

Bachelor Thesis

The victim's intention to participate in Victim-Offender Mediation

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Acknowledgement

This research is the outcome of my bachelor thesis in psychology exerted at the University of Twente in Enschede. I had the opportunity to conduct new research in a field of my choice in the last four months. Due to my positive module experiences in Conflict, Risk & Safety and my interest in the justice system, I decided to choose the topic victim's attitude towards justice and their willingness to participate in Victim- Offender mediation. Conducting research just by myself was sometimes a challenge to me but at the same time a new educational experience and new chance to prove myself.

Some people contributed to my research paper, by providing me professional as well as emotional support. Firstly, I would like to thank all of my supervisors very much for their help in times I was confused and especially for their productive feedback. Secondly, I would like to thank my family for being there for me and showing interest in my thesis. Also, my friends and fellow students always were helpful, thank you for that.

Abstract

Due to the promising effects of restorative justice, the relatively low participation rate among victims in Victim Offender mediation programs (VOM), and the growing interest in explaining the victims motivation to participate, the current study aimed at investigating factors that explain victims' intentions to participate in Victim- Offender- Mediation. Four hypotheses were proposed based on the theory of Planned Behaviour and the Big Five Personality Model. Firstly, it was expected that victims with a higher positive attitude towards restorative justice have a higher intention to participate in VOM. Secondly, victims with a higher subjective norm towards restorative justice have a higher intention to participate in VOM. Thirdly, victims with a higher perceived behaviour control towards restorative justice have a higher intention to participate in a Victim- Offender mediation. Fourthly, victims with high levels of neuroticism have a lower intention to participate in VOM, because they have less behavioural control. Thus, perceived behaviour control is also expected to be a mediator of the relationship between the personality trait neuroticism and the intention to participate in VOM. The hypotheses were tested through an online survey with a total of 73 participants who were asked to answer personality questions that aimed at assessing the participants level of neuroticism. Then they were encouraged to read a crime scenario and imagine themselves being the victim in it. Afterwards, the victim received an invitation letter to take part in a Victim- Offender mediation and was asked to estimate how they would react to it. The proposed questions were conceptualisations reflecting the attitude towards VOM, the subjective norm towards VOM, perceived behaviour control towards VOM and the intention to participate in VOM. The outcome of this study revealed that the victim's attitude, the victim's subjective norm and the victim's perceived behavioural control are important predictors of the victim's intention to participate in VOM, supporting the first, second and third hypotheses. However, neuroticism was found to not have an effect on the victim's intention to participate in VOM even when mediated by perceived behaviour control, thus rejecting the fourth hypothesis. These findings indicate that the victim's attitude, subjective norm and perceived behaviour control towards restorative justice can explain 64.4% of the variance in the victims' intention to participate in VOM. This should be taken into account by VOM practitioners when developing interventions to increase the participants' rates with the goal of decreasing the severity and frequency of victim's post- traumatic stress symptoms. Further research should target the assessment of the relationship between the personality trait neuroticism and the intention to participate in VOM more into depth.

1. Introduction

"It was important to find out what happened, to hear the offenders' story, and why he did it and how" (Umbreit & Coates, 1992).

There is a growing interest in restorative justice all around the world. Nowadays, crime debates about the hardness of punishment are mostly driven by political leadership which raises the demand of a new way of thinking in the criminal justice system (Umbreit, 1998). In contrast to that, restorative justice highlights the fact that "crime is a violation of one person by another rather than against the state" (Umbreit, Vos, Coates, 2006). Therefore, restorative justice involves interested crime victims and offenders as well as community members more directly in the process (Umbreit, Vos, Coates, 2006). With the help of dialogues, negotiations and problem solving strategies, restorative justice aims at improving the conflict resolution process between parties and the feeling of community safety (Umbreit, 1998). Thereby, the emotional processing of all parties is facilitated and the stigma of the crime may be removed (Umbreit, 1998). Literature suggests that cases that were dealt with in this way may meet the needs of the offenders and the victims better than cases that were dealt with only in the retributive justice system (Kuo, Longmire, & Cuvalier, 2010). Due to the fact that restorative justice is an effective future-oriented approach, the demand is increasing.

Victim-Offender Mediation (VOM) is one form of restorative justice that attempts at assisting crime victims and offenders to come together voluntarily. VOM programs are empirically grounded and already practiced in courts worldwide (Umbreit, Vos, Coates, 2006). In general, there are two types of VOM, indirect and direct (Wemmers & Cyr, 2006). The indirect type of VOM implies, for instance, the communication between the offender and the victim in the form of a letter or a phone call. However, the most common and effective type is the direct one such as the face-to-face meeting which happens in a safe environment under the supervision of a professional mediator (Umbreit, 1994; Umbreit, Vos, Coates, 2006). The victim and the offender have the opportunity to solve the conflict by discussing the incident, its impact and problem solutions in order to restore the losses of the victim and to hold the offender directly accountable for its action (Umbreit, 1994). Thereby, the goal of VOM is to contribute to the emotional processing of the crime event among the victim to maximize the healing process and among the offender to minimize the chance of reoffending (Umbreit, 1994).

The results of VOM are promising for both parties. Studies show that these meditated dialogues are effective in increasing the empathy level of the offender as well as of the victim (Umbreit, Robert & Betty, 2004). From the offender's perspective, a higher level of empathy can

lead to a higher level of responsibility feeling and thus, the chance of recidivism is decreased (Umbreit, Robert & Betty, 2004). Next to that, offenders are more likely to apologize to the victim which in turn, helps the victim to reduce their feelings of anger and fear (Shnoble & Nadler, 2008). From the victims perspectives, an increased empathy feeling for the offender can help them to reconstruct the offense narratives and thereby change their attitudes towards the offender which is an important aspect of their own emotional processing of the crime event (Kirkwood, 2010; Fortune, 1988). Similarly, Shnoble & Nadler (2008) state that through VOM, the victims can restore their sense of power which was at risk after the crime event. This goes also in line with a study suggesting the way a victim responds to a crime event and the offender is correlated to the victim's cognitive and emotional health (Witvliet, Ludwig, & Laan, 2001). Witvliet, Ludwig, & Laan (2001) state that forgiving thoughts facilitate the victim's perceived behaviour control and next to that, decreases psychological stress symptoms in comparison to non forgiving thoughts.

The victim's forgiveness is described as the letting go of their traumatic experiences which memories continue to influence the victim's feelings and thoughts in a negative way and thus limit their quality of life (Fortune, 1988). Fortune (1988) compares the victim's traumatic memory with a lens through which the victim perceives the world. By forgiving, the victim is able to free itself by putting the lens away even though the victim is still aware of the existence of the lens. In other words, forgiving is not forgetting, it is the victim's choice to accept the memory and to no longer let the memory continue to terrorize the victim's life (Fortune, 1988). However, Fortune (1988) argues that forgiveness can only be achieved once justice has been accomplished. Therefore, VOM represents an opportunity for the victim to process the crime event emotionally after the legal proceedings have been executed (Umbreit, Robert & Betty, 2004).

