

Bachelor Thesis

**Digital communication in Victim-Offender Mediation (VOM) – The victim's perspective
on the application of video messaging in VOM**

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July 3, 2020

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Abstract

This research explored which group of victims would be willing to participate in a new, digital form of victim-offender mediation (VOM), namely video messaging. This was done by comparing three forms of mediation regarding victims' needs and feelings. It was expected that fear towards the offender and victims' need to share information with the offender positively predict victims' willingness to give a video message, and the need for information is a negative predictor. Moreover, the need to share information was expected to negatively predict participation in letter exchange. Participation in face-to-face mediation was expected to be negatively predicted by fear and positively predicted by the need for information. Fear was also hypothesized to moderate the relation between victims' need to share information and video messaging, and face-to-face mediation. A sample of 111 participants read a crime scenario in which they imagined being a victim and filled in an online survey about their feelings and needs regarding the crime. The concept of VOM, face-to-face mediation, video messaging, and letter exchange were explained to the participants. Participants then indicated their willingness to participate in these forms of VOM. It was found that fear was no significant predictor of victims' willingness to give a video message. However, fear negatively predicted participation in face-to-face mediation. Moreover, fear did not influence the relationship between participants' need to share information and their willingness to participate in video messaging or in face-to-face mediation. Against expectations, victims' need to share information positively predicted both victims' willingness to participate in video messaging and letter exchange. Also, the need for information unexpectedly predicted both victims' willingness to participate in face-to-face mediation and video messaging positively. This research gives new insights to victims' willingness to participate in a new, digital form of VOM, namely video messaging, which might be valuable for practice.

word count: 301

Introduction

Restorative justice

The traditional, retributive justice system has received a lot of critique over the years. It has often been criticised that retributive justice solely focuses on punishing the offender as a means of dealing with crimes (Wenzel, Okimoto, Feather, & Platow, 2008). However, it fails to consider the needs of the involved parties, especially victims' needs (Wenzel, et al., 2008). Criticism of the retributive justice system has led to the emergence of a new form of justice, namely restorative justice. In comparison to retributive justice, restorative justice emphasizes the active, direct involvement of all affected parties during the court process. This means that it lays importance on the needs of all involved parties (Choi, Green, & Kapp, 2010; Wards & Langlards, 2009). Rather than only focusing on punishing the offender, restorative justice aims at repairing individual harm and at restoring the relationship between the offender, the victim, and the community (Wards & Langlards, 2009).

The most common approach to the practice of restorative justice is victim-offender mediation (VOM), which has gained increasing recognition all around the world (Umbreit & Amour, 2011, Hansen & Umbreit, 2018). VOM gives victims and offenders the opportunity to get in contact after a crime and to engage in a conversation (e.g., Hansen & Umbreit, 2018; Bonensteffen, Zebel, & Giebels, 2020). It is a voluntary process and only takes place if both victim and offender give their consent (Umbreit, Coates, & Vos, 2004). VOM gives victims and offenders the possibility to exchange thoughts and feelings regarding the offense in a secure environment and with the support of one or more mediator(s) (e.g., Umbreit, et al. 2004; Bonensteffen, et al., 2020). By participating in VOM, victims can let the offender know how the offense has affected them and ask questions regarding the offense, while offenders can take responsibility for their actions by offering an apology or restitution to the victim (Hansen & Umbreit, 2018; Umbreit, et al., 2004).

Past research on victim-offender mediation (VOM) showed that VOM is more effective than retributive justice with regards to different aspects (Latimer, Dowden, & Muisse, 2005). For example, it has been shown that both victims and offenders seem to be highly satisfied with the mediation (Umbreit, et al., 2004). Victims often reported that they were better able to cope with their situation after participating in VOM (Wemmers & Canuto, 2002). Moreover, a reduction in recidivism and in the severity of future offenses has been shown to be an outcome of victim-offender mediation (VOM) (Umbreit, et al., 2004).

Victims' feelings and needs

Fear and anger towards the offender after a crime

Victims can experience a range of different negative emotions after victimization. Becoming a victim is an emotional experience that often leads to experience negative feelings such as being anxious, depressed, or upset (Wemmers, 2002). While victims try to deal with their experience of becoming victimized, they often feel stressed, confused, or angry (Paul & Schenck-Hamlin, 2017). Victimization can elicit feelings of insecurity and vulnerability in the victim, which make him or her feel the need to restore his or her security (Wemmers, 2002). Moreover, victims frequently report the need for emotional support after a crime. Victims indicate that they feel the need to talk to someone about their experience and to receive emotional support (Wemmers, 2002). Furthermore, victims fear to meet their offender in person again and are afraid to be re-victimized such as through retaliation by the offender (Wemmers & Canuto, 2002; Hansen & Umbreit, 2018).

The need to become empowered

Becoming victimized threatens victims' feelings of agency (Shnabel & Nadler, 2015). When their feelings of agency are threatened, victims often feel powerless or that they have lost control (Shnabel, Nadler, Ullrich, Dovidio, & Carmi, 2009). Consequently, victims feel the need to restore their agency, for example, by engaging in power-seeking behavior (Shnabel & Nadler, 2008). According to Shabel and Nadler's (2015) needs-based model of reconciliation, empowerment by the offender such as through an apology or responsibility-taking can restore a victim's sense of agency. Restoring victim's feelings of agency is not only seen of importance in the healing process but might also be promoted by participating in VOM (Umbreit & Greenwood, 2000). For example, Bonensteffen, et al. (2020) suggest that an apology by the offender during mediation has a positive effect on the victim's feelings of agency. A sincere apology is seen as an important means to compensate for the harm inflicted on the victim and to ensure victims' satisfaction with the mediation (Choi & Severson, 2009; Bonensteffen, et al., 2020).

The need to let the offender know about the aftermath of the crime

Victims often feel the need to tell how the crime has affected them (Zehr, 2003). Within the context of a justice process, Herman (2003) suggests that it is of importance to give victims the possibility to talk about their view of the crime in a preferred setting. This allows victims to decide to which extent they want to expose themselves to their trauma again (Herman, 2003).

Nevertheless, telling their own personal story of the offense was shown to be an effective way of coping with trauma and is seen as an essential component of the healing process (Caplan & Turner, 2007; Zehr, 2003). Besides that, victims often report that they feel the need to share their experience with the offender and to show how the crime has affected them (Wemmers & Canuto, 2002; Hansen & Umbreit, 2018). Several victims reported the desire to let the offender know how the crime has affected them as a reason to participate in victim-offender mediation (Wemmers & Canuto, 2002).

The need for information

After a crime, victims also often report a need for information (e.g., Kippers, 2015, Ten Boom & Kuijpers, 2012). Victims who feel that they need information might be confused about what happened to them and want to be informed about different aspects of the crime. This involves that victims often want to know what exactly happened or why the offender committed the crime (Wemmers & Canuto, 2002; Ten Boom & Kuijpers, 2012). Moreover, victims reported that they would like to know what kind of person the offender is (Wemmers & Canuto, 2002). Besides that, the need for information also compasses victims' desire to be involved by receiving information about the process of the case (Ten Boom & Kuijpers, 2012). Victims desire to be actively involved in legal proceedings and that their needs are recognized during the process (Ten Boom & Kuijpers, 2012). In the context of this research, the need for information defines victims' need to receive information about the offense, the motives, and the offender himself directly from the offender.

