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THE IMPACT OF NON-CUSTODIAL SENTENCES ON THE REHABILITATION AND REINTEGRATION OF OFFENDERS IN JORDAN DURING THE PERIOD 2022–2025

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine how implementation of the non-custodial sentences will influence the rehabilitation and social reintegration of the offenders in Jordan over the period of 2022-2025. The research used descriptive-analytical research design and purposive sample of 27 people who were given alternative sentences such as community service. The data were gathered by a questionnaire which had been developed based on the theories of restorative justice and cultural homogeneity and thus the validity and reliability of the tool were upheld through the review of its experts and alpha test of Cronbach. The paper aims to give a detailed insight into the experiences of the offenders and how alternative sanctions can be implemented and how they can possibly influence behavioral change in individuals and increase their acceptance of the alternatives by the society. It also helps in the provision of scientific evidence to advance development of legislative and rehabilitative policies on alternative sanctions in Jordan thus facilitating restorative justice and social inclusion.

KEYWORDS: Alternative sanctions, restorative justice, offender rehabilitation, social reintegration, cultural homogeneity, Jordan.

1. INTRODUCTION

The criminal justice system reform can be represented by the emphasis on the rehabilitation of offenders as the key to the overall reform of society. The principles by which policies and rehabilitative programs are established ought to, therefore, be directed by scientific evidence and research-based facts and not idealized perceptions and anecdotal impressions. When you want to help people, you need to tell them the truth as Thomas Sowell has seen. In this respect, criminology still promotes the use of evidence-based policies, which oppose the substitution of the strategies that were proven with the strategies that seem effective (Kubrin and Tublitz, 2022).

Alternatives to custody are contemporary reformative techniques that can be applicable particularly to first or non-recidivist offenders. Such options as community service and electronic monitoring are effective ways of attaining rehabilitative objectives without denying the offenders their freedom and thereby lowering chances of reoffending since first-time offenders do not mix with habitual ones in prisons.

These changes towards such options are in line with the suggestions of the Royal Committee of Judicial Development. The Ministry of Justice (2019) provided the guidance on the necessity of alternative sanctions, which were officially acknowledged in the Penal Code of 2017 in the form of rehabilitative alternative which would improve the efficiency of the judicial system, balancing both general and specific deterrence.

On this basis, the present research will examine a specific issue in the context of the impact of non-custodial sentences on the rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders in Jordan in 2022-2025 on the basis of the experiences of those who have received such alternatives and the analysis of their rehabilitative and social aspects.

Problem Statement

The problem of the study is that it is necessary to assess the real rehabilitative effect of non-custodial options that have been actively implemented in the Jordanian judicial system as a comparatively new tool to soften the punishment and still serve to achieve rehabilitative functions. Through these options, the Ministry of Justice gives the offenders, especially first-time offenders, a chance to stay within the community without getting into touch with people who have habitual offenders in the correctional facilities, thus lowering chances of recidivism.

Although these alternatives have positive

rehabilitative, social and economic aspects, including relieving congestion in correctional institutions and the financial cost-saving aspect to the state, their real implementation remains an empirical research subject to prove their usefulness in meeting the targeted goals. This is especially needed where there is no direct scientific consideration on the view of the individuals who are affected by these sanctions. This paper will thus focus on the effects that these options will have on the rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders in Jordan between 2022 and 2025 by assessing the reactions of a purposive sample of offenders with adequate awareness of the conditions under which they are sentenced.

1.1. Study Questions

1. Is there a statistically significant relationship between the application of alternative sanctions and the rehabilitation of the offender's behavior?
2. Are alternative sanctions more proportionate and suitable for minor offenses compared to serious crimes?
3. Are alternative sanctions more effective in rehabilitating first-time offenders compared to habitual offenders?
4. To what extent do alternative sanctions gain social acceptance within Jordanian society?
5. How do alternative sanctions contribute to the reintegration of the offender as an active member of society?

1.2. Research Objectives

1. To identify the impact of non-custodial alternatives on offender rehabilitation in Jordan.
2. To determine the suitability of alternative sanctions for minor offenses compared to major crimes.
3. To examine the effectiveness of alternative sanctions in rehabilitating first-time offenders compared to habitual offenders.
4. To measure the degree of social acceptance of alternative sanctions in Jordan.
5. To analyze the role of alternative sanctions in reintegrating offenders as active members of society.

1.3. Significance of the Study

1.3.1. Theoretical Significance:

The research adds to the field of academic knowledge concerning alternative sanctions as a modern concept in penal policy by connecting them with the rehabilitative theories and subcultural

constructs. It offers more details on the social and psychological aspects of punishment and emphasizes on the rehabilitative as well as deterrent functions in the context of restorative justice. The research is a qualitative contribution to the research setting of Jordan where not many studies have discussed alternative sanctions in a holistic reformative approach.

1.3.2. Practical Significance:

The practical implication of the research is that it will enable policy makers to make informed decisions in coming up with penal strategies. It also helps in lessening the congestion in correctional centers and the related economic and social costs. Additionally, the research highlights the relevance of alternative sanctions to the rehabilitation of the first time offenders and to increase their chances of reintegrating back into society in accordance with the principles of restorative and humane justice that have been espoused in international conventions and national laws.

1.4. Key Concepts

1.4.1. Custodial Sentences:

Imprisonment or detention as a method of deterrence and rehabilitation is one of the most prevalent forms of punishment in the conventional court system, designed to limit the freedom of an individual who violated the law.

