

ARTICLE

The attitudes of prisoners towards participation in restorative justice procedures

Inbal Peleg-Koriat and Dana Weimann-Saks*

Abstract

Restorative justice can be implemented at different stages of criminal proceedings. In Israel, restorative justice processes are mainly used prior to sentencing, while there are no restorative programmes for adults following sentencing and while serving their prison sentences. The aim of the present study is to examine the possibility of implementing restorative processes within prison walls. To this end, the present study empirically investigates the level of readiness and willingness of prisoners (n = 110) from two large prisons in Israel to participate in restorative processes and examines the psychological mechanisms underlying their attitudes towards actual participation in these processes. The study proposes a model according to which the relationship between the cognitive component of attitude towards victims and the harm caused by the offence (beliefs and thoughts) and the behavioural component of attitude (the inclination to participate in restorative processes) is mediated by the affective component of attitude towards the offence (sense of guilt and shame). The findings of the study support the proposed model. The study also found that the more prisoners perceived the harm they caused as having more dimensions (physical, economic, emotional), the more positive their attitudes towards restorative justice would be. This study will advance research into restorative justice at a stage that has not previously been researched in Israel and has rarely been investigated elsewhere.

Keywords: Restorative justice, prisons, incarceration, punishment.

1. Introduction

In recent decades, law enforcement and social supervision systems in various countries, including Israel, have begun recognising alternative methods for settling criminal disputes. A significant number of alternative processes adopted in a

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range of countries are based on ideas of restorative justice. Although no single definition of restorative justice has yet been agreed upon (Sharpe, 2004), the restorative justice approach, generally speaking, views a criminal offence not only as a deviation from standard norms of criminal law but also as a dispute created between the offender and the victim of the offence, the results of which are harm to the victim, the community and even to the offenders themselves (Farkash, 2009; Zehr, 2002).

The principal aim of restorative justice is to redress the harm caused and settle the dispute by identifying the needs resulting from it. According to the restorative justice approach, this can be achieved by conducting an impartial guided dialogue between the parties affected by the criminal offence in order to reach agreements on what the offender and/or the community have to do to address the needs of those who have been harmed by the criminal offence (Johnstone, 2011; Zehr & Mika, 2003). In general terms, the restorative justice approach is considered a better way to respond to the needs of victims and offenders alike. Restorative justice processes focus on the harm caused by the offence and on how the harm to the victim of the offence can be meaningfully redressed. During the process, the victim and the offender have an opportunity to talk about what happened, and the offender has an opportunity to acknowledge the harm he or she has caused and try to make amends. An additional positive secondary result of restorative justice processes is that offenders who participated in restorative justice processes tend to present lower recidivism rates than offenders who participated in conventional criminal processes (Bazemore & Elis, 2007; Hayes, 2007; Shachaf-Friedman & Timor, 2008; Sherman & Strang, 2007). A comprehensive study found that the likelihood of an offender committing another offence in the 6 months following a restorative justice process was 33 per cent lower than in the case of offenders who had not participated in a restorative justice process. The study also found that this percentage was even higher when a restorative justice process constituted an addition rather than an alternative to regular legal processes (Poulson, 2003).

There is a high probability that during the process, offenders will undergo a significant change in acknowledging their responsibility for causing harm to others and for the damage they caused and the importance of redressing it and righting the wrongs (Gal, 2015). The result of a successful process entails redressing the harm caused and turning over a new leaf for those involved in an offence (Bazemore, 1998; Hayes & Daly, 2003). Studies that evaluated restorative practices found that offenders and victims alike expressed greater satisfaction with restorative processes than conventional criminal practices (Poulson, 2003; Sherman & Strang, 2007). Nevertheless, restorative justice processes are carried out primarily when the offenders are minors or in cases of less serious offences (misdemeanours and sometimes non-violent felonies) (Dzur, 2011; Larsen, 2014). Use of restorative justice in serious offences is relatively rare and controversial, even though research shows that the positive effects of restorative justice in serious offences are more substantial (Sherman, 2003; Van Camp, 2014). Moreover, it has been claimed in the literature that limiting the use of restorative justice to specific and unique cases (youth offenders or offences for which incarceration is

unlikely) defeats the principal purpose of the process since, in most cases, conventional retributive justice remains the preferred default choice (Butler & Maruna, 2016; Greene, 2013; Wood, 2015). On the other hand, the legitimate concern over using restorative justice instead of incarceration for serious offences is understandable. For example, in the context of sexual offences, McGlynn, Westmarland & Godden (2012) argued that diverting cases of sexual offences from the court system might serve to diminish the apparent seriousness of the crime. Additionally, some researchers have raised concerns that such an informal process may serve to re-victimise the victims (Jülich & Buttle, 2010; Stubbs, 2002; for an overview of the pros and cons on the use of restorative justice in cases of sexual violence, see Zinsstag & Keenan, 2017). Therefore, the present study proposes the possibility of incorporating restorative processes within prisons. Use of restorative practices within prison walls is likely to provide access to restorative justice to a wider population of adult criminals who have committed serious offences as well.

2. Restorative justice in prisons

Restorative justice processes can be incorporated at various stages of the conventional judicial procedure. In the past three decades, restorative justice processes have been primarily used prior to sentencing and as an alternative to incarceration. However, attempts have been made in a number of countries to incorporate restorative processes after sentencing as well, i.e., during incarceration (Walker, Sakai & Brady, 2006; Wallace & Wylie, 2013; Van Ness, 2007).

