

Bachelor Thesis:
**‘Give My Bike Back’: An Evaluation of Citizen Investigation Regarding Bicycle Theft in
the City of Enschede**

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Abstract

In recent years, citizen participation in criminal investigations has begun to play an increasingly important role. Citizens are able to assist the police in certain tasks that do not require specialist training, such as surveillance. Earlier survey research has been done as to how the factors in the Community Engagement Theory (CET) can motivate citizens to participate in police investigations. However, research as to how these factors influence the actual experience citizens have when participating in criminal investigations has not yet been done. This paper aims to research this influence, by interviewing four residents of the city of Enschede whose bike had been stolen. These citizens were given instructions by the police on how to conduct an investigation. After two weeks, these participants were contacted and were interviewed regarding their experience with the instructions, judgement regarding the CET factors trust, empowerment, self-efficacy and response efficacy, and general experience during their investigation. Results showed that especially trust and empowerment had a positive effect on the experience of citizens during their investigation. Response efficacy was also indicated as having a positive influence on the experience of participants, but was divided because of participants' negative expectations of retrieving their bike. The influence of self-efficacy was not clearly determined. For future research, investigating the influence of self-efficacy, response efficacy, as well as the possible risks of high empowerment is advised.

Keywords: citizen participation, trust, empowerment, efficacy

Introduction

In recent years, citizen participation in police investigations has become a phenomenon that is increasingly seen throughout the Netherlands. One recent example in The Netherlands would be the search for the missing boys Ruben and Julian in 2013, citizens wanted to assist the police with finding the two missing children. Thousands of citizens spread information across social media, and searching parties were set up in cooperation with the police (Van Duin & Wijkhuijs, 2014). Before the missing boys' case in 2013, citizen participation existed to a lesser extent. Recently, however, Cornelissens and Ferwerda (2010) indicate an increasing number of citizens are recognising the possibility of working together with the police. Based on this increase in participation, they indicate that crimes can be solved quicker and more efficiently.

Based on this large number of citizens prepared to help, the police noticed the positive influence that citizens can have on solving crimes as well. Thus, the police are actively attempting to include citizens in solving cases through citizen participation (Ayling, 2007). With citizens assisting in investigations, time and manpower can be saved. This saved time and manpower can be used to do more specialized work that citizens cannot participate in as easily. In doing so, police resources can be spent on specialised work, while citizens focus on actions that can be executed without specialised training, such as general surveillance of neighbourhoods (Ayling, 2007). With citizens participating in this way, there is a higher probability that crime will be reduced and a case will be solved (Cornelissens & Ferwerda, 2010). This offers an increased incentive for the police to include citizens in investigations.

This could be seen in the earlier mentioned case of Ruben and Julian (Van Duin & Wijkhuijs, 2014). Using physical search parties and spreading information online proved to be useful and contributed to finding of the two boys. Especially new technologies that have been developed recently have added new possibilities for citizens to participate in sharing information and possibly solving crimes (Van Duin & Wijkhuijs, 2014; Van der Land, Van Stokkom, & Boutellier, 2014). Platforms like Facebook and Twitter enable citizens to share any information they might have and share this information with their entire network. The other way around, the police can also inform large networks of citizens by using social media (Bertot, Jaeger, & Hansen, 2012). This way, information sharing between law enforcement and citizens is improved.

With these new possibilities introduced, citizens are more inclined to investigate on their own behalf. This is, however, not without risk (Kerstholt & de Vries, 2018). Giving citizens instructions to do their own investigation, especially in criminal investigations, can harm both

the investigation as well as the citizens (Kerstholt & de Vries, 2018). On a physical level, citizens could risk being harmed when asking questions to people who might not want to share information. Furthermore, when looking at a technological level, privacy might be infringed upon by citizen investigators (Kerstholt & de Vries, 2018). When looking at social media, for example, possible perpetrators might be 'named and shamed' publicly, regardless of whether they committed the crime or not. Citizen investigators who are under the impression that an individual has committed a crime could share information about this individual, breaching any confidentiality and harming the privacy of the suspect.

The reliability of information is also an issue, with citizens not being trained to interview and accurately document information (Kerstholt & de Vries, 2018). Citizen investigators are not trained to stay unbiased, and biases such as confirmation bias might occur when these investigators conduct their interviews (Nickerson, 1998). The citizen investigators, who are possibly in an emotional state, could already have formed their opinion about the interviewee, and thus, might steer the conversation in a way that it confirms their pre-existing beliefs.

In order to improve the cooperation between police and citizens, it is important to know what motivates citizens to participate in police investigations (Langhorst, 2018). Furthermore, it is important to investigate the experiences of citizens in doing police investigation, so that possible obstacles or dangers to the citizens as well as the investigations can be minimized.

Based on this, in this study, the factors that motivate citizen participation are investigated further in order to gain more insight into the possible strengths and weaknesses of citizen participation in criminal investigations. In order to increase the number of solved bicycle theft cases and to increase trust in the police when it comes to these theft cases, the Dutch police have started a pilot called 'Geef mijn fiets terug' or 'Give my bike back'. The pilot aims at supporting and guiding citizens in the search for their bike. Citizens that were victims of bike theft and reported this crime, are given instructions on how to gather evidence and possibly retrieve their bike. In order to improve this process of giving instructions and having citizens use these instructions to participate in police investigations, the factors that influence the experience of citizens while participating in a police investigation will be investigated and evaluated through interviews with citizens who participated in the pilot. Based on this, the following research question arises: *How do victims of bicycle theft in Enschede experience investigating the case of their stolen bike?*

Theoretical framework

The Community Engagement Theory (CET) as developed by Paton (2013) describes various factors that are relevant for citizen participation (Langhorst, 2018). Within the CET, factors are described at three different levels: the individual, social, and institutional level (Kerstholt, Duijnhoven, & Paton, 2017). However, to date, the main focus of the CET is centred around natural disasters. Within these circumstances, there is a larger emphasis on community, which may be less relevant for criminal investigations. For this reason, the social level is not included in this research. The participants are expected to focus more on their individual case, which would imply that only factors on an individual and an institutional level would be relevant.

