

**Evaluating the Impact of Evidence Disclosure Techniques and Suspect Status on  
Rapport, Trust, and Information Sharing during Suspect Interviews**

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## **Abstract**

One of the most challenging forms of investigative interviews is interviewing suspects. Strong communication and a thorough understanding of psychological and legal principles are essential. To optimise interviewer competence, it is important to examine the variables that influence interview outcomes. For instance, the interviewer can use different techniques to disclose evidence to the suspect. Although evidence disclosure techniques have been studied in relation to detecting deception, their effects on rapport, trust, and information sharing remain rather unexplored. Moreover, the role of the suspect's status, either innocent or guilty, can also influence these outcomes. Current research examines how evidence disclosure techniques (late/SUE versus gradual/TUE) and suspect status (innocent versus guilty) affect rapport, trust, and information sharing during suspect interviews. The study consisted of an interactive mock crime scenario, followed by a scripted face-to-face suspect interview, and concluded with a series of post-interview questionnaires. To analyse the results, a 2x2 between-subjects design was used. Students from the University of Twente ( $N = 93$ ) were randomly assigned to one of the four conditions. The findings suggest that when evidence is disclosed gradually (TUE) to suspects, they are likely to share more information, which can contribute to generating leads and continuing investigations in law enforcement. In addition, innocent participants reported higher levels of rapport and shared more information than guilty participants, indicating that suspect status affected how participants perceived the interaction and the extent of their cooperation. Neither rapport nor trust was significantly related to the amount of information shared. Foundations for future research on the impact of evidence disclosure techniques and suspect status on rapport, trust, and information sharing are also provided.

*Keywords:* suspect interviews, evidence disclosure techniques, suspect status, rapport, trust, information sharing

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## **Introduction**

Suspect interviews in law enforcement are the interactions between police officers and suspects for the purpose of gathering information, assessing credibility, and obtaining evidence (Santarcangelo, 2006). Information obtained from these interviews plays a crucial role in generating leads, continuing investigations, and making informed decisions (Holmberg & Madsen, 2014; Weiher et al., 2023). Interviewing suspects is considered one of the most challenging and demanding forms of investigative interviewing (St-Yves & Meissner, 2014). Being competent and well-informed is essential when dealing with suspects; interviewers should have strong communication skills, a thorough understanding of psychological and legal principles, and the ability to assess credibility and detect deception (Milne & Bull, 1999). Therefore, it is important to examine the variables that may influence the outcomes of these interviews to optimise competence. For instance, there are different ways of conducting suspect interviews; interviewers can release evidence gradually or only at the end of the interview. In addition, the characteristics of suspects, such as being innocent or guilty, can also influence the dynamics of the interview. However, the effect of these approaches and the effect of suspect status on rapport, trust, and information sharing remain largely unknown. Hence, this study examined how evidence disclosure techniques and suspect status influence rapport, trust, and information sharing during suspect interviews.

### **Strategic Use of Evidence (SUE)**

The ultimate goal of suspect interviews is to obtain accurate and relevant information from suspects (Milne & Bull, 1999). The evidence disclosure techniques and the suspect's status can have influences on the amount of information shared (Clemens & Grolig, 2019; Vrij et al., 2014).

The Strategic Use of Evidence (SUE) technique was developed to improve the effectiveness of suspect interviews by using available evidence more strategically (Hartwig et

al., 2005; Luke et al., 2014; Oleszkiewicz & Watson, 2020). The SUE technique relies on the interviewer possessing incriminating evidence against the suspect (Wagenaar et al., 1993) and is based on the psychological theory of self-regulation (Oleszkiewicz & Watson, 2020).

Self-regulation theory is a social-cognitive model that illustrates how individuals regulate their behaviour to prevent negative outcomes (such as being judged guilty) and pursue desired goals (such as being judged innocent) (Carver & Scheier, 2012; Newman & Newman, 2020). It describes how guilty suspects may use avoidance or denial strategies when trying to present a convincing story, often sharing as little information as possible (Dando & Bull, 2011; Oleszkiewicz & Watson, 2020). This is a cognitive as well as a defensive response, as lying typically involves a higher cognitive load; it requires fabricating details and remaining consistent (Vrij et al., 2014). In contrast, innocent suspects, who are convinced of their innocence, tend to be more consistent and cooperative in their responses and display a higher degree of transparency (Kassin, 2005; Lerner, 1980). Moreover, their cognitive load is generally lower, as they are recalling truthful experiences.

The SUE technique suggests withholding evidence until the suspect has provided information about their activities during the criminal event, thus late disclosure of evidence (Hartwig et al., 2005). By delaying the disclosure of evidence until the suspect has committed to a story, the SUE technique minimises the risk of providing a guilty suspect with opportunities to fabricate details or gain time to formulate a response (Hartwig et al., 2005; Luke et al., 2014; Oleszkiewicz & Watson, 2020). This strategy increases the cognitive load on guilty suspects, who must maintain their deception while remaining unaware of the evidence held by the interviewer. It thus forces them to answer open-ended questions first, making it harder to tell a simple and consistent story.

However, despite its advantages, the SUE technique also has its limitations. Critics argue that withholding evidence from suspects can compromise the neutrality of the interview,

leading to suspicion and defensiveness among suspects (Dando & Bull, 2011; Oleszkiewicz & Watson, 2020). The argument is that with late disclosure, the interviewer is more likely to look for specific details that may affect their judgement whether a suspect is guilty or not. In addition, the more confrontational nature of the SUE technique may create barriers to open communication, which may result in suspects sharing less information (Dando & Bull, 2011; Oleszkiewicz & Watson, 2020). These concerns gave rise to an alternative approach known as the Tactical Use of Evidence (TUE) technique.

### **Tactical Use of Evidence (TUE)**

The TUE technique suggests that it is best to gradually disclose information throughout the interview, rather than at the end. By gradually disclosing the evidence, the interviewer adopts a more neutral role, in which they gather a wide range of information that helps in evaluating the suspect (Oleszkiewicz & Watson, 2020).

It is argued that the TUE technique minimises the risk of the interviewer's judgement interfering with the overall decision on guilt or innocence, while fostering a more open dialogue, trust, and greater honesty during the interview (Dando & Bull, 2011; Oleszkiewicz & Watson, 2020). As a result, the TUE technique can promote more effective communication between the suspect and the interviewer, particularly for innocent suspects, who are generally more cooperative and transparent. This openness may encourage innocent suspects to share more information. In contrast, guilty suspects often use avoidance strategies to appear innocent, sharing as little information as possible with the interviewer, which can create barriers to open communication (Dando & Bull, 2011; Oleszkiewicz & Watson, 2020).

### **Rapport and Trust**

While the SUE technique focuses on increasing the chances of detecting inconsistencies in the stories of guilty suspects, the TUE technique prioritises a neutral, trust-



building approach that may be more effective in eliciting cooperation from suspects. The debate between the SUE and TUE techniques indicates a broader recognition of the importance of interpersonal dynamics, such as rapport and trust, in suspect interviews (Crough et al., 2022; Walsh & Bull, 2011; Weiher et al., 2023). Although interpersonal dynamics are widely recognised as important, their specific influence in the context of evidence disclosure techniques has remained rather unexplored. Examining these interpersonal factors in relation to SUE and TUE can help explain how different ways of disclosing evidence affect communication outcomes.

A central component of effective interpersonal dynamics is building rapport, which plays a crucial role in facilitating cooperation between interviewers and suspects (Crough et al., 2022; Gabbert et al., 2020; Walsh & Bull, 2011; Weiher et al., 2023). According to the Tripartite model of Rapport by Tickle-Degnen and Rosenthal (1987), rapport consists of the components of mutual attentiveness, positivity, and coordination. Rapport can thus be seen as a constructive and positive affect between individuals that promotes shared attention and a sense of harmony, and is often seen as a dynamic state (Gabbert et al., 2020; Tickle-Degnen & Rosenthal, 1987; Walsh & Bull, 2011; Weiher et al., 2023). Building rapport has been shown to increase the amount of information shared by suspects, promote greater trust, and encourage higher levels of cooperation (Abbe & Brandon, 2013; Collins et al., 2002; Vrij et al., 2014). Despite its significance, interviewers often fail to build or maintain rapport effectively (Abbe & Brandon, 2013). Given the importance of rapport in enabling effective communication, attention should be paid to one of its most closely related components: trust.

