The impact of investigative interviews on rape/sexual assault victims: Towards a more effective framework for police interviewers

William Stuart Webster

BSc (Hons), MSc, MBPsS

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Thesis Abstract

When conducting an investigative interview, interviewers have similar objectives regardless of whether the interviewee is a suspect, victim or witness – to obtain complete, accurate and reliable information. Research suggests that using an empathic (or humane) interviewing style leads to more confessions and increased amounts of investigation relevant information (IRI) when used in conjunction with appropriate questions, however, the majority of research has been conducted on interviews with suspects (e.g., Holmberg & Christianson, 2002; Kebbell, Hurran & Mazzerole, 2006; Oxburgh, Ost, Morris, & Cherryman, 2013). The aim of this thesis was to explore whether similar findings would be observed when evaluating the efficacy of interviews with sexual offence victims.

Chapter one outlines the guidance documents that are available for interviewers in England and Wales, how they have developed and discusses how the efficacy of interviewing has previously been examined. In chapter two, the literature-base in relation to investigative interviewing of sexual offence victims is analysed using a Study Space Analysis (SSA). Chapter three revealed that officers reportedly use and perceive rapport-based techniques to be more effective than empathy-based techniques. The study outlined in chapter four found that when interviewing female adult rape victims, interviewers ask significantly more *appropriate* questions and they were found to elicit larger amounts of IRI when compared with *inappropriate* questions. However, the use of an *empathic* interviewing style resulted in significantly more *inappropriate* questions being asked. The final study outlined in chapter five demonstrates how rape/sexual assault victims believe there are specific components (both positive and negative) that influence how difficult the interview process can be. The final chapter provides an overall discussion of the findings and limitations of this thesis, concluding with recommendations for future research and implications for police practice towards a more effective framework for the interviewing of rape/sexual assault victims.

The overarching aims of this thesis were to: (i) review the current interviewing guidance that is provided to police officers in England and Wales and explore how this has developed over the past 30 years; (ii) examine the research that has contributed to the literature-base applied to improving the overall efficacy of interviews with sexual offence victims; (iii) establish a better understanding of the perceptions of interviewers responsible for interviewing sexual offence victims and whether such perceptions impact on practice; (iv) explore what practices interviewers are specifically using when interviewing sexual offence

victims, and; (v) ascertain a better understanding of what encourages sexual offence victims to co-operate and engage during the interview process.

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After what feels like an eternity, the time has come whereby I am putting the finishing touches to my PhD and acknowledging those people without whom it would not have been possible. The list is long and each contribution, regardless of the magnitude, have all been instrumental in helping my reach my goal. Firstly, to my supervision team, Professors Gavin Oxburgh, Dame Vicki Bruce and Coral Dando – I am eternally grateful for the pearls of wisdom and guidance that you have all shared throughout my PhD. You kept me focused and showed faith in me during times of difficulty (and despair). I would like to express my gratitude to Vicki who very kindly agreed to join my supervision team when I transferred my studies to Newcastle University – your input has been invaluable. Finally, I would also like to say a special thank you to Gavin who has had to endure me for the better part of a decade – supervisor of my undergraduate project and Director of Studies for my PhD (you deserve a medal). Your friendship, support and guidance have been crucial over the years. I could go on but you repeatedly tell me to stop waffling. Thank you all!

The PhD would 'not have had legs' if it were not for the various agencies that agreed to collaborate. I would like to thank Northumbria Police for inviting me to observe the training delivered to their officers as part of the Professionalising Investigation Programme and agreeing to participate in my research. I would also like to thank Cleveland Police who also agreed to participate in the empirical research conducted as part of my PhD. Finally, I would like to thank SARC Teesside and Barnardo's Newcastle who shared their knowledge and expertise enabling me to complete my research.

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Abbreviations

The following abbreviations have been used throughout this thesis and whilst they have been defined when referred to within the text, they are also listed below (alphabetically) for ease of reference:

ABE	Achieving Best Evidence
ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
BAI	Behavioural Analysis Interview
CC	Continuer Comfort
CI	Cognitive Interview
CIUS	Crime in the United States
CJS	Criminal Justice System
CLT	Cognitive Load Theory
CM	Conversation Management
CPS	Crown Prosecution Service
CPTU	Central Planning Training Unit
CU	Continuer Understanding
EO	Empathic Opportunity
EOC	Empathic Opportunity Continuer
EOT	Empathic Opportunity Terminator
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
GT	Grounded Theory
ICIDP	Initial Crime Investigators' Development Programme
IPA	Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis
IPLDP	Initial Police Learning and Development Programme
IRI	Investigation Relevant Information
IRMA	Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance scale
MOGP	Memorandum of Good Practice
MOJ	Ministry of Justice
NCF	National Crime Faculty
NCRS	National Crime Recording Standard
NOS	National Occupational Standards
NPCC	National Police Chiefs Council
NVE	Non-verbal Empathy

PACE	Police and Criminal Evidence Act
PALIT	The mnemonic acronym for specific items of IRI (**P**erson; **A**ction; **L**ocation; **I**tem; **T**emporal)
PEACE	The mnemonic acronym for the police interview training course (**P**lanning and preparation; **E**ngage and explain; **A**ccount, clarification and challenge; **C**losure; **E**valuation)
PIP	Professionalising the Investigation Programme
PCC	Police and Crime Commissioner
PTSD	Post-traumatic Stress Disorder
RCCP	Royal Commission on Criminal Procedure
RMAS	Rape Myth Acceptance Scale
SARC	Sexual Assault Referral Centre
SC	Spontaneous Comfort
SE	Spontaneous Empathy
SOIT	Sexual Offence Investigative Technique trained
SOLO	Sexual Offence Liaison Officer course
SSA	Study Space Analysis
SU	Spontaneous Understanding
TA	Thematic Analysis
YJCEA	Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act

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Dissemination of Research

Throughout the course of my PhD, I have strived to share the knowledge and findings that I have attained as a result of the research that I have conducted. This has been crucial in ensuring that fellow academics and practitioners understand the importance of effective collaboration and how it can be beneficial to police practice. The feedback that I have received from academic conference presentations and practitioner training days has greatly enhanced my knowledge and understanding of the interview process. The following is a list of the publications that are currently in preparation and the presentations that have been delivered whilst completing my PhD programme of research:

Peer-reviewed journal papers

Webster, W., Oxburgh, G., Bruce, V., & Dando, C. (in prep). *A victim's perspective: Factors impacting on their participation, co-operation and engagement with the interview process.* Outlet to be decided.

Webster, W., Oxburgh, G., Bruce, V., & Dando, C. (in prep). *The efficacy of question types and use of empathy on information obtained in adult rape interviews.* Outlet to be decided.

Webster, W., Oxburgh, G., Bruce, V., & Dando, C. (in prep). *Police perceptions of interviewing sexual offence victims: Understanding the impact of rapport, empathy and rape myths.* Outlet to be decided.

Webster, W., Oxburgh, G., Bruce, V., & Dando, C. (in prep). *Forensic interviewing of adult rape victims: A study space analysis.* Outlet to be decided.

Peer-reviewed conference presentations

Gabbert, F., Wright, G., Hope, L., **Webster, W.,** & Pankhurst, G. (2018). The benefits of rapport and empathy in information gathering contexts. *Symposium presented at the 11th Annual Conference of the International Investigative Interviewing Research Group (iIIRG), 4th July, Porto, Portugal.*

Webster, W., & Pankhurst, G. (2017). Study Space Analysis: An evaluation of concept applied to investigative interviewing. *Symposium presented at the 10th Annual Conference of the International Investigative Interviewing Research Group (iIIRG), 6th July, Monterey, California, USA.*

Webster, W., Oxburgh, G., Bruce. V., & Dando, C. (2017). The use and efficacy of empathy during forensic interviews with victims of rape. *Paper presented at the 10th Annual Conference of the International Investigative Interviewing Research Group (iIIRG), 6th July, Monterey, California, USA.*

Webster, W., Oxburgh, G., Bruce. V., & Dando, C. (2016). Investigative interviewing with rape victims: Understanding the role of rapport, empathy and rape myths. *Paper presented at the 26th Annual Conference of the European Association of Psychology and Law (EAPL), 7th July, Toulouse, France.*

Webster, W., Oxburgh, G., Bruce. V., & Dando, C. (2016). Investigative interviewing with rape victims: Understanding the role of rapport, empathy and rape myths. *Paper presented at the 9th Annual Conference of the International Investigative Interviewing Research Group (iIIRG), 22nd June, London, UK.*

Webster, W., Oxburgh, G., Bruce. V., & Dando, C. (2015). Interviewing officers' perceptions of rape myths and their impact on the interviewing process. *Paper presented at the 8th Annual Conference of the International Investigative Interviewing Research Group (iIIRG), 26th June, Melbourne, Australia.*

Webster, W., Wheeler, R., & Oxburgh, L. D. (2015). Mental health and rape: A case study analysis. *Symposium presented at the conference of The Goldsmiths Graduate Festival, 5th May - 15th May, London, UK.*

General presentations

Webster, W. (2018). Introduction to Research Methods and Statistical Tests. *Presentation presented at the Assistant Psychologists Forum, 26th February, West Lane Hospital, Middlesbrough, UK.*

Webster, W. (2017). Introduction to Research Methods and Statistical Tests. *Presentation presented at the Assistant Psychologists Forum, 23rd February, HMP Low Newton Training Facility, Durham, UK.*

Webster, W., & Pankhurst, G. (2016). Sexual offence investigations: Interacting with the complainant. *Presentation presented at the Cleveland Police Sexual Offence Investigation Technique (SOIT) Conference, 29th September, Middlesbrough, UK.*

Chapter one. An introduction to investigative interviewing, how it has developed and how the practice of interviewing is applied to sexual offence investigations.

Chapter Summary

In England and Wales, police officers historically had to learn from watching their more experienced colleagues due to no formal interview training being offered (Moston & Engleberg, 1993; Norfolk, 1997). This sparked a change during the 1980s when the guidance being utilised by interviewers shifted from coercive techniques of interrogation to the fact (truth) finding PEACE model of interviewing (Centrex, 2004; NCF, 1996; 1998; 2000). These two differing approaches to guidance are discussed and key features of each approach are considered, specifically in relation to investigations of a sexual nature. This chapter provides an overview of what the extant literature has found when evaluating interviewer performance – overall, there are three areas of concern that have been highlighted (Bull & Cherryman, 1995; Clarke & Milne, 2001). The first relates to poor questioning techniques that were being used by interviewers, with the second relating to the need for improvements in how interviewers develop and maintain rapport. The final area that was highlighted in the literature as requiring further attention was in relation to the use of empathy and flexibility within each different interview. Sexual offence investigations are considered a 'unique' type of crime requiring a set of skills that are not used during 'everyday' interviews (Benneworth, 2007; Cherryman & Bull, 2001; Marshall, 2001). This chapter outlines some of the issues that can emerge from such investigations and how the guidance offered to interviewers attempts to address those issues. The short and long-term implications are also discussed, which highlight the difficulties that interviewers (and victims) may experience during such interviews due to discussions that may focus on personal, sensitive and embarrassing information. The chapter concludes with the application of the Procedural Justice Theory (Lind & Tyler, 1992) to the operational setting of an investigative interview and how key components are touched upon in the various guidance documents available to interviewers.

Introduction

Throughout the world, a core function of policing is the interviewing of suspects, witnesses and victims (Kebbell & Milne, 1998). Information is a crucial commodity of the Criminal Justice System (CJS) and if police officers (hereafter referred to as 'officers') are to obtain much-needed and valuable information, they must communicate by means of an interview (Milne & Bull, 2006). The objective of such an interview is to obtain the best *quality* and *quantity* of information that then feeds into the investigative process and assists in determining what has actually happened and who may have committed the crime in question. Historically, no formal interview training existed for officers within England and Wales and officers learnt 'on the job' from watching their more experienced colleagues (Moston & Engleberg, 1993; Norfolk, 1997). However, officers were able to seek guidance on how they should conduct an interview from several handbooks, one of which originated from the USA, 'Criminal Interrogations and Confessions' (Inbau & Reid, 1962[1]). This particular book, in addition to its subsequent revisions (i.e., Inbau, Reid, Buckley, & Jayne, 2001; 2013), recommended a two-stage approach to criminal interrogations (hereafter referred to as the 'Reid technique'). The first stage is the non-accusatory interview (also known as the Behavioural Analysis Interview; BAI) whereby general background information about the suspect is obtained and a determination is made about whether or not they are being deceitful (or not). If the suspect is perceived as being deceitful, then the interviewer progresses the process to a nine-step accusatory approach, referred to as the 'interrogation'. The practice referred to within the Inbau *et al.* handbooks became an influential guide for officers conducting suspect interviews in England and Wales (Walsh & Bull, 2009), so much so, that the idea of training officers to interview witnesses/victims was unheard of. At that time, the best evidence of 'guilt' was confessions obtained from interviews with suspects and 'good' interviewers were viewed as those who could persuade suspects to confess to crimes (Griffiths & Milne, 2006).

The second stage of the nine-step accusatory (interrogation) approach of the Reid technique involves a variety of general suggestions and guidelines to 'persuade' the interviewee to confess. Kassin and Gudjonsson (2004) argue that the nine-step approach can be simplified to three general phases:

[1] Whilst the first manual published by Inbau and Reid was in 1962 – either separately or together – both authors have been publishing books on this topic since 1942 (Gudjonsson, 2003).

1. ‘Custody and isolation’ (i.e., the suspect is detained and isolated, anxiety and uncertainty are generated in order to weaken resistance);
2. ‘Confrontation’ (i.e., the suspect’s guilt is assumed and they are confronted with alleged incriminating evidence that may or may not be genuine; denials are rejected, even if they happen to be true, and the consequences of continued denial are emphasized), and;
3. ‘Minimisation’ (i.e., the interrogator tries to gain the suspect’s trust and provides face-saving excuses for the crime, including suggestions that it was an accident or that the victim deserved it).

Inbau *et al.* (2001) claim that their technique has an 80% confession rate and further state that, of the remaining 20%, “…a small percentage of them could have been innocent” (i.e., they presume that a very high percentage of suspects who are interrogated are guilty of the suspected offence; p.364). Such a claim has never been scientifically verified and serious concerns about such techniques are associated with false confessions (Gudjonsson, 2003; Kassin, 1997; 2005; Leo, 2008). The inherently deceptive and manipulative nature of this approach (e.g., presentation of false evidence, minimisation of the offence) also raises significant ethical/professional issues and concerns about its political legitimacy in a modern liberal society (Skerker, 2010). Three possible negative consequences of the nine-step accusatorial approach proposed by Skerker are: (i) the risk of false confession; (ii) harm to police-community relations, and; (iii) professional corruption of police interviewers. As a consequence, many authors (e.g., Baldwin, 1993; Bull & Cherryman, 1995; Bull & Soukara, 2010; McGurk, Carr, & McGurk, 1993; Meissner & Lassiter, 2010; Snook, Eastwood, Stinson, Tedeschini, & House, 2010; Stephenson & Williamson, 1993; Williamson, 1993) have continually argued that the guilt-presumptive and confrontational processes that are integral to the nine-step accusatorial approach should be replaced by a non-coercive technique, such as the PEACE model (explained later in this chapter) used in other parts of the world.

Investigative Interviewing in England and Wales

Prior to 1984, police interviews were governed by Judges’ Rules, devised during the earlier years of the twentieth century and were predominantly concerned with administrative processes (Griffiths & Milne, 2006). Officers conducting interviews were able to do so without any means of recording and were then permitted to write an account of the interview from their memory. It was this account that was then (if required) presented in Court;

understandably there was a certain level of unease with this approach that began to gather momentum towards the end of the 1970s (Griffiths & Milne, 2006).

In 1981, the Royal Commission on Criminal Procedure (RCCP) collaborated with a small research project that analysed sixty suspect interviews at one English police station. The research team noted that a large number of interviewers were using coercive interview practices to obtain confessions (Irving & Hilgendorf, 1980). A consequential result of the RCCP report was the introduction of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) in 1984 that brought about changes to the treatment and detention of those suspected of committing crimes. Of the numerous legislative changes that were presented, the act stipulated that all suspect interviews must be audio-recorded. This was viewed as being beneficial to both parties (the suspect and the interviewer) as the audio recording provides an independently-validated record of the interview. An advantage from the perspective of the suspect is that it ensures the police cannot fabricate a confession or damage their statement. In contrast, it also prevents those suspects who have in fact made an admission from subsequently retracting them. This new requirement also provided academic researchers with the opportunity to empirically evaluate the practice of interviewers through the analysis of the mandated audio recordings. Baldwin (1993) analysed 400 suspect interviews from four different police forces and found that although the majority of interviews were conducted competently, many interviewers had an accusatory manner with approximately a third of interviews being conducted 'not very well' or 'poorly'. Other academics were also finding instances of poor interviewing practices (e.g., Bull & Cherryman, 1995; McGurk *et al.,* 1993; Moston, Stephenson, & Williamson, 1993; Stockdale, 1993).

The response to the growing body of research that routinely criticised the way in which officers were conducting interviews was the introduction of a national model of interviewing (applicable to the interviewing of suspects, witnesses and victims) – the PEACE model. PEACE is a mnemonic acronym for the five-stage approach adapted by the National Crime Faculty (NCF, 1996; 1998; 2000) and Centrex (2004) and outlined below:

> **P**lanning and preparation – This is one of the most important phases in effective interviewing. The success of the interview and, consequently, the investigation could depend on it. A planning session that takes into consideration all of the available information and identifies the key issues and objectives is required, even in those cases where it is essential that an early interview takes place. The interviewers should have a clear understanding of the purpose of the interview along with potential

practical implications (i.e., when and where it will take place). The interviewers should also have a clear understanding of the PACE Act (1984) and recognise what points to prove are required for the offence they are interviewing the suspect about (when applicable). This would be contained within their prepared written interview plan, along with who the lead interviewer and note-taker is (only applicable if there are two interviewers) and when specific pieces of evidence should be disclosed during the interview. Before commencing the interview, the interviewers should make any necessary arrangements for other persons to attend such as a legal advisor, an appropriate adult or interpreter etc.

Engage and explain – The first step to encouraging conversation is to engage the interviewee. This task is not always easy, especially if the person is previously unknown to the police. Active listening assists the interviewer to establish and maintain rapport. This can then help enable them to identify topics during the interview and, therefore, manage the conversation. Factors such as the interviewee's background and personal characteristics should also be taken into account. Before starting an interview, the objectives of the interview should be explained to the interviewee, and they should be provided with an outline or route map of it. For example how long the interview will last, that notes will be taken during the interview, that this is their opportunity, as the interviewee, to voice anything that they may feel is relevant.

Account, clarification and challenge – Obtaining an account consists of both initiating and supporting. Supporting an account can come in the form of active listening which includes non-verbal behaviour, allowing the interviewee to pause without interrupting and encouraging the interviewee to continue reporting their account until complete. In volume and priority crime investigations the most common way of initiating an account is simply to use an *open-ended* prompt, such as, 'tell me what happened.' There are various types of questions that can be used to extract information from the interviewee, some of which are useful e.g., *open-ended*. Others are not, and may actually confuse the interviewee or prevent them from giving a full and accurate account e.g., multiple questions.

Closure – This should be planned and structured so that the interview does not end abruptly. The interviewer should accurately summarise what the interviewee has said, taking account of any clarification that the interviewee wishes to make. Where

appropriate, the lead interviewer should check that the second interviewer has no further questions before closing the interview. The interviewer/s should then explain to the interviewee what will happen next. Finally, if this phase is conducted appropriately, it should facilitate a positive attitude towards the interviewee helping the police in the future.

Evaluation – Following an interview, the interviewer needs to evaluate what has been said with a view to determining whether any further action is necessary and how the interviewee's account fits in with the rest of the investigation. The interviewer should also reflect on their own practice during the interview.

Following its implementation, all officers (of Inspector rank and below) in England and Wales underwent a five-day experiential course and were also provided with two booklets that added further clarity to the five stages. These included: (i) a Guide to Interviewing (Central Planning Training Unit; CPTU, 1992a), and; (ii) the Interviewer's Rule Book (CPTU, 1992b). The Practical Guide to Investigative Interviewing (Centrex, 2004; NCF, 1996; 1998; 2000) eventually replaced these two handbooks. The model, which was introduced in 1993, was based upon collaborative work with academic researchers, psychologists, police practitioners, and lawyers, and was intended to take into account the vulnerabilities of some interviewees – the main aim was to minimise the risk of false confessions (Shawyer, Milne, & Bull, 2009). The model also integrated two interview methods based on reputable psychological principles: (i) the Cognitive Interview (CI; Fisher & Geiselman, 1992), and; (ii) the Conversation Management (CM) approach (see Gudjonsson & Pearse, 2011). The focus of the PEACE model is based on fairness, openness, workability, accountability, and fact (truth) finding rather than the obtaining of a confession (Gudjonsson & Pearse, 2011). Unlike the Reid technique of interrogation, officers are not allowed to lie to suspects or present them with false evidence in order to obtain a confession (Kassin *et al.,* 2010). The PEACE model is now a widely-resourced method of interviewing and is used throughout England and Wales, in addition to many other countries that include Australia, New Zealand, Norway (known as KREATIVE), Scotland (known as PRICE) and some parts of Canada.

The PEACE model of interviewing provides a framework for interviewing in any situation regardless of whether the person is a suspect, victim or witness and is a linear process (see figure 1.1). The model follows the journey of an interview before it begins (e.g., the **P**lanning and preparation stage) right through to its conclusion (e.g., the **E**valuation

stage). The actual interview is represented by the three stages that make up the centre of the five-stage approach and include: (i) **E**ngage and explain, (ii) **A**ccount, clarification and challenge, and; (iii) **C**losure. Figure 1.1 demonstrates how the interviewer can adopt a flexible approach moving freely between the three stages that make up the actual interview itself. This would be necessary if the interviewee revealed new information relevant to the investigation during the **C**losure stage, as the interviewer would then need to repeat the second and third stages of the PEACE model.

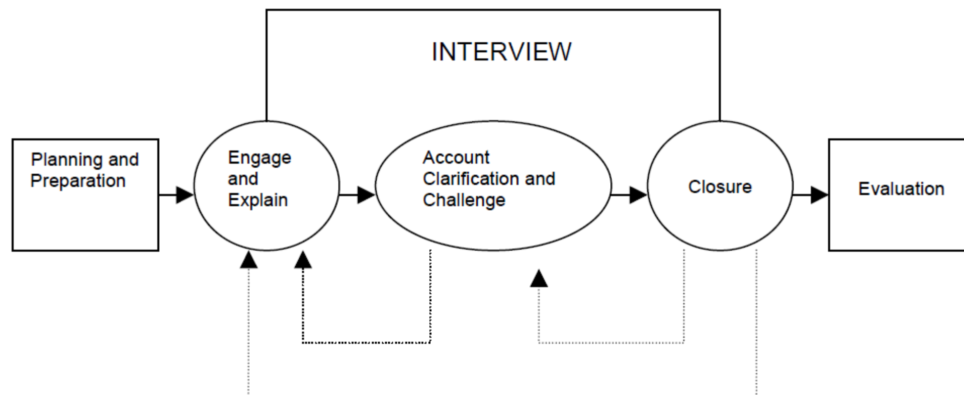

Figure 1.1. The PEACE model of interviewing (NCF, 2000, p. 27).

