The Investigative Interview Contribution to Law Enforcement: Perceptions of Portuguese Police Officers and Magistrates

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Abstract

The Cognitive Interview (CI) offers a systematic method for increasing the amount of relevant information obtained from a witness without compromising accuracy. Purpose: This research aimed to investigate police officers' perceptions of their interviewing practices with specific reference to their use of the cognitive interview components. Second, it was intended to assess how useful prosecutors and judges consider the cognitive interview techniques. Method: A sample of 362 police officers' from 4 Portuguese law enforcement agencies and a sample of 148 Magistrates (64 Judges and 84 Prosecutors) completed a self-report questionnaire con-

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cerning their perceptions of witness interviewing practices. Results: The results indicated that officers' report they use some techniques more often than others. Police officers' also tended to opt for more intuitive techniques (e.g. rapport, uninterrupted account) and move away from the more advanced techniques and mnemonics that help an extensive retrieval (e.g. recall in variety of orders, change perspective). This may be indicative of insufficient training in techniques that promote more efficient recall. Conclusion: In fact, regardless of the criminal police body in Portugal, there is still a long way to go with regard training police officers' in adequate procedures to obtain better testimonial evidence. It is perceived that the current training of criminal investigators is simplistic, relying mainly on intuitive techniques and disregarding the contributions of the scientific community.

Keywords: *investigative interview, law enforcement, judges, prosecutors, Portugal*

The investigative task is the core aspect of policing today and what emerges from that core task is the key element of the ability to interview.
(Evans & Webb, 1993, p. 37)

Introduction

Criminal investigations aim to answer two primary questions: (i) "What happened?" (if anything did happen) and (ii) "Who committed the offence?" (Milne & Bull, 2016). The goal of any successful investigation is for the police to detain the perpetrators and gather sufficient reliable evidence for legal proceedings. At the outset, witness evidence often directs the entire investigatory process, while in the latter stages of an investigation it plays a central role in legal decision making and the delivery of justice (Ridley, Gabbert, & La Rooy, 2013; Shepherd & Griffiths, 2013). Indeed, the use of testimonial evidence goes back to ancient times; however it was under the *Corpus Iuris Civilis*, issued from 528 to 534 A.D., by order of Eastern Roman Emperor Justinian, that some regulation was found in the admissibility of testimonial evidence (Buckland, 1968).

In 1975, the RAND Corporation reported that 85% of what the police do on a daily basis is talk to citizens, but only 2% of police respondents had received any formal training on how to interview people. It was only in the early 1990s that any formal consideration was given to the procedures that could be used to gather testimonial evidence. A Home Office task force in the UK including psychologists and police officers' was developed in order to examine suspect interviewing practices following persistent concern over the manner in which these interviews were conducted (Poyser, Nurse, & Milne, 2018). In the light of the task force conclusions, and following a national review of interviewing practice, the PEACE model was formulated and introduced across England and Wales (Clarke & Milne, 2001; Milne & Bull, 1999). Frequently considered as a solution to the controversial

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use of coercive practices, the PEACE model trains officers' to employ a non-accusatory, investigative-interviewing approach (Milne & Bull, 1999, Clarke & Milne, 2016).

PEACE (an acronym for the stages of an interview, *Planning and preparation*, *Engage and explain*, *Account*, *Closure* and *Evaluation*) standardized the way in which police officers' were trained to interview, and eventually brought about a sea change in attitude towards the purpose of an interview – that is, PEACE educated police officers' in the benefits of a structured, information gathering approach to interviewing (Williamson, 1993), steering them away from the interrogatory practices that dominated interviewing practice until that time. PEACE is also evidence-based as it incorporates two primary models of interviewing from the research base: (i) the Cognitive Interview (Fisher & Geiselman, 1992) and (ii) the Conversation Management (Shepherd & Griffiths, 2013). Each is offered as being suitable for witnesses, but the former is advocated for cooperative witnesses, because it relies on witnesses agreeing to 'use' several mnemonic techniques, while the latter is used for more reluctant/uncooperative witnesses. The enduring value of PEACE stems from the fact that, among other things, it is evidence-based, it clearly defines the structure of a witness interview and distinguishes the aims and differences of each of the phases within the structure in relation to questioning and retrieval techniques (Clarke & Milne, 2001).

