

UNIVERSITY OF TWENTE.

Faculty of Behavioural Management and Social Science

Psychology of Conflict, Risk and Safety

First Supervisor: Dr. Steven J. Watson

Second Supervisor: Dr. Miriam S. D. Oostinga

Impact of interview style on perceived trust in the interviewer and the effect on risk perception

Melissa Gencsoy

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to get a deeper understanding of the impact of different interview styles on suspects perceived trust in the interviewer and the effect of risk perception.

Previous research indicated that information-gathering interview styles lead to higher trust in the interviewer and that higher trust reduces suspects risk perception. Moreover, this study aimed to find out if trust mediates the relationship between interview style and risk perception.

This online study consists of an online questionnaire with a crime vignette, a skype interview and a second questionnaire about the interviewee's perception of the interviewer. Participants were asked to read the crime vignette before the interview, to identify with the scenario that they stole an iPhone and convince the interviewer of their innocence. The manipulated variable in this study is the different interview-style that is being used. The information-gathering style is marked by active listening, while the accusatory one dominates the interview with confrontations. A total of 50 participants took part in the online study, with 25 participants for each interview-style.

Most of the results are not in line with the previous indications, meaning that this research did not show that an information-gathering interview-style increases suspects trust and also that the general trust scale is not negatively correlated with risk perception. Additionally, the results showed that trust does not mediate the relationship between interview style and risk perception. However, the accusatory interview style was found to be associated with higher risk perception than the information-gathering one. Moreover, the findings indicate that high levels of perceived ability, a characteristic of trust, in the interviewer lead to high levels of risk perception. Therefore, even though none of the proposed hypothesis were found to be significant, this study did reveal an interesting finding of the effect of a characteristic of trust, namely ability, on the risk perception of the suspect. Since this study showed that trust is not the variable that mediates the relationship between interview style and risk perception, further research should investigate a different variable that mediates the relationship between interview style and risk perception.

Introduction

The topic of investigative and interrogative interviews is a well-discussed matter in our society. All kinds of different methods and styles have been used by police officers and investigators with the purpose of information-gathering or getting the suspect to confess (Meissner, Redlich, Bhatt & Brandon, 2012). Since the usage of different interview styles and methods used in investigative and interrogative interviews is such a frequently discussed topic, it is even displayed in many movies or series, such as in the Netflix series called ‘Criminal’. Each episode deals with a single case and all episodes take place in the same interrogation room, where different investigators with different methods try to obtain a confession from the suspect. Series like ‘Criminal’ or other investigative documentaries discuss the effectiveness, issues and mistakes that are being made in the methods used by the police. Some of these mistakes lead to false confessions and wrongful convictions. In order to resolve such issues, it is important to have a closer look at the effects different interview styles have on the suspect. There has not been a lot of research on the effects of different interview styles of the perceptions of the suspects, the focus of previous studies was rather on the end effect and what the interviewer perceives.

Meissner, Redlich, Michael, Evans, Camilletti, Bhatt and Brandon (2014) and Paterson (1997) described the importance of trust in investigative interviews and that trust is an essential part of interviewing. Therefore, trust and its essential characteristics, ability, benevolence and integrity display the first perception in this research that is being studied.

Moreover, foregoing research made indications about the factor of risk perception, which changes as a result of different interview-styles and techniques that are used (Williams, 2013). Wherefore, risk is the second perception that is being investigated.

While some previous studies did focus on interview-styles and effects on risks and parts of trust separately, the connection between different interview-styles, trust and risk perception has been neglected. Therefore, this research aims to look at the connection between each of these variables and their connection all together in a mediation model, to bring some deeper understanding of the suspect's perceptions in investigative interviews. This is important because to investigate the characteristic that might be crucial for the changes in suspects risk perception could be useful in practicing interviews with suspects and receiving the required information.

Interview style

When conducting investigative interviews, there are several techniques and styles to make use of. The two most common interview styles are interrogation or accusatory approaches and

information-gathering approaches. The main difference between these two interview styles is that “the aim of the accusatorial methods is to obtain confessions, the primary aim of information-gathering methods is to obtain information” (Meissner et al., 2012, p.6).

In accusatory interviews, “interviewers confront suspects with accusations” (Vrij, Mann, Kristen & Fisher, 2007, p.500). This approach is also characterized by psychological manipulation and confrontation (Meissner et al., 2012). It aims to convince the suspect to agree to the presupposed story or theory of the interviewer. According to Vrij et al. (2007), such interviews create a more negative and ruff atmosphere in general by the fact that the interviewer is accusing the interviewee which could lead to negative judgements and emotions for the respondent. This interview-style entails a lot of factors like dominance and control (Vrij, Fisher, Mann, Leal, Milne, Savage & Williamson, 2009). Holmberg and Christianson (2002) found “that police interviews marked by dominance are mainly associated with a higher proportion of denials” (p.31). Moreover, previous research demonstrated that “accusatorial methods increase the likelihood of false confessions” (Meissner et al., 2012, p.9).

The information-gathering style that emphasizes empathy is also known as a style marked by humanity because it makes suspects feel that they are acknowledged and respected. Providing such a humanitarian atmosphere is associated with admissions since the atmosphere is allowing them to confess and open up. Admissions are important to receive more checkable details against the evidence (Holmberg & Christianson, 2002). This style or approach promotes cooperation and improves the recall of information (Vrij, Meissner, Fisher, Kassin, Morgan, & Kleinman, 2017). It is also “characterized by rapport-building, truth-seeking, and active listening” (Meissner et al., 2012). Furthermore, Vrij, Mann, and Fisher (2006) found out in their study about individuals differences in the experience of accusatory and information-gathering interview styles, that “respondents felt that they were listened to more in information-gathering interviews”(p.589), which could be because it focuses on getting more relevant and reliable information from the interviewee, so the interviewers are encouraged to listen closely. In the same research, they found that interviews with such an approach were more cognitively demanding then interviews with other styles (Vrij et al., 2006). With cognitively demanding it is meant that respondents get open-ended questions and therefore need to answer more extensive than in harsh and accusatory interview styles where respondents often answer with short denials or simple answers (Holmberg & Christianson, 2002; Vrij et al., 2006). Therefore, in the case of interviews, a more cognitively demanding interview style is positively correlated to find out what exactly happened. This is because this kind of interview style consists mostly of open question which brings the interviewee to provide more detailed answers and information.

The research of Vrij et al., (2006) showed that accusatory interview styles were perceived as more uncomfortable and more stressful for suspects and information-gathering approaches were easier in terms of pressure and discomfort for the respondents than accusatory interview styles (Vrij et al., 2006). Since respondents or suspects perceive the information-gathering approach as easier, police officers and interviewers may think it is too easy for suspects, meaning that it is not strict enough and therefore often prefer a more dominant approach like the accusatory interview style (Sear & Stephenson, 1997).

Interview models

Concerning the interview-styles and how to conduct a proper interview, there are several models and techniques that provide guidance. The two most discussed models for interrogative and investigative interviews are the Reid technique and the PEACE framework.

The Reid technique covers three different components called factual analysis, interviewing, and interrogation. During the factual analysis, the investigator makes sure to have all the relevant information, develop leads and eliminate improbable suspects (Buckley & Jayne, 2011). The interview part refers to non-accusatory questions, building rapport and gathering information which includes behaviour analysis. In the last part, the interrogation, the interviewer uses an accusatory approach in the form of a “monologue”, so telling the suspect that there is no doubt about him/her being guilty and not asking open-ended questions (Moore & Fitzsimmons, 2011). Additionally, the Reid technique consists of nine steps, like confrontation, theme development and stopping denials, that aim to get a confession from the suspect during the interrogation (Buckley, 2000). Furthermore, it is stated with caution that it could be useful to lie to the suspects in terms of evidence. Therefore, many individuals who use the Reid technique make use of lies, threats and dominant leading questions (Buckley, 2000). This consequently affected the critical point that the Reid technique leads to many false confessions and less trust (Buckley, 2000; Moore & Fitzsimmons, 2011).