2.1 *The benefits of restorative justice in prisons*

Incorporating restorative processes in prisons can help prisoners to acknowledge the harm they have caused and the resulting needs of the victim and others who have been significantly affected by the offence. Prisoners would be expected to accept responsibility for their offences and are given the opportunity to 'make amends' in various ways, e.g., by offering the victim symbolic monetary compensation or an apology or by means of community service (Mace, 2000; Newell, 2001). Additionally, restorative justice processes can contribute to prisoners' positive self-image and lead to improvement in the social skills necessary for them to reintegrate into society. Certain restorative justice processes, e.g., victim-offender mediation or conferencing, may even be expected to help victims cope with their continuing sense of victimhood and reduce fears and hostility in the community. The relationship between the community and the prison, enabled in some restorative justice practices by means of community service or cooperative workshops for prisoners and community members, which are sometimes part of the restorative justice process (Dhami, Mantle & Fox, 2009), facilitates awareness and understanding among community members of the different processes taking place within the prison walls. Even though community service has been established as a tradition in prisons, it has not always been related to restorative justice (Dhami et al., 2009). Stern (2005) suggests that successful restorative justice

in prisons requires prisons to maintain a strong relationship with the outside community, as by having community representatives come to the prison and prisoners going out into the community to work. Additionally, the very participation in restorative justice processes helps prisoners to acquire skills in constructive and non-violent conflict management based on a dialogue about the needs and desires of both parties to the dispute (Dhami et al., 2009). These skills can even assist in managing conflicts in the prison, both between prisoners and prison staff and between the prisoners themselves. Restorative justice processes may also promote the creation of a more positive atmosphere within the prison walls (Butler & Maruna, 2016; Newell, 2002).

Another important reason for conducting restorative processes during the incarceration stage is associated with the considerable difficulty facing released prisoners when returning to their family and community. After their release, prisoners are expected to deal with interpersonal and social difficulties and may experience complications and rejection from their family and community, which could lead to recidivism (Fox, 2014). Thus, the role of prisons should not end with the act of incarceration but continue with therapeutic rehabilitation in order to help prisoners better integrate into society following their release (Dhami et al., 2009).

Research has shown that offenders and victims alike express the need for communication with the other party and a desire to receive answers to the questions troubling them. However, in most cases, in keeping with accepted judicial methods, no possibility exists for a meeting between offenders and victims, either during the judicial process or during the offender's prison sentence. In accordance with the existing judicial system in many countries, offenders are expected to be punished but not to really take full responsibility for their offences (Stamatakis & Vandeviver, 2013).

2.2 In-prison restorative justice programme

Previous studies investigated programmes carried out within prisons and were designed to raise the profile of the harm caused to the victim and the offender's responsibility, as part of a comprehensive programme to implement prison-oriented restorative justice or programmes, whose declared aim is to raise the awareness of the victim (e.g. Barr, 2013 [Northern Ireland]; Dhami et al., 2009 [UK]; Ellis, 2011 [Ohio]; Fellegi & Szego, 2013 [Hungary]; Hagemann, 2012 [Germany]; Robert & Peters, 2002 [Belgium]). For example, Stamatakis and Vandeviver (2013) conducted a study in Belgium, which has a tradition of using restorative justice in prisons, with a research sample of 901 participants, most of whom were male (90.6 per cent), Belgian nationals (67 per cent), aged 20-39 (68.0 per cent) and considered themselves religious (60.4 per cent). The aim of the study was to examine the inner motivations of prisoners for participating in restorative justice processes and the impact of religion on their willingness to do so. The results indicated that prisoners' willingness to participate in a restorative process was very high (60.6 per cent). The study also found that following participation in previous restorative processes, particularly programmes that raised the awareness of the victim and the harm caused to them, their willingness was even higher (88.5 per cent). These findings indicate that the offenders' awareness of the harm

and its extent was crucial in increasing their willingness and commitment to the restorative programme. Furthermore, religion was found to have a significant influence on certain restorative justice variables. For example, religion appeared to positively influence prisoners' inclination to meet victims and community members, and the largest proportion of prisoners who were or would be involved in a mediation process were religious. It is important to note that this was a preliminary study conducted in Belgium on prisoners whose demographic characteristics were very different from those of prisoners serving prison sentences in Israel and who participated in the present study (most of the prisoners in the present study are Jews or Muslims, most are non-religious and all of them are Israeli nationals). Additionally, Belgium differs from many other countries, including Israel, in that it focuses on restorative detention involving all prison sectors.¹ In Belgium, restorative justice is offered to both victim and offender at every stage of the criminal justice process, irrespective of the type or severity of the offence (Aertsen, 2017; Lauwaert & Aertsen, 2016). Therefore, as Stamatakis and Vandeviver (2013) state in their study, owing to the variety of cultures and systems across countries, their results could not be generalised beyond the population of Belgian prisons, and there is a real need for further research in various other countries.