1.4.2. Alternative Sanctions:

Substitutes of imprisonment, which are legal measures applied to accomplish rehabilitation without isolating the lawbreaker of society (community service, probation, or electronic monitoring).

1.4.3. Rehabilitation:

The objective of the process was to change offender behavior and redirect them to obeying the law by using educational and rehabilitative programs so that they can be reintegrated into the society as functional members of it.

1.4.4. Social Reintegration:

The process of reintegrating offenders into the social and economic life after the execution of alternative sanctions increases responsibility and minimizes chances of recidivism.

1.4.5. Cultural Homogeneity Theory:

The presence of a general social agreement on

ethical and social standards that helped to accept the rehabilitative sanctions and interpret their purpose.

1.4.6. Rehabilitative Theory:

The theory of penalties is based on the idea of correcting and reforming the criminal as opposed to just punishing him, on the fact that he can positively change when exposed to the rehabilitative programs by design.

1.5. Methodology of the Study

The study adopted a descriptive-analytical approach with an exploratory qualitative orientation, as it is well suited to the nature of the research, which aims to examine the impact of alternatives to custodial sanctions on the rehabilitation and reform of offenders within Jordanian society. A purposive sample consisting of 27 individuals sentenced to alternative penalties was selected, allowing for an in-depth exploration of their lived experiences and direct engagement with them for data collection purposes.

Data were collected using a questionnaire developed on the basis of two main theoretical frameworks: rehabilitation theory and cultural integration theory. The instrument was reviewed by a panel of experts to ensure its content validity, and its reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, which yielded high values indicating strong internal consistency.

Following data collection, the responses were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were employed to interpret the findings and test the specified hypotheses. This methodological process contributed to a robust and reliable understanding of the relationship between alternatives to custodial sanctions and the rehabilitation of offenders, as well as their reintegration into society.

2. Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

2.1.1. Concept of Alternative Sanctions:

This section addresses theoretical and practical definitions, types, and application bases of alternative sanctions, particularly within the Jordanian legal system.

2.1.2. Restorative Justice and Its Impact on Penal Policy:

Discusses the concept, objectives, and significance of restorative justice as a modern approach focusing

on rehabilitation rather than mere punishment.

2.1.3 Offender Rehabilitation and Social Reintegration:

Focuses on methods and programs for rehabilitating offenders, their effect on reducing recidivism, and integrating individuals as active citizens.

2.1.4. Theoretical Explanations for the Study:

Reviews theories explaining offender behavior and the role of alternatives in rehabilitation, including:

- Cultural Homogeneity Theory
- Restorative Justice Theory

2.1.5. Previous Studies:

Provides an analytical overview of key studies examining alternative sanctions and their effects, highlighting agreements and differences with the current study.

Theoretical and conceptual frameworks are essential to the interpretation of the phenomena under investigation as these frameworks provide a scientific context that helps to outline the relations between the variables in the research and design the instruments of the study and methods of data analysis. Since in this study the research problem is the role of non-custodial alternatives on offender rehabilitation and reintegration in Jordan, the current chapter is devoted to the overview of the main concepts, such as alternative sanctions, restorative justice, rehabilitation, and explanatory theories and prior studies which shape scientific background of the study under review.

CHAPTER ONE: CONCEPT AND LEGAL BASIS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ALTERNATIVE SANCTIONS

1.1 Concept of Alternative Sanctions

Alternative sanctions are a paradigm change in contemporary penal ideology in the attempt to curtail the use of custodial sentences to a lesser number of offenders, especially minor offenders by applying in their place restorative, or community-based punishments, which increase offender reintegration into society. These options involve community service, judicial supervision, rehabilitation programs, and other programs that are applied in non-prison settings, and the goals of both cost saving and contact avoidance with criminalized settings (Graham & McIvor, 2015, Alarid, 2018).

According to recent literature, alternative

sanctions are used to reduce the recidivism rates and enhance the efficiency of the criminal justice systems, particularly when they are associated with the principles of restorative justice (Parker & Smith, 2019; Bazemore & Umbreit, 2020). The Arab world has seen various nations such as Jordan initiating the revision of their legal systems to accommodate these options as a lead up to the broader adoption of these options in the penal policies. (Al-Werikat, 2022; Al-Sartawi, 2021).

1.2. Types of Alternative Sanctions

The forms of alternative sanctions vary according to judicial systems, with the most prominent including:

1. Community Service: Assigning the offender to perform tasks that benefit the public, such as street cleaning or working in charitable organizations.
2. Community Supervision: Subjecting the offender to judicial or societal oversight for a specified period.
3. Electronic Monitoring: Tracking the offender electronically through monitoring devices.
4. House Arrest: Restricting the offender's movement to their residence.
5. Mandatory Treatment: Requiring offenders with addictions or psychological disorders to participate in treatment programs.
6. Criminal Mediation: Resolving disputes between the offender and the victim through dialogue under the supervision of a neutral entity (Rosenblatt & Deane, 2020; Kras et al., 2017; Zehr, 2019).

The alternatives vary in their scales and appropriateness in relation to the seriousness of the crime, the personality of the criminal, as well as the conditions in society. Recent research notes that the variety and flexibility of alternative sanctions in response to the nature of the offense and the characteristics of offenders increase their practical usefulness, especially in legal systems where alternative sanctions can be imposed at their discretion of preliminary social reports (Roberts & Gabor, 2020). Through comparative experiences, it has been established that flexibility in legislation is critical to enhancing the use of alternatives and decreasing the uses of incarceration as a tradition.