An alternative approach to the Reid technique is the PEACE framework. The PEACE framework stands for Preparation and Planning, Engage and Explain, Account, Clarify and Challenge, Closure and Evaluation. According to Shawyer and Walsh (2007) “At each stage the ethos of the model encourages an open mind, fairness, and a search for the truth rather than the previous confession-oriented interviewing strategy” (p.107). The PEACE model or framework is also known as an ethical way of interviewing and aims to improve the quality of the information in the interview (Shawyer, & Walsh, 2007). The PEACE model was designed for interviewing in investigations of crimes. Moreover, this approach is focusing on seeking reliable information rather

than confessions. Therefore, it follows an information-gathering approach. Therefore, it is not common for investigators and interviewers to lie or accuse a suspect like it is in the Reid technique or in general during accusatory interview styles.

Trust

Trust is an important variable in interrogation and investigative interviews because it describes “the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party” (Mayer, Davis & Schoorman, 1995, p.348). Mayer et al. (1995) explanation of trust describes the interview situation accurately because they draw attention to the vulnerability of actions the interviewer might put the suspect in and also about the expectations the suspect has.

When conducting investigative interviews, the goal is to get to know what happened in a specific situation, so to gather information. Interviewers want to get the suspect to provide evidence that fit to or explain, the obtained evidence the interviewers have which is done by testing the suspects account against the evidence. For many individuals, it is important to feel and perceive a certain kind of confidence and trust during the interview and to get the feeling to be in a safe environment to open up and talk about such a situation or act (Landsheer, Van Der Heijden & Van Gils, 1999). This atmosphere is mostly given in information-gathering interview styles. Meissner et al. (2014) and Paterson (1997) described that essential parts of the information-gathering interview style are elements such as acceptance, respect and trust. It has come up that a suspect or interviewee who receives trust from the investigator or interviewer, during a information-gathering approach, will also be more likely to gain trust in this person just like an interdependency or correlation (Meissner et al., 2014; Paterson, 1997). Moreover, in order to talk to the interviewer and provide valuable information, the suspect or interviewee needs to gain a certain level of trust in the investigator (Landsheer et al., 1999).

Literature often uses different synonyms which often get mixed up with trust. Three of the most common synonyms that are being used are cooperation, confidence and predictability (Mayer et al., 1995). The first synonym cooperation describes an act of working together for a common benefit which can also be called joint action. Cooperation can be differentiated from trust because “You can cooperate with someone who you don’t really trust” (Mayer et al., 1995, p.713). The second synonym confidence was described by Luhmann, (1988) as being able to feel confident and rely on yourself and yours or someone else’s abilities in a situation without considering alternatives. Therefore, trust differs from confidence because it describes a feeling that requires previous contact

or engagement with the other person involved so that the individual can recognize and accept a risky situation (Luhmann, 1988). The last synonym predictability means that something is likely to happen because of a consistent repetition of behaviour or action, so this makes it possible to expect what could happen in advance (Mayer et al., 1995). For predictability, Deutsch (1958) stated that “to be meaningful, trust must go beyond predictability” (p.714) where Mayer et al (1995) added that “predictability is insufficient to trust” (p.714), because predictability might not be enough for an individual to put themselves in a risky situation or even take a risk.

In order to understand the importance of the element of trust in interviews, the model Mayer et al. (1995) designed, helps to explain the characteristics that are responsible for trust. They describe three important characteristics: ability, benevolence and integrity.

Ability refers to the proficiency with which one is able to deploy the group of skills that are highlighting the task and situation-specific nature of their construct, meaning that it refers to the skills one has in performing their job. It also reflects the knowledge and aptitudes of the interviewer. Therefore, the way the interviewee perceives the interviewer’s ability influences the trust the interviewer has in the interviewer. There are two aspects of ability that need to be considered, the competence of the interviewer and the perceived ability of the interviewer to help the suspect. Moreover, ability-based trust is also known as competence-based trust. According to Mayer et al., (1995) a lot of researchers found out that ability is a central element of trust, because by adding ability as a characteristic “it creates a framework of trust that is domain specific” (p.350). For suspects to perceive ability in their interviewers, the interviewers must present themselves as being competent in performing their job, which could be interpreted differently by the suspect due to the interview approach the interviewer makes use of.

Integrity is also a characteristic of trust because the relationship between these two factors “involves the trustor's perception that the trustee adheres to a set of principles that the trustor finds acceptable” (Mayer et al., 1995, p.719). The main principle of integrity is that it emphasizes a sense of justice. In the scenario of interviewing, integrity refers to the interviewer as being perceived as being honest and having a strong sense of ethics and moral principles.

The last characteristic of the model, benevolence can also be seen as an essential element of trust because it is “the extent to which a trustee is believed to want to do good to the trustor, aside from an egocentric profit motive” (Mayer et al., 1995, p.718). Therefore, perceived benevolence might be higher in the information-gathering approach because there the interviewer focuses on making the suspect feel comfortable to open up, which can be seen as someone wanting to do good. Additionally, high benevolence and integrity are assumed to be inversely related to the suspect's

motivation to lie, which makes it an essential factor in the assessment of trust (Mayer et al., 1995).

As stated above, in the Reid technique, interviewers can lie to their suspect about evidence and manipulate them, to obtain a confession, which consequently can be a false one. Meaning the suspect lied to the interviewer due to the approach of the interviewer. However, these lies and manipulations are forbidden in the PEACE framework where there should be a genuine desire to extract the suspect's side of the story.

Moreover, Colquitt and Salam (2015) found out that “in order to increase trust, leaders need to take steps to increase their ability, build their benevolence, and demonstrate their integrity” (p.401). All of these three characteristics are important in interviewing for the interviewee to gain trust in the interviewer. Therefore, it can be said that the style and approach the interviewer makes use of can affect each of the three characteristics of trust. Perceiving ability, integrity and benevolence in the interviewer is important because trust is necessary for the interviewee or suspect to believe that they are and will be treated fairly in the interview and that it is safe for them to share information. Meaning that the way trust could have an impact on the interview outcome is by having an effect on how people choose to share information or not.

Risk perception

According to Slovic and Peters (2006), risk is perceived in two ways, as a feeling and as an analysis. “Risk as a feeling refers to ‘individuals’ instinctive and intuitive reactions to danger” (p.322), whether risk as an analysis refers to logic, reasoning, and risk management (Slovic and Peters, 2006). Risk perception also refers to the judgement individuals make about the characteristics of risk and how they feel and think about the risk they face, which determines their protective behaviour. According to Sjöberg, Moen and Rundmo, (2004) “Risk perception is related to conceptions of knowledge which stress the limits of science and different ways of knowing” (p.1). Therefore, the decision the suspects are making is the decision to share information, which is a decision about the amount of risk they perceive during the interview. Whether or not the suspect is choosing to share information is based upon the likelihood of the outcome, so how positive or negative that outcome will be (Hilgendorf & Irving, 1981). One of the most important factors for the suspect in order perceive risk, is the suspect's perception of evidence against him (Williamson, 2013). Therefore, suspects are assumed to have higher risk perception in accusatory interviews, rather than in information-gathering ones. This is because accusatory interviewers have a presupposition of guilt, so interviewers assume the suspect to be guilty, which would according to Williamson (2013), increase suspects risk perception. With a presupposition of guilt, interviewers try to provoke a reaction, so they use confrontations and accusations which could confuse or disturb

suspects which makes them perceive risk (Williamson, 2013).

