

The impact of the prison environment on behavioral changes of inmates: a study of inmates in Kosovo and Finland

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Abstract

Purpose – This study aims to focus on understanding the prison environment, inmates' behavior and perceptions of the prison environment, analyzing the degree of awareness, rehabilitation and the programs that apply to prisons in both countries. It is assumed that the data that emerge from this research will contribute to a better understanding of the prisoner's world of their perception about the prison environment in Kosovo and Finland. The study focused on inmates' perception about the prison environment and their attitudes toward their sentences.

Design/methodology/approach – Qualitative study through in-depth interviews.

Findings – The results of this study indicated that inmates in Kosovo perceived the prison environment in a very negative light. The main reasons for this were the dissatisfaction with their status of being inmates and also lack of an appropriate classification of inmates. However, even though inmates in Finland perceived prison environment in a positive light, they still think that more educative programs are needed.

Practical implications – The results of this study indicated that Kosovo Correctional Service should implement more rehabilitative programs and improve its classification system. Criminal Sanction Agency in Finland as per results should increase efforts for implementation of new programs and aftercare action plans.

Originality/value – To the best of the author's knowledge, it is the first research on inmates in two countries Kosovo and Finland, and this added new knowledge to the existing information about the prison environment in Kosovo and Finland. The results of this research gave an idea to respective institutions to add new rehabilitative and aftercare programs.

Keywords Impact, Crime, Prison, Behavior, Environment, Inmates

Paper type Research paper

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1. Introduction

Previous research indicates that the prison environment positively or negatively affects the behavior of prisoners in various countries. In the absence of various rehabilitation and resocialization programs, prisons often fail to reduce the degree of recidivism. Social and environmental factors may increase risks of incarceration by constraining choices and pro-social opportunities for community integration upon release (Barrenger *et al.*, 2017). There are also many different factors, such as overcrowding, lack of educative and rehabilitation programs that contribute to the negative perception of inmates about the prison environment. According to Roberts *et al.* (2017), wide-range studies suggested that family therapies may indeed be helpful for prisons and their families. Prison environment in many cases had caused inmates depression, substance abuse and the physical attacks are associated with increased prevalence of depression, sentence time served with both any and heavy substance use and overcrowding (Albertie *et al.*, 2017). Education also plays a crucial role in reducing recidivism rates, and many inmates benefit from programs offered by the correctional system (Duke, 2018).

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There are limited studies addressing the impact of open prison environments in Kosovo and Finland, and this study sheds light on understanding the impact of the open prison environment on inmate behavior changes. Two open units of prisons in each country are selected for this study. It is essential to know how inmates see the prison environment because by analyzing the inmate perception, prisons can improve their programs, and this could impact the reduction of issues inside the prison. In this study, a sample of inmates from Kosovo and Finland were interviewed. The sections within the prison of these categories of inmates are similar to each other in the context of a number of inmates. Dubrava Prison is an institution in Kosovo with a high level of security, but the section of working inmates is an open section. It consists of two areas, the interior and the area of agriculture (KCS, 2015). There are currently eight sections with inmates of different categories, where all inmates are of adult age. One of the sections belongs to the health-care unit or the hospital, which provides health care to inmates. All inmates with health problems receive help in this health-care area inside the prison. Within the sections, there are also semi-open sections populated with the lowest security risk inmates and all those who work in prison facilities, such as agriculture, cleaning and other services. The Prison of Dubrava can hold 1,114 prisoners. The average number of prisoners in this prison is between 800 and 900 inmates (KCS, 2015). There are approximately 800 employees, ranging from guards, administrative staff, support staff and various experts. However, at the Dubrava Prison, even though the prison is considered with a high-security level, there is an open unit for inmates that work either inside or outside of prison. The working unit inside and outside of this prison consists of around 100 inmates, and they enjoy the freedom of movement in and out of prison. The same space capacity was identified in two Finnish open prisons that the research was conducted. Vanaja female prison in Finland at the time of research held 110 inmates, whereas Suomenlinna prison held 170 inmates.

Lipjan Correctional Center (Kosovo), was opened for juvenile delinquents and women imprisoned for various offenses. Currently, there are several categories of inmates:

- minors with educational measures;
- juvenile convicts;
- pre-detained juveniles and convicted women;
- detained women; and
- juvenile offenders (KCS, 2017).