1.3. Legal and Institutional Foundations for Implementing Alternative Sanctions, with Focus on Jordan

1.3.1. Legislative Framework

The legal framework constitutes a background mechanism of bringing into play other sanctions. In the United Kingdom and France, the laws have been adjusted to include such options as part of a combined rehabilitative policy of punishment (Phelps, 2017; Tonry, 2020).

In Jordan, the community sanctions were established due to the amendment to the Penal Code No. 27 of 2017, which introduced the community service and judicial supervision. Further government initiatives were through executive instructions and memoranda of understanding with the implementing agencies (Ministry of Justice, 2023). In 2025, the Cabinet passed a project of extending the range of crimes that will be covered and the creation of mechanisms of implementation (Ministry of Justice, 2025). Relative leadership in the Arab world has been indicated through comparative studies that show that Jordan has been leading in this area despite the challenges in implementation. (Alarid, 2021; Al-Nawasheh, 2024).

1.3.2. Institutional and Executive Structure

Effective execution of alternative sanctions needs to have an extensive institutional framework, such as the judges, supervision officers, civil society organizations, and psychological and rehabilitative assistance organizations. There is experience that the absence of coordination or poor training adversely impacts the quality of execution (Smith and Johnson, 2021; Alarid, 2021).

In Jordan, the community sanctions unit was set up by the ministry of justice and the trained personnel were in cooperation with foreign partners. Although these are vital initial moves, they are too narrow as compared to the demand of the society and require more funding, involvement of the community and more power on the administrative judiciary to control. (Al-Sartawi, 2021; Al-Werikat, 2022; Al-Hassan, 2021).

1.3.3 Social Acceptance and Cultural Context

The success of alternative sanctions is determined by the acceptance of the community. Such sanctions in certain settings are sometimes seen as being soft on criminals and therefore this could cause loss of confidence to the judicial system. Thus, it is crucial to provide additional publicity and media campaigns (Graham & McIvor, 2015; Garland, 2018).

In Jordan, some of the cases, especially the ones in respect of honor or even traditional norms are still in the public reservation in respect of non-custodial punishments. Local research emphasizes that media and legal education should be oriented to the development of the culture of restorative justice and rehabilitative practice. (Al-Ajarmeh, 2020; Al-Assaf, 2021).

1.3.4 Psychological Support and Vocational Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation institutions are at the center stage of success of alternative sanctions as they offer therapeutic services, job training and psychological assistance to offenders thus minimizing the chances of recidivism. Other nations like the Netherlands and Canada have managed to incorporate rehabilitation programs in alternative justice structures (Bazemore & Umbreit, 2020; Petersilia, 2019).

There are also local associations in Jordan involved in vocational, psychological rehabilitation programs, but they need institutionalization and sustainable funding. However, the magnitude and quality of initiatives has improved significantly over the last few years, paving the way to an all-covering national system. (Al-Werikat, 2022; Al-Hassan, 2021; Jordan River Foundation, 2023).

CHAPTER TWO: RESTORATIVE JUSTICE AND ITS IMPACT ON PENAL POLICY

There have been dramatic changes in the penal policy strategies in the international and the regional level in recent decades, following the increasing demands that penal policy should be oriented towards restorative justice as a more humane and more effective method of punitive practice as opposed to the traditional punitive model based on incarceration. Restorative justice is concerned with the restoration of the relationship between the offender, the victim and the society by means of conciliatory actions that are expected to address the harm and restore the social balance (Zehr, 2019).

It is suggested in literature that the implementation of restorative justice goes beyond the criminal offense and reconcile the society more broadly by engaging the community and the victim in the conflict resolution process. It is founded on the principle of collective curing as opposed to individual punishment (Van Ness & Strong, 2015).

Restorative justice is also more holistic as compared to the criminal justice system in that the focus is now on the normalization of the offender as opposed to punishment, empowerment of the victim, and peace in the society. This has directly impacted

on the policies of penalization where some judicial frameworks have suggested alternatives to a custodial sentence, which includes community service, criminal mediation, electronic monitoring, and rehabilitative programs (Bazemore & Walgrave, 1999).

In Jordan, the official penal policy over the past years has demonstrated a tendency to include the principles of restorative justice due to several factors, including overcrowding in prisons, a decrease in overall deterrence levels, a high level of recidivism, and the international and regional dynamics promoting alternative methods. This tendency is manifested in the legal amendments regarding the community sanctions including such amended Jordanian Penal Code No. 27 of 2017, which incorporated the community sanctions as the tools of the judicial process, especially of misdemeanors and minor crimes. (Jordan Ministry of Justice, 2023).

The substitution of punishment with rehabilitation implies the resetting of the penal policy both on the purpose and means. Whereas conventional punishment aims to achieve general and specific deterrence, restorative justice is aimed at obtaining real behavior change in the offender and reintegrating the offender as an active member of society thereby attaining a sustainable crime deterrence (Braithwaite, 1989).

Empirical research on the field provides evidence that restorative sanctions lower recidivism and increase psychological and social rehabilitation chances of offenders (and first-time offenders in particular) (Phelps, 2017). Involvement of the victim in the restorative process makes them more satisfied with justice than the traditional judicial procedures (Sherman & Strang, 2012).

Restorative justice, in the eyes of the victim, has a beneficial effect on mental health, eliminating feelings of anger, anxiety and the need to exact revenge. Literature available in Psychological Bulletin suggests that participation in reconciliation sessions by the victim boosts his or her sense of justice and provides the victim with a real voice in the court (PubMed, 2022). This intervention also helps to restore the social balance (Grimsey Jones et al., 2023).