The decision suspects make about sharing information, which is about weighing up the likelihood of a specific outcome, is a risk appraisal framework (Hilgendorf & Irving, 1981). Meaning that in this study it is about the interview-style producing the outcomes discussed in the beginning of the introduction, by effecting suspects decision about the likelihood and severity of an outcome. This scenario could possibly be partial explained by the variable of trust because trust can influence the respondent's perception of risk.

According to Siegrist, Gutscher and Earle (2005), a high level of trust reduces risk perception. However, there has not been much research on the specific matter of trust and risk perception, therefore, the influence of trust on risk perception is open for more research. Moreover, trust and risk perception influence each other in the setting of interrogation interviews because "The need for trust only arises in a risky situation" (Mayer et al., 1995, p.711). The risky situation in this study is being arrested for stealing, therefore establishing trust in the interviewer is important in order to cope with the situation and open up to the interviewer.

As mentioned earlier in order to establish trust in the interviewer, the suspect needs to perceive ability, benevolence and integrity. Ability could affect risk perception because if the interviewer accuses the suspect to be guilty and the suspect actually is guilty or the suspect is totally innocent might affect the perceived ability the interviewer seems to have in doing their job, which consequently can affect the perceived risk the suspects feel they might face. For integrity, Svare, Gausdal and Möllering (2019) found out that high integrity positively influences trust and reduces the perceived risk. They showed this effect based on a study about a network that is perceived to have high integrity, which they found out "reduces the perceived risk involved in sharing information and increase the probability of such sharing" (Svare et al., 2019, p.15). For interviews, it means that if the interviewer is perceived to have integrity, so that they are acting morally and fair, suspects might share more information because their risk perception lowers. The last characteristic of trust that might affect risk perception is benevolence, because when the interviewer is showing to be doing good and showing kindness to the suspect, the suspects perception of risk in the situation might be different. Meaning that for example in an accusatory interview style the suspect might not perceive as much benevolence in the interview as in an information-gathering style, which affect the perceived risk the suspect has in the situation.

As mentioned above, there has not been much research that provides information about the role of trust on risk perception, especially research that figures out what kind of role trust plays in the relationship of interview style and risk perception. In order to gain insight into this relationship, this study provides a situation where the interviewer can influence the likelihood the individual or

suspect is being punished and therefore research what kind of effect the interview style has on the risk framework.

Since previous research showed that the usage of different interview styles can lead to changes in the perception of risk for suspects, this study believes that trust might be the determinant about the decision about risk. Therefore, the variable of trust could explain the relationship between interview-style and risk perception because trust is an essential element when it comes to risk perception. Additionally, the reason for interview-style having an effect on risk perception might be because the interview-style changes the perceptions of trust. Therefore, the perception of risk could change due to the level of trust the suspect is perceiving in the interviewer as a consequence of the interview style the interviewer is making use of.

When considering all the described information from above, it is expected that the interview style that is being used should impact on the three core elements of trust: ability, benevolence and integrity. These three elements are being measured separately to see if a different interview style directly affects ability, benevolence or integrity because each of the elements has different mechanisms that makes it likely for a different interview-style to affect them. The different interview styles should affect each of these three components of trust because characteristics like accusations, judgements and dominance or active-listening, rapport-building and truth-seeking are major elements that have a high chance of affecting the perceived trust the interviewee develops towards the interviewer.

Therefore, this research will focus on the effect of information-gathering and accusatory interview-style on how trustworthy the interviewer is perceived to be and how this level of trust influences the perception of risk. Due to the previous studies that have been made in this area, this research predicts that the information-gathering style is related to higher trustworthiness in the interviewer and accusatory interview-styles to lower levels of trust. Furthermore, high levels of trust should reduce suspects risk perception. Therefore, the main focus of this study is about the impact of interview-style on the perceived trust in the interviewer and on risk perception of the suspect.

Hypothesis:

1. The information-gathering interview-style is related to higher trustworthiness (ability, benevolence & integrity) in comparison to the accusatory interview-style
2. High levels of trust (ability, benevolence & integrity) reduce risk perception
3. Trust mediates the relationship between interview-style and risk perception

Methods

Design

The presented study was an experimental study with a between-subject design with the independent variable as interview-style and the dependent variable of risk perception. Moreover, it was tested whether trust mediates the effect of interview style on risk perception. The two tested conditions of the variable interview-style were accusatorial approaches in contrast to information-gathering approaches in interviews. The goal of the study was to examine how trust influences the relationship between interview-style and risk perception.

Participants

A total of 50 participants participated in this research. Participants were recruited through the researchers themselves, meaning acquaintances of the researchers also took part. Moreover, the interviewers only interviewed participants they did not know personally to avoid biased results. Non-university students were recruited through WhatsApp, Facebook and Instagram. To participate, participants needed to be 18 years old and possess good English skills in reading and speaking. In the end, 3 participants were excluded from the study due to errors and problems in the Skype-interview. Therefore, a total of 47 participants consisted of 22 (47%) male participants and 25 (53%) female participants took part. The majority of the participants were German, $n = 38$ (79%). However, four participants were from the Netherlands and one participant each from Botswana, Bulgaria, Ireland and Romania. Their age ranged from 19 to 54 years with a mean age of $M = 22.6$ years and $SD = 6.59$.

Materials

The materials used for this research contained an online questionnaire measuring the variables trust in regard to risk perception (Appendix A & B), a vignette (Appendix C) and a laptop/computer. Moreover, the computer program Skype was used to conduct the interviews and Qualtrics to create and fill in the online questionnaire.

Questionnaire

The first questionnaire about trustworthiness was measuring the three characteristics of trust: ability, integrity and benevolence. The second questionnaire measured the perceived risk of the interviewer.

Trust. The questionnaire measuring perceived trust in the interviewer was adopted from Mayer and Davis, (1999). They focused on measuring the three characteristics of trust: ability, benevolence and integrity. The questionnaire is measured on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). It entails six items about ability, five items measuring benevolence and another six items for integrity. The Cronbach's alpha for the trust scale, so for all items of the three characteristics together was .80. The alpha for the ability scale was .89 and for the benevolence scale, alpha was .89. Both have a really good and high level of internal consistency. The Cronbach's alpha for the integrity scale was only .27 which shows a very low level of internal consistency.

Risk perception. The questionnaire about risk perception was based on the questionnaire from Watson et al. (2017). It focuses on the likelihood and severity of punishment. The questionnaire is measured on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Since the questionnaire is going to be answered by the participants after the interview and after they committed a crime, the researcher adjusted the questions from the previous questionnaire to the situation. The current study focuses on the theft of an iPhone at a café and the questions were therefore adjusted towards this specific scenario. For example, the question "I think the punishments for those caught stealing are strong" was adjusted and changed to "I am concerned about the punishment I might receive for stealing the iPhone". The researcher decided to add four questions to the risk perception scale about likelihood and the willingness to share information, to make it more relevant for the study. With the additional questions, the scale still measures risk perception and entails some questions about information provision. Additionally, six of nine questions were reverse coded and three remained the same since they were already coded in the right direction. The Cronbach's alpha for the corrected risk scale was .45 which represents a low internal consistency for nine questions.

Interview scheme

Moreover, for the Interview, the researcher followed an interview scheme, that was prepared beforehand and contained, as mentioned earlier, two different styles (Weiher, Watson, Luther, & Taylor, 2018). Interview schemes were used to create the same conditions for each participant and make the interviews as objective as possible. The difference between the two interview-styles is that one uses an information-gathering and the other one an accusatory approach. Both interview-styles have the same interview questions and only the introduction differs.