This center can accommodate 138 persons and has six residential buildings with a total of 12 accompanying facilities (KCS, 2017). There are many programs for advancement, secondary education and vocational training, such as hairdressing, tailoring, employment in different sectors (in the kitchen, in laundry and maintenance, cleaning and other activities). At the time of research in the Lipjan correctional Center, there were 55 female inmates serving their time and working within a prison environment.

2. Review of literature

Prisons today are faced with many problems, such as overcrowding, brutality, corruption and other forms of disorders. Diverse educative and rehabilitative programs are implemented with the purpose of reducing these issues. In a study using focus group discussions with prison personnel, inmates, and volunteers in a major prison in the Philippines, Narag *et al.* (2018), argued that inmate classification is a key aspect of prison management and inmate programming. To implement an effective classification of inmates, Narag *et al.* (2018) concluded that any classification scheme must consider the cultural practices of communitarian living and community spirit. Narag *et al.* (2018) argued that

alternative classification schemes by resources and leadership positions should be implemented.

[Lipsey and Wilson \(1993\)](#), through 302 meta-analyses about the variety of educational programs, behavioral outcomes and intervention, found that these programs had an effect on changing the behavior of prisoners. The average success rate between under-treated and controlled groups was 24 per cent.

In a study measuring inmate perception about the prison environment and punishment, using a random sample of 800 participants, among them 60 were in-depth interviewed, [Patrick and Marsh \(2001\)](#), found that almost 60 per cent of inmates perceive punishment as a central goal of the prison. In this context, inmates felt that the punishment was the ultimate goal of prisons, not resocialization and rehabilitation. The results of this study indicate that inmates perceive the prison environment negatively ([Patrick and Marsh, 2001](#)).

Analyzing two groups of inmates entering into Change Program, group 1 ($n = 122$) and control group ($n = 91$), [Hogan et al. \(2015\)](#) argued that responses from both groups indicated that behavioral change of inmates was occurring for the majority of program participants despite being forced to participate in these programs. [Hogan et al. \(2015\)](#) concluded that implementation of educative programs and staff commitment, and their belief in such treatment programs played a crucial role in the program's ability to change inmate behaviors. This is an indication that programs of behavior change can play a role in improving inmate behaviors.

Cullen and Jonson ([Wilson and Petersilia, 2011](#)), in their study about rehabilitation programs, concluded that the planned correctional intervention targeting the internal and criminal factor changes intending to reduce recidivism and, where possible, improving aspects life of the inmates would be very effective. In their research on the world of inmates and subculture, [Shmallegger and Smykla \(2007\)](#) argued that there are several categories of prisoners some are violent, some are less violent and some are not violent, and thus, classification of inmates is crucial.

In research that used a survey of prisoners in the US federal centers, [Seigafo \(2017\)](#) found that that rehabilitation plays a crucial role in reducing the degree of recidivism and that rehabilitation programs should be compulsory, not voluntary for inmates. According to [Seigafo \(2017\)](#), this is the step of an essential reform, like most inmates, which are approximately two million inmates in America's correctional centers, enter prisons without any formal education or training, and most suffer from mental disorders. In this context, [Seigafo \(2017\)](#) concluded that the correctional centers that dealt with these inmates had no reason to rehabilitate and improve their behaviors.

In a study using secondary data analysis of 50 semiautonomous prisons from the Arizona Department of Corrections, analyzing inmate misconduct, [Griffin and Hepburn \(2012\)](#), found that the security level of the prison was a significant predictor of prison misconduct. [Griffin and Hepburn \(2012\)](#), argued that the levels of both violent and nonviolent misconduct were greater in more secure prisons. The more secured/isolated prisons offer fewer programs; thus, inmates do not benefit enough from such programs, and this can result in their negative attitudes about the prison environment. The results showed that the deprivation of many activities might have led to more misconduct inside the prison.

[Rocha et al. \(2015\)](#), applying qualitative study, by using 45 female inmates measuring cognition in connection with inmate behaviors and their perceived prison environment, argued that lack of cognition programs (psychotherapies, groups therapies and counseling) contributed to some of the behavioral problems of female inmates in prison. Behaviors reflecting tension, depression, isolation and fear were related to lack of energy, mental slowness and lack of awareness surrounding the prison environment ([Rocha et al., 2015](#)).