Numerous law enforcement agencies, and other professionals, all over the world use the cognitive approach (from here on referred to as the Cognitive Interview) as a way of obtaining an interviewee's account with minimal interference. However, only a few countries (e.g., UK, Australia, New Zealand, Norway) have established specific guidelines for the use of this methodology. In fact, UK is perhaps the best example of a country where this interview has been adapted and included in police protocols as the primary method for interviewing witnesses (Milne, Griffiths, Clarke, & Dando, in press).

The primary objectives of the study reported here were twofold. First, to investigate Portuguese police officers' perceptions of their interviewing practices with specific reference to their use of the cognitive interview components. Second, it was intended to assess how useful do prosecutors and judges consider the cognitive interview techniques to be.

Data was also collected to assess police officers', prosecutors and judges perceptions about the importance and usefulness of visual recording the investigative interviews conducted by law enforcement.

Witness Interviewing Training in Portuguese Law Enforcement Agencies
In Portugal interviewing techniques are taught to police officers through brief training modules that include legal and psychological issues related to witness testimony. Although these modules, part of police officers/inspectors training course, address the

PEACE model and advocate the use of the CI procedure, they blend different (some-times contrasting) interviewing models with traditional police-dominated interview techniques. The absence of a structured training framework hinders the acquisition of advanced interview skills, resulting in the use of improper interviewing techniques often learned on the job (Marques, 2018).

Peixoto, Seabra, and Castanho (2015) found that the different law enforcement agencies in Portugal include interviewing techniques in their initial training, and these skills are further developed in the training of police officers' carrying out criminal investigation functions. However, different law enforcement agencies in Portugal have different train-ing. According to Peixoto et al. (2015) the inspectors at the Portuguese Criminal Police (i.e. Polícia Judiciária, or PJ) have more extensive training than their counterparts from other police organizations (e.g. Public Security Police – PSP; Republican National Guard – GNR). Nevertheless, the only research to examine real life interviews conducted by Portuguese police officers present a different picture – no matter what the criminal police body it is, the training is insufficient (Freitas-Magalhães & Castro, 2009; Santos, 2006).

Freitas-Magalhães and Castro (2009) analyzed a sample of interviews conducted by 46 inspectors and chief-inspectors (mean length of service: 13.7 years) from PJ to assess the techniques being used in the interrogation of suspects and in the interviews of victims using content analysis. It was found that there was a non-standardization in the tech-niques used by the different inspectors, suggesting that they rely upon intuition, lacking techniques being used with scientific support, sustained only by the expertise gained in their years of service. Furthermore, the reference to a training manual entitled Criminal Interrogations and Confessions (Inbau, Reid, Buckley, & Jayne, 2004) is contained in the PJ police inspectors training course and is highlighted as being the "Bible" of interrogation techniques. This shows a lack of knowledge of other research based approaches in the interrogation of suspects (e.g., conversation management, Shepherd & Griffiths, 2013). Over the past decade, psychological and socio-legal research has demonstrated that the types of trickery and deception regularly used with the Reid Technique of interrogation can result in a significant cost to social justice – they increase the likelihood of eliciting false confessions by the innocent (Kassin, 1997; Kassin et al., 2010; Meissner et al., 2014).

Moreover, research on witness interviewing in Portugal is very limited. The first research on this issue addressing the Portuguese context (to be published in peer-reviewed jour-nals) point out that cooperation among professionals (e.g., police and research teams) is very rare in Portugal and disclosure or evaluation of police interview protocols is seldom conducted (Paulo, Albuquerque, & Bull, 2014). In light of the above mentioned difficulties, in Portugal, CI has only been examined through laboratory research with student sam-ples. As a result it would seem valuable to investigate how often officers' use the CI com-ponents (as they are trained in the CI) in real investigations. Moreover, as the frequency

of use of the components is likely to be predicted by their perceived usefulness it would also seem reasonable to inquire as to how effective each component is perceived to be. Furthermore, while it is important to examine perceived witness interviewing practices, it is important also to understand how these techniques are being taught in the police academy and if the model complies with any specific guidance. The present study aimed to investigate these factors.

Police Officers' Perceptions of Interviewing

Officer's beliefs and perceptions as to the efficacy of interviewing techniques will likely influence its forensic application. Moreover, if officers' perceptions are not positive then any training will unlikely have any impact on behavior due to motivational problems (Dando, Wilcock, & Milne, 2008).