The information-gathering approach is also known as an information-gathering interview style which is focusing on finding out as much accurate information as possible about the crime that

has been committed. It starts with an introduction of the interviewer himself and name formalities, followed by a description of what the interview is about. “The primary purpose of this interview is to obtain as much information as possible. So, during this interview, it is important that you tell me everything without editing anything out and giving as much detail as possible. This is important because I wasn’t there, so I don’t know what happened, and I want you to have the chance to give your side of the story” (Appendix D). Here, the interviewer provides information about the rules and the procedures of the interview and also emphasizes the role of the interviewer as a listener.

However, the accusatory interview-style differs in the aspect of gathering information, because it is characterized with confrontations and aims to get the participant to confess or at least to agree to the presupposed theory of the interviewer. The interviewer does not introduce himself, so minimalizes the introduction and information provision about the purpose of the interview and directly starts with an accusation “I am certain that you stole that phone” (Appendix D).

Scenario

In order to make the investigative interview as realistic as possible, each participant received a crime vignette (Appendix C), which was designed by the researchers. The crime that was chosen concerns a minor crime, so participants could easily put themselves in the situation and empathize with the story. The vignette describes a crime where an iPhone was stolen out of a bag in a local café. The scenario entails a lot of details, like the exact location of the handbag, the colour of it and for example details about some individuals that passed by the suspect like a women, with big brown glasses and a men with visibility clothes. Moreover, the scenario is written out of the perspective of the offender, so the participant can really imagine being in the situation. The detailed description of the crime scenario is important because the participants need to convince the interviewer of his/her innocence, which is only possible if the participant can actually put himself in the scenario and the detailed description of the situation helps to make this experience as real as possible.

Procedure

Firstly, the participants are sent a consent form. They also receive the crime vignette that specifically describes the procedure of a crime in which the participants should relate to and emphasize with the situation as if they would have done the crime themselves. The crime concerns stealing an iPhone out of a handbag in a local cafe. The participants receive the crime vignette as an email 24 hours before the actual study begins, so they have time to learn the vignette and prepare for the interview. Moreover, participants get a preliminary questionnaire, with questions about gender, nationality and age. The questionnaire entails the questions from a personality

questionnaire, which was used by one of the other researchers and will therefore not be discussed any further. After that, the researcher calls the participant at the arranged time, which is one day after they received the mail, with a video call, via Skype. The time for the interview was either arranged privately by the researchers beforehand.

Before the interview began, the researcher explained to the participant that he/she needs to convince the interviewer of his/her innocence and that the interview was being audio recorded. After the explanation, the researcher leaves the call and the interviewer takes over. Two different interview styles are being used by the interviewer, one information-gathering and one accusatory interview style. The interviewer follows the set script which was described in the materials. During that interview, participants should try to convince the interviewer that they are not guilty of the crime, which was the task they have been given prior by the researcher. After the interview, the interviewer adds the researcher back into the call and leaves so the researcher takes over to guide the participant through the questionnaire that measures the variable trust/ in connection to risk perception. While the participant fills out the questions, the researcher mutes himself and closes his camera. The participant is free to do the same and asked to tell the researcher when he ready or when there are any questions. After the questionnaire was successfully filled out, the researcher sends the participant the debrief sheet and goes through it. The study ends with the researcher thanking the participant for their participation.

Data Analysis

All responses from the trust and risk perception questionnaire were recorded in Qualtrics. The answers were then transferred to IBM SPSS Statistics 24 to proceed with quantitative analysis. In order to start with the analysis, the data needed to be adjusted. Meaning, three participants were removed from the dataset because of technical problems and errors in the interviews. Moreover, the trust scale needed to be split into the three characteristics ability, integrity and benevolence to work with those variables separately. All analysis was performed using SPSS with an Alpha .05 applied.

To test the first hypothesis, stating that the information-gathering interview-style is related to higher trust, a t-test was conducted to find out about the difference between the accusatory and information-gathering interview-style. Additionally, to find out if one of the three characteristics of trust displays a significant difference for the two interview-styles, independent t-tests were conducted to compare ability, benevolence and integrity separately.

Moreover, for the second hypothesis regarding the relationship between trust and risk perception, correlation coefficients were compared, and scatter plots were drawn to see if trust and

risk perception have a negative relationship. Additionally, a multiple regression analysis including ability, integrity and benevolence was conducted. These variables were tested with risk perception separately to establish which of those has the strongest association with risk perception.

In order to find out if trust is a mediator for the manipulated independent variable interview style and the dependent variable risk perception, a mediation analysis was conducted in SPSS using PROCESS and also in JAMOVI using medmod. Before the mediation analysis, an independent sampled t-test was conducted to compare risk perception to the different interview styles and to get a first impression if the direct path between risk perception and interview style is significant. Afterwards, the mediation analysis itself was conducted, so to test if trust is a mediator for the relationship between risk perception and interview style.

Results

Hypothesis testing

Interview style and trust

The first hypothesis that information-gathering interview-styles are related to higher trustworthiness was tested by measuring the normality and conducting t-tests with the variables of trust and the two conditions for interview style. The two interview-styles, accusatory and information-gathering, separately represented the independent variable and trust displayed the dependent variable. All variables were normally distributed via Shapiro-Wilk test, therefore the independent samples t-test was used for each of the trust variables, ability, benevolence and integrity.

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the perceived trust in the interviewer in accusatory and information-gathering conditions. There was not a significant difference in the scores for accusatory interview styles ($M = 3.46$, $SD = .56$) and information-gathering interview styles ($M = 3.55$, $SD = .34$); $t(45) = -.63$ $p = .526$.

For ability there was not a significant difference in the scores for accusatory ($M = 3.89$, $SD = .85$) and information-gathering ($M = 3.91$, $SD = .55$) conditions; $t(45) = -.08$, $p = .932$. Benevolence also showed no significant difference in the scores for accusatory ($M = 2.97$, $SD = 1.00$) and information-gathering ($M = 3.35$, $SD = .74$) conditions; $t(45) = -1.41$, $p = .151$. The independent-sampled t-test for the last characteristic of trust, integrity, also showed that there is no significant difference in the scores for the accusatory ($M = 3.53$, $SD = .46$) and information-gathering ($M =$

3.40, $SD = .30$) conditions; $t(45) = 1.17, p = .248$.

Therefore, the results fail to reject the null hypothesis.

Trust and risk perception

For the second hypothesis that high levels of trust are associated with lower levels of risk perception, it can be said the test of normality shows that the significant value of the Shapiro-Wilk Test is greater than .05, so the data is normally distributed, for both the risk scale and the trust scale. Moreover, Pearson's correlation coefficient was computed to assess the relationship between the trust variables and risk perception.

Table 1.

Correlation Matrix

		Risk	Trust_Total	Benevolence	Integrity	Ability
Risk	Pearson's r	—				
	p-value	—				
Trust_general	Pearson's r	.160	—			
	p-value	.282	—			
Benevolence	Pearson's r	-.092	.755	—		
	p-value	.540	< .001	—		
Integrity	Pearson's r	.180	.673	.330	—	
	p-value	.225	< .001	.024	—	
Ability	Pearson's r	.328	.635	.037	.348	—
	p-value	.024	< .001	.804	.017	—

There was no correlation between the general trust scale and risk perception $r(45) = .16, p = .282$. Therefore, a Pearson's correlation coefficient was also computed to assess the relationship between all three characteristics of trust and risk perception. As table 1. shows, there was no correlation between perceived benevolence and risk perception and that there was also no correlation between perceived integrity and risk perception. For perceived ability, the results show that there was a correlation between the two variables $r(45) = .33, p = .024$. The correlation was found to be a moderate positive relationship because of $r < .5$.

