

Differences in Perception of Self-legitimacy between Prison Officers and Specialized Workers in Slovenian Prisons¹

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Recent studies on legitimacy in the prison environment have drawn attention to the importance of self-legitimacy of prison workers in their everyday performance of tasks in prison and establishing relationships with prisoners. This paper focuses on self-legitimacy of prison workers in Slovenian prisons, with the primary aim to identify factors that influence self-legitimacy of prison officers, specialized workers, and prison workers as a whole. Furthermore, factors that influence self-legitimacy of prison officers and specialized workers in prisons were compared in order to demonstrate the impact of characteristics of an individual group in prison on its members' perceptions of self-legitimacy. Results from multiple regression analyses show that the perception of supervisors' procedural justice, relations with colleagues, audience legitimacy, subculture of the prison staff, satisfaction with salary, age, and education level are the best predictors of self-legitimacy of prison workers. Moreover, results of discriminant analysis showed statistically significant differences between prison officers and specialized workers in the presence of subculture of the prison staff and exposure to stress. These findings show that the perceptions of self-legitimacy vary in different groups of prison workers. The implications of these findings are discussed.

Keywords: prison officers, prisons, self-legitimacy, specialized workers, Slovenia

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1 Introduction

The theoretical concept of the dual nature of legitimacy in criminal justice studies has been recently brought to attention by Bottoms and Tankebe (2012).⁴ Despite numerous

studies on self-legitimacy (Liebling, 2004; Meško, Hacin, Tankebe, & Fields, 2017; Meško, Tankebe, Čuvan, & Šifrer, 2014; Meško, Tičar, Hacin, & Hojs, 2016), researching differences between specific groups of prison workers has been neglected. Differences in perceptions of self-legitimacy are the result of the dynamic nature of legitimacy, as every group of prison workers develops a specific relationship with prisoners. Moreover, prison workers present the bond between prisoners and the organisation (prison) and present an important element of legitimacy (Steiner & Wooldredge, 2015).

Three groups of prison workers (managerial staff, prison officers, and specialized staff) are present in the prison system who develop specific relationships with prisoners that are more or less based on the use of power, which is possessed by those representing authority.⁵ Moreover, relations with prisoners influence self-legitimacy of the prison staff. Senior management in prisons is responsible for the smooth operation of prisons and decision-making at the strategic level. They are bearers of responsibility and have the power of de-

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⁴ The dual nature of legitimacy in prison consists of prisoner's perceptions of legitimacy and self-legitimacy of the prison staff. Legitimacy of prison staff is defined as the ability of prison workers to implement their authority in an honest, lawful and just manner, while prisoners acknowledge them the status of eligible power-holders, who deserve to be obeyed and to comply with their decision (Sparks & Bottoms, 1995; Tyler, 2011). Self-legitimacy of the prison staff is defined as the belief of prison workers that their position in prison and the power entrusted to them is in accordance with fundamental moral norms of the society and a sense of self-confidence, in terms of awareness of their abilities to perform tasks in the prison environment (Bottoms & Tankebe, 2012).

⁵ Hepburn (1985) defined six types of power used by the prison staff: 1) coercive power, 2) reward power, 3) legitimate power, 4) exchange power, 5) expert (professional) power, and 6) respect for personal authority.

cision-making that influences all prison actors.⁶ Liebling and Price (1999: 86) described prison officers as: "...gatekeepers, agents of criminal justice, peacemakers, instruments of change and deliverers and interpreters of policy". The scope of the work of prison officers covers a wide range of activities, in which they are forced to play various social roles (Liebling, 2000; Marsh, Dobbs, Monk, & White, 1958). Thomas (1972) wrote that throughout history, prison officers were structurally mounted in the conflict of roles, causing confusion between ensuring security and safety, and the rehabilitation of prisoners. The group of specialized workers consists of individuals from various fields who implement professional treatment of imprisoned persons, in terms of psychological assistance, education and work assistance, medical services, organisation of leisure time, social work, treatment of addiction etc. Meško, Frangež, Rep and Sečnik (2006) pointed to the negative attitudes of prisoners toward specialized workers that have a negative effect on their perception of self-legitimacy, as they are aware that prisoners are reluctant and take advantage of them in order to obtain benefits.

Several studies pointed to the differences in perceptions of legitimacy in prison in different cultural environments and groups (Liebling, 2000; Meško et al., 2017; Reisig & Meško, 2009). Self-legitimacy of prison workers is influenced by: 1) relations with colleagues, 2) supervisors' procedural justice, 3) audience legitimacy, 4) subculture of the prison staff, 5) stress, and 6) individual characteristics (Meško et al., 2014, 2017; Tankebe & Meško, 2015). The primary aim of this paper is to identify those factors that influence self-legitimacy of prison officers, specialized workers, and prison workers as a whole because a comprehensive study which includes multiple groups of prison workers has not yet been conducted. Furthermore, factors that influence self-legitimacy of prison officers and specialized workers were compared in order to demonstrate the impact of characteristics of an individual group in prison on its members' perceptions of self-legitimacy. In the following sections of the paper, self-legitimacy of prison workers and factors contributing to their perceptions of self-legitimacy are presented. Secondly, results of the study on self-legitimacy of the prison staff in Slovenian prisons are presented, and in the final part, findings are discussed.