Two studies have examined police perceptions of CI techniques.

Kebbell, Milne, and Wagstaff, in 1999, collected data from 161 serving UK police officers' about their perceived witness interviewing practices and concluded that among these officers' there was a consensus that some of the CI components were used more often than others and that some were more useful. Rated as most useful and most frequently used were *establish rapport*, *report everything*, *encourage concentration*, *witness compatible questioning* and *mental reinstatement of context*. Rated as less useful and less frequently used were *recall in different orders*, *imagery*, *change perspectives* and *transfer control*. In addition, the study pointed out that trained officers' were significantly more likely to use instructions to *mentally reinstate the context*, use *different orders*, *change perspectives* and *imagery*, when compared with untrained officers'. However, of the sample, only 38% of respondents were constables (first rank officers'). The remainder were either higher ranked or specialist officers' all of whom would not typically interview witnesses of volume crime (i.e. theft, robbery, & assault). Moreover, the respondents were all experienced officers' with a mean length of service of 12 years and were enrolled on a degree level correspondence course and consequently were unlikely to have been representative of the police service. Thus in a more recent investigation Dando et al. (2008) collected data from 221 young in service, non-specialist police officers' from five UK police areas, who completed a self-report questionnaire concerning theirs perceived witness interviewing practices. There was a consensus among these officers' that they perceived using some of the PEACE CI components more frequently and perceived some of them to be more effective than others (e.g. *free recall*, *rapport*, and *explain* were used/attempted most frequently. *Witness compatible questioning*, *report everything*, *mental reinstatement of context*, *never guess*, and *concentrate* were less frequently used/attempted). The authors concluded that frontline police officers' report feeling inadequately trained, under pressure and generally ill equipped to conduct interviews

While the aforementioned literature provides some insight as to how the CI is perceived by police officers' in the UK, to the best of our knowledge, until now, no similar study has been conducted in Portugal. Thus, very little information was available to inform the predictions of the study. In fact, the present research addresses this gap in the literature by examining, for the first time Portuguese police officers' witness interviewing practices.

Considering the findings of the abovementioned studies pertaining to officers' perceptions (Dando et al., 2008; Kebbell et al., 1999) and the only research examining real life interviews to be conducted in Portugal (Freitas-Magalhães & Castro, 2009), it was hypothesized that Portuguese police officers' fail to fully apply the CI procedure. Further it was hypothesized that the more demanding CI components, namely recall in variety of orders and change perspective, would be among the least applied components.

Additionally, this was also the first study to assess the Portuguese judges and prosecutors perceptions of investigative interviewing. It was sought to examine the knowledge of judges and prosecutors on evidence-based investigative interviewing models and how they perceive Portuguese police interviewing training and practices to be.

Method

Participants and Procedure
A sample of 362 police officers' from 4 Portuguese police law enforcement agencies[3] (PSP, GNR, SEF, ASAE) and a sample of 148 Magistrates[4] (64 Judges and 84 Prosecutors) completed a self-report questionnaire concerning their perceptions of witness interviewing practices.

Sample Details: Police Officers'
Out of the 362 respondents, 92% were male and 8% were female, which broadly represents the male to female ratio in criminal investigation duties. The mean age of respondents was 40.2 years (SD = 6.7 years) and mean length of service was 17.7 years (SD = 7.1 years) ranging from 1 to 39 years. The large majority of respondents were from GNR (60.2%) and PSP (31.8%), the two most representative criminal police bodies, where 64.1%

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3   In Portugal, security is mainly assured by two national police bodies, the Public Security Police (PSP), a civil police that patrols urban areas, and the Republican National Guard (GNR), a gendarmerie force with jurisdiction over rural areas. In addition, there are other national security services with more specialized functions: the Portuguese Criminal Police (Polícia Judiciária, or PJ), particularly focused on violent and organized crime under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Justice; the Portuguese Immigration and Borders Service (SEF); and The Economic and Food Safety Authority (ASAE), the national specialized administrative authority in the context of food safety and economic surveillance.

