

Acknowledgements

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Introduction

The Scottish Government published the [RJ Action Plan \(2019\)](#) to assist with the commitment to have RJ services available across Scotland by 2023, with the interests of the persons harmed at the centre.

Their vision is:

The Scottish Government want RJ to be available for everyone, at the time they need this. They want services of the same high standard, no matter where it is offered across the country. Everything this service offers will be based on evidence and is designed with trauma experts. The Scottish Government want to make sure that those who have been harmed are heard and their needs are met. Their aim is to reduce harmful behaviour in Scotland.

An outcome of the RJ Action Plan is to raise public awareness and understanding of RJ in Scotland. Various RJ animation clips exist. However, none place RJ within a Scottish context and are often linked to organisations, contain statistics and use language unrelated to Scotland.

Community Justice Scotland (CJS) and the Children and Young People's Centre for Justice (CYCJ) were funded by the Scottish Government to produce an animation clip to raise awareness and understanding of RJ. CJS and CYCJ worked collaboratively with the RJ stakeholder group to ensure the animation script portrayed the Scottish Government's vision for RJ. The animation looked at what RJ is, the process and the benefits. The [animation](#) clip can be used in a number of ways, including training and awareness sessions and in consultations to



ensure people have a basic understanding of RJ.

Before the animation was published, a survey was designed to measure understanding and awareness of RJ before and after viewing the animation. This aimed to evaluate the animation to inform future awareness raising material. This report seeks to identify this impact and next steps.

Method

Approval for the survey was agreed by CJS Research and Ethics Committee. It was recognised that the subject of RJ could be distressing, therefore, trigger warnings were given at the beginning of the survey and signposting to relevant services provided after completion.

A simple mixed methods survey was created using SurveyMonkey. It was designed to measure understanding and awareness of RJ before and after viewing the animation. The survey had 20 questions; these were a combination of open and closed ended questions, multiple choice and Likert scales.

Consent was gained from participants and a number of questions were asked; this included demographic information. This purpose of this was to explore whether the animation was more or less accessible to demographic groups. The survey asked questions to measure baseline awareness and invited the participant to detail what that awareness was and where that originated from. Participants were asked to watch the RJ animation clip and then to complete further awareness questions on the impact of the tool.

Participants were invited to complete the survey via email, which were sent to a variety of stakeholders, colleagues and social contacts, with a request to circulate the survey widely. The survey was live from the 1st to the 30th of April 2021. Completion of the survey was promoted using various social media platforms including CJS and CYCJ twitter accounts.

Participants were made aware that the survey results would be compiled into a report for the Scottish Government RJ stakeholder group.

Participants were thanked for their participation. The animation clip also provided a link to the Scottish Governments RJ stakeholder group website for relevant publications on RJ development in Scotland.

The data was analysed using SPSS and Microsoft Excel. Descriptive statistics were produced on demographics, baseline and end-line awareness. The open ended responses were grouped thematically and coded inductively in line with the requirements of the research questions.