⁶ Small prisons, in which prison directors and heads of departments have everyday contacts with prisoners, are characteristic for Slovenia. Specific roles of senior management, due to the everyday interactions with prisoners has changed. In this case, senior managers do not present a distant authority, but real authority, which is constantly present in the lives of prisoners. Their role is somewhere between the role of specialised staff (treatment component) and the role of prison officers (security component).

2 Factors Contributing to Self-Legitimacy

Barker (2011) argued that the audience follows orders and identifies itself with the holders of authority (individuals who are issuing orders). Power-holders strive to establish their own legitimacy by promoting the image of identity who has the right to command. In order to establish legitimacy of the prison staff in relation to prisoners, prison workers must believe in the eligibility of their own "ruling". McLean Henderson (2016) argued that self-legitimacy is based on the prison worker's self-esteem and their own ability to implement entrusted power. Tankebe (2014) defined self-legitimacy as the process of construction, validation, and resistance of a certain self-esteem of a power holder. Power-holders enter into a dialogue with the audience about legitimacy, with a certain image of themselves as confident and just bearers of power. Such a dialogue in prison is based on the quality of relations between the prison staff and prisoners derived from everyday interactions. Self-legitimacy presents a prerequisite for the recognition of legitimacy from the audience, without which a fracture in the dialogical process between the prison staff and prisoners occurs that affects the quality of life for prisoners, their well-being, and maintaining order in prison (Liebling, 2011). Bottoms and Tankebe (2013) argued that power-holders enter into interactions with their audiences to project and seek the confirmation of a certain self-identity, who believes that it is the eligible power-holder. Self-legitimacy in prison is formed on the relations between actors that are based on justice. The process of building self-legitimacy is influenced by numerous factors that arise as a result of daily work routines within the prison environment.

The nature of work in prison is unpredictable and often requires very long hours. Consequently, prison workers spend a lot of time with their colleagues. Social groups with strong ties that derive from the unpredictable nature of work in prison have an impact on an individual's sense of belonging to the group. Feelings of belonging leads to the development of specific relations, emotions and behaviour within the group (Bell & Hughes-Jones, 2008), and to the formation of subcultures. Norms of the subculture are present, not only with prison officers but also with specialized workers, and have an impact on relations between the prison staff. As most of the prison workers feel misunderstood, colleagues represent a group of individuals who understand their work, frustrations and stress, and provide them with the necessary confirmation of their work that affects the self-legitimacy of an individual (Liebling, 2004).

Prison worker's efficiency depends on the quality of relations with supervisors and their management skills. Their perceptions that supervisor's procedures and decisions are fair

and just, cultivate positive feelings toward them. Moreover, supervisors become an example that prison workers want to follow (Meško et al., 2014). With such leadership, supervisors are able to influence prison worker's self-esteem, trust in his own abilities, effective performance at work, and his perception of self-legitimacy. Supervisors' procedural justice consist of two dimensions: 1) distributive justice⁷ and 2) procedural justice⁸ (Clay-Warner, Reynolds, & Roman, 2005; Lambert & Hogan, 2013).

Bottoms and Tankebe (2013: 134) wrote: "... where force is used, authority itself has failed." McLean Henderson (2016) argued that prison workers seek confirmation of their legitimacy with a specific audience (prisoners),⁹ and recognition of legitimacy is hardened as depersonalisation and emotional alienation from prisoners are characteristic for prison workers (Crawley, 2004). However, established relations between prisoners and prison staff are based on a high level of intimacy, as prison workers spend most of their work day with prisoners, and represent a second "family" to them. Consequently, prison worker's perceptions of self-legitimacy are influenced by prisoners in a complex and often contradictory way.

Subcultures are produced as a result of the working environment and are important to the development of relations in institutions. The prison environment and organisational goals of the prison (treatment, security, punishment etc.) influence the development of norms of the prison worker subculture.¹⁰ Integration into the subculture of the prison staff means entering into a special social group of cynical individuals,¹¹ who are faced with similar problems and are looking for support in each other regarding their work in the prison environment, confirmation of their own work, and opportunities for social life (Liebling & Price, 2001). Identification with such a group evokes feelings of belonging and eligibility of the status of a

power-holder in an individual. Such feelings might have a positive impact on an individual's perceptions of self-legitimacy.

Working with people can be fulfilling, but authoritative professions are mainly stressful, due to the nature of the work and characteristics of the people treated. The prison literature defines stress in the workplace as feelings of anxiety, workload, tension, frustration, worry, emotional exhaustion and distress experienced by prison staff in connection with the workplace (Cullen, Link, Wolfe, & Frank, 1985; Grossi, Keil, & Vito, 1996). The stress of working with prisoners often leads to negative consequences on the psychological and physical well-being of individuals (Dollard, Winefield, & Winefield, 2001; Neveu, 2007). The typical consequences of burnout of prison workers are: 1) absenteeism from work, 2) increased number of sick days taken, and 3) dismissal (Carlson & Thomas, 2006; Garland, 2002, 2004; Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Schaufeli & Peeters, 2000). Moreover, stress influences vigilant behaviour of the prison staff as a response to threats in prison (Finn, 1998). Emotional strain that occurs as a result of prison work has a negative impact on an individual's self-esteem and self-image. In the following section, several aspects of Slovenian prisons are presented.