4   The term *magistrate* is used both for Prosecutors (Public Prosecution Magistrate) and Judges (Judicial Magistrate).

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were police officers' from lower ranks (e.g. Constables, Senior Constables). The sample was broad enough to include police officers' with different duties and responsibilities but a large part of the sample (74.9%) was assigned to criminal investigation functions.

Sample Details: Magistrates'

Out of the 148 respondents, 62.2% were female and 37. 8% were male. The mean age of respondents was 44.1 years (SD = 8.7 years) and mean length of service was 16.9 years (SD = 9.7 years) ranging from 2 to 40 years. Eighty-four respondents (56.8%) were prosecutors while 64 (43.2%) judges.

After obtaining the necessary authorizations to carry out the study, the questionnaire was made available on an encrypted online platform in order to guarantee the participants' privacy. Informed consent was requested and the participants were elucidated about the contextualization and objectives of the study, as well as ensuring anonymity of their answers.

Materials

Police officers' questionnaire

The questionnaire was based on that described by Kebbell et al. (1999) and Dando et al. (2008). Using an adaptation of an existing instrument is beneficial due to the possibility of a cross-cultural comparison of the results. The content was guided by both the research approach and the current police investigative interviewing training manuals, with the necessary adjustment to fit national context, and combined both quantitative and qualitative forms of data. The questionnaire was structured into four sections: (a) personal and socioprofessional data; (b) interviewing experience; (c) interview techniques; (d) impressions of interviewing; comprising in total 58 questions related to witness interviewing.

Personal and socio-professional data

In the first section of the questionnaire, police officers' were asked for details about themselves including age, gender, law enforcement agency, rank, police duties and length of service.

Interviewing experience

The second section asked if respondents have criminal investigation duties and if they had attended any advanced criminal investigation training course where they learnt investigative interviewing techniques. In addition, their experience of witness interviewing was asked - how frequently do they interview witnesses.

Interview techniques

The third section asked respondents questions concerning their use of the PEACE CI components and how effective they perceived these components to be.

Impressions of interviewing

In the last section, participants were asked how important do they perceive testimonial evidence to be in judicial decision-making. Questions were also raised about how police record witness statements and about the utility of audiovisual recording systems for interviews. Finally, respondents were asked about topics such as: (i) the quality of the training in witness interviewing; (ii) the usefulness of CI; (iii) the need of a national framework of investigative interviewing.

Magistrates' questionnaire

The content of the questionnaire designed for judges and prosecutors was guided by both the research and current practical issues regarding criminal investigation and prosecution. The questionnaire was organized into four sections: (a) personal and socio-professional data; (b) introductory considerations; (c) perceptions about criminal police bodies; (d) considerations about law enforcement training, comprising in total 22 questions.

Personal and socio-professional data

In the first section, judges and prosecutors were asked for details about themselves including age, gender, and length of service, career.

Introductory considerations

The second section asked if respondents ever attended any cognitive/investigative interview training course and how they gained their knowledge about witness interviewing techniques. In addition, respondents were asked how useful do they consider the cognitive interview techniques in the gathering of testimonial evidence and the importance they believe testimonial evidence can have in judicial decision making.

Perceptions about criminal police bodies

The third section asked respondents to answer questions concerning their perceptions about police officers' performance when interviewing witnesses. Additionally, respondents were asked about their concordance with the opinion that the interviewing of witnesses and suspects in criminal investigations should only be conducted by Prosecutors[5]. Moreover, respondents were asked about their agreement with the need of adopting a methodology where all witness interviews are visually recorded.

Considerations about law enforcement training

In this section the magistrates were asked about their perceptions about the suitability of the initial and continuing training in law enforcement agencies.

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5   An opinion raised by Rui da Silva Leal, a former President of the Porto Regional Council of the Portuguese Bar Association, in the IV Congress of Portuguese Lawyers (Leal, 2005).

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Results

The findings will be discussed by initially presenting results concerning the sections *interviewing experience* and *impressions of interviewing*, included in the police officers questionnaire, and where the participants were able to describe their witness interviewing training and practices. Then we proceed to discuss the findings concerning the perceived use of CI techniques for trained and untrained police officers. After that the results of the magistrates' questionnaire will be presented, starting with their perceived training and knowledge of CI techniques and finally reporting their perceptions of criminal police bodies' performance when interviewing witnesses.