Prison administration deals with a “special needs” category of inmates. In a study using mental and behavioral disorder structured interview and data records of subjects from the Forensic Unit of Psychiatry in Kosovo, from 2009 to 2011, [Ibishi et al. \(2015\)](#), found that 23.2 per cent of all treated patients were brought to this clinic from prisons. Furthermore, this study indicated that from a total of 94 subjects of psychiatric diagnoses, 69.1 per cent were with psychotic disorders ([Ibishi et al., 2015](#)).

In a cross-sectional data set through converting a longitudinal multilevel data of 912 state prisons across all 50 states from 1984 to 1995, [Richards \(2007\)](#), found that from 1984 to 1990, assaults against inmates in prison decreased slightly, whereas assaults against staff increased slightly.

3. Background

Most of the literature indicated that, due to the lack of family therapies, rehabilitation and education, the prison environment might have a negative impact on inmates ([Roberts et al., 2017](#); [Duke, 2018](#)). On the other hand, the classification process and overcrowding, drug abuse and depression ([Albertie et al., 2017](#); [Barrenger et al., 2017](#)), can impact inmates' daily lives. There is a gap in knowledge in the discipline of corrections about the impact of the prison environment in Kosovo and Finland, and the differences between their perceived prison environments in both countries. This is why this study is critical because by understanding the prison environment, better practices and further improvements can be made. Two groups of inmates in Kosovo and Finland are selected for this research. Samples are selected in two countries, due to the characteristics they share, such as they all work inside, or outside prison systems, and they all get a regular salary. Furthermore, the size of all four prison units of the study was similar.

Vanaja Prison holds 110 inmates, and at the time of interviews, there were 60 female inmates, which was similar to Lipjan Prison at the time of interviews, where there were 55 female inmates. In Dubrava Prison, there were about 70 inmates in the open unit working inside the prison, whereas at the time of the study, Suomenlinna prison housed about 170 inmates that worked inside and outside of prison perimeter.

Differences between two Kosovo prisons and also Finnish prisons is that Kosovo prisons lack the technology and living good living condition comparing to Finnish prisons. In Kosovo, prisons still need improvement in technology and infrastructure, whereas in Finland open prisons, inmates had their own rooms, with private bathrooms and common kitchen in case they wish to cook.

4. Problem statement

There are limited studies about inmate behaviors and the impact of the prison environment in Kosovo and Finland. According to [World Prison Brief Data \(2018\)](#), in 2016 there were about 1,648 inmates in Kosovo Prisons or about 95 inmates per 100,000 inhabitants, whereas in Finland in 2018 there were about 2,842 inmates (including 199 prisoners subject to electronic monitoring) or else 51 inmates per 100,000 inhabitants. The number of inmates per 100,000 citizens in Kosovo is higher, compared with the number of inmates in Finland.

According to the [Council of Europe Annual Penal Statistics \(2017\)](#), the median European Prison Population Rate in 2015 was 115.7 inmates per 100,000 inhabitants, or about 7 per cent decrease compared to the previous year. However, in Kosovo, the prison population increased in recent years. Most of the current research is focused on programs that prisons offer, such as education ([Duke, 2018](#)) and rehabilitation through therapies ([Barrenger et al., 2017](#)) that have an impact on inmate behavioral changes. There is a gap in the literature about behavior changes for inmates in Kosovo and Finland prisons.

5. Purpose of the study

This study focuses on understanding the prison environment, inmates' behavior and perceptions of the prison environment, analyzing the degree of awareness, rehabilitation and the programs that apply to prisons in both countries. It is assumed that the data that emerges from this research will contribute to a better understanding of the prisoner's world of their perception about the prison environment in Kosovo and Finland. The study focused on inmates' perception of the prison environment and their attitudes toward their sentences.

6. Research questions

The main research questions for this study are:

- RQ1.* What impact have open prisons in Kosovo and Finland on behavioral changes of inmates?
- RQ2.* How do inmates that work inside and outside Kosovo and Finland prisons perceive prison life?