Results

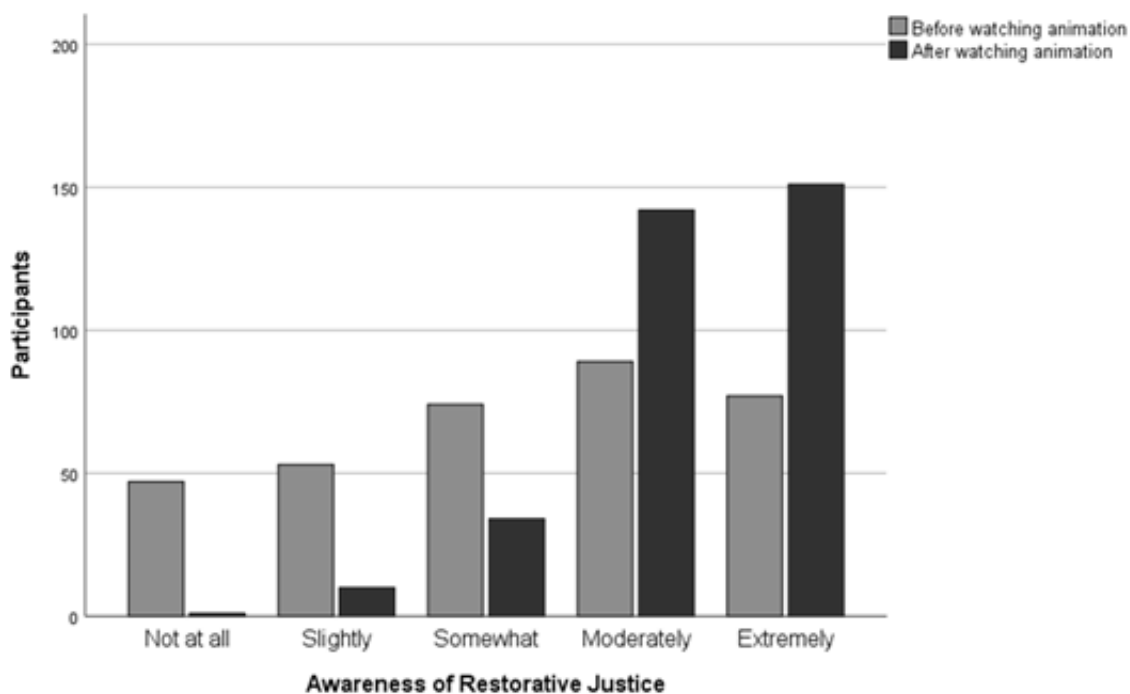
Demographics

340 individuals completed the survey, aged between under 18 years to over 65 years. The majority of participants were female 75% (255). 1% identified as non-binary or chose not to disclose their gender (2). The majority of participants were white Scottish 78% (254) followed by white British 13% (41).

Awareness of RJ (before and after watching animation)

When participants were asked if they had heard of the term RJ, results showed that 83% (280) had heard of the term and 17% (58) had not, or were unsure. Participants were asked to rate their baseline awareness of RJ, and then asked to rate their awareness again after watching the animation. Graph 3.2.1 provides a comparison of baseline and end-line RJ awareness.

Graph 3.2.1: Awareness of RJ before and after watching the animation



Understanding of RJ

After watching the animation, 57% (194) of participants rated themselves as 'more aware,' 41% (139) rated their awareness as the same and 1% (5) rated themselves as 'less aware.' The majority of those who rated their awareness the same before and after watching the animation, already had high levels of RJ awareness.

Participants who indicated they had heard of RJ were asked to comment on their understanding of the term. A total of 136 participants completed this question and 76% (106) demonstrated a full, clear understanding, 17% (23) demonstrated a broadly accurate, but partial understanding and 7% (10) demonstrated an unclear understanding, or were unsure. This was assessed against the same definition of RJ provided in the Scottish Opinion Monitor 2020 survey:

“Restorative Justice involves bringing together the victim of a crime with the person who committed it, to talk about its impact and to try to make amends. This happens either through a meeting with a trained facilitator, or by the victim and offender writing to each other. Both the victim and the offender have to agree to take part, and the process happens in addition to the normal justice system.”

Animation – The Positives

Participants were asked to comment on the most impactful element of the animation. From the 245 people who answered this question, 74% (195) found the inclusion of lived experience and real life stories the most impactful element. Participants said:

“the father who spoke with his son's attacker made a big impact on me.”

“Hearing the voices of people who had been through the process.”

The accessibility and style of the animation was also well-received by participants. 20% of participants (54) specifically mentioned this, stating;

“The animation was good. It was easy to follow and engaging.”

“The simplicity and the flow between graphics is really good - thought it was cool, simple and informative”

6% (15) participants also felt the information contained within the animation was better-communicated than in other methods of engagement. Participants coded under this category said:

“Good explanation of what it was and how it has benefited some participants.”