Trust is frequently considered a fundamental aspect of building rapport, as the two are closely intertwined; building rapport fosters trust, and enhanced trust further strengthens rapport (Abbe & Brandon, 2012; Brimbal et al., 2021; Leach, 2005). Trust can be defined as the amount of reliance or confidence someone has in another person (*APA Dictionary of*

*Psychology*, 2018). Within the context of suspect interviews, this commonly refers to the extent to which a suspect perceives the interviewer as honest, respectful, and non-threatening (Vrij et al., 2014). Building rapport can increase the level of trust and minimise defensive attitudes (Abbe & Brandon, 2013; Leach, 2005). Furthermore, Abbe and Brandon (2012) and Brimbal et al. (2021) state that trust helps to create an environment of mutual respect. Considering that trust and rapport are closely intertwined, investigating the development and maintenance of trust can provide valuable insight into the processes by which rapport is built, strengthened, and sustained during suspect interviews.

## **Hypotheses**

Current research seeks to unravel how evidence disclosure techniques and suspect status influence rapport-building, with trust as a central component, and how they influence information sharing. Previous studies suggest that the SUE technique focuses on increasing the likelihood of identifying inconsistencies in the accounts of guilty suspects (Hartwig et al., 2005; Luke et al., 2014; Oleszkiewicz & Watson, 2020), whereas the TUE technique prioritises a neutral, trust-building approach that may be more effective in encouraging suspects to cooperate (Dando & Bull, 2011; Oleszkiewicz & Watson, 2020). Additionally, innocent suspects tend to be more cooperative, while guilty suspects tend to use avoidance strategies to defend themselves (Dando & Bull, 2011; Kassin, 2005; Lerner, 1980; Oleszkiewicz & Watson, 2020).

Although previous studies have examined evidence disclosure techniques and suspect status during suspect interviews, less attention has been paid to how these factors relate to interpersonal dynamics, such as rapport and trust. This study fills this gap by empirically testing how these factors influence rapport, trust, and information sharing. By exploring the effects of these variables, this study seeks to provide valuable insights to inform and enhance police interviewing practices. The hypotheses of this study are as follows:

- $H_{1.1}$  = The TUE technique improves rapport and trust significantly more than the SUE technique.
- $H_{1.2}$  = The TUE technique improves the amount of information shared significantly more than the SUE technique.
- $H_{2.1}$  = Being innocent improves rapport and trust significantly more than being guilty.
- $H_{2.2}$  = Being innocent improves the amount of information shared significantly more than being guilty.

## **Methods**

### **Design**

The current study used a 2 (evidence disclosure: SUE versus TUE) x 2 (suspect status: innocent versus guilty) between-subjects design. The study consisted of both a survey administered through Qualtrics software and a face-to-face mock suspect interview. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the four conditions via the Qualtrics questionnaire. The dependent variables in this study were rapport, trust, and information sharing.

### **Participants**

The participants in this study were students from the University of Twente, recruited through SONA and snowballing. They were selected based on their interest and availability to participate in the study. To take part in this study, participants had to be at least 18 years old and fluent in English. The study was approved by the BMS Ethics Committee (Domain of Humanities & Social Sciences; ethical code: 250145).

A total of 94 participants were recruited. One of the participants was excluded from the sample due to technical issues with the audio recording during their interview. The final

sample therefore consisted of 93 participants. Their age varied from 19 to 30 years ( $M = 22.30$ ,  $SD = 2.40$ ), and 42 identified as male, 50 as female, and one as non-binary/third gender. A total of 21 participants were randomly assigned to the innocent condition with SUE, and 24 participants to the innocent condition with TUE. Additionally, 24 participants were randomly assigned to the guilty condition with SUE, and 24 participants to the guilty condition with TUE.

## **Materials & Procedure**

### ***Setting and Equipment***

The experiment took place in a quiet room at the University of Twente. The room contained a table, two chairs, a desktop computer to administer the survey, and a laptop to record the interview. In addition, the interviewer took handwritten notes with pen and paper during the interview.

### ***Mock crime – Pre-interview phase***

Upon arrival, participants were welcomed in the flex-experiment room and received general instructions about the study by the experimenter. Participants were required to give consent to participate in the study (see Appendix A) in which the required activities and the potential risks of the experiment were explained. Participants were not informed about the specific experimental condition to which they were randomly assigned and the true purpose of the study. All participants gave written informed consent prior to participation.

Two interactive scenarios were created to simulate an innocent and guilty condition. After completing the consent form, participants read either the innocent or guilty scenario on the computer. This provided them with specific information to recall and draw upon during the suspect interview. The scenarios were presented as a series of text messages from someone called Anna, to which they could respond by choosing from two options. The

participants' responses did not affect the experiment itself but were included to make the scenario more interactive.

In the innocent condition, participants pretended to be in Berlin for a job interview and, afterwards, visited a museum with friends from their university (see Appendix B). An example of an answer the participants could give in the innocent condition was "Well, I will wear a suit for the interview. So you probably also do not recognise me much either". In the guilty condition, participants read a scenario in which they were planning a heist to steal a painting from a museum with some others (see Appendix C). An example of an answer participants could give in the guilty condition was "Why don't we take another painting too?".

### ***Interview***

Following the simulation, participants were interviewed about their visit to the museum by the interviewer. Regardless of their condition, innocent or guilty, all participants were instructed to prove their innocence during the interview. For each interview, the interviewer followed the script of one of the two evidence disclosure techniques: either SUE or TUE. In both conditions, standardised scripts were used to structure the interviews and minimise interviewer bias. The SUE script was based on research by Hartwig et al. (2014), Luke & Granhag (2022), and Nyström et al. (2024), which outline the main principles of late disclosure of evidence and strategic inconsistency handling (see Appendix D). The TUE script was based on the Scenario's Onderzoekende Methode (van Beek & Bull, 2023), which outlines the main principles of gradual evidence disclosure in suspect interviews (see Appendix E). Both interview scripts followed current best practice on how to disclose evidence and asked only non-accusatory questions. During the interview, the interviewer took handwritten notes to keep track of what specific information was shared by each participant regarding each piece of evidence.

In the SUE condition, all evidence held by the police was disclosed only at the end of the interview. An example of evidence the police had was the fact that the participants went to the museum with others. If a participant's answer did not match the available evidence, e.g. claiming they went to the museum alone, the interviewer asked once more to confirm the participant's answer and then moved on. A sample question on this part of the evidence was “To confirm, you’re saying you were alone at the museum and didn’t meet anyone?/Can you tell me any more about the people you were with? (If not after latter, thank them and move on)”.

In the TUE condition, the evidence was disclosed gradually, as each piece of evidence became relevant during the interview. Again, an example of the evidence the police had was the fact that the participants went to the museum with others. If a participant's answer did not match the available evidence, for instance claiming that they went to the museum alone, the interviewer asked a follow-up question, indicating that the police had information showing that they were accompanied by others. The participant was then given another opportunity to explain why they did not mention this detail in the first place. A sample question was “We have reason to believe you were planning to meet with some others at the museum, and we also suspect these people might also be involved in the heist. Do you want to tell me any more about anyone you might have met at the museum?”.

### ***Questionnaire – Post-interview phase***

After the interview, participants were asked by the experimenter to return to the computer to fill in multiple questionnaires. These included measures of cognitive load, conversational flow and rapport. The cognitive load questionnaire measured how mentally demanding the interview was for the participants, while the conversational flow scale measured how fluent the interview felt for the participants.