7. Theoretical framework

This research provides new clues related to the power of the environment and situation inside prisons in changing behaviors of inmates. The fundamental question of how inmates perceive prisons environment in both countries is key to understanding if prisons need improvements that would benefit inmates. Many authors, such as Zimbardo, elaborated that the situation inside prisons impacts inmates negatively. Others concluded that the prison environment and rehabilitative programs have a positive impact on behavioral changes in inmates.

Deprivation theory (DT) was used to explain inmate behaviors. According to [Hamilton and Kigerl \(2015\)](#), offender attitudes and proclivities from misbehavior can be imported into the prison environment, both the prison environment and the prison culture within it can create a feedback loop that can foster misconduct. Based on DT, the length of time exposed to the prison environment has been found to play a role in institutional misconduct ([Hamilton and Kigerl 2015](#)). The longer prison time is associated with more infractions ([Gover et al., 2008](#)). Furthermore, authors of this theory indicated that higher security institutions also provide fewer activities (gym, yard time, family visitations, etc.) to inmates, which can lead to idleness conducive to misconduct and engage in violent behaviors ([Ellis et al., 1974](#)).

In the context of prisons, the DT means that the more time is spent in prisons, the more inappropriate behaviors and negative perceptions the inmates have for the prison environment. According to [Walker and Pettigrew \(1984\)](#), the Theory of Relative Deprivation is based on the concept that persons may feel deprived of some desirable thing relative to their past, other persons or groups or some other social category. Thus, this theory determined the social environment and social composition of individual identity within the prison environment. In short, deprivation theory predicted inmates' attitudes to be related to the prison situation and environment. Drawing upon traditional sociological models, [Harer and Steffensmeie \(1996\)](#), described the deprivation theory as an argument for structure. They wrote, "The deprivation model provides a functionalist or structuralist explanation that views inmate behavior as a response to problems of adjustment posed by the deprivations or "pains" of imprisonment. Inmate violence is primarily due to the influence of prison-specific variables" ([Harer and Steffensmeie, 1996](#), p. 329).

Based on the deprivation theory, the prison environment may have an impact on shaping the attitudes, perceptions, and values of inmate behaviors while inside a prison and may impact their recidivism rates.

8. Methodology

The methodology used for this study is qualitative through face-to-face in-depth interviews. Understanding the phenomenon of inmate behavior changes through the prison environment and inmate perception about prison required qualitative design through a semi-structured questionnaire.

To understand how inmates feel about the prison environment and its impact on behavior changes following research questions were asked:

RQ3. What impact have open prisons in Kosovo and Finland on behavioral changes of inmates?

RQ4. How do inmates that work inside and outside Kosovo and Finland prisons perceive prison life?

In this study, 22 inmates from Kosovo prisons and 24 inmates from Finland were recruited to participate. They all were working inside the prison environment, which means that they had better privileges than other inmates. By privilege, it is meant that they had days off to visit their families every month; they enjoyed a monthly salary. In both countries, a sample of a total of 46 inmates participated in the study. The selection of the sample was purposeful, those working inside or outside the prison environment. Total inmates from Kosovo prisons that participated in this study were 22 and 24 inmates from Finland. Size and security levels in all four prisons in both countries were about the same, the study was easier to be conducted and data analysis to be processed. The sample of 46 participants in both countries reached the saturation point, meaning that the investigator cannot collect new information if many other prisoners are interviewed. According to [Ravitch and Carl \(2016\)](#), the point of saturation in the qualitative research refers to that point from which the researcher does not find any new topic or information even if it involves a larger number of interviewees.

Two open prisons were selected for the study of inmates in Finland. Suomenlinna hosted male inmates and female prison of Vanaja. Sample selection was purposeful in both prisons, 13 male inmates participated from Suomenlinna and 11 female inmates participated from Vanaja Prison. All inmates in both Prisons in Finland were working, and most of them were working outside of the prison environment. The sample selection was similar for both countries ([Table I](#)).

Lipjan Correctional Center (Kosovo), is available for women imprisoned for various offenses. This center can accommodate 138 persons and has six residential buildings with a total of 12 accompanying facilities ([KCS, 2017](#)).