Following the introduction of the PEACE model of interviewing, the Association of Chief Police Officers[2] (ACPO) and the UK Home Office developed and introduced seven core principles that formed the basis of all Investigative Interviewing (Home Office Circular 22/92). These included:

1. The role of investigative interviewing is to obtain accurate and reliable information from witnesses, victims or suspects, in order to discover the truth about matters under police investigation;
2. Investigative interviewing should be approached with an open mind. Information obtained from the interviewee should always be tested against what the interviewer already knows or what can reasonably be established;
3. When questioning anyone an officer must act fairly in the circumstances of each individual case;
4. The interviewer is not bound to accept the first given answer. Questioning is not unfair merely because it is persistent;

[2] Now known as the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC).

5. Even when the right of silence is exercised by a suspect the police still have a right to put questions;
6. When conducting an interview, officers are free to ask questions in order to establish the truth; except for interviews with child victims of sexual or violent abuse which are to be used in criminal proceedings, they are not constrained by the rules applied to lawyers in court, and;
7. Vulnerable people, whether witnesses, victims or suspects, must be treated with particular consideration at all times.

The seven core principles highlighted above have since been amended and will be discussed in the following sections with particular reference to how the revised principles differ.

Evaluation of the PEACE Model

The literature-base that focuses on evaluating the PEACE model of interviewing continues to grow (and will be discussed throughout this thesis) and falls into one of three specific categories: (i) the evaluation of suspect (and to a lesser extent witness and victim) interviews; (ii) the use of questionnaires/semi-structured interviews to survey staff, and; (iii) a combination of the two former approaches. McGurk *et al.* (1993) were the first to evaluate the impact of the PEACE model before it was 'rolled out' to the police service. They found that initial improvements were made by the sample of interviewers and were sustained over the first six months. However, these findings must be treated with caution given that the sample of interviewers were made aware that they were being assessed and so could have made a conscious effort to alter their usual practice due to being observed. Furthermore, the sample only consisted of suspect interviews, so it is not known whether the skills were transferable to witness and victim interviews. Two years later, Bull and Cherryman (1995) were asked by the Home Office to conduct a programme of research that aimed to identify any skill gaps in experienced, PEACE trained officers' interviews with suspects involved in serious cases. After obtaining feedback from experienced detectives and reviewing relevant literature, a questionnaire was compiled that required officers to rate how necessary each of the listed skills were. Following the identification of 28 important and necessary skills, several dozen-interview recordings were obtained and evaluated by four 'expert' raters in relation to the 28 skills identified. In contrast to the findings of McGurk *et al.* (1993), Bull and Cherryman noted that interviewers had poor questioning techniques, a lack of rapport development (and maintenance) and shortfalls in empathy and flexibility. Again, these results must be

interpreted cautiously due to some of the interviews being conducted with vulnerable suspects. Both of these studies were conducted around the period of time when the PEACE model of interviewing was first implemented and so the credibility of the findings may be limited given that the training material was still in its infancy.

A pivotal study that evaluated the PEACE model of interviewing, nearly a decade after its introduction (ensuring that it had enough time to be absorbed), was conducted by Clarke and Milne (2001). They obtained responses from a representative sample of forces across England and Wales and had three main aims:

1. To identify good practice for the management and supervision of investigative interviewing;
2. To evaluate the extent to which PEACE interviewing techniques for suspect interviews had been incorporated into workplace practice, and;
3. To evaluate the extent to which PEACE interviewing techniques for witness and victim interviews had been incorporated into workplace practice.

Suspect interviewing.

A total of 177 interviews were collected from six different forces that had: (i) a balance of PEACE trained and untrained officers, and; (ii) a balance of forces with supervision and non-supervision policy in place. The type of crime being investigated was focussed specifically on the interviewing of ‘volume/bulk crime’ (e.g., theft, criminal damage, and assault). After reviewing a wide range of previously used scales and seeking feedback from police officers and academics a specially constructed (61 item) rating scale was developed to examine the use of the PEACE model. A total of fifteen police officers rated the sample of interviews and all had: (i) experience of teaching PEACE, (ii) experience of using PEACE, and; (iii) experience of conducting research/evaluating PEACE interviews.

Similar to Bull and Cherryman (1995), Clarke and Milne (2001) noted that improvements were still required in relation to rapport-building and that there were some notable concerns in relation to specific aspects of the model. In particular the first stage (**P**lanning and preparation) and how this aspect still needs to be improved given that better planning and preparation would enhance the interview. However, despite expressing concerns regarding the practice of some interviewers, Clark and Milne found that some positive interview practices had started to become embedded (e.g., the use of *open*-ended questions and allowing the suspect to give a full account). Another observation was the improvement in

the ethos and ethical approach to interviewing which reflected the seven core principles to investigative interviewing (previously highlighted on pp. 7 – 8).

Witness/victim interviewing.

Clarke and Milne (2001) used a similar approach to evaluate the impact of training for interviews with witnesses and victims. A total of 75 interviews were collected (n=43 witnesses and n=32 victims) from six different forces which included 58 interviews relating to volume/bulk crime investigations, and 17 interviews conducted with witnesses to serious crime (e.g., murder). The final rating scale included 80 items grouped into nine broad areas (these included the main elements of the PEACE framework in addition to sections on the use of the CI) and was developed using the scale that had been used to evaluate suspect interviews. Sixteen police officers assessed the sample of interviews; the majority were trainers in PEACE and had recently conducted interviews themselves.

When reviewing the findings, Clarke and Milne highlighted some particular concerns. Some interviewers were confusing the responsibilities between a suspect and witness/victim interview that could have detrimental effects on a witness or victim. Interviewers were cautioning them and/or providing them with the legal advice option, which implied that they were as much a suspect as a witness or victim. This practice could result in the witness/victim becoming very anxious and could also potentially jeopardise the evidence that they provide. The poor practice continued into the **E**ngage and explain stage where interviewing only constituted approximately a quarter of the time recorded with interviewers focusing on writing a statement. This then resulted in interviewers asking predominantly *closed* questions to clarify the content of what they were writing (the statement). The findings in relation to the **C**losure stage of the interview also revealed poor practice with only a third of interviewers providing a summary of the interview and then giving the opportunity to add, alter or correct what had been covered. However, these findings were from interviews with witnesses and victims of volume crime (i.e. theft, criminal damage or minor assault etc.) as opposed to serious crime. Introductions in serious crime interviews were found to be more professional with interviewees being more regularly told that the interview was their opportunity to give an account, and these interviews were also rated much higher. In addition, there was more evidence of rapport-building. This was epitomised by them demonstrating higher levels of active listening and flexibility, in addition to being more likely to explore the information that was provided by the interviewee. Although interviewers involved in serious crime did perform better, a large proportion of the mean scores congregated around the mid-point of the

rating scale used indicating that they were not necessarily performing to a high standard (Clarke & Milne, 2001).

Investigative Interviewing Training

The initial PEACE training course (as discussed on pp. 4 – 6) consists of components that must adhere to three National Occupational Standards (NOS) for investigation and interviewing, focuses on investigations into priority and volume crime (i.e. theft, criminal damage and minor assault etc.) and is linked to the NOS for investigation and interviewing. Those offences that are classified as serious crime (i.e. rape and murder) are covered by specialist interview training courses. In England and Wales, the majority of such courses take place over a three-week period and focus specifically on suspect interviews (Griffiths & Milne, 2006). The exception to this involves those specialist interview training courses that are designed for interviewing witnesses and victims, with particular emphasis on those involving child interviews and rape investigations. A consequential result of Clarke and Milne's (2001) national evaluation was the introduction of a tiered structure of interviewing skills:

Tier 1 – Probationary training (1 week);

Tier 2 – Detectives (one week and a prerequisite to attending the initial Crime Investigators' Development Programme (ICIDP);

Tier 3 – Specialist interviewers (suspect/witness/victim – three weeks);

Tier 4 – Investigative interview supervisor/assessor; and,

Tier 5 – Specialist interview advisor.

In England and Wales, the Initial Police Learning and Development Programme (IPLDP) was introduced in 2005 and was designed with the intention of supporting student officers throughout their two-year probationary period and to meet their individual development. Further enhancements were made in 2007 when the investigative interview training (and the five tiers) were incorporated into the Professionalising the Investigation Programme (PIP). The aim of this was to increase the professionalism of all officers, establishing a structured, professional approach to investigations and interviewing. The IPLDP provides officers with the necessary accreditation at PIP Level 1 (see Table 1.1):

Table 1.1. Professionalising the Investigation Programme (PIP) levels.

PIP level	Example of role	Investigative responsibility
1	Uniformed constable/police staff/supervisors	1. Conduct priority and volume crime investigations. 2. Interview suspects, witnesses and victims for priority and volume crime investigations.
2	Dedicated investigator (i.e. Detective)	1. Plan and conduct serious and complex investigations. 2. Plan, conduct and evaluate interviews with witnesses and victims for serious and complex investigations. 3. Plan, conduct and evaluate interviews with suspects for serious and complex investigations.
3*	Senior Investigating Officer (SIO)	1. Lead investigator in cases of murder, stranger rape, kidnap or crimes of similar complexity. 2. Manage major investigations.
4	SIO/Officer in overall command (OIOC)	1. Manage critical, complex, protracted and/or linked serious crime. 2. Responsible for the review of investigations in other force areas (as appropriate).

***Note.** This PIP level is split into various core and specialist roles including the interviewing of vulnerable witnesses and the specialist interviewing of suspects, some of which would have been categorised at the old Tier level 3.

Due to the steps taken to professionalise investigations and the introduction of the Core Investigative Doctrine (Centrex, 2005) in 2007, the principles of investigative interviewing were then updated (fully implemented in 2009) and currently consist of the following:

1. The aim of investigative interviewing is to obtain accurate and reliable accounts from suspects, witnesses and victims about matters under police investigation;
2. Investigators must act fairly when questioning suspects, witnesses and victims. Vulnerable people must be treated with particular consideration at all times;
3. Investigative interviewing should be approached with an investigative mind-set;
4. Accounts obtained from the person who is being interviewed should always be tested against what the interviewer already knows or what can reasonably be established;
5. When conducting an interview, investigators are free to ask a wide range of questions in order to obtain material which may assist an investigation;

6. Investigators should recognise the positive impact of an early admission in the context of the criminal justice system;
7. Investigators are not bound to accept the first answer given. Questioning is not unfair merely because it is persistent;
8. Even when the right of silence is exercised by a suspect, investigators have a responsibility to put questions to them.

A large number of the new principles share similarities with the original seven principles (see pp. 7 & 8), which indicates that they still remain grounded in the notion of 'ethical interviewing' (Williamson, 1993). However, the inclusion of a new principle (number six) does not coincide with the information-gathering role of the interviewer and may result in interviewers focusing on obtaining a confession as opposed to complete, accurate and reliable information – anecdotal evidence certainly suggests this.

Investigative Interviewing Areas of Concern

Since the research project conducted by Clarke and Milne (2001), the evaluation of interviewer performance has continued to progress and develop with different aspects of the investigative interview being the focus of academic interest. However, a predominant theme emerged from the Bull and Cherryman (1995) study that was later built upon by Clarke and Milne with respect to what interviewers appeared to struggle with when conducting their interviews. The first area relates to poor questioning techniques that were being used by interviewers and how they were predominantly using *inappropriate* questions (Bull & Cherryman, 1995; Clarke & Milne). The second issue that was identified as requiring improvement focused on the lack of rapport being developed and maintained throughout suspect interviews (Bull & Cherryman, 1995; Clarke & Milne, 2001). The final area of interviewing that provided differing results was in relation to the use of empathy and flexibility within the interview. Bull and Cherryman (1995) expressed concerns due to shortfalls in interviewers demonstrating these skills whilst Clarke and Milne (2001) noted an improvement in the ethos and ethical approach to suspect interviewing. However, with regards to victim interviewing Clarke and Milne found that volume crime victims were becoming anxious due to the poor practice of interviewers, whereas serious crime victims were treated with higher levels of active listening and flexibility. The next section will discuss more recent findings that have expanded on these areas of interest and provide clarification on the terminology, definition and operational use of each item.

Question typologies.

There has been a large amount of research that has concentrated on assessing the efficacy of different questioning techniques used during investigative interviews with suspects, victims and witnesses (see Clarke, Milne, & Bull, 2011; Myklebust & Bjørklund, 2006; 2009; Oxburgh, Ost, & Cherryman, 2012; Oxburgh, Ost, Morris, & Cherryman, 2013; Shepherd & Griffiths, 2013). It is now widely accepted that using *open-ended* questions (e.g., those starting with 'Tell me…', 'Explain…', 'Describe…') and more *probing* forms of questions (e.g., 5WH questions – 'What', 'Where', 'When', 'Why', 'Who' and 'How') are the most productive and encourage interviewees to freely recall events, that in turn, are also associated with more fulsome and accurate accounts (Aldridge & Cameron, 1999; Cederborg, Orbach, Sternberg, & Lamb, 2000; Davies, Westcott, & Horan, 2000; Loftus, 1982; Milne & Bull, 2006; Myklebust & Bjørklund, 2006). However, interviewers do not appear to be using *appropriate* questions (Baldwin, 1993; Davies *et al.,* 2000; Lamb, Hershkowitz, & Sternberg, 1996; Myklebust & Bjørklund, 2006). A notable concern is the more regular use of *inappropriate* questions (i.e., *closed, leading, multiple, forced choice, opinion/statement*) by interviewers that encourage interviewees to respond on the basis of recognition memory, rather than on the basis of free recall which can dramatically increase the probability of error in the provided answers (Dent, 1982; 1986; Dent & Stephenson, 1979; Lamb & Fauchier, 2001; Orbach & Lamb, 2001). The classification of question types does not adhere to a universally accepted protocol and consequently this can result in confusion when trying to compare different research findings (Poole & Lamb, 1998). For a more detailed explanation regarding the categorisation of different question typologies, please see chapter four of this thesis.

The use of rapport.

Rapport building is an established part of the interaction during investigative interviews, regardless of whether it is with a suspect, witness or victim (MoJ, 2011). Previous research has highlighted how a humanitarian style of interviewing, characterised by the use of supportive/humane interview techniques (e.g., empathy and respect), can facilitate communication and improve the quality of the interaction (Holmberg & Christianson, 2002; Vanderhallen, Vervaeke, & Holmberg, 2011). Whilst there is no shared definition on the exact meaning of 'rapport', the concept has traditionally been referenced by therapists in a clinical setting, citing the importance of establishing a 'therapeutic alliance' (Bedi, Davis & Williams, 2005). Some definitions of 'rapport' appear to conflict, as in practitioner guidelines

offered in England and Wales and the US respectively: *"A positive mood between interviewer and interviewee."* (ABE; MoJ, 2011, p. 70), and *"The establishment of a relationship, which does not have to be friendly in nature."* (The Army Field Manual, 2006, section 8.3). Some academic researchers believe that 'rapport' involves a, "…harmonious, sympathetic connection to another" (Newberry & Stubbs, 1990, p. 14) whereas other, more theoretically-driven conceptualisations identified and described attentiveness, positivity and coordination as the non-verbal components associated with the relationship between interacting individuals (Tickle-Degnan & Rosenthal, 1990). Although definitions of rapport are sometimes conflicting, most indicate interconnecting components of openness and an 'interest' in the other party (sometimes referred to as 'mutual attentiveness'; Newberry & Stubbs, 1990; Tickle-Degnan & Rosenthal, 1990).

During the early stages of an interaction, mutual attention is important for the purpose of building a relationship as it is essential to show an interest in the other party. It is argued that attentiveness facilitates the creation of focused and interacting engagement (Holmberg & Madsen, 2014; St-Yves, 2006). Paying attention is synonymous with active listening, whereby the listener, without interrupting, interprets what the other party is expressing, and through demonstrating active listening behaviour encourages the other party to talk and interact (St-Yves, 2006). In addition to active listening, another type of behaviour that helps facilitate the mutual attentiveness during an interaction and has been used as a measure to define 'rapport' is reflective listening (Alison, Giles, & McGuire, 2015). This is characterised by the listener being able to accurately reflect something that the other party has expressed to encourage further discussion or clarification (Alison, Alison, Noone, Elntib, & Christiansen, 2013).

Given that there is no agreed definition on the exact meaning of 'rapport' it comes as no surprise that such difficulties are also evident when attempting to define the concept within an operational setting (i.e., an investigative interview). The only reliable way to evaluate interviewer behaviour during the investigative interview is through empirical analysis as retrospective analysis is not as high in ecological validity. Ergo, a notable limitation of relying on retrospective perceptions (i.e., asking an officer to recall specific details from a previous interaction [e.g., a police interview]) is that the reliability of the account could be questioned, especially if that interaction took place weeks, months or even years earlier. This is further exacerbated due to the fact that (on some occasions) it is not possible to return to that interaction to check the consistency or accuracy of what the officer has reported. The use of empirical analysis enables a more reliable and accurate evaluation of the interaction, as it is

analysed first-hand by the researcher. Unfortunately, the number of research projects that utilise retrospective analysis far outweighs those that adopt an empirical approach and so the concept of 'rapport' continues to be somewhat of a mystery, especially within an operational setting.

The use of empathy.

Similar to rapport, there are various definitions that attempt to describe the multi-dimensional construct of empathy throughout counselling and clinical psychology, in addition to medical writings (see Baron-Cohen, 2011; Barrett-Lennard, 1981; Davis, 1983; Gladstein, 1983; Preston & de Waal, 2002). However, in terms of finding an appropriate definition that could also be attributed to the operational setting of an investigative interview, Davis (1983, p. 114) termed empathy as, "A reaction of one individual to the observed experiences of another" (see also Oxburgh & Ost, 2011). It is important to consider the various types of reactions that can range from simply understanding the other's perspective, to a more intuitive or emotional reaction (Davis, 1983). Therefore, when used in an investigative interview, it is not just about the interviewer 'showing' empathy to the interviewee, it is also about having the ability to understand their perspective appreciating their emotions and then communicating that directly, or indirectly (Davis, 1983; Oxburgh & Ost, 2011). The 'empathy' demonstrated by an interviewer during an investigative interview differs considerably to that demonstrated by other individuals in less complex and cognitively demanding exchanges (i.e., in clinical settings). Oxburgh *et al.* (2013) developed a model for measuring empathic responses within such interviews that was based on the theoretical principles of the empathy cycle outlined by Barrett-Lennard (1981). Their model focused on four key variables (empathic opportunities, empathic continuers, empathic terminators and spontaneous empathy) that were central to the interaction between interviewer and interviewee (this will be further discussed within chapter four).

To date, there is a dearth of empirical research examining empathic interviewing styles in relation to its impact and efficacy during the investigative interviewing process. The research that has been conducted has tended to focus more on the investigative interviewing of suspects/offenders and their perceptions of the police interview (Holmberg & Christianson, 2002; Kebbell, Hurren, & Mazzerole, 2006; Kebbell, Alison, Hurren, & Mazerolle, 2010; Oxburgh & Ost, 2011; Oxburgh *et al*., 2013; Oxburgh, Ost, Morris, & Cherryman, 2015). Previous research has found that the use of an empathic interviewing style leads to: (i) more confessions when interviewing suspects (Kassin & Gudjonsson, 2004); (ii) provides more

investigation relevant information (IRI) when used together with appropriate forms of questions (see Oxburgh *et al*., 2013; 2015), and; (iii) that offenders are more likely to admit to their crimes when interviewed in a non-judgemental manner (Holmberg & Christianson, 2002; Kebbell *et al*., 2006; Oxburgh & Ost, 2011). Researchers have argued that there are clear indications that the use of non-humane tactics in investigative interviews is wholly ineffective and that more empathic, rapport-based strategies have more of an effect in generating relevant information from the interviewee (Alison *et al.,* 2013). These findings are reflected in the discovery of specific qualities that have been found in 'skilful' police interviews, amongst which positive communication skills, empathy and open-mindedness were all present (see Bull & Cherryman, 1995).

The limited research that has focused on this concept in relation to investigative interviewing has generally noted the positive impact it can have on the interview process (see Dando & Oxburgh, 2016; Holmberg & Christianson, 2002; Kebbell *et al.,* 2006; Oxburgh *et al.,* 2012). However, it is worthy of note, that the Achieving Best Evidence in criminal proceedings guidelines (ABE [this document will be discussed in further detail on pp. 19 – 22]; MoJ, 2011) has only a single reference that states, "A guiding principle for developing rapport is to communicate empathy' (p. 189). Anecdotal evidence suggests that interviewers find this confusing. In short, the absence of having a precise explanation that interviewers can understand, leaves the term 'empathy' open to interpretation, with potential negative consequences relating to how it is researched, understood, trained, and practiced.

The Investigation of Sexual Offences

Crimes of a sexual nature are highly sensitive and personal, thus, interviewers may find subsequent interviews 'technically difficult' and 'stressful' to conduct as a result of having to make sense of painful emotions when conducting a thorough investigation (Oxburgh, Williamson, & Ost, 2006). The investigative interview is a cognitively-demanding task and is a conversational exchange that requires extensive training, practice, and a considered (empathic) approach to ensure that the interviewer-interviewee relationship is productive (Shepherd & Griffiths, 2013). The interviewer must examine the complaint in full to ascertain whether (or not) a crime has been committed, thus, to conduct an effective investigation, interviewers should be appropriately trained[3] and must, as a minimum requirement, have a clear understanding of what information might be relevant (Westera &

[3] In England and Wales, this would be in accord with the PIP, a training protocol that was introduced in 2007 (see McGrory & Treacy, 2012).

Kebbell, 2014). This is paramount in all investigations, but even more so in sexual offence investigations which are viewed as a distinctively different form of offending (Benneworth, 2007; Marshall, 2001). Being the first point of contact that the suspect or sexual offence victim has with the CJS, the quality and nature of early intervention provided by the officer may impact on the subsequent quality and quantity of evidence obtained. This, in turn, could then influence how the investigation progresses (Patterson, 2012).

Interviewing of sexual offence victims.

During the investigation of a sexual offence, the victim may have to describe the offence repeatedly and in great detail (Logan, Evans, Stevenson, & Jordan, 2005). Needless to say, given the invasive and often traumatic nature of what they have experienced, this can be daunting and upsetting. Tjaden and Thoennes (2006) reported that at least one in three rape victims will develop Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), rape trauma syndrome, or some other form of anxiety problem. Secondary re-victimisation is always a possibility following the actual incident itself and thus it is essential that the victim is not made to feel alienated, distressed or blamed during the process (Madigan & Gamble, 1991; Maier, 2008). It is, therefore, vitally important that such interviews are conducted ethically and as efficiently as possible to avoid future issues if the case progresses.

The highly specialist nature of the interview places a responsibility on officers to ensure they are aware of the need to demonstrate very different skills that are not generally used during routine interviews (Cherryman & Bull, 2001). This also includes an acknowledgment that each victim is unique and may display behaviours normally associated with reduced credibility (i.e., inconsistent statements [Alderden & Ullman, 2012], mental health deficiencies [Jordan, 2004], and the inability to recall specific details of the offence in question [Beichner & Spohn, 2012]). Some anxiety-related responses, such as changing the subject, initial omission of details, or concentration/memory problems, may be the result of disclosing intimate details regarding the offence to which they were a victim (Kaysen, Morris, Rizvi, & Resick, 2005). For an officer unfamiliar with trauma symptoms (e.g., PTSD), such behaviours may well suggest fabrication (Lonsway, Archambault, & Lisak, 2009) that could potentially have an impact on the overall outcome of the case. The implementation of effective models of interviewing (e.g., PEACE) could help to improve the interviewer-interviewee relationship, which consequently could then improve the efficacy of such interviews.

