

Critical evaluation of the use of restorative justice as an out-of-court disposal

Evaluating the use of restorative justice as an out-of-court disposal.

Key details

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Police region	South West
Collaboration and partnership	Restorative Gloucestershire, Gloucestershire Constabulary and University of Gloucestershire. This researcher is supported by the College of Policing bursary scheme .
Level of research	PhD
Project start date	October 2021
Date due for completion	October 2024

Research context

This research project began as a Masters by research and has been upgraded into a PhD. The upgrade into PhD incorporates additional data, including longitudinal data through follow up interviews and secondary statistical data spanning from 2017 to 2021.

Aim

To critically evaluate Gloucestershire Constabulary's development of restorative justice in a new two-tier system of out-of-court disposals.

Objectives

1. To conduct a process evaluation of restorative justice as an out-of-court disposal (OOC) in Gloucestershire.
2. To conduct an outcome evaluation of restorative justice as an OOC in Gloucestershire.
3. To critically evaluate the development and success of restorative disposals within Gloucestershire constabulary's new two-tier system for OOCs.

The project will take a longitudinal view of the use of restorative justice as an OOC in Gloucestershire. This includes reflections of developments up to 2021, the impact of COVID-19 and the proposed introduction of the two-tier system for OOCs.

This will increase the evidence base on restorative justice OOCs and the quality of restorative service in Gloucestershire.

Research methodology

This study uses a qualitative-dominant, multi-method approach to a process and outcome evaluation. It deploys the QUALIPREV process and outcome crime prevention evaluation tool, developed by Rummens and others (2016) and adapted for similar research by [Hobson and others \(2018\)](#).

The QUALIPREV indicators will be used as a structural framework and provide a thematic tool for the subsequent analysis, focusing on the 'implementation, efficiency and effectiveness' of the use of restorative justice as an OOC (Rummens and others, 2016:5).

QUALIPREV uses the following process indicators:

- cost of implementation
- correct implementation
- accessibility

- feasibility
- participation rate (specific groups and general participation)
- retention rate
- external confounding factors

QUALIPREV uses the following outcome indicators:

- crime rate (recorded crime or self-reported)
- victimisation – fear of crime
- changes in attitudes towards offending behaviour (reoffending rates)
- increased social skills
- displacement of crime

For the PhD, the process and outcome evaluation will collect additional data via methodological triangulation, organised and analysed under each of the QUALIPREV headings.

Interim reports or publications

Grant F, Rees E and Hobson J (2019). [Restorative Evaluation – poster for Restorative Gloucester and Gloucestershire Police.](#)