

*Abstract*

This present study sought to examine the role of people's belief system towards ex-offenders and its impact on judgments and reactions towards them. The belief that morality was fixed (entity theorists) would predict less prosocial and interaction behaviors towards ex-offenders than those who believed that they were malleable (incremental theorists). Entity theorists were more likely than incremental theorists to infer behaviors of ex-offenders as internal dispositions, lack of abilities, likely to display helpless coping responses and in turn they hold more prejudice beliefs against them and less likely to engage in prosocial and interaction behaviors with ex-offenders. Suggestions to facilitate rehabilitation for ex-offenders would also be discussed.

*Introduction*

In Hong Kong, the overall prison population was around 8,600 as of December, 2016, including those who had convicted offences, being held on remand and pending trial. There was a decreasing number of the overall prison population since 2010 (Hong Kong Correctional Services, 2016). In addition, the recidivism rate, which was defined by those who had convicted new offence within two years after discharged and were re-admitted to correctional institutions, had also fallen from 36.5% in year 2014 to 27.1% in year 2013. (Hong Kong's Information Services Department, 2016).

Over the past decades, the Hong Kong Correctional Services Department (CSD) has placed great emphasis on rehabilitating offenders. The two core emphasizes are on the prevention of crimes, especially for teenage; and on the prevention of re-offending after released. The department has worked in partnership with NGOs, media, corporations, communities and schools to strengthen