The present study focuses on the rapport scale by Duke et al. (2018), which was developed specifically to measure rapport in investigative interviews. The questionnaire was used to assess the interviewer's behaviour in establishing rapport, the interviewee's perception of whether rapport had been established, and their willingness to share information (see Appendix F). The questionnaire consists of multiple subscales, including a trust/expertise subscale, which was used to assess the dependent variable trust. An example question in the rapport scale is “I think that the Interviewer can generally be trusted to keep his/her word.” Participants rated the 21 statements using a Likert scale ranging from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”).

In addition, participants were asked to fill in demographic information, including their age and gender. After completing the questionnaire, participants were debriefed about the true purpose of the study (see Appendix G).

## **Statistical Analysis**

### ***Information Sharing: Coding and Inter-Rater Reliability***

To assess participants' information sharing during the interview, each transcript was coded based on a number of categories. The following categories were used: (1) where they were at the museum, (2) with whom they were at the museum, (3) why they went to the museum, (4) what they did at the museum, (5) what they wore to the museum, (6) how they got to the museum, (7) what time they arrived/left or were at certain times at the museum, and (8) what they studied. Each time a participant provided new information not yet addressed by the evidence within a category, it was added to the total amount of information shared. For example, the police already knew that participants had travelled to the museum by metro. If a participant mentioned a different form of transport other than the metro during the interview, this was counted as shared information. Since multiple researchers coded the transcripts, the

inter-rater reliability was assessed using intra-class correlation coefficient (ICC) on a subset of 10 transcripts coded by all researchers.

### ***Assumption Checks and Statistical Tests***

The results from the Qualtrics survey and the coded information from the transcripts were imported into the programme R, version 4.4.0, to analyse the data. Additionally, the following packages were installed: tidyverse, car, psych, and ARTool. The assumption of normality was assessed by plotting a histogram of participants' mean score on the rapport questionnaire and the coding of information sharing, alongside performing Shapiro-Wilk tests. A  $p$ -value below .05 was interpreted as an indication that the assumption of normality was violated. The assumption of homogeneity of variance was assessed by performing a Levene's test. If the  $p$ -value exceeds .05, the assumption of equal variances was considered met. If any of the assumptions were violated, a non-parametric test, the aligned rank transform (ART) ANOVA, was performed instead of the parametric 2x2 ANOVA. The ART ANOVA is a non-parametric alternative to the traditional ANOVA that aligns and ranks data before factorial ANOVA procedures are applied, making it suitable when the assumptions of normality and/or homogeneity of variance are violated.

### ***ANOVAs: Rapport, Trust, Information Sharing***

To examine the effects of evidence disclosure technique and suspect status on participants' perceived rapport and trust in the interviewer, two types of 2x2 ANOVAs were conducted. One analysis focused on the whole rapport questionnaire for investigative interviews, assessing the overall rapport, while the other specifically examined the trust/expertise subscale of this questionnaire (see Appendix E), thereby measuring trust. A final 2x2 ANOVA was conducted to analyse the relationship between evidence disclosure technique and suspect status, and the amount of information participants shared.



## Results

### Descriptive statistics

The current study assessed the influence of evidence disclosure techniques and suspect status on the dependent variables rapport, trust, and information sharing. First, a Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between rapport, trust, and information sharing. The correlations between information sharing and both rapport and trust were weak and not statistically significant. The descriptive statistics and correlation coefficients are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1**

*Correlation matrix of the dependent variables: Rapport, Trust, and Information Sharing (N = 93)*

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3
1. Rapport	3.78	0.45	—		
2. Trust	3.68	0.56	.91**	—	
3. Information Sharing	13.20	6.31	.16	.16	—

*Note.* \*\* $p < .01$ .

### Assumption checks

Prior to analysis, the assumptions of normality and homogeneity of variances were assessed. The histogram of the mean score for each participant on the rapport questionnaire (see Appendix H) and the Shapiro-Wilk test ( $W = 0.98$ ,  $p = .17$ ) indicated that the assumption of normality was not violated. Moreover, Levene's test for equality of variances ( $F = 0.39$ ,  $p = .76$ ) showed no evidence that the homogeneity hypothesis was violated.

The histogram of the total number of information sharing coding (see Appendix I) and the Shapiro-Wilk test ( $W = 0.92, p < .001$ ) indicated that the assumption of normality was violated. However, Levene's test for the assumption of homogeneity was met,  $F(10, 38) = 0.75, p = .68$ . Since the assumption of normality was violated for information sharing, instead of a 2x2 ANOVA, an ART ANOVA was conducted.

## **Main analyses**

### ***Rapport***

A two-way ANOVA was conducted to examine the effects of evidence disclosure technique (SUE versus TUE) and suspect status (innocent versus guilty) on participants' level of rapport. The main effect of the suspect status was statistically significant,  $F(1, 89) = 5.30, p = .024$ , indicating that innocent suspects rated levels of rapport significantly higher ( $M = 3.88, SD = 0.42$ ) than guilty suspects ( $M = 3.68, SD = 0.45$ ). There was no statistically significant main effect on the evidence disclosure technique,  $F(1, 89) = 0.25, p = .62$ . The level of rapport was not significantly higher when using the TUE technique ( $M = 3.80, SD = 0.43$ ) than the SUE technique ( $M = 3.75, SD = 0.47$ ). Lastly, there was no significant interaction between evidence disclosure technique and the suspect status,  $F(1, 89) = 2.17, p = .14$ .

The means and standard deviations per condition were as follows: participants in the SUE-Guilty condition reported  $M = 3.59, SD = 0.46$ ; those in the SUE-Innocent condition reported  $M = 3.94, SD = 0.42$ ; participants in the TUE-Guilty condition reported  $M = 3.76, SD = 0.43$ ; and those in the TUE-Innocent condition reported  $M = 3.84, SD = 0.42$ .

### ***Trust***

A second two-way ANOVA was conducted to examine the effects of evidence disclosure technique (SUE versus TUE) and suspect status (innocent versus guilty) on participants' perceived trust in the interviewer. The main effects were neither statistically

significant for the suspect status  $F(1, 89) = 1.29, p = .26$ , nor the evidence disclosure technique,  $F(1, 89) = 0.04, p = .83$ . Innocent suspects rated trust higher ( $M = 3.74, SD = 0.60$ ) than guilty suspects ( $M = 3.61, SD = 0.53$ ); however, this difference was not statistically significant. The perceived level of trust was also not significantly higher when using the TUE technique ( $M = 3.68, SD = 0.56$ ) than the SUE technique ( $M = 3.67, SD = 0.56$ ). Lastly, the interaction between evidence disclosure technique and the suspect status was also not statistically significant,  $F(1, 89) = 0.31, p = .58$ .

The means and standard deviations per condition were as follows: participants in the SUE-Guilty condition reported  $M = 3.57, SD = 0.54$ ; those in the SUE-Innocent condition reported  $M = 3.77, SD = 0.58$ ; participants in the TUE-Guilty condition reported  $M = 3.65, SD = 0.52$ ; and those in the TUE-Innocent condition reported  $M = 3.72, SD = 0.61$ .

### ***Information sharing***

An ICC was computed to assess the inter-rater reliability among three researchers across a total of 10 transcripts. The analysis showed excellent reliability,  $ICC(3,3) = 0.99$ , 95% CI [0.98, 1.00],  $F(9, 18) > 1000, p < .001$ . Additionally, an ART ANOVA was conducted to examine the effects of evidence disclosure technique (SUE versus TUE) and suspect status (innocent versus guilty) on participants' information sharing. Given that the assumption of normality was violated, the ART ANOVA was chosen to provide a more robust analysis.

The main effects of both the evidence disclosure technique,  $F(1, 89) = 4.26, p = .042$ , and the suspect status,  $F(1, 89) = 11.51, p = .001$ , were statistically significant. Participants in the TUE condition shared more information ( $M = 14.6, SD = 7.14$ ) than in the SUE condition ( $M = 11.7, SD = 5.25$ ). Participants in the innocent condition shared more information ( $M = 14.8, SD = 6.77$ ) than in the guilty condition ( $M = 11.5, SD = 5.88$ ). The interaction between

the evidence disclosure technique and the suspect status was not statistically significant,  $F(1, 89) = 2.59, p = .11$ .