Individual level. The individual level revolves around three factors: Risk perception, self-efficacy, and response efficacy (Kerstholt et al., 2017). Risk perception, as the name implies, concerns the risk as perceived by the individual. Risk perception can motivate individuals to act because of the perceived likelihood and the perceived consequences of a situation (Slovic & Peters, 2006). These dimensions influence the way citizens perceive risks and can motivate them to act on these risks (Loewenstein, Weber, Hsee, & Welch, 2001). Furthermore, prior experiences also play a role in risk perception; experiences with the risk can influence the behaviour of citizens, raising awareness and knowledge, as well as prompting community interaction (Becker, Paton, Johnston, Ronan, & McClure, 2017). As a result, since risk perception composes several factors, it can be concluded that risk perception varies between individuals, depending on earlier experiences with this risk.

The second factor that is part of the individual level, self-efficacy, was first introduced by Bandura (1982). Self-efficacy estimates the ability an individual possesses to perform a certain task and to lead this task to a successful end. This judgement is made by the individual performing the task. A high level of self-efficacy would mean that one believes in one's ability to complete the task successfully. In essence, the individual will judge him/herself as being able to conduct the task. On the contrary, a low level of self-efficacy suggests that an individual feels unable to conduct the task. Self-efficacy plays an important role in whether or not an individual will take action (Bandura, 1977). With a high level of self-efficacy, it is more likely that an individual will take action because this individual believes that he or she is able to conduct the task successfully. In contrast, with a low level of self-efficacy individuals will be less motivated to take action because they do not believe in their capability to bring the action to a successful result (Bandura, 1977). Thus, high levels of self-efficacy are expected to facilitate participation in citizen investigations.

The third factor, response efficacy, describes an individual's judgement about the usefulness of the specific course of action to attain one's goal (Kievik & Gutteling, 2011). Rather than looking at the ability of the individual to do a certain task, the course of action is evaluated in its potential to be successful (Kievik & Gutteling, 2011). A high level of response efficacy means that the individual judges the action to lead to a positive result. This will cause the individual to be more likely to take this action. Conversely, a low response efficacy means that the individual judges that execution of the action is not going to lead to the desired result, causing them to be less likely to take this action (Kievik & Gutteling, 2011). Based on this, it is expected that higher levels of response efficacy lead to increased participation in citizen investigation.

Institutional level. The institutional level, as the name implies, deals with the institutions an individual interacts with. In this study, the institution would be the police. Within the institutional level, two factors are distinguished: trust and empowerment (Paton, 2013). In doing criminal investigations, citizens would turn to the police in case of risks or dangers. If an individual has low trust towards an institution, it would be less likely that this individual would turn to this institution for help (Jackson & Bradford, 2010). This makes trust essential when it comes to citizen-police cooperation. If an individual has a low amount of trust regarding the police, the competence of the police might be questioned by this individual, and potential instructions and guidelines might be disregarded (Jackson & Bradford, 2010; Paton, 2013). Because of this, it is important for an institution like the police to demonstrate their presence and be fair and objective in their actions (Hough, Jackson, Bradford, Myhill, & Quinton, 2010). This would cause citizens to have increased trust in the police, which would make citizen-police cooperation even more fruitful.

Empowerment is the second factor at the institutional level. Empowerment deals with the amount of power and control an individual can have when cooperating with an institution (Conger & Kanungo, 1988). Rather than the individual trusting the institution, when it comes to empowerment, the institution also has to show trust in the individual. When dealing with citizen-police cooperation, this reciprocity is crucial; when citizens are given instructions, it is essential that the police also shows the trust that these people have the ability to conduct the task (Paton, 2013). Citizens participating in citizen-police cooperation would have a higher inclination towards participating when these citizens have the feeling that they are being treated fairly, as well as having the feeling that they are contributing to the successful completion of the investigation.

Present study. This framework has also been applied in earlier research of Langhorst (2018). In this study, it was found that out of the factors present in the CET model, the factors self-efficacy, response efficacy and empowerment influenced citizens to participate in a criminal investigation. However, this study focussed on the intention of citizens to work together with law enforcement in solving crimes, whereas the present research will investigate the actual behaviour of citizens when doing a criminal investigation. As noted above, the police initiated a pilot in which citizens were given instructions on how to retrieve their bicycle. The experience of citizens while doing this investigation might be influenced by the factors mentioned in the CET (Paton, 2013) These factors will be used to evaluate the experiences of citizens that participated in this pilot. It is expected that all of the factors previously mentioned (self-efficacy, risk perception, response efficacy, trust and empowerment) will influence the experience participants have when conducting their investigation; should the citizens rate their self-efficacy, risk perception, trust and empowerment as high, their experience while conducting their investigation is expected to be better than should these factors be rated as low. Furthermore, it is expected that when the instructions given to the citizens are rated as being clear, citizens' experience with their investigation will be evaluated as more positive.

The following research question will be answered: *How do victims of bicycle theft in Enschede experience investigating the case of their stolen bike?*

The following sub-questions were formulated:

1. How did citizens utilise the instructions given to them by the police?
2. To what extent did self-efficacy and response efficacy have an impact on the citizen's experience when participating in a criminal investigation?
3. To what extent did trust and empowerment have an impact on the citizen's experience when participating in a criminal investigation?

Methods

Design

In order to understand the respondents' experiences considering their investigation to retrieve their bike, a semi-structured interview design was used. The research is, thus, of a qualitative nature. Four independent variables were used, namely, self-efficacy, response efficacy, trust and empowerment, all measured on two levels; either those factors were considered relevant in the interview or not. The independent variables are expected to have an

impact on the dependent variable 'general experience with the investigation' which is also qualitatively measured.