Despite the difficulties of enforcing the restorative justice, which have been noted like legislative gaps or lack of awareness of the subjects, studies show that these can be addressed by training of judges, civil society and effective links between formal and informal organizations. (Tonry, 2020; Al-Ajarmeh, 2020).

As noted in some of the international media

reviews, alternative justice, though being unconventional, has the potential of offering more meaningful solutions than incarceration in sensitive cases, even though it is unconventional. As an example, a report by The Guardian in 2025 reported of a survivor of sexual violence who found the restorative mediation approach more rewarding in matters of dignity and justice than the traditional punitive action (The Guardian, 2025). On the contrary, through research, restorative justice policy is supported by the fact that incarcerations tend to recidivate the crime, which is more likely to be recidivated after release (Cullen, Jonson, and Nagin, 2020).

Restorative justice aims at the causation of criminal activity by introducing conciliatory and rehabilitative schemes that aim at reforming the offender and compensating the society and victims, which resonates with the current goals of penal policy. Polices reviews in Europe emphasize that restorative justice is directly related to the culture of tolerance in a society, by which lawmakers must govern legal structures tallied with local values to make them acceptable (Maruna & LeBel, 2010).

Thus, restorative justice is not an equivalence or substitution of incarceration in technical terms, but an alternate idea in the penal philosophy. The effective application of it would entail a combination of penal policies that would be balanced between community protection, rehabilitation of offenders, and justice to the victims.

3. CHAPTER THREE: OFFENDER REHABILITATION AND SOCIAL REINTEGRATION

The principle of offender rehabilitation has emerged as a key focus in the modern penal policy reform, especially in the light of the increasing global tendencies to prefer non-custodial options as more efficient in the context of criminal conduct and recidivism prevention. These options, in particular, community sanctions and community service programs, are premised on the involvement of offenders in the process of reform through education and social aspects as opposed to confining them in prison (Petersilia, 2019).

There are numerous researches that support the idea that alternative sanctions give offenders real chances to accept responsibility, learn the outcomes of their behavior, and engage in the activities that can benefit their practice and help them develop their social identity in a positive way (Alarid, 2021). They also enable the offenders to preserve family and community connections, which is a decisive factor in

social reintegration (Bazemore & Umbreit, 2020).

The best programs would be developed to meet the needs of the offenders with respect to treatment, education, and employment instead of merely being based on supervisory actions. The greater the level of individualization of the program, the higher the chances of reoffending prevention (Andrews & Bonta, 2017).

The emerging community sanction programs are continuing to grow in Jordan. Early signs and symptoms of success suggest that the target groups are reducing recidivism, especially among those engaged in the activities that come along with the education and community (Jordan Ministry of Justice, 2023). According to the local research, community-based rehabilitation in the form of unpaid labor or training seminars contributes to offenders getting back their dignity and a sense of belonging, which is not possible in a conventional correctional setting. (Al-Hassan, 2021; Al-Sartawi, 2021).

The theoretical framework supporting this philosophy relies on multiple criminological theories:

- Social Learning Theory posits that criminal behavior is learned, emphasizing the importance of positive environments for behavioral reshaping (Akers, 1998).
- Labeling Theory warns against the effects of stigmatizing offenders as criminals through imprisonment, which hinders reintegration (Becker, 1963).
- Reintegrative Shaming Theory emphasizes shaming without humiliation and providing opportunities for dignified reentry into society (Braithwaite, 1989).

The use of alternative sanctions in a rehabilitative philosophy helps in establishing a therapeutic setting in which the main goal is the social and psychological adjustment without violating the basic rights and stigmatizing the criminal by placing him/her in prison. It also promotes the acceptance of ex-criminals in the society as key members and participants in change and facilitates the criminal justice goals in a balanced way (Kras et al., 2017).

Recent restorative justice research indicates that alternative sanctions, especially community mediation, and community service programs are effective in lowering recidivism among first time offenders. On the basis of analytical research, it is concluded that engagement in restorative programs makes people feel more responsible and decreases the chances of committing repeat offenses (Fulham et al., 2023; Ghali, 2024).

In a study carried out in the Netherlands, it was shown that the inclusion of young offenders into education- and work-based reform programs enhanced educational performance and social reentry, although some of them faced problems with follow-up (van der Geest et al., 2023). This is applicable in the case of Jordan especially due to the few official rehabilitative facilities.

Constant post-implementation support like vocational counseling and psychological support is a major success factor in reintegration. Research has shown that, in most cases, the lack of these factors results in offender relapse and criminal re-entry. (McNeill, 2018).

In spite of their positive aspects, the effectiveness of such programs is determined by a number of conditions, such as the quality of personnel training, monitoring, a positive legal framework, and a cognizant society about their purpose. Rehabilitation is not possible without the integration of the judicial powers, civil society, and education and professional divisions.

4. CHAPTER FOUR: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

Criminal punishment has experienced radical changes in the past few decades, as the philosophical schools of punishment changed their approach from the emerging retributive school to the more humanistic and reformist schools. The two theories that mainly cause this change are The Reformatory Theory of Punishment and the Cultural Homogeneity Theory as both provide a modern approach towards the conceptualization of alternative sanctions and their functioning with regard to crime reduction and reintegration of criminals into the community.