3 Prison Workers in Slovenian Prisons

The Slovenian prison system, in addition to the Prison Administration, which represents an independent administrative unit within the Ministry of Justice, consist of six prisons, seven departments, and a correctional home for juveniles. Slovenian prisons are small compared to most other European prisons, as only four have capacities of more than 100 prisoners. The organisational structure is similar for all prisons and consists of the Sector for the treatment of prisoners, which consists of: 1) the department for education, 2) the department for safety and security, and 3) the department for work, and 4) Department for general, legal and economic affairs. Despite the similarity in the organisational structure, minor differences are present due to: 1) the size of the prisons, and 2) specifics regarding the categories of imprisoned persons (Ministrstvo za pravosodje, 2016).

Directors, who report to the Director General of the Slovenian Prison Administration, are responsible for the smooth operation of prisons and the correctional home. In addition to directors and senior managers, the prison staff consists of: 1) pedagogues, 2) psychologists, 3) social workers, 4) specialised workers in treatment service, 5) medical technicians, 6) instructors, 7) work instructors, 8) engineers and technicians, 9) economic workers, 10) workers in the eco-

⁷ The dimension of distributive justice refers to the employees' evaluations of wages, work assignment, shift work and sanctions – the evaluation and comparison of the outcomes (Greenberg, 1982; Wolfe & Piquero, 2011).

⁸ The dimension of procedural justice refers to the employees' perceptions of fairness in the procedures against them – the assessment of the quality of decision-making, fairness and honesty in the procedures (Wolfe & Piquero, 2011).

⁹ Sieh (1989) wrote that prisoners should not be above the lowest social class in a modern society.

¹⁰ The most intense and distinct subculture in prison develops with prison officers, but most of the elements and norms of this form of subculture are internalised by the specialised workers as well.

¹¹ Cynicism of the prison staff occurs as a mechanism for coping with everyday problems posed by work in prison. It is seen as a logical result of employees' adaptation to pressure, frustration and role conflict.

nomic units, 11) prison officers, and 12) administrative and other workers (Meško, Fields, & Hacin, 2015). The number of prison workers in Slovenian prisons, departments, and the correctional home during the period 2000-2016 decreased from 859 employees in 2000, to 845 employees in 2016. The size of the managerial staff during this period remained the same. The numbers of prison officers and administrative and other workers increased from 419 to 520 prison officers, and from 56 to 77 administrative workers. However, the number of specialized workers, who are responsible for the treatment of prisoners (pedagogues, psychologists, social workers and other specialized workers in the treatment service) remained approximately the same during this period. The growing number of imprisoned persons has a negative impact on the ratio between specialized workers and prisoners, as the ratio increased from 15 imprisoned persons per specialized worker in 2000, to 28 imprisoned persons in 2016 (Kotnik et al., 2016, 2017; Magister, 2001; Meško et al., 2015). Although the employment rate increased, no major changes occurred regarding treatment of prisoners.

4 Methodology

Self-legitimacy of the prison staff in Slovenian prisons is the focus of the present research. A modified questionnaire, developed by Tankebe and Meško (2015) was used. To conduct the study, consent of the Director General of the Slovenian Prison Administration, directors of individual prisons, heads of departments and prison workers who agreed to take part in the study, were obtained. Data collection took place from October to December, 2016. A survey was conducted in all six prisons (Celje, Dob, Ig, Koper, Ljubljana, Maribor) with departments (Ig, Murska Sobota, Nova Gorica, Novo mesto, Puščava, Rogoza, Slovenska vas) and the correctional home (Radeče). Participation in the survey was voluntary and confidential, and all prison workers were invited to participate in the study. Prior to surveying, the context of the study was presented.

The sample consisted of 243 prison workers representing 28.7% of all prison workers ($N=845$) in 2016 (28.7% prison officers and 29.3% specialized workers). There were 175 males (72%) and 68 females (28%) surveyed and more than 60% of respondents were older than 45 years. Furthermore, over 40% of respondents had completed vocational or high school and approximately 40% achieved some level of higher education (specialized workers presented the majority of respondents who completed some form of higher education). Five respondents refused to answer. Three-quarters of those surveyed were married or in a non-marital partnership, and less than 10% were single and 11 refused to answer. Approximately

60% (149) of surveyed prison workers were employed in the judicial police – prison officers, while more than 30% (79) of respondents were specialized workers. Moreover, five percent (13) of respondents were engaged in some other form of work within the prison or the correctional home (most of them were administrative workers). Two respondents refused to answer. More than a third of those surveyed have been employed in the prison system for 16 years or more, 30% of respondents between 6 and 10 years, and approximately 15% of respondents for five years or less, and 16 respondents refused to answer. The sample of the surveyed prison workers is representative, which enables the generalisation of results to Slovenian prisons and the correctional home.