Participants

Participants in this study included 4 adult residents of the city of Enschede, whose bike had been stolen between one and two months before the interviews took place and who were proficient in the Dutch language. Initially, 9 individuals participated in the citizen investigation pilot. However, due to time and location constraints, 5 participants were not able to attend an interview, in person or online. Participants of this investigation included 3 males and 1 female. All participants in this study were volunteers, asked to participate by the police of Enschede after they filed a report at the police bureau about their bicycle being stolen.

Materials and analysis

Instructions. Several instructions were given to the participants before they participated in the investigation. Participants received a set of instructions presented on the website, created by the police, named 'pilot: geef mijn fiets terug' (Appendix A). These instructions covered various aspects of doing an investigation: Making a file, Social Media, Neighbourhood Research, Online Research, Camera Footage and Witness Hearing. Furthermore, the website provided quick tips, as well as a collection of other sites that could help the participants out. Participants were also given a phone number of one of the police specialists on the pilot that they could call anytime should they experience trouble or uncertainty about what to do.

Interview scheme. After the participants conducted their investigation, they were interviewed using a semi-structured interview scheme containing 22 questions (Appendix B). These questions were formulated in cooperation with the police specialists on the pilot. The interviews were recorded using a laptop and a mobile phone as a backup. The audio recordings were transcribed using Express Scribe transcription software v 5.55, and then coded using Atlas.ti 8.

Analysis. These interviews were recorded using a laptop, and a mobile phone as a backup.

After the interviews had taken place, the researcher transcribed the interviews using Express Scribe v 5.55. Following this, the transcribed interviews were coded using Atlas.ti 8. Various sentences within the interviews were given codes corresponding to the instructions given (making a file, social Media, neighbourhood research, online research, camera footage, hearing witnesses). When the participants mentioned topics regarding the psychological factors

self-efficacy, response efficacy, trust and empowerment, these sentences were coded respectively. The codes concerning the psychological factors included a negative and positive code, in order to distinguish between positive and negative feedback more easily (e.g. trust negative, trust positive). One more code was made to indicate general feedback about the instructions, such as clarity, or the amount of information. After the interviews were coded using the abovementioned codes, the codes were analysed in order to evaluate the experience of the investigation, the instructions and the psychological factors that play a role in this investigation.

Procedure

After participants filed their police report, they were asked if they would like to participate in a pilot study concerning citizen participation regarding a criminal investigation. After agreeing, the participants were given a set of instructions verbally by a police specialist. These instructions included the various actions the participant might take to retrieve their bike, as well as safety precautions and contact information. Participants were made aware that after their investigation, they would be contacted by a researcher who would ask them questions regarding their investigation in order to evaluate the investigation. Furthermore, participants were referred to the website ‘pilot: give my bike back!’ (Appendix A), where they could find these instructions online. Following these instructions, the participants tried to retrieve their bike independently. The amount of effort that was put into this investigation was up to the participants. After at least two weeks, the participants were contacted by a researcher, asking whether they wanted to give feedback about the pilot in a verbal interview. If agreed, the researcher and the participant would pick a date, and meet at a convenient location. Before starting the interview, participants were asked to sign an informed consent form (Appendix C). The form specifies that the participant could withdraw from the interview without any consequences at any given time. Furthermore, the participant was made aware that the data collected would be kept confidential and anonymous.

After signing the informed consent form, a semi-structured interview (Appendix B) was conducted in one session that lasted 27 minutes on average.

Results

In the interview, three topics were addressed: 1) general information concerning the investigation that participants conducted; 2) use and valuation of the instructions and 3) underlying psychological mechanisms.

General information

One out of the four participants had retrieved his bike. Neighbourhood research had been successful, as one of the residents of the area where the bike got stolen had seen this bike multiple times. The participant proceeded to wait for the person that was driving the bike to appear again around this location, and when this person left his bike, proceeded to check the frame numbers of the bike, which matched. The participant then proceeded to take the bike and store it at a relative. The participant then contacted the police so the frame number match could be confirmed. However, the police did not proceed to do this check in a timely fashion, according to the participant. The participant did call the general police phone number, instead of the number that had been given to him by one of the specialists. Other participants were not able to retrieve their bike. As a consequence, none of the perpetrators were apprehended.

Participants indicated that they participated in the pilot because they wanted to help out any way they could and because they wanted to retrieve their bike. One participant also indicated being interested in the process the police normally goes through and would like to get some first-hand experience in doing an investigation. Frustration about the bike being stolen also played an important role in one of the participants' motivation.

Instructions

During the pilot, participants received instructions on how to conduct an investigation as a citizen. These instructions mentioned six courses of action that the participants could take: making a file, social media, neighbourhood research, online research, camera footage and witness hearing.

Making a file. Most of the participants did not make a file. Only one out of the four participants made a file containing interviews, camera footage and witness statements. This participant indicated spending 4 to 5 hours on transferring files and transcribing interviews every day he investigated (e.g. hearing witnesses, neighbourhood research). This person did not specify how many days he spent doing neighbourhood research and hearing witnesses, so it is not clear how many hours in total were spent. One of the participants indicated that time was

the main reason for not making a file. The other participants did not comment on their reason for not doing this.

Social Media. Half of the participants indicated using social media to find witnesses and spread the word about the stolen bicycle. One of the participants was very active on social media and indicated using Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to spread the word about the stolen bicycle and ask for witnesses. This participant spent three hours in total on looking for information on his bicycle on social media. The other participant that used social media posted once about the bike on Facebook. The two other participants did not indicate using social media in their stolen bicycle case.