The means and standard deviations per condition were as follows: participants in the SUE-Guilty condition reported  $M = 11.2, SD = 6.03$ ; those in the SUE-Innocent condition reported  $M = 12.3, SD = 4.29$ ; participants in the TUE-Guilty condition reported  $M = 11.7, SD = 5.67$ ; and those in the TUE-Innocent condition reported  $M = 17.4, SD = 7.02$ .

## **Discussion**

### **Main Findings**

The first set of hypotheses ( $H_{1.1}$ – $H_{1.2}$ ) investigated whether the TUE technique would improve rapport, trust, and the amount of information shared significantly more than the SUE technique during suspect interviews.  $H_{1.1}$  stated that the TUE technique would improve rapport and trust significantly more than the SUE technique during suspect interviews. This hypothesis was not supported, as there was no significant difference found between the two evidence disclosure techniques.  $H_{1.2}$  stated that the TUE technique would improve the amount of information shared by suspects significantly more than the SUE technique. This hypothesis was supported, as the amount of information shared was significantly higher among those interviewed using the TUE technique.

The second pair of hypotheses ( $H_{2.1}$ – $H_{2.2}$ ) examined whether being innocent would improve rapport, trust, and the amount of information shared significantly more than being guilty during suspect interviews.  $H_{2.1}$  stated that being innocent would improve rapport and trust significantly more than being guilty during suspect interviews. This hypothesis was partially supported, as being innocent had a statistically significant positive effect on rapport, but not on trust.  $H_{2.2}$  proposed that being innocent would improve the amount of information

shared significantly more than being guilty. This hypothesis was supported, as the amount of information shared was significantly higher among those who were innocent.

## **Rapport & Trust**

This study found no significant effect of the evidence disclosure technique on rapport and trust. This means that we found no significant differences in the levels of rapport and trust between the two evidence disclosure techniques. However, the overall mean rapport and trust scores were slightly above the middle of the 5-point Likert scale, indicating that a moderate level of rapport and trust was achieved in each condition.

This aligns with previous research suggesting that the two evidence disclosure techniques do not affect rapport and trust differently (Polman et al., 2024). According to Polman et al. (2024), it is not the technique itself, but rather the use of non-accusatory questions that improves levels of rapport and trust. Since non-accusatory questions were used in both scripts of the interviews, this may explain why no significant differences were found in rapport and trust. These findings also align with the results of a previous bachelor thesis conducted in a similar context, which also reported moderate rapport levels and no significant differences across evidence disclosure techniques (Geschiere, 2025).

Moreover, previous research argues that although rapport and trust are closely related, it is the reinforcement of trust, rather than the mere presence of trust, that further strengthens rapport (Abbe & Brandon, 2012; Brimbal et al., 2021; Leach, 2005). Consequently, it can be challenging to isolate trust as a dependent variable in the absence of rapport. Since all participants reported moderately high levels of rapport, this may have led to similarly moderate levels of trust, regardless of the specific interview technique.

Nevertheless, a significant effect of the suspect status was found on rapport. This indicates that being innocent significantly improves rapport compared to being guilty. This

aligns with previous research that suggests that innocent suspects assume that the interviewer can easily see their innocence through their behaviour, also known as the Illusion of Transparency (Gilovich et al., 1998; Kassin, 2005; May et al., 2020). Innocent suspects who believe their innocence is evident to the interviewer may be more open during the interview, which may promote a more positive interaction, thereby improving rapport.

### **Information Sharing**

This study found a significant effect of the evidence disclosure technique on the amount of information shared. This indicates that the TUE technique significantly improves the amount of information shared more than the SUE technique. This could be due to the transparent nature of the TUE technique, making it easier for suspects to fill in gaps and therefore add more information, whether truthful or deceptive (Dando & Bull, 2011; Luke & Granhag, 2022; Oleszkiewicz & Watson, 2020; Weiher et al., 2022).

Moreover, this study found a significant effect of the suspect status on the amount of information shared. This indicates that being innocent significantly improves the amount of information shared more than being guilty. This is in line with previous research, indicating that innocent suspects' decision-making differed from that of guilty suspects (Kassin, 2005; Lerner, 1980; Luke et al., 2013; May et al., 2020). One possible explanation for this is the idea that people have a fundamental need to believe that the world is fair and that individuals get what they deserve, also known as the Belief in a Just World (Lerner, 1980). Within this context, innocent suspects may have more confidence in the fairness of the justice system, believing that their innocence will be recognised if they report the events as they happened. This explains why innocent suspects often waive their right to remain silent (Kassin, 2005) and simply share as much information as they remember.

However, no significant interaction was found between the evidence disclosure techniques and suspect status within information sharing. This indicates that although both the TUE technique and being innocent improve the level of information sharing, their effects are independent of each other. In other words, when a suspect is innocent, the choice of evidence disclosure technique does not significantly affect the outcome, as both techniques produce similar results.

### **Rapport, Trust and Information Sharing**

The findings revealed no significant correlation was found between information sharing and both rapport and trust, contradicting the claims in the introduction. This may be due to the moderate level of cognitive load for both innocent and guilty participants, making it difficult for them to recall and share all relevant information, thus potentially reducing the overall amount of information shared.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, several participants indicated that they were mainly focused on giving as much information as possible to perform well. It is therefore possible that they were so fixated on remembering and reporting details of the scenario that they were not actively engaged in feelings of rapport and trust during the suspect interview.

### **Limitations**

One limitation of this study is that the participants did not actually participate in the scenarios; they only read about them. As a result, they may have identified less strongly with the situation than if they had participated in a real simulation, which may have affected the validity of this study. According to Camerer and Mobbs (2017), real and hypothetical choices involve different brain processes, which can lead to different responses. This means that reading about committing a crime may have led to a weaker emotional response, making

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<sup>1</sup> The mean cognitive load in all conditions was 2.85 on a 1-5 Likert scale.

participants feel less guilty than if they had actually committed the crime. To minimise the impact of this on the study, participants had to respond to the text messages sent during the mock crime, making the scenario feel more interactive and simulating a more realistic decision-making environment.

A second limitation is that the researchers of this study had already read both scenarios of the mock crime. For example, the names of the individuals with whom the participant went to the museum differed between the two conditions, making it relatively easy for the interviewer to determine whether a participant was in the innocent or guilty condition. As a result, the interviewers' judgement could have influenced the outcomes of the interview. However, to minimise the influence of the interviewers' judgement, a standardised script was used during the procedure of this study.

### **Future Directions**

Future research could improve this study by having participants role-play in the mock crime instead of simply reading the scenario. According to O'Sullivan (2018), role-playing can promote a deeper connection to a scenario by encouraging participants to engage more personally and emotionally. This could enable the suspect interview to more closely resemble real-life scenarios and help participants to better recall the details of the events.

Moreover, although the study already contains some elements of a double-blind experiment, as the interviewer does not initially know whether the participant is in the innocent or guilty condition, knowing the scenarios makes it relatively easy to distinguish the participant's condition during the interview. To further reduce potential bias, the study could be improved by using a fully double-blind design, where neither the participants nor the researchers know the assigned condition and the scenarios for both the innocent and guilty condition are disguised from the interviewer.



## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, this study examined how evidence disclosure techniques (SUE versus TUE) and suspect status (innocent versus guilty) affected rapport, trust, and information sharing during suspect interviews. The findings suggest that gradual disclosure of evidence (TUE) has a significant positive effect on the amount of information shared, highlighting its value in suspect interviews. In addition, innocent participants reported higher levels of rapport and shared more information, indicating that suspect status affects how individuals perceive the interaction and their willingness to cooperate. Although there were limitations regarding, for instance, the double-blind experiment, the use of standardised scripts helped to minimise potential biases. Overall, the study provides a foundation for future research on how evidence disclosure techniques and suspect status affect rapport, trust, and information sharing.

