

The experiences towards former inmates' labour re-entry in Peru

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Abstract

Incarceration and prison overpopulation in Peru is rapidly increasing. This situation creates and perpetuates the exclusion and precariousness of already marginalized populations. Although the Peruvian government established the necessity to work through punishment and rehabilitation connected with employment and productive life, massive overcrowding of prisons reduces adequate coverage of the incarcerated population. This essay shows that entering the labour market is a crucial factor in completing the rehabilitation process.

I will look at the experiences and narratives of former inmates to analyze to what extent the resocialization objective of the Peruvian government works, explaining the policy implications of post-prison labour trajectories. For this, I ask: what are Peru's government policies regarding post-incarceration, employment and rehabilitation? What are the experiences of former inmates in their labour trajectories after prison? How is the state-citizen relation developed through former inmates' experiences of post-prison labour trajectories?

The essay attempts to understand how governmentality operates at three levels: macro - how the State constructs the labour market -, meso - the policy discourse and instruments promoted by the Penitentiary Institution on resocialization programs and policies -, and micro - the labour trajectories of former inmates. I argue that the contradiction between neoliberal labour policies and the prison's highly regulated world creates systemic barriers for former inmates, thus making the labour market almost inaccessible for them

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Introduction

The prison as an institution contributes to state governance, separating society's "dangerous" elements (Goffman 2001). Prison reinforces state control and legitimizes the monopoly of violence (Weber 2009). In a contemporary approach to prisons, Wacquant (2010) suggests that the penal State is extended over the bodies of the most marginalized populations. Mass incarceration is creating and perpetuating exclusion and precariousness. The opposition between the function and the outcome of the prison is not new (Bandyopadhyay 2007; Keene, Smoyer and Blankenship 2018; Mathiesen 2000) and highlights not only the challenges related to rehabilitation but also the reduced interest in investing more resources in it.

Mass incarceration is a growing problem worldwide (Dammert and Salazar 2009; Lynch 2011; Ungar 2003; Wacquant 2009). After the United States of North America, South America had the highest number of people in prison (Prison World n.d.). Peru is a relevant case of study inside the region because its prisons show a rapid increase in incarceration without space for the population. On the one hand, Perú is the fourth country with more incarcerated population in Latin America, in absolute numbers - just behind Argentina and Colombia, countries with more inhabitants. On the other hand, it is the second country with a higher rate of prison overpopulation in the region (240%), just behind Bolivia (Prison World n.d.).

The Penitentiary institution in Peru - which is called INPE - is in charge of designing and implementing resocialization policies. A way to measure the resocialization strategy's progress is the reoffending rate, which in Peru is around 25% (INPE 2019). The Peruvian government established the necessity to work through punishment and rehabilitation connected with employment and productive life to avoid reoffending. However, massive overcrowding of prisons reduces the adequate coverage of the incarcerated population. This situation brings two questions concerning the rehabilitation purpose of the institution. The first one is, to what extent incarcerating more and more people contributes to the institutional resocialization goals? And also, what happens after prison? What are the outcomes of the prison when these people are relieved?

The motivation of this essay is to contest the idea that getting a job, as a goal, is not the decisive factor to complete the rehabilitation process. Then, it is relevant to look at former inmates' different and unequal experiences interacting with State institutions while entering the labour market. In doing so, I will look at the relevance of prison stigma, social networks and social capital.

The hypothesis is that the State contributes to creating a set of systemic barriers in the labour market that allocates some segments of the population on the margins of precarious labour. I will argue that there is a contradiction between the neoliberal labour policies and the prison's highly regulated world. The paradox establishes that prison is a route to rehabilitation through participation in the labour market but ends setting up structures that make that entry almost inaccessible.

I will look at the experiences and narratives of former inmates to analyze to what extent the resocialization objective of the Peruvian government works, asking what the policy implications of former inmates' experiences of post-prison labour trajectories are. I will answer this through three sub-questions:

- What are Peruvian's government policies regarding post-incarceration, employment and rehabilitation?
- What are the experiences of former inmates in their labour trajectories after prison?
- How is the state-citizen relation developed through former inmates' experiences of post-prison labour trajectories?

This proposal approaches how governmentality operates at three levels: macro, meso and micro; to answer the research question. The macro-level is about how the State constructs other social institutions, such as the labour market, focusing on secondary data about the history of Neoliberalism on the Peruvian labour market. Then, at the meso-level, I analyze the policy discourse and policy instruments promoted by the INPE, mainly centred on resocialization programs and policies. Finally, the micro-level is about everyday encounters at the margins of the State through the analysis of interviews about the labour trajectories of former inmates.

The dissertation has five parts. The first contains the literature and concepts related to the state-citizen relation after prison that guide this research. The second part explains the qualitative methodology strategy utilised for collecting data on this issue. Then, in third place, I focus on the macro-level of analysis through the characteristics of the labour market in Lima and the impact of the neoliberalism reform in the 90s. Also, the meso-level presents the policy context related to the labour return of former inmates. In the fourth part, I will go through the study cases and their labour journey out of prison. Finally, I would go back to the research question but with a scope on the three-level of analysis and the policy outcomes.

I. State-citizen relation in post-incarceration experiences facing the labour market

1. Margins of the State: the creation of informality and precariousness

For this proposal, I will look at the state-citizen relationship through the labour trajectories of former inmates. First, I will look at the State as an essential factor that produces a particular type of labour market and mainly focus-informal labour market. Thus, I will look at the intentional absence of State that shapes the characteristics of the constructed informal labour market, segmentation, precarious conditions, and its impact on its subjects. Finally, I am interested in the experiences of those in the informal labour market and their labour trajectories, looking at the effect of social elements such as stigma and gender roles as relevant variables.

1.1 Effects of the State

This proposal will consider the State as an actor, beyond its structure and ruled apparatus, through its effects and interaction with Peruvian society. Mitchel (1989) suggests looking at the State in a less structured way. Rather than in institutions or regulations programs, he suggests looking at how the State manifests in social and political realities (1989: 27), thus constructing a less binary and artificial division between the State and society as separated units of analysis. In addition to this, Trouillot's (2011) proposal aims to engage with the State's process and practices through its effects (2011: 151). Trouillot (2011) mentions four effects relating to territories and jurisdiction: isolated and atomized subjects; identification; legibility through a particular language; and knowledge and spatialization. These effects help construct governmentality and manage the population (Trouillot 2011), contributing to establishing labour informality and workers' precariousness. Nonetheless, the author remarks that the State is a sum of processes and not a fixed apparatus.