Neighbourhood research. Three out of the four participants conducted a form of neighbourhood research. One participant went through the neighbourhood where the bike was stolen, asking the inhabitants of that neighbourhood whether they witnessed anything regarding the bike theft. Two other participants also went through the vicinity of the bike theft to look for possible witnesses. The bicycles that were stolen were not stolen in a residential area, making neighbourhood research more difficult. One participant spent close to four hours on neighbourhood research per day he investigated. He did, as with social media, not indicate how many days he did investigate.

Another participant indicated spending less than an hour in total on neighbourhood research. One participant did not do neighbourhood research at all because the bicycle was not stolen in a residential area, and thus he viewed doing neighbourhood research as not being relevant. One participant indicated that the only time he felt unsafe was when conducting neighbourhood research. Doing the research in a residential area of lower socioeconomic status, he did not feel at ease. Furthermore, he encountered a man that was “*Pretty big, and using some very crude language*” and refusing to cooperate. This did not contribute to his feeling of safety during the investigation. Additionally, this participant indicated that residents of this lower socioeconomic area were often not cooperative, because they did not want to cooperate with the police.

Online research. All participants indicated that they did online research. The participants checked out several websites selling second-hand items, in hopes to find their bicycle there. All participants indicated that doing this online research did not cost them a lot of time. On average, the participants spent one to two hours doing online research. Despite the easily accessible websites, all participants indicated not finding a trace of their bike online.

Camera footage. Three out of the four participants tried to acquire camera footage of the incident. One of these participants was allowed to watch camera footage of the bike theft.

Other participants were not allowed to see the camera footage the company had acquired. The last participant that asked for camera footage was informed that the cameras present around the area the bicycle was stolen were not working. The participants that looked for camera footage did not spend more than two hours doing so. The participant that did not ask for camera footage looked around the area where the bicycle was stolen and concluded that there were no cameras present. Thus, the participant did not ask for camera footage.

Hearing witnesses. Two out of the four participants conducted a form of witness hearing. After these participants found out their bikes were stolen, they asked people in the direct surroundings of the bike location if they had seen something. Two other participants did not indicate doing this, with no reason given as to why not.

Psychological Factors

Based on CET (Paton, 2013), participants were asked several questions regarding the four factors mentioned in this model: self-efficacy, response efficacy, trust and empowerment.

Self-Efficacy. Self-efficacy was the factor that was divided the most regarding the responses given. In general, all participants indicated that they were able to follow the instructions. The participants knew what was expected of them, and it was clear what the several courses of action meant. However, two out of the four participants indicated not always feeling able to bring the investigation to a successful end. One of these participants reported a general feeling of being lost during the pilot. This participant indicated that, even though she was able to follow the instructions, she did not know enough to be able to complete the investigation successfully. She felt unqualified to do the investigation. This participant also felt a feeling of hopelessness. She felt like she was “*looking for a needle in a haystack*”, and this feeling did not contribute to her ability to successfully complete the investigation. Even though the participant had this feeling, she was still able to complete most of the steps that she deemed necessary.

The second participant reported a similar feeling while conducting his investigation, reporting that conducting the investigation is difficult because of a lack of experience. Furthermore, this participant felt that doing this investigation was pointless from time to time, especially when he thought the bike would probably be gone anyway. He indicated that this might be a pessimistic thought, but that he could not help but think about this while conducting the investigation.

Response efficacy. The response efficacy of the pilot was generally judged positively. Respondents indicated that they felt that including citizens in criminal investigations would yield positive results when the instructions they received were given. One participant said:

I think that when you involve citizens in certain investigations, small investigations, it would be more effective than to let the police handle it by themselves. A lot of people nowadays do not trust the police, and I think that, as a younger person, without a police uniform and the like, you would be able to obtain more information from people than when the police would do this. I found that out during my own investigation.

Furthermore, another participant indicated that he felt that the general population would also judge the response efficacy of this pilot to be high. “... *And I think it is very good that citizens can help out with these ‘less important’ things. More bicycles will possibly be retrieved. I think that’s great, and I think everybody understands this.*”

Although the above results indicate a high amount of response efficacy, response efficacy was rated low for the possibility of retrieving one’s bike. As indicated earlier, participants felt a sense of hopelessness. The feeling of hopelessness was mainly caused by the idea that the bicycle had already been sold somewhere else. One participant said: “*You know, when I hear ‘Yeah, that [bicycle] is already in Poland’, ‘forget about it’, then I assume that [the bicycle repair shop employee] knows because he has already seen some of these cases.*” “*That does not give [me] a lot of hope*”.

Furthermore, response efficacy of the current situation, in which citizens would report the crime to the police, was judged negatively by multiple respondents. One respondent indicated: “*The situation was of course: you report the theft because you have to. Otherwise, you will not be able to get the money back from insurance. However, you already know in advance that this report will lead nowhere.*”

Trust. Trust was rated very positively by all four participants. Participants indicated that they were already trusting the police when they started the pilot. Furthermore, participants indicated that because of participating in the pilot, their trust in the police increased. Reasons for the increased trust were the guidance and personal attention they received during the pilot. One participant indicated that the only thing that influenced trust negatively was some miscommunication between different members of the police regarding the stolen bike. He told that the police did not indicate clearly which number to call when something was wrong, which led to some miscommunication and dialling 112 outside a life-threatening situation. Other than that, however, this participant still trusted the police in general.

Empowerment. Participants generally indicated that they felt empowered enough by the police. Participants indicated that the police trusting the citizens by allowing them to do

certain steps of the investigation themselves had a positive influence on their ability to do the investigation. Furthermore, participants mentioned that should the police trust more citizens with doing the steps mentioned in the instructions, this would have a good influence on the number of solved cases and the efficiency of police work.