A multiple linear regression was run with all three trust characteristics, to see how well each of those predict risk perception. The regression analysis with ability, benevolence and integrity as predictors showed that $R^2 = .13$, so 13% variance in risk perception is explained by the three predictors. In addition to the variance, ANOVA showed that there was a non-significant effect of trust on risk perception at the $p < .05$ level for the three conditions $F(3,43) = 2.16, p = .106$. The data showed that none of the three characteristics of trust was found to have significant results.

Table 2.

Model Coefficients – Risk perception

Predictor	Estimate	SE	t	p
Intercept	2.561	0.890	2.878	.006
Benevolence	-0.109	0.114	-0.955	.345
Ability	0.274	0.144	1.901	.064
Integrity	0.218	0.276	0.790	.434

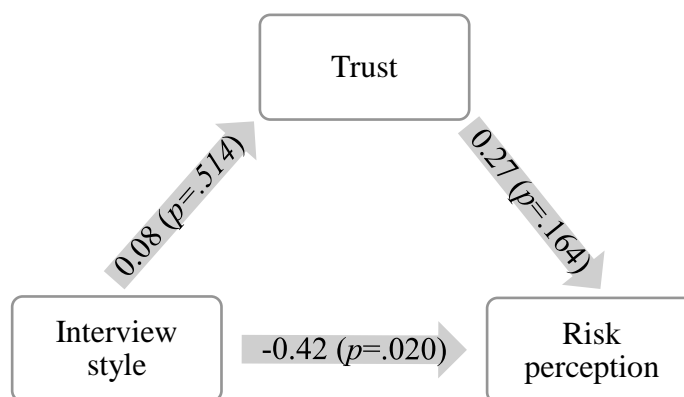
Mediation model

The third hypothesis about mediation stated that trust mediates the relationship between interview-style and risk perception. The first analysis that was conducted was an independent-samples t-test to compare the risk perception in accusatory and information-gathering conditions. There was a significant difference in the scores for accusatory interview styles ($M = 4.24$, $SD = .68$) and information-gathering interview styles ($M = 3.84$, $SD = .61$); $t(45) = 2.10$, $p = .041$. Therefore, the direct effect of interview-style on risk perception was found to be statistically significant. Additionally, the accusatory interview style was related to higher risk perception than the information-gathering one.

The outcome variable for the mediation analysis was risk perception. The predictor variable was interview-style and the mediator for the analysis was the combined trust scale.

Figure 1:

Mediation model - Estimates of each path



The indirect effect of interview style on risk perception was found to be nonsignificant [Effect = .024, 95% C.I. (-.055, .103)]. In the mediation model, 5% is explained by mediation, however, this result was not significant $p > .05$. Therefore, the mediation analysis was not significant and the hypothesis that trust mediates the relationship between interview style and risk perception must be rejected.

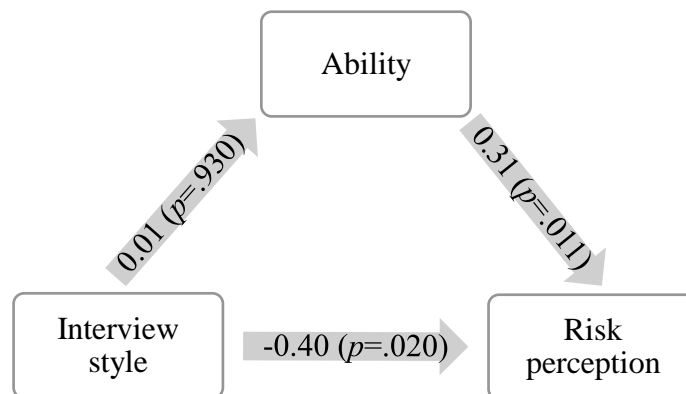
Additional analysis

As stated in the results of the second hypothesis, ability was the only element that was found to be related to risk perception, therefore the researcher decided to conduct an exploratory analysis

with ability as a mediator. The outcome variable for the exploratory analysis was risk perception. The predictor variable was interview-style and the mediator for the analysis was ability.

Figure 2:

Exploratory mediation model –Estimates of each path



The indirect effect of interview style on risk perception was still found to be nonsignificant [Effect = .005, 95% C.I (-.121, .132)]. In the exploratory medication model, only 1% is explained by mediation and this result was not significant $p > .05$. Therefore, the exploratory mediation analysis with ability as the mediator was also not significant.

Discussion

Previous research shows that different interview styles and approaches affect how suspects perceive the interviewer and how they process the situation they are in (Meissner et al., 2012). Therefore, this research aimed to find out what kind of role trust plays in investigative interviews and how these interviews and the variable of trust influence suspects risk perception.

The first hypothesis stated that the information-gathering interview-style is related to higher perceived trust in the interviewer. This hypothesis was designed based on the foregoing research from Meissner et al. (2014), whose data supports the effectiveness of information-gathering style of interviewing suspects. However, the results of this study showed that there are no significant differences between the accusatory and information-gathering interview style on trust. These non-significant results did not change when looking at ability, benevolence and integrity individually. These results indicate that the level of trust the suspect perceives through the different interview

styles did not differentiate from one another. Therefore, this research failed to reject the null hypothesis.

One explanation for these findings could be that the interviewees were all suspects who are actually guilty. Meaning that, because this study only had guilty suspects, these suspects might not feel the need to trust the interviewer, because why should they trust someone when they know they are in trouble anyway. So even when the interviewer is using an information-gathering approach and is being nice to the suspect, the suspect could still believe that it's just an act and they are out to arrest him because he is guilty. The choice of participants is a limitation in this study, therefore it may be wise to include innocent people in the future, to see a difference in the interview-style, because innocent people might trust a information-gathering approach more since they want to have someone that believes their true innocence. These points will be elaborated on later on in this section.

Moreover, regarding the general trust scale which was not found to have any significant results in this study, it can be said that for the participants to join a study in which one of their friends is a researcher and do an interview via Skype or the general situation of COVID-19 could have influenced the answers and the effectiveness of the scale (Birk, 2001; Shin, 2013). In online interviews and in general online-based studies researchers still need to learn how to build trust in such an online environment because it is not as personal like it would have been in a real meeting, which may have affected their perceived trust in the interviewer (Penningroth, 2015; Salmons, 2014).

The second hypothesis in this research that high levels of trust are related to lower levels of risk perception, was based on the study of Siegrist et al. (2005) who found out that a high level of trust reduces risk perception. Therefore, the expected results would have been that trust and risk perception have a negative linear relationship. The present results are not as expected based on the foregoing research (Siegrist et al., 2005). In this present study, the relationship between trust and risk perception was not statistically significant. Therefore, the second hypothesis, that high levels of trust reduce risk perception must be rejected because the relationship between trust (ability, benevolence & integrity) and risk perception was not negatively correlated. The main difference between the study of Siegrist et al. (2005) and this study is that Siegrist et al. (2005) performed a random telephone study without any crime vignette or scenario, only with general questions.

Due to previous research of Svare et al. (2019) it was expected that at least integrity would be found to be associated with risk perception, which was not the case. However, out of the three characteristics of trust, ability was found to be the only variable of trust to have a statistically significant correlation with risk perception. An unexpected finding was that their correlation was

moderately positive. Meaning that when the perceived ability in the interviewer increases so does perceived risk perception of the interviewee. The regression analysis showed that none of the characteristics of trust had a statistically significant linear dependence of their mean on risk perception. However, ability was found to have a p-value which is nearly significant. This result provides not exactly as much evidence against the null hypothesis as .05 but it is still worth to report the almost significance of ability, since this could be interesting for further research and the result provides more evidence than any other result of the three variables of trust do. Additionally, ability was found to have a significant effect on risk perception in the exploratory mediation model. Therefore, the second hypothesis has been rejected. Moreover, the outcome about the moderate positive correlation with ability and risk perception might be more in line with the research of Watson, Zizzo and Fleming (2017).