Existing forms of mediation

The different needs of victims might be fulfilled by participating in one of the various forms of victim-offender mediation. The most common forms of mediation are face-to-face mediation, shuttle mediation, and letter exchange. The three forms of VOM differ in richness, which is described by Dainton and Zelle (2014, as cited in van Dijk, 2016) as the capacity of a medium to transport information. The richness of a medium comprises "the medium's capacity for immediate feedback, the number of cues and channels utilized, personalization, and language variety" (Daft & Lengel, 1986, p.560).

Swaab, Galinsky, Medvec, and Diermeier (2012) have presented their richness approach to communication channels along four communication dimensions: face-to-face and text-based, and synchronous and asynchronous. According to Swaab, et al. (2012), a medium can be either synchronous or asynchronous which refers to its ability to provide direct feedback. The other

dimension refers to the medium's ability to provide cues such as sight and sound (Swaab, et al., 2012). Therefore, a rich communication channel can be defined as one that is synchronous and provides several cues (Swaab, et al., 2012).

In the context of VOM, face-to-face mediation is the richest form of mediation as it offers direct feedback and the most cues compared to other forms of mediation (Daft & Lengel, 1986; Swaab, et al., 2012; Kippers, 2015). Face-to-face mediation facilitates the conversation between victim and offender as there is access to the other person's non-verbal behavior, facial expressions, and voice (Swaab, et al., 2012; Kippers, 2015). This also limits the possibility of misinterpretations (Swaab, et al., 2012). Moreover, this form of mediation is synchronous, which means that one person can immediately give and receive feedback from the other person (Swaab, et al., 2012; Kippers, 2015). In shuttle mediation, a mediator communicates the information between both parties (Umbreit, et al. 2004). Therefore, there are fewer cues regarding the behavior and emotions of the other party which might lead to misinterpretations (Swaab, et al., 2012). Moreover, there might pass some time until one person receives a response from the other party which limits the ease of communication and might lead to misinterpretations (Swaab, et al., 2012). The same accounts for letter exchange (Kippers, 2015). A letter is also an asynchronous communication mean and, thus, does not allow for direct feedback (Swaab, et al., 2012; Kippers, 2015). Moreover, a letter increases the chance for miscommunication as the reader only has access to a limited number of cues (Swaab, et al., 2012; Kippers, 2015).

Reasons for victims' (non)-participation in VOM

Even though victims can participate in several forms of VOM, participation rates only vary from 40 – 60% (Hansen & Umbreit, 2018). Alongside other reasons for participating in VOM, victims reported their need to let the offender know how the crime has affected them and their need for information as reasons to participate in VOM (Wemmers & Canuto, 2002). However, victims also had other reasons such as restitution by the offender to participate in VOM (Wemmers & Canuto, 2002). Still, many victims refuse to get in contact with their offenders for various reasons (Hansen & Umbreit, 2018). For example, victims most often reported that their fear towards the offender was a reason for them to not participate in VOM (Wemmers & Canuto, 2002; Hansen & Umbreit, 2018). Besides that, victims refused to participate because they did not want to see the offender again or merely thought that mediation would not have any impact on their situation (Wemmers & Canuto, 2002).

Both victims and offenders who participated in VOM report high satisfaction rates with

VOM (Umbreit, et al., 2004). However, participation rates contradict these findings (Hansen & Umbreit, 2018). This suggests that victims might not be completely satisfied with the existing forms of mediation and, therefore, do not choose to participate. To increase the participation rate in VOM, Hansen and Umbreit (2018) suggest that more research is needed regarding its practice. Research might be needed that investigates whether the existing forms of mediation can satisfy the needs of all types of victims. Victims often prefer indirect forms of mediation as these involve less confrontation with the offender (Wemmers & Canuto, 2002). However, these indirect forms are less rich in information (e.g., Kippers, 2015). Thus, they might have limitations in fulfilling the needs of all types of victims after a crime. Overall, it might be valuable to consider exploring new forms of mediation that combine indirect mediation with a rich communication channel. Digital communication might provide this opportunity. Therefore, it should be evaluated for which group of victims digital communication might be beneficial but also whether it has limitations in meeting victims' needs. Thereby, it should be considered that victims and offenders can differ in their needs and expectations towards VOM.

Video messaging as a means of communication in VOM

Research on digital communication as a means of communication in victim-offender mediation (VOM) is still in the beginning. Therefore, this research focuses on the evaluation of video messaging as a possible, new form of victim-offender mediation (VOM). The central question of this research is: Which group of victims might choose to give a video message to the offender as a form of victim-offender mediation?

Kippers (2015) has presented different communication means used in victim-offender mediation (VOM) along the four communication dimensions introduced by Swaab, et al. (2012). According to Kippers (2015), giving a video message falls into the category of face-to-face communication. A video message might be seen as similar to face-to-face mediation as it also has the advantage that more cues are given, such as a person's non-verbal behavior or voice, which make it easier for the other person to interpret emotions accurately (Swaab, et al., 2012, Kippers, 2015). However, victims and offenders are not truly face-to-face during mediation. Therefore, Kippers (2015) and Swaab, et al. (2012) categorized video messaging as an asynchronous form of communication. In the context of VOM, this means that the person receiving the video message cannot give direct feedback to the other person such as in answering or asking questions (Swaab, et al., 2012; Kippers, 2015). Thus, there is no immediate response which can limit the ease of communication and makes misinterpretations more likely (Swaab, et al., 2012). This might be a limitation of video messaging. However, video messaging might be a 'richer',

indirect form of mediation compared to the existing forms such as letter exchange or shuttle mediation, which might have its advantages.

Video messaging as a form of victim-offender mediation (VOM) might not satisfy the needs of all victims as it has its limitations. However, there might be groups of victims that benefit from giving a video message to the offender. There are several victims who choose indirect forms of mediation as it is too confronting for them to meet the offender face-to-face (Wemmers & Canuto, 2002; Shapland et al., 2008). Especially victims who experience extreme negative emotions, such as fear towards the offender, might benefit from video messaging as a form of mediation. According to Hansen and Umbreit (2018), it is important that a victim feels free to express his or her emotions during victim-offender mediation. Giving a video message might offer this group of victims a secure environment to express their feelings as they do not directly meet the offender face-to-face. This might also prevent victims from the risk of being re-victimized, which results in experiencing emotions related to the offense all over again (Wemmers, 2002). Therefore, it is expected that:

H₁: Fear towards the offender positively predicts victims' willingness to give a video message but negatively predicts participation in face-to-face mediation.

The findings have also shown that one of the victims' needs is to let the offender know how the crime has affected them (Wemmers & Canuto, 2002; Zehr, 2013; Hansen & Umbreit, 2018). By giving a video message to the offender, the victim would have this opportunity without meeting the offender face-to-face. This might be especially useful for participants who highly fear meeting the offender and perceive it as very stressful. Sharing their own story about the crime in a video message without the offender being present might help victims to feel more secure. Feeling secure might help victims to be more open and honest about their thoughts and feelings regarding the crime, which they might not be brave enough to mention in the presence of the offender (Caplan & Turner, 2007). Moreover, they also have more control over how they present themselves to the offender (Caplan & Turner, 2007).