The approach of the State as an experience of interaction with society is not standardized. Not all the citizens have equal access to the State, and not all are included neither excluded in the same way. Therefore, a significant number of people remain in the margins of the State. Das and Poole (2004) argue that the State constructs its margins to differentiate and segregate according to divergent measures. It is helpful to separate the subjects of the law. Some technologies reaffirm and establish margins emerging from written practices and State control over subjects, the populations, territories, and lives (2004: 9). The characteristics of the margins have a direct impact on the workers' everyday experiences.

The concept of margins of the State is relevant to look at two interconnected aspects of this essay. On the one hand, to informality, as the most common type of labour in Peru, and how the Peruvian State constructs and allows informality, but at the same time, it is also overwhelmed by it. On the other hand, to the former inmates as subjects, and how the label attached for having been in prison, or even the stigma about their former affiliation to prison, influences and situates them in a particular margin. Therefore, it is relevant to look at the conditions where "margins of the state" are manifested in the informal labour market in the post-incarceration experience.

1.2 Labour market segmentation and informality

I will approach the relationship between former inmates and the State through the experience of labour. According to Tilly (1998), labour is understood as "any human effort adding use value to goods and services" (Tilly 1998: 22). The author remarks that the mentioned effort involves other relevant social phenomena that makes it more complex - such as the intersection of labour and race, ethnicity or gender. Labour also implies differential compensation of work and categories of workers, forms of access and summons, and workers' experiences in the field (Tilly 1998: 16). The author shows different ways of approaching labour. Therefore, I will focus on labour market segmentation, a division of labour that increases inequality (Bauder 2001). This approach's analyses social groups and institutions (Bauder 2001; Piore 1983).

The notion of 'social nature of labour' (Peck, 1996: 29) recognizes that workers are social actors as much as they are labour and that social division is constructed outside the market and then shapes employment relationships (Offe and Hinrichs, 1985; Hanson and Pratt, 1995 cited in Bauder 2001: 39)

Bauder (2001) adds two essential factors to look at the segmentation through labour trajectories. The first is that the labour market exists in a broader context of connected sets of policies, practices, and institutions that reproduce social inequality (Bauder 2001: 38). Secondly, the relation between the workers and a particular market segment stigmatizes the subjects (Bauder 2001). These factors are relevant to the labour trajectories after prison. The connection with the penitentiary institution works as a "structural stigma" affecting "conditions, cultural norms, and institutional policies that constrain opportunities" (Keene, Smoyer and Blankenship 2018: 800). For this proposal, I will look at the above in the context of the post-prison transition and the difficulties faced, such as accessing the Peruvian labour market.

1.2.1 Segmentation

It is necessary to situate labour market segmentation in a broader context comprising a connected set of policies, practices, and institutions that reproduce social inequality (Bauder 2001: 38). The theory of labour market segmentation was established in opposition to the neoclassical approach, which supports that jobs are allocated through a process of free and fair competition (Peck 1989:119). In doing so, neoclassical economists assume that subjects have equal conditions to participate in the labour market.

On the other hand, Doeringer and Piore (1971) present a dual proposal, including new variables for labour segmentation. The authors established a division of labour in two sectors: the first offers skilled workers better conditions, and the second is less stable with persistent unemployment (Peck 1989).

The low-status jobs in the secondary sector were filled by ethnic minority workers, women, the disabled and young people, while the primary sector was seen as the domain of white, prime-aged males (Peck 1989:121)

Even when there is an in-depth approach to the differences in labour market segments, this dual approach does not include other variables such as the intervention of the State to regulate the labour market or the particularities of women's participation in it (Peck 1989). Not all segments have the same features, nor do the subjects who belong to them.

Going deeper into the characteristics that emphasize certain inequalities, it is necessary to include the relationship between workers and a particular market segment that stigmatizes the subjects (Bauder 2001). This segmentation approach is helpful to explain the economic marginalization of ethnic minorities, lower classes and women (Clairmont et al., 1983; Fevre, 1992 cited in Bauder 2001:37). Segmentation allows us to look at the characteristics of the labour trajectories of former inmates.

Finally, feminist socioeconomics proposes gender inequalities as a relevant unit of analysis. They highlight that women's labour market opportunities are limited and moulded by sex discrimination, gender inequality in domestic labour, and the interplay of household and workplace power relations (Grimshaw, Fagan, Hebson and Tavora 2017: 2). The differences related to gender in the labour market are essential, as it relates to the differences in care work and unpaid work, which are mainly performed by women (Kabeer 1999). This situation has a direct effect on their participation in the labour market.

This segmentation approach is relevant in looking at the Peruvian labour market, which is primarily informal, to understand the role of gender or ethnicity as characteristics that become barriers to entering the labour market after prison. In addition to this, the informal market is especially precarious.

1.3 Precariousness, labelling and stigma

1.3.1 *The precariat workers*

During the 1970s, the expansion of the neo-liberal economic model established global roots for the current precarious labour market and its workers (Standing 2011). Economic growth and development depend on market competitiveness; everything should maximize competition and allow market principles to permeate all aspects of life (Standing 2011: 1). During the '90s, Peru implemented a general economic reform with severe implications on the labour market (Ewig 2020, De Olarte 1993). One of the primary outcomes was the flexibilization of labour conditions, which implied that workers' possessed unsafe physical and contractual conditions (Jiménez 2001).

Standing (2011) sustains that it is necessary to increase labour flexibility to attract investment and reduce production costs. In this context, "the precariat" is a new subject who must undertake new adverse conditions with their life and body. The author mentions that the precariat is neither working class, middle class, nor proletariat. The core of the term emphasizes their precarious existence (Standing 2011: 11). The consequences of flexibilization on the labour market are relevant to Peru, where the informal sector includes insecure labour agreements.

Although informality in Peru is not homogeneous, the conditions might vary significantly within the same city. The differences of former inmates' experiences will be approached by looking at labour market segmentation and emphasizing their previous productive experiences in prison. Standing (2011) mentions that inmates and former inmates are precariats because they are criminalized subjects. Their time in prison defines their identity even when they are out of the institution. Consequently, they face various restrictions to employment and are re-condemned with insecurity and fewer options.

Standing (2011) explains that there is a process to "precariatise" the subject. The author mentions three stages. The first one is related to the pressures and experiences attached to the precariat existence. This manifests through their present lives, *without a secure identity or sense of identity or purpose of development achieved through work and lifestyle* (ibid: 17). The second aspect is related to frustration as evidence of the subjective and emotional part of the process. An example of this occurs when the

workers have a higher education than required for their duties (Kosugi 2008 cited in Standing 2011: 7). Finally, the third aspect is the lack of belonging to a community to support them in times of need, which isolates the subjects. The atomization of subjects is also part of the effects of the State (Trouillot 2011). In the case of precarious work, the subjects depend on and need to work to survive.