Thematic analysis was applied to generate codes and themes of the study. A researcher of this study did not work in the correctional department of either country. The role of the researcher was to conduct research from a neutral point and analyze the findings to determine the potential need for improvement. In two Kosovo prisons, the total number of participants that participated in this study was 22 ($n = 22/12$ male and 10 female inmates). In Finland prisons, the total number of participants was 24 ($n = 24/13$ male and 11 female inmates). The total number of participants in both countries was 46 ($n = 46$ or 25 male and 21 female inmates).

Table I Inmates from Kosovo and Finland				
<i>Men prisons</i>	<i>Women prisons</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Number of participants</i>	<i>Total number</i>
Dubrava	Lipjan	Kosovo	N = 10 Females/N = 12 Males	N = 22
Suomenlinna	Vanaja	Finland	N = 11 Females/N = 13 Males	N = 24

The sample selection purposeful, and criteria for all groups (male and female) who work in the prison environment or outside the prison and get paid for their work. Only inmates that were paid for their work while doing their sentencing were selected to participate in the study. With a mentioned sample size, it is apparent that the point of saturation is reached. No new information came up during interviews after each interview.

According to [Creswell \(2009\)](#), in qualitative research, the goal is to explore some complex factors around a phenomenon and to present different perspectives or understandings that participants have. In this case, the main factors examined are the prison environment and its impact on behavior changes of inmates, and how much the prisoners repented of past criminal acts. The risk of the participants interviewed in this research was low, and this research was done voluntarily. The unit leaders have asked the inmates in that section if they were interested and willing to become part of the research about the prison environment and the quality of prison life.

Before initiating the research, three approvals were required:

1. approval for access to the Dubrava Prison;
2. approval for access to the Correctional Center in Lipjan and approval for allowing interviews to be recorded; and
3. approval for a study from Criminal Sanction Agency in Helsinki.

Initially, each respondent was asked by the researcher whether they had come of their own free will without any pressure or influence, and all of them indicated that they expressed their interest voluntarily. Because each of the candidates for the interview has been separately clarified the nature of the research and the purpose, the participants were again asked whether they want to continue or abandon their participation.

Each participant was allowed to skip any question he or she did not want to answer and have the right to withdraw from the study at any time. Because each participant in each interview separately has agreed to continue, they have been provided with the Informed Consent Form. In this form of compliance, information has clarified the manner of interviewing, the purpose of interviewing; how the data will be processed, which data can be cited and in what way can be quoted, providing each participant that they will remain anonymous and ensuring that personal information will remain confidential. The interview process began at the end of August 2017 in Kosovo, but technically the preparation of the questionnaire and the design started much earlier. The interview approach was based on the semi-structured questionnaire design, and the duration of each interview was from 45 min to an hour.

All participants were inmates, working inside the prison environment in their respective prisons. At the time of interviews, organizational conditions did not influence participants' or their experience, because each participant participated voluntarily, and the interview was conducted at an administrative building in an office where only a researcher and participant were inside the room. No further changes in personnel occurred during this study, and the same management and leadership were from a few years ago to the time of the interview. The study was conducted in two of Kosovo prisons (Dubrava and Lipjan) and two of Finland's prisons (Suomenlinna and Vanaja).

To turn these interviews into transcripts, it took about 46 h of active listening. Each transcript is created from a document Microsoft Word and codified, where the required data was selected from transcripts and processed. Thematic analysis was applied for each interview and 130 codes were created and used to create themes for which this research was prepared. Two databases in Microsoft Excel have been created based on information received from codes so that the output of the results is clearer and more understandable. Thematic analysis was used to generate codes and select themes deriving from each interview.

Other factors may impact the perception of inmates as well, such as improved working conditions inside prison, change of management and also the maturation.

9. Instrumentation

The primary instrument for qualitative data was through in-depth face-to-face interviews. Voice recording was used for interviewing each participant separately. Note-taking during each interview was used. However, participants were asked standard questions, and researchers followed up with clarifying questions, if necessary, based on participant response. To validate the study, a researcher considered weighing all options of follow-up with secondary data. Participants were interviewed at the administrative office inside the prison perimeter. A total sample of 47 participants was interviewed in two countries, Kosovo and Finland. The semi-structured questionnaire had 10 same questions for each participant. To validate data, confirming questions were asked at prison administration.