4.1. Reformatory Theory

The reformatory theory focuses on rehabilitating the offender as opposed to punishing the offender. It assumes that punishment is expected to be a chance of rectifying behavior and encourage social reintegration. Under this theory, punishment is perceived as a treatment means that takes into consideration the psychological and social aspects of the offender (Al-Werikat, 2020; Zehr, 2019; Bazemore & Umbreit, 2020). These principles have been manifested in the questionnaire used in this research that gauged perceptions of people with respect to behavioral change opportunities and rehabilitative purpose of punishment.

The reformatory style is more of a close to restorative justice that aims at restoring harm done as

a result of the crime and not necessarily punishing the criminal. It also focuses on restoring the bond between the offender and the society. (Zehr, 2019; Rosenblatt & Deane, 2020).

4.2. Cultural Homogeneity Theory

According to this theory, the effectiveness of the penal policies and their community-based alternatives is determined by the levels of societal homogeneity and cultural tolerance of the punitive models (Garland, 2018; Al-Qudah, 2022). Societies that are culturally homogeneous are likely to express more support of non-custodial sanctions, as these actions are consistent with such collectivist values as justice, mercy, and moral deterrence (Al-Assaf, 2021; Phelps, 2017).

Based on the responses, analyzing them within the framework of this theory makes it possible to comprehend the cultural aspect of the acceptance of alternative sanctions and the level of their compatibility with the social environment of the offender. This can be seen in the perceptions of other sanctions as being socially acceptable or being a cultural phenomenon or a new practice of penal policy among the participants.

The Chicago School of Sociology emphasized the significance of social environment as an explanatory factor of criminal behavior as communities with weak social bond are more likely to develop deviant behaviors and hence the need to reintegrate them instead of isolating them (Shaw & McKay, 1942). Moreover, Sampson & Laub (2005) suggested the theory of Life-Course that demonstrated how stable work and social connection are the turning points in the life of an offender, which can deter recidivism in case of the backing of the community-based options.

4.3. Previous Studies

Several previous studies have examined alternative sanctions and their impact on offender rehabilitation.

- Al-Kilani (2013) carried out a study of the topic of Alternative Sanctions to Short-Term Custodial Sentences on the basis of a comparative theory-analytical study to determine the effectiveness of alternative sanctions on the Palestinian legislation. The research has found out that the used alternatives failed to attain the intended goals and were incompatible with modern penal philosophy, which restricted the ability of the alternatives to serve as real alternatives to incarceration. The researcher suggested that alternative sanctions should be considered as

separate means of social rehabilitation, which should be guaranteed in reality and not put in limiting conditions that weaken their efficacy. This paper highlights the need to establish a powerful legislative framework, which has been the focus of the current study through the analysis of the effects of these options in Jordan.

- Ashweir (2021) conducted a research in the title of Alternative Sanctions in Light of the Draft Criminal Law and Prospects of Penal Policy through a comparative analytic approach. The paper examined the Moroccan criminal draft law on integration of alternative sanctions with a particular focus on the new strategy that focuses on non-custodial penalties including restriction of specific rights, obligatory treatment, and fines daily. But, there are still legislative and institutional obstacles to implementation. The researcher suggested the need to establish the required infrastructure, the presence of civil society, and the effectiveness of alternatives in the context of recidivism reduction and social reintegration.
- Al-Zoubi (2021) carried out a research study of the subject of challenges in implementing alternative sanctions in the Jordanian Penal Code through a legal analytical approach. The paper found the weaknesses in legislation and institutional support, such as shortage of qualified personnel and poor coordination among the concerned parties. Some recommendations were made such as legal retextualization, the widening of the scope of applying alternative sanctions, and the introduction of institutional and training assistance to make them effective.
- Al-Khawaldeh (2022) undertook a research work entitled The Legal Regulation of Alternative sanctions: The Jordanian Experience that utilizes an analytical methodology. The article involved an analysis of the legislation on alternative sanctions following the recent 2017 amendments to the Jordanian Penal Code, and it was found that even though the introduction of alternatives has become an important change in the Jordanian penal policy, there are still significant issues such as the restricted usage and lack of awareness among the judges. It was recommended to turn on legal provisions, broaden the scope of crimes that are subject to the law, and enhance rehabilitation and

awareness initiatives of judicial and executive organizations.

- Koops et al. (2023) published A Quasi-Experimental Study on the Effects of Community versus Custodial Sanction in Youth Justice based on a quasi-experimental study to provide a comparison between community and custodial sanctions among young people in the Netherlands. The results showed that young people who faced community sanctions had a lower recidivism rate than those who received the custodial sentences. Community sanctions worked particularly well among low and medium-risk youth. The research suggested the extension of community sanctions to better the youth rehabilitation and decreasing recidivism.
- Su'esu'e et al. (2025) published A Systematic Review of Evidence-based Alternative Models of Incarceration, a review of empirical research on the efficacy of alternatives like community service, electronic monitoring and treatment programs. The paper concluded that the efficacy is enhanced when the alternatives are planned and developed according to the principles of science and stated that the rehabilitative and preventive objectives should be achieved through continuous monitoring and assessment.

4.4. Commentary on Previous Studies

The significance of alternative sanctions to curb crime is emphasized in all studies, but their effective implementation presupposes changes in the legislation and social education campaigns. They also state that these penalties may be more efficient when they are backed by clear legislations and strong implementation systems.

4.5. Methodology of the Study

The research design was a descriptive analytical approach, which would be suitable in identifying the effects of non-custodial sanctions on rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders in Jordan. The research targeted offenders who had in fact received alternative sanctions thus allowing to examine in detail their actual experience as related to the Reformatory Theory and Cultural Homogeneity Theory thus contributing to the scientific validity of the results as far as the application of restorative justice in the local setting was concerned.