For this research, I will approach work's precariousness to understand former inmates' experiences and how market segmentation affects and reduces their available options. Also, in which circumstances they can choose between more than one job, when the experience of having been in prison contributes or restrict their opportunities.

1.3.2 The label of a -former- prisoner

The construction of the "former inmate" as a subject is labelled with an "irredeemable mark" (Keene et al. 2018: 701) of prison, adding -although not exclusively- a stigmatized social characteristic (Goffman 2001). The effect of stigma helps to understand to what extent it can shape or orientate the former inmate's interaction with state institutions and the market. Then, INPE works as a "structural stigmatizing" institution, affecting "conditions, cultural norms, and institutional policies that constrain opportunities" (Keene et al. 2018: 800). Therefore, this essay aims to approach the stigma dimension of prison, going further and finding how relevant it is and in what circumstances it is relevant.

There is a current relation between inmates and prisons with stigma (Goffman 2001). In the case of former prisoners, the influence of the institutions follows them in their journeys outside jail (Keene et al., 2018). I am interested in looking at the label of "prison" in their transition to freedom and, more specifically, the label of "former prisoner". In doing so, I am interested in understanding to what extent it influences or determines the labour trajectories of inmates once they are out of prison.

Eyben et al. (2007) describe the role of labels as necessary *to impose boundaries and define categories* (ibid: 1). The authors' approach shows that labelling has a meaning within power relations. Therefore, some power positions determined and framed other people and issues, creating a vertical distance. This situation responds to *social, political and economic power; they are critical for securing hegemonic meanings and values* (Eyben et al. 2007: 3). Then, to understand a problem, it is necessary to frame it to introduce it into the policy debate. Consequently, people are labelled and categorized to shape into a frame of interest (Eyben et al., 2007).

In addition, the authors argue that labelling produces unexpected outcomes. In some cases, it can go against the initial purpose and use the categories for opposite political

intentions. Therefore, to offset that situation, an option is to *counter-labelling* (Eyben *et al.* 2007: 6), *that is*, to re-shape the nominal way to frame and categorize some issues. Nonetheless, it is insufficient to change the conditions in which those labels were created and not question the problem's core. In this essay, I am interested in labels that stigmatize individuals, creating an unequal relation of moral superiority and inferiority of the subjects (Moncrieffe 2007). Nonetheless, the shape that labelling and frames take are socially constructed and belong to a specific context (Eyben *et al.*, 2007).

Moncrieffe (2007) argues that stigmatized labels are embedded in discourses that discriminate and explain the *labelled group's inferiority* (2007: 90) to exacerbate differences and generate fear. Therefore, stigma displays its effectiveness when the subject identifies with the negative perception and *may opt to exclude themselves* (Moncrieffe (2007: 87). The approach of labelling and stigmatization is helpful to look at the characteristics of the process of labour return of former inmates.

As a label, "former-inmate" itself reinforces the attachment of the subject to the penitentiary institution. Therefore, it is essential to look at the different actors' stigma behaviour during the former inmates' labour trajectories. On the one hand - considering the State's role - does the State has a stigmatization role after prison? Is it a problem for their immediate environment and networks? On the other hand, how do subjects label themselves and their relevance in different labour contexts? Do labels produce boundaries? If so, for which type of market? Regarding the relation between labelling, stigmatization, and the labour market, this research focuses on Lima's urban metropolitan labour market and on how former inmates get engaged.

II. Methodology

The methodological strategy of this essay consists on discourse analysis and policy analysis through interviews. For this, I combined the collection of primary and secondary data. First, I looked at the Peruvian penitentiary policies related to promoting labour re-entry as a rehabilitation outcome in planning the intervention, and I analyzed the discourses behind it. Secondly, I used the evidence from former-inmates labour trajectories dealing with the Peruvian State in their daily experiences to understand in what circumstances the State is present, is absent, or fails.

The objective of using former inmates as a unit of analysis is to look at their relationship with the State institutions within their trajectories timeline. Sapin (2007) defines life course as a set of life trajectories (or lifelines), particularly family, school, professional, residential, and reproductive. Trajectories represent "a model of stability and change to long term" and a "relational history" (Sapin et al. 2007, p.32 cited in (Cavagnoud, Baillet and Cosio-Zavala 2020). In addition, Delory-Momberger (2009) adds the relevance of the psychic and social aspects, where the latter is defined through cultural and social dimensions (Cavagnoud, Baillet and Cosio-Zavala 2020). The use of trajectories concerning labour would allow me to reconstruct the transition of the former-inmates identities in the different ways they have interacted with the labour market and the nature of that synergy.

- **Case selection**

I interviewed ten former inmates. Even it is not a representative sample, it allowed me to explore the experiences, perceptions, social relations and how this can or cannot dialogue with the state itineraries for this population.

I contacted the informants through an NGO that validated my presence and helped build the trust relations and bonds necessary to conduct the interviews. In addition, even when the Covid-19 context makes in-person interaction difficult, it also helps positively, as the people involved already knew how to interact through virtual tools.

- **Methods**

The primary qualitative method used is the renewed Ageven form (Cavagnoud *et al.* 2020). I adapted this tool to focus on labour trajectories. This qualitative approach contributes to answering the research question differentiating the experience of being in prison and the transition into the labour market. In addition, it helped to focus on inflexion points, which shows events that represent a change in their trajectories (Cavagnoud *et al.* 2020).

Trajectories and inflexion points would help me differentiate personal aspects from policy-related issues. I will look at the circumstances in which the State was present and how, if in a positive/negative way or absent, it should be present. I will contrast the experiences, look at the implications for the people's trajectories and how the circumstances dialogued with state policies, services, or contradicted their purpose.

On the other hand, secondary data collection helped to understand the Peruvian State frame to rehabilitate former inmates through penitentiary policies promoting labour. Then, I contrast the policies that aim to contribute to labour promotion and what inmates deal with in prison. Then, the result helped me highlight the labour trajectories on different variables showing that getting a job after prison is not the end of the resocialization process.

The last source is the literature review to operationalize the main concepts: state-citizen relation, labour market segmentation, stigmatization, and labelling. This step helped me understand the different dimensions of state-citizen relations and their circumstances and outcomes to analyze the labour trajectories.

- **Ethics, positionality and interviewee selection**

For ethical reasons, I did not ask the interviewees about offences they have committed. Because I did not ask them myself and an NGO did the filter, it turned out that some of the people in my sample had been in prison for terrorism. Even when the type of offence was not a sampling criterion, I am interested in the "former-prisoner" stigmatized level; some cases are taken as exploratory interviews that helped me situate the research hypothesis.