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### **AI Statement**

When writing my thesis, I made use of the tools ChatGPT and DeepL. I primarily used ChatGPT while working in R, to check if the codes I created were correct and to figure out how to fix certain errors in my script. All codes created by ChatGPT were checked before analysis.

In addition, I used both ChatGPT and DeepL to revise my sentences to ensure they complied with the APA 7<sup>th</sup> edition style and were grammatically correct. All sentences were thoroughly checked and edited before they were included.



## Appendices

### Appendix A

#### *The informed consent*

##### Purpose of the research

The aim of this research is to gain a better understanding of the interaction between police interviewers and suspects and how this affects the outcome of interviews. If you take part you will be asked to play the role of a suspect accused of a crime. Participating in this research takes up to 40-45 minutes.

##### What will I have to do?

You will be asked to play the role of someone visiting a museum in Berlin. You will be given a brief description that describes your activities. You will need to read this information carefully because you will be asked questions about it within the interview. After reading through the material, you will take part in a mock police interview which will take place in real life. During the interview, the police interviewer will ask you a series of questions. Your task will be to convince them of your innocence. After the interview you will complete a questionnaire and the experimenter will provide a debrief which explains the study in more detail.

##### Who can take part in this research?

To take part you must be at least 18 years of age or older and be fluent in English.

##### Are there any risks associated with taking part?

There is minimal risk involved in participating in this study. However, some participants might feel stressed because you must play the role of a suspect accused of a crime within a police interview. If you are worried about how this might affect you, we ask you to consult the

research team before deciding to participate. Our contact details can be found at the end of this form. There will be no danger to your physical well-being or safety, and you can end the interview at any time without having to provide an explanation.

#### How will my data be stored and used?

Your data will be used for the completion of BSc theses, and the research may also be presented at academic conferences or within academic journals. Your questionnaire data will be stored only in an anonymized form. Access to the research data can therefore not be used to identify specific individuals. The interviews will be recorded in order to be able to analyze the obtained data. The recorded data will be stored on secure university servers for 10 years according to the University of Twente's data policy. All data (audio and questionnaire) will be stored on the universities' password-protected servers to ensure maximum security. The audio will only be available to the research team, unless you specify, at the end of this study, that the audio may be used for educational purposes or to present the research. The anonymized data may be made public in accordance with the principles of open science, but any publicly available data will be in a fully anonymized form (including the removal of any participant numbers) and so it will not be possible to identify any single individual from the available data.

#### What are my rights and how can I withdraw?

Participating in this research is entirely voluntary and you do not have to take part if you do not want to. You have the right to withdraw from participation at any time, without giving any reasons, without any consequences. You can simply hang up the call, the researcher will not call you back. However, if you lose connection accidentally, the researcher will remain available to call back for 5 minutes. Upon your request we will immediately delete the audio of you, you need only provide us with your participant number, so we know which audio to

delete. Participating in this research can be terminated at any moment. Presuming that you terminate this research, all your data will be fully deleted and omitted from the research.

Questions or remarks regarding this research can be directly emailed to the researchers (m.l.moreitz@student.utwente.nl; l.bovendeerd@student.utwente.nl; c.m.heuking@student.utwente.nl; m.quintanaperez@student.utwente.nl) or the project supervisor (s.j.watson@utwente.nl and l.weiher@utwente.nl).

Complaints or concerns about this research can instead be emailed to the secretary of the Behavioural Management and Social Sciences Ethics Committee of the University of Twente. (Drs. L. Kamphuis-Blikman, Tel: +31 (0) 53 489 3399, or Email: l.j.m.blikman@utwente.nl).

Please tick the boxes if you agree and consent:

- I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time, without having to provide a reason.
- I am at least 18 years old.
- I understand I will be asked to participate in an audio recorded interview.
- I understand that any information given by me may be used in future reports, academic articles, publications, or presentations by the researcher(s), but that my personal data will not be identifiable.
- I agree to take part in the study.

## Appendix B

### *Innocent scenario (partially)*

The facts are these:

You are in debt. You are desperately looking for a job and you need extra cash to pay your rent, because your landlord is already threatening to have you evicted and you have nowhere to go if you lose your flat. Anna, who you met at some social events during your studies in computer science, told you about a job in Berlin when you met her again recently at a bar with some mutual friends. You apply and got an interview. As you have some friends in Berlin, you decided to stay a day longer in Berlin to meet your old friends.

Your friends are:

You have already exchanged some messages about the trip. Anna wants to visit the Old National Gallery and is especially excited to see "The Monk by the Sea" by Caspar David Friedrich. You agree to meet your friends there after your job interview. Anna has sent you some messages to prepare you for the trip.



Anna:

“Hey, I am just wanting to go through some last minute details before we meet in Berlin. I already sent you the travel plans. We will stay at my cousin’s place - I sent you the address already. We will all meet at the Old National Gallery after your job interview. It is only a couple stations from your job interview. Take the U5 line on the metro to Museumsinsel. Femke told me to send you the floor plans. Possibly because Pascal always gets lost and always wants to know what the place will look like before he goes anywhere. Sally works part-time in a bar close by, so we probably all go to the museum at different times. You’ll be really surprised when you see us all again. I will be blonde now. Femke got neck tattoos and piercings, though maybe that won’t surprise you knowing her. Pascal, well he grew this big beard and we all pretend it looks good.” Honestly, I cannot wait to see you all again! It has been too long!”

Your answer:

- Well, I will wear a suit for the interview. So you probably also do not recognise me much either.
- Maybe I will put on some fake glasses so I don’t feel left out in having changed so much.

Anna:

“Oh, I’ve got you covered. I’m going to give you a blond wig so you can surprise them with your new hair for a big reveal! You need to put your backpack in a locker. The lockers are on the basement floor, next to the disabled toilets. The museum closes at 7 pm, so depending on when you are done with the interview, we need to be efficient with what we want to see.”

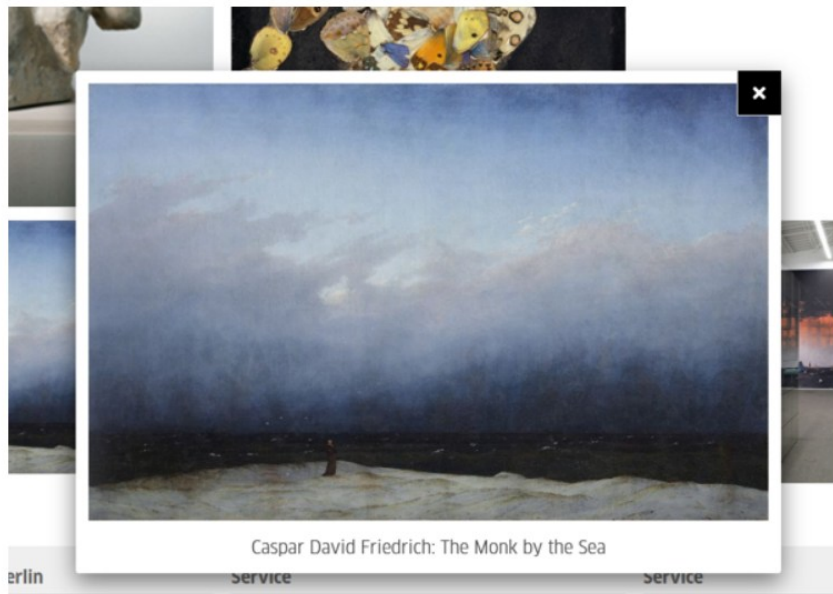
## Appendix C

### *Guilty scenario (partially)*

The facts are these:

You are in debt, desperately looking for a job and need extra cash to pay your rent because your landlord is already threatening to have you evicted and you have nowhere to go if you lose your flat. Anna, who you met at some social events during your studies in computer science, approached you at a bar recently with some mutual friends and asked you whether you would like to join in a heist. She convinces you that you will only steal a painting from a museum with limited risk of being caught, and no chance of anyone being harmed, so you agree. You have already been in contact with the team numerous times via encrypted messages. The team is:

Your role in the heist is to come up with a system that can overrule the silent alarm. You finally figured it out, so the time has come to actually steal the painting. Your target is the Old National Gallery in Berlin where the plan is to steal “The Monk by the Sea” by Kaspar David Friedrich. You don’t know anything about art, but Anna assures you it is a valuable enough painting that your financial worries would be in the past as soon as her buyer confirms the paintings authenticity and pays out.