“The message that RJ will be available throughout Scotland in 2023.”

Animation – Suggested Improvements

Four main themes were noted in the suggested improvements: more lived experience, further information, a change in style and accessibility (Table 3.3.1).

Table 3.3.1	
Improvements	Participant Numbers
More lived experience	68% (82)
Further information required	20% (24)
A change in the video style	18% (21)
Improved accessibility	13% (16)
Other	9% (11)

Reflecting the comments participants made about the most impactful elements of the animation, the most suggested improvement was the inclusion of more lived experience. Participants suggested:

“More examples of real success stories where restorative justice has been beneficial both for those harmed and those who committed the crimes.”

“Further detail into what this actually looks like with real world examples.”

Some participants did not appreciate the testimonies in the animation were from individuals who had experienced RJ directly. Other participants wanted to hear more from the people who caused harm, and a number wanted a video of people with lived experience talking about their involvement in RJ from their own words.

Overwhelmingly, the message was that people were most engaged with real stories from those who have been through RJ processes. This is valuable information to take into account when planning any future engagement materials to feature lived experience and ‘real life’ experiences of the process and impact.

Other participants requested further information. However, the animation did signpost the viewer to the Scottish Government RJ stakeholder website, containing relevant publications in relation to the development of RJ in Scotland. Participants said:

“this feels very introductory and left me with a lot of questions”

“Could be a little vague”

The specific information participants requested has been analysed alongside the ‘further questions’ participants had. Some noted that lengthening the animation to fit in all the information they required would make it less accessible, and requested links to further training, or perhaps a series of follow-up videos. It is important to recall our sample had high levels of professional experience, and it is to be expected they might not find all the information they require in a general introductory video. This suggested improvement is positive, in that it shows there is a desire to learn more about RJ. However, to meet the request for more information in future animations, the audience, and pitching the information at the right level for their requirements, should be carefully considered to satisfy the needs of professionals, the public and people who use RJ.

Whilst for some the animation style was a positive, for others it did not help to engage them with the video and its content. Participants suggested:

“Use of colour to make it come alive”

“Stop drawing lines on each of the pictures. I find this very off putting”

Overall, within this sample, the animation style was more popular than not, with more participants finding it impactful (54) than problematic (21). However, for future engagement materials, the divisive nature of this style should be noted, with participants suggesting:

“The sound could be improved. Subtitles to make the video available to a wider audience.”

“Some of the audio was a bit difficult to hear”

“The language is too professional “assessment” “third party contact” are not terms people would usually use. Keep it more simple and every day.”

Accessibility is a core concern and the participants have made valuable suggestions about the necessity to ensure any future material meets all accessibility requirements. The specific access needs identified were around sound quality, less jargon, the need for subtitling, suggesting a streamlined ‘less cluttered’ version suitable for neurodiverse viewers, and highlighting the requirement for good reading ability in English for the current animation.

Summary

Overall, this animation was successful, with participants feeling better informed about RJ following viewing than before. Lived experience and ‘real-life’ stories were the most impactful elements of the animation, and participants requested more of this in future materials. Participants wanted to hear not only from the victim, but also the experience of the harmer, and other family members.

The available participants made it difficult to establish the communication preferences for different age groups. This study did provide useful considerations around accessibility, (such as suggestions for using subtitles, not relying on written text, and ensuring sound quality is high which can be taken forward into future engagement materials. It is also important to ensure accessibility to different learning styles and groups of people, including professionals, the public and individuals who may access RJ. This should include, but is not limited to children, adults and groups of people with particular needs, such as learning disability, ethnic groups or older adults etc.



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Limitations of the survey are that it is not representative of the wider population of Scotland, as the majority of participants worked in the justice sector. There were also general limitations, including over-reliance on self-reported data, and the possibility that participants provided socially desirable answers.