Table 1: Participants

| | Men | Women |
|------------------------|-----|-------|
| Case of study | 3 | 3 |
| Exploratory interviews | 2 | 2 |

Source: own elaboration

Also, concerning the gender characteristics of labour, I was expecting to have more childcare and unpaid work experiences. The interview guide had questions about paid labour, and going deeper in the familiar experiences could have expanded the research into another area. Nonetheless, the domestic care networks were evident and essential to managing childcare when they were in prison. Further research would be necessary to better understand specific gender demands. Nonetheless, an interesting finding was

that INPE allocates its resources prioritizing male prisons. At the same time, none of the women interviewees was enrolled in a specific productive programme inside the jail because these programmes were not available for women.

III. The labour market in Lima and the policies related to labour return

This section will approach the macro-level of the proposal centred on the labour policies and the neoliberal reform implemented in Peru during the 90s. This change generated a new type of labour market, and as a consequence, informality extended massively instead of reducing. The informal sector interacts and blurs the boundaries with the formal sector. As a result, there is not necessarily state failure; instead, there are different absence types. I will explore the types of absence that the Peruvian State produced and its consequences on labour market segmentation, mainly in the informal sector, creating precarious labour conditions.

III.1 The 90: Neoliberalism, flexibility and labour precariousness

At the beginning of 1990, Peru dealt with an economic and social crisis shaped by hyperinflation and the battle against terrorism. In this context of an emergency, Fujimori¹ implemented several policy reforms that were part of a regional trend. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) promoted the Washington Consensus in Latin American and implemented Neoliberalism as a regime (Ewig 2010)². One of the most significant neoliberal policies was the economic structural adjustment (Cáceres, Cueto and Palomino 2008; Fernandez 2013; Olarte 1993).

A goal of the neoliberal reform was to strengthen the formal economy, promoting the investment of big companies and increase the formal sector (Durand 2007). Nonetheless, De Olarte (1993) suggests that Fujimori's economic and political strategy did not respond to significant problems - like poverty, inequality, and unemployment. In contrast, there was a substantial increase in unemployment during the 90s (Olarte 1993).

¹ Alberto Fujimori was the president of Peru between 1990 and 2000. He is considered the last dictator of the country.

² Ewig (2010) affirms that the role of epistemic communities was essential to develop those reforms. IMF and the World Bank were promoting the reform and with firm interests in it. Significant evidence of the penetration of those institutions into the Peruvian state was the revolving door dynamic between the bureaucrats of the international institutions and the heads of the ministries in Peru. Therefore, the close link during the 90 between the state and the global community interests facilitated the reform's implementation.

Also, the extreme flexibilization of the labour market made it difficult to retain a job. From 52% at the beginning of the neoliberal era in 1990, the informality increased to 56,9% in 1997(Jiménez 2001: 163).

This situation was related to the reform and changes in social policies, seeking to implement market principles and efficiency as an outcome (Ewig 2010). In addition, Jiménez (2001) affirms that the neoliberal program caused a backlash of economic, political and social conditions. One of the consequences was the national dependency on the foreign economy, which made Peru more vulnerable to global demands and crisis without strengthening the domestic market.

Lora and Pages (1996 cited in Saavedra, 1999: 4) sustain that the labour reform in Peru was one of the more drastic in Latin America. Regarding labour flexibility and liberalisation of the labour market, it promoted temporary employment contracts. Saavedra (1999) adds that in 1991 many reforms sought to make the labour market more flexible and reduce the costs of contracts and dismissal. Subsequently, in 1993 Fujimori's government eliminated the "absolute labour stability law", lowering the cost of firing an employee.

Finally, Durand (2007) framed the social contract where citizens pay taxes and receive social protection from the State. This situation is more an exception than a rule with plenty of tax-liberated markets. At the beginning of 2000, the author affirms that "there are more private companies and less State" (Durand 2007: 10). The labour reform has benefited private investment and reduced the protection of the workers. This measure would have severe impacts on the increase of the informal and precarious labour market.

III.2 Peruvian labour market informality and segmentation

The informal labour market is not homogeneous, and it is in constant interaction with the formal market. Jaramillo & Sparrow (2014) show that formal and informal agreements divide the Peruvian labour segmentation, and the urban area concentrates most of the labour force (Jaramillo and Sparrow 2014: 8). In 2010, the informal labour force in the country was distributed in 50% employees, and 45% independent workers, domestic workers, and non-paid familiar/kinship workers (Jaramillo and Sparrow 2014: 27), showing the informal sector's heterogeneity. In addition, Cosamalon (2018) highlights that to have a complete view of the characteristics of the informal sector; it is necessary to differentiate between independent workers, such as micro-business owners, taxi drivers, artisans, street vendors and informal salaried employees.

While the informal market is the most extended in Peru, it also has adverse conditions. According to ENAO 2017, 70% of the labour force is in the informal sector, and 30% of those with a full-time agreement have a lower payment than the national minimum wage (Barrantes and Matos 2019: 9). In addition, Jaramillo (2014) affirms that informality is too much spread in the labour market, and it is not politically viable to enforce labour regulations. Also, Cosamalón (2018) shows that informality responds to the excess of rules in the formal sector and the State's impossibility to regulate them (ibid 44). The authors sustain that informality is such a massive issue that challenges the State's capacity.

In Peru, informality implies the absence of social benefits and unsafe and low-quality labour conditions. Therefore, it is related to a position of vulnerability and marginality as an economic activity of the poor, and it works as a safety net in a crisis (Rentería 2015). Nonetheless, Cosamalón (2018) argues that informality is not only the result of exclusion or state evasion and highlights the subjects' agency in choosing a specific economic activity in response to an unattended urban demand. This approach challenges the discourse that reduces the informal workers as victims of the system.

Nonetheless, choosing informal labour as an option is not necessarily a voluntary decision. Some circumstances can promote it because the formal market is too bureaucratic or, in contrast, informality provides a better income by reducing social expenses (Arroyo 2020). Besides, informality becomes a solution that also allows solving employment scarcity by self-employment. Nonetheless, the author argues that the mentioned solution creates a problem in economic growth. The closed relation between the formal and informal labour markets enables the formal market to take advantage of the self-exploitation from the informal side, which undermines institutionality (Arroyo 2020: 272). It is essential to look at the constant interaction of both sectors, taking into account how the formal market has dominance.

In addition, Arroyo (2020) argues that during early 2000 the economic growth had two main reasons. The first one was expanding the formal sector through exportation, and the second was the connections between formal and informal economies. Consequently, Peru was in the top five of the most informal countries by 2012 (Schneider 2012 cited in Arroyo 2020: 267). As a result, it produces a mix of economic growth without competition or institutionality (Arroyo 2020: 266).