Anna:

“Hey, I just want to go through some last minute details before we meet in Berlin. I already sent you the travel plans. We will stay at my cousin’s place - I sent you the address already. But on the big day, we have to go at different times to the museum so that no one suspects that we are together, just in case any of us get caught. We will take public transport, the U5 line on the metro to the Museumsinsel, also at different times. I will send you the museum's floor plans as well.

Honestly, I cannot wait to get this over with. The buyer is putting pressure on so I am glad that you figured out how to overrule the silent alarm.

Anyways, remember to wear some sort of disguise. I will wear a blonde wig to hide my hair. Sally got neck tattoos on Etsy and fake piercings. Marcel, well he won’t need a disguise as he is our man on the inside.”

Your answer:

- I will wear glasses and clothes that I would normally never wear.
- I will not wear any disguise that way I will be able to blend in more.

Anna:

“Whatever works best for you, but make sure to at least wear the wig I gave you to hide your hair or it’ll be too easy to follow you on the security cameras outside.

Anyhow, from Marcel we know that there will only be two security guards on duty, and he is one of them. All the intrusion detectors are on the entrances and exits. The whole museum works like a bee hive. Once we are in, we are part of the hive so the security is really light.

Still, avoid looking up as there will be lots of cameras. Marcel will delete the recordings but it is still better to be safe. Now, this is important: the museum closes at 7 pm.

Right before 7, we will hide in the disabled toilet in the basement floor. Marcel broke the lock, so the toilet is currently not in use so we can hide there until 9 pm. I don’t need to tell you that you cannot bring your phone but bring a book if you get bored.”



## **Appendix D**

### ***Interview script SUE***

#### Part 1 – Opening and initial free narrative

Hello, my name is NAME.

I am investigating an incident at the Natural History Museum in Berlin. There has recently been some criminal activity there. A painting has been stolen and we have reason to believe you may have been involved.

Because of that, I need to ask you some questions about your recent visit there. Please answer our questions as fully as you're able to. This is your chance to give your side of the story so we don't make any wrong decisions.

1. First, can you let me know in as much detail as possible about your visit to the museum?

#### Part 2 – Probing and locking the account

##### *Topic 1 - Establishing they were at the museum*

If they admit being at the museum and in Berlin within the opening statement, then these items can be omitted.

If not then they need to be disclosed to prove that we know they were there – a way to get the ones who want to be too clever to engage properly with the task:

1. Thank you for giving me an overview of your day, but you don't discuss being at the museum and we have reason to believe you were in Berlin and at the museum at the time of the event. Can you tell us what you were doing there and what you did while you were there?

If still deny being there:

2. I'm sorry, but we have train tickets in your name travelling to Berlin before the event, and CCTV footage of you entering the museum. So we have a discrepancy here with what you're saying and the evidence we have. Please let me know what you were doing during the visit to the museum.

*Possible contradictions and clarifications to note for later probing:*

Method of travel – **you have tickets showing they were on the U5 metro line to Berlin.**

**You have CCTV of the suspect entering the museum alone.**

Did they describe and explain wearing the disguise shown in the CCTV?

*Topic 2 – Expertise*

1. One thing we wanted to ask you about was your background, can you tell us a bit about your education and profession?
2. Can you tell us any more about your expertise in physical security measures, like alarm systems?

If they have not yet mentioned a reason to know about or purchase tools and materials for physical security:

3. To clarify, you are saying that there is no reason why you would need access to materials for building physical security devices?

*Possible contradictions and clarifications to note for later probing:*

Do they mention they studies computer science and security – **you know about their study and employment history in security design.**

Do they explain why they might have ordered parts to make physical security devices – **you have financial records showing they purchased equipment needed to make a device to interrupt the museum security systems.**

*Topic 3 – Group membership*

**If they have not mentioned meeting anyone at the museum:**

1. Did you meet anyone at the museum?

If they still deny meeting anyone/fail to describe them:

2. To confirm, you're saying you were alone at the museum and didn't meet anyone?/Can you tell me any more about the people you were with? (If not after latter, thanks them and move on)

*Possible contradictions and clarifications to note for later probing:*

Claiming to be alone.

Lying about/not mentioning being in contact with the other people.

*Topic 4 – Activities within the museum*

**Depending on if they already explained being in in the disabled toilet:**

1. While you were in the museum, did you need to use the bathroom at any point? (ask to elaborate if only say yes)

**If they deny:**

2. Again, just to make sure I have your story right, you're saying you did not visit the bathroom while you were there

**If they indicate any bathroom other than the disabled one in the basement:**

3. Again, just to make sure I have your story right, you're saying you only visited that bathroom, and no others?

**Depending on if they already explained being in room 3.06 or being by "the monk by the sea"**

4. Did you go to the third floor of the museum?/You mentioned going to the third floor of the museum can you remind us what you were doing there?

If they deny (only the bits that are appropriate, e.g. if they admit being at the third floor but deny being at the painting):

5. Just to check my understanding, you're saying you did not go up to the third floor and did not view the painting "The monk by the sea"?

*Possible contradictions and clarifications to note for later probing:*

Not mentioning being in the disabled toilet – **You have their fingerprints showing they were in the disabled toilet.**

Not mentioning being on 3<sup>rd</sup> floor/by painting – **you have CCTV they thought they had deleted showing the group together in front of the painting and being on the third floor before the heist.**

### Part 3 – Evidence disclosure

**\*Can skip items that are fully addressed in the initial account\***

**If ALL evidence is accounted for (possible in innocent condition) then these questions can be skipped.**

**If in the first prompt the suspect gives an account thank them and say that this conforms with the evidence piece by disclosing it. E.g. "That makes sense, we have some CCTV of**

**you entering the museum wearing what looks like a disguise, which seemed odd to us.**

**Let's move on to the next thing".**

**If they still do not explain the evidence after the direct disclosure of the evidence remain polite and non-confrontational, but make it clear that what they have said contradicts the evidence held. E.g. "Your story doesn't really align with the evidence we have, but let's move on to the next thing".**

Thank you for giving us your account. Some of the things you said don't align with some of the evidence we have, so I wanted to give you another opportunity to explain what happened.

### *Topic 2 – Expertise*

1. We have reason to believe you would have the capability to build a device that could prevent the museum security from working properly. Is there anything you can tell us about that?

If this remains unexplained:

2. We know you have an education in computer science, have worked building security for museums in the past, and we have financial records showing you have ordered the parts that would be needed to build a device like the one used to interrupt the alarm systems in this theft. Can you explain why you decided to not tell us about this?

### *Topic 3 – Group membership*

1. We have reason to believe you were planning to meet with some others at the museum, and we also suspect these people might also be involved in the heist. Do you want to tell me any more about anyone you might have met at the museum?

If this remains unexplained:

2. We have phone records showing you were in contact with one other person about meeting them at the museum, and that you planned to meet some others there. We also believe these people have some expertise that would be needed to perform a heist. Can you tell us any more about your plans to meet people at the museum?

#### *Topic 4 – Activities within the museum*

1. You indicated that you were never in the basement disabled persons bathroom, but we have some information indicating you were in that room. Can you help me to understand why our information conflicts with your story?

If unexplained:

2. We have your fingerprints from multiple surfaces in that bathroom. Can you help me to understand how that could have happened if you were not in that room?
3. We have additional information that indicated that you were in room 3.06, by the painting that was stolen. Can you explain why our information doesn't match with what you've told us?

If unexplained:

4. We recovered some CCTV footage that someone had attempted to delete showing you in that room with a group of people that match some of our other suspects. Can you explain for me why we would have that footage if you were not in that room or by the painting?

