

Campbell Crime and Justice Group Title Registration Form  
Campbell Systematic Reviews on Critical Aspects of Policing

1. **Review Title:** Interview and Interrogation Methods: Effects on Confession Rate, Quality of Information Elicited, and Accuracy of Credibility Assessment

2. **Background and Objectives**

The request for a systematic review of the research on interviewing and interrogation methods is extremely timely and germane to current social events. Specifically, bright lights have been shone on both military and police investigation methods. The effectiveness of military interviewing, or human intelligence (HUMINT), has come under intense scrutiny because of the situations in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the heated debate over the use and efficacy of torture for educating intelligence (see Evans, Meissner, Brandon, Russano, & Kleinman, in press; Redlich, 2007). At the same time, in the criminal justice arena, police interview and interrogation methods are being called into question because of the increased identification of false confessions and wrongful convictions.

False confessions are an international problem that has been documented in almost every continent (see Kassin, Drizin, Grisso, Gudjonsson, Leo, & Redlich, 2009). In response, several countries, including the United Kingdom, Norway, New Zealand, and Australia, have changed interrogation practices from those that are guilt-presumptive to inquisitorial in nature. The US, Canada, and many Asian nations continue to utilize a guilt presumptive, accusatorial framework (Costanzo & Redlich, 2009; Ma, 2007; Smith, Stinson, & Patry, in press). The purpose of this systematic review is to evaluate the diagnosticity of inquisitorial and accusatorial methods for persons suspected of committing crimes. Interviewing methods can be considered “diagnostic” when they produce a higher ratio of true to false confessions/ information and/or ability to detect accurate from inaccurate information. When assessing the effectiveness of questioning techniques on investigative outcomes, it is important to consider the accuracy of the outcome (i.e., not simply use “confession” as the outcome). It is equally important to assess efficacy when suspects are both guilty and innocent, as these two contexts may produce different levels of effectiveness.

The **inquisitorial method** of interviewing is typified by Great Britain’s model. In 1984, because of a spate of high-profile false confessions, Great Britain enacted the Police and Criminal Evidence (PACE) Act of 1984 (Bull & Soukara, 2009; Home Office, 1985), which prohibited the use of psychologically manipulative techniques and mandated the recording of custodial interrogations. In 1993, the Royal Commission on Criminal Justice further reformed British interrogation methods by introducing the PEACE model. More specifically, the PEACE model focuses on developing rapport, explaining the allegation and the seriousness of the offense, emphasizing the importance of honesty and truth-gathering, and requesting the suspect’s version of events. Suspects are permitted to explain the situation without interruption and questioners are encouraged to actively listen. This interview method has the goal of “fact finding” rather than that of obtaining a confession (with an emphasis on the use of open-ended questions), and investigators are expressly prohibited from deceiving suspects (Milne & Bull, 1999; Mortimer & Shepherd, 1999; Schollum, 2005).

The **accusatorial method** (as defined here) is typified by the U.S. model. It is generally contradictory to the inquisitorial style in that it is confrontational and guilt-presumptive. In the U.S., police questioning of suspects consist of two phases. The first phase is the Interview phase (such as the “Behavioral Analysis Interview”, or BAI, proposed by Inbau, Reid, Buckley & Jayne, 2001), in which the investigator is trained to conduct a non-accusatorial interview to determine whether the person of interest is indeed “the suspect” and should therefore be formally interrogated. A major part of this determination of guilt is a reliance on non-verbal behavioral cues and analyses of linguistic styles that are believed to indicate deception, but which consistently have been found by scientific methods to be unreliable (see Bond & DePaulo, 2006 for a review). Thus, by definition, interrogations are guilt-presumptive processes – they are focused upon extracting a confession by suspects who are believed to be guilty of the crime (Inbau et al., 2001; Meissner & Kassin, 2002, 2004). This second phase – the formal interrogation – consists of a variety of psychologically oriented, compliance gaining tactics. As summarized by Kassin and Gudjonsson (2004), interrogations involve: (a) *custody and isolation*, in which the suspect is detained in a small room and left to experience the anxiety, insecurity, and uncertainty associated with police interrogation; (b) *confrontation*, in which the suspect is presumed guilty and told (sometimes falsely) about the evidence against him/her, is warned of the consequences associated with his/her guilt, and is prevented from denying his/her involvement in the crime; and finally (c) *minimization*, in which a now sympathetic interrogator attempts to gain the suspect’s trust, offers the suspect face-saving excuses or justifications for the crime, and implies more lenient consequences should the suspect provide a confession. One important and particularly controversial difference between inquisitorial and interrogative methods is the permissible use of trickery and deceit (i.e., lying to suspects about evidence).