Discussion

The research question of this paper was: *How do victims of bicycle theft in Enschede experience investigating the case of their stolen bike?*

To answer this question three sub questions were formulated:

1. *How did citizens utilise the instructions given to them by the police?*
2. *To what extent did self-efficacy and response efficacy have an impact on the citizen's experience when participating in a criminal investigation?*
3. *To what extent did trust and empowerment have an impact on the citizen's experience when participating in a criminal investigation?*

Looking at the above-mentioned results, the research question and the sub-questions can be answered. In the following discussion, the feedback on the instructions and the experiences of the participants while doing the investigation will be summarized and discussed. Furthermore, the psychological factors that are expected to influence the behaviour of the participants in conducting an investigation will be considered. Lastly, the limitations of the research will be discussed.

Utilisation of instructions

Camera footage. An action that was indicated as not being very successful was looking for camera footage. Three out of the four participants indicated that they tried to acquire camera footage, but without success. One of the participants was able to watch the camera footage, but the other two participants were not allowed to view the footage. This could have been very detrimental to the investigation because being able to watch camera footage could possibly identify a bike thief. Participants indicated that companies that were asked to show their camera footage were not eager to do so. This could imply that there is some uncertainty whether it is allowed to share camera footage with citizens. This can be confirmed when looking at the interviews with the participants. Participants indicated not being aware that asking for camera footage is allowed as a citizen. For this measure to be more effective, it could be communicated to companies that it is allowed to show camera footage to citizens should they ask for it in an

investigation. This would make camera footage more accessible to citizens, possibly increasing the number of bicycles retrieved. Furthermore, it could be helpful if participants in an investigation could get a form of identification that shows they are cooperating with the police. This way, it will be clearer for companies that a citizen is participating in a police investigation, which will possibly make it more likely that the citizen will get access to the camera footage.

Neighbourhood research. Regarding the neighbourhood research, it could be concluded that neighbourhood research can be effective, as one of the participants managed to retrieve his bike because of this neighbourhood research. However, this effectiveness seems to be dependent on the position where the bicycle got stolen. For bicycles stolen in residential areas, neighbourhood research might be more effective than for bicycles stolen in public areas like city centres. Furthermore, neighbourhood research could be the most dangerous aspect of the investigation, as one participant indicated not feeling safe while conducting this research.

Witness hearing. Witness hearing was generally not rated as being very effective. Two out of the four participants conducted a form of witness hearing after they discovered that their bicycle was stolen. However, none of the participants indicated that doing so contributed to their investigation, as none of the witnesses reported any useful information. This could be explained by the location of the bicycles. These were stolen in very populated areas, making it harder for possible witnesses to notice any suspicious activity. A measure that could be taken to make witness hearing less important is adding more camera surveillance to these very populated areas like city centres and train stations. This way, information about the culprit can be retrieved from the camera footage, thus making witness statement less vital.

Social media and online research. Looking at the actions that the participants could take, it becomes clear that doing online research, be it using social media or doing online research, was the action that was most undertaken by the participants. This can be attributed to the accessibility of Social Media and other websites like second-hand sales websites.

Making a file. On the contrary, making a file was the activity that was the least undertaken by the participants. This can be attributed to the time and material that is required to make a file. Not all participants had enough time or material to make a file. In order to increase the amount of information that is stored in a file by the participants, this process could be more facilitated by the police. Using a website or an app, making a file could be made more accessible, and this could possibly lead to more information on the various cases being stored by the civilians.

To answer sub-question 1, it can be stated that the instructions were rated as being very clear. Regarding the information given, it was indicated that the police gave the right amount

of information; not too much, not too little. Furthermore, participants indicated that they perceived the police as being very accessible during their investigation. Participants felt expertly guided, by the instructions, as well as by the police.

Self-efficacy and response efficacy

There was a discrepancy between the ease of carrying out the instructions and the self-efficacy reported in the interviews. Two out of the four participants indicated not feeling as they were able to complete the investigation successfully, although they managed to complete a considerable amount of the instructions provided. A risk of low self-efficacy could be that participants cease their investigations early (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998). However, with the considerable amount of instructions completed regardless of the low self-efficacy, it could be argued that this is not the case. On the other hand, it is unsure what the results of the investigation would be if self-efficacy was rated high by these participants. In future research, this connection between self-efficacy and continuation of citizen participation investigation could be researched further.

With regards to the sub-question 2, there is no clear answer as to the impact of self-efficacy on the experience of the participants in citizen investigation. Where previous literature stated that a low self-efficacy would lead to premature termination of efforts, this was not apparent in this research. In future research, this study could be replicated in order to investigate in more depth to what extent efficacy beliefs are required to feel able to participate successfully in a criminal investigation as such. It should also be considered that with threats or crimes of a smaller or larger magnitude, different efficacy beliefs might be needed. Therefore, when implementing citizen investigation on a larger scale, it should be kept in mind what levels of self-efficacy are adequate for each felony.

A more positive result was the experienced response efficacy. Looking at responsive efficacy, it becomes clear that the judged effectiveness of the method practised in the pilot is high. Especially compared to the current response, where a crime is reported and matters are left to only the police, participants reported an increase in the response efficacy of the new method they experienced during the pilot. This increase can be explained by the increased responsibility of the participants themselves; they can decide the amount of effort they can put into their investigation, instead of the police deciding so. The high response efficacy reported in the interviews shows a positive influence on the experience of the participants in criminal investigations. However, the response efficacy regarding the possibility of retrieving a stolen bike was indicated as being low. Participants indicated that they could not get rid of the feeling

that the bike was already sold or moved to a different country. This feeling had a negative influence on the experience of the participants when conducting their investigation. This discrepancy between the high response efficacy on the instructions and the low response efficacy regarding the possibility of retrieving the stolen bike could be a starting point for future research. Since this research concerned a pilot study, different results could be found when citizen investigation regarding bike theft would be implemented on a larger scale.

To answer sub-question 2, it can be concluded that the impact of self-efficacy on the experience that citizens have on participation regarding a criminal investigation is unclear, while it could be concluded that high response efficacy beliefs among citizens conducting criminal investigations have a positive impact on their experience. Looking at the reported high response efficacy, it can be concluded that the instructions were clear, as the participants conducted most of the actions present in the instructions. Some actions were, however, less successful than others.