Given the sensitive details that the victim may have to describe, making the interview process as victim-friendly as possible could be beneficial to the investigation process. Using an oppressive/confrontational interview technique (similar to the Reid technique) may spark memories similar to those experienced during the offence that the victim is attempting to recount, which could trigger anxiety-related responses (Kaysen *et al.,* 2005). If the credibility of a victim is already assumed (i.e., that their account is untruthful), they are generally confronted with alleged incriminating evidence that may or may not be genuine (a previous relationship with the suspect) and their denials are rejected (all of which are key components of the accusatory approach), then should inconsistent statements and being unable to recall details of the offence be expected? Given that such factors have been found to damage the credibility of a victims account (Alderden & Ullman, 2012; Beichner & Spohn, 2012), the more non-coercive approach of the PEACE model (that focuses on fairness, openness, workability, accountability, and fact (truth) finding) may put the victim at ease, which in turn could reduce anxiety levels. Being afforded the opportunity to explain the incident without interruption could assist in reducing concentration/memory problems (Lonsway *et al.,* 2009). In addition to the PEACE model of interviewing, there is also guidance available for officers on interviewing vulnerable victims and witnesses (including children) – the ABE in criminal proceedings (Ministry of Justice; MoJ, 2011).

The ABE in criminal proceedings guidelines.

The ABE guidelines were first published in 2002 and a large number of the special measure provisions in the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act (YJCEA; 1999) were implemented and replaced the previous guidance set out in the Memorandum of good practice for video-interviewing children (MOGP; 1994). The ABE guidance was later updated in 2007, with the most recent revision, to date, being released in 2011 (although a further update is due imminently; MoJ, 2011). This guidance document is predominantly aimed at officers conducting visually-recorded interviews with vulnerable, intimidated and significant witnesses/victims. It is also utilised by those officers that are tasked with preparing and supporting witnesses/victims during the criminal justice process and those involved at the trial, both in supporting and questioning the witness/victim in court. While the guidance is not compulsory, it is advised. Compliance (in conjunction with effective training) with the guidance is likely to enhance the quality of the interview, which is likely to benefit the interviewer, the interviewee, practitioners and the Court.

The revised edition of the ABE includes amendments that account for legislative changes to the YJCEA (1999), that were introduced to eradicate some of the difficulties associated with giving oral evidence by granting 'vulnerable' and 'intimidated' witnesses/victims (including sexual offence victims) the use of alternative trial arrangements (with limitations and conditions attached). There are a wide variety of modifying measures that can be used to protect witnesses/victims from recognised court related stressors, including the erection of temporary screens to shield them from the view of the defendant, or the use of live-links to allow them to give evidence from a room remote from the main courtroom in a comparatively informal, relaxed environment (all the while remaining visible and audible to those in court). Previous research has identified the positive impact that special measures can have on cases involving sexual offence victims with almost half of the sampled victims stating that special measures had enabled them to give evidence and that they would not otherwise have been willing or able to give (Burton, Evans, & Sanders, 2006; Hamlyn, Phelps, Turtle, & Sattar, 2004).

Finally, given the importance of visually-recorded statements, it is imperative that they are of good quality so as to ensure that where a prosecution takes place this can be conducted as effectively as possible. Therefore, it is advised that officers read the ACPO guidance 'Advice on the structure of visually recorded witness interviews' (2010) in conjunction with the ABE as this will further reinforce good practice. The ACPO guidance was developed based on feedback from a range of sources about recurrent problems with the way visually recorded interviews had been conducted and how they then were used as evidence in court. The next section will detail what guidance the ABE provides officers with on how they should conduct an interview.

The ABE guidance document given to officers has four recommended phases that fall under the section related to 'conducting the interview' and these include:

1. Establishing rapport;
2. Free narrative account;
3. Questioning, and;
4. Closing the interview.

Phase one is a process whereby the interviewer should establish rapport with the witness/victim to personalise the interview and put them at ease. The initial interaction is recognised as determining the success of the interview, as well as assisting in the *quantity* and

quality of information gained in the interview, by establishing a sense of trust that can help in laying the foundations for future, successful, communication (MoJ, 2011). Through this process, the interviewer is reducing any possible tension and insecurity felt by the witness/victim, treating them with a unique set of needs, as opposed to being 'just another witness/victim'. The significance of building rapport within the investigative interview is highlighted straight away in this first phase of the ABE and was previously discussed in the chapter (pp. 14 – 16).

Phase two of the interview recommends that the interviewer should initiate an uninterrupted free narrative account from the witness/victim through the use of an *open-ended* invitation. This would be through an *open* question framed in such a way that the witness/victim is able to give an unrestricted answer, which in turn enables them to control the flow of information in the interview (i.e., "Tell me…", "Explain…" or "Describe…"). The free narrative account allows the interviewer to gain a better understanding of the way in which the witness/victim holds the information about the event in their memory. Thus, note taking is recommended at this stage. However, the detail of note taking is down to the interviewer, too many notes may distract the witness/victim, which subsequently could hinder the flow of recall. On the other hand, if the interviewer slows the witness/victim down in order to record detailed notes, this could potentially hinder maximum retrieval.

Phase three focuses on the questioning of the witness/victim, as most will not be able to recall everything relevant to the event that is in their memory. Therefore, their accounts could greatly benefit from the interviewer asking *appropriate* questions related to the event that could assist in further recall. Those officers conducting the interviews need to fully appreciate that there are various types of questions that vary in how direct they are (further discussion on question typologies will be presented in the next section and throughout this thesis). The questioning phase should, whenever possible, commence with *open-ended* questions and then proceed, if necessary, to specific *closed* questions. These are the second best type of question (to *open-ended* questions) and should be used to obtain information not provided by the witness/victim in the free narrative account and not elicited through the use of *open-ended* questions. A specific *closed* question is one that allows only a relatively narrow range of responses.

Finally, phase four centres around closing the interview by briefly summarising what the witness/victim has said, using words and phrases used by them as much as possible. By adopting such practices allows the witness/victim to check the interviewer's recall for

accuracy. The interviewer must explicitly tell the witness/victim to correct them if they have missed anything out or have got something wrong.

Incorporating Psychological Theory to the Investigative Interview

The eight core principles of Investigative Interviewing, the PEACE model of interviewing and the ABE in criminal proceedings guidelines all share a similar ethos that will now be discussed. Firstly, the eight core principles of Investigative Interviewing highlight that *Investigators must act fairly when questioning suspects, witnesses and victims* and that *Vulnerable people must be treated with particular consideration at all times* (see pp. 12 & 13). This is echoed throughout the training that is offered in conjunction with the PEACE model of interviewing which focuses on *fairness, openness, workability, accountability and fact (truth) finding.* The '**E**ngage and explain' stage encourages the use of *active listening to assist the interviewer in establishing and maintaining rapport* whilst the '**C**losure' stage advises the interviewer to explain to the interviewee what will happen next as this should *facilitate a positive attitude towards the interviewee helping the police in the future* (see pp. 4 – 6). Finally, the guidance offered in the ABE, particularly in the first two phases, also follows a similar theme. Phase one advises that the interviewer *should establish rapport with the witness/victim to personalise the interview and put them at ease* and that *by establishing a sense of trust it can help in laying the foundations for future, successful, communication*. If the interviewer follows the guidance then they are *reducing any possible tension and insecurity felt by the witness/victim, treating them with a unique set of needs, as opposed to being 'just another witness/victim.* Phase two of the guidance then recommends that the interviewer should initiate an uninterrupted free narrative account from the witness/victim as this then *enables them to control the flow of information in the interview* (see pp. 19 – 22). The highlighted components taken from the three different interviewer guidance protocols will now be discussed in relation to Procedural Justice Theory (PJT).

Procedural Justice Theory (PJT).

PJT derives from social psychology and relates to the notion of fairness, dignity, respect, and due process in legal proceedings. With sexual offence victims, it relates to their personal experiences of interacting with the police and how the behaviour of an officer could potentially influence their level of co-operation throughout the investigation – in other words, the fairness with which a sexual offence victim is treated and whether this influences if they co-operate or resist authority. The earliest studies regarding the psychology of procedural

justice recognised that the opportunity to present information relevant to a decision enhances judgements relating to the fairness of the decision-making procedures (Thibaut & Walker, 1975; Walker, LaTour, Lind & Thibaut, 1974). Early theories regarding PJT attempted to explain procedural justice by referring to the assumptions made by the perceiver about the potential outcomes that could be the result of different procedures (Leventhal, 1980; Thibaut & Walker, 1975). Key components of PJT include (see Lind & Tyler, 1992 for a full review):

- Participation (being allowed to speak) – which involves having the opportunity to present one's own side of the dispute and be heard by the decision maker;
- Dignity – which includes being treated with respect and politeness, having one's rights acknowledged by the decision maker, and;
- Trust – that the authority is concerned with one's welfare.

Lind and Tyler also suggest that people want to be treated fairly by authorities, independent of the outcome of the interaction. Fair treatment by an authority, defined in terms of voice (by coming forward and disclosing the crime to the authorities), dignity and trust, directly shapes procedural justice judgements and signifies that the individual in question is a valued member of the group. Tyler and Blader (2003) argued that this, in turn, would then facilitate co-operation by strengthening a person's tie to the social order. The strengthening of the tie promotes the value of membership within the group, which then increases the level of confidence in the authorities (i.e., the interviewer), which subsequently provides encouragement to others. In other words, as a result of perceived fair treatment, sexual offence victims may be more willing to report crimes. Conversely, if officers show disrespectful behaviour, this will reduce the likelihood of citizen co-operation (Mastrofski, Snipes, & Supina, 1996; McCluskey, Mastrofski, & Parks, 1999). These findings could also be associated with those of Bull and Cherryman (1995) who found that specific qualities, similar to those antecedents that make up the PJT (e.g., voice, dignity and trust), were also present within 'skilful' police interviews. Similarly, in terms of interviews with suspects of crime, many authors have highlighted the importance of being empathic, respectful and humane when interviewing suspects, again, comparable to the procedural justice framework antecedents (e.g., Holmberg & Christianson, 2002; Kebbell *et al.,* 2006; Oxburgh *et al.,* 2013; Shepherd, 1991).

Chapter Conclusion

When conducting an investigative interview, regardless of whether it is with a suspect, witness or victim, the interviewer has the same objectives: to obtain complete, accurate and reliable information from the interviewee. This chapter has provided an overview of the evolution of interviewing practice in England and Wales and outlined the guidance that is available for interviewers on how they should conduct effective investigative interviews. Research conducted to date has examined the impact various interviewing and interrogation techniques can have on individuals and their impact on justice. What is evident is that suitably trained officers, who act fairly, approaching each case with an open mind, must conduct each investigative interview ethically. This is imperative when conducting sexual offence investigations given the ‘unique’ nature of the crime and how the relevant information often required is highly sensitive and personal (Benneworth, 2007; Marshall, 2001). The chapter concludes by linking key components of PJT (Lind & Tyler, 1992) with various elements of the three different guidance protocols that are provided to officers in England and Wales.

The following chapter will examine the research that has contributed to the literature base applied to improving the overall efficacy of interviews with sexual offence victims. To date, the research that is available is complex, wide-ranging and somewhat inconclusive. The use of a Study Space Analysis (SSA) will review the exact nature and methodological designs of those studies that have begun laying the foundation for other researchers to expand on and offer recommendations based on psychologically-informed guidance.

Chapter two. The investigative interviewing of sexual offence victims: A Study Space Analysis.

Chapter Summary

This chapter discusses the current literature-base regarding interviews with sexual offence victims. The use of a Study Space Analysis (SSA; Malpass *et al.,* 2008) enabled the identification of areas of concentration and inattention by examining the exact nature and methodological designs of studies that have contributed to the scientific literature-base. The lack of consistency and disparity amongst the reporting, conviction and estimated incidence rates implies that something is potentially missing from sexual offence investigations. The SSA included a total of 30 articles and covered a 15-year period (2001 to 2016). There were twenty-two quantitative and eight qualitative studies that conducted research in five different countries (Canada, England, New Zealand, Sweden and the USA). A total of 65 different predictors and 54 outcome variables were identified and it was clearly evident what researchers have previously focused their attention on (i.e., perceived victim credibility [Campbell, Menaker & King, 2015; Jordan, 2004] and what is yet to be explored (i.e., assessing the quality of the evidence obtained). These findings are discussed alongside the suggestion of possible explanations as to why those areas of research are, or are not, being afforded academic attention. The chapter concludes by providing guidance on how particular issues; concerns and pieces of research may be applied to improving the overall efficacy of investigative interviews with sexual offence victims. Various possible courses of action are also proposed that highlight the potential impact such factors could have on the overall investigative process.

Introduction

Rape and sexual assault are two very serious crimes with specific elements making up their definitions dependant in which jurisdiction the alleged offence occurred. When discussed in the psychological literature, the distinction between the various sexual offences is not as straightforward, often being grouped together and discussed under several headings such as 'sexual offending', 'sexual abuse' or 'serious sexual offences' (Oxburgh & Ost, 2011; Rich & Seffrin, 2012; McMillan 2014). Sexual offending *per se* covers a range of offences that can include child abuse (non-contact through to penetrative), rape[4], sexual assault, sexual murder, Internet offences (e.g., the downloading of child pornography) and exhibitionism (non-contact offence). Throughout the course of this thesis, where 'sexual offending' (in any context) is referred to, it will be in relation to rape in accordance with the Sexual Offences Act (2003) in England and Wales. Unless otherwise stated, any reference that is made in relation to rape/sexual offending will involve heterosexual acts, committed by one adult on another adult.

Sexual offending *per se* is increasing as evidenced by national and international reporting rates (Garcia-Moreno & Watts, 2011). In England and Wales alone, sexual offences rose to 129,700 recorded cases for the year ending (YE) June 2017. This is the highest volume recorded since the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) in 2002, following annual increases since the year ending March 2012 (UKONS; 2017). In the USA, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in conjunction with Crime in the United States (CIUS; 2016), estimated that there were 95,730 reported cases of forcible rape during 2016. Despite noting a 19% increase in the reporting rates from the previous year (YE June 2016) in England and Wales, the conviction rate for sexual offences remains stubbornly low, with estimates of less than 3% (Daly & Bouhours, 2010). This is considerably lower compared to all other types of crime (see Greenfield, 1997; HMIC & HMCPSI, 2007; UKONS, 2017; Sinclair & Bourne, 1998; Walker, Kershaw, & Nicholas, 2006). Perhaps more concerning are some estimates that only 14% of all sexual offences are actually reported to the police (Darwinkel, Powell, & Tidmarsh, 2013a). Such findings raise some key questions: Why do crimes of this nature have such low reporting and conviction rates? Do such interviews differ from other, more general, types of crime? How many cases proceed through the CJS from initial reporting through to court? These are all issues that the author will attempt to make more transparent throughout this thesis.

[4] In the UK, a person (A) commits an offence of rape if he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person (B) with his penis; where (B) does not consent to the penetration, and (A) does not reasonably believe that (B) consents.

Offences of a sexual nature are viewed as a 'unique' form of offending (Benneworth, 2007; Marshall, 2001), which is potentially due to the fact that very often, such offences take place in private settings with very few, if any, witnesses; thus the police only have the victim's and/or suspect's version of events to go on (Lees, 2002; Oxburgh & Ost, 2011). Even when objective evidence such as DNA is available, it does not provide any clarification on the issue of consent (Westera, Kebbell, & Milne, 2011) and, thus, there are still difficulties in determining the veracity of each account if the case proceeds to court (Edwards, 2003; Lees, 2002). These circumstances place an even larger importance on the investigative process and for many sexual offence victims; the reporting of the crime can potentially initiate a long and sometimes arduous relationship with the CJS. Therefore, the manner in which officers engage with them can either make the process easier or more difficult (Campbell, 2008).

In chapter one, the general guidance that is available for interviewers was discussed (see pp. 4 – 6) in addition to the ABE guidance that was specifically developed for the interviewing of vulnerable victims and witnesses (see pp. 19 – 22). Each of these guidance documents has elements that are underpinned by components that make up the PJT (see pp. 22 – 23; Lind & Taylor, 1992). A key factor in explaining why sexual offence investigations are so 'unique' stems from the traumatic and invasive nature of what the victim has experienced. The possibility of secondary re-victimisation occurring following the actual incident is always a realistic cause of concern, therefore it is paramount that the victim is not made to feel distressed, blamed or alienated during the interview process (Madigan & Gamble, 1991; Maier, 2008). An ethical approach by the interviewer could help reduce the likelihood of such feelings being experienced during the interview. Those components that make up the PJT (e.g., being allowed to speak, being treated with respect and politeness and trusting that the interviewer is concerned for their welfare) were also present within 'skilful' police interviews (Bull & Cherryman, 1995).

The research that examines investigative interviewing and how the practice of an interviewer can impact on this process is still in its relative infancy. To date, researchers have predominantly focused on the interviewing of suspects and their perceptions of the interviewing process (e.g., Holmberg & Christianson, 2002; Kebbell *et al.,* 2006; Kebbell *et al.,* 2010; Oxburgh & Ost, 2011; Oxburgh *et al.,* 2013; 2015). In addition, research has also examined the use and productivity of different question typologies when conducting investigative interviews with children (Aldridge & Cameron, 1999; Cederborg *et al.,* 2000; Davies *et al.,* 2000 Myklebust & Bjørklund, 2006; 2009). The body of research that has specifically focused on the interviewing of (adult) victims, in particular sexual offence

victims, does not appear to be as extensive. A recognised effort was made to initially improve the process (from the perspective of the victim), however, the level of attention has not been as consistent as research focusing on suspect interviewing (Clarke & Milne, 2001; Dando, Wilcock, & Milne, 2008; Fisher, Geiselman, & Raymond, 1987; Kebbell, Milne & Wagstaff, 1999). Given the 'unique' difficulties associated with conducting sexual offence investigations (Benneworth, 2007; Marshall, 2001) and the wide-ranging occurrence of such crimes (CIUS, 2016; Garcia-Moreno, 2011; UKONS 2017) the purpose of the upcoming Study Space Analysis (SSA) was to determine the exact nature and methodologies used in previous research to establish any gaps in knowledge. Such an insight could then be used to propose possible courses of action that could consequently assist in the development of a more effective framework for the investigative interviewing of sexual offence victims.

Method

Analytical Design

A SSA (Malpass *et al*., 2008) was conducted to ascertain the extent of research that had been conducted on the investigative interviewing of sexual offence victims. The analysis describes the studies that make up the literature-base and explores the associations between study attributes by cross-tabulating variables to construct an overall study space matrix. Often spoken about in the same discussions as meta-analysis, systematic and narrative reviews, a SSA is a different type of methodology (Malpass *et al*., 2008) that highlights the variables of potential importance and those that may have gone unnoticed – a meta-analysis is limited to research that has actually been conducted. A SSA also provides the researcher with the ability to examine whether the distribution of studies in a particular field is uneven (see Memon, Meissner, & Fraser, 2010). Whilst systematic reviews can identity underexplored issues (i.e., Paluck & Green, 2009), the use of a SSA allows for quantification and increased rigour (Bartos, Berger, & Hegarty, 2014). Despite being a relatively newfound methodology that is still developing, it was felt that an approach utilising a SSA was the most appropriate as it provides an in-depth examination of the current literature-base. More specifically, it would highlight what has, and has not, been researched when focusing on the investigative interviewing of (adult) sexual offence victims. The findings of the SSA helped provide additional justification and motive for the direction of the PhD programme. Using this methodology also enabled the researcher to keep a running 'catalogue' of the articles that contributed to this particular area of research, updating the SSA matrix as and when relevant studies were published.

As highlighted by Malpass *et al.* (2008), a study space can be developed at two different levels of resolution. A 'low resolution' study space uses just the variable names, whereas a 'high resolution' furthers this by containing the various different variable levels in addition to the specific variations in methodological and procedural details. It is then those study attributes that define the dimensions of the research 'space' with the frequencies in each cell used to interpret the population of regions in each respective 'space'. The following steps detail how a study space matrix is constructed (a study space model used in this review is shown in Figure 2.1):

1. Identify relevant studies in the literature-base of interest (a process shared with narrative and meta-analytic reviews);
2. For each study, construct a matrix detailing the independent, dependent, methodological and procedural variables;
3. Identify and include in the study matrix constant 'variables'. These are factors that are controlled and held constant in a given study but which may vary across studies;
4. Enter a '1' in every cell in the matrix corresponding to an intersection of study attributes in each individual study, and;
5. Merge the individual study matrices into an overall matrix.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES in ***bold*** with levels in regular formatted text	**1.1 Interviewing officer gender;** male	1.2 female	**2.1 Age of Interviewing Officer;** 20 - 29	2.2 30 - 39	2.3 40 - 49	2.4 50 - 59	2.5 60+
B. METHODOLOGICAL VARIABLES							
200.1 Sex of interviewee; male							
200.2 female	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
200.3 both	2	2					
200.4 not given	1	1					

Figure 2.1. A screenshot of the study space structure used to plot cross-tabulations between methodological and independent variables.

Study Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria

All included studies were: (i) published in peer-reviewed journals and relate to the investigative interviewing of adult sexual offence victims; (ii) addressed how a variable/s might impact on at least one aspect of the interview, and; (iii) included details specific to the victim and/or interviewer/s (e.g., the credibility of the victim's account, interviewers' rape

myth acceptance or the amount of empathy used[5]). Both quantitative and qualitative methodologies were included to provide a reliable representation of the literature-base albeit that including qualitative research is unique in a SSA. Reviews and descriptive studies were excluded due to them not always providing full details of the variables used and/or making reference to research that had already been published, and therefore satisfies the inclusion criteria stipulated above.

Literature Search

All articles were obtained from searches of the following databases: (i) *PsychINFO;* (ii) *Scopus;* (iii) *ScienceDirect,* and; (iv) *Ingenta.* All were searched using various combinations of the following key words: 'forensic interviewing', 'investigative interviewing', 'rape victims', 'police interview', 'rape survivor', 'rape complainant', 'rape victim interview, 'interview techniques', 'sexual offences', 'sexual assault', 'rape', 'interviewing style', 'interviewing officer', 'rape reporting', 'empathic interviewing' and 'humane interviewing'. Relevant articles published by known authors were also sourced. A total of 30 articles (see Appendix A) were located covering a 15-year period (2001 to 2016[6]). After collating the sample of articles, each of the reference sections were reviewed to assess how successful the search strategy had been. Each article included in the sample was cited by at least one other author indicating that the search strategy had been successful and covered the breadth of the literature-base.

Coding Scheme

Quantitative methodology.

The predictors and outcomes (IVs & DVs[7]) for each study were identified and listed onto individual matrices. These were subsequently merged to form one complete matrix for the total sample that included a frequency count of the number of analyses falling into each category intersection[8]. Due to the large number of articles included in the SSA and the individual analyses that were observed a range of different predictors were recorded, one example included the participant group (i.e. the sample population of a study e.g., rape victims or officers'). This was replicated for the different outcomes, which again included a

[5] A full set of all variables, together with methodological characteristics relating to each study used was compiled and can be accessed by the following link - https://www.ncl.ac.uk/psychology/staff/profile/williamwebster.html#publications
[6] There were no research articles published prior to 2001 that met the search criteria.
[7] For consistency throughout, all independent and dependent variables will be described hereinafter as 'predictors' and 'outcomes'.
[8] A copy of the complete matrix can be accessed by the following link - https://www.ncl.ac.uk/psychology/staff/profile/williamwebster.html#publications

wide range of items, one example relates to the victim's perspective/opinion (i.e. what a study was measuring e.g., overall satisfaction with the police or self-blame score). For a full list of the predictors and outcomes included in the SSA, see Results and Discussion section below.