Even though VOM has promising effects, participation in VOM is voluntary and only 40 - 60 % of victims and offenders are willing to participate in such a dialogue (Umbreit, Coates & Vos, 2004). There are some reasons that explain why not more people want to take part in the program. On the one hand, considering reasons for the offenders for not participating in VOM, are the fear of being judged by the victim (Umbreit, Vos, & Coates, 2006). Nevertheless, most of the time, they still participate in VOM because it helps them to decrease their sentence (Wyrick & Costanzo, 1999). On the other hand, non-participation of victims can occur due to the fact that they experience high levels of anxiety, hostility towards the offender as well as depression after the crime event which hinder their intention to participate in VOM (Wyrick & Costanzo, 1999).

However, the victim's motivation to take part in VOM is not yet fully explored. Consedine (2003) states that victims wish to explain the offender about the impact of the crime and wish to

gain more knowledge about the offender. Nonetheless, the nature and the circumstances of the crime as well as the point of time when the victim receives the invitation to participate in VOM, have an influence on the victim's decision to take part in the program (Wyrick & Costanzo, 1999). Zebel, Schreurs and Ufkes (2017) argue that the victim's willingness to participate in VOM increases the more time elapsed between a serious crime incident and their registration in VOM. In contrast to that, the victim's willingness to participate in VOM decreases the more time elapsed between a minor crime offense and the registration in VOM (Zebel, Schreurs & Ufkes, 2017). However, the perceived seriousness of the crime event is also determined by the victim's individual and psychological features, which means that the same offense can be perceived differently (Lens et al., 2013). Next to that, many studies indicate that certain personality characteristics can be related to the victim's willingness to participate in VOM. On the one hand, for instance, the personality characteristics being friendly and extroverted are associated with the participation in restorative justice (Wyrick & Costanzo, 1999). On the other hand, Pemberton (2012) suggests that victims who perceive high levels of suffering, are more likely to have the desire of vengeance than those who perceive lower levels of suffering which also influences their participation in VOM (Pemberton, 2012). All in all, there is a growing debate trying to explain the motivation of victims to participate in VOM.

Given the aforementioned considerations of the promising effects of VOM, the still relatively low participants rates and the growing interest in explaining the victims willingness to participate in a restorative justice program, this research aims at investigating the underlying factors of the victim's intention to participate in VOM. This leads to the research question: *What explains the victims' intention to participate in victim-offender mediation programs?* In the following section 'Research framework', the theory of Planned behaviour and the Big five personality model is linked to the victims needs after a crime. Based on that, a conceptual framework and the related hypotheses are proposed.

1.1 Research Framework

People tend to differ in their views on restorative justice. In order to examine the underlying causes for victim's willingness to participate in VOM, the theory of planned behaviour as well as the big five model will be explained in the following.

1.1.1 Theory of Planned Behaviour

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) is a social psychological model that attempts to explain the relationship between the individual's intention and their actual behaviour. In this research, the TPB model is linked to victim's intention to participate in VOM.

According to the TPB, voluntary behaviour is determined by the intention to actively engage in that particular behaviour. However, there are intentions that are carried out and there are intentions that are not set into action (Ajzen, 1985). Intention refers to the motivational factor that has an impact on the actual behaviour. Meaning, intention can be seen as an indicator of how willing an individual is to try to carry out a certain behaviour. Generally speaking, the stronger the intention is, the more likely is the person to perform the given behaviour (LaMorte, 2019). Then, the TPB model stipulates that the individual's intention is explained by three boundary conditions: attitude towards the behaviour (A), subjective norm (SN) and perceived behavioural control (PBC) (Ajzen, 1991). In other words, these three determinants together shape the person's intention toward behaviour and therefore, they are the predictors of performing a behaviour or not. In particular that means that the intention toward behaviour is determined by the degree to which the individual evaluates the given behaviour positively for himself (A), the degree to which the individual believes that significant others want him to perform the certain behaviour (SN) and the degree to which the individual feels able to execute the given behaviour (PBC).

The first determinant of intention is the attitude toward the behaviour, which implies the individual's positive evaluation toward the particular behaviour (Ajzen, 1985). Meaning the person's belief if a certain behaviour makes a positive or negative contribution to their personal life, influences the intention to perform it. The individual's positive belief in behaviour can lead to performing it, whereas the individual's negative belief in behaviour can hinder the person to take action. Considering victims' attitude towards justice, studies have shown that victims often feel left out in the current justice system since they do not have an active role even though they wish to be included in the process (Wemmers & Cyr, 2006). In contrast to that, VOM offers the victims an alternative way by including them in the process and by meeting their need of recognition (Wemmers & Cyr, 2006). Therefore it is expected that intention to participate in VOM is explained by victims' attitude, because it probably fits the needs of the victims. This leads to the following hypothesis:

H1: *Victims with a higher positive attitude towards restorative justice have a higher intention to participate in VOM.*

The next factor of TPB is the Subjective norm, which describes social influence as an impact on the individual's intention toward engaging in behaviour (Ajzen, 1985). The individual's perception of social pressure put on him to engage in a certain behaviour, determines the individual's intention to take action. Meaning, if an individual thinks that significant others also believe that the person should perform the behaviour, is influential on whether he engages in the behaviour. The term significant others refer to the individual's social network such as friends and family, the cultural norms and group beliefs that surround the person (Beck & Ajzen, 1991). Considering the victim's belief that significant others want him to participate in VOM, literature has shown that the general public opinion is more interested in restitution and prevention strategies by holding the offender directly accountable for its action rather than incarceration in jail (Umbreit, 1998). Furthermore, the wellbeing of victims stands in the focus of restorative justice and significant others usually care for the health of their fellow human beings (Steyn & Lombard, 2003). Therefore, it is expected that intention to participate in VOM can be explained by the victim's subjective norm, because it probably fits the needs of the victims. Thus, the second hypothesis is proposed:

H2: *Victims with a higher subjective norm towards restorative justice have a higher intention to participate in VOM.*

The last determinant of the intention component in the TPB is perceived behavioural control, which implies the individual's perception of the ability to perform a behaviour that is dependent on the perceived difficulty and ease (Ajzen, 1985). Meaning, the person's belief of being capable to display a given behaviour determines his intention to engage in action or not. When people believe they are able to perform the behaviour, there is a higher chance that they will do so. This includes the individual's perception of having the necessary resources and opportunities to carry out certain behaviour (Beck & Ajzen, 1991). Regarding the victims' perceived ability to meet their offenders, literature suggests that victims feel the need for closure and wish to be included in the process in order to tell the offender directly how they feel due to the crime incident (Wemmer & Cyr, 2006). Therefore, it is expected that the intention to participate in VOM is explained by the victim's perceived behavioural control, because it probably fits the victim's needs. Thus, the third hypothesis is as follows:

H3: *Victims with a higher perceived behavioural control towards restorative justice have a higher intention to participate in VOM.*

1.1.2 The Big Five Model

Personality dimensions can contribute to explain individual differences regarding the victim's willingness to participate in restorative justice. The big five model is a widely used model that attempts to explain personalities (Kumar, Bakhashi, & Rani, 2009). It assumes that five relatively independent dimensions together shape a structural representation of the personality. These five dimensions are Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience and Agreeableness. According to the model, every dimension remains consistent over time, situation or when applied to diverse cultures and language groups (John, 1990). Each of them implies several personality characteristics which tend to occur together (Kumar, Bakhashi, & Rani, 2009). Generally speaking, every dimension determines a person's behaviour in a particular situation.

