

*The role of social identity and stigma for the well-being of prisoners*

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*The aim of the present study was to investigate how the expectation of rejection by external society affects the well-being of people who spend time in prison and/or have a criminal record. In recent years, research has paid increasing attention to the effects of stigmatization. Indeed, rejection due to a stigmatized social identity has been found to be detrimental to the well-being of ex-prisoners (Kyprianides, Easterbrook & Cruwys, 2019). We applied the Rejection-Identification Model (RIM; Branscombe et al., 1999) and the Social Identity Model of Identity Change (SIMIC, Haslam, 2014) to examine the relationship between social identity, rejection, and well-being among prisoners. The social cure tradition has shown that identification with multiple groups (typically those that are not stigmatised or discriminated against) is associated with better health and well-being for those facing life stressors. Therefore, we predicted that identifying as a prisoner will threaten the well-being, while multiple social identities will buffer well-being against the negative effects of group-based rejection among prisoners.*

*In Italy, 52 male prisoners completed a questionnaire that assessed well-being (depression, anxiety, stress and life satisfaction), identification and group membership (student, family role, ...). The correlational results showed a negative relationship between stigma identification and well-being and a positive relationship between group membership and well-being, according to the hypotheses. The perception of stigma correlates positively with depression. These findings will be discussed in terms of the practical implications of dealing with prisoners' stigmatized social identity.*