Empowerment and trust

The psychological factors trust and empowerment were seen as having the most positive influence on the participant's experience, with all participants rating both trust and empowerment positively. Participants all indicated trusting the police from the start of the investigation until the end, and the feedback and accessibility of the police during the investigation mainly contributed to this. Regarding empowerment, citizens appreciated the increase in autonomy the police facilitated with this pilot. They indicated expecting that empowering citizens in this way will cause an increase in the speed and effectiveness of investigations. Looking at this feedback, it can be concluded that trust and empowerment influenced the experience of the participants in citizen investigation positively. Trust and empowerment had a positive impact on the experience of the participants regarding their citizen investigation.

This positive feedback regarding trust and empowerment is promising for future implementation of citizen participation in a criminal investigation. However, it should not be forgotten that too much empowerment can lead to detrimental results. Conger and Kanungo (1988) addressed this possibility of negative consequences. Should citizens feel overly confident because of their newly acquired empowerment, the possibility of mistakes might increase with the new independence of the citizen-investigators. As mentioned earlier by Kerstholt and de Vries (2018), citizen participation is not without risk, and overconfidence caused by empowerment could increase the possibility of errors like privacy infringement and

confirmation bias. it is important that in future, research the possibility of these errors is investigated so that they might be prevented.

To answer sub question 3, it can be concluded that trust and empowerment were rated as having a positive influence on the experience of citizens doing a criminal investigation. Participants indicated being very trusting of the police, and indicated that doing to research only had positive influence on that trust. The empowerment that was experienced as a result of the newly acquired autonomy of the citizen-investigators furthermore had a positive influence on the experience of these investigators, and is promising for future implementation.

Limitations

Looking at the high level of trust reported by the participants, a limitation to this research can be found: participants already indicated being trusting of the police before they participated in the investigation. This form of self-selection bias (Lavrakas, 2008) can influence the external validity of this research, since the population that participated is not representative of the general population. In this research, the participants all indicated being very trusting of the police, which makes it more likely for them to participate in the research. Victims of bike theft who do not have trust in the police were not present in this study, which would indicate that they are less likely to participate in this study. Having participants that indicate not being trusting of the police participate in the study would have increased the external validity of the research, and possible have caused different results than the results seen in this paper.

Moreover, a social desirability bias (Edwards, 1957) possibly present among the interviewees would also constitute a limitation to this research. The reports of participants on how many hours they spent on certain forms of investigation could fall victim to this bias, since it is possible that participants indicated a higher amount of time spent in order to leave a more positive impression on the researcher and the police. This would make it more difficult to estimate the amount of time really spent on the investigation, which could hamper to larger scale implementation of the pilot.

Conclusion

Overall, retrieving the bike on one's own initiative is classified as a positive experience. This research indicated the importance of the various psychological factors in the CET model (Paton, 2013), on an individual as well as an institutional level (Kerstholt et al., 2017). Additionally, the instructions that were given by the police were evaluated, creating the possibility of improvement and larger scale implementation. The most notable results of this

research included the positive influence of trust and empowerment on the experience of the participants in criminal investigations. However, future research is needed to assess possible dangers of the highly rated amount of empowerment, so as to not cause an excess of privacy and validity violations. Furthermore, the discrepancy between the rated self-efficacy and the number of instructions carried out by the participants makes it difficult to draw a clear conclusion on the impact of self-efficacy on the experience of the participants when investigating. For future research, it is recommended that this study is replicated, with a separate scale for self-efficacy, in order to determine what level of self-efficacy is required to participate successfully in citizen investigations. When looking at the instructions, online research was rated as being the easiest to complete, requiring little effort and being easily accessible according to participants. Making a file, however, was rated as being difficult and time-consuming. Should this pilot be implemented on a larger scale, providing more support to participants in making a file could prove beneficial to the number of participants making these files.