The first dimension, conscientiousness, is associated with being responsible, hard working and achievement oriented (McCrae & John, 1992; Barrick & Mount, 1991). Individuals that are characterized as conscientious are organized and careful. The second category, neuroticism, is embodied in individuals that are anxious, unstable, worried, insecure and depressed (McCrae & John, 1992; Barrick & Mount, 1991). The third factor of the model is extraversion, which refers to a behaviour that is described as active, talkative, energetic, assertive and sociable (McCrae & John, 1992; Barrick & Mount, 1991). The fourth dimension, openness to experiences, is embodied in individuals that tend to be broad minded, imaginative, insightful, curious and having a need for variety (McCrae & John, 1992; Barrick & Mount, 1991). The last factor agreeableness refers to behaviour that is described as cooperative, forgiving, trustworthy, flexible, good-natured and generous (McCrae & John, 1992; Barrick & Mount, 1991). People who score high on agreeableness tend to be less sceptical and critical since they evaluate scenarios more positively (Bernardin et al., 2000).

Considering the victim's intention to participate in restorative justice, the personality dimension neuroticism seems to be most important for this study. Literature has indicated that individuals that embody high levels of neuroticism, become more aroused when confronted with an emotional-induced scenario (Matthews & Gilliland, 1999). However, according to Tok et al. (2010), these people wish to react in a less aroused way. Since a study by Bandura (1997) suggested that people only engage in behaviour when they feel capable of coping under certain circumstances, it may be that people who are characterized as high in neuroticism, have less perceived behavioural control also regarding the intention to participate in VOM. Thus, it is expected that perceived

behaviour control mediates the relationship between the personality trait neuroticism and the intention to participate in VOM. Hence, the fourth hypothesis is proposed as follows:

H4: *Victim's with high levels of neuroticism have a lower intention to participate in VOM, because they have less perceived behavioural control.*

1.1.3 Conceptual model

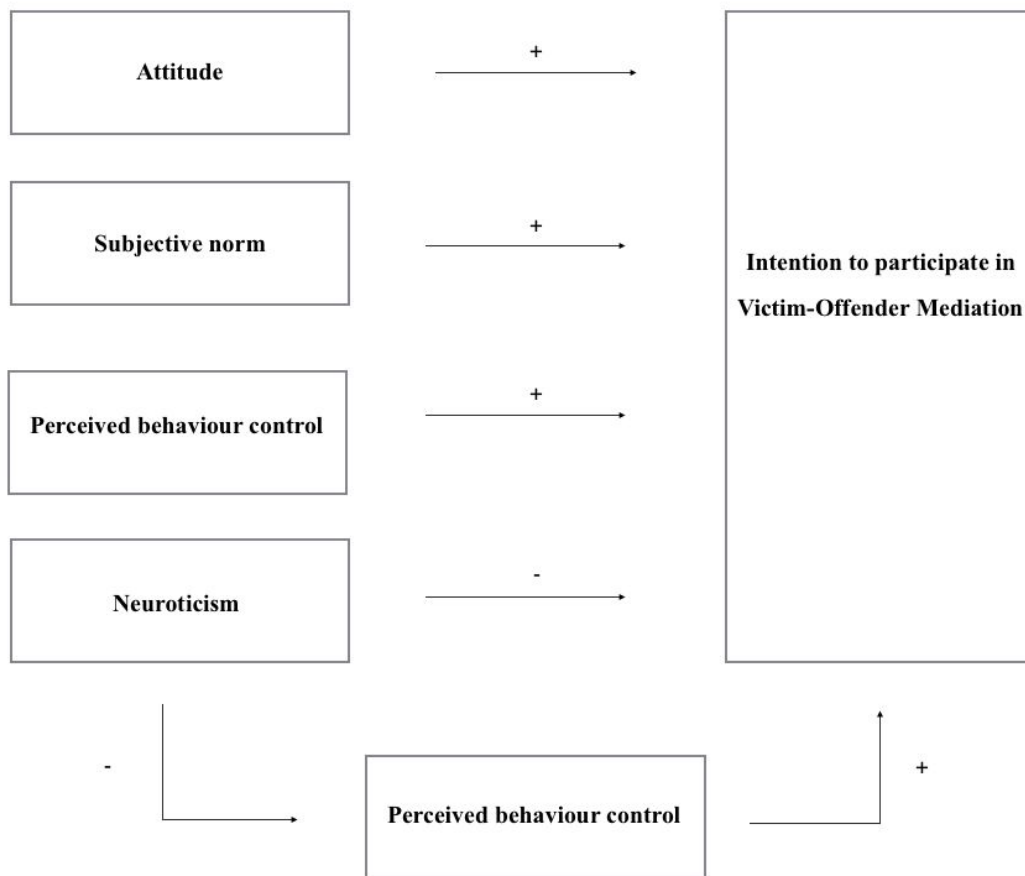


Figure 1. The conceptual model illustrates the relations between the independent and dependent variables based on the proposed hypotheses. The indication on the arrows indicate either a positive or a negative correlation.

2. Method

2.1 Design

A questionnaire survey design was performed. Data was collected from individuals acting as respondents in an online survey. The dependent variable in this study was the intention to participate in Victim-Offender Mediation. The independent variables were based on the Theory of Planned Behaviour which implies the victim's attitude, the subjective norm and the perceived behavioural control. Additionally, based on the Big Five personality model, the characteristic neuroticism represented also as an independent variable and perceived behaviour control is the mediator for the relationship between neuroticism and the dependent variable.

2.2 Participants

In total, 102 participants took part in the research. A snowball sampling was used which is a nonprobability sampling method. The inclusion criteria to participate in the study was to be at least 18 years old and to understand English sufficiently. The exclusion criteria was an incomplete procedure of the survey or the incorrect answer of a controlling question regarding the crime scenario ("What weapon did the offender use?"). Due to this criteria, 29 participants were excluded from the study. Thus, the data of 73 respondents (41 female, 30 male and 2 diverse) were used. The participants' average age was 24 (SD= 7.17) which ranges between 18 and 57 years. Most of them were german (80%), followed by dutch (10%) and other nationalities (10%). The participants' education level was ranging between high school graduation and master degree. Respondents who are students of the University of Twente received 0.25 SONA.

2.3 Materials

As materials, an online survey was used including an informed consent, a demographic questionnaire, a crime scenario, controlling questions and a questionnaire to assess the independent, dependent and mediating variables. In total, 32 questions were asked. The whole online survey was designed with the help of the software 'Qualtrics'.