#### Part 4 – closing

1. That's all the questions I have for now, I wanted to thank you for coming in and talking to us. Is there anything else you want to add before I close the interview?

Then we are finished for now. Please stay here with us and my colleague will be with you shortly and explain the next steps.

## Appendix E

### *Interview script TUE*

#### Part 1 – Opening and initial free narrative

Hello, my name is NAME.

I am investigating an incident at the Natural History Museum in Berlin. There has recently been some criminal activity there. A painting has been stolen and we have reason to believe you may have been involved.

Because of that, I need to ask you some questions about your recent visit there. Please answer our questions as fully as you're able to. This is your chance to give your side of the story so we don't make any wrong decisions.

1. I want to go through each piece of what happened part by part, but first can you let me know in as much detail as possible about your visit to the museum?

#### *Topic 1 - Establishing they were at the museum*

As for later, skip questions where evidence is accounted for in the initial story.

1. First can you tell me about how you travelled to the museum?
2. Is there any reason you'd do anything special with your clothing on the day you visited the museum?

#### **If any evidence is omitted or contradicted, challenge after these two questions**

E.g.

1. "I ask you because we have train tickets in your name for the U5 metro indicating that you travelled to the Museum on the day of the theft. Can you explain for me what you were doing travelling toward the museum?"



2. We have CCTV footage of you wearing what seems to be a disguise entering the museum, and that doesn't really match the story you've given us so far. Can you help us to understand the discrepancy?

*Possible contradictions and clarifications to note for probing:*

Method of travel – **you have tickets showing they were on the U5 metro line to Berlin.**

**You have CCTV of the suspect entering the museum alone.**

*Topic 2 – Expertise*

1. One thing we wanted to ask you about was your background, can you tell us a bit about your education and profession?
2. Can you tell us any more about your expertise in physical security measures, like alarm systems?

If they have not yet mentioned a reason to know about or purchase tools and materials for physical security:

3. To clarify, you are saying that there is no reason why you would need access to materials for building physical security devices?

**If any evidence is omitted or contradicted, challenge after three questions are asked**

4. We have reason to believe you would have the capability to build a device that could prevent the museum security from working properly. Is there anything you can tell us about that?

If this remains unexplained:

5. We know you have an education in computer science, have worked building security for museums in the past, and we have financial records showing you have ordered the

parts that would be needed to build a device like the one used to interrupt the alarm systems in this theft. Can you explain why you decided to not tell us about this?

*Possible contradictions and clarifications to note for later probing:*

Do they mention they studies computer science and security – **you know about their study and employment history in security design.**

Do they explain why they might have ordered parts to make physical security devices – **you have financial records showing they purchased equipment needed to make a device to interrupt the museum security systems.**

*Topic 3 – Group membership*

**If they have not mentioned meeting anyone at the museum:**

1. Did you meet anyone at the museum?

If they still deny meeting anyone/fail to describe them:

2. To confirm, you're saying you were alone at the museum and didn't meet anyone?/Can you tell me any more about the people you were with? (If not after latter, thanks them and move on)

**If any evidence is omitted or contradicted, challenge after two questions are asked**

3. We have reason to believe you were planning to meet with some others at the museum, and we also suspect these people might also be involved in the heist. Do you want to tell me any more about anyone you might have met at the museum?

If this remains unexplained:

4. We have phone records showing you were in contact with one other person about meeting them at the museum, and that you planned to meet some others there. We also

believe these people have some expertise that would be needed to perform a heist. Can you tell us any more about your plans to meet people at the museum?

*Possible contradictions and clarifications to note for later probing:*

Claiming to be alone.

Lying about/not mentioning being in contact with the other people.

*Topic 4 – Activities within the museum*

**Depending on if they already explained being in in the disabled toilet:**

1. While you were in the museum, did you need to use the bathroom at any point? (ask to elaborate if they only say yes)

**If they deny:**

2. Again, just to make sure I have your story right, you're saying you did not visit the bathroom while you were there

**If they indicate any bathroom other than the disabled one in the basement:**

3. Again, just to make sure I have your story right, you're saying you only visited that bathroom, and no others?

**Depending on if they already explained being in room 3.06 or being by “the monk by the sea”**

4. Did you go to the third floor of the museum?/You mentioned going to the third floor of the museum can you remind us what you were doing there?

If they deny (only the bits that are appropriate, e.g. if they admit being at the third floor but deny being at the painting):

### ***Toilet fingerprints***

5. You indicated that you were never in the basement disabled persons bathroom, but we have some information indicating you were in that room. Can you help me to understand why our information conflicts with your story?

If unexplained:

6. We have your fingerprints from multiple surfaces in that bathroom. Can you help me to understand how that could have happened if you were not in that room?

### ***CCTV of the group in the room***

7. We have additional information that indicated that you were in room 3.06, by the painting that was stolen. Can you explain why our information doesn't match with what you've told us?

If unexplained:

8. We recovered some CCTV footage that someone had attempted to delete showing you in that room with a group of people that match some of our other suspects. Can you explain for me why we would have that footage if you were not in that room or by the painting?

*Possible contradictions and clarifications to note for later probing:*

Not mentioning being in the disabled toilet – **You have their fingerprints showing they were in the disabled toilet.**

Not mentioning being on 3<sup>rd</sup> floor/by painting – **you have CCTV they thought they had deleted showing the group together in front of the painting and being on the third floor before the heist.**

#### Part 4 – closing

1. That's all the questions I have for now, I wanted to thank you for coming in and talking to us. Is there anything else you want to add before I close the interview?

Then we are finished for now. Please stay here with us and my colleague will be with you shortly and explain the next steps.

## **Appendix F**

### ***Duke et al. (2018) – Rapport scale***

1. I think the Interviewer is generally honest with me.
2. The Interviewer did his/her job with skill during the interview.
3. The Interviewer respects my knowledge.
4. The Interviewer and I have our culture in common.
5. The Interviewer performed expertly during the interview.
6. I think that the Interviewer can generally be trusted to keep his/her word.
7. The Interviewer and I probably share the same ethnicity.
8. The Interviewer really listened to what I had to say.
9. I was motivated to perform well during the interview.
10. I feel I can trust the Interviewer to keep his/her word to me.
11. The Interviewer made an effort to do a good job.
12. The Interviewer acted like a professional.
13. The Interviewer paid careful attention to my opinion.
14. The Interviewer and I got along well during the interview.
15. The Interviewer and I worked well together as a team.
16. The Interviewer probably shares my culture.
17. I wanted to do a good job during the interview.
18. The Interviewer was attentive to me.
19. Communication went smoothly between the Interviewer and me.
20. The Interviewer was interested in my point of view.
21. I felt committed to accomplishing the goals of the interview.

*Note.* Items 1–6 are part of the Trust/Expertise Scale.

## **Appendix G**

### ***Debrief***

#### Study objective

This study is interested in how the timepoint of disclosure of evidence influences rapport, cognitive load, cues to deception and amount of information given by the participants.

This study hopes to answer the question of how the procedure of disclosing evidence influences you as the interviewee on aforementioned topics.

#### How did it work?

As a participant in this study you received the case vignette and were sequentially assigned to one of the four conditions: innocent, guilty and late disclosure of evidence or gradual disclosure of evidence. Late disclosure of evidence means that evidence is discussed at the end of the interview, while gradual disclosure of evidence means that evidence is discussed throughout the interview, point by point. After the interview everyone received the same survey with which we want to measure if rapport, cognitive load, cues to deception and the amount of given information differ between the four conditions.

#### Why is this important?

By participating in this study, you contributed your part to research with regard to forensic strategies when interviewing suspects. This research adds to the existing pool of knowledge on investigative interviewing with a focus on police interviewing techniques. The purpose of this research is to develop a better understanding of how different techniques influence the quality of the investigative interview.