Compared to a letter, a video message might give the victim more space for personalization of the message towards the offender (e.g., Swaab, et al, 2012). A video message allows the victim to use more cues (e.g., non-verbal behavior, voice, emotions) when explaining their thoughts and feelings to the offender and limits misinterpretations (e.g., Swaab, et al, 2012). Based on the literature, the following two hypotheses are proposed:

H₂: The need to let the offender know how the crime has affected them positively predicts victims' willingness to give a video message to the offender but negatively predicts participation in letter exchange.

H₃: Victims' need to let the offender know how the crime has affected them positively predicts victims' willingness to give a video message but negatively predicts victims' willingness to participate in face-to-face mediation, which is influenced by fear.

- a. The relation between victims' need to let the offender know how the crime has affected them and victims' willing to give a video message to the offender is positively influenced by fear (moderation).*
- b. The relation between victims' need to let the offender know how the crime has affected them and their willingness to participate in face-to-face mediation is negatively influenced by fear (moderation).*

Nevertheless, there might be victims' needs that might not be satisfied, such as the need for information. It could be argued that giving a video message to the offender might not satisfy victims who have a high need for information, because they do not receive direct feedback from the offender (Kippers, 2015). Therefore, victims with a high need for information might be more likely to participate in richer forms of mediation such as face-to-face mediation which offers immediate feedback (e.g., Swaab, et al., 2012; Kippers, 2015). Therefore, it is hypothesized that:

H₄: The need for information positively predicts victims' willingness to participate in face-to-face mediation but negatively predicts victims' willingness to participate in video messaging.

Theoretical model

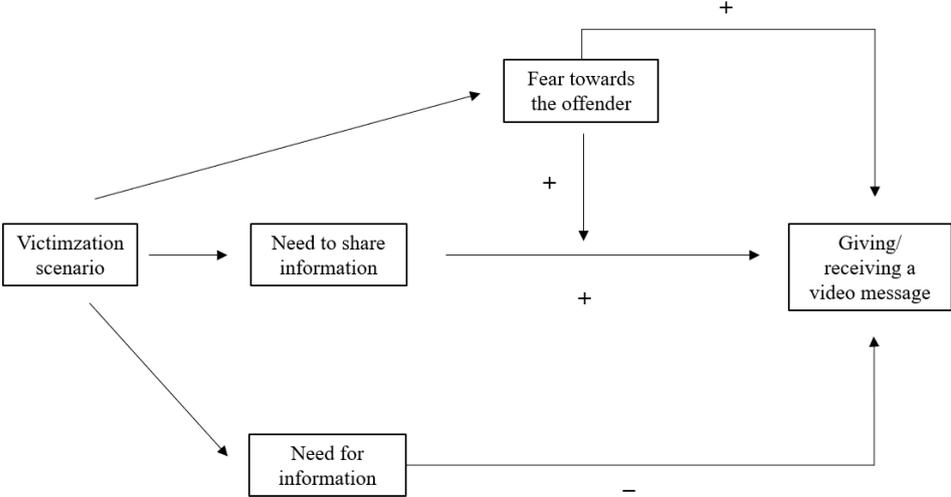


Figure 1. Proposed research model of the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable willingness to participate in video messaging

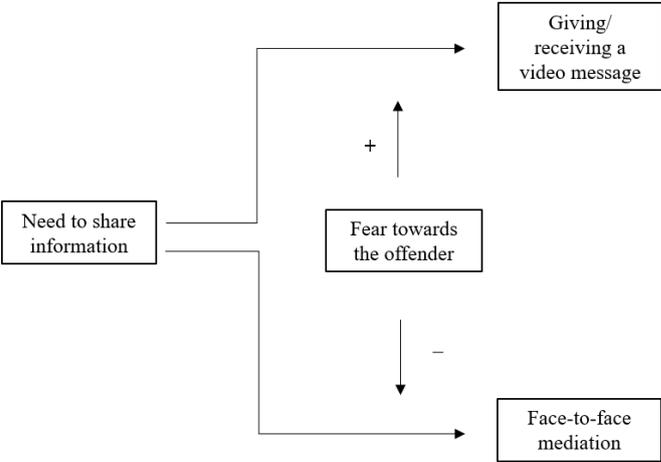


Figure 2. Proposed influence of fear towards the offender on the relationship between victims' need to share information and victims' willingness to participate in face-to-face mediation and video messaging

Methods

Design

To test the hypotheses, a correlational survey design was chosen in which the independent and dependent variables were measured. The independent variables were fear towards the offender, the need to share information (i.e. the need to let the offender know how the crime has affected oneself), and the need for information. The three dependent variables were victims' willingness to participate in face-to-face mediation, video messaging, and letter exchange.

Participants

A sample of 141 participants, consisting of students from the University of Twente and persons of the researcher's social network, have been recruited through convenience sampling. Students from the University of Twente could participate via the SONA system, where they would earn credits for their participation. However, 30 participants had to be excluded from the data set which resulted in a total number of 111 participants. 28 participants did not complete the survey and another participant did not give his/her consent in the beginning of the survey. One participant was under the age of 18 and, therefore, had to be excluded from the sample. Participants age ranged from 18 to 65 ($M = 28,93$; $SD = 12,59$). 72% ($N = 80$) of participants were female and 27% ($N = 30$) were male. There was one participant characterizing as another gender. 75% ($N = 83$) of the participants were German, one participant was Dutch (1%), and 24% had another nationality ($N = 27$). Most participant had a high school degree ($N = 61$; 56%).

All participants took the same questionnaire. Participants had to digitally sign an informed consent before proceeding with the questionnaire. This research has been approved by the Ethics Committee of the Behavioural, Management and Social Sciences (BMS) Faculty.

Materials

An online survey was designed using the software Qualtrics. The questionnaire contained an informed consent (Appendix A) and a scenario (Appendix B). Additionally, it contained a total number of 50 items, one optional open question, and additional texts (see Appendix B). The survey took approximately 10 minutes to complete.

Crime scenario

All participants read a scenario in which they were asked to take the perspective of a victim experiencing a violent robbery. The scenario is an adaptation from a scenario that has

already been used by Kippers (2015), van Dijk (2016), and Bonensteffen (2018). The scenario was translated from Dutch and small adjustments have been made.

It is Friday night and you want to withdraw some money before you go to town. As you walk to the ATM, it is quiet, and the streets are empty. You take your money from the machine and put it in your wallet. Suddenly, you hear someone shouting and you feel a hard hit on your head. You stumble and see a man approaching you with a gun. He points the gun at you, screaming that he wants your money. You see no other option than giving him your wallet. The stranger grabs your wallet and runs away. He leaves you shocked. You feel blood running down your face and recognize a wound on your head. After a few minutes you see another person coming by to help you. Together you call the police and you are taken to the hospital. After the robbery, you feel scared and you are more attentive. The next day, the police interrogates you and you give them a description of the offender. Sometime later, the police managed to arrest the offender based on your description. The offender has been convicted.

Explanation of VOM and its forms

Participants were presented with a written text, saying that they received a call from a mediator of a VOM organization and that they would be a candidate for VOM. In the text, VOM, specifically its procedure and purpose, was explained to the participants. Afterwards, different forms of mediation, namely face-to-face mediation, giving a video message, and letter exchange, were shortly explained to the participants.