2.3.1 Crime scenario

Every participant read the same scenario in which he had to imagine being the victim (Appendix A). However, the researcher chose a robbery as a crime scene since the most common incident when participating in Victim-Offender Mediation are property offenses (Wellikoff, 2020). The crime scenario was designed in such a way that the participants were asked to be the victim. Therefore, the personal pronoun “You” was used to increase the participants’ identification with the victim in the scenario. In the scenario which was made up by the researcher, the victim was robbed at an ATM at the central station by a thief. The thief used a knife in order to threaten the victim and to get as much money as possible. After the thief ran away, the victim collapsed and had to stay at the hospital. Since the crime incident, the victim suffered from anxiety and sleeplessness. Eventually, some weeks later, the police found the offender and told the victim, he will get a sentence for approximately 3 years. Next to that, the victim received an invitation letter from an institution, organising Victim-Offender mediations, because the offender contacted them. The letter informed the victim about restorative justice implying its aim, its procedure, and its benefits. The victim was offered the opportunity to participate in Victim-Offender Mediation and to meet his offender.

2.4 Variables

2.4.1 Independent variables

The independent variables in this study were Neuroticism, Attitude, Subjective norm and Perceived behaviour control.

The first independent variable was the personality trait *Neuroticism* which was measured with the help of the Big Five Inventory (John & Srivastava, 1999). Five items were designed such as “I see myself as somebody who is depressed” and answers were given on a seven-point bipolar adjective scale ranging from “Strongly disagree” to “Strongly agree”. However, the second item (“I see myself as somebody who is relaxed and handles stress well”) was recoded to ensure the validity of the outcome. Regarding the reliability of these items, the neuroticism scale was found to have a questionable alpha which is close to acceptable ($\alpha = .69$). Additional analysis shows that even by deleting an item, the alpha of neuroticism will not increase. Thus, no improvement can be made.

The other independent variables were the major constructs of the theory of Planned behaviour. Each of them was assessed through the formulation of four to six items based on the

Theory of Planned Behaviour questionnaire construction (Ajzen, 2006). The latter was measured with the help of a seven-point bipolar adjective scale.

To assess the independent variable *Attitude*, experiential and instrumental factors were used. An item was for instance, “Participating in Victim-Offender Mediation will be:” and the related seven-point bipolar adjective scale was ranging between “Useless” and “Useful”. Considering the reliability of these items, the attitude scale was found to have a good alpha ($\alpha = .88$).

Next, in order to detect the participants’ *Subjective Norm*, which is the second independent variable, descriptive and injunctive factors were used. Thus, four items were formulated such as “People like me would participate in Victim-Offender Mediation” and the seven-point bipolar adjective scale was offering answer possibilities between “Strongly disagree” and “Strongly agree”. However, the second item (“Most people like me would not participate in victim-offender mediation”) was recoded when analysing the data due to a negative formulation regarding the attitude towards restorative justice. In this way, the validity of the item outcome was ensured. Regarding the reliability of these items, the subjective norm scale was found to have an acceptable alpha which is almost good ($\alpha = .79$).

Moreover, autonomy and capacity factors were used to evaluate the independent variable *Perceived Behavioural Control* which also acts as a mediation variable. Therefore, statements such as “I am confident that I am able to talk to the offender during the Victim-Offender Mediation” were used. Again a seven-point bipolar adjective scale was used ranging from “Strongly disagree” to “Strongly Agree” as answer possibilities. Nevertheless, item three (“I am not able to have a constructive conversation with the offender during victim-offender mediation”) and four (“I am not confident that I am capable of participating in victim-offender mediation”) were also recoded to ensure the validity of the outcome. Considering the reliability of these items, the perceived behavioral control scale was found to have a good alpha ($\alpha = .85$), meaning the items are internally consistent.

2.4.2 Dependent variable

The dependent variable in this study was the *Intention* to participate in Victim-Offender Mediation. Therefore, three items were developed such as “I intend to participate in Victim-Offender Mediation.” and a seven-point bipolar adjective scale ranging from “Strongly disagree” to “Strongly agree” was used to measure this. Since the second item was negatively formulated it was later recoded when analyzing the data. Regarding the reliability of these items, the intention scale showed an excellent alpha ($\alpha = .97$).

2.5 Procedure

The participants were introduced to the research on the platform www.sona-system.com and via social media. On the SONA platform, the survey was shown under the name “People’s view of the justice system” and 0.25 SONA points were offered when taking the survey. As social media devices, facebook, instagram and whatsapp were used to publish the link that leads participants to the online survey. When the participants clicked on the link, either using their smartphone or their laptop, the online survey started by showing the informed consent form.

The informed consent form informed the respondents about the purpose of the research, the procedure of the survey, the validity of the data, and their rights to withdraw the survey at any time without giving any reason. They needed to accept the informed consent in order to start the actual survey. The questionnaire was organised along several thematic blogs that followed each other as soon as the respondents clicked on the arrow at the end of each survey page.

First of all, participants were asked to fill out a demographic questionnaire in which the respondents were supposed to answer general questions about themselves including their gender, nationality, age and highest finished education. The second thematic blog investigated the personality characteristic neuroticism. Therefore, participants were asked to indicate to what extent they agree with a certain statement regarding the way they see themselves. Then, the respondents were requested to read a crime scenario and to imagine being the victim. After reading the scenario, the items measuring attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioural control and the intention to participate in VOM were administered. Additionally, questions regarding the respondent's personal experiences were assessed. Meaning, they were asked if they have been victimised before or know somebody who has been victimised. Next to that, the respondents were requested to indicate whether they have been familiar with restorative justice before and if they have a better understanding of restorative justice through this research. These questions served as control questions.

The survey ended with a debriefing in which the actual aim of the study, which is the investigating of the participants’ intentions to participate in restorative justice, was stated. Furthermore, the participants were informed that they could still withdraw from the survey by emailing the researcher. In addition, the participants were given the chance to contact the researcher in case they would like to receive further information about the research and the outcome of the survey.

2.6 Data Analysis

The collected data was analysed in the statistical software program IBM SPSS statistics 24 using different methods.

For the reliability analysis, the internal consistency of all subscales were measured via measuring Cronbach's alpha. Thereby, it was examined if the questionnaire is accurately measuring what it was developed for (Blanz, 2015). For the interpretation of the outcome values, a table was followed which indicates that an alpha of $>.5$ can be considered as bad, an alpha of $>.6$ as questionable, $>.7$ as acceptable, $>.8$ as good, $>.9$ as excellent (Blanz, 2015).

Moreover, Pearson correlation was performed in order to measure the correlation between the independent variables and the dependent variable. Therefore, the correlations strength and direction between the previously created subscales were calculated (Cohen, 1988). Regarding the strength, Pearson correlation coefficient ranges between the value -1 and $+1$ (Cohen, 1988). The higher the number the stronger is the correlation between the variables. An absolute value means a perfectly linear rank-order. Considering the direction, a positive value as the correlation coefficient shows that the two measured variables tend to decrease and increase parallelly (Cohen, 1988). However, a negative value shows that if one variable increases, the other variable decreases and vice versa. The correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (Cohen, 1988).

Next to that, a hierarchical Regression analysis was performed to explain the variability in the dependent variable by assessing the contribution of each predictor, which were added stepwise (Lewis, 2007).

Furthermore, a mediation analysis was conducted with the additional help of the program Hayes PROCESS. Mediation investigates the effect of a predictor variable on the outcome variable, mediated by another variable that acts as a mediator (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). Hence, this analysis refers to questions that aim at exploring 'how' a variable exerts an effect over another one. According to Baron and Kenny (1986), there are three conditions that need to be met in order to prove a mediation effect.