4.1 Measures

This section describes those variables which were subjected to factor analyses (principal axis factoring; rotation Varimax) and further analysed with regression and discriminant analyses.

Self-legitimacy. The following five statements were used to measure self-legitimacy of prison workers: 1) The powers I have as a prison worker are morally right, 2) I am sure I can give a good reason to prisoners as to why my powers as a prison worker are morally proper, 3) I am sure that I have enough authority to do my job, 4) I believe I have enough knowledge to do my job, and 5) I believe I am capable enough to do my job. These statements were measured on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 – Strongly disagree to 5 – Strongly agree. The factor ‘Self-legitimacy’ is a summation of responses to the five statements.

Relations with colleagues. The following five statements were used to measure the quality of relations between prison workers: 1) I have a good working relationship with my colleagues, 2) My colleagues treat me with respect, 3) I feel that my colleagues trust me, 4) I feel supported by my colleagues, and 5) I have a good working relationship with my colleagues. These statements were measured on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 – Strongly disagree to 5 – Strongly agree. The Factor ‘Relations with colleagues’ is a summation of responses to the five statements.

Supervisors’ procedural justice. The following 10 statements were used to measure prison worker’s perception of supervisors’ procedural justice: 1) Decisions of my supervisor are equally fair to every prison worker, 2) I feel that my supervisor treats me with respect and dignity, 3) My supervisor usually gives me an explanation for the decisions that affect me, 4) My supervisor takes account of my needs when making decisions that affect me, 5) Decisions by my supervisor

are always based on facts, not personal biases, 6) I am treated fairly in the prison, where I work, 7) My supervisor gives me support to do my job, 8) I can always approach my supervisor when I have a problem, 9) I have confidence in the abilities of my supervisor, and 10) My supervisor takes my opinions into an account, when making decisions. These statements were measured on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 – Strongly disagree to 5 – Strongly agree. The factor ‘Supervisors’ procedural justice’ is a summation of responses to the 10 statements.

Stress. The following four statements were used to measure the stress of prison workers: 1) At work, I am subjected to stress, 2) I feel that I get assigned a lot more duties in comparison to my colleagues, 3) The stress that I am experiencing at my job affects my personal life, and 4) Performance of duties that are required for my workplace, exhausts me. These statements were measured on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 – Strongly disagree to 5 – Strongly agree. The factor ‘Stress’ is a summation of responses to the four statements.

Subculture of the prison staff. The following three statements were used to measure the presence of subculture among prison workers: 1) I always support my colleagues in front of prisoners, 2) I always support a prison worker in a dispute with a prisoner, and 3) I always support my colleagues, when they impose sanctions upon prisoners (even if I do not agree with the sanction). These statements were measured on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 – Strongly disagree to

5 – Strongly agree. The factor ‘Subculture of the prison staff’ is a summation of responses to the three statements.

Satisfaction with salary. The following three statements were used to measure prison worker’s satisfaction with the salary: 1) I am satisfied with my present salary, 2) Considering how much I work, I am satisfied with my salary, and 3) I am well paid considering the conditions of work. These statements were measured on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 – Strongly disagree to 5 – Strongly agree. The factor ‘Satisfaction with salary’ is a summation of responses to the three statements.

Audience legitimacy. The following five statements were used to measure audience legitimacy: 1) Most of the prisoners with whom I work feel that they are treated fairly in prison, 2) Most of the prisoners with whom I work feel that prison workers take the time to explain their decisions, 3) Most of the prisoners with whom I work feel that prison workers always comply with the laws, 4) Most of the prisoners with whom I work feel that prison workers are people whom they can trust, and 5) Most of the prisoners with whom I work feel that prison workers treat them fairly. These statements were measured on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 – Strongly disagree to 5 – Strongly agree. The factor ‘Audience legitimacy’ is a summation of responses to the five statements. A detailed description of variables (mean, standard deviation, and Cronbach’s alpha), which were included in factor analyses, are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Description of variables included in the factor analysis

Variable	Prison officers		Specialized workers		Prison workers	
	M	S.D.	M	S.D.	M	S.D.
<i>Self-legitimacy</i>	4.16	0.62	4.05	0.58	4.12	0.61
The powers I have as a prison worker are morally right.	4.19	0.83	4.00	0.78	4.12	0.80
I am sure I can give a good reason to prisoners as to why my powers as a prison worker are morally proper.	4.13	0.83	3.91	0.86	4.06	0.83
I am sure that I have enough authority to do my job.	4.10	0.92	4.04	0.87	4.08	0.89
I believe I have enough knowledge to do my job.	4.15	0.75	4.17	0.80	4.16	0.75
I believe I am capable enough to do my job.	4.24	0.69	4.31	0.67	4.28	0.67
	Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.83$		Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.66$		Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.79$	
<i>Relations with colleagues</i>	3.98	0.71	3.94	0.60	3.97	0.66
I have a good working relationship with my colleagues.	4.12	0.81	4.14	0.67	4.14	0.75
My colleagues treat me with respect.	3.88	0.86	3.92	0.75	3.90	0.80
I feel that my colleagues trust me.	4.07	0.77	3.92	0.73	4.02	0.75
I feel supported by my colleagues.	3.90	0.84	3.82	0.78	3.88	0.81
I have a good working relationship with my colleagues.	3.99	0.76	3.91	0.64	3.97	0.71
	Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.92$		Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.89$		Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.91$	