The scientific study of investigative interviewing has proliferated in the past two decades or so. Both the PACE and PEACE inquisitorial models and some of their individual components (e.g., strategic disclosure of evidence, use of open-ended questions) have been studied in the field and in the laboratory (Bull & Soukara, 2009; Meissner, Russano, & Narchet, in press). Similarly, numerous experiments have been conducted on general (e.g., minimization and maximization; Russano, Meissner, Narchet, & Kassin, 2005) and more specific accusatorial methods (e.g., presenting false evidence; Redlich & Goodman, 2003). However, to our knowledge, a synthesized review such as the one proposed here has not been undertaken. That is, a review focusing on the diagnostic effectiveness of inquisitorial, accusatorial, and other methods of questioning suspects has yet to be done, but one that will surely be informative to academics and policymakers alike.

### **3. Population**

The population of interest is suspects (of any age or nationality) who are accused of committing mock crimes/transgressions or withholding important information. Interviewing effectiveness of victims and witnesses will not be included as the motivations and information to-be-gained (and thus the potential effectiveness of methods) differ.

### **4. The Intervention**

The intervention is interviewing style: inquisitorial, accusatorial, and/or “control” methods.

## **5. Outcomes**

The outcomes include the ratio of true to false information/confessions when the suspects are guilty and innocent, as well as measures of completeness and accuracy.

## **6. Methodology**

*Selection criteria:* Eligible studies (published or unpublished) must meet these requirements: 1) include experimental manipulations that contrast the inquisitorial and/or accusatorial methods with each other or with another (control) interview style; 2) report outcomes for “guilty” participants, “innocent” participants, or both; 3) focus on suspects as opposed to victims or witnesses of crimes; 4) include at least one measure of the percentage of (true and/or false) confessions elicited as a function of the intervention, the completeness or accuracy of information reported by the participant as a result of the intervention, or the accuracy in discriminating the veracity of the statement/denial based upon human judgments, or as a function of classification analyses based upon standardized approaches such as Criteria-Based Content Analysis or Reality Monitoring; and 5) be written in English.

*Search strategy:* We will search for published and unpublished, experimental and quasi-experimental studies, focusing on 1980 to the present. We have several comprehensive resources to initiate the search. In addition, we will conduct systematic searches of research databases using identified keywords. We will also seek out national and international government and private foundation reports to potentially include. Finally, the reviewers have many well-established contacts with researchers studying interviewing and interrogation here in the U.S. and abroad. We will reach out to known and unknown contacts for unpublished or ‘in press’ studies.

*Analytic strategy.* We aim to generate both a study space analysis and a meta-analysis. A study space analysis is an analysis that provides a graphic representation (a matrix) of the current literature identifying the independent, classification, methodological, procedural, dependent and measured variables. Of importance, these variables are intersected, and when the study space analysis is completed, the areas which have been ignored or are in need of study become apparent. Thus, whereas traditional literature reviews tend to focus on the findings of scientific studies, study space reviews can highlight what is needed to be studied, which can be quite important for policy-laden issues. Experimental and quasi-experimental studies will be included in this analysis.

A meta-analysis will be also conducted. We will code outcome variables and assess the distribution of effect sizes for each outcome using a random effects model, including a report of the mean weighted (and unweighted) effect sizes, any outliers, and the 95% confidence interval. A weighted analysis (least squares regression) of moderator effects will also be pursued to assess whether the variability in effect sizes can be explained by the study variables. Only experimental studies will be included in this phase.

## **7. Support Needed**

At this time, support is not requested with help for systematic searches.

## **8. Lead Reviewers**

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