Qualitative methodology.

A separate form of coding was devised for the qualitative studies to enable their incorporation. The research question/s explored were classified using similar categories formulated from the quantitative studies. For example, one study (Jordan, 2008) focused on the perspective/overall assessment of the victim in relation to the service provided by the police. Hence, this research question was interpreted as measuring the *victim's perspective/opinion*.

Results and Discussion

The aim of the SSA was to examine the literature-base that has contributed to improving the overall efficacy of investigative interviews with sexual offence victims. This was achieved by reviewing the nature and methodologies of the research studies conducted in this topic area to establish any gaps in knowledge.

SSA Demographics

There were twenty-two quantitative studies from five countries: Canada (*n*=1), England (*n*=6), New Zealand (*n*=4), Sweden (*n*=2) and the USA (*n*=9), and eight qualitative studies from three countries: England (*n*=3), New Zealand (*n*=1) and the USA (*n*=4) (Table 2.1 outlines all of the included articles). After all of the articles were collected and, following detailed coding, 65 different predictors and 54 outcomes were identified. The predictors from quantitative papers were broken-down into six categories based on the type of variable they were manipulating and included:

(i) Interviewing officer characteristics:

a. Gender: (male & female);
b. Age: (20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60+);
c. Rank: (high & low);
d. Agency/force/constabulary type: (town/village, county, city, state/federal, other);
e. Received specialist training: (yes & no);
f. Educational attainment: (high school diploma, college, associate's degree, bachelor's degree, master's degree);
g. Investigation experience: (<5 cases, 6-10 cases, 11-20 cases, >21 cases), and;
h. Length of service: (< 5 years, 5-9 years, 10-19 years, 20-29 years, >30years).

(ii) Victim characteristics:

a. Was the victim drunk/stoned (substance abuse): (yes/no);
b. Any previous consensual sex with accused: (yes/no);
c. Previously been raped or abused: (yes/no);
d. Is the complainant psychiatrically disturbed/emotionally expressive: (yes/expressive/crying/upset & no/controlled/calm);
e. Is the complainant perceived as being immoral (victim character): (yes/questionable moral character & no/moral character);
f. Is the complainant intellectually impaired/mental health difficulties: (yes/no);
g. Has the complainant made previous false allegations: (yes/no);
h. Has the complainant concealed factors/provided information/cooperated: (yes/all & no/omitted);
i. Gender: (male/female);
j. Victim race/ethnicity: (white, black, Hispanic, minority, mixed race, Asian & other);
k. Marital status (single/married/cohabiting);
l. Employment status: (employed/unemployed);
m. Victim age: (<12, 13-19, 20-25, 26-64, >65, unknown, <16, >16, <35 & >35);
n. Victim character issues: (previous drug user, previous alcohol consumer, prostitute, mental health issues & motive to lie);
o. Victim previous convictions: (yes/no), and;
p. Did the victim live with their parents: (yes/no).

(iii) Offence characteristics:

a. Type of rape (victim/suspect relationship): (stranger/known <24 hours, acquaintance/known >24 hours/non-stranger, intimate/ex-partner/domestic, vulnerable & family);
b. Was a weapon used during the incident: (yes/no);
c. Were witnesses present during the incident: (yes/no);
d. Did the victim resist during the incident/was physical force/violence used: (yes/no);
e. Was the victim injured: (yes, no, slightly & seriously);
f. Did the offence occur outside: (yes/no);
g. Did penetration occur: (yes/no);
h. Time of offence: (during the day, at night & unknown);
i. Alcohol usage: (victim and suspect, victim only, suspect only & unknown);

j. Location of offence: (suspects or victims home, victim and suspects home, outside, other private residence, >1 location, hotel, car, club/pub, unoccupied dwelling, school, sporting stadium, private dwelling & public place);
k. Manipulation technique: (force, not reported, victim unconscious, victim scared, victim intoxicated, no memory, victim drugged, grooming, weapon, refused to stop, consensual but victim underage, unknown, threats, pressurised & no force)
l. Type of assault: (rape, attempted rape, sexual battery & other);
m. Was a threat made: (yes/no);
n. Number of victims involved: (1 & >2);
o. Number of suspects involved: (1 & >2), and;
p. Victim risk taking behaviours: (alcohol drank, drug taking, getting drunk, going to a bar alone, accepting a ride from a stranger, being in a place where people sell/buy drugs & being passed out).

(iv) Suspect characteristics:

a. Suspect race/ethnicity: (white, black, Hispanic, Asian & unknown);
b. Does the suspect have prior arrest history/previous convictions: (yes/no);
c. Suspect age: (0-12, 13-19, 20-25, 26-64, 65+, unknown, under 35 & 35+), and;
d. Suspect employment status: (employed/not employed).

(v) Investigation-related issues (this predictor category relates to matters associated with how the investigation was conducted), and:

a. Format of Interview: (standard, structured, cognitive);
b. Stage of Investigation Process: (initial contact and reporting, medical examination, statement taking and interview, case progress);
c. Was there a delay in reporting: (yes/>6 hours & no/<6 hours);
d. Type of information provided: (initial account, offender description, offence description);
e. Outcome of case: (prosecution/guilty, no prosecution/not guilty/lost, unknown & successfully processed);
f. Was a rape kit completed: (yes/no);
g. Were there any discrepancies in the victim statement: (yes/no);
h. Presence of a rape victim advocate: (yes/no);
i. Was the credibility of the victim questioned: (yes/no);
j. Strength of evidence: (SART exam received, victim fingerprints collected, bloodstains collected, hair sample collected, skin sample collected, clothing or bedding collected, semen collected & vehicle license plate collected);
k. Was the crime reported by the victim: (yes/no);
l. Was the crime reported to the police: (yes/no), and;
m. Was there any supporting evidence available: (yes/no).

(vi) Research-related issues (this predictor category relates to matters associated with how the respective research studies may have manipulated a variable):

a. Method of data collection: (face to face & internet);
b. Level of rape myth present in scenario: (high/low);
c. Participant group: (SOIT officers, rape survivor/victim, police officer, prosecutor/solicitor, aggravated assault victim & crime victim);
d. Rape myth acceptance: (high/low to moderate);
e. Training condition: (baseline training & experimental training);

f. Point of assessment: (before any participation in training, after classroom instruction, after classroom instruction and one simulated sexual assault interview, after classroom instruction and two simulated sexual assault interviews);
g. Gender of professional: (male/female), and;
h. Age: (25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, >65).

The outcomes were broken down into nine categories and included:

(i) Victim perspective/opinion:

a. Self-blame score;
b. Overall satisfaction with the police;
c. Investigative interview/service provided by the police/service delivery;
d. Secondary victimization behaviour;
e. Secondary victimization emotions;
f. Total shame score;
g. PTSD severity score;
h. Perceived empathy score;
i. Likelihood of court score;
j. Rape myth acceptance;
k. Belief in a just world;
l. Locus of control;
m. Attitudes towards the police, and;
n. Pro victim/anti rapist attitudes scale.

(ii) Police officers' professional perspective/opinion:

a. On the service provided by STO's;
b. Legitimacy of the complainant/victim reliability/credibility;
c. Accuracy/credibility of information provided;
d. Rape myth acceptance;
e. Victim blaming;
f. Belief in a just world;
g. Gender role;
h. Perpetrator blaming, and;
i. The role of victim credibility.

(iii) Case outcome:

a. Founding decision;
b. Arrest decision;
c. Present to prosecution decision, and;
d. Felony charge decision.

(iv) Behavioural observations by the law:

a. Expressive self-presentation style, and;
b. Self (perpetrator) blame.

(v) Police officers' personal beliefs:

a. Self-rated/content knowledge;

b. Beliefs;
c. Attitudes towards rape;
d. Number of victims known personally;
e. Negative comments toward rape victims;
f. Reporting rape to the police;
g. Level of general education;
h. Background information, and;
i. Level of sexual assault education.

(vi) Reporting process:

a. Was the offence reported to the police, and;
b. Features associated with rape attrition.

(vii) Prosecutor views/perceptions:

a. Advantages of playing video-recorded interviews as evidence;
b. Disadvantages of playing video-recorded interviews as evidence, and;
c. Ideal characteristics of the account given by complainant.

(viii) Police officers' career-related experiences, and:

a. Number of sexual assault cases;
b. Years as a police officer;
c. Attitudes toward training;
d. Crime victim advocacy;
e. Performance in a simulated sexual assault interview;
f. Knowledge of interview techniques, and;
g. Treatment of crime victims.

(ix) Researcher perspective (this outcome category refers to the perspective of the author who conducted the research [not the author of this thesis] that is included as an article in the present SSA):

a. Victim cooperation at the time of reporting;
b. Victim cooperation during the initial investigation;
c. Victim cooperation at the time of the arrest, and;
d. Real rape categories.

To ensure that the categorisation of predictor and outcome variables was appropriate, regular meetings took place with the supervision team where discussions focused on justifying/explaining why each category of variables (both predictors and outcomes) was grouped together. After reviewing the 30 articles included in the sample and on-going discussions throughout the course of conducting the SSA; it was felt that the final categorisation of the predictors and outcomes was a reliable and accurate reflection of what was included.

Table 2.1. Frequency of studies included within the SSA.

	Research Design			
	Quantitative (predictors)		**Qualitative**	
	Specific Characteristics	***Related Issues****		**Totals (%)**
Outcomes				
1. Victim perspective/ opinion	1 *(6)*	4 *(4, 8, 12, 29)*	4 *(1, 10, 18, 28)*	**9**
2. Police officer professional perspective/ opinion	5 *(7, 9, 16, 21, 25)*	2 *(17, 22)*	1 *(13)*	**8**
3. Case outcome	1 *(2)*	-	-	**1**
4. Behavioural observations by the law	-	-	-	**0**
5. Police officer personal beliefs	1 *(20)*	2 *(3, 11)*	1 *(26)*	**4**
6. Reporting process	2 *(5, 30)*	-	-	**2**
7. Prosecutor views/perceptions	-	1 *(23)*	-	**1**
8. Police officer career related experiences	1 *(19)*	-	1 *(15)*	**2**
9. Researcher perspective	2 *(24, 27)*	-	-	**2**
*** Perspective of other professional*	-	-	1 *(14)*	**1**
Totals	**13**	**9**	**8**	***30***

Note: Figures in parenthesis indicate the reference numbers allocated to each article included within the SSA (see Appendix A for full details).
* A generalised term used to refer to both the investigation-related and research-related predictor categories.
** This measurement emerged from one qualitative study and a new variable created.

The six predictor categories (quantitative) were then separated into two broad groups: (i) *specific characteristics*, and; (ii) *related issues* (a term used to refer to both the investigation and research related predictor categories). Articles measuring some form of *victim perspective/opinion* (*n*=9) and *police officer professional perspective/opinion* (*n*=8) accounted for the largest number of studies. However, when considering the totals outlined in Table 2.1, it should be borne in mind that the qualitative studies included did not manipulate any predictors. Due to the specifications of qualitative research this makes any true comparison with quantitative research difficult, thus, a true comparison of all the analyses within the SSA is challenging. For comparison purposes, Table 2.2 provides an overview of

the total quantitative studies utilised by using the predictor and outcome categories (outlined on pp. 32 – 35).

Table 2.2. Frequency of total quantitative analyses broken down by predictor and outcome categories.

	Predictors						
	Specific Characteristics				Related Issues		
Outcomes	**Interviewing officer (1)**	**Victim (2)**	**Offence (3)**	**Suspect (4)**	***Investigation (5)***	***Research (6)***	**Totals**
1. Victim perspective/opinion	2 (1%)	4 (3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	*24 (20%)*	*18 (38%)*	**48 (5%)**
2. Police officer professional perspective/opinion	68 (22%)	42 (30%)	30 (18%)	0 (0%)	*14 (12%)*	*16 (9%)*	**170 (18%)**
3. Case outcome	0 (0%)	28 (20%)	44 (21%)	20 (43%)	*24 (20%)*	*0 (0%)*	**116 (12%)**
4. Behavioural observations by the law	14 (4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	*0 (0%)*	*18 (16%)*	**32 (4%)**
5. Police officer personal beliefs	126 (40%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	*0 (0%)*	*30 (27%)*	**156 (17%)**
6. Reporting process	0 (0%)	28 (20%)	22 (32%)	8 (12%)	*8 (6%)*	*3 (3%)*	**69 (7%)**
7. Prosecutor views/ perceptions	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	*15 (12%)*	*0 (0%)*	**15 (2%)**
8. Police officer career related experiences	105 (33%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	*0 (0%)*	*15 (13%)*	**120 (13%)**
9. Researcher perspective	0 (0%)	37 (27%)	119 (55%)	19 (40%)	*33 (30%)*	*0 (0%)*	**208 (22%)**
Totals	**315 (34%)**	**139 (15%)**	**215 (23%)**	**47 (5%)**	***118 (12%)***	***100 (11%)***	***934***

Note 1. Italicised text and figures relate to predictors from ‘Related Issues’. **Note 2.** Percentages of totals in parenthesis.

Of those studies that utilised a quantitative research design, a total of 934 individual analyses were conducted by the researchers, whereby the relationship between various predictor and outcome categories was recorded. Those studies that had a more complex research design naturally provided a greater number of analyses (i.e., numerous predictor and outcome cross-tabulations). Table 2.3 provides an overview of the research questions explored within the eight qualitative studies and how these were broadly classified utilising the quantitative categories.

Table 2.3. Research questions explored from studies using a qualitative methodology.

Research question/s	Allocation of research question to quantitative category
Rape survivors post-assault experiences (see study #1)	• Victim perspective/opinion
Victims perspective/overall assessment of the service provided by the police (see study #10)	• Victim perspective/opinion
Police views on indicators of victim reliability, and; Police views on the reasons for attrition (see study #13)	• Police officer professional perspective/opinion
Rape victim advocates experiences and perceptions of the police and medical systems involved in the interviewing of rape victims (see study #14)	• *Perspective of other professional*
Officer experiences of dealing with rape cases (see study #15)	• Police officer career related experiences
Victim credibility, Victim perceptions of questioning, and; Victim perception on how this may affect their level of disclosure (see study #18)	• Victim perspective/opinion
Police officer's perceptions/definitions of sexual assault, Police officer's perception of the typical sexual assaults reported, and; Police officer's thoughts on the factors that influence perceptions, responses and attitudes towards those responses (see study #26)	• Police officer personal beliefs
Experiences of rape with respect to the UK legal system from the perspective of (see study #28): • Victims • Police officers • Experts in the provision of victim support	• Victim perspective/opinion • Police officer career related experience • *Perspective of other professional*

Note 1. Categories in *italicised* text were not formulated from the quantitative studies (and previously outlined). These are additional categories derived from analysis of the qualitative studies.
Note 2. The study number indicated by the '#' is a reference to the article that the research question was taken from (this list can be found in Appendix A).

The findings of the SSA will now be explored in greater detail focusing on each predictor category and any notable interactions they have with the outcomes (refer to Table 2.2 and the list of variables that make up each predictor category [see pp. 32 – 34]).

Predictor Categories

Interviewing officer characteristics (category 1).

Thirty-four percent of studies (*n*=315) manipulated some form of predictor from this category and 299 different analyses were conducted relating to the *personal beliefs*, *professional perspective/opinion* and *career related experiences* of police officers. Although relatively high, this is understandable given: (i) that interviewer characteristics and generic offence/investigation details are not as specific or sensitive as personal characteristics relating to victims; (ii) the strict ethical requirements relating to data collection for this type of research, and; (iii) the possible psychological impact that involvement in such research might have on victims. To demonstrate the wide ranging parameters of inclusion for this predictor category the following research was grouped together for the purpose of this SSA. Research conducted by Ask (2010) investigated how an officer's length of service could impact on their treatment of crime victims, whilst Rich and Seffrin (2014) provided analysis on how a police force could impact on their negative comments toward rape victims.

Victim characteristics (category 2).

This category constituted 15% of the analyses and it was evident that the main focus was on *police officer professional perspective/opinion*, with 42 individual analyses being conducted. Two studies (i.e., Campbell *et al.,* 2015; Jordan, 2004) investigated the impact that various victim characteristics had on the *police officer professional perspective/opinion*. Despite over a decade separating the two research articles, Campbell *et al*., found that some myths still existed amongst officers - a finding concurrent with the work of Jordan. For example, some officers in both studies believed that the level of detail in a victim statement, their willingness to co-operate, and any previous criminal history all impacted on the perceived level of credibility.

Offence characteristics (category 3).

This category accounted for 23% of the recorded analyses where manipulation of 16 different variables took place (see pp. 32 – 34 for a full list), with four different outcomes categories providing some form of measurement. A significant proportion (53%) of these

studies measured the *reporting process* and the *case outcome*. Research conducted by Du Mont, Miller, & Myhr, (2003) demonstrates this as they explored how certain factors (i.e. presence of a weapon, where the offence took place etc.) had an impact on whether the offence was reported to the police. These findings are similar to those produced for the predictor category *victim characteristics,* in that both could potentially be explained by considering the impact that various misconceptions and social prejudices associated with rape may have on the actual reporting of a case and its progress through the CJS. The manipulation of variables from this predictor category provides additional insight into the prevalence of rape myths (i.e., how the victim-suspect relationship, consumption of alcohol or lack of fight from the victim could impact on the overall case outcome). Such misconceptions are regularly applicable to cases progressing through the CJS and the impact of such misconceptions is not just limited to those directly involved in the investigation. For example, rape myths may also have an impact on members of the Jury and Judiciary *per se*, all of whom play a pivotal role in determining the outcome of the case (the potential impact of rape myths will be discussed further in chapter three).

Suspect characteristics (category 4).

Only 5% of the recorded analyses manipulated one of the four different variables included within this predictor category and just three forms of measurement were recorded: (i) *case outcome*; (ii) *reporting processes,* and; (iii) *researcher perspective* (outcome categories 3, 6 & 9). The outcome category that was measured the most (43%) was *case outcome*. This large representation was a result of the article by Alderden and Ullman (2012) who sought to identify what factors predicted the investigation outcome for sexual assault cases across several points throughout an investigation (i.e., suspect race/ethnicity, prior arrest history etc.).

Investigation-related issues (category 5).

Given the specific focus of the SSA and its overarching aim to propose possible courses of action that could consequently assist in the development of a more effective framework for the investigative interviewing in sexual offence cases, this predictor category was deemed to be the most relevant. It was hoped that those studies that manipulated a variable associated with *investigation-related* predictors, would provide the foundation for gaining a more detailed insight into the specific processes involved. These studies/analyses would ultimately form the basis for any potential policy recommendations, given that the study attributes are concerned with actual investigation-related matters. This category

accounts for 12% of the overall recorded quantitative analyses. Six different outcome categories[9] were used to provide some form of measurement and will now be explored in further detail (see pp. 34 – 35 for a full list).

Victim perspective/opinion (category 1).

This accounted for 20% of the recorded analyses in relation to the predictor concerned with *investigation-related issues* and was the largest of all outcome categories with 14 different variables measuring items relating to the victim and aspects linked to the investigation. An example of research that contributed to this particular category was conducted in New Zealand and investigated how women's overall satisfaction with the police differed at various stages of the investigation process (Jordan, 2001).

Police officers' professional perspective/opinion (category 2).

Accounting for 12% of the total quantitative analyses in relation to *investigation-related issues*, this included analyses that measured how officers' perceived credibility of information provided was influenced by how the information was obtained. An example can be seen in the research conducted by Westera *et al.* (2011) who explored how the interview format (standard, structured and CI) influenced officers' perceived credibility of the information provided during mock rape complainant interviews.

Case outcome (category 3).

This category accounted for 20% of the recorded analyses with a total of four items used for measurement, and was formulated as a result of research conducted in the USA by Alderden and Ullman (2012). They attempted to establish what factors during the investigation could predict the outcome of sexual assault cases, with a focus on the reporting of the investigation as opposed to the actual practicalities involved within an interview.

Reporting process (category 6).

This accounted for the smallest frequency of recorded analyses (6%) when used as a form of measurement and was a result of the work conducted by Brown, Hamilton and O'Neill (2007) who investigated the features associated with rape attrition throughout a police investigation.

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[9] Outcome categories 4, 5 and 8 contained no analyses and hence are not included here.

Prosecutor views/perceptions (category 7).

This accounted for 12% of the recorded analyses in relation to the predictor concerned with *investigation-related issues* and the three items used for measurement were the advantages and disadvantages of playing video-recorded interviews as evidence, and ideal characteristics of the account given by the complainant. This category was formulated after reviewing research by Westera, Kebbell and Milne (2013), which investigated how the interview format and type of information provided influenced the perceptions of prosecutors.

Researcher perspective (category 9).

This category had the largest number of analyses recorded (30%) and was a consequence of two studies (Kaiser, O'Neal & Spohn, 2016; Waterhouse, Reynolds, & Egan, 2016). The former assessed the level of victim co-operation at different stages of an investigation by examining case notes; a similar method used by the latter authors who assessed how many actual reported rapes matched the 'real rape' myth.

Research-related issues (category 6).

Just 11% of the recorded quantitative analyses manipulated some form of item from this predictor category. Items from six different outcome categories were used to provide some form of measurement. However, a notable proportion (49%) are linked to the *professional perspectives/opinions, personal beliefs*, and *career related experiences* of police officers (outcome categories 2, 5 & 8). Those predictors included are all concerned with *research-related issues* and predominantly the set-up of research studies where various aspects of interview practice are manipulated (see pp. 32 – 34). Given the various predictors that are included, the involvement of perceptions and experiences of police officers was to be expected due to being the only group that could provide feedback or comment on the practicalities involved in the interviewing or training offered for interviewing sexual offence victims. This was evident in the research conducted by Lonsway, Welch and Fitzgerald (2001) who explored how the training received by officers impacted on their performance in a simulated sexual assault interview.

General Discussion

One methodological detail highlighted was the differentiation between studies focussing on 'real' versus 'hypothetical' cases/scenarios. Twenty-one studies (70%) utilised methodologies that involved real-life cases, ranging from first-hand accounts of experiences

with the investigative interviewing process, to the examination of actual case details. The remaining nine studies (30%) from England (*n*=2), New Zealand (*n*=2) and the USA (*n*=5) comprised methodologies that involved hypothetical cases/scenarios utilising some element of quantitative methodology, with three using a mixed-methodology. Sexual crimes are, by their very nature, personal, sensitive, and distressing to the victims. Thus, conducting research on this topic can be difficult, resulting in various ethical and methodological issues. For example, trust and approval is required from all concerned and researchers must adhere to data-protection laws and security agreements/principles. Therefore, difficulties in acquiring such data could provide a possible explanation as to why nearly one third of the sample utilised hypothetical cases/scenarios.

The general topic of investigative interviewing has various elements that can be the primary focus of research. For this SSA, the emphasis was placed on the investigative interviewing of sexual offence victims which is of vital importance given the worldwide increase of sexual offences (CIUS, 2016; Garcia-Moreno & Watts, 2011; UKONS, 2017). The widespread disparity amongst incidence, reporting rates and conviction rates for sexual offences also implies that some factors appear to be having more of an impact on victims' willingness to report the crime (e.g., confidence levels and attrition rates; Darwinkel *et al.,* 2013a; Du Mont *et al.,* 2003; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2006).