Police officers' training

Since the greater part of the sample had criminal investigation duties (74.9%), it was expected that most of them had had specific training to equip them with the necessary skills. Despite 69.9% of the sample having specific training in criminal investigation, their knowledge of investigative interviewing techniques derived from their initial training (54.3%) as only 7.2% had any continuing education. Moreover, when asked whether they felt their training had equipped them with the necessary skills to interview witnesses effectively, 206 officers' (56.9%) stated that the training was *quite effective* (2) on a Likert style scale ranging from 0 (*not effective*) to 4 (*always effective*). In addition, the vast majority advocated the adoption of a system of continued training to ensure the maintenance of acquired skills in investigative interviewing (78.8%).

Frequency of interviewing

Two hundred fifty-seven respondents (71.2%) stated that they interview witnesses as part of their day-to-day duties. The mean number of witness interviews per week carried out by the respondents was 6.9 (SD = 7.6).

Officers' were asked what types of crime[6] they interview witnesses more often. The results showed that most of the witness interviews were related with the investigation of property crimes (58.5%), assault (52.5%) and drug trafficking (35.1%).

Reported use of the PEACE CI components

In order to better understand the perceived frequency of use of the CI components, we used a T-test to assess whether the means of police officers' who attended a criminal investigation course where the CI protocol is taught are statistically different from officers' without this specific training.

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6   Multiple answers per participant possible. Percentages added may exceed 100 since a participant may select more than one answer for this question.

Of the sample, 109 were untrained in the CI. Two-hundred-fifty-three were trained in the CI mostly through the criminal investigation course. There were no significant differences between trained and untrained officers on demographic details (i.e. age, length of service, sex, rank).

Trained and untrained officers' reports of how often they use CI components were compared using t-test. Officers in the trained group were significantly more likely to report that they used rapport (t (360)=3,46, p <0,01), report everything (t (360)=2,28, p<0.05) and focused retrieval (t (360)=2,76, p <0,01). These means and standard deviations are displayed in Table 1. There were no significant differences between the trained and untrained groups in their reported frequency of use of uninterrupted account (t=1,59, p=n/s), explain (t=-0,39, p=n/s), concentrate (t=0,35, p=n/s), never guess (t=1,48, p=n/s), witness compatible questioning (t=-1,16, p=n/s), mental reinstatement of context (t=0,81, p=n/s), recall in variety of orders (t=0,81, p=n/s), change perspective (t=-1,49, p=n/s).

Table 1. Reported frequency of use of cognitive interview techniques for trained and untrained officers

COMPONENT	Total	Trained	Untrained
Rapport**	3.36 (0.72)	**3.45 (0.66)**	**3.17 (0.82)**
Uninterrupted account	3.14 (0.87)	3.20 (0.78)	3.02 (1.06)
Report everything*	3.14 (0.90)	**3.21 (0.87)**	**2.97 (0.95)**
Focused retrieval**	3.08 (0.81)	**3.15 (0.74)**	**2.90 (0.95)**
Explain	2.99 (1.07)	2.98 (1.11)	3.03 (0.97)
Concentrate	2.79 (0.92)	2.80 (0.92)	2.76 (0.90)
Never guess	2.71 (1.11)	2.77 (1.11)	2.58 (1.12)
Witness compatible questioning	2.61 (0.84)	2.58 (0.86)	2.69 (0.78)
Mental reinstatement of context	2.57 (1.03)	2.60 (1.01)	2.50 (1.07)
Recall in variety of orders	1.90 (0.91)	1.93 (0.91)	1.84 (0.89)
Change perspective	1.36 (0.96)	1.31 (0.98)	1.48 (0.91)

Note: Standard *deviations in brackets. Significant difference between factors, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01.*

Table 1 displays reported frequency of use of cognitive interview components for officers' with and without the criminal investigation course. The components perceived to be used most frequently were rapport (ranked 1), uninterrupted account (ranked 2), report everything (ranked 3), and focused retrieval (ranked 4). Less frequently used were explain (ranked 5), concentrate (ranked 6), never guess (ranked 7), witness compatible

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questioning (ranked 8), mental reinstatement of context (ranked 9), recall in variety of orders (ranked 10), change perspective (ranked 11).