Variables

All variables were measured using a 5-point Likert scale which ranged from ‘Strongly agree’ (5) to ‘Strongly disagree’ (1). A factor analysis showed that all items/scales had only one factor with an Eigenvalue > 1. Therefore, all items/scales showed construct validity.

Independent variables.

Fear towards the offender. Fear towards the offender was measured with five items ($\alpha=.81$). Participants should indicate to which extent they agree with statements like “Imagining being a victim, when I think about the offender, I would feel nervous.” The items were translated from Dutch and adapted from van Dijk (2016).

Need to share information with the offender. The need to let the offender know how the crime has affected the victim was assessed with five items ($\alpha=.89$). Participants were asked

to imply to which extent they agree with statements like “Imagining being a victim, after the offense, I want to tell the offender how I feel”.

Need for information. The need for information was measured with four items ($\alpha=.78$). With need for information, victims’ need to receive information from the offender about the crime was assessed. Participants indicated to which extent they agree with statements like “Imagining being a victim, after the offense, I want to know why the offender has committed the crime”.

Dependent variables.

Victims’ willingness to participate in face-to-face mediation, video messaging, and letter exchange. Participants willingness to participate in face-to-face mediation, video messaging, and letter exchange was measured with four items each. Participants were asked to indicate to which extent they agree with statements like “I would like to meet the offender in person” or “I would like to send a video message to the offender”.

A reliability analysis was conducted for all three scales. The analysis showed a Cronbach’s alpha of .88 for face-to-face mediation and a Cronbach’s alpha .84 for video messaging. Cronbach’s alpha for letter exchange was .86. Therefore, Cronbach’s alpha indicated a good reliability for all three scales.

Additional variables.

Anger towards the offender. Besides fear, it was also checked for anger towards the offender. Anger towards the offender was assessed with five items ($\alpha=.77$). These items were also translated from Dutch and adapted from van Dijk (2016). Participants indicated to which extent they agree with statements like “Imagining being a victim, when I think about the offender, I would feel angry.”

Anonymity. It was additionally assessed, to which extent victims would like to stay anonymous when giving a video message. Participants should indicate to which extent they agree with five items like “As a victim, imagining recording a video message for the offender, I do not want to show my face to the offender”($\alpha=.84$).

Other needs. Some additional needs that might play a role in deciding for a mediation form have been assessed with five items ($\alpha=.86$). Overall, these items measured the need to meet the offender in person, for example, to look him in the eye or see his emotions. Participants

rated to which extent they agree with statements like “Imagining getting in contact with the offender, I want to look the offender in the eye”.

Final choice of form(s) of VOM. The final choice of VOM form(s) was assessed after measuring all independent, dependent, and additional variables. Participants were asked to make a final choice about whether they would like to give or receive a video message, participate in face-to-face mediation or letter exchange, or if they do not want to participate in mediation. The final choice of VOM form(s) was assessed with five “yes or no” questions. Participants could choose more than one form of VOM.

Control variables. To control whether participants could imagine themselves in the role of the victim, four items were included. Participants were asked to indicate to which extent they agree with statements like “I could imagine myself in the role of the victim”. However, a reliability analysis identified a questionable reliability as Cronbach’s alpha was .65. Excluding an item did not increase the scales reliability. Most participants scored in the middle to upper part of the scale, which indicates a moderate score on the control question ($M=3,84$; $SD=0,76$). This means that most of the participants were able to imagine themselves in the role of the victim during the survey.

Demographic questions. Participants were asked to indicate their age, gender, nationality, and highest completed education at the end of the survey.

Procedure

The survey was designed with Qualtrics. Therefore, participants received a link that redirected them to the online survey. All participants read the informed consent, in which they received information regarding the procedure and purpose of the study. However, incomplete information about the purpose of the research was given to them to prevent bias. Moreover, participants were debriefed that the survey is anonymous and voluntary and that they can withdraw from the study at any time. They were asked to digitally sign the informed consent before proceeding with the scenario. The participants were asked to read the scenario carefully and to imagine themselves in the role of the victim. Afterwards, participants were asked to answer questions regarding their emotions and needs. This included questions regarding their anger and fear towards the offender, their need to let the offender know how the crime has affected them, and their need for information. Moreover, participants should answer some questions regarding some additional needs.

After answering these questions, participants were informed that they were a candidate

to participate in VOM. Participants were presented a text which explained VOM to them. Three different forms of VOM were presented and shortly explained to them (face-to-face mediation, video message, letter exchange). Following these explanations, participants were asked to indicate to which extent they would be willing to participate in these three forms of mediation. Moreover, participants filled in questions regarding their need to stay anonymous when giving a video message. Participants should also make a final choice about whether they would like to receive or give a video message, to participate in face-to-face mediation, or letter exchange, or if they do not want to participate in mediation.

Subsequently, participants were asked to indicate to what extent they could imagine themselves in the role of the victim. Lastly, they answered some demographic questions regarding their age, gender, nationality, and education. At the end of the survey, participants received the withheld information concerning the purpose of the study.

Results

Overview of the data - Descriptive statistics and correlations

Mean and standard deviations of all variables were depicted by descriptive statistics. Fear towards the offender measured after the victimization scenario had a mean score of 4,04 ($SD=0,76$) while anger towards the offender had a mean score of 3,83 ($SD=0,76$). Moreover, the need for information showed a mean score of 3,68 ($SD=0,99$) while the need to share information had a mean score of 2,92 ($SD=1,09$).

Furthermore, the willingness to engage in face-to-face mediation showed the highest mean ($M=3,68$, $SD=0,99$), followed by video messaging ($M=2,59$, $SD=1,08$), and letter exchange ($M=2,46$, $SD=1,12$). Frequencies of the final choice of the form(s) of VOM showed how many times each form of VOM, including no mediation, have been chosen by the participants. Participants had the possibility to choose more than one form of VOM. In total, 65 (35%) participants chose to take part in face-to-face mediation. 42 (22%) participants indicated that they would like to receive a video message from the offender while 26 (14%) participants wanted to give a video message to the offender. Additionally, 28 (15%) participants chose to do a letter exchange and 26 (14%) participants did not want to participate in mediation. This means that most participants were willing to participate in face-to-face mediation and the least in letter exchange. Within the category of video messaging, more people were willing to receive a video message than they were willing to give one to the offender.

Table 1 shows the correlations and mean scores including SD of all measures. *Fear towards the offender* had a negative significant correlation with *victims' willingness to participate in face-to-face mediation* ($r = -.22, p < 0.01$). Furthermore, there was a significant positive correlation between *fear towards the offender* and *victims' willingness to participate in letter exchange* ($r = .26, p < 0.01$). However, correlation analysis showed a non-significant correlation between *fear towards the offender* and *victims' willingness to participate in video messaging* ($r = .11, p = .25$).

Moreover, a positive correlation between *fear towards the offender* and need for information was shown by a correlation analysis ($r = .41, p < 0.01$). However, the analysis showed a non-significant correlation between *fear towards the offender* and the *need to share information* ($r = .08, p = .40$).