Firstly, only the effect of the predictor variable on the dependent variable which is known as the 'total effect', needs to be significantly different from zero (Baron & Kenny, 1986). This is illustrated as path c in the figure below (see figure 2). However, new literature argues that even if this condition is not met, meaning the total effect is not significant, there is still the possibility of a mediation effect and thus, the analysis should be continued (Zhao, Lynch, & Chen, 2010).

Secondly, there must be a so-called 'indirect effect' which implies the effect of the predictor variable on the outcome variable through the mediator, either completely or partially (Baron &

Kenny, 1986). Since the ‘indirect effect’ can be calculated as the product of path a and b, the effect from the independent variable on the mediator and the effect from the mediator on the dependent variable were measured separately (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). According to Baron & Kenny (1986), if one path is statistically insignificant, one concludes there is no mediation effect.

Thirdly, the ‘direct effect’ which is illustrated in the figure below as c' , shows if there is a complete or partial mediation (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). If the before assessed significant path c becomes zero and thereby loses its significance, one can conclude a complete mediation. If not, one can conclude a partial mediation (Baron & Kenny, 1986).

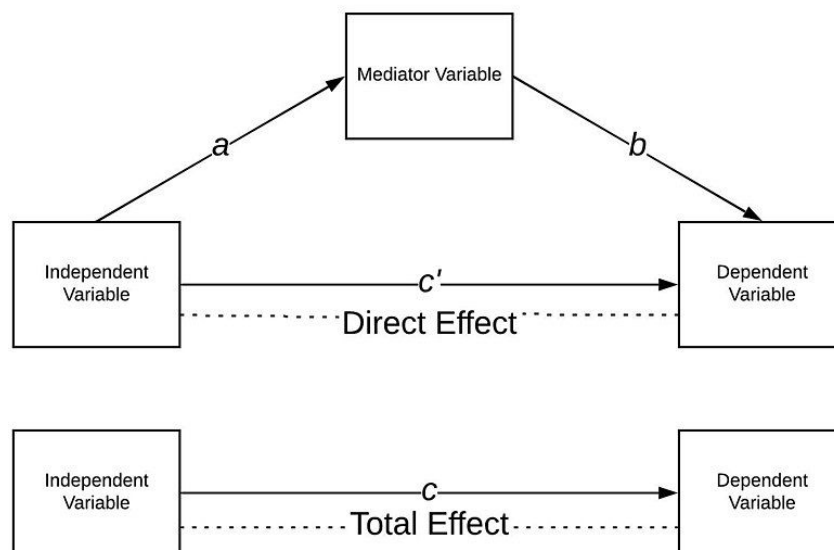


Figure 2. Mediation effect.

3. Results

In this section, the results of the data analysis are shown. The four hypotheses are tested by different analyses as described in the method section. Thirdly, other notable results are investigated.

3.1 Testing the hypothesis

To test hypotheses 1, 2 and 3, the variables that are proposed to explain the victim's participation in Victim- Offender Mediation were tested by Pearson correlation and a regression analysis. Next, a mediation analysis was performed to test hypothesis 4.

3.1.1 Descriptives and Correlations

To get an overview, the descriptive statistics and correlations of the subscales of the variables in this study are summarized in table 1. As illustrated, the means and standard deviations are normally distributed and do not show any extraordinary scores.

To test the first hypothesis - *Victims with a higher attitude towards restorative justice have a higher intention to participate in VOM.* - Pearson correlation between the independent variable attitude and the dependent variable intention was assessed. As shown in the table, a significant moderate correlation between attitude and intention was found ($r = .542$; $p < .001$; $N = 73$), indicating as the attitude towards restorative justice increases, the intention to participate in VOM increases simultaneously. Hence, the first hypothesis is supported.

To test the second hypothesis - *Victims with a higher subjective norm towards restorative justice have a higher intention to participate in VOM.* - Pearson correlation between the independent variable subjective norm and the dependent variable intention was measured. As proposed based on literature, a significant moderate correlation between subjective norm and intention was detected ($r = .687$; $p < .001$; $N = 73$). Meaning as the subjective norm towards restorative increases or decreases, the intention does parallelly. Thus, the second hypothesis is supported.

To test the third hypothesis - *Victim's higher perceived behavioural control towards restorative justice have a higher intention to participate in VOM.* - Pearson correlation between the independent variable perceived behaviour control and the dependent variable intention was calculated. As shown in the table, there was a significant moderate correlation between perceived

behaviour control and intention, indicating as perceived behaviour control increases or decreases, so does intention ($r = .599$; $p < .001$; $N = 73$). Hence, also the third hypothesis is supported.

All in all, the test suggests that all correlations between the constructs of the theory of planned behaviour (attitude, subjective norm, perceived behaviour control) and the behavioural intention to participate in VOM are significantly moderate at varying strengths. The results show that subjective norm towards VOM has the strongest influence (.687), followed by attitude (.542) and then perceived behaviour control (.599). For the remaining variable neuroticism, no significant correlation was found.

Table 1.

Descriptives and Correlations of variables

Scale	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Correlation Coefficient
Attitude	73	4.57	1.12	.542**
Subjective Norm	73	4.47	1.08	.687**
Perceived behaviour control	73	4.82	1.26	.599**
Neuroticism	73	3.79	1.05	.064
Intention	73	4.69	1.51	

Note: Dependent variable: subscale intention; Independent variable: subscales A, SN, PBC, N.

***.* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

3.1.2 Regression analysis testing control variables

A hierarchical regression analysis was performed with all independent variables, including also the control variables a) personal experiences regarding victimisation, and b) familiarity with VOM, in the model to find out whether they affect the impact of Attitude, Subjective norm and Perceived behaviour control on the intention to participate in VOM.

In order to determine whether participants personal experiences with victimisation, a) 'themselves have been victimised', or b) 'knowledge of someone else has been victimised', affects the impact of Attitude, Subjective norm and Perceived behaviour control on the intention to participate in VOM, a hierarchical regression analysis with 3 models was conducted.

Therefore, in the first model, the predictor variable a) 'participants themselves have been victimised' and the dependent variable the intention to participate in VOM were analyzed. The results indicated model 1 not to be statistically significant, meaning control variable a) does not predict the intention to participate in VOM ($B=-.16$; $t(1)=-1.41$; $p=.16$).

In the second model, the predictor variable b) 'knowledge of someone else has been victimised' was added to the previous model as well. The regression analysis revealed model 2 also not to be statistically significant, meaning also control variable b) does not predict the intention to participate in VOM ($B= -.03$; $t(2)= -1.19$; $p=.36$).

In the third model, both control variables, a) and b), as well as the Attitude, Subjective norm and Perceived behaviour control variables were added as predictors and the intention to participate in VOM was included as the dependent variable. The hierarchical regression analysis showed model 3 to be statistically significant ($p=.00$). Next to that, the increased R^2 value of (.64) indicates that the addition of the Attitude, Subjective norm and Perceived behaviour control variables to the model, accounts for 64% of the variance in the intention to participate in VOM, whereas 36% of the variance in the intention to participate in VOM cannot be explained by Attitude, Subjective norm and Perceived behaviour control ($R^2=.644$; $F=0$; $p=0$). Additionally, the variable Subjective norm appeared to be the strongest predictor of this model ($B=.44$; $t(6)=4.99$; $p=0$), followed by Perceived behaviour control ($B=.36$; $t(6)=3.83$; $p=0$) and then Attitude ($B=.26$; $t(6)=2.93$; $p=.005$).