2.3 Limitations of restorative justice in prisons

Besides the advantages of using restorative justice during incarceration, there are also a number of limitations. Some restorative justice programmes, e.g., victim-offender mediation or conferencing, require the voluntary participation of both offender and victim. The victim may feel uncomfortable about participating in a meeting within prison walls, while taking the prisoner outside the prison may not be an option. Security considerations may also prevent the victim and/or community members from entering the prison. Additionally, in some cases the prison is located at a considerable distance from the victim's residence and/or the community (Dhami et al., 2009). Thus, to try and overcome the difficulties involved in a full restorative justice process during incarceration, a number of restorative programmes have been developed that are based on restorative justice principles but easier to implement during incarceration. For example, cooperative workshops for prisoners and community members (termed 'offending behaviour programmes') have been developed, in which prisoners learn to deal with conflicts and prejudices via role play. Another example, the Sycamore Tree Project, which today would be described as 'a victim awareness programme', was developed in the UK in 1998, and has since also been implemented in a number of other countries such as the United States, the Bahamas, New Zealand, Australia and South Africa (Anderson, 2018; Dhami et al., 2009; Fourie & Koen, 2018; Prison Fellow-

1 In the early 2000s, Belgian prisons recruited restorative justice consultants who were responsible for introducing the notion of restorative justice and establishing restorative programmes within prisons (Van Droogenbroeck, 2010). However, since 2008, the status of these consultants has changed; they have been promoted as members of the management staff, and while they are still responsible for restorative justice programmes, they are also assigned to a number of other roles (Stamatakis & Vandeviver, 2013).

ship, 1999). According to this model, workshops are facilitated by prison staff or professional volunteers to raise awareness among prisoners about the harm they caused and to encourage them to take responsibility. At these workshops, in some cases, meetings are held between surrogate victims (real victims but unconnected to the offender by the same event [Umbreit, Coates & Vos, 2007]) and offenders, during which the surrogate victims relate their tangible and non-tangible injuries as a result of a criminal act. Prisoners have an opportunity to make symbolic 'compensation', such as craftwork given to the indirect victims, writing letters and expressing remorse. During the seminars, the prisoners can watch video clips of victims and experience simulations demonstrating the harm caused.

Yet another example is community service, in which prisoners do rehabilitation work for the community, for example building wheelchairs and additional implements for people with disabilities. The premise is that the very act of working for the benefit of others in need affords prisoners an opportunity to compensate the community and reintegrate into it. A fourth possibility is victim-offender mediation, which includes direct and indirect meetings between the offender and the victim of a particular crime. The prison meeting takes place with a facilitator and involves giving a report, asking questions and receiving answers, healing and accepting responsibility and focuses less on 'compensation' (Bazemore, Zaslaw & Riestler, 2005; Dhimi et al., 2009). Victim-offender mediation can be conducted more indirectly, for example by conference call or exchange of letters via a mediator. In these processes the mediator bridges between the offender and the victim, conveys questions and answers and helps to achieve understandings and agreements about compensation, if relevant, but the two parties do not meet face-to-face (Wallace & Wylie, 2013).

2.4 The current status of restorative justice in prisons

Despite all the foregoing and the great potential for incorporating restorative justice during the incarceration stage (reducing recidivism, rehabilitating the prisoner, addressing some of the victim's needs and increasing the likelihood of the offender's proper reintegration into society when released), there are rather few restorative justice programmes currently operating throughout the world that bring together the offender and the victim of a particular crime (victim-offender mediation) during incarceration, and restorative programmes that do exist are based primarily on workshops, community projects and meetings with surrogate victims, e.g., Sycamore Tree Project and Restorative Circles, which is a group-planning process for individual inmates, their families and prison staff (Bazemore et al., 2005; Edgar & Newell, 2006; Goulding, Hall & Steels, 2008; Walker et al., 2006). In addition, few studies have investigated the level of willingness among different types of prisoners to participate in restorative programmes (motivation, inner feelings, attitudes towards the harm caused, level of responsibility and others), as well as the success of existing programmes (Stamatakis & Vandeviver, 2013). Moreover, although the use of restorative processes in Israel has grown in various stages prior to sentencing, restorative programmes during incarceration are virtually non-existent. Also, to the best of our knowledge, there has been no research on the feasibility of incorporating restorative programmes in prisons in

Israel. This study aims to meet the challenge arising from the literature and practice and investigates the attitudes of prisoners in Israeli prisons towards participation in various restorative processes, with emphasis on processes in which direct and indirect meetings are held between the offender and the victim (e.g. victim-offender mediation or conferencing) or surrogate victims. The study also attempts to examine the psychological mechanisms that engender these attitudes.

3. Measuring attitudes

The tripartite model of attitudes (Breckler, 1984; Rosenberg & Hovland, 1960) defines an attitude as a system of beliefs, feelings and behavioural tendencies in relation to a given object, while distinguishing between cognitive, affective and behavioural components of attitude, which represent different aspects of human experience (e.g. Bagozzi, Tybout, Craig & Sternthal, 1979; Breckler, 1984; Eagly & Chaiken, 1993; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Rosenberg & Hovland, 1960). The cognitive component relates to thoughts, beliefs and judgements about a certain object; the affective component to feelings, sensations and impulses that arise as a result of those thoughts and beliefs; and the behavioural component refers to the individual's willingness to behave positively or negatively towards the attitude object (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). This model has been supported in research showing that each of the components is acquired differently and stored separately in memory (Breckler, 1984; Olson & Kendrick, 2008). For example, the cognitive component can be taught through appropriate education; the affective component can be formulated by classical conditioning (i.e. creating a consistent connection between a certain emotional response and the attitude object); and the behavioural component can be developed as a result of operant conditioning (i.e. a change in behaviour as a result of reinforcement received in response to previous acts) (Kim, Lu & Estrada-Hernandez, 2015). Although the tripartite model of attitudes is a recognised approach to measuring attitudes in the research literature, it has attracted considerable criticism, which focuses primarily on the relationship between the cognitive and affective components and the behavioural component (Farley & Stasson, 2003; LaPiere, 1934; Wicker, 1969). Some studies have shown a disparity at times between the actual behaviour and the (cognitive and affective) attitude expressed towards that behaviour (Kraus, 1995). Nevertheless, it has been found that there are conditions that strengthen the relationship between the cognitive and affective components and the behavioural component; among others, when the attitude concerns a specific behaviour (Armitage & Conner, 2001; Wallace, Paulson, Lord & Bond, 2005), and when the attitude is very firm (Glasman & Albarracín, 2006), the relationship between the cognitive and the affective components and the behavioural component will be stronger. Another issue pertains to the relationship between the cognitive and the affective components in shaping the behavioural tendency.