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<i>Supervisors' procedural justice</i>	3.49	0.80	3.66	0.73	3.56	0.77
Decisions of my supervisor are equally fair to every prison worker.	3.07	1.13	3.18	1.08	3.10	1.10
I feel that my supervisor treats me with respect and dignity.	3.70	0.96	3.83	0.87	3.75	0.92
My supervisor usually gives me an explanation for the decisions that affect me.	3.62	0.97	3.74	0.92	3.66	0.95
My supervisor takes account of my needs when making decisions that affect me.	3.49	1.00	3.72	0.91	3.58	0.95
Decisions by my supervisor are always based on facts, not personal biases.	3.45	0.97	3.60	0.90	3.49	0.93
I am treated fairly in the prison, where I work.	3.68	0.87	3.72	0.90	3.70	0.87
My supervisor gives me support to do my job.	3.53	0.91	3.58	0.85	3.56	0.88
I can always approach to my supervisor when I have a problem.	3.82	0.96	4.10	0.78	3.93	0.90
I have confidence in the abilities of my supervisor.	3.50	0.99	3.42	1.15	3.48	1.03
My supervisor takes my opinions into an account, when making decisions.	3.19	0.95	3.63	0.87	3.36	0.93
	Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.94$		Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.94$		Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.94$	
<i>Stress</i>	3.18	0.80	3.52	0.76	3.28	0.81
At work, I am subjected to stress.	3.86	0.99	4.14	0.94	3.95	0.99
I feel that I get assigned a lot more duties in comparison to my colleagues.	2.75	0.97	3.16	1.09	2.92	1.03
The stress that I am experiencing it at my job affect my personal life.	3.02	1.16	3.35	1.12	3.13	1.15
Performance of duties that are required for my workplace, exhausts me.	3.10	1.01	3.41	0.91	3.18	0.99
	Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.74$		Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.71$		Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.75$	
<i>Subculture of the prison staff</i>	4.03	0.78	3.65	0.69	3.86	0.79
I always support my colleagues in front of prisoners.	4.22	0.84	4.06	0.94	4.17	0.86
I always support a prison worker in a dispute with a prisoner.	4.01	0.85	3.60	0.89	3.86	0.88
I always support my colleagues, when they impose sanctions upon prisoners (even if I do not agree with the sanction).	3.81	0.98	3.26	0.90	3.61	0.99
	Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.85$		Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.60$		Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.78$	
<i>Satisfaction with salary</i>	2.09	0.96	1.93	0.86	2.05	0.94
I am satisfied with my present salary.	2.19	1.09	2.11	1.04	2.18	1.07
Considering how much I work, I am satisfied with my salary.	2.13	0.97	1.90	0.91	2.07	0.97
I am well paid considering the conditions of work.	1.99	1.00	1.77	0.92	1.93	0.98
	Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.92$		Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.88$		Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.92$	
<i>Audience legitimacy</i>	3.19	0.71	3.07	0.82	3.15	0.74
Most of the prisoners with whom I work feel that they are treated fairly in prison.	3.23	0.92	3.13	0.91	3.19	0.91
Most of the prisoners with whom I work feel that prison workers take the time to explain their decisions.	3.10	0.87	3.09	0.99	3.10	0.89
Most of the prisoners with whom I work feel that prison workers always comply with the laws.	3.19	0.83	3.13	0.94	3.17	0.86
Most of the prisoners with whom I work feel that prison workers are people whom they can trust.	3.15	0.84	2.99	1.02	3.10	0.90
Most of the prisoners with whom I work feel that prison workers treat them fairly.	3.27	0.84	3.04	0.90	3.20	0.86
	Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.88$		Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.91$		Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.89$	

Scale: 1 – Strongly disagree to 5 – Strongly agree.

* Principal axis factoring; Varimax

5 Findings

Prior to the regression analyses, based on which factors that influence prison workers perception of self-legitimacy in Slovenian prison were identified, Pearson's *r* correlation tests were conducted. The tests were performed for two reasons: 1) a preliminary assessment of the predictors that influence prison workers perception of self-legitimacy, as 2) a correlational analysis to establish whether any of the variables are highly correlated – the problem of multicollinearity.