Furthermore, a correlation analysis demonstrated a significant positive correlation between the independent variable *need to share information* with all three dependent variables (*victims' willingness to participate in* (1) *face-to-face mediation*, (2) *video messaging*, (3) *letter exchange*; $r = .31, p < 0.01$; ; $r = .45, p < 0.01$; ; $r = .31, p < 0.01$). The strongest correlation was identified between *need to share information* and *victims' willingness to participate in video messaging*.

Lastly, there was a significant positive correlation between the independent variable need for information and all three dependent variables. The *need for information* had the strongest correlation with *victims' willingness to participate in face-to-face mediation* ($r = .26, p < 0.01$), followed by their correlation with *victims' willingness to participate in video messaging* ($r = .24, p < 0.05$). The weakest correlation was between need for information and *victims' willingness to participate in letter exchange* ($r = .21, p < 0.05$). However, there were only very small differences in correlations between the need for information and the three dependent variables. Thus, the correlations can be assumed to be equally strong.

Table 1.

Descriptive of main variables including their correlations (Pearson's correlation coefficient)

	N	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Fear towards the offender	111	4.04	.76	-	.08	.41**	-.22*	.11	.26**	.24*	.13	.11
2. Need to share information	111	2.92	1.09	.08	-	.39**	.31**	.45**	.31**	-.05	-.46**	.29**
3. Need for information	111	3.68	.99	.41**	.39**	-	.26**	.24*	.21*	.03	-.10	.45**
4. Willingness to participate in face-to-face mediation	111	3.46	1.20	-.22*	.31**	.26**	-	.18	-.08	-.20*	-.67**	.60**
5. Willingness to participate in video messaging	111	2.59	1.08	.11	.45**	.24*	.18	-	.29**	-.03	-.13	.17
6. Willingness to participate in letter exchange	111	2.46	1.12	.26**	.31**	.21*	-.08	.29**	-	.11	-.02	.04
7. Anger	111	3.83	.76	.24*	-.05	.03	-.20*	-.03	.11	-	.15	.11
8. Need for anonymity	111	3.21	1.10	.13	-.46**	-.10	-.67**	-.13	-.02	.15	-	-.33**
9. Additional needs (i.e. the need to see the offender in person)	111	3.68	.99	.11	.29**	.45**	.60**	.17	.04	.11	-.33**	-

Note. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$. All items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale.

Hypothesis testing

Fear towards the offender and victims' willingness to participate in face-to-face mediation or video messaging

It was predicted that fear towards the offender positively predicts victims' willingness to give a video message but negatively predicts victims' willingness to participate in face-to-face mediation (H₁). A multivariate regression analysis was conducted with *fear towards the offender* as the independent variable and *victims' willingness to participate in video messaging* and *face-to-face mediation* as the dependent variables. The analysis showed a non-significant relationship between *fear* and *victims' willingness to participate in video messaging* ($B = .16$, $SE = .14$, $t = 1.19$, $p = .24$). This suggests that fear towards the offender is no significant predictor of participants' willingness to participate in video messaging.

However, a significant negative relationship between *fear* and *victims' willingness to participate in face-to-face mediation* was observed ($B = -.34$, $SE = .15$, $t = -2.31$, $p < 0.05$). This implies that participants who reported a higher fear towards the offender were less willing to participate in face-to-face mediation. The results are in support of the first hypothesis. Nevertheless, the first hypothesis could only be partly confirmed.

Victims' need to share information and victims' willingness to participate in video messaging or letter exchange

It was hypothesized that the need to let the offender know how the crime has affected them positively predicts victims' willingness to give a video message to the offender but negatively predicts victims' willingness to participate in letter exchange (H₂). A multivariate regression analysis was conducted to test whether the independent variable *need to share information* is a significant predictor of the dependent variables *victims' willingness to participate in video messaging* and *letter exchange*. A significant model was observed, indicating that the *need to share information* accounts for a significant proportion of variance in the dependent variable *video messaging* ($F(1,109) = 16.80$, $p < 0.001$), with an adjusted R^2 of .20, and in the dependent variable *letter exchange* ($F(1,109) = 11.52$, $p = 0.001$), with an adjusted R^2 of .09.

The analysis showed a significant relationship between the *need to share information* and *video messaging* ($B = .45$, $SE = .09$, $t = 5.32$, $p < 0.001$), and the *need to share information* and *letter exchange* ($B = .32$, $SE = .09$, $t = 3.39$, $p = 0.001$). This indicates that the need to share information positively predicts both dependent variables. In other words, participants who

reported a higher need to let the offender know how the crime has affected them were more willing to participate in video messaging. Against expectations, participants who reported a higher need to tell the offender how the crime has affected them were also more willing to participate in letter exchange. Thus, the second hypothesis could only be partly confirmed.

The influence of fear

Moreover, it was predicted that victims' need to let the offender know how the crime has affected them positively predicts victims' willingness to give a video message but negatively predicts victims' willingness to participate in face-to-face mediation, which is influenced by fear (H_3). By testing H_2 , it was already shown that the *need to share information* is a significant, positive predictor of *victims' willingness to participate in video messaging* ($B=.45$, $SE=.09$, $t=5.32$, $p<0.001$). Additionally, a regression analysis was performed to test whether the independent variable *need to share information* is a significant predictor of the dependent variable *victims' willingness to participate in face-to-face mediation*. Against expectations, the analysis showed a significant, positive relationship between the *need to share information* and *victims' willingness to participate in face-to-face mediation* ($B=.35$, $SE=.09$, $t=3.45$, $p=0.001$). This means that victims' need to let the offender know how the crime has affected them positively predicts victims' willingness to participate in face-to-face mediation. In other words, participants who reported a higher need to share information with the offender were more willing to participate in face-to-face mediation.

To test the moderation effect of fear, the third hypothesis has been divided into two sub-hypotheses ($H_{3a}+H_{3b}$). A moderation analysis was conducted with *fear towards the offender* as a moderator of the relation between *need to share information* and *victims' willingness to participate in video messaging* (H_{3a}). Two models with the uncentered variables were fitted. Model 1 tested the effect of the independent and moderating variable on the dependent variable. The first model showed to be significant ($R^2=.21$, $F(2,110)=14.55$, $p<0.001$). In Model 2, the interaction effect between victims' *need to share information* and *fear towards the offender* was added. Model 2 was also significant ($R^2=.24$, $F(3,110)=10.32$, $p<0.001$). However, no significant R^2 change could be observed in Model 2 (R^2 change=.12, $p=0.2$), indicating that fear is no significant moderator of the relationship between participants' need to share information and their willingness to participate in video messaging. Therefore, H_{3a} was rejected.

A second moderation analysis was performed to evaluate the influence of the moderator *fear towards the offender* on the relation between the independent variable *need to share information* and the dependent variable *willingness to participate in face-to-face mediation*

(H_{3b}). Again, two models with the uncentered variables were fitted. Both models showed to be significant ($R^2 = .18$, $F(2,110)=10,05$, $p<0,001$; $R^2 = .17$, $F(3,110)=7,41$, $p<0,001$). However, the results showed no significant R^2 change, when adding the interaction effect to Model 2 (R^2 change = .02, $p=0.17$). This means that fear is no significant moderator of the relation between victims' need to share information and their willingness to participate in face-to-face mediation. Therefore, H_{3b} was also rejected.