Watson et al. (2017) showed that trust in a body that is able to punish an individual might lead to higher risk perception. The body who can punish the suspect is, in this case, the interviewer who embodies a police officer. This interviewer, when behaving very competent in the task he performs from the suspect's point of view, leads the suspect to perceive more risk perception. The perceived competence of the interviewer could be crucial because it shows the suspect that the person that can punish one is good in doing their job and that one perceives more risk being in an interview with a person that seems to be competent performing their job as an interviewer. Additionally, the fact that all participants were actually guilty could have had an effect on their perception of ability being associated with higher risk perception because suspects could feel even more risk when they know the interviewer is competent and will figure out that they are guilty. Therefore, their research can be taken as an explanation of the present results of this study.

The results of this study also showed that for example accusatory interview styles lead to higher risk perception and as mentioned above, high ability is positively correlated to risk perception. This could mean that in practice, suspects feel themselves to be in a riskier situation when the interviewer has high capability and confidence in his accusatory interviewing methods. For practice this means that accusatory interview styles have a larger effect on the suspect's risk perception and therefore, interviewers can use their skills, especially presenting themselves as capable and confident, to investigate the suspects and obtain a confession or receive the information they need.

The last hypothesis which stated that trust could be a mediator between the variables interview style and risk perception was also found to have non-significant results. The results show that the relationship between interview style and risk perception was found to be significant and that

accusatory interview-styles are associated with higher risk perception, which supported the researcher's decision to execute the mediation analysis. The finding of the significant effect of interview style on risk perception is in line with the research of Williamson, (2013). Based on the research of Williamson (2013), who suggested that suspects who perceive a presupposition of guilt, which entails accusations and confrontation experience more risk, it was expected to find a significant difference between the different interview styles and risk perception. Especially the outcome that the accusatory interview style was related to higher risk perception is in line with Williamson's research since his research indicated that the perception of evidence against the suspect leads the suspect to perceive more risk.

However, the relationship between interview style and trust and trust and risk perception was found to be non-significant, which made the whole mediation analysis not significant because the indirect effect needs to be significant to report a mediation. That means that the mediation analysis showed that the relationship between interview style and risk perception is not explained by trust. An explanation for these results could be that trust may not be the mechanism or variable by which the risk perception of the suspect is reduced.

Therefore, it is also recommended to investigate a different variable, rather than trust, that might explain the relationship between interview style and risk perception. When staying close to the topic of trustworthiness, perceived confidence in the interviewer could be a variable that may provide more information than trust, as previous research often indicated confidence and trust to be essential in the evaluation of risk perception (Earle & Siegrist, 2008; Siegrist, Gutscher & Earle, 2005). Moreover, a second variable that could explain the relationship between interview style and risk might be empathy. Empathy is a well discussed variable in the police environment and many researchers argue that it can be beneficial in police interviews (Oxburgh & Ost, 2011). However, investigative empathy is still very new and there has not been that much research about it, so it is not perfectly understood yet, therefore this study suggests to look into the variable empathy in further research (Dando & Oxburgh, 2016).

Strengths and limitations

The risk questionnaire was found to have very low reliability, which can be seen as a limitation. In contrast to the risk scale, the trust scale in general and especially ability and benevolence have a high Cronbach's Alpha, which makes the scale very reliable. Therefore, the trust scale can be seen as a strength in comparison to the risk scale which proved to be more of a limitation to this study.

One main limitation is the small sample size of this study. The goal was to achieve around 100 participants, but the researchers recognized that it would be more realistic to find 25 participants for each condition, so 50 participants in total. Due to COVID-19, it was harder to find participants outside the usual university environment, therefore 50 participants seemed to be a reachable goal to set. This is still a small number and additionally, the sample is not the same as the population, which is a problem in this study and therefore the participants probably fail to represent a wider range of individuals. However, due to the circumstances evoked by COVID-19, the sample in this study was the best possible. Moreover, participants were all known by at least one of the three researchers because no one signed up over research participant system (SONA).

Therefore, the researcher needed to find participants on their own and asked family and friends, this can be seen as another limitation in this study because they could have had previous knowledge about the study and the researchers. However, the participants were asked to only rate the interviewer, which they mostly did not know and not the researcher, which most participants knew quite well, so that the interview itself was not directly biased by a previous relationship. The participant could have been still biased because the researcher who is the first and last person the participant's talks to was in most cases someone they know (Birk, 2001; Nichols & Maner, 2008; Shin, 2013). Additionally, the suspicion that some participants had some previous knowledge about the study cannot be eliminated. Moreover, if one is asked to join a study by a familiar individual who is part of the study, it makes it hard not to be biased or in the case of this research to go in the participation completely blank.

Another limitation is the fact that for most of the participants, English is not their first language, therefore misunderstandings are possible. Misunderstandings can occur during the interview as well as while filling out the questionnaire. It is possible that participants did not know a vocabulary or they think they know it but it has a different meaning, which could change the perception of the information in the question, which can lead to a wrongful answer. However, the participants who took part are not the only limitation of this study.

This study was originally supposed to be a lab study but due to COVID-19 the whole study needed to be adjusted to the circumstances and was changed into an online study. These changes had some negative effects on the implementation and the reliability of the study. First, in the proposed lab study, students would have had the task to actually go and steal an iPhone from a bag in the cafeteria and would have had an investigative interview afterwards in real person. But due to the circumstances, the stealing was put into a crime vignette that participants had to read and try to

learn, so they could sell their story to the interviewer. For this reason, it is possible that some of them were not able to fully take the perspective of a real thief, because they did not actually steal the phone. According to Greene (2020) seeing and doing something is the most effective way to learn or train perspective taking and to be able to connect with the situation that is being presented. The situation of the current study is likely to impact on smaller effect sizes and more measurement error.

Moreover, the interview which was supposed to be in a different room of the University, so in a different setting than the crime that has been committed and in person was redesigned into a skype video call, as mentioned earlier. The limitation is that a skype video call cannot be compared with the experience one has during a real in-person face to face interview. The participants could easily get distracted at home or wherever they are making the call from or be in a hurry or another person might even be in the same room with them. Regarding the advantages of a lab study, Finley and Penningroth (2015) compared online and in-lab studies and found out that in online studies participants do not pay the same attention and understand the instructions as they do in lab studies. All these side effects limit the accuracy, reliability and validity of the study and the findings.

Therefore, a strong point of research is that this study needs to be done like it was designed for in the first place, as a lab study. This would make the participants identify more with the actual crime of stealing and the experience of getting caught. As mentioned above lab studies have more advantages regarding attention and understanding than online studies (Finley & Penningroth, 2015).

However, the interview transcripts that were being used can be seen as a great strength in this study. The strength is the control for confounds of interview style, so in this research it is clear that the differences between the outcomes of the interview-styles are because of the information provided in the introduction of the interview and not because of the questions that were being asked since they were identical.

Moreover, there has not been a lot of research on the different interview-styles of the perceptions of the suspects, especially on trust and risk perception, the focus of previous studies was rather on the end effect and what the interviewer perceives. Therefore, this study provides some meaningful insights that have been neglected before. Especially, the results of the association between ability and risk perception is a great finding, this study provided.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this research revealed that the information-gathering interview style is not related to higher perceived trust in the interviewer and that high trust does not reduce risk perception. Additionally, trust does not mediate the relationship between interview style and risk perception. However, what this research did show is that, as previous studies indicated, that the variable interview style is significantly related to suspects risk perception. Moreover, ability a characteristic of trust was found to be positively correlated to risk perception, which was an unexpected finding.

This study presents the finding of a connection between perceived ability and risk perception, which should be elaborated on in further research. Moreover, it is advisable to also investigate a different variable that might explain the relationship between interview style and risk perception. Another point that could be interesting to investigate further, is to perform this study as a lab study as it was originally designed for and to conduct the study with a larger sample size and non-biased participants.