According to appraisal theories of emotions, emotions and cognition are inseparable, so an individual's interpretations (appraisals) of the environment or

the situation can produce or change emotions (e.g. Ellsworth & Scherer, 2003; Frijda, 1993; Roseman, 1984, 2001; Scherer, Schorr & Johnstone, 2001). According to appraisal theorists, it is how an individual interprets a situation – rather than the situation itself – that gives rise to one emotion rather than another (Siemer, Mauss & Gross, 2007). The unique emotional experience, in turn, promotes particular behavioural reactions. Weiner (1993) proposed a model according to which attribution (cognition) leads to emotion, and the emotions then lead to a tendency to act. In his research he showed that when an individual is perceived as responsible for his or her (negative) behaviour, we feel less affinity towards the person and, as a result, are less willing to help him or her. In recent years this line of thinking has been reinvestigated by researchers from a variety of fields and has gained additional empirical support (Halperin & Pliskin, 2015; Wondra & Ellsworth, 2015). Additionally, emotional regulation research indicates that a change in the individual's beliefs and thoughts about the attitude object (cognitive reappraisal) can lead to emotional regulation that has the power to affect his or her behavioural tendencies (Dennis & Hajcak, 2009; Gutentag, Halperin, Porat, Bigman & Tamir, 2017). For example, Halperin, Porat, Tamir and Gross (2013) studied this issue in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and found that cognitive reappraisal can play a causal role in reducing negative intergroup emotions and thus reduce aggressive reactions and increase conciliatory reactions to conflict-related events.

Therefore, the present study assumes that in order to examine prisoners' inclination to participate in restorative justice processes (the behavioural component), it is also important to examine the cognitive and affective components of their attitude, which together are expected to influence their behavioural tendencies. Insights into the three components of prisoners' attitude towards restorative justice are expected to contribute to psychological knowledge by introducing a model that provides a better understanding of the basic mechanisms related to prisoners' intention to participate in restorative justice processes. Additionally, prisoners may be more likely to consider actual participation in restorative justice when they acknowledge that they have caused harm. Moreover, a precondition for participation in restorative justice processes is that the offender has acknowledged that the offence occurred and has accepted at least some responsibility and guilt that lead to feelings of shame (McGlynn et al., 2012; Shapland et al., 2006). The offender's awareness of responsibility may initially be superficial, but later, recognition of his responsibility will be established, and its implications will become more significant (Jülich & Buttle, 2010; Zehr, 2002). Thus, there is a real need to empirically examine these assumptions, *inter alia*, at the prison stage.

4. The present study

The aim of this study was to measure prisoners' intentions of taking responsibility for their behaviour and their willingness to actually compensate for some of the harm they caused (general readiness to participate in restorative justice processes).

Additionally, the study relied on the tripartite model of attitudes and appraisal theories of emotion and assumed that prisoner readiness to participate in restorative processes that include direct and indirect meetings between the offender and the victim or surrogate victims (behavioural tendency) is positively linked to both the cognitive component of the attitude – appraisal of the situation (e.g. have I harmed anyone, and if so, whom? Do I feel regret? Am I able to make amends?) – and the affective component of attitude – feelings of guilt and shame (how do I feel about the offence?) (Hypothesis 1). Additionally, along similar lines of thinking that led to the research mentioned previously, the present study investigated a model according to which the connection between the cognitive and behavioural components is mediated by the affective component (Hypothesis 2). Moreover, in continuation of the findings of Stamatakis and Vandeviver's research (2013), one of the present study's hypotheses was that among prisoners who reported that their behaviour caused harm, a positive correlation will be found between the perceived number of dimensions of the harm caused by the prisoner (emotional, economic and physical) and attitude towards restorative justice processes (Hypothesis 3).

4.1 Method

4.1.1 Participants

Hundred and ten male prisoners from two prisons in Israel took part in the study. Their ages ranged from 19 to 75 ($M = 38.78$, $SD = 12.70$); most of the participants were Muslim (60.4 per cent), and most perceived themselves as religious (42.7 per cent) or traditional (35 per cent). Most of the participants were married (52.4 per cent) and had an elementary (33.6 per cent) or high school education (29.1 per cent), and 14.5 per cent had an academic education. For 61.3 per cent this was their first incarceration, and 38.7 per cent had been in prison before. The average period of incarceration was 38.98 months ($SD = 52.29$). The longest sentence was 480 months and the shortest was one month (see Table 1).