Victims' need to receive information from the offender and their willingness to participate in face-to-face mediation or video messaging

Furthermore, it was expected that the need for information positively predicts victims' willingness to participate in face-to-face mediation but negatively predicts victims' willingness to participate in video messaging (H₄). A multivariate regression analysis was conducted to test whether the independent variable *need for information* is a significant predictor of *victims' willingness to participate in face-to-face mediation* and *video messaging* as the dependent variables. The analysis revealed a significant model, indicating that the *need for information* explains a significant proportion of variance in the dependent variable *face-to-face mediation* ($F(1,109)=16,80$, $p<0,001$), with an adjusted R^2 of .20, and in the dependent variable *video messaging* ($F(1,109)=11,52$, $p=0,001$), with an adjusted R^2 of .09.

A significant relationship between the independent variable *need for information* and *victims' willingness to participate in face-to-face mediation* ($B = .32$, $SE = .11$, $t = 2,79$, $p < 0.01$), and the *need for information* and *victims' willingness to participate in video messaging* ($B = .26$, $SE = .10$, $t = 2,53$, $p < 0.05$) were observed. This suggests that participants who reported a higher need for information were more willing to participate in face-to-face mediation but unexpectedly also more willing to participate in video messaging. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis could only be partly confirmed.

Additional results

The role of anonymity when giving a video message

Descriptive statistics displayed a moderate level of the need to stay anonymous among participants ($M=3,21$, $SD=1,10$). This suggests that participants were more likely to have the need to stay anonymous while recording a video message than having the need to reveal their face and body to the offender.

Other needs and the choice of mediation form

Descriptive statistics showed a moderate to high level of other needs (i.e., the need to meet the offender in person) as most participants scored on the middle to upper part of this scale ($M=3,68$, $SD=0,99$). This means that most participants had the need to meet the offender to look him/her in the eye, see his/her reactions, confronting themselves and to show their emotions to the offender. Moreover, a correlation analysis showed a significant positive correlation between these other needs and the willingness to participate in face-to-face mediation ($r= .60$, $p < 0.01$). Therefore, this suggest that victims with a high level of these needs are more likely to be willing to participate in face-to-face mediation.

Discussion

Victim-offender mediation has gained increasing recognition over the past decades (Umbreit & Amour, 2011, Hansen & Umbreit, 2018). In contrast to retributive justice, victims receive more recognition in restorative justice. Restorative justice emphasizes the involvement of victims and recognition of their needs during their process (Choi, et al., 2010; Wards & Langlards, 2009). However, still, a great number of victims and offenders refuse to participate in VOM (Hansen & Umbreit, 2018). This suggests that VOM still might not fully meet the needs of victims and offenders. Therefore, this research explored some of the victims' emotions and needs after a crime that might play a role in deciding to take part in VOM or not. The focus of this research was on victims' fear towards the offender, their need to share information, and victims' need for information.

Digital communication has become an important factor in many areas of life. This also includes the field of restorative justice. This research explored a new, digital form of mediation, namely video messaging. Specifically, this research investigated which group of victims would be willing to choose to give a video message to the offender. This was done by considering which emotions and needs might influence the choice of the mediation form. In this research, it was examined if fear towards the offender, the need to share information, and the need for information predict victims' willingness to participate in three forms of VOM, namely face-to-face mediation, video messaging, and letter exchange. Comparisons between the three forms of mediation were made with regard to the victims' needs.

Discussion of the results

The role of fear in choosing a mediation form

Previous research suggested that fear towards the offender is a central factor for non-participation in VOM (Wemmers & Canuto, 2002; Hansen & Umbreit, 2018). It was suggested that video messaging as a new, digital form of VOM might be especially valuable for victims who report high levels of fear as there is no direct confrontation with the offender. Therefore, it was predicted that victims' fear towards the offender positively predicts victims' willingness to give a video message to the offender but negatively predicts victims' willingness to participate in face-to-face mediation. However, the results showed that fear towards the offender was no significant predictor of victims' willingness whether to participate or not in video messaging. This suggests that there might be only a very small influence of participants' fear on their willingness to participate in video messaging.

There might be several explanations for this finding. Firstly, it should be considered that fear was elicited through a scenario in this study. Thus, it might not be comparable to the fear felt by real victims. Therefore, it is difficult to generalize these findings as feelings of fear felt by a real victim might have a different influence. Secondly, it might be that some other needs were more important than feelings of fear for deciding about whether being willing or not willing to give a video message.

Nevertheless, in support of the first hypothesis, it was found that participants who reported a higher fear towards the offender were less willing to participate in face-to-face mediation. Thus, it can be suggested that victims with a higher fear towards the offender might be less likely to participate in face-to-face mediation. These victims might either participate in no mediation at all or choose more indirect forms of mediation. This is also in line with previous findings which show that victims often prefer more indirect forms of mediation (e.g., Wemmers & Canuto, 2002; Shapland et al., 2008). Victims often report that they fear to meet the offender and indirect mediation forms avoid confrontation with the offender (Wemmers & Canuto, 2002, Umbreit & Hansen, 2018).

This research also examined the influence of victims' fear towards the offender on the relationship between the need to share information with the offender and their willingness to participate in forms of VOM. It was hypothesized that victims' need to let the offender know how the crime has affected them positively predicts victims' willingness to give a video message but negatively predicts victims' willingness to participate in face-to-face mediation, which is influenced by fear. Specifically, it was expected that victims' fear would positively

influence the relation between victims' need to share information with the offender and their willingness to participate in video messaging. Additionally, it was hypothesized that victims' fear would negatively influence the relation between victims' need to share information with the offender and their willingness to participate in face-to-face mediation.

Unexpectedly, it was found that the need to share information with the offender positively predicted both victims' willingness to give a video message and their willingness to participate in face-to-face mediation. Additionally, the results showed that victims' fear towards the offender had no significant influence on both relationships, which is against expectations. Thus, the relationship between the need to share information and victims' willingness to participate in video messaging is not positively influenced by fear. Moreover, the relationship between the need to share information and victims' willingness to participate in face-to-face mediation is also not negatively influenced by fear.

In the context of VOM, this would imply that victims who have the need to share information with the offender might not be influenced by their feelings of fear, when deciding if they are willing to participate in video messaging or face-to-face mediation. This is not in line with previous findings. For example, previous research demonstrated that fearing the offender is a reason for participants to not participate in VOM or to choose an indirect form of mediation, such as video messaging, as it is less confronting (Wemmers & Canuto, 2002; Hansen & Umbreit, 2018).

In this study, fear might have had no influence on the relationship between the need to share information and the two mediation forms because participants might have focused more on fulfilling their needs rather than focusing on their feelings of fear when deciding if they were willing to participate video messaging and face-to-face mediation. Thus, their feelings of fear might have been less relevant to them.

Victims who have a higher need to let the offender know how the crime has affected are more willing to give a video message but also to participate in letter exchange

The relationship between victims' need to let the offender know how the crime has affected them and victims' willingness to participate in video messaging and letter exchange has been examined. It was expected that the need to let the offender know how the crime has affected them positively predicts giving a video message to the offender but negatively predicts participation in letter exchange. It was found that the need to share information was a significant predictor of both victims' willingness to participate in video messaging and victims' willingness to participate in letter exchange. Thus, participants who reported a higher need to

share information were more willing to give a video message to the offender. However, against expectations, participants who reported a higher need to share information were also more willing to participate in letter exchange.