4.6. Population and Sample

The research sample included offenders who will

receive alternative sanctions in Jordan in the years 2022 and 2025, such as community service, community supervision, electronic monitoring, or limitations on visiting certain places instead of incarceration. Formal records show that more than 11,000 alternative sentencing were carried out within this time.

The study relied on a purposive qualitative sample consisting of 27 participants, due to the nature of the topic and the specificity of the target group, as the participants were individuals sentenced to custodial penalties. This circumstance limited the possibility of recruiting a larger number of participants. The sample size is considered appropriate for exploratory qualitative research, which focuses on an in-depth understanding of participants' experiences, perceptions, and the quality of the information they provide, rather than on statistical generalization.

4.7. Study Instrument

A survey was developed to determine the perception of offenders about the effectiveness of alternative punishment on rehabilitation and reintegration. The instrument was grounded on the theoretical frameworks (Reformatory Theory and Cultural Homogeneity Theory) and informed with the prior literature and research on the alternative sanctions and restorative justice.

The questionnaire will have two major parts, both of which will have statements intended to assess the perceptions of the respondents on the influence of alternative sanctions on their rehabilitation. Academic experts reviewed the instrument to facilitate face validity and suitability to the objectives of the study.

4.8. Validity and Reliability

A panel of academic specialists in criminology, penal policy and social measurement reviewed the questionnaire to guarantee content validity. The level of reliability was determined through the use of Cronbachs Alpha to determine internal consistency where the reliability was found to be 0.92 which is a high level of reliability, and it is above the scientifically acceptable limit of 0.70. This contributes to effectiveness of study findings.

4.9. Statistical Analysis

The SPSS was used to analyze quantitative data obtained by responses of the participants and the relevant statistical methods were applied to meet the study objectives and test the hypotheses. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze data to

reveal general trends and verify the relationship between variables and significant differences. Internal consistency measures (Alpha of Cronbach) were also used to affirm reliability and validity, which guaranteed the strength of the analytical results.

4.9. Presentation and Analysis of Results

4.9.1. Demographic Data of the Study Sample

Table 1: Demographic Data of the Study Sample.

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	23	85.2%
	Female	4	14.8%
Total Gender		27	100%
Education Level	Bachelor's	7	25.9%
	Diploma	5	18.5%
	High School or below	15	55.6%
Total Education		27	100%
Type of Crime	Criminal	21	77.8%
	Economic	3	11.1%
	Cyber	3	11.1%
Total Crime Type		27	100%
Type of Alternative Sanction	Community Service	25	92.6%
	Community Supervision	1	3.7%
	Electronic Monitoring	1	3.7%
Total Alternative Type		27	100%
Previous Convictions	Yes	8	29.6%
	No	19	70.4%
Total Previous Convictions		27	100%
Acceptance of Alternative	Yes	26	96.3%
	No	1	3.7%
Total Acceptance		27	100%
Recidivism (Same Crime)	Yes	5	18.5%
	No	22	81.5%
Total Recidivism		27	100%

The results indicate that the majority of the sample were male (85.2%, $n = 23$), while females constituted 14.8% ($n = 4$). Regarding educational level, the largest proportion held a high school diploma or less (55.6%, $n = 15$), followed by

bachelor's degree holders (25.9%, $n = 7$) and diploma holders (18.5%, $n = 5$). Regarding the type of crime, criminal offenses predominated (77.8%, $n = 21$), followed by economic crimes (11.1%, $n = 3$) and cybercrimes (11.1%, $n = 3$). The most common alternative sanction was community service (92.6%, $n = 25$), followed by community supervision and electronic monitoring (3.7% each, $n = 1$ for each). Most participants had no prior convictions (70.4%, $n = 19$), whereas 29.6% ($n = 8$) had previous convictions. Recidivism for the same crime was observed in 18.5% ($n = 5$), while 81.5% ($n = 22$) had not reoffended. Finally, courts accepted the application of alternative sanctions in the vast majority of cases (96.3%, $n = 26$), and rejected them in only 3.7% of cases ($n = 1$).

4.9.2. Presentation of Hypotheses

Question One: Is there a statistically significant relationship between the application of alternative sanctions and the rehabilitation of the offender's behavior?

To answer the first research question, Spearman's rank correlation coefficient was used to measure the strength and direction of the relationship between the two variables under study, at a statistical significance level of ($\alpha \leq 0.05$).

Table 2: Spearman Correlation between Implementation of Alternative Sanctions and Rehabilitation of Offender Behavior.

Variables	Spearman's Rho	Sig. (2-tailed)	N
Implementation of Alternative Sanctions	-0.47	0.8	27
Rehabilitation of Offender Behavior			

Table (2) presents the results of Spearman's rank correlation test examining the relationship between the application of alternative sanctions and the rehabilitation of the offender's behavior. The findings indicate that the correlation coefficient reached (-0.47), reflecting a weak negative relationship, which did not reach the level of statistical significance (Sig = 0.8 > 0.05).

In light of the current study sample, this result suggests that there is no statistically significant relationship between the application of alternative sanctions and the rehabilitation of offenders' behavior. This indicates that the implementation of alternative sanctions alone was not sufficient to

produce a tangible behavioral change among offenders within the context of the study.