To sum up, the hierarchical regression analysis revealed that the participants' personal experiences with victimisation do not affect the regression of the independent variables Attitude, Subjective norm and Perceived behaviour control, on the intention to participate in VOM.

Furthermore, in order to determine whether participants' familiarity with VOM, in this case the controlling question assessing prior knowledge about restorative justice, affects the impact of Attitude, Subjective Norm and Perceived behaviour control on the intention to participate in VOM, a hierarchical regression analysis with 2 models was conducted.

In the first model, prior knowledge about restorative justice was added as a predictor and the intention to participate in VOM was included as the dependent variable. The results indicated model 1 to be statistically significant, meaning familiarity predicts the intention to participate ($B=.33$;

$t(1)=2.96$; $p=.004$). The R^2 value of (0.1) suggests that familiarity with VOM accounts for 10% of the variance in the intention to participate in VOM, which means also that 90% of the variance in the intention to participate in VOM cannot be explained by prior knowledge about restorative justice ($R^2=0.1$; $F=.004$).

In the second model, the familiarity controlling variable as well as the Attitude, Subjective norm and Perceived behaviour control variables were added as predictors to the analysis. The results revealed model 2 to be statistically significant ($p=.00$). Controlling each predictor variable, the second model suggests a value change of the familiarity variable as it loses its significance ($B=0.12$; $t(5)=1.6$; $p=0.11$). However, the other predictor variables Attitude ($B=.22$; $t(5)=2.58$; $p=0.12$), Subjective norm ($B=.39$; $t(5)=4.20$; $p=0$) and Perceived behaviour control ($B=.35$; $t(5)=4.11$; $p=0$) appeared to statistically significantly predict the intention to participate in VOM. Hence, the R^2 value of (0.63) in this model suggests that Attitude, Subjective norm and Perceived behaviour control collectively account for 63% of the variance in the intention to participate in VOM ($R^2=0.63$; $F=0$).

To sum up, the hierarchical regression analysis revealed that the participants' prior knowledge about restorative justice does not affect the regression of the independent variables Attitude, Subjective norm and Perceived behaviour control on the intention to participate in VOM.

3.1.3 Mediation analysis

A mediation analysis was used to understand the relationship between an independent variable and a dependent variable by investigating how well this effect can be explained by a second independent variable acting as mediator.

To test the fourth hypothesis - *Victim's with high levels of neuroticism have a lower intention to participate in VOM, because they also have less behavioural control.*- the mediation analysis was performed to examine the relationship between neuroticism and the intention to participate in VOM mediated by perceived behaviour control.

A non significant total effect of the independent variable neuroticism on the dependent variable intention was found ($B=.064$, $S.E.=1.08$, $p=.27$). Indicating that the personality trait is not a direct predictor of the intention to participate in VOM. This means the possibility of a partial mediation effect can be excluded. Nevertheless, there is still the possibility that there is an indirect interaction effect of neuroticism on the intention completely mediated by perceived behaviour control.

To test this, the indirect effects were assessed by looking at the mediator's paths' coefficients. A significant positive moderate correlation between perceived behaviour control and intention was detected ($B= 0.55$, $S.E.=.91$, $p=.001$). Meaning as the victims' perceived behavior control decreases, their intentions to participate in VOM decreases simultaneously. However, a statistically non significant negative weak effect of neuroticism on perceived behaviour control was found ($B=-.367$, $S.E.=.134$, $p=.008$). Indicating that neuroticism does not have an influence on perceived behaviour control. Following the steps of the Baron & Kenny's approach, this result means there is also no complete indirect mediation effect due to one insignificant path.

To conclude, there was neither a significant total effect of neuroticism on intention nor a significant effect of neuroticism on perceived behaviour control. Only the correlation between perceived behavioral control and intention was statistically significant. Thus, there is no mediation effect and the fourth hypothesis can be rejected.

3.2 Other notable results

Regarding other notable results, a frequency table of the participants personal experiences regarding victimisation as well as of the intention to participate were calculated.

A frequency table was used to measure the participants personal experiences regarding victimisation. Out of 73 respondents, 53 reported to not have been victimised before. This indicates that 72% of the participants answered the questions solely on their imagination of how they think they would feel and react as a victim in such a situation. On the other hand, 28% of the data is based on the estimations of actual victims.

Furthermore, in order to assess how many participants would intend to participate in VOM, the average scores for the intention scale were measured and the participants were grouped into three categories. The first group 'low intention' included all participants with a mean - 1 SD, whereas the second group 'Average intention' included all participants who scored a mean between -1 SD and +1 SD. Lastly, the third group 'high intention' implied every participant who scored a mean +1 SD. As shown in the pie chart (Appendix B), the majority of participants indicated a high intention to participate in VOM, meaning they would intend to meet their offender (64.79%). However, 22.54% of respondents showed a low intention to participate in VOM, indicating they would not intend to take part in this restorative justice program. Lastly, 12.68% of the participants showed an average intention to participate in VOM which means they neither disagree nor agree to take part in a victim-offender mediation.

4. Discussion

4.1 Discussion of the results

Due to the promising effects of restorative justice, the relatively low participation rate in VOM and the growing interest in explaining the victims motivation to participate, the current study aimed at investigating factors that explain victims' intentions to participate in Victim- Offender- Mediation. Four hypotheses were proposed based on the theory of Planned Behaviour and the Big Five Personality Model. The hypotheses were tested through an online survey. The proposed questions were conceptualisations reflecting the personality characteristic neuroticism, the attitude towards VOM, the subjective norm towards VOM, perceived behaviour control towards VOM and the intention to participate in VOM. The data analysis of the correlations between those constructs showed several significant results.

As expected, the key variables of the Theory of Planned Behaviour model appeared to explain the intention to participate in VOM, whereas neuroticism unexpectedly did not exert any influence. Thus, hypotheses 1, 2 and 3 can be supported and hypothesis 4 can be rejected. Furthermore, the outcome of this study revealed that the control variables a) personal experiences regarding victimisation, and b) familiarity with VOM, did not affect the impact of Attitude, Subjective norm and Perceived behaviour control on the intention to participate in VOM. Hence, the key variables of the theory of planned behaviour collectively account for 64.4% of the variance in the victim's intention to participate in VOM. Moreover, the finding showed that the majority of the participants would intend to participate in VOM (64.79%). However, 72% of respondents indicated to not have been victimised before, thus these data relied solely on the participants imagination how they would react as a victim.