Results of the test, based on data obtained from prison officers in 2016, showed that significant correlations exist between prison officers' perceptions of self-legitimacy, and: 1) relation with colleagues ($r = 0.62; p < 0.01$), 2) supervisors' procedural justice ($r = 0.45; p < 0.01$), 3) audience legitimacy ($r = 0.36; p < 0.01$), 4) subculture of the prison staff ($r = 0.27; p < 0.01$), and 5) satisfaction with salary ($r = -0.19; p < 0.05$). The strongest correlation was identified between prison officers' perceptions of self-legitimacy and relations with colleagues (Table 2). Significant correlations exist between specialized workers' perceptions of self-legitimacy and: 1) relations with colleagues ($r = 0.34; p < 0.01$), 2) audience legitimacy ($r = 0.22; p < 0.05$), and 3) satisfaction with salary ($r = -0.24; p < 0.05$). The strongest correlation was identified between specialized workers' perceptions of self-legitimacy and relations with colleagues (Table 3). Additional analyses showed that significant correlations exist between prison workers' percep-

tion of self-legitimacy and: 1) relations with colleagues ($r = 0.54; p < 0.01$), 2) supervisors' procedural justice ($r = 0.38; p < 0.01$), 3) audience legitimacy ($r = 0.30; p < 0.01$), 4) subculture of the prison staff ($r = 0.25; p < 0.01$), and 5) satisfaction with salary ($r = -0.19; p < 0.01$). The strongest correlation was found out between the perception of self-legitimacy and relations with colleagues (Table 4).

Using Pearson's test, the problem of multicollinearity was reviewed, and high correlations between independent variables were analysed. Correlations higher than 0.80 should be deemed problematic, as they make it impossible to obtain unique estimates of the regression coefficients because there are an infinite number of combinations of coefficients which would work equally well (Field, 2009). Based on the results of the tests, threats of multicollinearity were ruled out. Further diagnostic tests confirmed the initial assessment of absence of multicollinearity, and the Variance Inflation Factor [VIF] for variables was adequate (Table 5).

Table 2: Pearson's *r* coefficients for key variables – Prison officers

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Self-legitimacy	-						
Relations with colleagues	0.62**	-					
Supervisors' procedural justice	0.45**	0.53**	-				
Audience legitimacy	0.36**	0.42**	0.45**	-			
Subculture of the prison staff	0.27**	0.15	0.02	-0.12	-		
Stress	-0.01	-0.25**	-0.23**	-0.06	-0.05	-	
Satisfaction with salary	-0.19*	-0.05	0.24**	0.03	-0.33**	-0.22**	-

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; N = 149

Table 3: Pearson's *r* coefficients for key variables – Specialized workers

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Self-legitimacy	-						
Relations with colleagues	0.34**	-					
Supervisors' procedural justice	0.21	0.57**	-				
Audience legitimacy	0.22*	0.48**	0.48**	-			
Subculture of the prison staff	0.20	0.26*	0.05	0.08	-		
Stress	-0.05	-0.19	-0.11	-0.09	-0.11	-	
Satisfaction with salary	-0.24*	0.08	0.19	0.19	0.15	-0.38**	-

p* < 0.05; *p* < 0.01; N = 79

Table 4: Pearson's *r* coefficients for key variables – Prison workers

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Self-legitimacy	-						
Relations with colleagues	0.54**	-					
Supervisors' procedural justice	0.38**	0.54**	-				
Audience legitimacy	0.30**	0.43**	0.44**	-			
Subculture of the prison staff	0.25**	0.17**	0.00	-0.04	-		
Stress	-0.01	-0.21**	-0.16*	-0.08	-0.09	-	
Satisfaction with salary	-0.19**	-0.02	0.20*	0.12	-0.16*	-0.28**	-

p* < 0.05; *p* < 0.01; N = 243

In Table 5, results of OLS regression analyses for predicting prison worker's perceptions of self-legitimacy are presented. Three analyses were conducted. In the first analysis, we tested those factors influence prison officer's perceptions of self-legitimacy in Slovenian prisons in 2016. We discovered that audience legitimacy and stress have no influence on prison officer's perceptions of self-legitimacy. At the same time, results showed that: 1) relations with colleagues ($\beta = 0.48$; $p < 0.001$), 2) supervisors' procedural justice ($\beta = 0.23$; $p < 0.001$), 3) subculture of the prison staff ($\beta = 0.21$; $p < 0.001$), 4) satisfaction with salary ($\beta = -0.14$; $p < 0.05$), and 5) education ($\beta = 0.13$; $p < 0.05$) have an impact on prison officer's perceptions of self-legitimacy. The following key findings emerged: 1) prison officers, who have good relations with colleagues and believe that supervisor's decisions are fair, perceive self-legitimacy more positively, 2) prison officers' integration to the subculture has a positive impact on their perception of self-legitimacy, 3) prison officers' [dis]satisfaction with salary

has a negative impact on their perception of self-legitimacy, and 4) older and more educated prison officers express higher levels of self-legitimacy. Relations with colleagues had the highest effect on prison officer's perceptions of self-legitimacy, and overall, the model explained 55.0% of the variance in perceptions of self-legitimacy of prison officers sampled.

In the second analysis, we tested those factors that influence specialized worker's perceptions of self-legitimacy in Slovenian prisons during the same time period. We found that: 1) relations with colleagues, 2) supervisors' procedural justice, 3) stress, and 4) age have no influence on specialized worker's perceptions of self-legitimacy. However, audience legitimacy ($\beta = 0.24$; $p < 0.10$), subculture of the prison staff ($\beta = 0.27$; $p < 0.05$), satisfaction with salary ($\beta = -0.41$; $p < 0.001$), and education ($\beta = 0.29$; $p < 0.01$) do have an impact. Two key findings emerged: 1) audience legitimacy arose as a new factor that influences self-legitimacy of spe-

cialized workers, and 2) similar to prison officers, subculture of the prison staff, satisfaction with salary and age influenced self-legitimacy of specialized workers. Satisfaction with salary had the highest effect, and overall, the model explained 32.1% of the variance in perception of self-legitimacy of specialized workers sampled.