4.1.2 Procedure

After obtaining approval from the Israel Prison Service, the researchers came to the prisons and distributed questionnaires (in Hebrew or Arabic) to the prisoners. Due to the restriction imposed on us by the Israel Prison Service regarding the number of prisoners who could participate in the study (up to 120), we randomly administered the questionnaires to 120 prisoners who spent their free time in the prison yard. In all, 110 questionnaires were valid. The study was carried out at a time when there was no other activity in the prison. Participants were told that participation was voluntary and that they were free to refuse our request to participate in the study. It was also explained to them that the survey was anonymous, that the prison staff would not have access to their answers, and that they should not include any identifying details in the questionnaires. The response time was about 20 minutes. The study was approved by the Institutional Ethics Committee at Yezreel Valley Academic College.

Table 1 *Descriptive statistics for the sample (n= 110*)*

		n	%		
Prison	A	49	44.5		
	B	61	55.5		
Participation in the prison's therapeutic programme	Yes	85	87.6		
	No	12	12.4		
Type of offence	Drugs	8	7.8		
	Property	9	8.8		
	Assault	7	6.9		
	Violence	20	19.6		
	Family	6	5.9		
	Sex	9	8.8		
	Traffic	22	21.6		
	Other	21	20.6		
Religion	Jewish	29	28.7		
	Muslim	61	60.4		
	Christian	8	7.3		
	Other	3	3		
Religiosity	Religious	44	42.7		
	Orthodox	36	35		
	Non-religious	23	22.3		
Family status	Married	54	52.4		
	Divorced	15	14.6		
	Single	29	28.2		
	Widowed	5	4.8		
		Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Age (years)	19	75	38.78	12.70	
Number of children	0	11	2.31	2.31	
Current prison term (months)	1	480	38.98	52.28	
Number of previous incarcerations	0	11	2.35	2.15	
Remaining prison term (months)	1	100	20.57	18.10	

* It should be noted that the beginning of the questionnaire indicated that participants do not have to answer questions that cause them discomfort. For this reason, we did not receive a full response from all the participants to some of the demographic questions that were presented to the participants apparently for reasons of privacy or inconvenience faced in answer them.

4.1.3 Measures

All the participants completed the following questionnaires: demographic questions, details about their sentence and their offence (length of incarceration,

remaining prison term, offence for which they were imprisoned, type of harm – emotional, economic and physical²).

General readiness for restorative justice processes. Four questions based on the survey used by Dinsdale (2001) with some adjustments (To what extent do you regret the consequences of the offence for which you are serving a prison sentence?; Do you want to have an opportunity to compensate for some of the harm you caused?; Do you want to explain the motives and circumstances that led you to commit the offence?; Would you like to participate in projects designed to contribute to the community [e.g. building wheelchairs, helping people with disabilities]?) Respondents were asked to mark their responses to each question on a scale from 1 = not at all, to 6 = very much ($\alpha = .73$).

Attitude towards restorative justice processes. To assess attitude towards restorative justice processes (that include direct and indirect encounters between offender and victim), we used a 14-item scale ($\alpha = .90$) (rated from 1 = strongly disagree to 6 = strongly agree). Some of the questions were based on the survey used by Dinsdale (2001) with some very minor adjustments, and other questions were specifically formulated for the present study. The participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with the 14 statements regarding restorative justice (e.g. I would like to meet face-to-face victims of crimes similar to the one I committed; I think about the victim I harmed).

To examine whether there were clusters or sub-scales within these 14 items, factor analysis (a principal component analysis method – PCA) was conducted. Since we assumed independence across the components, varimax orthogonal rotation was used. The analysis revealed three components (based on the criterion of $e.v. < 1$). After rotation, the first component was the ‘behavioural factor’ (including items 1-4 and 12). This component explained 29.77 per cent of the variance. A second component, the ‘affective factor’ (including items 7-9, 13), explained an additional 19.69 per cent of the variance. A third component, the ‘cognitive factor’ (including items 10-11, 14), explained an additional 14.71 per cent of the variance. The three components explained 64.17 per cent of the variance. Two items (5, 6) were eliminated owing to low loading coefficients (see Table 2).

Following the factor analysis findings we computed three sub-variables: *the behavioural factor* – the prisoner’s willingness to actually participate in restorative justice processes ($n = 5$, $\alpha = .865$, e.g. *I would like to meet face-to-face with the people who were harmed by the offence I committed*); *the affective factor* – the sense of guilt and shame ($n = 3$, $\alpha = .726$, e.g. *I am ashamed of the acts I committed and for which I am in prison today*); *the cognitive factor* – the prisoner’s thoughts about the victims and the harm they caused ($n = 3$, $\alpha = .696$, e.g. *I think about the harm my actions caused to my family*). For descriptive statistics of the variables, see Table 3.

2 To examine hypothesis 3, we have created a new variable (the ‘harm level’) that measures the number of ‘harm types’ (emotional, economic and physical) reported by the participant (0-3).

Table 2 *Loadings of the attitude towards restorative justice variables on the components after rotation*

Variable	Component		
	Behavioural	Emotional	Cognitive
I would like to meet the people who were personally affected by the offence I committed.	.812		
I would like to meet people who have been affected by the type of offence I am in prison for.	.733		
I would like to write a letter to the victim of the offence I committed.	.771		
It is appropriate to hold meetings between prisoners and their victims.	.649		
I have things to say to the victim of my offence.	.707		
I think about the harm my behaviour caused to my family.			.826
I think about the harm my behaviour caused to my friends.			.505
I regret the behaviours for which I am in prison today.			.551
I accept responsibility for the acts I committed and for which I am in prison.			.666
I am ashamed of the acts I committed and for which I am in prison.		.872	
I feel guilty.		.740	
I am ashamed to meet the family of the victim of my offence.		.601	

Table 3 *Descriptive statistics of the variables*

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Attitude towards restorative justice processes	1	6	4.68	1.19
Cognitive component	1	6	5.11	1.05
Behavioural component	1	6	4.30	1.51
Affective component	1	6	4.81	1.43

4.2 Results

4.2.1 Descriptive statistics

Eighty-two point four per cent (82.4 per cent) of the participants reported that someone was harmed by their actions. As shown in Figure 1, 58 per cent of the participants reported that their families were harmed by their actions, 31 per

Figure 1 *Who was hurt by your actions? (More than one answer may be marked) (n = 102)*



cent reported that the victim was harmed, 30 per cent reported that the victim's family was harmed, 18.6 per cent reported that their community was harmed and only 15.7 per cent reported that the victim's community was harmed.