4.1.1 Attitude

Considering the first hypothesis - *Victims with a higher positive attitude towards restorative justice have a higher intention to participate in VOM-* , victim's attitude towards restorative justice was found to significantly and positively predict the intention to participate in VOM. Meaning, the more positively the victim evaluates VOM, the more likely he/she is to participate in such a mediation program. In contrast, that implicates that if a victim has negative associations with VOM the possibility of the victim to take part in it, decreases. This goes in line with previous findings of Ajzen (1985) who argued that the individual's positive belief in a certain behaviour can lead to

performing it, whereas the individual's negative belief in behaviour can hinder the person to take action. These findings are also consistent with Chatzisarantis, Hagger, Biddle, & Smith (2005), who argued that the attitude is an important determinant of the individuals behavioural intention. Similarly, Armitage & Conner (2001) state that the person's attitude can predict his behaviour. Furthermore, the results indicate that the more the victim believes in the personal benefits of taking part in VOM, the more likely he also is to take part in it. Hence, the victim's intention to participate in VOM can be explained by their levels of attitude. This is a crucial finding which can help to understand the victims motivation to take part in restorative justice programs.

4.1.2 Subjective norm

In line with the second hypothesis - *Victims with a higher subjective norm towards restorative justice have a higher intention to participate in VOM* - , victim's subjective norm towards VOM turns out to be an important predictor of the behavioural intention to participate in such a mediation program. Meaning, the higher the victim's subjective norm towards restorative justice, the higher the victim's intention to participate in VOM. This matches previous literature as Ajzen (1985) argued that if an individual thinks that significant others also believe that the person should perform the behaviour, she/he is more likely to engage in the behaviour. Similarly, Cialdini (2001) highlights the role of subjective norm in the decision making process, as he argued that people tend to look for others' proof especially in times of uncertainty. Also, Glynn and Huges (2007) stated that in ambiguous situations, people search orientations through social norms. In this research, the victims' traumatic experiences after a crime event could represent an uncertain situation in which they do not know if they should meet their offender or not, which leads the victims to seek social guidance regarding their decision to participate in VOM. Thus, the intention to participate in VOM can be explained by the victim's subjective norm towards restorative justice since it fits the victim's need.

Surprisingly, in the current study, the victim's subjective norm was found to be the strongest factor of predicting the intention to participate in VOM. In contrast to that, previous studies suggest the subjective norm as the smallest predictor of behavioural intention (Armitage & Conner, 1999). Thus, it may be that especially the victim's belief of what significant others think about participating in restorative justice, plays an important role in the context of victim's motivation to participate in VOM. However, due to limited research on the meta-analysis of the theory of planned behaviour, it cannot be concluded whether this finding is unique or if this could represent victim's behavioural pattern when considering the participation in VOM.

To sum up, findings of this research confirmed the hypothesis although it contradicts literature regarding the influence strength of the subjective norm on the intention.

4.1.3 Perceived behavioural control

In line with the third hypothesis - *Victim's higher perceived behavioural control towards restorative justice have a higher intention to participate in VOM.*- , the victim's perceived behaviour control towards VOM showed to influence the intention to participate in a mediation program. Meaning, the higher the victim's perceived behaviour control, the higher is their intention to participate in VOM as well. This result matches previous literature as Ajzen (1985) argued that the person's belief of being capable to display a given behaviour determines his intention to engage in action or not. Similarly, Godin, Valois, Lepage & Desharnais (1992) stated that a person's confidence in doing a certain behaviour is related to their intention to perform it. Since the perceived behavioural control depends on whether or not the individual perceives the actual behaviour as easy or difficult (Ajzen, 1985), one can say that the more easy the victim perceives the VOM is going to be, the more likely he is to take part in it. Hence, the victim's intention to participate in VOM can be explained by their levels of perceived behavioural control because it fits the victim's needs.

Interestingly, perceived behaviour control was found to be the weakest predictor of the intention to participate in VOM in this study. Contrastly, previous research identified perceived behaviour control to be the biggest predictor of behavioural intention (Godin & Kok, 1996). However, due to limited research on the meta-analysis of the theory of planned behaviour, it cannot be concluded whether this interesting finding is unique or if this could represent victim's behavioural pattern when considering the participation in VOM.

To sum up, findings of this research confirmed the hypothesis although it contradicts literature regarding the influence strength of the subjective norm on the intention.

4.1.4 Neuroticism with perceived behaviour control as mediator

Regarding the fourth hypothesis - *Victim's with high levels of neuroticism have a lower intention to participate in VOM, because they also have less behavioural control.* - the outcome showed that the personality trait neuroticism does not have an effect on the intention to participate in VOM even when mediated by perceived behavioural control. Indeed, as the results showed there was neither a significant total effect of neuroticism on intention nor a significant effect of neuroticism on

perceived behaviour control. Only the correlation between perceived behavioral control and intention was significant which was already interpreted in 4.1.3.

This finding stands in contrast to the proposed hypothesis. It was expected that the personality characteristics of neuroticism such as being anxious and insecure, lead to less perceived behaviour control regarding the intention to participate in VOM since people only engage in behaviour when they feel capable of coping under certain circumstances (Bandura, 1997). One possible explanation for this finding, could be that the proposed hypothesis relied on the consideration of the researcher. Perhaps, the undirected reasoning of the researcher serves as a reason for the rejection of the hypothesis.

Nonetheless, it stands out that exactly the assessment of the two correlations which are based on the neuroticism scale, were non-significant and next to that, relied on the only scale which showed a questionable alpha. Indicating that the scale is not assessing the personality trait neuroticism as intended even though it was based on four items proposed by a standardized questionnaire. As a result, the reliability and validity have been limited and may have led to these insignificant results of further analyses of the mediation effect.

However, there is also the possibility that the proportion of neurotic people in the current study is lower than in reality. Meaning, it may be that not many neurotic people were taking part in the online survey since the participation was voluntary and the sample was random. A study shows that the personality trait neuroticism is associated with social laziness (Ziapour, Zokaei, Javid, Javid, Javid & Pour, 2015), which triggers the idea that people who score high in neuroticism are less willing to help somebody by filling out their survey without their own benefit than people scoring low in neuroticism. Nonetheless, these are only assumptions which should be treated with caution since they need further investigation to explain the insignificant result of the independent variable neuroticism.

To sum up, it remains unclear if the findings indicate that indeed, the personality trait neuroticism has neither an influence on perceived behaviour control nor on the intention to participate in VOM or if these findings are only the result of low validity or even due to the fact the proportion of neurotic people in this study was low.

4.2 Conclusion

To conclude, the current study outcomes supports the efficacy of the theory of planned behaviour and shows in particular that this theory can be applied to explain the victim's intention to participate in Victim- Offender Mediation. This is a crucial finding as it revealed that the victim's attitude, the

victims's subjective norm and the victim's perceived behaviour control collectively explain 64% of the variance in the victim's intention to meet their offender during a mediation meeting.