Previous expectations were based on the finding that compared to a letter, a video message is a 'richer' form of communication (Swaab, et al., 2012; Kippers, 2015). A video message allows victims the use of more cues to express their thoughts and emotions regarding the offense (Daft & Lengel, 1986; Swaab, et al, 2012). Thus, a video message allows the victim to personalize their message towards the offender more than a letter and limits miscommunication (Daft & Lengel, 1986; Swaab, et al, 2012).

An explanation for the finding that victims' need to share information with the offender is a positive predictor of their willingness to participate in letter exchange could be that a letter might still meet the need to share information with the offender. Even though a letter might be a less rich communication medium, it allows the victim to write down their feelings about the crime that they would like to share with the offender.

Victims who have a higher need to receive information from the offender are more likely to participate in face-to-face mediation but also in video messaging

It was hypothesized that the need for information positively predicts victims' willingness to participate in face-to-face mediation but negatively predicts victims' willingness in video messaging. It was shown that the need for information was a significant predictor of both victims' willingness to participate in video messaging and to participate in face-to-face mediation. In other words, participants who reported a higher need for information were more willing to participate in face-to-face mediation but unexpectedly also more willing to participate in video messaging.

Nevertheless, the findings are in line with previous research. For example, van Dijk (2018) found that victims with a high need for information prefer to participate in 'richer' forms of mediation. In this study, face-to-face mediation is the richest form of mediation (Daft & Lengel, 1986; Swaab, et al., 2012; Kippers, 2015). Video messaging might have its limitations to satisfy victims' need for information as it asynchronous (e.g., Swaab, et al, 2012; Kippers, 2015). This means that there might pass some time until victims receive a response from the offender to their video message. Thus, victims might not directly get their questions answered.

Nevertheless, video messaging might be a richer, indirect form when compared to letter exchange or shuttle mediation. Similar to face-to-face mediation, a video message allows the victim to perceive several cues, such as emotions, nonverbal, and verbal behavior, which are

full of information (e.g., Swaab, et al, 2012; Kippers, 2015). Even though video messaging might not allow for direct feedback, it could compensate this limitation by allowing the victim to get information through several other cues. Therefore, it might be able to satisfy victims' need for information.

The different mediation forms

This study showed that most participants would choose to participate in face-to-face mediation. Moreover, this research also examined some other needs which can overall be described as 'the need to meet the offender in person'. This involves the need of participants to look the offender in the eye, to see his non-verbal behavior (i.e. emotions and reactions), but also to meet the offender as a symbolic act of confrontation. A relation between these needs and the willingness to participate in face-to-face mediation was found. Therefore, people who have a high level of these needs are more willing to participate in face-to-face mediation. For those people, the other forms of mediation might not fully meet these needs.

Within the category of video messaging, participants more often indicated that they would like to receive a video message from the offender than giving one. An explanation for this might be victims' need to restore their feelings of agency. Shabel and Nadler (2015) explain that victims' feelings of agency are threatened after a crime. Consequently, victims feel the need to restore their agency, which can be restored through empowerment by the offender (Shnabel & Nadler, 2015). Empowerment by the offender might be a sincere apology. Therefore, it might be that victims first need to be empowered in a video message from the offender before they are able to give a video message. However, the relationship between feelings of agency and victims' willingness to participate in video messaging has not been investigated. For that reason, these results should be interpreted with caution. Further research might also test the relationship between victims' need to restore feelings of agency and their willingness to participate in video messaging.

There were still several participants that did not want to participate in mediation at all. Some participants also chose that they wanted to participate in more than one form of mediation. This might be of importance for the practice of VOM. Instead of participating in no mediation at all, victims could take small steps towards meeting the offender by transiting from indirect to richer, direct forms of mediation. For example, video messaging as an indirect form could precede a face-to-face meeting with the offender.

Anonymity during a video message is important to victims

An additional variable of interest has been the victims' need for anonymity during a video message. In this research, most participants preferred to stay anonymous when giving a video message to the offender. This insight is important to consider in the practice of video messaging in VOM. A possible explanation for this could be that participants might feel more secure when they can stay anonymous. A secure environment was identified as an essential condition for VOM as it enables victims to open up and to alleviate their negative emotions (Wemmers, 2002; Hansen & Umbreit, 2018). Moreover, victims often fear meeting the offender or to experience revenge by the offender (Wemmers & Canuto, 2002; Herman, 2003; Hansen & Umbreit, 2018). Therefore, victims might prefer to hide their identity in front of the offender to prevent re-victimization.

Limitations

This research has its limitations. The greatest limitation of this research is that no real victims were involved. Most participants indicated that they could imagine themselves in the role of the victim. Nevertheless, it is unclear to what extent the scenario could elicit feelings in the participant that might be felt by a real victim. Therefore, emotions and needs manipulated through the scenario might not be comparable to the emotions and needs felt by real victims after a crime. For example, participants' emotions related to the offense described in the scenario might differ in the extent and intensity from the emotions of a real victim. Consequently, it is difficult to generalize the results of the study.

Another limitation might be that there was no assessment of participants' general views on restorative justice or possible previous experience with the justice system. These might have influenced participants' willingness to participate in VOM. Furthermore, a limitation might be that participants' willingness to not participate in VOM has not been investigated explicitly.

Moreover, a limitation might be the study design which did not allow participants to directly experience what giving or receiving a video message might feel or look like. Therefore, further research on video messaging as a form of VOM might consider implementing an experimental design. This might allow participants to have a more realistic experience of giving and receiving a video message, which might also improve the generalizability of the results.

Implications for practice and final remarks

This research might be a valuable contribution to the field of victim-offender mediation and its practice. It provides new information about victims' feelings and needs after a crime in relation to their willingness to participate in VOM. Specifically, new insight into victims' willingness to participate in a new, digital form of mediation, namely video messaging, could be gained. These new insights might be valuable, when considering an implementation of video messaging as a form of VOM. Introducing video messaging as a form of VOM might increase victims' participation as it might reach a new group of victims. Based on the findings, a video message might be especially appealing to those who prefer an indirect mediation form but still would like to have a rich communication channel to let the offender know how the crime has affected them but also to receive information from the offender.

Overall, insight from this research might be valuable, when adjusting VOM to increase victims' participation. This research might provide a starting point to design different 'victim profiles' based on their needs and emotions. Based on these profiles, practitioners might recommend a form of mediation that would be most suitable for the victim and his or her needs and feelings. However, these new insights should be generalized with caution as each victim has their own way to cope with the crime, their own needs, and an individual personality. These factors make every case individually and, therefore, require individual treatment.

Future research

Future research should focus on a possible application of video messaging as a new form of VOM. It could be evaluated how video messaging should work in practice and whether it meets the needs of real victims. For example, the tasks of the mediator or the design of the setting and procedure might be evaluated. Moreover, the offenders' perspective on the application of video messaging could be considered in future research.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Informed consent

Dear participant,

thank you for participating in this survey. In this study, I am interested in the feelings and actions of victims after a crime. I kindly ask you to read a scenario in which you have to imagine yourself being a victim. Afterwards, I would like you to answer some questions. This survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. Your data will be processed anonymously and participation is voluntary. This means that you can withdraw from the study at any given time, without explanation. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me via a.k.reichelt@student.utwente.nl.