After interpreting the results from Table 2.2, it is possible to make various assumptions with regards to the quantitative analyses that make up the majority of the sample. Of the categories created for the predictors, 34% manipulated some form of *interviewing officer characteristic.* With regards to the categories created for the outcomes, these appeared to be evenly spread across the quantitative analyses. Nevertheless, the outcome categories concerned with measuring *police officers' professional perspectives/opinions, personal beliefs* and *career related experiences* accounted for a significant proportion of the sample with 48% measuring how the manipulation of various predictors could influence one of these three outcome categories. After reviewing the included quantitative studies, it is evident that the largest frequency of analyses (299 of the 934 analyses [*n*=22]) involved research where some form of *police officers' professional perspective/opinion, personal belief* or *career related experience* was being measured to ascertain what sort of influence *interviewing officer characteristics* had on one of the three outcome categories. When the entire sample was taken into consideration (N=30) there was a similar finding. On examination of the frequency of studies (see Table 2.1) to establish their exact nature, the outcome categories concerned with *police officers' professional perspectives/opinions*, *personal beliefs* and *career related*

experiences accounted for 47% (*n*=14) of the entire sample (N=30). Regardless of the type of research methodology being used, approximately 50% of articles included measured one of these outcome categories. Again, this was not wholly unexpected given: (i) that the *professional perspectives/opinions, personal beliefs* and *career related experiences* of police officers are not as sensitive as those relating to victims; (ii) the strict ethical requirements relating to data collection regulations for this type of research, and; (iii) the possible psychological impact that involvement in such research might have on victims.

Of the predictor categories created, *investigation-related issues* was the most relevant in relation to the aims of the SSA. After reviewing the outcome and predictor categories, there were some notable areas of concentration and inattention. For example, three of the outcome categories were concerned with *victim perspective/opinion, police officers' professional perspective/opinion,* and *case outcome.* Previous research has been conducted on how rape victims have been questioned, the perceived legitimacy of their complaint, their overall satisfaction with the service provided by the police/law enforcement agency, and how this relates to the case outcome. However, one aspect that has not been explored is what interviewing techniques those officers who interview sexual offence victims both use and value. It is important to ascertain an understanding of what techniques those interviewers are using and then how effective and/or useful they perceive those techniques to be (this will be discussed in three). To provide adequate guidance for policy implications in relation to the investigative interviewing of sexual offence victims, it is clear from this SSA that additional research is required. One particular area yet to be researched relates to assessing the quality of evidence obtained during an investigative interview. It is imperative that future research analyses actual audio/video-recorded interviews, as opposed to transcripts or self-report measures (see chapter four). This will ensure the ecological validity of any subsequent findings and will enhance our understanding of the interactive process, providing sound guidance for policy implications based on robust and scientific research. Nonetheless, before empirical research of this nature can be conducted it is crucial that the perspective of those conducting the interview is sought to further our understanding of the interview process when concerned with sexual offence victims.

Limitations of the Study

There has been a limited amount of academic attention afforded to research on the interviewing of sexual offence victims which could provide an explanation as to why: (i) the included sample only covered 15 years, and; (ii) why the total sample used was smaller in

comparison with other SSAs (e.g., Memon *et al.*, 2010 – who used 57 studies). This may be due to cultural issues, possibly dictated by the region/country in which the study was conducted. For example, Chon (2014) explored how the legal systems differ between Western and non-Western regions and how this then relates to the decision a sexual offence victim makes in relation to whether the offence is reported to the police. He identified that legal systems in Western countries are more likely to approve laws that protect women from sexual violence. This then impacts on the reporting rates as Western victims are more likely to report (searching for justice) given that they hold stronger attitudes towards gender equality and are more aware of their legal rights per se (Baumer, Felson, & Messner, 2003).

To overcome this issue, it was decided that a range of terminology would be included when referring to this particular genre of crime (i.e., sexual assault, sexual abuse, sexual offending, and rape). In addition, only five countries' governmental/legislative systems came under review. Due to being based in England, the researcher is mostly familiar with systems being practiced there; however, this should not restrict the importance of potential policy recommendations worldwide. Dussich (2001) and Yamawaki (2008) argue that cross-cultural differences exist with regards to how individuals from Western and non-Western societies view sexual violence. Dussich (2001) noted that Japanese women tolerate a higher level of sexual violence than English-speaking women, who lived in Japan. In a similar study, Yamawaki (2008) found that Japanese college students are less likely to advise rape victims to report their offence to the police than US college students. It was suggested that this dissuasion stems from Japanese culture that focuses on concern for the victim and them being devalued by those surrounding them. It is possible that cross-cultural differences could also be seen in how interviewers investigate such crimes. However, they all essentially have the same objective – to obtain complete, accurate and reliable information. It is plausible that the findings from this SSA could have widespread implications based on the consistent findings from academic research that are replicated throughout the world.

Another limitation relates to the grouping and coding of variables that form the basis of the individual and merged matrices (see previous hyperlinks referred to on p. 30). Due to the numerous elements that can be explored and the subtle variations in the different CJS processes across the world, the final number of variables exceeded expectation and resulted in a complex final matrix. Given that SSAs are still in their relative infancy, the processes involved in constructing and developing the matrices require a somewhat subjective approach. Finally, the comparison of both quantitative and qualitative studies was challenging – no other SSA has fully incorporated qualitative data. Consequently, the findings from Table 2.2 must

be interpreted with caution. It is hoped that as this concept matures and gains further attention and academic rigour, the processes concerned with its construction, development and presentation of results will develop accordingly.

Potential Policy Implications

Research must be relevant and scientifically robust to convince practitioners and policy makers to alter their everyday practices and/or amend training programmes. The method used to evaluate the scientific adequacy for development and implementation of policy is vitally important and Malpass *et al*. (2008) identified two models in this regard: (i) the Well-established Knowledge (WEK), and; (ii) Best Practices (BP) models. Of the two models, the WEK approach has the higher criterion position, stipulating that a well-established literature-base should be available before any form of policy formation can occur. It also suggests that those studies making up the literature-base should be based on 'settled' science (Kargon, 1986), be scientifically respectable, and well established (Yarmey, 1986). The BP model takes a different perspective, suggesting that it is acceptable to make generic conclusions based on the best evidence available at the time. The more rigid BP model could potentially be utilised with any level of empirically based knowledge and used as a guide for policy change. However, a potential implication is that whenever new literature becomes available, changes relating to policy recommendations are going to be continuous. The literature-base explored for the purpose of this SSA (research assessing the effectiveness of investigative interviewing practices with sexual offence victims) meets the adequacy criteria set out by Malpass *et al*. (2008) in that the conclusions are based on the best evidence available at the time.

The only true method of empirically testing the effectiveness of investigative interviewing is through field tests, as replicating such research in a laboratory setting may raise ethical concerns and undoubtedly reduce the ecological validity of any subsequent findings. Nevertheless, the need to further investigate and explore this area has been recognised by various government reforms/reviews and has been subject to regular scrutiny (see e.g., Home Office Circular 69/86; HMCI/HMCPSI, 2007; Stern Review, 2010). Indeed, some progress has been made, especially in relation to the care of victims, in addition to some re-shaping of the law to reflect modern notions of sexual autonomy. However, the level of attention from the media and society in relation to those cases concerned with sexual offences has never been so high, especially in the wake of various high-profile cases involving well-known public figures in the UK (e.g., Jimmy Savile, Rolf Harris *et al*.). The findings from

this SSA indicate that the literature-base is predominantly focused on the views of victims and officers when assessing the efficacy of such interviews. A notion reflected by the overwhelming amount of research that exists within this realm of investigative interviewing. In contrast, psychological research focused on the interviewing of suspects specifically investigates how particular interviewing practices impact on the amount of IRI that is obtained.

Policy-makers, to date, appear to have focussed on reducing the high attrition rates in sexual offence cases and increasing conviction rates (see Kelly, Lovett & Regan, 2005) – this has been the historical gauge for measuring 'success' in sexual offence investigations. However, the Stern Review (2010)[10] suggested that such a focus was unhelpful and was one of the first to publicly suggest that it was time to take a 'broader approach'. Wolchover and Heaton-Armstrong (2008) have previously argued that Government reforms should focus more on police forces conducting quality investigations and case preparation, thereby refining ways of detecting unreliable allegations. Table 2.4 provides a breakdown of the various factors highlighted from the current SSA which, it is felt, could have potential policy implications in relation to sexual offence investigations.

Firstly, after reviewing the literature-base that has contributed to enhancing the understanding of how (adult) sexual offence victims are interviewed, it is apparent that they are notably different and require a specific set of skills not used during volume crime investigations (Benneworth, 2007; Cherryman & Bull, 2001; Marshall, 2001). The unique nature of sexual offence investigations requires that interviewers' should adopt a considered (empathic) approach to ensure that the interaction is productive (Shepherd & Griffiths, 2013) and one that acknowledges the potential impact of mental health problems (Jordan, 2004). Such deficiencies can result in the victim displaying behaviours that are not consistent with the interviewers' expectations of how a traditional victim might behave (Alderden & Ullman, 2012; Beichner & Spohn, 2012) and this may result in the victim's credibility being questioned. Whilst the benchmark for measuring success in sexual offence investigations has been reviewed and subsequently amended (see the Stern Review, 2010), perhaps the best practice/training guidelines also need to be reviewed to ensure that psychologically-informed and scientifically-proved guidance is acknowledged and incorporated to highlight the concerns previously raised. Such a review would support the stance of Wolchover and

[10] A report produced by Baroness Vivien Stern *CBE* relating to an independent review of how rape investigations were handled by public authorities in England and Wales.

Heaton-Armstrong (2008) who identified that the point of focus should be on conducting quality investigations.

The SSA highlighted how there are some areas of research, specifically focusing on the investigative interviewing of adult sexual offence victims, that have received substantially more attention than when compared with others. A predominant focus of research within the literature-base was evident whereby *interviewing officer characteristics* were regularly manipulated to ascertain how they impacted on the *professional perspectives/opinions, personal beliefs* and *career related experiences* of police officers. In comparison, there was a dearth of research that manipulated *investigation-related issues* (i.e. how the use of certain question typologies or interviewing techniques may impact on the quantity/quality of information provided). Throughout England and Wales, there are numerous police forces that have collaboration agreements with research facilities. It is imperative that such agreements are formulated with the aim of conducting research that is innovative and provides new-found knowledge on issues that are yet to be addressed. The findings from this SSA could help identify those areas of research yet to be explored and provide direction for those forces collaborating with academics/researchers. Any subsequent findings should then be shared to ensure that those officers participating in the research receive reflective feedback and those not participating receive psychologically-informed guidance on what practices improve the efficacy of interviewing sexual offence victims.

Table 2.4. Potential policy implications interpreted from the SSA.

Identified topic	Highlighted issue	Possible action
Method used to measure success of rape investigations	Since Stern (2010) there has been no review to assess whether the suggested measurements have been implemented within the UK.	Conduct a full review. Some cases may not get a conviction but this does not mean that an investigation has been conducted poorly.
Current best practice/training guidelines in use	Interviewing a sexual offence victim is more challenging compared to others. Research suggests that a considered approach is taken to address psychological issues (e.g., victim blaming and rape myth acceptance).	Review current best practice/training guidelines to ensure they incorporate psychologically-informed and scientifically-proven guidance for practitioners.
Prevalence of rape myths	This is an issue that has attracted attention for some time and is significant in relation to confidence levels and the overall perception of rape *per se*, suspects and victims.	The current best practice/training guidelines need to be reviewed and if needed, amended, to ensure that law enforcement professionals are aware of the implications of such prejudicial views (i.e., how societal attitudes inform laws).
Current level of awareness regarding vulnerable adults	Some vulnerabilities (e.g., mental health) are not fully understood by professionals.	Conduct a survey to ascertain the current level of understanding amongst law enforcement professionals. Those findings could then be used to amend, where necessary, the current best practice/training guidelines to ensure that vulnerabilities are better understood and how confusion on such issues could impact on related investigations.
Expectations about traditional crime behaviour versus sexual offences	Some police/law enforcement agencies compare the behaviour of sexual offence victims (post-offence) with those of other crime victims and confuse some behaviours as indicators of reduced credibility.	Review the current best practice/training guidelines to ensure that investigators are educated/trained on the different behaviours that sexual offence victims may or may not display and what psychological research indicates is relevant.
The use of empathy during interviews	The relationship between empathy and psychological factors such as PTSD and shame is debated within academic literature – 'coaching' and 'rewarding' vs. effective interview technique.	More research is needed within this realm of psychology to ascertain a better understanding of the relationship between empathy and effective interviewing. Collaboration is required between academics and law enforcement professionals to review current practice and then use such findings to advise future interview training protocols.
Accessibility and availability of advocates' services	Rape victim advocates (within the USA) provide numerous benefits and can prevent serious negative consequences for rape victims, their family and friends. Ensuring this service is available (and encouraged) to victims is of paramount importance.	Review the current practices that are currently in place to ensure the policies being used utilise a multi-agency approach – seeking input from all the necessary parties.
Specific areas of concentration within the literature base	Findings from the SSA indicate that there is an abundance of research that focuses on how particular characteristics (associated with the interviewing officer) impact on their professional perspectives / opinions, beliefs and experiences in relation to such interviews.	Numerous police forces throughout the UK have collaboration agreements with research facilities. Such agreements need to be reviewed to ensure that future research is innovative, providing newfound knowledge on issues of concern.
Specific areas of inattention within the literature base	Findings from the SSA indicate a notable gap in the current literature base, particularly research that assesses the quality of evidence obtained during forensic interviews.	Collaboration between academics and practitioners is necessary to further advance our understanding of the interview process. Agreements could be formulated whereby such research is conducted with the findings relayed back to practitioners – providing both reflective feedback and guidance on what actually contributes to the effective interviewing of sexual offence victims.

Chapter Conclusion

This chapter involved an SSA and reviewed the current literature-base concerned with the investigative interviewing of sexual offence victims. Since 2000, research in relation to the effectiveness of investigative interviews with sexual offence victims has gathered momentum, including actively researching the ways that improvements can be made to the investigation. However, as best practice guidelines have developed in the UK (i.e., Home Office, 2002; 2007; MoJ, 2011; Office for Criminal Justice Reform, 2006), the gauge for measuring success within such interviews has been revised and conviction rates are no longer used as the benchmark to determine the level of efficacy; a change that has been brought about because of the improved understanding of these offences.

This SSA discovered that the predominant focus of the research currently available has focused on measuring three particular outcome categories, all related to officers: (i) *professional perspectives/opinions;* (ii) *personal beliefs,* and; (iii) *career related experiences.* The gaps highlighted indicate that the exploration of interviewers' perceptions regarding their interviewing practices and the analysis of actual interviews with sexual offence victims could be invaluable in gaining a more detailed understanding of what really occurs during the interview process (discussed further in chapters three and four). The following chapter will specifically focus on gaining a better understanding of the perceptions of police officers who interview sexual offence victims in England and Wales and whether those perceptions impact on practice.

Chapter three. Police perceptions of interviewing sexual offence victims: Understanding the impact of rapport, empathy and rape myths.

Chapter Summary

This chapter (an empirical research study) utilised a mixed methodological approach to establish a better understanding of the perceptions of interviewers responsible for interviewing sexual offence victims and whether such perceptions impact on their practice. One hundred and three police officers from 14 police forces in England and Wales completed a questionnaire and provided feedback on their views regarding ‘rape myths’, how frequently they use specific interview techniques and how effective they perceived them to be. The quantitative findings highlighted that female interviewers reported finding it easier to remain impartial and free from prejudice when interviewing sexual offence victims than their male counterparts. In addition, interviewers reported using rapport-based techniques more regularly and perceived them to be more effective than empathy-based techniques. Conversely, the qualitative analysis revealed that empathy-based techniques were valued more highly by the sampled interviewers than the quantitative findings initially indicated. The chapter concludes with recommendations as to how investigations could be improved, with specific reference to how officers could utilise psychologically-informed guidance to improve their practice.

Introduction

The research published to date continues to highlight the prevalence of sexual offences and the impact they can have on victims (Venema, 2016). For an individual who has been the victim of a sexual offence, the reporting of such a crime, whether to a close friend, family member or police officer, can be a daunting prospect that brings numerous significant concerns (Patterson, Greeson, & Campbell, 2009). The trauma associated with sexual offences extends far beyond the assault itself, and society's response can also impact on the well-being of a victim (Campbell, Wasco, Ahrens, Sefl, & Barnes, 2001). It is widely reported that the majority of sexual offence victims do not report the crime to the police, and of those that do, there is a mixed response when reflecting on how they were treated by the CJS overall (Venema, 2016). It is argued by Grubb and Turner (2012) that the reporting figures are 'misleading' and are more likely to only represent the 'tip of the iceberg' when considered in comparison with the true figure. The alleged suspect is seldom convicted, and victims have been found to report secondary re-victimisation (Alderden & Ullman, 2012; Campbell, 1998; Madigan & Gamble, 1991; Maier, 2008; Martin & Powell, 1994). This experience is epitomised by "…victim-blaming attitudes, behaviour and practices engaged in by community service providers, which further the rape event, resulting in additional trauma for rape survivors" (Campbell *et al.,* 2001, p. 1240).

It has been widely reported that the police play the role of 'gatekeeper' to the early stages of the CJS (Frazier & Haney, 1996; Seneviratne, 2004) and the manner in which they interact with victims is pivotal. It is crucial that officers understand how differing styles of treatment can have contrasting effects on the quality of the investigation itself (Patterson, 2012). In addition, previous research has highlighted how these professional 'gatekeepers' may be allowing their own beliefs to impact on their professional decision-making when dealing with sexual offence victims (Jordan, 2001; Page, 2008a; Ullman & Townsend, 2007; Woodhams, Hollin, Bull, & Cooke, 2012). These two particular issues require further exploration to ascertain whether they are connected, and if not, what other factors may potentially influence the low reporting rates associated with sexual offences.

Rape Myths and Common Misconceptions

Hester and Lilley (2016) believe there are several factors that may account for why reporting and conviction rates for sexual offences are so low, one being *'rape myths'* and their enduring presence over the past 30 years. Burt (1980) first defined rape myths as,

“Prejudicial, stereotyped or false beliefs about rape, rape victims, and rapists” (p.217), whilst Lonsway and Fitzgerald (1994) believe them to be, “…attitudes and beliefs that are generally false but are widely persistently held, and that serve to deny and justify male sexual aggression against women” (p.134). More recently they have been defined as, “Descriptive or prescriptive beliefs about rape (i.e. about its causes, context, consequences, perpetrators, victims, and their interaction) that serve to deny, downplay, or justify sexual violence that men commit against women” (Bohner, Eyssel, Pina, Siebler, & Viki, 2009, p. 19). There are various different types of myths, all of which serve different functions. Below are some of the common misconceptions articulated by Bohner *et al* (all of which assume that the victim is female):

- Some allocate blame to the victim for the offence (i.e., that women who wear revealing clothing provoke rape);
- Suggest that rape only happens to specific types of women (i.e., only those who behave promiscuously get raped);
- Remove blame from the suspect (i.e., implying that men cannot control their sex drive), and;
- Suggest that many reports of rape are false (i.e., that women often make up accusation in revenge against the alleged suspect).

It is important to acknowledge that rape myths are prevalent amongst people of all ages, genders, and across different races (Burt, 1980; McGee, O’Higgins, Garavan, & Conroy, 2011; Suarez & Gadalla, 2010). Despite some research dating back over 40 years (e.g., Barber, 1974; Brownmiller 1975; Burt, 1980), rape myths remain a phenomenon that continues to receive attention (McMillan, 2014). A large proportion of that focus has been on the consequential reaction of those exposed to such information (Goodman-Delahunty & Graham, 2011; Marshall & Hambley, 1996; Page, 2007; Peterson & Muelenhard, 2004; Sleath & Bull, 2012). The implications of rape myths vary in terms of how they influence (unconsciously or otherwise) the way in which blame is attributed to both the victim and suspect (Burt, 1980; Chiroro, Bohner, Viki, & Jarvis, 2004). However, there remains an important question - have common misconceptions around rape ever been confirmed as myths?

Since the emergence of the term during the 1980s, various definitions have been proposed and although they share similar connotations, there are notable differences (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994) which have had important implications for the development of

measurement instruments. The tools predominantly use three characteristics of myths which include: (i) they are false of apocryphal beliefs that are widely held; (ii) they explain some important cultural phenomenon, and; (iii) they serve to justify existing cultural arrangements. As with other common misconceptions, an act of rape (or sexual assault) may, or may not, conform to the myths about that incident. However, those acts that adhere to the myths are generally well publicised (see Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994 for a review). Furthermore, a large number of the commonly used myths are impossible to verify (i.e. 'many women have an unconscious desire to be raped'; Burt, 1980). A driving force behind the development of tools to measure the overall endorsement of such misconceptions is the high prevalence of rape myths and their possible implications – such tools include the use of rape myth acceptance scales (Burt, 1980; Payne, Lonsway, & Fitzgerald, 1999). The various different tools that have been developed will now be discussed along with how such tools have been used amongst different populations.

Rape Myth Acceptance Scales

The Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (RMAS) developed by Burt (1980) was the first tool used to measure individual levels of endorsement. A 19-item scale that predominantly focuses on misconceptions associated with the victim, for example, 'One reason that women falsely report a rape is that they frequently have a need to call attention to themselves.' Whilst the reliability measures of this scale have been found to be satisfactory, some notable concerns have been raised. Despite being the most influential tool developed to date, as time has progressed, the terminology used within the RMAS is now out-dated, and although it has been found that males are more accepting of rape myths than females, no other demographic variable has been found to be linked with rape myth acceptance (Payne *et al.,* 1999). A large number of items used within the RMAS reflect the ideology of rape myth acceptance, yet "…many of these relationships appear to reflect simple common sense, as well as a certain circularity" (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994, p. 148). Finally, Norton and Grant (2008) noted that there are only three sub-scales used within the RMAS that were sexual conversation, adversarial beliefs and interpersonal violence. Due to the highlighted concerns Payne *et al.* (1999) developed the Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance scale (IRMA) that aimed to provide a more detailed assessment of rape myth acceptance through the use of a 45-item tool (40 rape myth items and five filler items) that measures seven different factors. This scale makes a conscious effort to distinguish between different types of rape as the authors noted that different types of rape myths might influence different individuals in a variety of ways. The seven factors that the IRMA measures are, 'she asked for it', 'it wasn't really rape', 'he didn't

mean to', 'she wanted it', 'she lied', 'rape is a trivial event', and 'rape is a deviant event'. In comparison to the RMAS, analyses of the IRMA demonstrate higher levels of reliability (Harrison, Howerton, Secarea, & Nguyen, 2008).

In addition to the IRMA, numerous other tools have been developed to measure rape myth acceptance (i.e., Acceptance of Modern Myths About Sexual Aggression [AMMSA; Gerger, Kley, Bohner, & Siebler, 2007], Acceptance of Rape Myths Scales [Gilmartin-Zena, 1988], Attitude toward Rape Victims Scale [Ward, 1988]), however, no other measurement utilises such an in-depth and comparable range of established factors that is used in the IRMA. Despite Gerger *et al.,* (2007) arguing that all rape myth acceptance scales suffer from low mean scale responses, Sleath and Bull (2015) believe that the IRMA provides the greatest inclination about individuals' rape myth acceptance.