This finding may be explained by the fact that behavioral rehabilitation is a complex process influenced by multiple interrelated factors, such as the offender’s social and cultural characteristics, the level of family and community support, and the nature of the rehabilitative programs accompanying the alternative sanction. This interpretation aligns with Cultural Congruence Theory, which posits that the effectiveness of penal interventions depends on their compatibility with prevailing social and cultural values. It is also consistent with the restorative justice perspective, which emphasizes that achieving behavioral reform requires integrating alternative sanctions within a comprehensive system of rehabilitative and restorative programs, rather than applying them in a purely procedural manner.

This result is consistent with the findings of Cullen et al. (2020), who indicated that alternative sanctions, when implemented without supportive programs, do not produce a substantial effect in reducing criminal behavior or recidivism. It also aligns with Phelps (2017), who highlighted the limited impact of community supervision alone on behavior modification. However, this finding differs from Bazemore & Umbreit (2020), whose study showed that the effectiveness of restorative justice increases when implemented within an integrated institutional framework that provides continuous rehabilitative programs. This discrepancy may be attributed to differences in implementation contexts.

Question Two: Are alternative sanctions more proportionate and suitable for minor offenses compared to serious crimes?

To answer this question, the relationship between the type of offense (serious/minor) and the implementation of alternative sanctions was analyzed using the Chi-Square test, as both variables are nominal in nature. The test was conducted to determine whether a statistically significant relationship exists at a significance level of ($\alpha \leq 0.05$).

Table 3: Distribution of Sample by Crime Type and Implementation of Alternative Sanctions.

Crime Type	Alternative Implemented (No)	Alternative Implemented (Yes)	Total
Major	2	19	21
Minor	0	6	6
Total	2	25	27

Table (3) illustrates the distribution of the study sample according to the type of offense and the implementation of alternative sanctions. The results of the Chi-Square test revealed no statistically

significant relationship between the type of offense and the application of alternative sanctions, as the Chi-Square value reached ($\chi^2 = 0.617$) with one degree of freedom ($df = 1$). The statistical significance value was ($Sig = 0.432$), which exceeds the adopted level of significance.

Within the context of the current study sample, this result indicates that the application of alternative sanctions was not statistically associated with the type of offense, whether serious or minor. Descriptive data further show that the implementation rate of alternative sanctions reached (90.5%) in serious crimes and (100%) in minor crimes; however, this difference did not reach statistical significance, suggesting a similarity in application patterns across both categories within the study context.

This finding may be interpreted in light of a justice orientation grounded in the principles of restorative justice, which emphasizes behavioral reform and the reintegration of offenders into society, while considering the circumstances of each individual case rather than relying solely on the legal classification of the offense. This approach may reflect an institutional mechanism for applying alternative sanctions within the existing legal framework, rather than indicating an absolute preference for a particular category of crimes.

From the perspective of Cultural Congruence Theory, societal acceptance of alternative sanctions may be influenced by the nature of the crime and its social and cultural sensitivity. Accordingly, the absence of statistically significant differences in this study may reflect the predominance of legal and institutional considerations in decisions regarding the implementation of alternative sanctions, rather than a direct reflection of societal acceptance levels. This highlights the importance of future research addressing community perceptions and attitudes toward the application of alternative sanctions—particularly in more serious offenses—within the Jordanian social context.

Question Three: Are alternative sanctions more effective in rehabilitating first-time offenders compared to habitual offenders?

To answer this question, the Mann–Whitney U test was employed to measure differences in perceived effectiveness of alternative sanctions between two independent groups—first-time offenders and habitual offenders—due to differences in group size and the nature of the data, at a statistical significance level of ($\alpha \leq 0.05$).

Table 4: Mann–Whitney Test for Effectiveness of Alternative Sanctions between First-Time and

Habitual Offenders.

Effectiveness of Alternative Sanctions	Group	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
First-Time Offenders	22	12.80	281.50	
Habitual Offenders	5	19.30	96.50	
Mann-Whitney U		28.50		
Asymp. Sig		0.085		
Exact Sig		0.09		

Table (4) presents the results of the Mann-Whitney U test concerning the effectiveness of alternative sanctions in rehabilitating first-time offenders compared to habitual offenders. The findings revealed differences in the mean rank scores of perceived effectiveness between the two groups, with a mean rank of (12.80) for first-time offenders and (19.30) for habitual offenders. However, these differences did not reach the level of statistical significance, as the probability values were (Asymp. Sig = 0.085) and (Exact Sig = 0.09), both exceeding the adopted significance level.

This result indicates that there are no statistically significant differences in the effectiveness of alternative sanctions in behavioral rehabilitation between first-time and habitual offenders. Nevertheless, the descriptive trend suggests that habitual offenders tend to rate the effectiveness of alternative sanctions more highly than first-time offenders, although this tendency did not reach statistical significance.

This trend may be explained by the fact that habitual offenders often have prior experience with custodial penalties, which may make them more aware of the differences between traditional imprisonment and alternative sanctions, and more inclined to view the latter as a less severe and more rehabilitative option. In contrast, first-time offenders may demonstrate a more cautious or reserved perception due to their limited prior exposure to different forms of punishment. This interpretation is consistent with Cultural Congruence Theory, which suggests that individuals' acceptance of penal interventions is influenced by their prior experiences and social context, potentially explaining the observed tendency among habitual offenders within the present study.

Question Four: To what extent do alternative sanctions gain social acceptance within Jordanian society?

To answer this question, the One-Sample Wilcoxon Test was used to measure the level of social acceptance of alternative sanctions by comparing the observed median of participants' responses with a hypothetical median, in accordance with the nature of the data and the level of measurement, at a

statistical significance level of ($\alpha \leq 0.05$).