In the final analysis, we tested those factors that influence prison worker's perceptions of self-legitimacy in Slovenian prisons in 2016. We discover that stress has no influence on prison worker's perceptions of self-legitimacy. Moreover, we found that: 1) relations with colleagues ($\beta = 0.39; p < 0.001$), 2) supervisors' procedural justice ($\beta = 0.16; p < 0.05$), 3) audience legitimacy ($\beta = 0.09; p < 0.10$), 4) subculture of the prison staff ($\beta = 0.22; p < 0.001$), 5) satisfaction with salary ($\beta = -0.19; p < 0.001$), 6) age ($\beta = 0.16; p < 0.01$), and 7) education ($\beta = 0.18; p < 0.001$) have an impact. The following key findings emerged: 1) once again, prison workers' [dis]satisfac-

tion with salary has a negative impact on their perceptions of self-legitimacy, 2) similar to prison officers and specialized workers, the subculture of the prison staff and level of education have an impact on perceptions of self-legitimacy at the level of entire prison staff, 3) similar to prison officers, relations with colleagues, supervisors' procedural justice and age of prison workers influence self-legitimacy of the prison staff, and 4) similar to specialized workers, perception of audience legitimacy also had an influence. Relations with colleagues had the highest effect on prison worker's perceptions of self-legitimacy. Overall, the model explained 42.8% of the variance in perceptions of self-legitimacy of prison workers sampled. Due to identified differences in factors that influence self-legitimacy of prison officers and specialized workers we conducted discriminant analyses in order to identify possible differences in perceptions of self-legitimacy between specialized workers and prison officers.

Table 5: OLS Regression analysis: predicting self-legitimacy of the prison staff

Self-legitimacy	Prison officers				Specialized workers				Prison workers ^a			
	(s.e.)	β	t	VIF	(s.e.)	β	t	VIF	(s.e.)	β	t	VIF
Relations with colleagues	0.07	0.48****	6.59	1.67	0.12	0.12	0.86	1.88	0.06	0.39****	6.09	1.69
Supervisors' procedural justice	0.07	0.23****	3.15	1.69	0.11	0.13	1.02	1.71	0.06	0.16**	2.48	1.61
Audience legitimacy	0.07	0.04	0.65	1.47	0.09	0.24*	1.91	1.63	0.06	0.09*	1.67	1.41
Subculture of the prison staff	0.07	0.21****	3.24	1.24	0.10	0.27**	2.45	1.21	0.05	0.22****	4.09	1.16
Stress	0.07	0.10	1.63	1.19	0.12	-0.14	-1.14	1.55	0.06	0.02	0.29	1.23
Satisfaction with salary	0.06	-0.14**	-2.07	1.34	0.10	-0.41****	-3.63	1.31	0.05	-0.19****	-3.49	1.20
Age	0.05	0.22****	3.63	1.12	0.08	0.13	1.12	1.33	0.04	0.16***	2.97	1.13
Education	0.06	0.13**	2.19	1.04	0.10	0.29***	2.67	1.23	0.04	0.18****	3.54	1.10
F			21.39				4.13				21.89	
R ²			55.0%				32.1%				42.8%	
N			149				79				243	

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$, **** $p < 0.001$

^a Prison workers comprises prison officers, specialized workers, and other workers in prison.

In Table 6, results of the discriminant analysis are presented. Wilks' Lambda (0.85; $p < 0.001$) revealed statistically significant differences between prison officers and specialized workers in Slovenian prisons in 2016. The results emphasise that subculture of the prison staff (13.09; $p < 0.001$) affects differentiation between the groups. A comparison between prison officers and specialized workers reveals that the subculture of the prison staff is more present among prison officers while specialized workers experience more stress. Classification of prison officers' and specialized workers' responses shows that 71.9% of originally grouped respondents were correctly classified (91.3% of prison officers and 35.4% of specialized workers). Results of the classification reveal that prison officers have more unified views, with 64.6% of specialized workers expressing similar views as prison officers. Only 8.7% of prison officers have similar views as specialized prison staff.

The specifics of an individual group of prison workers and unique perceptions of self-legitimacy of its members were somehow neglected in studies on self-legitimacy, despite results of previous studies highlighted the differences in perception of self-legitimacy between different actors in the criminal justice system (Meško et al., 2014). Comparison of prison officers and specialized workers as to their perceptions of self-legitimacy in Slovenian prisons revealed that the subculture of the prison staff, [dis]satisfaction with salary, and level of education present factors that influence the perceptions of legitimacy in both groups. However, the groups differ significantly in the fields of relations with colleagues, supervisors' procedural justice, and age having no impact on specialized workers' perceptions of self-legitimacy. Audience legitimacy, which can be explained as the effort of prison workers to be seen as legitimate power-holder in prisoners' eyes influences only specialized workers' perceptions of self-