Some of the sample questions from the questionnaire were the following:

- Q1. Describe your life in prison, how much prison has changed your life?
- Q2. Do you think that living under prison rules and regulations had an impact on your behavior changes in a positive or negative way?
- Q3. How do correctional officers and other prison staff behave with you?
- Q4. What have you learned from your experiences inside the prison for good or bad that in the future will impact your decision-making/behaviors?
- Q5. What kind of programs, rehabilitative/educative/resocialization prison administration offers for you?

10. Issues of trustworthiness and ethical procedure

To achieve credibility, a process triangulation and member checking were applied. Information from prison administration was taken after the completion of interviews.

The researcher submitted a request to gain access to the prison, and Kosovo Research Permit was issued by Kosovo Correctional Service with number #1457/2017. For gaining access to Finnish Prisons, Criminal Sanction Agency of Finland, Central Administration issued a Research Permit upon the researcher's request. The Research Permit number issued by the Criminal Sanction Agency in Finland was 7/332/2018. The interview started at the end of August 2017 in Kosovo, and in Finland, it began in May 2018.

11. Results

Most of the male respondents interviewed from Kosovo Dubrava prison, 11 out of 12 before the offense, had outstanding economic status. Even among them, some were the owners of the companies, businesses or landowners and real estate holders, accounting of millions of dollars in wealth. Unlike men, the economic situation was good for women interviewed but not as good as for men. Similarities existed among inmates of Finland, where most of the male inmates were living before sentencing in good economic conditions ([Table II](#)).

12. Data collection

To process the data, we have separated themes deriving from Kosovo inmates and those from inmates of Finland. All questions asked deriving from the semi-structured questionnaire were answered by all participants. All participants were interviewed in an administration building in an empty office, where only a researcher and participant were in the office. A voice-recorder was used during each interview; however, it was used only after participants signed Consent Form, indicating they agree that their experiences may be

Table II Participant statistics based on their crime category

Offense	Number of inmates	(%)
Murder or attempted murder	15	33
Narcotic offenses	8	17
Fraud and money laundry	8	17
Abuse and assault	4	8.69
Robbery and property thefts	4	8.69
Reckless driving	2	4.34
Other crimes	5	10.86
Total	46	100

used for publication. Before the interview, the researcher explained each participant about the nature of the study, purpose and possible questions during the interview. Consent Form was given to the participant to read, and in case a participant had any questions before signing it, they had an opportunity to ask the researcher about it. Kosovo and Finland participants all agreed to sign Consent Form after having read it and after the researcher made sure they clearly understand it. Only one participant in Finland did not agree to sign it. Therefore, he was released, and the interview did not continue.

13. Findings and interpretation

The results of this study are interesting because they are very different from each other if we compare a group of inmates from Kosovo with their counterparts from Finland. After each interview was examined carefully, the themes below will clarify the overall picture of the impact of the prison environment in the eyes of inmates.

14. Classification

Most of Kosovo inmates with no distinction of gender, perceive the prison environment in a very negative light. Participant KINM-6 stated that "suicide is better than coming again here in prison." When asked about their opinion and experiences inside the prison, inmate KINM-14 stated that the prison environment "is horror, extremely terrible." Only inmate KINM-19 which was at the time of arrest drug addict (heroin addiction) saw prison environment as positive, and as she indicated that she "got rehabilitation of drug addiction, it helped me a lot, because in Kosovo there are not any rehabilitative institution dealing with drug addicts." KINM-1, KINM-4, KINM-5, KINM-6, KINM-7, KINM-9, KINM-10, KINM-11, KINM-12, KINM-20 and KINM-14, indicated that the prison environment is very negative, because of prison management lack appropriate classification of inmates. Prison programs, such as rehabilitation and education (Duke, 2018), had an impact on inmate perception, either positive or negative, based on the programs offered. Overall most of the participants see the prison environment in a negative light, and they are unhappy with prison conditions and also unhappy being inside a prison due to the mentality that they are innocent. Participant KINM-8 stated:

At first there was not enough space in a cell with four other inmates, counting only four beds, they gave me a mattress and had to sleep on the ground for weeks.