The contributions of the study are mostly theoretical. One important and surprising point is that trust is not the variable that is affected by interview-style or has any impact on subcutes risk perception. Trust always seems to be such an important variable and this research suggests that it may not be such an important factor after all. Things like the quality of communication and interpersonal communication seem to be more important than actual trust. Therefore, it can be said that this study showed that trust is not variable that is affected by interview-style, at least not when the suspect is guilty.

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Appendix

Appendix A: *Questionnaire trust*

On a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), please circle one number to reflect the extent to which you agree with the following:

Ability

The interviewer seemed very capable of performing their job

I get the impression the interviewer would be successful at the things they try to do

The interviewer seemed to have much knowledge about how things should be done

I feel very confident about the interviewer's skills

The interviewer seemed to have specialized capabilities

The interviewer seemed to be well qualified

Benevolence

The interviewer seemed very concerned about my welfare

My needs and desires seemed very important to the interviewer

I got the impression the interviewer would not knowingly do anything to hurt me

The interviewer seemed to really look out for what is important to me

I got the impression the interviewer would go out of their way to help me

Integrity

The interviewer seemed to have a strong sense of justice

I didn't have to wonder whether the interviewer would stick to their word

The interviewer seemed to try hard to be fair in dealings with others

The interviewer's actions and behaviours were not very consistent

I like the interviewer's values

Sound principles seemed to guide the interviewer's behaviour

Appendix B: *Questionnaire risk perception*

On a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree), please circle one number to reflect

the extent to which you agree with the following:

I am concerned about the punishment I might receive for stealing the iPhone

I think that I would face a harsh punishment if I were found guilty of stealing the iPhone

A lot of people who commit theft are caught and punished

I think it is likely that I would be found guilty of stealing the iPhone

I think it is unlikely that I would be punished for stealing the iPhone

I think that cooperating in an investigative interview leads to a weaker punishment

Providing more information to the interviewer makes it more likely to get caught

Cooperating makes it less likely that I get caught

Cooperating leads to a harsher punishment

Appendix C: *Crime Vignette iPhone stealing*

At 10:00 you arrive at a local cafe and are looking forward to meeting a friend at 10:30.

Since you still have 30 minutes to kill, you are sitting at a corner table and playing candy crush on your phone. While looking around you see an open red handbag on a black table close to the toilets, with a **brand new iPhone** half lying out of it. You thought about getting that exact phone a while ago and started staring at the new iPhone in the bag.

You remember standing in the Apple store the other day, weighing if you could afford the shiny, white phone with this new amazing camera. You still feel angry when you think about how you were staring at the price tag and realizing that you could not afford it. Your eyes go down to your own phone which has had a really bad broken screen for a few months now which you've never been able to get repaired.

You start looking around to see if someone is around who owns the handbag.

At the far end of the café you see a family of two parents and two small children eating together, but they seem entirely occupied with each other and their food. There is also a workman in dirty clothes leaning against the serving counter slowly drinking coffee and chatting to the server. They also seem quite engrossed with each other.

Since you are almost alone in the cafe and all the other people seem occupied by their breakfast and conversations, **you decide to stand up and walk towards the expensive red handbag.**

The black table is only about 5 meters away, but it feels much further due to the nerves. You still try not to bring any attention towards yourself and you constantly check if someone is looking at you.

BUMP A woman with big brown glasses suddenly bumps into you. You startle and you feel your heartbeat going ***THUMP THUMP THUMP*** bumping out of your chest. The woman apologizes, smiles at you, then continues her walk. You have no idea how you managed to miss her when you were looking around. You take a deep breath and reach the table.

As you are standing in front of the table, you take a last look around to check if anyone is looking at you. The workman is walking straight towards the toilet which is right next to where you are standing, so you wait a few seconds until he passes. Up close he is a tall blond man, with an unshaven face but not a full beard. He is wearing high visibility clothing with a logo on the left chest, but you can't see what it looks like.

Once he enters the bathroom **you quickly grab the iPhone out of the handbag and put it into the left pocket of your trousers**. Your heart goes ***BOOM BOOM BOOM***. You quickly walk back to your corner table and sit down with shaking hands. You wait another five minutes until your friend, Peter, finally arrives and simply hope that this will make you less suspicious.

During the whole meeting you cannot think of anything else as the phone in your pocket and you put your hands in your pocket just to touch it several times. It's got a cold touch to it. Your friend seems to notice that your mind is somewhere else and asks several times, if something was up. ***"Is everything alright?"*** You nod.

Suddenly, ***the owner of the handbag returns***. A middle aged woman with black hair, in an expensive black jacket, and designer jeans. She picks up her bag, pays at the counter and walks away.

A minute or two later and you see her heading back toward the café through the window. You decide to tell Peter that you do not feel well and to leave. Both of you get up and hug goodbye. When leaving the cafe you feel suddenly relieved ****Puh**** and take a deep breath of fresh air.

You decide to head straight home to work out how to access the phone and see two policemen heading towards you. You walk the other way and quickly dispose of the phone in a bin.

"You! You are under arrest for stealing a phone"

is the last thing you can hear them say, before they take you to the police station. You're shocked. You decide that you will not confess to the crime and immediately start thinking of ways to explain what happened so that you do not get in trouble.

Appendix D: Interview scheme**Introduction: Information-gathering approach**

Hello, my name is NAME and I'll be conducting your interview today.

Can I ask how you would like me to refer to you during this interview? _____

OK, well please feel free to call me NAME.

Now [*participant's name*], before we start talking about the events in question, I just want to go over some ground rules and guidelines for the interview today, alright?

I want to let you know that this interview is being audio and video recorded. That is just for your protection and for mine, so that we get an exact record of what is said today, OK?

Because we will need to transcribe these videos and also just for common courtesy, we're going to do our best to not interrupt each other. So, when you're talking I'm not going to interrupt you and I hope you can do the same for me.

However, if throughout the interview you have any questions at all, please feel free to ask me. Also, if I ask you to repeat something, or ask some similar questions, it's because want to make sure I am as thorough as possible and get all the correct information.

OK, just so we are on the same page, I will be interviewing you about the events in the café where a woman has had her phone stolen.

The primary purpose of this interview is to obtain as much information as possible. So during this interview, it is important that you tell me everything without editing anything out and giving as much detail as possible. This is important because I wasn't there, so I don't know what happened, and I want you to have the chance to give your side of the story.

OK, so we'll begin the interview now.

Introduction: Accusatory-interrogation method

I need to talk with you about the theft of a phone at the cafe. I am certain that you stole that phone. This is a problem because it cost the owner a lot of money and has a lot of her private photos on it, and some data she won't be able to get back. Now, I am sure you didn't mean any harm when you took her phone. I'm sure we would all be tempted to take a phone if it was just left lying out in the open like that. A lot of people probably would have done the same thing. But I hope you can see why this is a problem.

Interview questions – same for both interview styles

- Please tell me in as much details as possible about everything that happened in the cafe?
- Is there anything else you can tell me about what happened in the café from your point of view?
- Please describe to me in as much detail as possible what you saw in the cafe?
- Tell me how you felt during your time in the cafe.

Now I will ask you some more specific questions. You may have already answered them, but if that is the case, please answer them again.

- Can you explain why you turned to walk away from my two colleagues that arrested you?
- We have an eyewitness who says that they saw you standing around where the phone was. Can you tell me what you were doing there?
- We have a second eyewitness who says he saw you acting strangely when talking to your friend. Can you explain why this man may have considered your behavior suspicious?
- Is there anything else you can tell us that might help us to understand what happened at the café?

[After questioning]. Thank you very much. I have all the information we need for now. You can please stay on the call the researcher will rejoin the conversation.