Rape myths are widely held beliefs about offences of a sexual nature that are used to justify or minimise that violence (Gerger *et al.,* 2007). Prior to discussing how myths are endorsed amongst officers, it is important to ascertain what the varying levels of endorsement are amongst the general population (including different sub-groups such as males and females). Unfortunately, research has found that rape-related misconceptions are not uncommon (O'Neal, 2017), however, levels of endorsement do vary. Süssenbach and Bohner (2011) discovered that levels of endorsement ranged between 19% and 57% (see also Carmody & Washington, 2001; Hammond, Berry, & Rodriguez, 2011). Other research has also found that the general population moderately or strongly agree with at least one statement that represented a rape myth (Ben-David & Schneider, 2005; Frese, Moya, & Megias, 2004). For example, 30% of students agreed with the statement that women '*often'* falsely accuse men of rape, whilst 17% believed that women could not be forced into having sex (Giacopassi & Dull, 1986). Whilst the AMMSA adopts a more subtle measurement of rape myth acceptance, it has shown that between 12% and 23% of participants scored on or above the midpoint, denoting a greater tendency to endorse rape myths (Gerger *et al.,* 2007). Within England and Wales, a survey by Amnesty International U.K. (2005) found that 37% of participants held a woman 'partially' or 'totally responsible' for a rape if she had failed to say 'no' clearly to the man; 35% if she had behaved in a flirtatious manner; over 30% if she was drunk, and; over 25% if she was wearing sexy or revealing clothing.

When examining how different individuals endorse such misconceptions, one particular area that has found some notable differences is in relation to gender. Previous research has found that males demonstrate a higher level of rape myth acceptance than

women (Anderson, Cooper, & Okamura, 1997; Frese *et al.,* 2004; Suarez & Gadalla, 2010), whereas others have found no notable gender differences (Abrams, Viki, Masser, & Bohner, 2003; Süssenbach & Bohner, 2011). Two other areas that have been explored to ascertain whether endorsement levels differ are age and education level. Such research has found that adherence to rape myths is stronger amongst younger and less educated individuals than compared with their older and more educated counterparts (Aronwitz, Lambert, & Davidoff, 2012; Hammond *et al.,* 2011; Kershner, 1996; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994; Suarez & Gadalla, 2010; Vonderhaar & Carmody, 2015). Given the wide-ranging prevalence of such myths, there is always the possibility that such endorsements could influence how individuals within the CJS perceive sexual offence investigations (Gerger *et al.,* 2007). Those personnel previously identified, as the 'gatekeepers' are vulnerable to the same biases and influences that are involved in the processing of general information (e.g., like concentrating on information that aligns with pre-existing beliefs; McEwan, 2003).

Rape Myth Acceptance amongst Police Officers

Early research highlighted the potentially hostile climate created for sexual offence victims within the CJS that are a consequential result of the prejudicial myths that fuel the false beliefs (see Brownmiller, 1975; Clark & Lewis, 1977). Previous research has found that rape myths were not only present in the belief systems of lay persons but also in those professionals who had direct contact with sexual offence victims (Barber, 1974; Goodman-Delahunty & Graham, 2011, Page, 2008a; 2010; Sleath & Bull, 2012). Research has also noted that some police officers are sceptical of sexual offence victim claims and that commonly held misconceptions are in fact endorsed (Brown & King, 1998; Feldman-Summers & Palmer, 1980; Jordan, 2004; 2008; Page, 2007; 2008a; 2008b). If police officers responsible for investigating sexual crimes endorse such myths, then this could be problematic (Sleath & Bull, 2015). It has been argued that, "Research assessing police officers' attitudes toward rape has been sparse in the last thirty years" (Page, 2008a; p.45). Despite this observation being made over a decade ago, the body of research examining the endorsement of rape myths amongst officers is still limited (Sleath & Bull, 2015; 2017). Lonsway and Fitzgerald (1999) did find that police officers had a higher level of rape myth acceptance than when compared with the general population. More recent research indicates that the level of endorsement amongst officers varies and that further exploration is required (Campbell, 2005).

It is important to ascertain a better understanding of these negative attitudes as it has been suggested that each officer's own personal beliefs about rape influences their professional decision-making (Schuller & Stewart, 2000). The research that has explored gender differences between officers and their adherence of rape myths also varies. For example, some studies have noted that female officers are less accepting of rape myths than their male counterparts (Brown & King, 1998; Edwards, Turchik, Dardis, Reynolds, & Gidycx, 2011; Page, 2007; Sleath & Bull, 2015). Schuller and Stewart (2000) discovered that during hypothetical scenarios, female officers were more likely to believe sexual offence victims, attributing less blame to them and consequently were more likely to believe that the suspect was guilty and should be charged. However, Campbell and Johnson (1997) discovered no gender differences when officers were asked to define offences of a sexual nature. As highlighted by Schuller and Stewart (2000), officers subconsciously allow their own beliefs to influence their perception of a sexual offence investigation. Rape myth acceptance constitutes a large proportion of this, however, there are other factors that can serve to influence how an officer views such investigations.

Whilst common misconceptions can vary, they may also specifically influence various aspects of the offence. This can include the circumstances of the offence, the behaviour of the victim before and after the offence, together with the broader gender-based characteristics about the victim. Two distinct factors that have been found to influence officer decision-making are characterised as *legal* and *extra-legal* factors. Legal factors include whether a witness was present, the strength of the evidence, victim resistance, whether the suspect used violence during the attack, the willingness of the victim to cooperate, and whether the suspect used a weapon (Alderden & Ullman, 2012, Bouffard, 2000; Cook, David, & Grant, 2001; Kerstetter, 1990; LaFree, 1989; O'Neal & Spohn, 2017; Spohn & Tellis, 2014). Whilst it is understandable how some of these factors may influence officer decision-making (when concerned with those cases that involve a sexual offence), it also highlights problematic issues with how officers respond to such cases. Those characteristics associated with a 'real rape' (i.e., victim resistance, use of force and the use of a weapon) are more likely to result in action being taken from officers (see Estrich, 1987). O'Neal and Spohn (2017) found that suspects were 15 times more likely to be arrested if a weapon had been used, and four times more likely if the suspect used violence during the offence. Furthermore, O'Neal, Beckman and Spohn (2016) also noted that officers were more likely to arrest the suspect if a witness had been present. Such findings are concerning and suggest that officers are adhering to the stereotypical characteristics associated with a 'real rape', disregarding the unique nature of

how such offences could be committed (i.e., in a private setting where no witnesses would be present).

Extra-legal factors that have been found to influence officer decision-making include irrelevant characteristics that are formed as a result of various cultural, legal and rape related myths. Extra-legal factors include victim 'risk-taking' behaviour, victim character, victim/suspect relationship, victim/suspect living arrangement, suspect demeanour, substance use and victim preference (Alderden & Ullman, 2012; Bouffard, 2000; Du Mont *et al.,* 2003; Grubb & Harrower, 2009; LaFree, 1989; O'Neal *et al.,* 2016; Goodman-Delahunty & Graham, 2011). Such factors draw parallels with those beliefs that are associated with increased levels of victim culpability. For example, victims of acquaintance rape are blamed more for their assault as opposed to those victims of stranger rape (Du Mont *et al.,* 2003; Grubb & Harrower, 2009). Such a factor could play a crucial role during the investigation process and could ultimately form the basis of a decision as to whether or not a victim receives legal attention from the police (O'Neal, 2017). The next section will now address how these various factors influence how an officer perceives the legitimacy of a case and whether they view it as being a genuine offence.

Perceptions of false reporting amongst sexual offence victims.

The discussion that surrounds the issue of false allegations in the reporting of sexual offences has been around for some time (McMillan, 2018). Similar to the widespread adherence of rape myths by CJS personnel, there is also a belief that their estimation of false reporting rates is also higher than what research tends to suggest (Rumney, 2006; Saunders, 2012). The myth that details how some females lie about rape and lack credibility continues to be apparent and consequentially impacts on the treatment that women receive from those individuals surrounding them (McMillan, 2018). A crucial factor that impacts on the treatment that a sexual offence victim receives when making a report comes from the CJS; how the police interact with them is central to this, given that it is they who the victim is most likely to have regular contact. Previous research has highlighted how some officers are sceptical of sexual offence victim claims (Jordan, 2004; 2008). The growing level of concern surrounding false reporting has gathered momentum internationally since the 1970s (Ask, 2010; Feldman-Summers & Palmer, 1980; Galton, 1975; Kelly *et al.,* 2005; Spohn, White, & Tellis, 2014; Temkin, 1997) and the prevalence rates have varied. For instance, Feldman-Summers and Palmer (1980) found that officers believed that approximately 60% of all rape complaints were either false or mistaken, whilst Kanin (1994) found that 41% of reports were

viewed as being false. More recently, Ask (2010) found that officers' estimations of false reports amongst rape victims varied between 16% and 26%. Whilst their entire sample did not respond to these items of the questionnaire, 170 of the 211 officers did provide a response in relation to the minimum and maximum estimations. In comparison, Mennicke, Anderson, Oehme and Kennedy (2014) discovered that 114 of the 141 officers who provided feedback in their study estimated that false reports are higher than current best estimates (using a threshold of between 2% and 8%; Lonsway *et al.,* 2009). If officers' estimations of false reports amongst sexual offence victims is higher than the true figure, it raises the question of how this impacts on victims coming forward and reporting a crime. However, there is no reliable and accurate scientific data on this matter, hence no further discussion will take place as speculating on such matters is inappropriate. The next section will discuss how sexual offence victims may be treated by an officer and the subsequent impact this may have on them.

When deciding to report a sexual offence, the victim must consider whether personnel within the CJS will believe that they were actually a victim to a crime (Orenstein, 2007). A possible explanation as to why sexual offence victims may be reluctant to report their crime to the police could be due to the perception that they may be blamed, treated disrespectfully, not believed, stigmatised, re-traumatised or dismissed (Ahrens, Campbell, Ternice-Thames, Wasco, & Sefl, 2007; Chen & Ullman, 2010; Konradi & Burger, 2000; Patterson *et al.,* 2009; Rennison, 2002). There may be some substance in those perceptions as sexual offence victims who have had previous interactions with the CJS have reported negative and traumatising experiences (Campbell, 2006; Campbell & Raja, 2005; Campbell *et al.,* 2001; Chen & Ullman, 2010; Felson & Pare, 2008; Filipas & Ullman, 2001; Frazier & Haney, 1996; Frohmann, 2002; Konradi & Burger, 2000; Larcombe, 2002; Monroe *et al.,* 2005; Patterson, 2011; Ullman & Townsend, 2007). Sexual offence victims have reported that police officers did not take their allegation seriously and treated them with disbelief or scepticism (Felson & Pare, 2008). Campbell *et al*. (2001) found that over 50% of sexual assault victims viewed their experience with the CJS as being a hurtful process. The importance of a police officer making the victim feel believed, together with the nature of their reaction to disclosure, and regular communication regarding the progress of the case is vital (Jamel, Bull & Sheridan, 2008; Temkin, 1987; 1997; 1998). The following section will now address how the approach of the interviewer plays a key role in shaping the experience of the victim.

The Role of a Police Officer when Interviewing a Sexual Offence Victim

The manner in which an officer engages with a sexual offence victim can influence how difficult that process can be (Campbell, 2008). Given that such crimes are viewed as a 'unique' form of offending it is understandable that officers may find such interviews 'technically difficult' and 'stressful' to conduct due to the highly sensitive and personal details being discussed (Benneworth, 2007; Marshall, 2001; Oxburgh *et al.,* 2006). The 'unique' nature of these offences results in officers having to demonstrate interviewing skills that are not used in 'everyday' interviews (Cherryman & Bull, 2001). Within chapter one (pp. 4 – 22), specific interviewing skills were highlighted as being present in the guidance documents (the seven core principles of Investigative Interviewing, PEACE model of interviewing and the ABE in criminal proceedings guidelines) that are provided to interviewers, inclusive of those who interview sexual offence victims. These guidance documents all communicate a similar ethos as to how an interviewer should interview a sexual offence victim. An example of the terminology and phrases used can be seen in chapter one (p. 22) and the ethos appears to follow a general theme that focuses around approaching the interview with an *open mind* and *fairness* with the interviewer making attempts to *establish and maintain rapport, personalising the interview, establishing a sense of trust* and *treating them (the victim) with a unique set of needs.* As interviewing guidance has developed, so too has the evaluation of interviewer performance, which ensures that the guidance being provided is having its intended effect. Two areas of interviewing skills that were initially identified as requiring additional attention are the use of rapport-building and empathy (Bull & Cherryman, 1995; Clarke & Milne, 2001). These two concepts were presented in chapter one (pp. 14 – 17) where the difficulties in allocating a single definition to each respective concept were also discussed. Previous research highlighted the importance of each concept in an operational setting (i.e., an investigative interview) and how it can help facilitate communication with a victim that, in turn, yields more investigation relevant information (IRI; see Holmberg & Christianson, 2002; Holmberg & Madsen, 2014; Kebbell *et al.,* 2006; Oxburgh & Ost, 2011; Oxburgh *et al.,* 2012; 2013; 2015; Patterson, 2012). However, issues with such research were also raised due to the reliance on anecdotal evidence. But how do those individuals conducting the interview view these two concepts?

There is a lack of research that has focused specifically on assessing interviewers' perceptions regarding the use and perceived efficacy of these two concepts. However, the concept of rapport within an investigative interview has been assessed more often than empathy. For example, Kebbell *et al.* (1999) surveyed 161 officers from England and Wales

and found that the 'establish rapport' component of the CI was both the most frequently used and perceived to be the most useful of the nine different components assessed. This was also found by Dando, Milne and Wagstaff (2008) who established that 'establishing rapport' was the most regularly used CI component and that it was also perceived to be the most effective when conducting interviews with witnesses/victims from their sample of 221 officers based in England and Wales. This finding is also evident in the investigative interviewing of children. La Rooy, Lamb and Memon (2011) surveyed 91 Scottish officers about their perceptions of interviewing children and discovered that 97% of interviewers reported that they *almost always* or *always* 'established rapport'. The rating of effectiveness for this interview component also supported the high level of reported usage with 61% of interviewers reporting that it was either *very effective* or *always effective*. However, the results of La Rooy *et al.* cannot be generalised to the interviewing of adults given that their study focused on the interviewing of children.

The limited research that has focused on the concept of empathy in relation to investigative interviews has noted the generally positive impact it can have on the interview process (see Dando & Oxburgh, 2016; Holmberg & Christianson, 2002; Kebbell *et al.,* 2006; Oxburgh *et al.,* 2012). However, no research has sought to specifically ascertain how often interviewers use this concept as a practice or how effective it is perceived to be when interviewing sexual offence victims.

The Present Study

The present study utilised a questionnaire that was predominantly based on one used by Dando *et al.* (2008). The exploratory aims of the present study included: (i) an examination of the personal beliefs and perceptions of interviewers with regards to rape myth prevalence; (ii) ascertaining how such beliefs could potentially impact on the interviewing process; (iii) exploring how difficult it is for interviewers to remain impartial and free from prejudice during the interview process; (iv) ascertaining a better understanding of how often interviewers use specific interview techniques and the perceived efficacy of those techniques; (v) an examination of whether differing interviewer perceptions of rape myth prevalence is linked to how they believe they develop and utilise rapport-building and empathy skills during interviews with sexual offence victims, and; (vi) establishing (qualitatively) the process by which interviewers would make a victim feel at ease during an investigative interview.

The interview techniques examined are predominantly based on specific components of the ABE guidance and include:

- The establishment of rapport;
- Asking for an uninterrupted account;
- Instruction to report absolutely everything;
- Instruction not to fabricate or guess;
- The offering of comfort if the victim is struggling to control their emotions;
- Encouragement to take their time, and;
- Use of empathy.

The following hypotheses were formulated after reviewing research that found female officers are less accepting of rape myths, are more likely to believe sexual offence victims and attribute less blame to the victim than their male counterparts (Brown & King, 1998; Edwards *et al.,* 2011; Page, 2007; Schuller & Stewart, 2000; Sleath & Bull, 2015):

H_1: There will be a gender difference between interviewers' perceptions of rape myth prevalence and it is predicted that female interviewers will perceive rape myths to be less prevalent than male interviewers.

H_2: There will be a gender difference between interviewers' perceptions regarding the potential impact of rape myths on the interviewing process and it is predicted that female interviewers will believe that rape myths have a lesser potential to impact on the interviewing process than male interviewers.

H_3: There will be a gender difference between interviewers' perceptions of how difficult it is to remain impartial and free from prejudice and it is predicted that female interviewers will find it less difficult to remain impartial and free from prejudice than male interviewers.

The present study also sought to explore whether any relationship existed between interviewer length of service and: (i) rape myth prevalence; (ii) the potential for such influences to impact on the interview process, and; (iii) how easy interviewers felt it was to remain impartial and free from prejudice during sexual offence victim interviews.

Regarding the recommended interview techniques, the present study wanted to investigate interviewers' perceptions regarding the reported use and perceived efficacy of the

different interview components (rapport-based and empathy-based techniques) and to explore: (i) whether interviewer gender influenced the reported use and/or perceived efficacy of those techniques; (ii) whether interviewer length of service influenced the reported use and/or perceived efficacy of the recommended techniques, and (iii) whether differing interviewer beliefs regarding rape myth prevalence impacted on interview practice. And finally, the present study also explored how interviewers facilitate investigative interviews by making a victim feel at ease or by comforting them.

Method

Design

The design used was a mixed methodology comprising a questionnaire that contained a series of Likert scales and open-ended questions where respondents could provide qualitative responses to their answers. For the quantitative analyses, a series of independent sample t-tests were used to compare the mean scores for the various different techniques being investigated. To correct for multiple testing (where applicable) a series of one-way between-groups multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) were performed. When analysing the reported usage and perceived efficacy of recommended interviewing techniques, they were ranked in order of most used/effective to least used/effective using the mean scores obtained for each technique. Respondents' qualitative responses were analysed using Conceptual Analysis (Budd, Thorp & Donohew, 1967) which involved breaking down and analysing the concepts highlighted by interviewers in response to how they would facilitate an investigative interview by making the victim feel at ease or by comforting them. This method of analysis recorded and quantified the number of occurrences of particular words/phrases used within the qualitative responses (Joffe & Yardley, 2003; Oxburgh, 2011).

Respondents

A total of 103 officers, with experience of interviewing sexual offence victims, from 14 different forces/constabularies throughout England and Wales agreed to participate in the research. Thirty-seven per cent (*n*=38) were male and 63% (*n*=65) were female with an overall mean length of service of 16 years and 7 months (*SD* = 94.31; range = 2 – 39 years). Ninety per cent of respondents (*n*=93) held the rank of Constable, 8% (*n*=8) held the rank of Sergeant, and 2% (*n*=2) held the rank of Inspector. All indicated that they had completed additional specialist interview training since completing their basic training (as a minimum)

and all had completed the Tier 2 PIP training course that focuses on serious and complex investigations (see chapter one, p. 12).

Materials

A 30-item questionnaire was designed (see Appendix B) that was based on Dando *et al.* (2008). The questionnaire had four separate sections and required respondents to provide quantitative and qualitative information of the following types: (i) *About you:* age, gender, police force, length of service, rank, current police duties and whether they had a specialist role; (ii) *Interviewing experience:* interview training courses attended, if they interviewed sexual offence victims as part of their current duties and if so, how many they interviewed over a 12 month period. (iii) *Interview technique:* how often they used specific interviewing techniques and the perceived efficacy of those techniques (this was done via a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (never/not at all effective) to 5 (always/always effective). Respondents were then invited to elaborate on their answers through the use of open-ended questions, what alternative method(s) they used to achieve the desired outcome, their understanding of 'empathy', how it differed from 'sympathy' and how they would facilitate an interview by comforting the victim; (iv) *Your impressions of interviewing victims of sexual offences:* how prevalent they felt rape myths were, the likelihood of them impacting on the interview process and how difficult it was to remain impartial and free from prejudice when interviewing a sexual offence victim (this was done via a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (not at all, never, very easy) to 5 (very, always, very difficult). The final items of this section enabled respondents to provide open-ended feedback reflecting on the training they had received, any concerns they had and whether the training could be improved.

A large number of the items included in the *interviewing experience* section of the questionnaire were adapted from those used by Dando *et al.* (2008) to ensure that they were applicable to the interviewing of sexual offence victims as opposed to the interviewing of witnesses/victims of crime in general. The *interview technique* section also comprised a large number of items devised by Dando and colleagues that were used to explore respondents reported usage and perceived efficacy of the 'establish rapport', 'asking for an uninterrupted account', 'instruction to report absolutely everything' and the 'instruction not to fabricate or guess' components. If a respondent did not use the particular component being discussed they were asked to elaborate on how they would achieve the desired goal. Finally, the items used to explore the respondents reported usage and perceived efficacy of empathy-based techniques ('offering of comfort if the victim is struggling to control their emotions',

‘encouragement to take their time’ and ‘use of empathy’) were developed by the author and adopted a similar phrasing as those items from the questionnaire devised by Dando *et al*.

Procedure

Whilst the final questionnaire was being constructed, the researcher approached officers from various different forces in England and Wales to enquire whether they (and their colleagues) would be interested in participating. The respective officers who were contacted acted as either a gatekeeper or signposted the researcher to a higher-ranking colleague who then disseminated the questionnaire amongst officers with the necessary experience that enabled their participation. At least one officer from each of the fourteen forces approached participated in the research, however, response rates naturally varied. It was difficult to accurately gauge the true response rate due to the researcher not always been in control of how many officers were asked to participate or who was provided with the questionnaire.

Following approval from the respective ethics committees at Teesside and Newcastle University (see Appendices C and D), the questionnaire was distributed electronically via email across various police forces throughout England and Wales through those gatekeepers who had been contacted and/or identified. Informed consent was obtained (see Appendix E), anonymity ensured and each respondent was informed that if they wished to withdraw their data at a later point they could do so by contacting the researcher. Respondents were provided with information regarding the aim of the study and if they were happy to proceed, they completed the questionnaire and then returned it to the researcher either directly or through a gatekeeper. Each respondent was provided with a debrief sheet (see Appendix F) upon completion of the questionnaire.

Results

The overall aim was to establish a better understanding of the perceptions of interviewers (responsible for interviewing sexual offence victims) and whether perceptions impact on practice.

Quantitative Analysis of Data

1. Interviewer’s perceptions of the impact of rape myths.

Police interviewers’ perceptions of various issues in relation to rape myths were examined including: (i) their perceived level of prevalence (hereinafter referred to as

‘prevalence’ score); (ii) the extent to which they could impact on the interviewing process (hereinafter referred to as ‘impact’ score), and; (iii) the level of difficulty associated by interviewers’ to remain impartial and free from prejudice during investigative interviews (hereinafter referred to as ‘impartiality’ score).

The ‘prevalence’ score was calculated in response to the question *‘How prevalent do you believe rape myths are in today’s society?’* The ‘impact’ score was obtained in response to the question *’Do you believe that these (rape myths) could have an impact on the way that an interviewing officer would conduct an interview with a sexual offence victim?’* Finally, the ‘impartiality’ score was calculated in response to the question *‘How easy/difficult is it to remain impartial and free from prejudice when interviewing a victim?’* As shown in Figure 3.1 the findings revealed that the overall mean ‘prevalence’ score was 3.31, with a mean ‘impact’ score of 1.91, and a mean ‘impartiality’ score of 2.26.