This overcrowding issue, shaped in a negative way inmate's perception, which seems like the most significant problem in prison, which disconfirms findings by Richards (2007), where she found that there was a significant negative relationship between overcrowding and prison issues, such as assaults and other problems. Participant KINM-3 indicated that the prison environment in Dubrava is an average, and "life is so inside the prison." Participant KINM-13, KINM-20 and KINM-21, stated: "I did not know there was a female prison here, had no idea it existed." The rest of the participants indicated that isolation

inside the prison environment has a negative impact on their behavior; they felt more depressed and hopeless. This is a confirmation of DP, as it indicated that the more isolation inmates feel, the worse their behaviors become.

Contrary to inmates in Kosovo, participants in Finland have the opposite view about their experiences inside the prison environment. In the same questions asked for inmates in two prisons in Finland, most of the inmates indicated that the prison life and prison environment was good. Participant FINM-4 indicated that open prison in Suomenlinna is good and stated: "Prison environment gave me enough time to think about my life, my past and move toward the future." Furthermore, participant FINM-4, FINM-5, FINM-6, FINM-7, FINM-8 and FINM-9, indicated that they did not have bad experiences while serving time in prison. In a similar study, [Lipsey and Wilson \(1993\)](#) found that opportunities offered to inmates had a positive impact on their behavioral changes. Participants, FINM-2 indicated that the prison environment was bad because it limited freedom.

Interestingly enough, FINM-3 and FINM-22 stated: "Helsinki closed prison is difficult because there are not enough opportunities to work and attend various programs, but not the open prison." In the past similar research, closed prisons are perceived as negative by inmates ([Griffin and Hepburn, 2012](#)). As for the classification of inmates, the groups of inmates from Finland indicated that the classification of inmates in those two prisons was appropriate. This confirms the DT that the social environment may have an impact on the attitudes of inmates toward staff, each other and the prison system ([Walker and Pettigrew, 1984](#)).

15. Rehabilitation

Kosovo inmates share different views about this issue from inmates in Finland. All male participants from Kosovo prison indicated that they regret so much about their past behavior, because such behaviors led them to prison, whereas participants KINM-13, KINM-15, KINM-17, KINM-18 and KINM-20, indicated that they felt regret that such behaviors or situations they put themselves in, led them to prison, and feel bad for their families, but not for the victims. Participant KINM-17 stated, "I do not feel any regrets for my behaviors at all; prison is not bad for me." This is the reflection that most of the participants see the prison environment in a negative light. All participants from Kosovo prisons indicated that they would never do again or bring themselves to any situation that would lead them to prison. The findings in Kosovo prisons confirmed the DT, where the longer the sentences and their spending time in prison, the more infractions are associated with a violation of prison rules ([Gover et al., 2008](#)).

The group of inmates from Finland, the majority of them maintained that they regret their past behavior because they were aware, they had caused harm to victims and their families. Participant FINM-3 stated that "the verdict was wrong, the other way around, I was not robbing anyone, but the person was doing it to me, so I have defended myself." This participant was sentenced only six months and did not go through rehabilitation programs, such as psychotherapy and group therapies or therapies of similar nature. Participant FINM-16 remained firm that she was innocent, stating: "Just because I am not from Finland, the system did wrong to me." The rest of the participants felt that they did wrong, and the sentence was appropriate for them. Similar results were found in a study by [Richards \(2007\)](#), where demographics of the inmate composition may play a role in clashes between prison subcultures. Overall, participants from Finland perceived the prison environment in a positive light. Inmates from Kosovo indicated that the prison environment had a negative impact, whereas the inmates from Finland think the opposite.

16. Good staff behaviors

In general, most of the inmates in both countries have a positive perception about the behaviors of staff and especially correctional officers. However, there are some exceptions

to this conclusion, especially at the group of female inmates in Kosovo. Participants, KINM-13, KINM-14 and KINM-18, indicated that the behaviors of the staff are not good toward them, due to lack of communication and good relations to inmates. The main reason for this is what they say, "the staff is corrupted, and do favors for some rich inmates." Participant KINM-12 thinks that "staff is unprofessional, due to lack of education." In a similar study, about the prison environment, it is found that harassment and bullying inside the prison were related to weak links and inadequate communication between officers and inmates (Ireland *et al.*, 2016). All other participants from Kosovo prisons perceived staff behaviors as good behaviors and are happy with them. Participants from Finland, all perceived staff behaviors as professional and with excellent behaviors, very helpful. However, participant FINM-1 declared: "The first year of imprisonment was difficult, but now I am fine because I know what to say and what not to say inside prison environment." As found in DT, offering more opportunities to inmates has a positive impact on improving their behaviors inside prisons environment.