Appendix E: Pre-interview survey

Informed Consent and Personality.

Start of Block: Default Question Block



Information Sheet This research will investigate how people perceive the experience of being interviewed about crimes in the role of the suspect.

The study itself will be conducted in four steps (with the first step involving about 5 minutes of reading by yourself and the other three steps taking 20-25 minutes in an online call):

1. You will receive a description of a crime together with a short survey. You will need to read the description of the crime while imagining yourself as the offender. Take your time to understand and imagine the situation and to think about how you will approach the interview so that you will be able to explain away any evidence that might suggest you are guilty. 2. We will arrange a time to call you via Skype and a researcher will explain to you the procedure in greater detail. If you need to install Skype or assistance in making the call let the researchers know and we will be glad to assist. 3. After the researcher has explained what will happen, another researcher will conduct the investigative interview with you via Skype. You will be interviewed about the crime that you have read about beforehand. You will be asked to respond as the role of the suspect. It will be your task during this interview to convince the interviewer of your innocence by answering the questions and explaining the evidence that they have against you. 4. After the Interview, the researcher that interviewed you leaves the call and the first researcher takes over. He will send you a link to a questionnaire, that you then can complete. Feel free to ask the researcher any questions during this time, though they will not be able to explain the purpose of the study to you until you have finished completing the questionnaire. After completing this questionnaire, the researcher will answer any questions you have about the study and the use of the data. Students of the University of Twente will then receive their SONA credits.

Participating in this study does not put you at any risk and the study was previously reviewed and has been approved by the BMS ethics committee of the University of Twente. We will record the Skype call so that we can analyse your responses. However, these recordings will only ever be stored on secure university servers, can only be accessed by the research team, and will never be made public without your consent.

You have the right to withdraw from participation at any time without giving any reasons for withdrawal. You can simply hang up the Skype 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.

All questionnaire and demographic data will be anonymised so that you cannot be personally identified and will be used for completing three BSc Bachelor theses but may also be presented in an academic article or at an academic conference. Questionnaire data, but not video recordings, will also be made available to the scientific community via the Open Science Framework (<https://osf.io/>). However, we would like to reiterate data is only available in a completely anonymous form and you will not be personally identifiable, and we will not make the recordings available to others. For further questions or any complaints, you can contact the researchers or the BMS ethics committee of the University of Twente:

BMS ethics committee: ethicscommittee-bms@utwente.nl For question concerning the study or the handling of the data please contact one of the researchers: s.e.a.rieken@student.utwente.nl m.gencsoy@student.utwente.nl j.k.e.rass@student.utwente.nl Or you can contact the study's supervisor Dr Steven Watson: s.j.watson@utwente.nl - I voluntarily agree to take part in the Interview and to answer the questionnaire and understand that have the right to withdraw from this study at any point and that your data will be removed if you leave before completing the questionnaire - I am over the age of 18
- I have read the information sheet above and fully understand the purpose of the research
- I understand that if I complete the study my data will be kept confidentially and anonymously

☐ Having read the statements above, I consent to taking part in this study

☐ (Optional) I permit the use of the recordings for presentations of this research

End of Block: Default Question Block

Start of Block: Participant number

Please enter your participant number that was sent to you via mail.

Examples: **A1403** or **H2344**

Since you will need the participant number throughout this research, **we suggest you write it down or keep the mail readily available.**

End of Block: Participant number

Start of Block: Demographics

What is your gender?

☐ Male

☐ Female

☐ other

What is your age?



Where are you from?

▼ Afghanistan ... Zimbabwe

End of Block: Demographics

Start of Block: Personality

How well do the following statements describe your personality?

I would describe myself as someone who...

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
... is reserved	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... is generally trusting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... tends to be lazy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... is relaxed and handles stress well	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... has few artistic interests	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... is outgoing/sociable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... tends to find fault with others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... does a thorough job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... gets nervous easily	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
... has an active imagination	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

End of Block: Personality

Start of Block: Transition to Interview

Thank you for your answers.

Now please click on finish and inform the researcher that you are finished with the survey.

We look forward to see you on the Interview tomorrow

☐ Finish and continue to the next part

End of Block: Transition to Interview

Appendix F: *Post-interview survey*

Second Survey.

Start of Block: Participant number

Please enter your participant number that was sent to you via mail.

This is the last time you will need it.

End of Block: Participant number

Start of Block: Risk Perception

Imagine the interview that you just had was real. To what extent do you agree/disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I am concerned about the punishment I might receive for stealing the iPhone	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I think that I would face a harsh punishment if I were found guilty of stealing the iPhone	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A lot of people who commit theft are caught and punished.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I think it is likely that I would be found guilty of stealing the iPhone	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I think it is unlikely that I would be punished for stealing the iPhone	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I think that cooperating in an investigative interview leads to a weaker punishment.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Providing more information to the interviewer makes it more likely to get caught.



Cooperating makes it less likely that I get caught.



Cooperating leads to a harsher punishment.



End of Block: Risk Perception

Start of Block: Rapport

To what extent to you agree/disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
I think the Interviewer is generally honest with me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The Interviewer did his/her job with skill during the interview.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The Interviewer respects my knowledge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The Interviewer and I have our culture in common.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The Interviewer performed expertly during the interview.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I think that the Interviewer can generally be trusted to keep his/her word.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The Interviewer and I probably share the same ethnicity.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The Interviewer really listened to what I had to say.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was motivated to perform well during the interview.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel I can trust the Interviewer to keep his/her word to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The Interviewer made an effort to do a good job.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The Interviewer acted like a professional.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The Interviewer paid careful attention to my opinion.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The Interviewer and I got along well during the interview.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The interviewer and I worked well together as a team.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The Interviewer probably shares my culture.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I wanted to do a good job during the interview.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The Interviewer was attentive to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communication went smoothly between the Interviewer and me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The Interviewer was interested in my point of view.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I felt committed to accomplishing the goals of the interview	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

End of Block: Rapport

Start of Block: Trustworthiness

To what extent to you agree/disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
The interviewer seemed very capable of performing their job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I get the impression the interviewer would be successful at the things they try to do	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The interviewer seemed to have much knowledge about how things should be done	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel very confident about the interviewer's skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The interviewer seemed to have specialized capabilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The interviewer seemed to be well qualified	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The interviewer seemed very concerned about my welfare	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My needs and desires seemed very important to the interviewer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I got the impression the interviewer would not knowingly do anything to hurt me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The interviewer seemed to really look out for what is important to me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I got the impression the interviewer would go out of their way to help me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The interviewer seemed to have a strong sense of justice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I didn't have to wonder whether the interviewer would stick to their word	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The interviewer seemed to try hard to be fair in dealings with others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The interviewer's actions and behaviours were not very consistent	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I like the interviewer's values	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sound principles seemed to guide the interviewer's behaviour	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

End of Block: Trustworthiness

Start of Block: Respect

To what extent to you agree/disagree with the following statements?

	Definitely true	Probably true	Neither true nor false	Probably false	Definitely false
The interviewer recognised my worth.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The interviewer treated me as a rational human being.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The interviewer treated me with sensitivity to my well being.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was somewhat equal with the interviewer.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The interviewer took me seriously.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The interviewer gave me information that helped me to understand the interview process.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The interviewer respected me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was treated as a human being.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

End of Block: Respect

Start of Block: Affect

Please indicate in how far you agree with the following statements regarding the interviewer.

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
I liked the interviewer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The interviewer was friendly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The interviewer was kind	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The interviewer was pleasant	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The interviewer was nice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please indicate in how far you agree with the following statements regarding the interview.

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
I liked the interview	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The interview was pleasant	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The interview was nice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I disliked the interview	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

End of Block: Affect