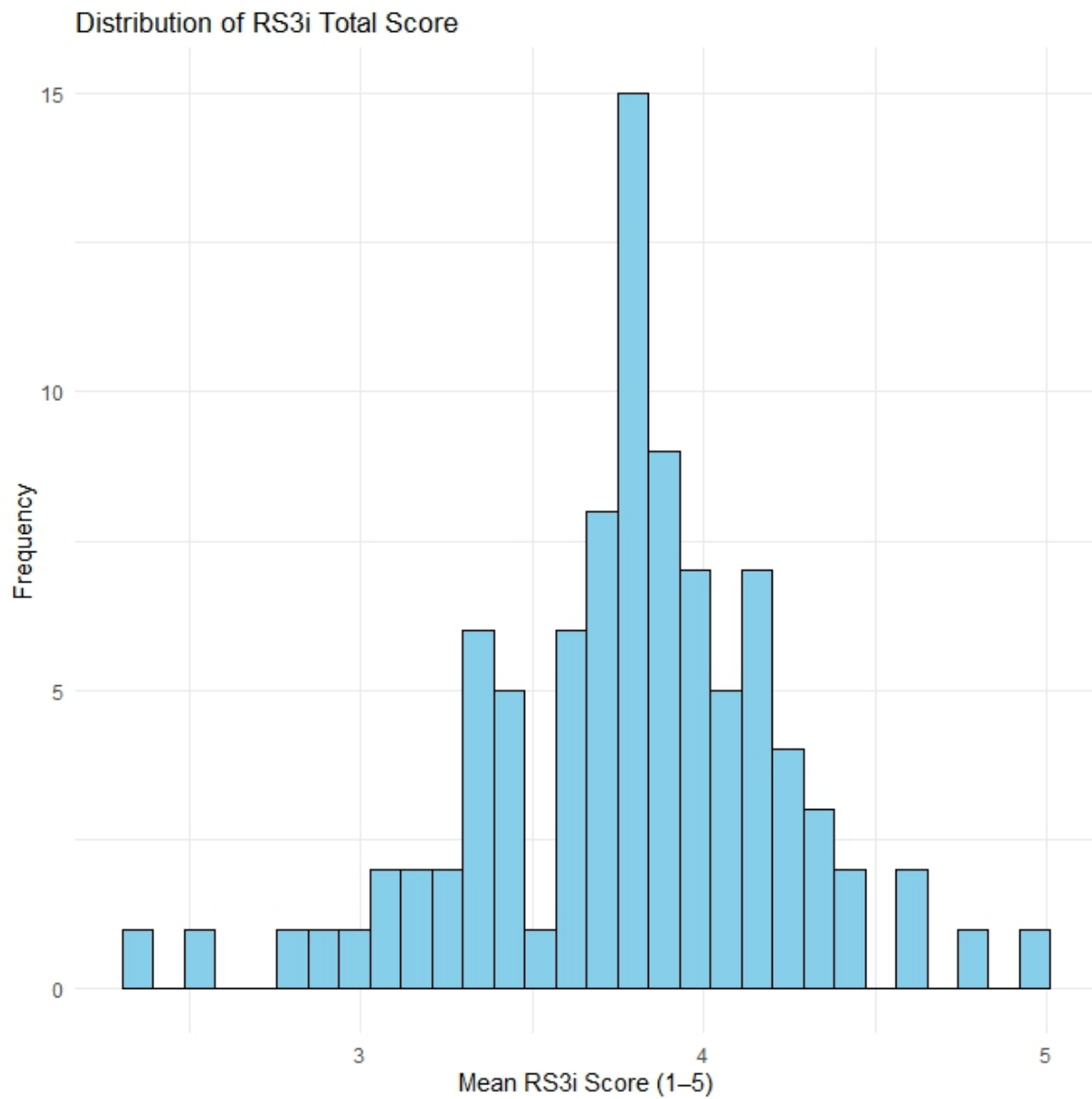
#### Withdrawing Policy.

If you decide that you want to withdraw from this research, please contact us (researchers) within 10 days and quote your participation number to allow us to locate your data and withdraw it.

## Appendix H

**Figure 1**

*Histogram to assess the assumption of normality*



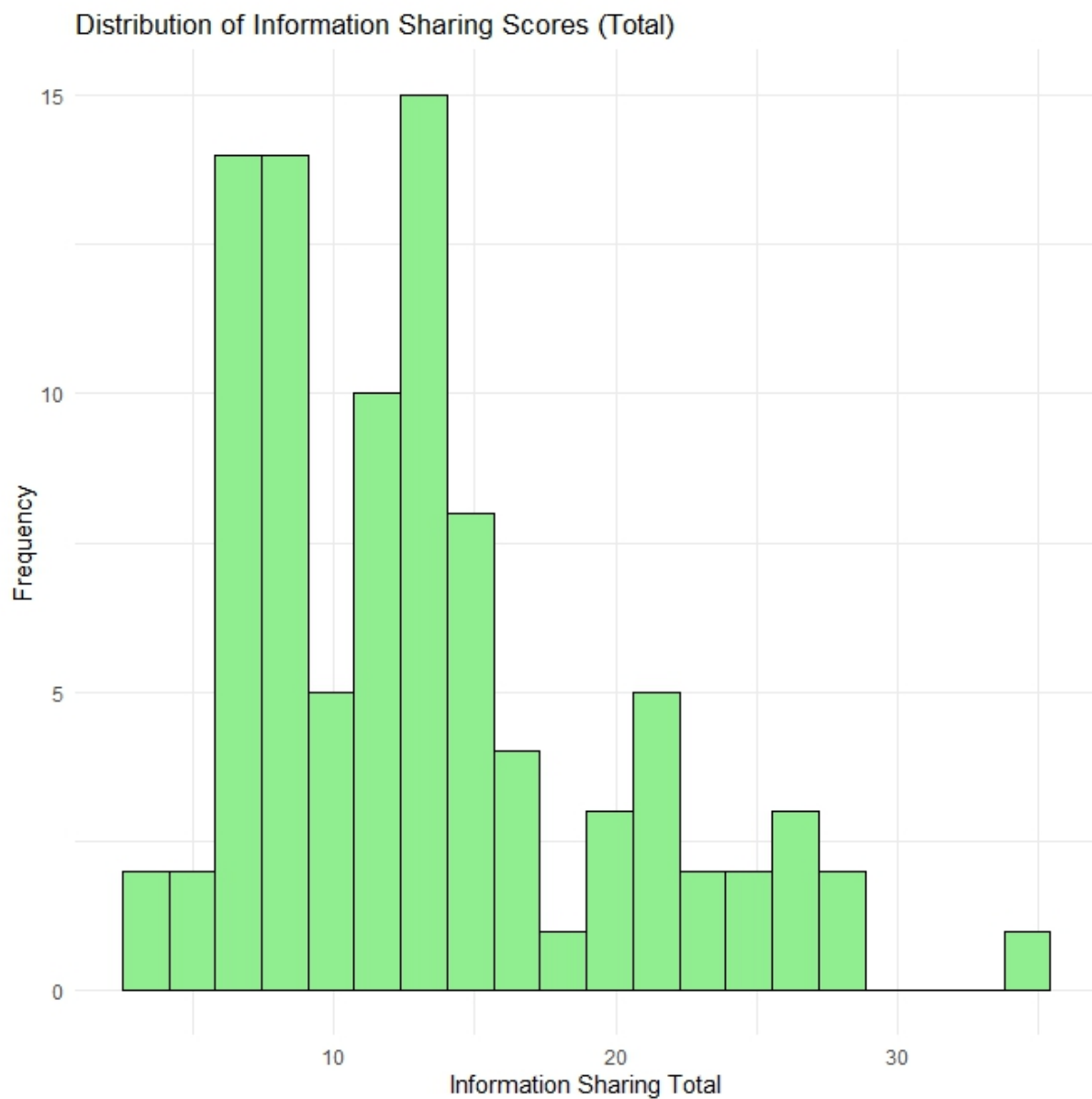
*Note.* This figure demonstrates the participants' mean score on the Duke et al. (2018) rapport questionnaire.



## Appendix I

**Figure 2**

*Histogram to assess the assumption of normality*



*Note.* This figure demonstrates the participants' mean score of the total number of information sharing codings.