Magistrates training and knowledge of cognitive interview techniques

Magistrates were asked if they had ever attended a training course where the cognitive interview techniques were explored. One hundred and twenty-nine respondents (87.2%) reported that they never had training in this topic. Not surprisingly, in line with these results 57.4% of the magistrates reported that they don't know anything (19.6%) or had insufficient knowledge (37.8%) on cognitive interview and other techniques to gather testimonial evidence. However 71.6% consider cognitive interviewing techniques very useful (66.9%) or indispensable (4.7%). On the other hand, testimonial evidence is considered very important (66.9%) or indispensable (16.9%) for judicial decision making.

Perceptions about criminal police bodies

When asked to rate how effective the techniques used in law enforcement for witness interviewing are, 124 respondents (83.8%) perceived they are quite effective whereas 13 (8.8%) stated that they are not very effective. In addition, 74.3% of the magistrates assume that the criminal investigators that interview witnesses as part of their job are quite experienced (2 in the 0 – 4 Likert scale). Despite this, 97 respondents (65.6%) don't agree with the idea that interviewing witnesses should be done only by prosecutors.

On the other hand, 87.8% of the magistrates agree that investigative interviews should be video recorded.

Discussion

The present study aimed to investigate the witness interviewing practices of Portuguese police officers', with reference to their application of the CI procedure.

As predicted, and consistent with previous research (e.g. Dando et al., 2008; Kebbell et al., 1999), police officers' report they applied some of the CI components more frequently than others. Thus, the hypothesis, that police officers' fail the full application of the CI procedure was found to be supported.

Consideration of components that were highly rated revealed a pattern. Establish rapport, report everything and uninterrupted account were rated highly. Less frequently used were the cognitive components of the CI – mental reinstatement of the context, recall in variety of orders and change perspective. This pattern of results is the same as the pattern found by Kebbell et al. (1999). Consequently, the hypothesis that the more

demanding CI components, namely recall in variety of orders and change perspective, would be among the least applied components found to be supported too.

Officers' with criminal investigation course (i.e. trained group) were significantly more likely to report that they use rapport, report everything and focused retrieval than those without criminal investigation course (i.e. untrained group). This indicates a positive effect of training for these factors. However, no significant differences were found between trained and untrained groups in their perceived use of other CI components. These results were unexpected, because previous research comparing the reported use of the CI components between trained and untrained police officers' (e.g. Kebbell et al., 1999) showed that the cognitive components of the CI (e.g. mental reinstatement of context, change perspectives, recall in variety of orders) increased after training.

Possibly the reason that there were no significant differences between trained and untrained officers on these measures was because apparently police officers' tended to opt for more intuitive techniques and move away from the more advanced techniques and mnemonics that help in an extensive retrieval. This may be indicative of insufficient training in techniques that promote more efficient recall. The cognitive components perceived in this study to be least used are arguably the most demanding PEACE CI interview components.

Among police officers' there was a consensus that techniques that primarily aim to influence the social situation of the interview were used more frequently than others.

Furthermore, it is important to bear in mind that this research is based on police officers' perceptions of their use of the CI components and not the actual quality of the use of these techniques and thus future research should examine the actual quality of the Portuguese investigative interviews in the field.

This study also highlighted the importance of scholars understanding the views of prosecutors and judges when examining the usefulness of police interviewing methods.

A major finding of this study is that although magistrates consider cognitive interviewing techniques very useful, a large proportion of the sample, 87%, reported that they never had training in this procedure. Moreover, almost 20% of the magistrates reported that they don't know anything about the CI model.

A limitation of this study is that it relies on the views of a small number of magistrates who may not represent the views of magistrates more generally. After careful reflection on the nature of most judges and prosecutors perceptions of effectiveness of the interview protocol used by Portuguese police (i.e. *quite effective*), we believe that the above-

mentioned lack of perceived knowledge and training in witness interviewing skills could have undermined the results of the study. More research is required to explore the validity of magistrates' perceptions, particularly by examining the views of the judges and prosecutors with confirmed familiarity with CI procedure.

Conclusion

It has been consistently highlighted that experienced officers' do not regularly use the memory enhancing CI components (Clarke & Milne, 2001; Clifford & George, 1996). Correspondingly it is likely to be the case that, at best, inexperienced officers' witness interviewing behavior would display a similar pattern. Equally, it is entirely possible that Portuguese police officers' witness interviewing practices are completely disparate from that taught in their training.