Kind regards,

Alicia Reichelt

I hereby declare that I read the information about the study and I know that participation is voluntary, that data will be processed anonymously and that I can withdraw from the study at every moment:

- Yes
- No

Appendix B: Online Survey

A scenario is presented to you on the following page. Please read the text carefully and try to imagine yourself in the following situation as good as you can. Afterwards, questions regarding the scenario are asked.

Scenario

Imagine being in the following situation:

It is Friday night and you want to withdraw some money before you go to town. As you walk to the ATM, it is quiet and the streets are empty. You take your money from the machine and put it in your wallet. Suddenly, you hear someone shouting and you feel a hard hit on your head. You stumble and see a man approaching you with a gun. He points the gun at you, screaming that he wants your money. You see no other option than giving him your wallet. The stranger grabs your wallet and runs away. He leaves you shocked. You feel blood running down your face and recognize a wound on your head. After a few minutes you see another person coming by to help you. Together you call the police and you are taken to the hospital. After the robbery you feel scared and you are more attentive. The next day, the police interrogates you and you give them a description of the offender. Sometime later, the police managed to arrest the offender based on your description. The offender has been convicted.

In the following, a number of questions are asked regarding the offense. Please read each question carefully. There are no right or wrong answers.

Fear and anger towards the offender

Please indicate to which extent you agree with the following statements.

Imagining being a victim, when I think about the offender, I would feel ...

	Strongly agree (5)	Somewhat agree (4)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Strongly disagree (1)
angry (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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fearful (2)	<input type="radio"/>				
mad (3)	<input type="radio"/>				
furious (4)	<input type="radio"/>				
insecure (5)	<input type="radio"/>				
panic (6)	<input type="radio"/>				
nervous (7)	<input type="radio"/>				
frustrated (8)	<input type="radio"/>				
tensed (9)	<input type="radio"/>				
enraged (10)	<input type="radio"/>				

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Need to share information and need for information

Please indicate to which extent you agree with the following statements.

Imagining being a victim, after the offense, ...

	Strongly agree (5)	Somewhat agree (4)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Strongly disagree (1)
I want to let the offender know how the crime has affected me (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I want to tell the offender how I feel (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I want to know why the offender committed the crime (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I want to share my feelings with the offender (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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I want to know how the crime has affected the offender (5)

I don't want that the offender knows how I feel about the offense (6)

I want to know the offender's motives (7)

I want to know why the offender has chosen me (8)

I have the desire to show my emotions to the offender (9)

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Additional needs

Please indicate to which extent you agree with the following statements.

Imagining getting in contact with the offender, ...

	Strongly agree (5)	Somewhat agree (4)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Strongly disagree (1)
I want to look the offender in the eye (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I want to see the offender's face (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I want to meet the offender as a symbolic act of confrontation (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I want to see how the offender reacts when he receives my message (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would like to see the offender's emotions (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Explanation of VOM

After the offense, you receive a call from an organization which initiates and coordinates meetings between victims and offenders after crime. These meetings are set up as an alternative to traditional court processes. The person who calls your works as a mediator for this organization and is present during these meetings in order to guide the conversation. The mediator explains to you:

In victim-offender mediation (VOM), you get the opportunity to get in contact with the offender. You can talk with the offender about what has happened, ask questions about the motivations why he committed the crime or let the offender know how the crime has affected you, for example. The offender gets the opportunity to acknowledge responsibility for his deed or to apologize to you. Together you can come to an agreement about the crime. Your conversations with the offender are confidential and participation is voluntary; the offender does not have any juridical advantages from participation in VOM.

Explanation of VOM forms

The mediator explains to you that there are different forms of victim-offender mediation:

You can meet the other person in a **face-to-face mediation**:

A meeting with the offender is set up. You have the opportunity to see and talk to the offender in person. It takes place in a safe environment in which a mediator is present the whole time. Your conversations are held confidential.

There is also the opportunity to have contact via **video messages**:

You can record a video message directed to the offender. In the video message, you have the opportunity to ask questions or to share your feelings about the crime with the offender. You will not see the offender face-to-face. The video message is at every point of time in the mediator's hand and is hold confidential and deleted after the mediation. In turn, you can receive

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a video message from the offender, he does not know when or how often you watch the video message.

Third, you can have contact by **letter**:

You get in contact with the offender through letter exchange. The letter is held confidential by the mediator.

Willingness to participate in face-to-face mediation, video messaging, and letter exchange

We are now interested in what you think about the different mediation forms.

Please indicate to which extent you agree with the following statements.

	Strongly agree (5)	Somewhat agree (4)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Strongly disagree (1)
I would like to participate in face-to-face mediation (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would like to send a video message to the offender (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would like to see the offender (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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I would like to do a letter exchange (4)	<input type="radio"/>				
I would like to write a letter to the offender (5)	<input type="radio"/>				
I would like to meet the offender in person (6)	<input type="radio"/>				
I would like to exchange a video message with the offender (7)	<input type="radio"/>				
I probably won't meet the offender in person (8)	<input type="radio"/>				
I would like to receive a letter from the offender (9)	<input type="radio"/>				

I probably
won't give a
video
message to
the offender
(10)

I would like
to receive a
video
message
from the
offender (11)

I probably
won't do a
letter
exchange
(12)

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Anonymity

Please indicate to which extent you agree with the following statements.

As a victim, imagining recording a video message for the offender, ...

	Strongly agree (5)	Somewhat agree (4)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Strongly disagree (1)
I would like to stay anonymous (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I do not want to show my face to the offender (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is important for me to show my face to the offender (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would like to face the camera with my back (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I want to show my emotions to the offender (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Final choice of mediation form

Now, we would like to know whether you would participate in mediation. More than one answer is possible: There is also the opportunity to combine different mediation forms.

In which mediation form would you like to take part?

- receiving a video message from the offender (1)
- giving a video message to the offender (2)
- face-to-face mediation (3)
- letter exchange (4)
- no mediation form (no contact with the offender) (5)

Can you please give a short explanation for your choice? (optional)

Control questions and demographics

Please indicate to which extent you agree with the following statements.

	Strongly agree (5)	Somewhat agree (4)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Strongly disagree (1)
I could imagine myself in the role of the victim. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I could imagine what the victim might have felt and thought. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It was difficult for me to imagine being the victim. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was willing to take the role of the victim. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



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What is your gender?

- Female (1)
- Male (2)
- Other (3)

What is your age?

What is your nationality?

- Dutch (1)
- German (2)
- Other (3) _____

What is your highest completed level of education?

- Less than High School degree (1)
- High school degree (VWO, Abitur etc.) (2)
- College (3)
- Bachelor's Degree (4)
- Master's Degree (5)
- Other (6) _____

Thank you for your participation! In this study, we would like to know which group of victims would choose to participate in a new form of victim-offender mediation, namely giving a video message to the offender. We believe that especially victims who have a high fear towards the

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offender as well as a high need to let the offender know how the crime has affected them are most likely to choose participating in this new form of victim-offender mediation.

If you have any questions regarding this study or are interested in the results, feel free to contact me via a.k.reichelt@student.utwente.nl.

Please click the button on the right to save your data.