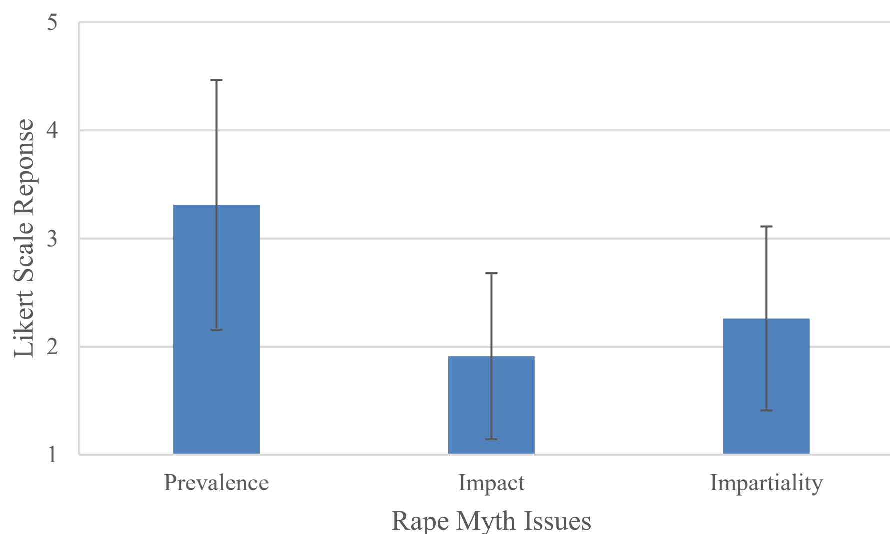

Figure 3.1. Mean Likert scale responses from the sampled interviewers reported perceptions of each issue.

The role of gender and length of service.

To explore whether interviewer gender and length of service would influence their perceptions of prevalence, impact and impartiality score, the differences in mean scores were analysed.

Interviewer gender.

A series of independent-sample *t*-tests were used to examine the relationship between interviewer gender (male; female) and rape myth prevalence, impact and impartiality during interviews with sexual offence victims. Hypothesis one was rejected as no significant result was found between male and female interviewers' perceptions regarding rape myth 'prevalence'. Hypothesis two was also rejected as no significant result was found between male and female interviewers' perceptions regarding rape myth 'impact'. The third hypothesis was accepted as there was a significant difference in 'impartiality' scores between male ($M = 2.50$, $SD = 0.80$) and female interviewers ($M = 2.12$, $SD = 0.86$); $t\ (101) = 2.21$, $p = 0.02$ one-tailed, 95% CI: [.04 to .72], indicating that female interviewers perceived it as being less difficult to remain impartial and free from prejudice during the interview process. The result had a moderate effect size ($d = 0.5$).

A one-way between-groups multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed to investigate the different rape myth issues ('prevalence,' 'impact' and 'impartiality') as a function of interviewer gender (male; female). This analysis was conducted to correct for multiple testing (reducing the likelihood of obtaining an inflated Type 1 error – finding a significant result that is not significant) and revealed that the previously discussed significant result must be interpreted with caution. Preliminary assumption testing was conducted to check for normality, linearity, univariate and multivariate outliers, homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices, and multicollinearity, with no serious violations noted. There was no statistically significant difference between male and female interviewers on the combined dependent variables, $F\ (3, 99) = 2.09$, $p > .05$; Wilks' Lambda = .94; partial eta squared = .06, therefore no further investigation of the various interactions took place.

Interviewer length of service.

Similar to Dando *et al.* (2008), prior to any data being analysed, interviewer length of service was re-coded dichotomously using a median split, thus creating two separate groups:

- *Less experienced interviewers*: There were a total of 51 respondents (n=17 males; n=34 females) who had a mean length of service of 10 years ($SD = 38.16$; range 2 years and 5 months – 15 years and 1 month).

- *More experienced interviewers*: There were a total of 52 respondents (*n*=21 males; *n*=31 females) who had a mean length of service of 22 years (*SD* = 67.44; range 15 years and 2 months – 39 years).

A series of independent-sample *t*-tests were used to examine the relationship between interviewer length of service and different rape myth issues ('prevalence', 'impact' and 'impartiality'), however no significant results were found.

2. Reported use of specific interview techniques.

This aspect was examined to ascertain how often each specific interview technique was used in addition to how interviewer gender and length of service impacted on interview practice. Table 3.1 ranks the recommended interview techniques from the 'most' to 'least' regularly used by respondents based on the overall mean Likert scale scores obtained for each technique. The descriptive statistics presented indicate that rapport-based techniques are more regularly used by the sample of interviewers than empathy-based techniques.

Table 3.1. Descriptive statistics for the reported use of the recommended interview techniques (ranked in order of most to least used; N=103).

Rank	Interview technique	Mean	SD
1	Instruction not to fabricate or guess	4.58	0.96
2	Asking for an uninterrupted account	4.57	0.71
3	Instruction to report absolutely everything	4.32	0.94
4	The establishment of rapport	4.22	1.24
5	Encouragement to take their time	3.87	1.28
6	Use of empathy	3.76	1.18
7	The offering of comfort if the victim is struggling to control their emotions	3.17	1.28

Note. Likert scale used: 1 – never, 2 – rarely, 3 – usually, 4 – almost always, and 5 – always.

Interviewer gender.

A series of independent-sample *t*-tests were conducted to compare the reported use of the seven recommended interview technique scores between male and female interviewers, however, no significant results were found.

Interviewer length of service.

A series of independent-sample *t*-tests were conducted to compare the reported use of the seven recommended interview technique scores between less and more experienced interviewers, however, no significant results were found.

3. The perceived efficacy of specific interview techniques.

Table 3.2 ranks the recommended interview techniques in order of perceived efficacy from 'most' to 'least' based on the overall mean Likert scale scores obtained for each technique. The perceived efficacy of rapport-based techniques is higher from the sample of interviewers than when compared with the empathy-based techniques.

Table 3.2. Descriptive statistics for the perceived efficacy of the recommended interview techniques (ranked in order of most to least effective; N=103).

Rank	Interview technique	Mean	SD
1	Asking for an uninterrupted account	3.79	0.75
2	The establishment of rapport	3.71	0.82
3	Instruction not to fabricate or guess	3.59	0.87
4	Instruction to report absolutely everything	3.45	0.81
5	Encouragement to take their time	3.33	1.06
6	Use of empathy	3.31	0.96
7	The offering of comfort if the victim is struggling to control their emotions	2.99	0.97

Note. Likert scale used: 1 – not at all effective, 2 – not very effective, 3 – quite effective, 4 – very effective, and 5 – always effective.

Interviewer gender.

A series of independent-sample *t*-tests were conducted to compare the perceived efficacy of the seven recommended interview technique scores between male and female interviewers. As shown in Table 3.3, there was a significant difference in the perceived efficacy scores for the *establishment of rapport* technique between male ($M = 3.50$, $SD = 0.76$) and female interviewers ($M = 3.83$, $SD = 0.84$); $t\ (101) = -1.99$, $p = .049$ two-tailed, 95% CI: [-.66 to -.01], indicating that female interviewers perceive building rapport to be more effective than their male counterparts. The result had a small effect size ($d = .41$). There was also a significant difference in the perceived efficacy scores for the *offering of comfort if the victim is struggling to control their emotions* technique between male ($M = 2.74$, $SD = 0.89$) and female interviewers ($M = 3.14$, $SD = 0.98$); $t\ (101) = -2.07$, $p = .041$ two-tailed, 95% CI: [-.79 to -.02], indicating that female interviewers also perceive

comforting the victim to be more effective than their male colleagues. The result had a small effect size (d = .42).

Table 3.3. Independent-sample *t*-test results for the perceived efficacy of the recommended interview techniques between male and female interviewers.

Interview technique	Male		Female		*t* (101)	*p*	*Cohen's d*
	Mean	**SD**	**Mean**	**SD**			
The establishment of rapport	3.50	0.76	3.83	0.84	-1.994	.049*	0.41
Asking for an uninterrupted account	3.76	0.71	3.80	0.78	-0.240	.811	0.05
Instruction to report absolutely everything	3.32	0.87	3.52	0.77	-1.252	.214	0.26
Instruction not to fabricate or guess	3.71	0.69	3.52	0.95	1.058	.293	0.22
The offering of comfort if the victim is struggling to control their emotions	2.74	0.89	3.14	0.98	-2.071	.041*	0.42
Encouragement to take their time	3.18	1.11	3.42	1.03	-1.068	.288	0.22
Use of empathy	3.08	0.88	3.45	0.99	-1.896	.061	0.39

**Indicative of a significant difference between male and female interviewers for that technique.*

Note. Likert scale used: 1 – not at all effective, 2 – not very effective, 3 – quite effective, 4 – very effective, and 5 – always effective.

A one-way between-groups multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed to investigate gender differences (male; female) amongst interviewers with regards to their perceived efficacy of the different interview techniques (*establishment of rapport*, *asking for an uninterrupted account*, *instruction to report absolutely everything*, *instruction not to fabricate or guess*, *offering of comfort if the victim is struggling to control their emotions*, *encouragement to take their time* and *the use of empathy*). This analysis was conducted to correct for multiple testing (reducing the likelihood of obtaining an inflated Type 1 error) and revealed that the previously discussed significant results must be interpreted with caution. Preliminary assumption testing was conducted to check for normality, linearity, univariate and multivariate outliers, homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices, and multicollinearity, with no serious violations noted. There was not a statistically significant difference between male and female interviewers on the combined dependent variables, F (7, 95) = 1.99, $p > .05$; Wilks' Lambda = .87; partial eta squared = .13, therefore no further investigation of the various interactions took place.

Interviewer length of service.

A series of independent-sample *t*-tests were conducted to compare the perceived efficacy of the recommended interview technique scores between less and more experienced interviewers, however, no significant results were found.

4. Interviewers' beliefs in the prevalence of rape myths in society.

The variable concerning interviewers' beliefs in the prevalence of rape myths in society was re-coded dichotomously (i.e., low/high). Respondents who allocated a score of 1 – *'not at all'* or 2 – *'rarely'* in the Likert scales were coded as 'low', with those who entered a score of 4 – *'common'* or 5 – *'very'*, coded as 'high':

- *Low prevalence*: There were a total of 29 respondents (*n*=12 males; *n*=17 females) with a mean age of 43 years (*SD* = 6.19; range = 33 – 58 years) and a mean length of service of 19 years (*SD* = 81.70; range = 6 years and 1 month – 39 years).
- *High prevalence*: There were a total of 48 respondents (*n*=16 males; *n*=32 females) with a mean age of 40 years (*SD* = 7.31; range = 26 – 54 years) and a mean length of service of 15 years (*SD* = 92.22; range = 2 years and 5 months – 30 years).

The reported use of specific interview techniques.

A series of independent-sample *t*-tests were conducted to compare the reported use of the seven recommended interview technique scores between interviewers who had a rape myth prevalence score of 'low' and 'high' with a number of significant results found (see Table 3.4).

Table 3.4. Independent-sample *t*-test results for the reported use of the recommended interview techniques between interviewers with low and high perceptions of rape myth prevalence.

Interview technique	Low		High		*t* (75)	*p*	*Cohen's d*
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
The establishment of rapport	4.28	1.25	4.21	1.30	0.224	.824	0.05
Asking for an uninterrupted account	4.34	0.81	4.73	0.57	-2.426	.018*	0.57
Instruction to report absolutely everything	4.31	1.00	4.38	0.94	-0.286	.776	0.07
Instruction not to fabricate or guess	4.86	0.35	4.46	1.11	2.334	.023*	0.55
The offering of comfort if the victim is struggling to control their emotions	3.24	1.30	3.23	1.26	0.041	.968	0.01
Encouragement to take their time	3.34	1.47	4.15	1.11	-2.530	.008*	0.60
Use of empathy	3.34	1.14	4.02	1.94	-2.446	.017*	0.58

**Indicative of a significant difference between interviewers with low and high beliefs for that technique.*

Note. Likert scale used: 1 – never, 2 – rarely, 3 – usually, 4 – almost always, and 5 – always.

Four significant results were obtained for this section of the analysis. There was a significant difference in the reported use scores for the *asking for an uninterrupted account* technique between interviewers with 'low' (M = 4.34, SD = 0.81) and 'high' rape myth prevalence scores (M = 4.73, SD = 0.57); t (75) = -2.43, p = .02 two-tailed, 95% CI: [-.70 to -.07], indicating that interviewers who believe rape myths to be more prevalent use this technique more often than those who believe rape myths are less prevalent. The result had a moderate effect size (d = .57). There was also a significant difference in the reported use scores for the *instruction not to fabricate or guess* technique between interviewers with 'low' (M = 4.86, SD = 0.35) and 'high' rape myth prevalence beliefs (M = 4.46, SD = 1.11); t (61.03) = 2.33, p = .02 two-tailed, 95% CI: [.06 to .75], indicating that interviewers who believe rape myths to be less prevalent use this technique more often than those who believe rape myths have a higher prevalence. The result had a moderate effect size (d = .55).

A significant difference in the reported use scores for the *encouragement to take their time* technique was also noted between interviewers with 'low' (M = 3.34, SD = 1.47) and 'high' rape myth prevalence beliefs (M = 4.15, SD = 1.11); t (47.28) = -2.53, p = .02 two-tailed, 95% CI: [-1.44 to -.16], indicating that interviewers who believe rape myths to be more prevalent use this technique more often than those who believe rape myths have a lower prevalence. The result had a moderate effect size (d = .60). Finally, there was a significant difference in the reported use scores for the *use of empathy* technique between interviewers with 'low' (M = 3.34, SD = 1.14) and 'high' rape-myth prevalence beliefs (M = 4.02,

SD = 1.19); *t* (75) = -2.45, *p* = .02 two-tailed, 95% CI: [-1.23 to -.13], indicating that interviewers who believe rape myths to be more prevalent use this technique more often than those who believe rape myths have a lower prevalence. The result had a moderate effect size (*d* = .58).

A one-way between-groups multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed to investigate how differing beliefs regarding rape myth prevalence (low; high) amongst interviewers impacted on their use of different interview techniques (*establishment of rapport*, *asking for an uninterrupted account*, *instruction to report absolutely everything*, *instruction not to fabricate or guess*, *offering of comfort if the victim is struggling to control their emotions*, *encouragement to take their time* and *the use of empathy*). This analysis was conducted to correct for multiple testing (reducing the likelihood of obtaining an inflated Type 1 error) and revealed that the previously discussed significant results must be interpreted with caution. Preliminary assumption testing was conducted and it revealed that the data violates the assumption of homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices (that the variance-covariance matrices are equal across the cells formed by the between-subjects effects), therefore the MANOVA was abandoned.

The perceived efficacy of specific interview techniques.

A series of independent-sample *t*-tests were conducted to compare the perceived efficacy of the recommended interview technique scores between interviewers who believed that rape myths had either a ‘low’ or ‘high’ prevalence. As shown in Table 3.5, a significant difference was found in the perceived efficacy scores for the *encouragement to take their time* technique between interviewers with ‘low’ (*M* = 2.97, *SD* = 1.21) and ‘high’ rape myth beliefs (*M* = 3.56, *SD* = 0.97); *t* (75) = -2.39, *p* = .02 two-tailed, 95% CI: [-1.10 to -.10], indicating that interviewers who believe rape myths are more prevalent perceive this technique to be more effective than those who believe rape myths have a lower prevalence. The result had a moderate effect size (*d* = .56).

Table 3.5. Independent-sample *t*-test results for the perceived efficacy of the recommended interview techniques between interviewers with low and high rape myth prevalence perceptions.

Interview technique	Low		High		*t* (75)	*p*	*Cohen's d*
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
The establishment of rapport	3.86	0.74	3.65	0.86	1.210	.266	0.29
Asking for an uninterrupted account	3.72	0.70	3.83	0.78	-0.617	.539	0.15
Instruction to report absolutely everything	3.48	0.79	3.46	0.82	0.128	.898	0.03
Instruction not to fabricate or guess	3.66	0.77	3.58	0.94	0.347	.730	0.08
The offering of comfort if the victim is struggling to control their emotions	3.03	0.98	3.06	0.98	-0.122	.903	0.03
Encouragement to take their time	2.97	1.21	3.56	0.97	-2.258	.019*	0.53
Use of empathy	3.07	0.96	3.44	0.92	-1.674	.098	0.39

**Indicative of a significant difference between investigators with low and high beliefs for that technique.*

Note. Likert scale used: 1 – not at all effective, 2 – not very effective, 3 – quite effective, 4 – very effective, and 5 – always effective.

A one-way between-groups multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed to investigate how differing beliefs regarding rape myth prevalence (low; high) amongst interviewers impacted on their perceived efficacy of different interview techniques (*establishment of rapport*, *asking for an uninterrupted account*, *instruction to report absolutely everything*, *instruction not to fabricate or guess*, *offering of comfort if the victim is struggling to control their emotions*, *encouragement to take their time* and *the use of empathy*). This analysis was conducted to correct for multiple testing (reducing the likelihood of obtaining an inflated Type 1 error) and revealed that the previously discussed significant result must be interpreted with caution. Preliminary assumption testing was conducted to check for normality, linearity, univariate and multivariate outliers, homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices, and multicollinearity, with no serious violations noted. There was not a statistically significant difference between those interviewers with low and high rape myth prevalence beliefs on the combined dependent variables, F (7, 69) = 1.93, $p > .05$; Wilks' Lambda = .84; partial eta squared = .16, therefore no further investigation of the various interactions took place.

Qualitative Analysis of Data

5. Facilitating an investigative interview with a sexual offence victim.

Conceptual Analysis (Budd *et al.*, 1967) was used in an exploratory context to analyse concepts highlighted by interviewers in response to how they would facilitate an investigative

interview by making the victim feel at ease or by comforting them. Beaney (2003) explained how this methodology can be used to analyse concepts by breaking them down into their constituent parts in order to gain a greater understanding of a particular issue in which the concept is involved. From the 103 respondents, 91 provided qualitative feedback. Analysis of the responses revealed 34 different occurrences of words/phrases, 14 of which referred to various elements concerned with the concepts of rapport-building or empathy. Table 3.6 outlines all of the different words/phrases uttered, together with the total number of respondents who referred to those specific words/phrases. The words/phrases associated with the concepts of rapport-building and empathy are underlined given that these are the two interviewing skills that the current study is specifically focused on. Those words/phrases had to be consistent with the definitions cited within chapter one and could be used when referring to a concept or when mentioning the skill in terms of its practical usage.

Table 3.6. Recurring phrases used by interviewers in order to facilitate an interview with a sexual offence victim.

Words/phrases	Number of respondents	Words/phrases	Number of respondents
Use of 'breaks' or 'pauses' in the interview to comfort the victim	62	Rapport incorporated into explanation of interview process	**6**
Offering of 'tissues' to comfort the victim	33	Rapport building kept separate from the interview to keep it 'neutral' and 'relevant'	**5**
Offering a 'refreshment' to comfort the victim	24	Appropriate forms of physical contact i.e. touch on arm/hand	5
Use of 'reassurance' to comfort the victim	23	Issues with the terminology of 'comfort'	5
Reference to 'rapport'	23	Use of 'breathing techniques' to help comfort victim	4
Build rapport prior to the interview	21	Offer 'support' as a form of comfort	4
No physical form of contact to comfort victim	17	Different tactics to help settle the victim	4
Acknowledgement of emotion and stating that it is acceptable	12	Reference to 'sympathy'	4
Reference to 'empathy'	11	Tailoring approach to the victim and offering 'comfort' accordingly	4
Concerns over how practices may be misconstrued/criticised in court	11	Level of rapport building affected by time constraints and workload	3
Use of comfort to help victim 'regain composure'	9	Rapport key for developing trust and reassuring the victim	3
Rapport key to help 'settle' the victim and make comfortable	8	Jury's not interested in the rapport building	3
Use of 'friend' or 'family' as support to help comfort the victim	7	Rapport not always appropriate	2
Comfort is linked with obtaining investigation relevant information	7	Acceptable to show emotion	1
Use of 'non-verbal communication' to comfort victim	7	Asking what could make the process 'easier' for the victim	1
Instructed not to 'comfort' the victim during the interview	7	Different rapport building tactics to be used	1
Use of 'understanding' to comfort the victim	7	Alternative interviewing officer to be used if rapport cannot be built	1

When reviewing table 3.6, there is one notable observation. From the 91 respondents who provided feedback, 68% (*n*=62) referred to the use of 'breaks' or 'pauses' to help comfort the victim, as indicated by the following quotes:

'I ask them if they would like a break or assure them that they can take a moment to gather themselves' (participant 4).

'...if the distress continues for some time I would suggest a short break from the interview. I also consider the use of breaks throughout the interview to minimise distress and weariness' (participant 11).

The second most regularly mentioned words/phrases involved the offering of 'tissues' to help comfort the victim and 36% (*n*=33) of the respondents alluded to this action:

'The act of passing a tissue tends to suffice' (participant 15).

'Tell them it's ok. Give a tissue and ask them to take a deep breath' (participant 71).

The third most regularly mentioned words/phrases by respondents referred to the action of offering a 'refreshment' and 26% (*n*=24) of them spoke of using this gesture:

'I simply tell them to take their time and then I offer them water or a drink' (participant 36).

There were numerous examples whereby respondents actually referred to all three of these actions when asked to indicate how they would help comfort the victim, as demonstrated in the following quotes:

'Ask them if they want a break / a drink. Hand them tissues' (participant 8).

'I will suggest a break; I will ask if they want a drink; I will pass tissues' (participant 18).

The largest occurrence of words/phrases specifically related to a concept was for *'rapport'*, with 25% (*n*=23) respondents quoting this term when asked how they would comfort or put a victim at ease during the interview. In comparison, 12% (*n*=11) of interviewers mentioned *'empathy'* in response to this question. Whilst *'rapport'* was referred to more regularly than *'empathy',* a large number of rapport-related utterances were concerned with its practical usage (i.e., concerns about how it impacted on their practice):

'We are supposed to be very 'neutral' during the interview' (participant 37).

In addition to concerns about its practical usage, there were also notable comments relating to when rapport should be demonstrated during the investigation process:

'I find that rapport sometimes continues into the interview room but I try to keep it separate from the interview as I want them to concentrate on the matter we are discussing' (participant 14).

Some of the key themes developed as a result of the words/phrases that were reported by the respondents focused on issues such as: *'build rapport prior to the interview'*, *'rapport incorporated into the explanation of the interview process'*, *'rapport building kept separate from the interview to keep it "neutral" and "relevant"'* and *'level of rapport building affected by time constraints and workload'*.

More notable are some of the indirect words/phrases used by the interviewers that are strongly linked to the concept of empathy and have been used within the literal and practical definitions of this concept. Key themes that emerged as a result of the qualitative responses included: *'use of "reassurance" to comfort the victim'*, *'acknowledgment of emotion and stating that it is acceptable'*, *'use of "non-verbal communication" to comfort the victim'* and '*use of "understanding" to comfort the victim'.* Interviewers referred to these themes in conjunction with how they could help assist the interview process, as demonstrated in the following responses:

> *'Reassuring them that it's ok to get upset and to take as long as they need to compose themselves. I would always do this and tend to find it very effective'* (participant 7).
>
> *'More reassurance to ensure best evidence is achieved'* (participant 20).

A final observation when analysing the qualitative responses were the four different *'references to "sympathy"'* and how the practical definition of this concept was confused with that of empathy. This is demonstrated in the following response:

> *'I believe that there is a balance to be met in this matter…I feel "I know this is very difficult, give yourself a moment", or similar is perhaps a correct level of sympathy and compassion'* (participant 56).

Discussion

Given the dearth of academic research in relation to the investigative interviewing of sexual offence victims, the present study aimed to establish a better understanding of the perceptions of interviewers (responsible for interviewing sexual offence victims) and whether perceptions impact on practice.