As shown in Figure 2, of the 103 participants who reported that their behaviour had caused harm, 59 per cent reported that the harm was emotional, 45 per cent that it was physical and 44 per cent reported economic harm.

Figure 2 *What type of harm did you cause? (More than one answer may be marked) (n = 103)*

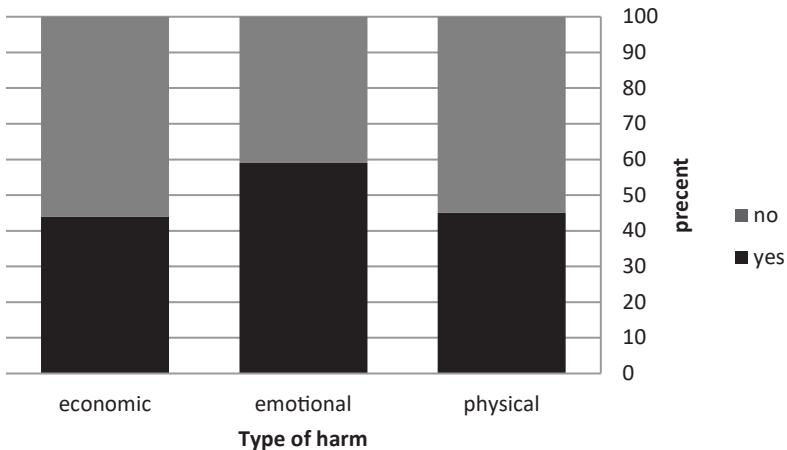


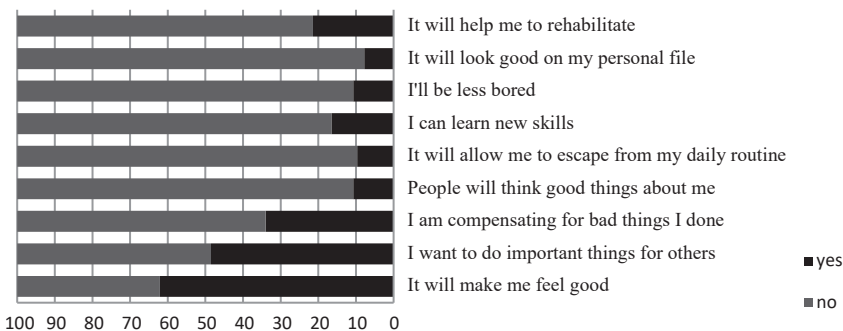
Table 4 *General readiness for restorative justice processes*

	1 Not at all	2	3	4	5 Very much
To what extent do you regret the consequences of the offence for which you are serving a prison sentence?	4.8%	1.9%	4.8%	11.4%	77.1%
Do you want to have a chance to compensate for some of the harm you caused?	11%	4%	4%	10%	71%
Do you want to explain the motives and circumstances that led you to commit the offence?	13%	10%	6%	8%	62%
Would you like to participate in projects designed to contribute to the community (e.g. building wheelchairs, helping people with disabilities etc.)?	0.9%	2.8%	2.8%	6.5%	86.4%

As shown in Table 4, the participants reported high levels of general readiness to participate in restorative justice processes: 77.1 per cent reported that they ‘very much’ regretted the consequences of the offence for which they were serving a prison sentence, 71 per cent ‘very much’ wanted to have an opportunity to compensate for some of the harm they had caused, 62 per cent wanted to explain the motives and circumstances that led them to commit the offence; and 86.4 per cent reported they would ‘very much’ like to participate in projects designed to contribute to the community.

As shown in Figure 3, 62 per cent of the participants reported that they intended to contribute to the community because it would make them feel good; 48.5 per cent, because they wanted to do something meaningful for others; and 34 per cent, because they wanted to compensate for the harm they had caused to others.

Figure 3 *If you want to participate in activities intended to contribute to the community, why? (More than one answer may be marked)*



4.2.2 Hypothesis testing

To test Hypothesis 1 we computed Pearson correlations among the three factors of the attitude towards restorative justice processes (cognitive, affective and behavioural subcomponents). The correlations between the three factors were all positive and significant. A strong positive correlation was found between the cognitive factor and the behavioural factor, and between the affective factor and the behavioural factors (see Table 5).