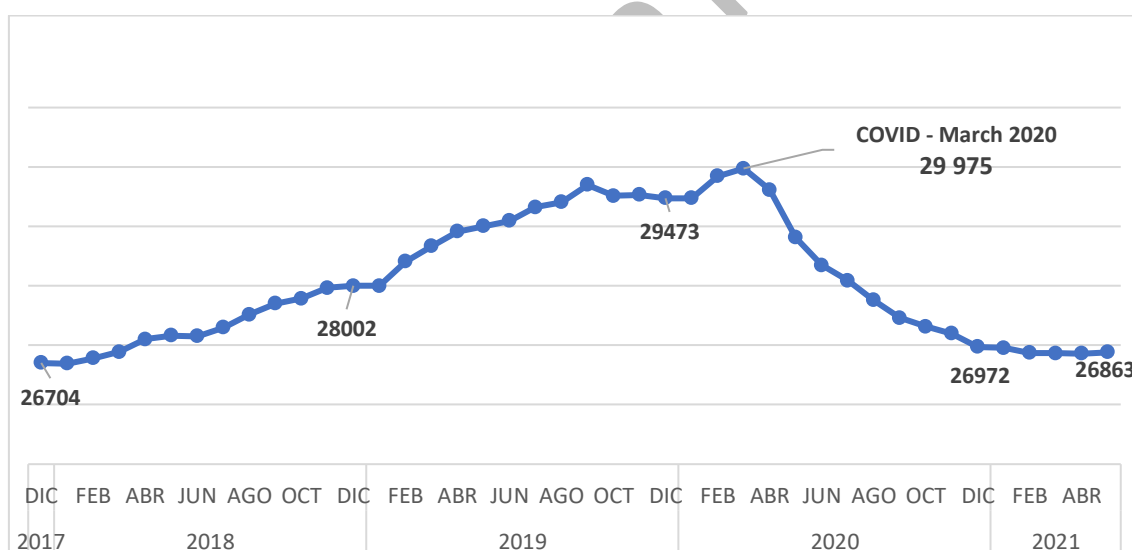
The informal sector is very representative of the Peruvian labour market; it is necessary to understand the differences between the option available for the people who leave prison and look at the role of stigmatization in this sector and in the formal market.

III.3 The labour market and the prison population in Lima

Informality is a general problem in Peru and Lima is not the exception. Even though it has more formal sector work, it has a very high level of precarity and informality. The Services represents 57.3% of those employment, commerce 23.1%, Manufacturing 12.5% and Construction 5.8% (ILO 2020). Also, during Covid-19, the informal labour market increases up to 74,3% (ILO 2020: 03). In addition to this, 40,8 of the employment in Peru is high-risk labour and 8,4% middle-risk, which represent a high instability in their labour positions (ILO 2020). The situated context is relevant to situate the conditions of the labour market the participants of this research have to face.

In May 2021, the total population in prison in Peru was 86 812, and women represented 5,26%. Lima had 30,97% of incarcerated people, and the third part of the population in prison were young people between 18 and 29 years old (INPE 2021). The following graph shows a significant reduction in the number of people in jail during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Graphic 1: Penitentiary population in Lima Dic 2017 - May 2021



Source: own elaboration based on INPE statistic report

At the end of every year, there was a consistent increase in the population incarcerated, which brings evidence that overpopulation was an expanding problem. The decrease in prison population from April 2020 is directly related to the pandemic. This exceptional circumstance produced two effects. On the one hand, there were people affected by Covid that have died. On the other hand, it exacerbated the overpopulation problem that prisons have, because most inmates survived with familiar external support that at that moment was banned. Then, it became a problem for the INPE to provide inmates with

minimal basic needs. Therefore, the penitentiary institution relieved an important number of people with exceptional circumstances³ who potentially returned to the labour market. The following section presents the policy initiatives that promote labour skills.

III.4 The policies of interest: targeted and not targeted former inmates

The second dimension of this proposal, the meso-level, is related to the policy discourses and instruments related to labour return. I am focusing the analysis mainly through two programmes - CREO and FOCOS - and two policies - Productive Prisons and The National Penitentiary Policy 2030, related to labour incentives. These policy initiatives focus on people with a sentence, in and out of prison. Their goal is to train inmates in different skills to work during their time in prison and use them once they are released.

The policy dimension is operationalized through three aspects. The first one is the written documents related to the policies and programs. From this evidence, the second aspect is the broader narratives related to labour behind those policies, about the role of prison and inmates. And, finally, the interaction and discretion of street-level bureaucrats and midlevel bureaucrats in the experiences of former inmates. The third part will be approached in a more extended way in Section Five through the labour trajectories.

As it was mentioned before, according to the INPE statistics report (2020), the prison population in Lima is almost 27.000, which shows a rate of 138% overpopulation. Also, the most representative age groups are between 25 and 29 for men, and between 35 and 39 for women. In addition to this, most of the people are for the first time in prison. Nonetheless, 25,6% of people is at least a second time incarcerated.

III.4.1 CREO, FOCOS, Productive Prisons and the National Penitentiary Policy

The INPE, through the National Penitentiary Policy 2030, recognizes the institution's limitations to cover and promote former inmates' labour return adequately. Therefore, they seek to improve prisons' conditions related to infrastructure and services. CREO and FOCOS show an interest in promoting labour to inmates and former inmates and their correct behaviour and performance. In addition to this, Productive Prisons is a policy that explicitly seeks to link the efforts from the INPE with other institutions to promote labour. The following tables resume the purpose of the programmes.

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Table 2: Programmes related to labour promotion

| Programmes | Main goal | Targeted population | People impacted | Responsible |
|--------------------------|--|--|---|---|
| CREO⁴ | Strengthen psychosocial skills to rehabilitate and achieve social reintegration in young people and primary adults with criminal behaviours. | Men between 18-29 years old for the first or second time in prison. Inmates without drug issues, psychiatric problems and with a sentence under 15 years. | 691 in Lima 1726 in Peru 9 prisons in Peru 2 in Lima | INPE (belongs to the Judiciary Ministry) |
| | Resume: The resocialization of inmates through activities that generate adaptive habits and behaviours; increase levels of employability; improve positive cognitive and social skills; prevent drug use; with the aim of achieving adequate and productive management of free time, promoting the practice of healthy lifestyles and personal development. | | | |
| FOCOS⁵ | Intervention to face criminal risk behaviours, reducing the probability of recidivism. | Former inmates released and persons with a sentence with penitentiary benefits of semi-release and conditional release | 543 in Peru 14 Offices out of prison 3 in Lima | INPE (belongs to the Judiciary Ministry) |
| | Resume: Strengthen competencies so that participants increase their repertoire of primary and intermediate social skills that allow them to improve their behaviour according to what is required in positive social and work relationships and direct their moral development to a conventional level. | | | |

Source: Own elaboration based on the National Penitentiary Policy 2030

⁴ CREO: Building Pathways of Hope and Opportunity

⁵ FOCOS: Strengthening of Social Competences for non-criminal recidivism of those released.

