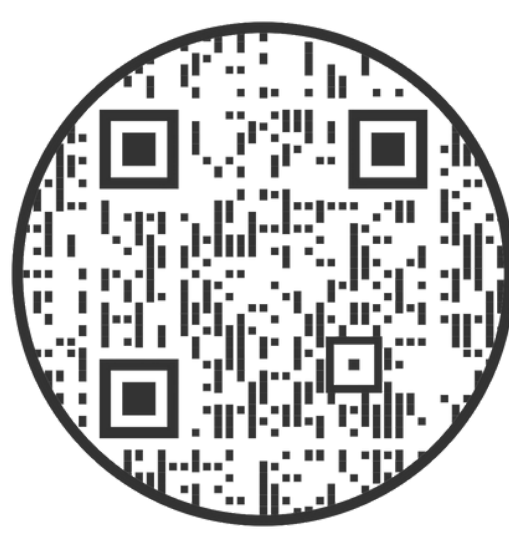


An investigation into police compliance in respect of restorative justice rights within the Victims' Code (2021) at one police force in the north-east.

<p style="text-align: center;">The Research Team</p> <p>I contributed to research with a team across Durham University and Northumbria University which involved: Nikki D'Souza, Donna Marie Brown, Tia Simanovic, Callum Wilson and Sara Ciucci.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Author Rachel Clarke</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Contact information Email: rachel.h.clarke@durham.ac.uk</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Introduction</p> <p>This research examines the extent to which one north-east Police Constabulary fulfils the entitlement under the 2021 Victims' Code, for victims of crime to be informed about restorative justice.</p> <p>The Victims' Code sets out the minimum standard that organisations must provide to victims of crime, focussing on victims' rights.</p> <p>The research team I was involved with was undertaking this as a pilot study, with the hope to widen this to a national project next year.</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;">OBJECTIVE</p> <p>The purpose of the exploratory study was to fill a gap in research and uncover the extent to which the police fulfil the rights under the Victims' Code, as there is no external authority that checks the implementation of these rights.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">METHODOLOGY</p> <p>A mixed methodology was used by the research team such as: interviews, focus groups, survey analysis and quantitative data analysis. My part of the project was focused on the operational police officers, analysing the two online focus groups.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">RESULTS</p> <p>The main outcome was understanding the unanimity in the host Constabulary with restorative justice being viewed as beneficial for victims, and that it should be victim-led. However, there appeared many practical difficulties, namely with time, which may have limited the use of restorative justice.</p>
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<p>Key Findings</p>
<p>1. The role of the Victims' Code in furthering Victims' Rights</p> <p>In the focus groups it was noted by individuals with over 20 years of experience how much victim support has changed since the implementation of the Victims' Code. This shows that the Victims' Code made a positive contribution to furthering victim's rights.</p>
<p>2. Time pressures in completing and responding to training and research evidence</p> <p>Many participants were hesitant over the opening question regarding the victim's rights in the Victims' Code. They did all their training on the Victims' Code online, which was often done in little time and with little attention. The lack of time and pressured environment in the police meant that they reported never using research to inform their practices. Having time allocated and prioritised by superiors could mean that they have more informed policing, which they reported as saying could be useful.</p>
<p>3. The suitability and restorative justice for all victims of crime</p> <p>There were mixed views on whether restorative justice could be appropriate for all victims of all crimes. Some questioned it's use for serious offences, with others questioning why someone should stop a victim from exploring restorative justice. Ultimately all participants agreed that it should be down to the victim whether restorative justice is explored.</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">Conclusion</p> <p>Overall, there appears a desire from the participants to pursue restorative justice, reflective of their wider focus on victim support and victim care in the service.</p> <p>However, they have faced problems in the delivery of restorative justice, with time being pressured in their work as other obligations may be taking priority and restorative justice being quite time-consuming.</p> <p>It was also suggested that time could be allocated to look at the research evidence, to foster more evidence-based policing.</p> <p>Providing a victim-led service is very important to the service, but changes may need to be made to further the practical implementation of restorative justice, but there is a need for further research in this area.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Full report:</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p style="text-align: center;">Acknowledgements:</p> <p>I'd like to express my gratitude to my supervisor Dr Donna Marie Brown, as well as the rest of the research team, for kindly supporting me in the research. I also extend my many thanks to the Durham Laidlaw Team and Laidlaw foundation for giving me the opportunity to do this research.</p>
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