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Appendix

Appendix A

Link to website: <https://start.me/p/ek0PgP/pilot-geef-mijn-fiets-terug>

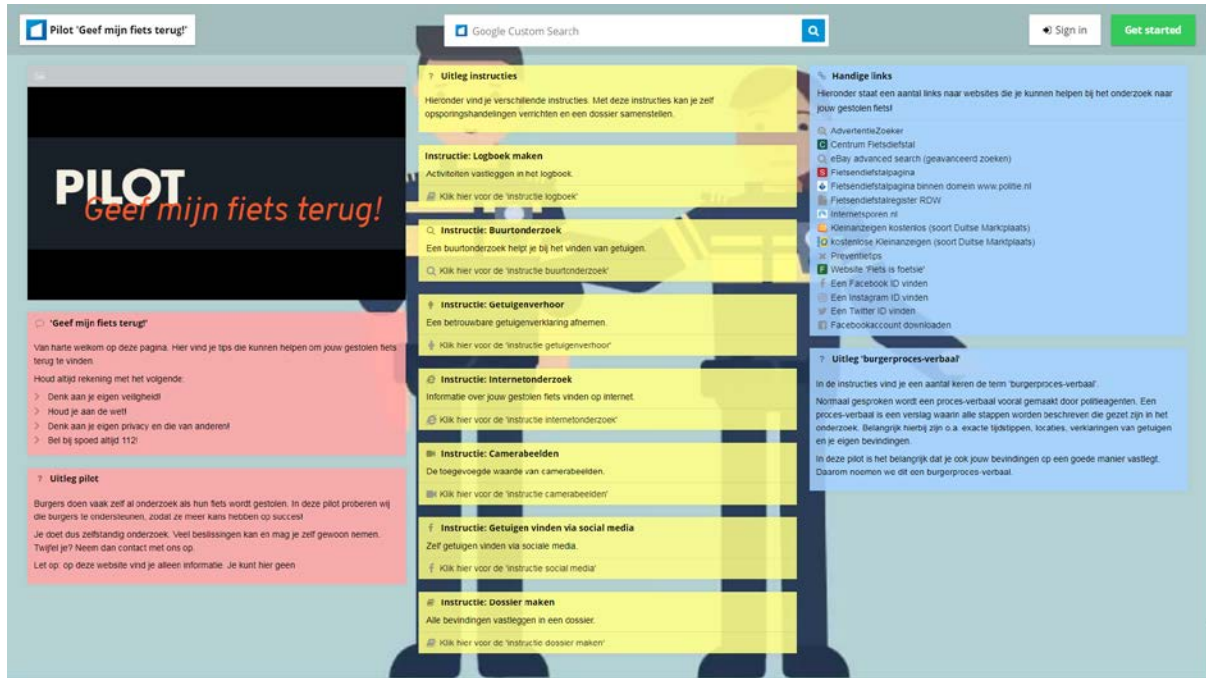


Figure 1. Website 'Pilot: Geef mijn fiets terug!'

Appendix B

Beste Deelnemer,

Hartelijk dank voor uw deelname aan de pilot over burgeronderzoek naar aanleiding van een gestolen fiets. Via deze vragenlijst hopen we zo veel mogelijk informatie te vergaren over uw ervaringen in het doen van burgeronderzoek naar aanleiding van de instructies. Met de antwoorden die u geeft op de verschillende vragen, proberen we gemeenschappelijke punten te vinden met de rest van de deelnemers, zodat we de instructies in de toekomst kunnen verbeteren.

Mochten er vragen zijn, aarzel dan niet om contact op te nemen met

- **Wouter Waanders, W.j.Waanders@student.utwente.nl, 06 4 122 122 4**

General info about the research

1. Heeft u uw fiets teruggevonden?
 - a. Hoe heeft u dat ervaren?
2. Is de dader opgespoord?
 - a. Hoe heeft u dat ervaren?
3. Wat was uw motivatie om mee te doen?
4. Hoe heeft u het onderzoek uitgevoerd; welke stappen heeft u ondernomen?
5. Wat is de grootste uitdaging die u tegenkwam bij het uitvoeren van het onderzoek?

Instructions

6. Heeft u gebruik gemaakt van de instructies die door de politie zijn gegeven?
 - a. Zo ja, welke?
 - b. Waarom deze en andere niet?
7. Hoeveel tijd heeft u aan besteed aan de verschillende onderdelen?
 - Buurtonderzoek
 - Getuigenverhoor
 - Onderzoek op internet
 - Getuigen zoeken via sociale media
 - Camerabeelden zoeken en bekijken
 - Dossier maken
8. Hebben de instructies u nieuwe inzichten gegeven in het doen van onderzoek (naar fietsendiefstal) als burger? Zo ja, welke?

9. Heeft u informatie gezocht die niet vermeld was in de instructies? Zo ja, welke?
 10. Heeft u acties uitgevoerd die niet vermeld werden in de instructies? Zo ja, welke?
 11. Heeft u het onderzoek alleen uitgevoerd of samen met anderen?
 12. Wat is uw mening over de instructies die verstrekt zijn?
- (Heeft u het idee te weinig, genoeg, of te veel informatie gekregen te hebben?)
13. Heeft u suggesties voor het aanvullen of verbeteren van de instructies gegeven op de website?

Efficacy/ self-efficacy

14. Heeft u het idee dat burgeronderzoek tot meer opgeloste zaken leidt?
15. In welke mate achtte u zichzelf in staat tot het volbrengen van uw onderzoek?
16. Heeft u ooit het gevoel gehad dat uw veiligheid in het geding is gekomen tijdens het onderzoek?

Trust in law enforcement

17. Heeft u vertrouwen in de politie op het gebied van burgeronderzoek?
18. Heeft u het idee dat het vertrouwen in de politie toe zal nemen door het geven van dergelijke richtlijnen?

Empowerment

19. Hoe heeft u het contact en/of de samenwerking met politie ervaren?
20. Welke begeleiding vanuit de politie zou u graag hebben gekregen, waardoor u de werkzaamheden (nog) beter/sneller/efficiënter had kunnen uitvoeren?
21. Wat vindt u van het initiatief van de politie om burgers te betrekken bij hun eigen opsporingsonderzoek?

Advies

22. Terugkijkend op de pilot, welk advies zou u de politie willen meegeven?

Hartelijk dank voor uw deelname!

Appendix C

INFORMED CONSENT FORMULIER

Naam van het onderzoeksproject

I want my bike back!

Doel van het onderzoek

Dit onderzoek wordt geleid door Wouter Waanders]. U bent van harte uitgenodigd om deel te nemen aan dit onderzoek. Het doel van dit onderzoek is het verkrijgen van meer informatie met betrekking tot burgeronderzoek om zo de instructies voor dit burgeronderzoek te kunnen verbeteren.

Gang van zaken tijdens het onderzoek

U neemt deel aan een interview waarin aan u vragen zullen worden gesteld over uw deelname aan een burgeronderzoek met betrekking tot een gestolen fiets.

U dient tenminste 16 jaar te zijn om deel te nemen aan dit onderzoek.

Tijdens het interview zal, aan de hand van een topic list, dieper worden ingegaan op het verloop van uw burgeronderzoek. Van het interview zal een audio-opname worden gemaakt, zodat het gesprek later ad-verbatim (woord voor woord) kan worden uitgewerkt.

Dit transcript wordt vervolgens gebruikt in het verdere onderzoek.

Potentiële risico's en ongemakken

- Er zijn geen fysieke, juridische of economische risico's verbonden aan uw deelname aan deze studie. U hoeft geen vragen te beantwoorden die u niet wilt beantwoorden. Uw deelname is vrijwillig en u kunt uw deelname op elk gewenst moment stoppen.