Table 3: Policies related to labour promotion

| Policies | Main goal | Targeted population | People impacted | Main responsible |
|--|---|--|------------------------|--|
| Productive Prisons | Development of labour, business and entrepreneurial competence of the prison population for their insertion or reintegration into work | Inmates of all ages (males and females) inside prison. | 24000 inmates | INPE (belongs to the Judiciary Ministry) Ministry of Labour Ministry of Production Private businesses |
| | Resume: Promotion of work inside and outside the prison. Expose this policy to the business community and thus establish alliances aimed at labour reintegration. 70% of the items were distributed in carpentry, leather, clothing and ceramics. In addition, current law contemplates that INPE collects 10% of what is produced to reinvest. | | | |
| National Penitentiary Policy 2030 | The updating of the Penitentiary Policy has as its primary objective to solve the problem of "Inadequate living conditions to favour the reintegration of persons deprived of liberty". The main purpose of the prison system is the resocialization of the people who have committed crimes and who, without the minimum conditions of health, cleanliness, education, housing, among other services, this goal is hampered. | | | |

Source: Own elaboration based on the National Penitentiary Policy 2030

The tables presented show a significant under-coverage of the population to be attended. While the CREO program targets young men in prison for the first time, FOCOS has an even more worrying number of coverages outside jail. On the other side, the Productive Prison policy mainly promotes manual skills unrelated to Lima's main labour market demands. Therefore, the initiatives oriented toward self-employed works or abilities related to the informal labour market, such as handicrafts.

- ***The institutional limitations***

The INPE argues that the main restriction to ask for more economic resources to improve the coverage of their programmes is the lack of evidence that sustains the success of resocialization. Also, the infrastructure is a significant limitation to provide better services related to labour training or working spaces. According to the infrastructure diagnosis (INPE 2020) the 59% of the productive facilities in prisons are in bad conditions, 40% are in regular conditions, while only 1% is in an acceptable condition (DL 1343, 60).

In addition to this, prison employees are very few to cover the incarcerated population. At the beginning of 2020, the total number of penitentiary workers in the country was 10.434. They are oriented mainly to the security area, while administrative employees represent 18%, and people related to resocialization treatment represent 17%. According to the overpopulation in every prison, this situation becomes more dramatic, which is a bigger problem in male than female prisons (INPE:2020, 64). Overcrowding of the population creates a resource scarcity visible in budget resource problems to implement adequate spaces for life and work inside the prison. Also, as INPE employees are insufficient to cover the whole population, the programmes have to target a reduced population.

- ***Stigma from INPE's perception***

INPE recognizes that former inmates have difficulties getting an adequate job once they are relieved. Nonetheless, they attribute this to having criminal records, and not necessarily to the skills people have or get inside. The poor supply of services for graduates former inmates is a worrying aspect related to getting a job to maintain their freedom.

According to the National Penitentiary Policy 2030, the stigma of going through prisons has great relevance in the labour market experience. It is related to the type of work that former prisoners get, mainly of low quality. The important factor for reducing recidivism is obtaining a job that provides good working conditions.

Even when INPE recognizes the main challenges former inmates face out of prison, some of them are attributed to external circumstances - such as other people stigmatizing former inmates and denying them work opportunities. Therefore, the most extended labour market is a low-quality one that contributes to recidivism.

There is no available information specifically oriented to labour concerning gender. In the 2030 national policy, the institution attempts to strengthen women's labour return and guarantee economic and social women's rights. Nonetheless, these programmes are hardly implemented in female prisons. Therefore, most of the women are excluded from labour training. The policy discourse proposes that labour is essential to reach the resocialization goal. The INPE has implemented programmes to promote work, even though these efforts targeted young men with minor crimes⁶.

⁶ There are other programmes oriented to people dealing with drugs consuming and also to sex offenders. Nonetheless, the effort remain to the male population.

IV. Former prisoners' labour trajectories

In this section, former prisoners' labour trajectories show how the meso and macro levels, are experienced in their journeys out of prison. The scope is centred on how the State emerges in everyday transactions and how the margins are allocated. The labour experiences are approached through the stories of six participants, three women and three men. The tables below resume the cases and their prison experiences.

Table 4: Male participants

| | Victor <i>Cm1</i> | Felipe <i>Cm2</i> | Marino <i>Cm3</i> |
|------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Period in prison | 2011-2018 | 2011-2017 | 2011-2016 |
| N° of years | 7 | 6 | 6 |
| Age of entrance | 20 | 21 | 20 |
| Age of exit | 27 | 27 | 25 |
| Time out of prison | 6 years | 4 years | 5 years |
| N° of dependants | One son | None | One son |
| Household members | 4: he, his wife, son and sister in law | 2: He and his mother | 3: he, his wife and son |
| Education level | Complete secondary | University student | Complete secondary |
| Labour status | Employed Formal sector | Partially employed Informal sector | Employed Formal sector |
| Main labour position | Hygienic services manager Formal sector | Assistant of a friend Informal sector | Supermarket product coordinator Formal sector |
| Labour experience | Cooker, barber, plumber. | Waiter, construction, brickworker, plumber. | Waiter, construction, brickworker, plumber. |
| Participation in any program | CREO | CREO | CREO |

Source: Own elaboration based on interviews

The three men were in prison at an early age and spent less than ten years inside. All of them were part of the CREO program. Once they were relieved, they used their networks to get a work in the informal sector. Nonetheless, these experiences were not permanent and required a lot of effort, jumping from one job to another.

In contrast, women represent a significant minority of the prison population, which makes policy efforts and resources prioritized for males. Even though the circumstances in and

out of prison shows necessity to go through the gendered experience in prison and in the labour market.

Table 5: Female participants

| | Violeta <i>Cf1</i> | Susana <i>Cf2</i> | Mercedes <i>Cf3</i> |
|------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Period in prison | 2011 – 2016 2016 – 2024 probation | 2005 -2019 | 1987- 1990 1993 – 2013 |
| N° of years | 5 inside 9 in probation | 14 | 3 and 20 |
| Age of entrance | 25 | 25 | 29 |
| Age of exit | 30 | 39 | 49 |
| Time out of prison | 5 years | 2 year | 8 years |
| N° of dependants | None | Partially dependant Daughter | Parents |
| Household members | 5: she, her brother, sister in law and two nieces | 4: she, two children and one1 friend | 4: she and her siblings |
| Education level | Incomplete secondary | Complete secondary | Incomplete university |
| Labour status | Part-time employ Informal sector | Unemployed (because of Covid) | Unemployed (because of Covid) |
| Main labour position | Bookshop seller | - | - |
| Labour experience | Bookshop seller, handicrafts, decoration with balloon hairstyle | Handicrafts, manicurist | Art teacher, making craft cards |
| Participation in any program | FOCOS | None | None |

Source: Own elaboration based on interviews

The women's cases analyzed show that they experienced longer sentences and therefore came out of prison being older than the men whose experiences I have analyzed. None of these women participated in the CREO program because it was not available for females. Also, they were not beneficiaries of Productive Prison intervention for two reasons. The first one is because the program was not present in every prison. And the second one is that some women refused to participate in the jails with the program because the conditions were inadequate. They were required to work on Wednesdays and Saturdays, prevented from receiving visits the only days when female visits were allowed.