4.3 Limitations

This study is limited to the nature of participants due to ethical guidelines. Most of the respondents were not real victims, they only imagined being the victim in the crime scenario that was constructed in the online survey. In particular, 53 out of 73 participants indicated they have not been victimised before which means that 72% of the data is based only on the participants estimations of how they would feel and react in such a situation. It should be taken into account that actual victims are likely to experience post- traumatic stress symptoms which are hard to imagine by only reading a crime scene (Bonanno e.a. 2011, geciteerd in: Pemberton, 2012). Hence, the results of the assessed attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioural control and the intention to participate in VOM are likely to differ to those from actual victims. Hoerger et al. (2009) confirm this assumption as people tend to over- and underestimate their emotional reaction regarding events in the future. This psychological effect noun as "affective forecasting", may have led participants to imagine their feelings of being the victim of a robbery differently than actual victims. Furthermore, the assessment of the personality characteristic neuroticism relied solely on self reports of their behaviour which may have limited the strength of the findings as well, as results could be exposed to biases. Next to that, the study is limited to the fact that the online survey was measuring only the intention to participate in VOM and not their actual behaviour. However, the intention to participate does not always lead to the actual participation in VOM. Thus, the generalization of the results should be treated with caution.

4.4 Implications & Recommendations

Regarding the theoretical perspective, the findings are significant in improving the comprehension of the underlying cognitive and social determinants of how victim's arrive at the decision to participate in restorative justice programs or not. Due to the usage of a widely applied social psychological model (TPB), this research provides the field with results from explanatory nature rather than descriptive. Targeting the development of a theory for each key variable (A, SN, PBC) individually, could give insight into even more vulnerable knowledge about the victim's intention formation regarding the participation in VOM.

Considering the practical perspective, the outcome of this research benefits researchers, VOM practitioners and policy makers who develop interventions or strategies to increase the participants rates of restorative justice programs. Victims' psychological traumatic experiences and health problems after a crime incident limit their quality of life and thus, are a serious problem which VOM tackles. Through the knowledge of the efficacy of applying the TPB model to predict the victim's intention to participate in VOM, it is possible to develop focused methods that are more effective in meeting the needs of the victims after a crime so that consequently, the participant rates increases and the severity and frequency of the victim's post- traumatic stress symptoms decreases.

However, for further research, there are few suggestions that can be made. Regarding the assessment of the personality trait neuroticism, the reliability was questionable which should be improved when replicating. Since the neuroticism scale relied merely on four questions, in follow up- studies the amount of items as well as the number of respondents should be increased. Thereby, it might be possible to capture the personality trait neuroticism more sufficiently and further results become clearer.

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Annex

A - Online questionnaire

Informed Consent

Dear participant,

Thank you for participating in this study, which examines people's views of the justice system. This research is part of my bachelorthesis research. In this research I will ask you to imagine being the victim in a crime scenario and to answer questions related to your view of justice.

If at any point this questionnaire is too confronting or is giving too much stress, you are allowed to stop your participation, without giving a reason.

Your data will be completely anonymous and not given to third parties without your permission. Data will only be used for research purposes.
In order to participate in the online survey, which will take approximately 10 minutes, you should be able to read/understand English sufficiently.

This research got permission from the ethical board of BMS. If you have any further questions, feel free to contact Pia Brox (p.v.brox@student.utwente.nl).

Please answer the following question:

I have read the foregoing information and give my consent:

- Yes
- No

Demographic questions

First of all, I would like to ask some general questions.

What is your gender?

- Female
- Male
- Diverse

What is your nationality?

- German
- Dutch
- Other

What is your age in years?

What is your highest finished education?

Now I would like to ask you some questions about your personality. Could you indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I see myself as somebody who is depressed.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I see myself as somebody who is relaxed and handles stress well.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

https://utwentebbs.eu.qualtrics.com/Q/EditSection/Blocks/Ajax/GetSurvey...nextSurveyID=SV_8Dm5111WYG9H3Zr&ContextLibraryID=UR_6KfDECKnxiT46fH

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Qualtrics Survey Software

03.04.20, 17:51

I see myself as somebody who can be tense.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I see myself as somebody who worries a lot.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Crime scenario

At the following page a crime scenario is given. Please try to read it carefully and try to imagine being the victim in the scenario. The remainder of this research concerns questions about this scenario in which you are the victim.

Imagine the following scenario:

You are going to withdraw cash at an ATM at the central station of Enschede. While you are entering your card code in the machine, you feel a knife in your back. Then you hear a dark and frightening voice whispering in your ear: "Withdraw the maximum amount or I'll kill you!". Feeling paralysed, you are giving him as much money as possible. The thief immediately runs away with your money and you collapse.

After a couple of minutes, you wake up again and find yourself surrounded by a crowd of people including paramedics. After a short stay at the hospital you are allowed to return home and physically you are fully recovered. However, since the crime incident, you feel frightened, stressed, anxious and lost confidence. You are not able to go out alone and you are suffering from sleeplessness.

Controlling question

What weapon did the offender use?

- A pistol
- A knife
- His fist

Invitation to Victim Offender Mediation

Some weeks later, the police found the offender and told you he will get a prison sentence for approximately 3 years. Next to that, you are receiving a letter from an institution, organising victim-offender mediation. The letters contains the following information:

Nowadays, crime victims and offenders get the opportunity to get in contact with each other. This is called-victim-offender mediation. Within victim-offender mediation, all parties involved in the crime are given the opportunity to talk with each other, in presence of a trained mediator. It gives you, as a victim, the chance to ask the offender questions that you might have and explain the impact of the crime on you and your daily life.

It aims at contributing to the emotional processing of the crime event and to maximise the healing processes. It could help the offender to take responsibility and minimise the chance of reoffending.

Participating in victim-offender mediation is voluntary for both you and the offender.

The letter also informs you that the criminal prosecutor is the person who decided that victim-offender mediation might be value for both you and the offender. During mediation you try to work to an agreement between you and the offender. If there is one, this agreement will be communicated back to the criminal prosecutor. He will take notice of this agreement and will take it into consideration when deciding which punishment fits the offense and the offender.

Imagining being the victim in the scenario, could you indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements?

On a scale of 1 to 7, I think participating in victim-offender mediation will be:

Bad	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Good
Unpleasant	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Pleasant
Unhelpful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Helpful
Not effective	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Effective

Useless	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Useful
Negative	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Positive

Imagining being the victim in the scenario, could you indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
People who are important to me would approve my participation in victim-offender mediation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Most people like me would participate in victim-offender mediation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Most people like me would value it to participate in victim-offender mediation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Friends who have experienced being a victim of a crime would have participated in victim-offender mediation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am confident that I am able to talk to the offender during victim-offender mediation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

capacity to participate in victim-offender mediation

I am not able to have a constructive conversation with the offender during victim-offender mediation

I am confident that I am capable of participating in victim-offender mediation

Imagining being the victim in the scenario, could you indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I intend to participate in victim-offender mediation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I will probably not participate in victim-offender mediation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In the future, I would be willing to participate in victim-offender mediation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Lastly, I would like to ask you some questions regarding your personal experiences.

	No	Yes
I was already familiar with Victim- Offender Mediation before participating in this study	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have been victimised before	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I know somebody who has been victimised before	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Debriefing

This is the end of the survey. Thank you so much for participating in this research!

In the introduction it was stated that this research examines your perception of justice as a victim. However, your data will contribute to the results which aims at investigating a victim's intention to participate in a victim-offender Mediation program. Should you not give consent to use your answers for this research purpose, please email the researcher.

If you are interested in any further information or in the outcome of this research, feel free to contact Pia Brox (p.v.brox@student.utwente.nl).

B - Pie chart of intention scale

Intention VOM_Groups