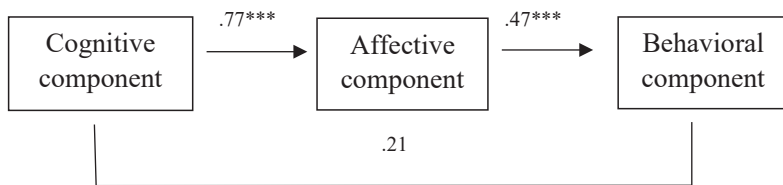
Table 5 *Correlations between the three factors of the attitude towards restorative justice processes (n = 110)*

	Behavioural	Affective
Cognitive	.437***	.595***
Behavioural		.544***

*** $p < .00$

To examine the mediating role of the affective factor in the correlations between the cognitive and behavioural factors (Hypothesis 2), we used Hayes' (2013) PROCESS bootstrapping command with 5,000 iterations (Model 4). The analysis treated the cognitive factor as a predictor variable, the affective factor as the mediator and the behavioural factor as the dependent variable. Results showed that the 95 per cent confidence interval for the indirect effect of the cognitive factor on the behavioural factor through the affective factor did not include 0 (95% CI [.180, .658] with 5,000 resamples, $F(2,94) = 22.39$, $p < .001$). In other words, the model indicates indirect effects of the cognitive factor on the behavioural factor through the affective factor on judicial assessment (see Figure 4).

Figure 4 *The mediating model of the cognitive component on the behavioural component*



*** $p < .001$

To test Hypothesis 3, we computed Pearson correlations between the perceived number of dimensions of the harm caused by the prisoner (emotional, economic and physical) and the attitude towards restorative justice processes. A positive correlation was found between the variables ($r = .21$, $p < .05$). The more prisoners perceive the harm they caused as having more dimensions (physical, economic emotional), the more positive their attitudes towards restorative justice will be.

5. Discussion

This study investigated the attitudes of prisoners in Israeli prisons towards actual participation in restorative justice processes and their readiness and willingness to participate in these processes. The study also attempted to identify the psychological mechanisms that provide the basis for prisoners' attitudes towards actual participation in restorative justice processes and proposes a model according to which the relationship between the cognitive and the behavioural components of prisoners' attitudes towards actual participation in restorative justice processes is mediated by the affective component of the attitude. The results of this study indicate that a large percentage of the participants acknowledged that their actions caused harm to a person or people (the victim of the offence and his or her family, the offender's family and/or the community). However, less than a third of the participants reported that the victim was harmed. Fifty-nine per cent of the participants reported emotional harm following their offence, and 45 per cent reported physical harm, while a similar percentage reported economic harm. In addition, the findings indicate great willingness on the part of the participants to express remorse, meet with the victims and volunteer in the community.

The hypothesis regarding the research model was also supported. As hypothesised, a strong positive correlation was found between the participants' thoughts about the victim and the harm caused (the cognitive component) and willingness to participate in a restorative justice process (the behavioural component), and this correlation was mediated by the feelings these thoughts aroused in them (the affective component). This study found that the more that the offender perceived the harm as having more dimensions, the more positive his attitude was towards restorative justice processes.

5.1 Theoretical and practical contributions

This study makes several theoretical and practical contributions. From a theoretical standpoint, the study expands the limited empirical knowledge regarding prisoners' attitudes towards restorative justice processes. The very few studies that have thus far examined prisoners' willingness to participate in restorative justice processes have been conducted in countries where restorative justice is practised (Gavrielides, 2014; Stamatakis & Vandeviver, 2013). In contrast to previous studies, the present study investigates prisoners' readiness and willingness to participate in these processes before they have been exposed to a restorative process or to programmes that raise awareness of the victim and the harm caused to them. Thus, this study adds to and validates the preliminary literature in this realm.

This study also adds to the fundamental discussion in the research literature about the possibility of combining the principles of a conventional criminal justice system with the principles of restorative justice (Wallace & Wylie, 2013; Wheeldon, 2009). Guidoni (2003) argues that as long as we relate to punishment as negative retaliatory sanctions, the incorporation of restorative justice principles into a social institution based on criminal punishment is very problematic. Similarly to the abolitionist approach, he views restorative justice as being in complete contradiction to criminal punishment. In contrast, Duff (2003) suggests

looking at restorative justice not as an alternative to punishment but rather as a different form of punishment. According to this approach, incorporating restorative justice processes during the punishment stage will lead to 'restorative punishment', which has several advantages (Gavrielides, 2014). Acknowledging the concept of 'restorative punishment' and incorporating restorative processes in prisons may be expected to help prisoners to acknowledge the harm they caused and the needs engendered by this harm, to accept responsibility for their offences and 'make amends' in various ways (Mace, 2000; Newell, 2001). Moreover, restorative justice processes can contribute to the prisoners' positive self-image and to improving the social skills necessary for their reintegration into the community. They may even be expected to help the victim of the offence to cope with their feelings of victimhood and reduce the level of fear and hostility in the community in general. Since in its essence the restorative justice process focuses on the harm caused and on redressing it, it is not subject to strict rules but 'tailored' to the needs of the participants. From the victims' point of view, the principles of the restorative justice process enable recognition and validation of the harm and its consequences, as well as vindication – characteristics that are not usually possible in legal proceedings. The restorative justice approach enables focus on the victims, and their wishes and needs, gives them a voice and provides them with the ability to choose and control the process (Aertsen, Bolívar, De Mesmaecker & Lauwers, 2011; Bazemore & Umbreit, 2001; Gustafson, 2005; Hayden & van Wormer, 2013; Van Camp & Wemmers, 2013). All these elements can contribute to the victim's recovery process. Further support for the appropriateness of the restorative justice approach is provided by the study conducted by Gromet and Darley (2009), which investigated public attitudes and found that although the public supports the practice of punishing the offender, people are willing to accept that there is more than one way to do justice. In other words, there is belief among the public that conventional punishment and restorative alternatives can be combined.