All the participants have experience in jobs that require their physical presence, such as construction, services and selling. These occupations match the demand in the labour market in Lima. As shown in Section Four, the programmes oriented their training to manual skills. The products they produced inside prison have very little demand in the labour market, such as decorations or handicrafts, and are also situated in the informal sector.

IV.1 Becoming a citizen: the prison out of prison

The experience of prison remains in people's lives even when they do not belong to the institution. This indivisible label leaves a mark on their journeys and pulls them back to jail. They experienced the State through the ID office, dealing with police officers and trying to use the certificates that show their education and trained experiences. To get a job, there were two main types of experiences. The first one is related to showing what they have learned in prison through certifying their educational or technical training. The second one is related to access to a job and having to deal with their criminal records.

Everything we do comes from our own initiatives; it does not work as it does in other countries where you can use what you learned outside prison. Here a person does not leave the prison with a document that proves he has worked inside and can go out to work. It is not like in other places. It does not happen that a person goes out and shows up in a stable, formal business, and it is hired. The INPE should make a complete report of your good behaviour inside the prison as part of the CREO program. As that does not happen, you leave with a document that proves you have been trained or received an education, which has no value on the street. If you say that you have studied, they ask you where did you learn that? And then they tell you that your certificate has no value.

Marino, 30 years old, 5 years out of prison.

In a job they asked me for documents that proved I have worked or studied, and I asked again to the INPE. They have a copy that proved my work, which the director signed, but they did not give me when I asked for it. They said no, there is no document. They had a certificate that validated that I had worked and they did not recognize that.

Mercedes, 60 years old, 8 years out of prison.

I had no idea where my ID was; the police kept it when they arrested me. I went to RENIEC, and to prove that I was no longer a prisoner, I had to pay an additional fee to update that information. The process took more than a month, and I had to

go to return about three times. Once in the office, the lady at the window yelled that she was processing my records, just like that. Then the people around looked at me strangely, like with fear, and I felt terrible. I was only left to swallow my shame. For updating that I was no longer in jail, it was 65 soles, and the ID was 35 soles more. My family helps me with the expenses, but the people who get out of prison don't have that money to do all the paperwork, and they mistreat you. They should be taught to be more cautious in these cases.

Violeta, 35 years old, 5 years out of prison with probation.

If the police stop you in the street and realize you have records, they will check you. They stop as long as they want just for fun until they get tired and then let you go. That is undermining the rights of a person to circulate. They denigrate you as a human being. None of my colleagues from the University knows that I have been in prison, but I have thought about what would happen if one day I went to a party with them and the police stopped us in the street, what would it be like afterwards? Will they still be my friends?

Felipe, 31 years old, 4 years out of prison.

The quotes presented show different types of interactions with the State that links the citizen experience to the prison and gives them a differentiated treatment. At one stage, the structural stigma (Keene et al 2018) limited people's opportunities outside. The quotes show a different treatment from the state institutions through the bureaucrats in front-line levels and middle levels. In addition, there is a contradiction between what the prison certifies and how useful -or not- these certificates are outside. This situation shows a lack of connection between INPE and other institutions - such as the Education or Labour ministries - to certify the legitimacy of the documents and the people's capacities. Once outside prison, the interviewees faced events where they realized that what they did during their time in prison / in the process of resocialization / was not valid outside.

IV.1.1 Probation and five years on trial

Probation and the redemption process exemplify how the Peruvian State regulates stigma outside the prison building. Former inmates in this circumstance have to deal with two specific situations. In probation, the first one must sign and receive a talk once a month in a particular place and for an entire morning. On the other hand, they appear with criminal records during the first five years out of prison in redemption. After this period, they have to ask for the elimination of the records from the national system.

Nonetheless, they eliminate the criminal records after the former inmate pays their fine with the Peruvian State and completes its sentence.

The mentioned situations bring essential difficulties. Probation talks are fixed in time and place. They are not compatible with labour schedules, demanding to build strategies to sort it out and bring difficult situations, such as choosing between their work or keeping in order with the INPE. Also, they have to comply with some requirements - such as a permanent address and a job contract - to complete the sentence outside prison.

A partner inside had a false contract to comply with the requirement and access probation. It is nonsense that they ask you for a work contract; how will I get a work contract from jail? How is someone going to hire me without having interviewed me personally, without knowing who I am? Where do I get this contract from? I don't know what they are asking from me.

Susana, 41 years old, 2 years out of prison.

On the other hand, having visible criminal records makes it difficult to access the formal labour market. The participants affirm it is the main reason to be rejected in a job. As a consequence, networks are fundamental to have access to job opportunities through personal recommendations - even though these opportunities remain informal and unstable.

Since last April, I don't have anything (in my records), I'm clean, so I just showed up and went back to work in May. It was not very difficult to get a job. I applied without fear because my documents are already clean; I can take them out, and nothing appears. Now I am at a point where I no longer have any social pressure. After so many years, I am just recovering my self-assurance and confidence. I believe that I am capable of passing any work interview. Before, because of the frustration of not having a job, I went into despair; I abandoned myself and did not want to do anything. It led me to have depression problems, too, to use drugs.

Marino, 30 years old, 5 years out of prison.

For me, no matter what, if you want to go out and look for a job, you have to be recommended by someone who wants to believe in you and give you the opportunity, because it is not easy. In fact, If you were a company, you are not going to risk hiring people with records, because no matter what the crime is, then I think that if you are going to give an opportunity,

it is only because of a friendship with someone you know and wants to help you.

Susana, 41 years old, 2 years out of prison.

The role of stigma in the labour market is related to essential factors, such as rejection from other citizens, such as hiring someone with criminal records. Former inmates are still linked to the penitentiary institution through administrative procedures that they face out of prison. These records restrict their entry into the formal market, where it is necessary to present documents or where the selection procedures include checks for criminal and police records. Therefore, the informal labour market allows skipping those filters. Nonetheless, it also derives from more precarious labour conditions.