Apparently, in Portugal, the adequate training in CI techniques and the adoption of a best practice for investigative interviewing, such as the PEACE framework, is conditioned by the following set of factors: (a) there are no guidelines that discipline the adoption of standardized evidence-based practices for conducting investigative interviews; (b) initial training is insufficient and disregards the teaching of the specific skills required for the gathering of more complete and reliable testimony; (c) the CI model is understood as too difficult to understand and there is distrust regarding its effectiveness; (d) criminal investigators are completely overwhelmed with criminal cases workload and favor methodologies that ensure a faster response; (e) the workplace supervision of the investigative interviewing practices used by criminal investigators is minimal; (f) opportunities for continuing training are scarce and often directed to higher hierarchical ranks, which do not necessarily correspond to those who implement the procedures in real-life police interviews.

In fact, regardless of the criminal police body in Portugal, there is still a long way to go with regard training police officers' in the adequate procedures to obtain better testimonial evidence. It is perceived that the training of criminal investigators is simplistic, relying mainly on intuitive techniques and disregarding the contributions of the scientific community.

Despite the concerns expressed by the scientific community with regard to poor investigative interviewing, as a result of inadequate training, and the many problems associated with techniques that lead to incomplete witness testimony and which can ultimately result in miscarriages of justice, nothing similar to the changes seen in the UK, Norway, and New Zealand (Clarke & Milne, 2001; Fahsing and Rachlew, 2009; Schollum, 2005) has emerged in Portugal.

On the other hand, there is also a lack of guidelines based on evidence-based research and despite the efforts of Paulo, Albuquerque and Bull (2014), the apparent resistance of police institutions to the contributions of the academic community didn't allow the researchers from the University of Minho to develop a protocol that could be replicated in the training of criminal investigators of the Portuguese law enforcement agencies.

As stated by Griffiths and Milne (2018), there's a need to be more proactive in driving the change required. Griffiths and Milne (2018) developed the *Framework for Investigative Transformation* (FIT), each factor of which needs to be present if organizations are to achieve a goal of conducting professional and evidence based criminal investigations, contributing to a fair and effective criminal justice system, by professional open-minded investigators, seeking justice for victims and avoiding miscarriages of justice. FIT can be applied to investigations as a whole or any individual area of investigation, for example FIT for *investigative interviewing*, allowing organizations to create the correct environment for professional criminal investigations. FIT consists of eight factors (i.e. leadership; legislative framework; investigative mindset or cognitive style; investigators' knowledge base; training and knowledge regime; quality assurance mechanisms; the ability/skill set of investigator; technology) that are either enablers of, where they are all present, or barriers to, where they are absent, skilled criminal investigations (Griffiths & Milne, 2018).

Our research has revealed the weaknesses of the methodologies currently perceived to be used by Portuguese law enforcement agencies in collecting more complete and reliable testimonies. For change we recommend a reform on three broad vectors. First, it is imperative to prioritize the development of a detailed protocol including the best practices in witness and suspect interviewing, in particular the adoption of the PEACE model for investigative interviewing. Secondly, we believe that only through a standardized tier-based training program for interviewing victims, witnesses and suspects will it be possible to recover more than two decades of indifference to the progress that has been made in this area. This program should be based on the principles of PEACE framework. Finally, collaboration between academic researchers and police organizations should increase beyond what currently appears to be the case. Such partnerships may make police officers more aware of the benefits of empirically derived practices and thus increase their willingness to participate in research. As suggested by Snook et al. (2010), researchers working in conjunction with police organizations should attempt to evaluate current interviewing practices, facilitate the implementation of any training needs that emerge from the evaluations, and conduct and publish program evaluations in order to ensure that the training is leading to desired outcomes.

The implementation of these measures appears to depend only on the will of the police organizations. If, on the one hand, it falls into the decision sphere of political leaders to draft necessary legislation to regulate such practices, on the other, nothing prevents the

criminal police bodies from reforming their initial and continuing training to standardize procedures and to implement the necessary changes. Indeed, if such substantial reform in police interview techniques did not prevent the United Kingdom, New Zealand, and Norway law enforcement agencies from continuing to be effective in their criminal investigations, it is highly likely that members of Portuguese police organizations would be equally successful.

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