Vergoeding

U ontvangt voor deelname aan dit onderzoek geen vergoeding. Door deel te nemen aan dit onderzoek zult u meer inzicht krijgen in burgeronderzoek en de manier waarop dit burgeronderzoek verbeterd kan worden.

Vertrouwelijkheid van gegevens

Uw privacy is en blijft maximaal beschermd. Er wordt op geen enkele wijze vertrouwelijke informatie of persoonsgegevens van of over u naar buiten gebracht, waardoor iemand u zal kunnen herkennen.

Voordat onze onderzoeksgegevens naar buiten gebracht worden, worden uw gegevens **anoniem** gemaakt: geanonimiseerd.

De onderzoeksleider zal uw gegevens niet delen met anderen.

In een publicatie of presentatie zullen of anonieme gegevens of pseudoniemen worden gebruikt. De audio-opnamen, formulieren en andere documenten die in het kader van deze studie worden gemaakt of verzameld, worden opgeslagen op een beveiligde locatie bij de Universiteit Twente en op de beveiligde (versleutelde) computers van de onderzoekers.

Vrijwilligheid

Deelname aan dit onderzoek is geheel vrijwillig. Je kunt als deelnemer jouw medewerking aan het onderzoek te allen tijde stoppen, of weigeren dat jouw gegevens voor het onderzoek mogen worden gebruikt, zonder opgaaf van redenen.

Dit betekent dat als je voorafgaand aan het onderzoek besluit om af te zien van deelname aan dit onderzoek, dat dit op geen enkele wijze gevolgen voor jou zal hebben. Tevens kun je tot 7 werkdagen (bedenktijd) na het interview alsnog de toestemming intrekken die je hebt gegeven om gebruik te maken van jouw gegevens.

In deze gevallen zullen jouw gegevens uit onze bestanden worden verwijderd en vernietigd.

Als je tijdens het onderzoek, na de bedenktijd van 7 werkdagen, besluit om jouw medewerking te staken, zal dat eveneens op geen enkele wijze gevolgen voor je hebben. Echter: de gegevens die u hebt verstrekt tot aan het moment waarop uw deelname stopt, zal in het onderzoek gebruikt worden, inclusief de bescherming van uw privacy zoals hierboven beschreven. Er worden uiteraard geen nieuwe gegevens verzameld of gebruikt.

Als u besluit om te stoppen met deelname aan het onderzoek, of als u vragen of klachten heeft, of uw bezorgdheid kenbaar wilt maken, of een vorm van schade of ongemak vanwege het onderzoek, neemt u dan aub contact op met de onderzoeksleider:

Wouter Waanders

W.j.Waanders@student.utwente.nl

Toestemmings-verklaring

Met uw ondertekening van dit document geeft aan dat u minstens 16 jaar oud bent; dat u goed bent geïnformeerd over het onderzoek, de manier waarop de onderzoeksgegevens worden verzameld, gebruikt en behandeld en welke eventuele risico's u zou kunnen lopen door te participeren in dit onderzoek

Indien u vragen had, geeft u bij ondertekening aan dat u deze vragen heeft kunnen stellen en dat deze vragen helder en duidelijk zijn beantwoord. U geeft aan dat u vrijwillig akkoord gaat met uw deelname aan dit onderzoek. U ontvangt een kopie van dit ondertekende toestemmingsformulier.

Ik ga akkoord met deelname aan een onderzoeksproject geleid door Wouter Waanders. Het doel van dit document is om de voorwaarden van mijn deelname aan het project vast te leggen.

1. Ik kreeg voldoende informatie over dit onderzoeksproject. Het doel van mijn deelname als een geïnterviewde in dit project is voor mij helder uitgelegd en ik weet wat dit voor mij betekent.

2. Mijn deelname als geïnterviewde in dit project is vrijwillig. Er is geen expliciete of impliciete dwang voor mij om aan dit onderzoek deel te nemen.

3. Mijn deelname houdt in dat ik word geïnterviewd door (a) onderzoeker (s) van de Universiteit Twente]. Het interview zal ongeveer 45 minuten duren. Ik geef de onderzoeker (s) toestemming om tijdens het interview opnames (geluid / beeld) te maken en schriftelijke notities te nemen. Het is mij duidelijk dat, als ik toch bezwaar heb met een of meer punten zoals hierboven benoemd, ik op elk moment mijn deelname, zonder opgaaf van reden, kan stoppen.

4. Ik heb het recht om vragen niet te beantwoorden. Als ik me tijdens het interview ongemakkelijk voel, heb ik het recht om mijn deelname aan het interview te stoppen.

5. Ik heb van de onderzoeksleider de uitdrukkelijke garantie gekregen dat de onderzoeksleider er zorg voor draagt dat ik niet ben te identificeren in door het onderzoek naar buiten gebrachte

gegevens, rapporten of artikelen. Mijn privacy is gewaarborgd als deelnemer aan dit onderzoek.

6. Ik heb de garantie gekregen dat dit onderzoeksproject is beoordeeld en goedgekeurd door de ethische commissie van de BMS Ethics Committee. Voor bezwaren met betrekking tot de opzet en of uitvoering van het onderzoek kan ik me wenden tot de Secretaris van de Ethische Commissie van de faculteit Behavioural, Management and Social Sciences op de Universiteit Twente via ethicscommittee-bms@utwente.nl

7. Ik heb dit formulier gelezen en begrepen. Al mijn vragen zijn naar mijn tevredenheid beantwoord en ik ben vrijwillig akkoord met deelname aan dit onderzoek.

8. Ik heb een kopie ontvangen van dit toestemmingsformulier dat ook ondertekend is door de interviewer.

| | | |
|----------------|--------------|-------|
| _____ | _____ | |
| _____ | | |
| Naam deelnemer | Handtekening | Datum |

| | | |
|------------------|--------------|-------|
| _____ | _____ | |
| _____ | | |
| Naam Onderzoeker | Handtekening | Datum |