I earned 720 soles (25% less than basic income), and I had to work 13 hours. I had no breaks and if I missed a day, I had to pay the owner for my absence. In other words, I had to pay her 30 soles, and she also deducted my daily 30 soles. To go to INPE's therapy, I coordinated with my friend the cashier, and she gave me helped me. To go and sign between Monday and Saturday, I had to negotiate my day off with some girls so I could go and sign up for my therapy at the FOCOS office.

Violeta, 35 years old, 5 years out of prison with probation.

You can't have a good job because of the records. You get a job through someone you know or who recommends you. And the question comes, is it better to be inside than to be outside? Do you know why? Because I beat the shit out of me working and they exploit us out there. I am constantly tempted to steal or not to steal, but I still struggle with that demon. I continue working with a salary of 250 soles, and with that, I have to pay for a house, electricity, food. What is left for me? I can't save any money. I can't do absolutely anything. At least inside, I have food - it will be ugly, but it is a meal - and no one will tell me that I have to pay bills at the end of the month.

Felipe, 31 years old, 4 years out of prison.

The testimonies show that the informal sector is the primary option but not the most desired one once relieved. Nonetheless, the experience of precarious jobs is not an exclusive experience related to prison. Most of the Peruvian labour market is informal, but having criminal records reduces the available options while dealing with stigma. Also, the precariousness in the informal market can be so complex that the predictability of

prison life appears attractive, as it is a place that ensures basic infrastructure and daily food. This situation presents a broader problem related to Peruvian society in general, allowing extreme precarious levels of labour.

IV.2 The relation between in and out: useful skills acquired in prison

Specialized workshops inside prison require technical infrastructure - such as an oven or professional tools - that can allow inmates to produce ceramics, wood or bake sculptures. Therefore, once outside, if they want to continue working in the same activity, being self-employed is impossible because the infrastructure cost for individual production is too high outside the prison. The products related to handicrafts tend to be cheaper to produce. Nonetheless, the interviewees affirmed that the market for hand-made postcards, teddy bears and fantasy jewellery is limited. They cannot survive selling only that, as not many people are willing to buy those products.

Some professionals teach you how to do the work in the education workshops, whether decorating balloons or jewellery. Worse, I have not felt that they have taught me to do something in the other prison. No one has taught me, I learned it alone by looking at other women, and many people are like this and learned alone. The men have had much more of this support. They have programmes that train them.

(Violeta, 33 years old, 5 years in prison)

These experiences show inconsistencies between what they get inside and what they face outside. There are reduced materials inside the prison to promote more adequate labour workshops, and also, the institution cannot train all the population in prison. Finally, another relevant factor is the technological gap. The participants mentioned it as a problem they face outside and makes them feel disadvantaged - from using computers and Microsoft Office to using smartphones and other gadgets. This situation is an essential aspect to consider when looking at which skills should be taught inside prison.

On the other hand, the experience in CREO looks for an integral transformation that includes well behave in different life dimensions, and an important one is a labour. As INPE cannot implement the program for the whole population, they focalize on specific people. The programme has a rigorous schedule. They have to wake up at 6:00 am, have to do approximately an hour of exercise, and they have to be clean and well behaved. The inmates deserve to be like the state invest in them because they are young

men that would return to the labour market under their 30s, and they committed a minor offence.

I believe that the CREO program was a complete success. It was a success because, to be honest, it might not have been the same story if I had gone to another place. Thanks to the CREO program, recreational workshops, productivity workshops, and psychology workshops helped you excel and cope with all the inside struggles.

Victor, 33 years old, 6 years out of prison.

It is assumed that with the program, you will work, and study will help you reduce the years of the sentence. But even though I studied and worked for 5 years, I earned almost nothing, only 2 months less. Two months is the time it takes me to put together a benefit and get a hearing. And then, getting it approved is very difficult. The problem is that I did not have any kind of penitentiary benefit. Anyway, I had to pay for a lawyer to at least gain some weeks of freedom.

Marino, 30 years old, 5 years out of prison.

Nonetheless, interviews show that the reward of behaving as an exemplary inmate does not benefit people outside. Even when they did what the program required; the stigma of criminal records affected them outside prison. Their value in the market was lower as it was related to the stigma associated with jail, which constitutes them.

Stigma constructs the margins (Das & Poole 2004), and the former prisoners are allocated there. The training they receive is related to manual activities that do not match with the labour market demand. Therefore, the State regulates social relations as labour and the segments inside the labour market with labour flexibility that creates instability.

The experiences of the participants in the interviews show the microlevel of the state-citizen relationship through everyday transactions. They present how they experience the margins of labour market precariousness in the difficulties in getting a job, and how the bureaucrats treat them in ordinary procedures.

An important finding of the analysis is the inconsistency between the policy efforts and what former inmates get once outside prison. Therefore, it is essential to train people demanded activities in the labour market, and strengthen the relationship between INPE and the Ministries of Labour and Education.

Conclusion

Through this research, I looked across the micro, meso and macro-level of analysis to learn how former inmates' experiences could improve prison-related policies. Even though an increase in the budget would be helpful, the State needs to change its approach to transform labour market participation to produce successful experiences of resocialization of former inmates.

This dissertation's central argument sustains a contradiction between the state resocialization policy efforts in the highly regulated prison system and the neoliberal labour policy. This situation becomes more evident when former inmates pretend to access the labour market, which is incredibly challenging because of the market structure and the role of stigma. Even when the services sector is the most demanded labour force, criminal records are a determining factor that excludes former prisoners from this sector.

At the macro-level of analysis, the State's neoliberal political economy co-constructs informality. Consequently, former prisoners will always be associated with precarity. Therefore, the former inmates' resocialization trajectory would not be a guarantee as long as the precarity in the labour market is tolerated.

Even when informality allows people to avoid stigma for a while, criminal records are an obstacle to access the formal market or obtain better working conditions. Then, their kinship and friendship relations helps them in getting a job and being honest about their criminal records.

On the other side, in the meso-level, the type of training received in prison reproduces social inequalities. It is oriented to works in the informal sector with limited demanded activities. There is an explicit discourse about what the inmates can do, related to things made with their hands, and they do not promote more complex training. In addition, the training they received is not oriented to labour market demands. Also, it is essential to strengthening the relationship between the penitentiary institution and other ministries - such as Labour and Education - to give real value to the training certificates that inmates get inside the prison. In addition, the system of probation should not adversely affect people's labour.

Finally, at the micro-level, it is necessary to train and improve bureaucrats working in prisons or with former inmates. CREO and FOCOS programmes at the meso-level also need an increase in their budgets. But, unless the labour market dynamic changes at the

macro level, many former inmates will remain in precarity, and the scope for change is limited.

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