Introduction of restorative processes into prisons will enable a wider public of offenders and victims to achieve important goals that are implicit in the process. Limiting the use of restorative justice processes to only specific and unique cases defeats the principal objective of restorative justice since in most cases this approach leaves conventional retributive criminal justice as the preferred default system (Butler & Maruna, 2016; Greene, 2013; Wood, 2015). As Edgar and Newell (2006) have argued, as long as restorative processes and prisons are perceived as opposing punishment systems that cannot be combined, the potential for introducing restorative practices for perpetrators of serious crimes is extremely low. Moreover, the victims of serious offences, too, cannot achieve the benefits implicit in the restorative process, such as emotional rehabilitation and meaningful participation in their cases, with an opportunity to ask the questions that are important for them (Strang et al., 2006).

As described earlier, the present study investigated a model in which the affective component mediates the relationship between the cognitive and behavioural components. Beyond making a theoretical contribution, the model also contributes on a practical level. Previous research in a variety of areas has shown

that by means of cognitive reappraisal, it is possible to change the way a person thinks about an event that arouses emotions, and thus to affect the emotion aroused (Gross, 1998; Gutentag et al., 2017). Cognitive reappraisal has been found to be an effective tactic in emotional regulation, and according to the findings of the present study, this type of regulation is essential to strengthen willingness to participate in restorative processes. For example, the introduction of victim awareness programmes into educational and welfare prison programmes can lead to cognitive reappraisal of the harm caused and its extent, and consequently to emotional regulation, resulting in increased willingness. This is especially pertinent in light of this study's findings that less than one third of the participants acknowledged that the victim was harmed. This finding in itself justifies the need for restorative justice and victim awareness programming in prisons and the criminal justice system in general.

In this context, an additional finding in this study indicates that when prisoners perceive the harm they caused as having more dimensions (physical, economic, emotional), their attitudes towards restorative justice will be more positive. Gavrielides (2014) proposed the division of the restorative process in prisons into two categories: 'preparatory practices' and 'delivery practices'. Preparatory practices include all the unilateral processes, for example offending behaviour programmes and victim awareness programmes. According to Gavrielides, this category can also be viewed as preparation for the second category, delivery practices, which consist of programmes that include direct and indirect meetings between offender and victim, or others who have been harmed by the offence. On the basis of this division, and in light of the findings of this study, it is advisable for prisons to first introduce preparatory practices in order to raise prisoners' consciousness of the extensive harm they caused, and only afterwards, when the level of willingness and readiness has increased, move on to delivery practices. This notion is also consistent with previous study findings supporting implementation of restorative processes towards the end of the prison term, at which time there is greater importance in strengthening prisoners' feelings that they have a support system. This process guides prisoners' behaviour, leading up to their reintegration into the community, and they can also take advantage of the healing possibilities inherent in the victims' acceptance of their apology (O'Brien, 2001; Wallace & Wylie, 2013; Witvliet et al., 2008). The present study validates earlier studies, indicating that there are prisoners who need to heal and make amends for the harm they caused to their victims.

5.2 Limitations

Alongside this study's significant contributions are several limitations that should be addressed in future research. First, the variables were examined using self-report questionnaires. This method may suffer from possible disparities between the participants' statements about their emotional or behavioural tendencies and their actual emotional and behavioural reactions (Holland, Verplanken & Van Knippenberg, 2002). Additionally, the participants' demographic characteristics and cultural context should be addressed. The present study was conducted in prisons in Israel, and most of the participants were religious or tra-

ditional Muslims. In light of the above, it seems that the generalisability of the study's findings and conclusions to other populations with different cultural characteristics is limited. In future research, it would be interesting to examine participants with different demographic characteristics

5.3 Conclusions

This study is the first of its kind conducted in Israel, a country in which there are no restorative justice programmes for adults following sentencing and while serving prison sentences. Hence, the purpose of the study was to examine the prisoners' initial, basic and general attitudes towards restorative justice processes. In future studies, in order to deepen understanding and provide a suitable and appropriate work model, it will be important to examine the attitudes of prisoners towards specific processes, such as victim-offender mediation. To this end, items and questions that focus on the prisoners' attitudes towards their direct victims should be added to the questionnaire. Additionally, it would be interesting in future studies to add a qualitative aspect to the research, for example by conducting interviews with prisoners regarding their attitudes.

In summary, this field study empirically investigated prisoners' self-reported attitudes towards the innovative notion of using restorative justice processes within prisons. Numerous studies have addressed the advantages of restorative justice (Mace, 2000; Newell, 2001) and the effectiveness of these processes, but very few have examined prisoners' willingness to participate in them. This, however, is a pioneering study in Israel and one of the first internationally to empirically investigate prisoners' affective, cognitive and behavioural attitudes. The findings indicate that fertile ground exists for conducting these processes and, as indicated by studies conducted in other countries, prisoners' willingness to participate in these processes is high (Stamatakis & Vandeviver, 2013). It may be concluded from this study that for prisoners to participate cooperatively in the process, their beliefs and thoughts need to change. These changes are likely to affect the prisoners' sense of guilt and shame and may, in turn, affect their actual willingness to participate in these processes. The study also stresses the importance of understanding the extent of the harm caused, since acknowledging the actual harm increases prisoners' willingness to participate in restorative processes.

We hope the present study will open the door for additional studies examining restorative justice processes during incarceration. We also hope that it will encourage implementation of restorative justice processes during incarceration.

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