Table 5: One-Sample Wilcoxon Test on Social Acceptance of Alternative Sanctions.

Variable	N	Median	Test Statistic	Std. Error	Sig. (2-tailed)
Social Acceptance	27	16	378	4.55	0.000

Table (5) presents the results of the Wilcoxon test regarding the level of social acceptance of alternative sanctions. The findings showed that the observed median reached (16.0), which is higher than the hypothetical median. The test statistic value was ($Z = 4.550$) at a statistical significance level of (Sig = 0.000), indicating a statistically significant difference between the two medians.

This result indicates that alternative sanctions enjoy a high level of social acceptance among the study participants, reflecting positive attitudes toward this form of punishment within the social context in which the study was conducted.

This finding can be interpreted from the perspective of restorative justice, which emphasizes that the effectiveness of sanctions is not limited to their deterrent function but also extends to the degree of societal acceptance of such measures as tools that contribute to offender rehabilitation and social reintegration. It also aligns with Cultural Congruence Theory, which suggests that the success of penal policies is linked to their compatibility with prevailing social values and cultural norms. This may explain the high level of social acceptance of alternative sanctions observed in the current study sample.

Question Five: How do alternative sanctions contribute to the reintegration of the offender as an active member of society?

To answer this question, the One-Sample Wilcoxon Test was used to measure the level of contribution of alternative sanctions to the social reintegration of offenders. This was done by comparing the observed median of participants' responses with a hypothetical median, in accordance with the nature of the data and the level of measurement used, at a statistical significance level of ($\alpha \leq 0.05$).

Table 6: One-Sample Wilcoxon Test on Contribution of Alternative Sanctions to Social Reintegration.

Variable	N	Median	Test Statistic	Std. Error	Sig. (2-tailed)
Reintegration	27	18	378	4.59	0.000

Table (6) presents the results of the Wilcoxon test regarding the contribution of alternative sanctions to the reintegration of the offender as an active member of society. The findings indicated that the observed median reached (18.0), and the test statistic value was ($Z = 4.590$) at a statistical significance level of ($\text{Sig} = 0.000$), demonstrating a statistically significant difference between the observed and hypothetical medians.

This result suggests that alternative sanctions contribute to a high degree to the social reintegration of offenders, from the perspective of the study participants. It reflects a positive perception of the role of this type of sanction in supporting offenders' participation in social and productive activities, rather than isolating them within correctional institutions.

This finding can be interpreted through the lens of restorative justice, which emphasizes that alternative sanctions are effective tools for social rehabilitation and for strengthening the bonds between the offender and society, rather than relying solely on traditional deterrence. It is also consistent with Cultural Congruence Theory, which posits that societal acceptance of offenders and their reintegration into the social environment helps reduce social stigma and enhances opportunities for positive reintegration.

This result aligns with the study by Rosenblatt & Deane (2020), which confirmed that community service programs enhance offenders' social integration, as well as Petersilia (2019), who highlighted the role of alternatives to imprisonment in facilitating reintegration. It is further supported by Maruna & LeBel (2010) regarding the concept of desistance from crime, in addition to findings from local studies such as Al-Sartawi (2021) and Al-Wreikat (2022), which emphasized the importance of activating alternative sanctions within the Jordanian context to promote offenders' reintegration into society.

4.10. Study Recommendations and Proposals

The study findings point to several implications that led to key recommendations for decision-makers involved in legislation and regulatory frameworks within Jordan's criminal justice policy. The study emphasizes the importance of expanding the application of alternatives to custodial penalties, particularly in minor cases and for first-time and non-repeat offenders, given their role in enhancing opportunities for rehabilitation, facilitating social reintegration, and reducing recidivism.

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The results also highlight the necessity of linking these alternatives to structured and well-organized rehabilitation and supervision programs to ensure their practical and operational effectiveness. Furthermore, the study recommends the development and enhancement of training programs for judges and personnel working in community sanctions departments to ensure proper implementation, consistency, and impartiality in their application.

5. CONCLUSION

This paper finds that alternative sanctions are a significant rehabilitative element of the Jordan criminal policy. They present the possibility to alleviate congestion of correctional facilities, lower costs, and increase the likelihood of the reintegration of offenders into the community. Although, the results indicate that the implementation of these sanctions may not be directly related to the nature of the crime or immediate changes in conduct, it clearly shows that there is high forms of social acceptance and that they play a critical role in re-integrating offenders into active members of their communities.

The findings also underscore the fact that alternative sanctions can only work in a positive legislative and institutional environment. The action plan depends on the joint activities of the judiciary, civil society organizations, and rehabilitative institutions as well as the development of the competencies of the staff members involved in this sphere. This guarantees implementation of a reformative philosophy as opposed to depending on the conventional punitive measures only.

All these findings can be attributed to theoretical perspectives that form the basis of the study, especially, Restorative Justice Theory according to which punishment is a form of reform and social balance, and Cultural Homogeneity Theory which emphasizes the importance of social values of accepting alternative sanctions. They also support other studies that have shown that community-based alternatives are effective in reducing recidivism and increasing social reintegration.

In this respect, alternative sanctions are not only technical alternatives to incarceration, but symbolic and philosophical changes of the penal system. It is vital to make them grow further and continue to support policies to make them sustainable and effective to guarantee the fulfillment of criminal justice goals, with deterrent, rehabilitative, and humane aspects.

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