17. Dissatisfactions and programs

To understand the prison environment, it was important to see what some of the most difficult moments were. The inmates from Kosovo, most of them, think that they are dissatisfied with court processes. Participants KINM-1, KINM-3, KINM-5, KINM-6, KINM-11, KINM-12, KINM-13, KINM-14, KINM-19, KINM-20 and KINM-21 think that court processes were very unjust with them, and the verdicts they got were not fair. In a study conducted by Patrick and Marsh (2001) yielded about the same results, where inmates perceive prison environment as punishment environment. Similar results are found in a previous study about court orders or decrees, which represent a loss for inmates in services, liberty and security in prison (Richards, 2007). Other participants from Kosovo are not happy with the cut of prison benefits, such as food orders from home, during visit sessions, using weekends to go out at home and come back every month and early release. Most of Kosovo inmates confirmed DT, indicating that to feel better, they needed more programs and better treatment.

Contrary to participants from Kosovo, the participants from Finland were not dissatisfied with court processes or prosecution. Only participant FINM-2 and FINM-3 were dissatisfied with the court process or final verdicts. All other participants accepted the court processes as fair and just. Participant FINM-2 stated, "They saw me as an immigrant, for this, the verdict was biased, and in Finland, the judge does what prosecutor tells him or her." The rest of the participants were satisfied with court processes and verdicts, accepting that what they did was wrong, and they deserved to serve the time in prison. Participant FINM-1 stated, "when they called me that my child has passed away, my world crashed on me, I realized that prison is a prison, could not be there in such moments." This may be due to the security level of prisons in Finland, where both prisons were an open type. A similar study conducted in the past suggests that close prisons create more dissatisfaction, and deprivation of many activities leads to more misconduct (Griffin and Hepburn, 2012), and the prison environment contributes to behavioral problems (Rocha *et al.*, 2015).

Concerning programs, such as group therapies, psychotherapies and counseling, participants from Kosovo, were not offered any of such rehabilitative programs.

Contrary to Kosovo results, participants in Finland, they all were offered such programs, and only participant FINM-3 did not wish to participate in such programs as the sentence was too short for it. The deprivation from freedom did affect participants of this study. A participant from Finland, FINM-4 stated: "Prison sentence was too long for the crime I did, and the court was a little bit unjust with me." The same participant was also the recidivist, who was in prison before even for some other criminal offenses. FINM-5 indicated that the biggest disappointment was prison administration, explaining that too much bureaucracy is

to be followed. FINM-6 indicated that the court was a little bit unjust because my crime was an accident.

18. Limitation

Due to the nature of the study, which is qualitative through in-depth interviews, we cannot generalize the results of this study. Nor can we prove the theory of deprivation or other theories about the prison environment. This study sheds light on the experiences and thoughts of inmates in both countries for the period and can be limited to only this period, as the prison environment may be seen differently in the future. Further research is needed to evaluate and understand the prison environment in open prisons in Finland and inmates that work in Kosovo.

19. Conclusions

The results of this research pointed out substantial differences in the impact of the prison environment on both groups, male and female inmates from both countries. Prison environments in Kosovo are perceived to be a negative influence on the behavior of inmates due to a lack of rehabilitative programs and inappropriate classification systems. Improving the conditions under which inmates live would be beneficial for behavior changes and rehabilitation process. Lacking rehabilitative programs, such as psychotherapies, group therapies and other opportunities for Kosovo inmates, led to their negative perceived prison environment. Some of the main reasons why inmates perceived prison environment in a negative light were the classification system that needs improvement, and the lack of rehabilitation programs and opportunities for their improvement for future life. However, most of the inmates in Finland benefited from a variety of programs offered by prisons, but more such programs are needed in the future. Correctional officers are seen as professionals by all participants. In general, the results of this study indicated that Kosovo prisons lack educative and rehabilitative programs, while prisons in Finland offer more opportunities for their inmates. Overall, both groups of inmates confirmed DT More rehabilitative programs may be needed in Kosovo prisons and more aftercare programs in Finland Prisons. Further research is needed to understand why inmates perceived prison environment varies across countries.

20. Declaring founds

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