Table 6: Discriminant analysis: Prison officers and specialized workers

Variable	Prison officers		Specialized workers		Wilks' Lambda	F
	M	S.D.	M	S.D.		
Self-legitimacy	4.16	0.62	4.05	0.58	0.99	1.62
Relations with colleagues	3.98	0.71	3.94	0.59	0.99	0.17
Supervisors' procedural justice	3.49	0.79	3.66	0.73	0.99	2.63
Audience legitimacy	3.19	0.71	3.07	0.82	0.99	1.31
Subculture of the prison staff	4.03	0.78	3.65	0.69	0.95	13.09****
Satisfaction with salary	2.09	0.96	1.93	0.86	0.99	1.56
Wilks' Lambda					0.88****	

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$, **** $p < 0.001$; N = 243

5 Discussion and Conclusion

In the present study, we focused on exploring those factors that influence self-legitimacy of prison staff and tested the impact of specific characteristics of an individual group of prison workers on its members' perception of self-legitimacy. Overall findings showed that: 1) relations with colleagues, 2) supervisors' procedural justice, 3) audience legitimacy, 4) subculture of the prison staff, 5) satisfaction with salary, 6) age, and 7) education influence self-legitimacy of prison staff. These findings confirm the theoretical assumptions on factors which influence self-legitimacy (Meško, et al., 2014, 2017; Tankebe & Meško, 2015).

legitimacy. These findings reveal: 1) the need for inclusion of specific characteristics of individual groups of prison workers in research on self-legitimacy, as tasks of an individual groups differ significantly in terms of providing safety and security, treatment of prisoners, authorities, uniformity etc., 2) the cohesion and homogenous nature of prison officers as they represent a closed social group characterized by uniformity, camaraderie, authoritarian views and conservatism, 3) that the norms of prison subculture are present in all groups of prison workers and are not characteristic only for prison officers, 4) that the level of education achieved has a positive influence on an individual's perceptions of self-legitimacy, and we assume that knowledge obtained influences an individual's trust in his or her own competence for perform-

ing work with prisoners, 5) the need for specialized workers to be perceived as legitimate authority figures with prisoners. We assume that in contrast to prison officers who perceive confirmation of their work from their colleagues and supervisors, specialized workers seek confirmation from prisoners, and 6) dissatisfaction of both groups of prison workers with salary, because austerity measures that were introduced to the Slovenian public sector affected the social security of prison workers.

Results of the study confirm the impact of specific characteristics of an individual group of prison workers on its members' perceptions of self-legitimacy. We assume that the main differences derive from the nature of work and obligations of individual professional groups, the authoritarian nature of work (providing safety and security) of prison officers who seek confirmation of their own legitimacy from colleagues and supervisors (hierarchy and closeness of the group), and the rehabilitative orientations of specialized workers who seek confirmation of their work from clients (prisoners).

The primary limitation of this study is seen in the small size of the sample of specialized staff where a larger sample would enable a more detailed and accurate comparison of specific groups of specialised workers. Future research should focus on: 1) in-depth exploration of differences between different groups of prison workers' perceptions of self-legitimacy, 2) relations between prison workers and prisoners and its implication on prison workers' perceptions of self-legitimacy, 3) the different effects of self-legitimacy on the job performance of prison officers and specialized workers and establishing relations with prisoners, and 4) cynicism of prison workers.

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Raziskovanje razlik med samozaznavo legitimnosti pravosodnih policistov in specializiranih delavcev v slovenskih zaporih

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Nedavne študije o preučevanju legitimnosti v zaporskem okolju so opozorile na vpliv samozaznave legitimnosti zaporskih delavcev na njihovo vsakodnevno opravljanje nalog v zaporu in vzpostavljanje odnosov z obsojenci. V prispevku se osredotočamo na raziskovanje samozaznave legitimnosti zaporskih delavcev v slovenskih zaporih. Primarni cilj te študije je identifikacija dejavnikov, ki vplivajo na samozaznavo legitimnosti pravosodnih policistov, specializiranih delavcev in zaporskih delavcev kot celote. Dejavniki, ki vplivajo na samozaznavo legitimnosti pravosodnih policistov in specializiranih delavcev v zaporih, bodo primerjani z namenom potrditve vpliva značilnosti posameznih skupin v zaporu na zaznavo lastne legitimnosti njihovih članov. Rezultati regresijskih analiz so razkrili, da zaznava postopkovne pravičnosti zaposlenih, odnosi s sodelavci, zaznava legitimnosti (projekcija), subkultura zaporskih delavcev, zadovoljstvo s plačilom, starost in nivo izobrazbe vplivajo na samozaznavo legitimnosti zaporskih delavcev. Rezultati diskriminantne analize so opozorili na statistično pomembne razlike med pravosodnimi policisti in specializiranimi delavci na področjih subkulture zaporskega osebja in stresa. Ugotovitve študije so potrdile spremenljivost samozaznave legitimnosti v različnih skupinah zaporskih delavcev. V zaključku razpravljamo o implikacijah ugotovitev študije.

Ključne besede: pravosodni policisti, zapori, samozaznava legitimnosti, specializirani delavci, Slovenija

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