1. Interviewers perceptions of the impact of rape myths.

Overall, the findings appear to support previous research in that rape myths are not uncommon and can have acceptance rates that range from 19% to 57% (O'Neal, 2017; Sussenbach & Bohner, 2011). Naturally, rape myth acceptance can vary and is determined by

numerous individual factors, some of which were explored in the present study. The first two hypotheses were rejected, as there were no gender differences in relation to interviewers' perceptions of rape myth prevalence and the extent to which they could potentially impact on the interviewing process. The third hypothesis was accepted as the results indicated that female interviewers reportedly find it easier to remain impartial and free from prejudice when interviewing a sexual offence victim than their male counterparts. This finding supports a body of previous research, which found that females demonstrate a lower level of rape myth acceptance than males (Anderson *et al.,* 1997; Frese *et al.,* 2004; Suarez & Gadalla, 2010). This finding has also been replicated amongst police officers whereby female officers were found to be less accepting of rape myths than their male counterparts (Brown & King, 1998; Edwards *et al.,* 2011; Page, 2007; Schuller & Stewart, 2000; Sleath & Bull, 2015). Despite noting that female officers are less accepting of rape myths, this does not necessarily mean that the presence of a female interviewer is less traumatising to the victim, the unique nature of each investigation and victim characteristics must not be underestimated due to the individual differences amongst interviewers and victims (Martin, 2005; Wentz & Achbold, 2012).

In addition to interviewer gender, length of service was also explored to ascertain whether any relationship existed with prevalence, impact and impartiality scores. No significant results were obtained between less and more experienced interviewers in relation to their perceptions regarding rape myth prevalence, the potential for such influences to impact on the interview process, and how easy they felt it was to remain impartial and free from prejudice during such interviews. Whilst there is no previous research that has specifically investigated how interviewer length of service may influence such perceptions, some parallels can be drawn with the findings from research that has looked at how age may influence interviewer perception. As an officer's length of service increases, so too does their age, suggesting that a younger officer would also be a lesser-experienced interviewer. Previous research has found higher levels of rape myths acceptance amongst younger individuals than when compared with their older counterparts (Aronwitz *et al.,* 2012; Hammond *et al.,* 2011; Kershner, 1996; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1999; Suarez & Gadalla, 2010; Vonderhaar & Carmody, 2015). A possible explanation as to why no significant difference was obtained could be due to how length of service was classified. Future research could separate the sample into age ranges as opposed to using a median split.

It could be argued that the belief that rape myths would *'rarely'* impact on the interview process and that it is *'fairly easy'* to ignore such influences should be the minimum

expectation of any competent interviewer. However, 71% of respondents in the current study (*n*=73)[11] indicated that rape myths had the potential to impact on the way they conduct interviews, with 10% of respondents (*n*=10)[12] stating that it was difficult to remain impartial and free from prejudice during investigations. Such findings raise an important question as to whether interviewers who hold such views should be conducting investigations of this nature. Alternatively, perhaps those interviewers who acknowledge the potential for such misconceptions to impact on their practice, are actually better equipped to conduct such investigations given their open-minded approach? Or are these respondents simply being more honest than their fellow colleagues? This area will be addressed further in this discussion (implications for practice) and in chapter six.

2. The reported use of specific interview techniques.

It was apparent that interviewers use rapport and empathy in different ways (see Table 3.1). Of the seven recommended interview techniques, there were three identifiable as utilising or focusing upon an element of rapport (e.g., *establishment of rapport, instruction to report absolutely everything* and *instruction not to fabricate or guess*), whilst three utilise or focus upon an element of empathy (e.g., *the offering of comfort if the victim is struggling to control their emotions, encouragement to take their time* and the *use of empathy*). Of the recommended interview techniques assessed, the three rapport-based techniques all rank within the four most regularly used. The *instruction not to fabricate or guess* is used the most regularly. The *instruction to report absolutely everything* and the *establishment of rapport* are the third and fourth most regularly used techniques and this is consistent with previous research in that the establishing/maintenance of rapport is the most regularly used interview practice (Dando *et al.*, 2008; Kebbell *et al.*, 1999; La Rooy *et al.,* 2011). More specifically, Dando *et al.* (2008) also found that the techniques concerned with the reporting of everything and the establishing of rapport were two of the most regularly used practices. When analysing the mean values displayed within Table 3.1 they indicate that the sample of interviewers, as a minimum, '*almost always'* use the three rapport-based interview techniques.

The three techniques that utilise or focus on some form of empathy (*the offering of comfort if the victim is struggling to control their emotions, encouragement to take their time* and the *use of empathy*) all rank at the opposite end of the scale when compared to rapport-based techniques. The *encouragement to take their time* is the most regularly used empathy-

[11] This total is comprised of those respondents who signalled their perception using one of the options *rarely, usually, almost always* and *always* as opposed to those who responded using *never*.
[12] This total is comprised of those respondents who signalled their perception using either the option *fairly difficult* or *very difficult* as opposed to those who responded using *very easy*, *fairly easy* or *neutral*.

based technique, however, when compared with all of the other interview techniques, this technique lies in fifth place. The *use of empathy* and *the offering of comfort if the victim is struggling to control their emotions* are the sixth and seventh most regularly used techniques, respectively. When ranking techniques, naturally something has to come first and last. However, this does not necessarily mean that the technique ranked highest is always used and similarly that the technique ranked lowest is never used. When interpreting the mean values displayed within Table 3.1 they indicate that empathy-based techniques are not used as often as rapport-based techniques. Nonetheless, the sample of interviewers, as a minimum, '*usually'* uses the three empathy-based techniques.

The remaining technique concerned with *asking for an uninterrupted account* is the second most regularly used. An explanation for such a finding could be the result of the guidance currently being provided to interviewers in England and Wales (MoJ, 2011). This technique is concerned with phase two of the interview, whereby the victim would be asked to provide a free narrative account of the incident/s, a request outlined through the use of an open-ended question. Consequently, the high ranking of this technique was not unexpected given that in order to obtain an account from the victim, the interviewer would naturally be required to initiate a discussion regarding the incident in question. This finding also supports that of Dando *et al.* (2008) who found that this particularly interview technique ranked as the second most regularly used practice by police interviewers in their study.

The role of investigator gender and length of service.

The findings from the current study support those of Dando *et al.* (2008) in that no significant differences were found between less and more-experienced interviewers in relation to the reported usage of the various recommended interview techniques. Furthermore, interviewer gender did not influence practice with no significant differences found when comparing the reported usage of the recommended interview techniques by both male and female interviewers.

3. The perceived efficacy of specific interview techniques.

It was apparent that interviewers perceived rapport and empathy in different ways. Table 3.2 outlines the seven recommended interview techniques in order of perceived efficacy, three of which are in relation to rapport-building and three that focus on empathy (as highlighted on the previous page). Of the seven interview practices, rapport-building techniques rank within the four most effective. The second most effective technique overall is

the *establishment of rapport*. This is followed by the *instruction not to fabricate or guess* and the *instruction to report absolutely everything*. Again, these findings are consistent to those of Dando *et al.* (2008) and Kebbell *et al.* (1999) who also noted that the establishment of rapport and the reporting of everything were perceived as being the most effective in interviews.

With regards to empathy, there is a slight decrease in the mean scores obtained. The three techniques relating to empathy are all ranked as the least effective from the sample. The techniques *encouragement to take their time* and the *use of empathy* are ranked as the most effective empathy-based practices. Finally, *the offering of comfort if the victim is struggling to control their emotions* is perceived as the least effective interview technique. On initial interpretation these results would suggest that interviewers perceive rapport-based techniques as being more effective than those empathy-based techniques. However, when observing the data displayed within Table 3.2 they reveal that all of the rapport and empathy-based techniques have similar mean values. These values indicate that the sample of interviewers, as a minimum, perceive these techniques to be '*quite effective'*. Whilst the rapport-based techniques rank more highly that does not necessarily mean the empathy-based techniques are perceived as being ineffective.

The remaining technique concerned with *asking for an uninterrupted account* is ranked as the most effective. Whilst this was not the technique perceived as being the most effective in the study conducted by Dando *et al.* (2008) it was still a close second. As previously stated, this is a technique outlined within the ABE guidance document and such a practice is required by the interviewer in order to initiate a discussion regarding the incident in question. The open-ended invitation is a recommendation for all investigative interviews, as such; the high ranking of this technique could be a result of the increased familiarity of this practice.

The role of investigator gender and length of service.

When comparing the perceived efficacy of the recommended interview techniques between interviewer genders, only two gender differences were noted. Female interviewers perceived the techniques concerned with the *establishment of rapport* and *the offering of comfort if the victim is struggling to control their emotions* as being more effective on the interviewing process than their male counterparts. A possible explanation could be due to females displaying better attitudes and/or behaviours towards sexual offence victims and ultimately recognising the importance of rapport and empathy more so than their male

counterparts when trying to put a victim at ease (e.g., see Brown & King, 1998; Jordan, 2001; Page, 2007; 2008; Rich & Seffrin, 2012). However, there were no significant differences in relation to the effectiveness of the recommended interview techniques between interviewers with differing lengths of service.

4. Interviewers' beliefs in the prevalence of rape myths in society.

The reported use of specific interview techniques.

The attitudes of interviewers regarding rape myth prevalence were explored to ascertain how varying beliefs would impact on their reported usage of the recommended interview techniques. Those interviewers who believed that rape myths had a higher level of prevalence reportedly use the technique concerned with *asking for an uninterrupted account* more often than those interviewers with beliefs that rape myths have a lower prevalence. However, whilst a significant difference in scores was noted for the reported usage of this interview technique, when the actual mean values were interpreted, both interviewer groups either *'almost always'* or *'always'* reportedly use this technique (see Table 3.4). This finding is also reflected in Table 3.1 where this technique is the second most regularly used interview technique by all interviewers.

Of the four interview techniques that had significant differences in the reported usage scores from those interviewers with differing beliefs regarding the prevalence of rape myths; two were concerned with empathy-based techniques whilst one was concerned with rapport. Those interviewers who believed that rape myths have a higher level of prevalence use the two empathy-based techniques (*encouragement to take their time* and the *use of empathy*) more often than those who perceive rape myths to be less prevalent. When interpreting the mean values that represent each of the interviewer groups; they suggest that interviewers with higher prevalence beliefs *'almost always'* use these techniques as opposed to just *'usually'* using such techniques as reported by interviewers with lower prevalence beliefs.

Whilst there is no definitive link between an individual's beliefs regarding rape myth prevalence and their acceptance of such myths, a possible explanation is that those who believe that rape myths have a higher level of prevalence would generally have reduced rape myth acceptance. In other words, the increased awareness and understanding of the various difficulties associated with such investigations may influence their perception regarding such issues. It could be hypothesised that interviewers then in turn have a greater appreciation and

understanding of how strenuous and/or difficult the investigative interview could be for the victim and consequently incorporate those empathy-based techniques.

The final interview technique focused on an element of rapport (*instruction not to fabricate or guess*). Those interviewers with a belief that rape myths have a lower level of prevalence reportedly use this technique more regularly than those with higher prevalence beliefs. The topic of false reporting amongst sexual offence victims has been widely researched and findings suggest that interviewers tend to overestimate such figures (Ask, 2010; Kanin, 1994; Mennicke *et al.,* 2014; Spohn *et al.*, 2014; Temkin, 1997). It could be argued that the current findings support this notion in that those interviewers who do not perceive rape myths to be as prevalent feel the need to use this technique more often than those interviewers with lower prevalence beliefs. Can it be assumed that the lack of awareness or acceptance of such myths result in the interviewer perceiving the victim to be less credible?

When reviewing the quantitative data obtained, it appears that interviewers value the concept of rapport more highly than they do empathy and this is reflected by the rankings for the reported use of rapport and empathy-based techniques. However, this could be a consequential result of being provided with the ABE guidance document on how to best practice an investigative interview with a victim/witness. Notably, the expanse of academic research focusing on rapport-building in relation to investigative interviewing, also outweighs that which focuses on the impact and efficacy of empathy. The predominant focus on rapport, both by policy makers and psychological research, could be an explanatory factor in why the sampled police interviewers utilised this concept more regularly. Of the previous research that has been conducted on the use of rapport and empathy within the investigative interview, it is more extensive when concerned with the interaction between the interviewer and a suspect, as opposed to a victim. The vast majority of this research has focused more on the perspective of the suspects/offenders and their perceptions of the investigative interview (Holmberg & Christianson, 2002; Kebbell *et al*., 2006; Kebbell *et al*., 2010; Oxburgh & Ost, 2011; Oxburgh *et al*., 2013; 2015).

The perceived efficacy of specific interview techniques.

Interviewer attitudes regarding rape myth prevalence were also explored to ascertain how varying beliefs would impact on the perceived efficacy of the recommended interview techniques. However, the number of significant differences obtained was notably fewer than when compared with the findings from the reported use of said interview practices. Those

interviewers who believed that rape myths had a higher level of prevalence perceived the *encouragement to take their time* technique as being more effective than those interviewers with beliefs that rape myths have a lower prevalence. Whilst both interviewer groups perceived this interview technique to be effective, those with higher rape myth prevalence beliefs value it as being *'very effective'* as opposed to just being *'quite effective'* (see Table 3.5). Again, as previously highlighted, do those interviewers with higher rape myth prevalence beliefs have a more developed understanding of the potential factors that could influence such investigations (as previously suggested)? In turn, is this finding a result of that increased awareness that could possibly encourage interviewers to be more reassuring and patient when interviewing a victim, in essence valuing the incorporation of an empathic approach?

Similar to the findings for the reported usage, it also appears that the sampled interviewers value rapport more than empathy in terms of perceived efficacy. The term 'rapport' is repeatedly referred to within the ABE guidance document, so much so that the first phase of the interview is defined by it. As a result, the awareness of this concept is much greater, both in terms of its literal definition and practical usage. In comparison, empathy has only one reference within the ABE (MoJ, 2011) in relation to the development of rapport. This sole reference appears to imply that the quality of empathy is more of a contributing factor as part of rapport, as opposed to being identified as a stand-alone quality. At no point is a definition cited providing guidance on how to communicate empathy or indeed how interviewers should 'identify' and/or 'understand' what empathy actually means. Previous research has also highlighted how this concept can sometimes be confused with sympathy and that distinguishing between the two can be difficult (Eisenberg & Lennon, 1983; Shepherd, 2007; Oxburgh *et al*., 2015). Needless to say, these are two completely different concepts and their incorporation into the investigative interview could have a significant, albeit very differing, impact on the interview process.

5. Facilitating an investigative interview with a sexual offence victim.

The findings generally indicate that interviewers (at least in this sample) reportedly use and perceive rapport-based practices to be more effective in investigative interviews with sexual offence victims compared with empathy-based practices. The respondents' qualitative responses that were obtained from the conceptual analysis appear to support this belief as they referred to 'rapport' more often than 'empathy'. However, those words/phrases used by the respondents in relation to the concept of rapport were discussed regarding its practical usage

and when it should be demonstrated during the investigation process. It could be inferred from the findings that whilst interviewers do value the importance of rapport, it is perhaps only used in the early stages of an investigation (pre-interview) and momentarily in the early stages of an interview. An assumption based on the large number of respondents who referred to the various points in an investigation where they would develop rapport commenting on how it would be used *'prior to the interview', 'kept separate from the interview'* and how it is *'incorporated into explanation of the interview process'.* An explanation of such responses could be that rapport is being used in the build-up and during the '**E**ngage and explain' phase of the interview as opposed to being maintained throughout the interview. However, the large number of respondents who justify using rapport *'prior to the interview'* so as to ensure that the victim can *'concentrate on the matter we are discussing'* suggests that there may be some interviewers who feel rapport maintenance during an investigation is detrimental. This is clearly a problem if interviewers feel that rapport maintenance prevents them from being *'neutral'* and could potentially have serious implications (i.e. on how comfortable the victim feels that could then influence the manner in how the investigation proceeds). This finding contradicts the guidance provided to interviewers (see chapter one) and previous research that highlights the importance of rapport and how it can help facilitate communication with a victim (Holmberg & Christianson, 2002; Holmberg & Madsen, 2014; Kebbell *et al.,* 2006; Oxburgh & Ost, 2011; Oxburgh *et al.,* 2012; 2013; 2015; Patterson, 2012).

As previously highlighted, the concept of empathy was not valued as highly in terms of its reported usage and perceived efficacy of the recommended interview practices. However, the qualitative responses with regards to how respondents would attempt to facilitate an investigative interview with a sexual offence victim appear to contradict this. As mentioned some of the more regularly mentioned words/phrases by respondents were strongly linked to the concept of empathy and were mentioned in conjunction with how they could help assist the interview process. These findings concur with previous research, which, despite focusing on suspect interviews, found the use of an empathic interviewing style led to more confessions and more IRI when used in conjunction with appropriate forms of questions (Kassin & Gudjonsson, 2004; Oxburgh *et al*., 2013; 2015). The work of Alison *et al*. (2013) contends that strategies incorporating empathy *per se* (e.g., a humane interviewing style) have much more impact in generating relevant information from the interviewee than non-humane strategies. Despite being conducted in relation to interactions occurring between suspects, there is still overlap in our findings with victims.

The final observation from the qualitative feedback noted how respondents made *'reference to "sympathy"'* and how this was sometimes confused with the practical definition of empathy. The ABE (MoJ, 2011) refers to sympathy and explains how *'the interviewer should convey to the witness/victim that they have respect and sympathy for how they feel'* (p. 189). This provides a possible explanation as to why there may be some confusion between the two (Shepherd, 2007). Research conducted by Oxburgh (2011) noted that many officers found it difficult to differentiate between empathy and sympathy and this consequently resulted in them being unable to provide clear definitions of the two. As previously highlighted, these are two completely different concepts and confusion between the two further reinforces the need for specific concentration that could enhance interviewers understanding of them and how they may impact on the interview process.

Limitations of the Study and Future Directions

The data used was obtained via a self-report questionnaire that ensured the respondents referred to their own personal experiences when providing feedback. The generalised nature of the questionnaire also ensured that respondents were not influenced by other characteristics of a particular case that may impact fieldwork. However, it is not clear whether respondents completed the questionnaire alone with no help from colleagues. In addition, when considering interview techniques used, there was no way of confirming whether or not respondents did indeed use a recommended interview technique when conducting interviews with sexual offence victims, or whether they felt they should state that they did. In addition, the respondents may have been reluctant to report that rape myths are difficult to ignore and that they impact on the interview process, as they could have been concerned with how this would reflect on their perceived level of competence. Consequently, future research should consider analysing actual video recorded interviews to provide a more detailed understanding of the complete social interaction that occurs between interviewer and interviewee, thereby increasing ecological validity (see chapter four). Such analyses would also enable researchers to observe the non-verbal communication to establish any links with the use of non-verbal empathy and rapport-building.

Given that there is a dearth of research that has focused on victims of sexual offences (specifically rape), future research should now focus on the interviewing of sexual offence victims. Such research should also include the perspective of the victim to understand how (if they have been previously interviewed) they believe their interviews were conducted,

especially in relation to the use of rapport/empathy and how these concepts may have impacted on their interview experience. This is the focus of the chapter five.

Recommendations for Practice

Clear differences between the quantitative and qualitative responses were found in the present study. This was predominantly with how the concept of empathy was valued, and the references made within the qualitative responses suggest that it is key in facilitating an investigative interview with a sexual offence victim. In contrast, the concept of empathy was neither used nor perceived to be as effective within the quantitative findings. This disparity suggests that some level of confusion exists in understanding the literal definition and practical usage of both concepts. This is illustrated in the words/phrases used by the respondents when explaining how they would facilitate an investigative interview, as opposed to asking how often they use recommended interviewing techniques. Previous research has highlighted the importance of incorporating empathy into investigative interviews and the impact that this can have on the amount of IRI obtained from the interviewee (Kassin & Gudjonsson, 2004; Alison *et al*., 2013; Oxburgh *et al*., 2013; 2015). This knowledge now needs to be transferred from the academic arena, where it originated, to those where it can be acted upon, put into practice and further refined. The training/guidance currently being delivered to police interviewers has a void in that it is not utilising psychologically-informed guidance based on the evaluation/reflection of interviewer interview practice. Attention must now turn to the investigative interviewing of sexual offence victims and begin incorporating a larger focus on empathy and how this, in conjunction with rapport-building and appropriate questioning, could improve the efficacy of interviews.

Chapter Conclusion

The present study provides some insight into the perceived level of influence that rape myths have on the investigative process in relation to sexual offence victims, how victims are interviewed, and how police interviewers' beliefs and perceived prevalence of rape myths may influence their use of recommended interview practices. Findings indicated that some gender differences exist in relation to how rape myths might influence the interviewing process, and interviewers with differing beliefs also perceive and report using the recommended interview techniques rather differently. Notably, it was found that the gap between the reported usage and perceived efficacy of rapport/empathy is not as expansive as first thought. The sampled officers did reportedly use and perceive rapport-based techniques

to be more effective, however when looking at the mean values the only notable difference with empathy-based techniques was in relation to the reported usage that varied between *‘almost always’* or *‘usually’* using the respective techniques.

The next chapter (another empirical research study) will address this area further, examining video-recordings of 25 investigative interviews with female adult rape victims for the use of empathy and rapport by interviewers and whether question typology has any impact on the amount of IRI obtained.

Chapter four. The efficacy of question types and use of empathy on information obtained in adult rape interviews.

Chapter Summary

Previous research has highlighted how interviewers find the investigation of sexual crimes 'technically difficult' and 'stressful' to conduct due to having to make sense of painful emotions (Oxburgh *et al.,* 2006). Chapter three gave an indication as to the interview practices that interviewers currently use. This chapter (an empirical research study) will attempt to add clarity and confirm what practices interviewers are specifically using through the analysis of 25 video recordings from investigative interviews with female adult rape victims in England. The aims of the present study were to establish whether: (i) the use of empathy; and (ii) the use of different question typologies impacted on the 'quantity' and 'quality' of investigation relevant information (IRI) obtained in video-recorded interviews. Overall, results found that interviewers asked significantly more *appropriate* than *inappropriate* questions that, in turn, elicited significantly more items of IRI. However, there was no impact on the amount of IRI obtained between *empathic* and *non-empathic* interviews, nor were there any significant differences in the number of *appropriate* questions asked between interviews classified as *empathic* and *non-empathic*. The first exploratory finding revealed that the outcome of the investigation was not influenced by the ratio of *appropriate* and *inappropriate* questions asked by the interviewer. The final exploratory finding indicated that the type and amount of IRI obtained did not influence the outcome of the investigation. The chapter concludes with a discussion of possible implications for practice in this specialist area of work.

Introduction

A core function of policing is the investigation of crime (ACPO, 2004) and the information provided by witnesses and victims is crucial to the criminal investigation (Kebbell & Milne, 1998; Milne & Bull, 2006). To obtain such information, an officer must communicate with the witness/victim by way of an interview (Milne & Bull, 2006) and their objective is to obtain the best *quality* and *quantity* of information that then assists in determining what has actually happened or who committed the crime. However, interviews involving sexual crime are considered to be 'unique' given that they are predominantly committed in a private setting with very few, if any, witnesses present. Very often, the police only have the victim's and/or suspect's version of events to rely on (Benneworth, 2007; Lees, 2002; Marshall, 2001; Oxburgh & Ost, 2011).

The investigation of sexual crimes also involves discussing highly sensitive and personal details, thus, officers may find interviews 'technically difficult' and 'stressful' to conduct as a result of having to make sense of painful emotions (Oxburgh *et al.,* 2006). The treatment of sexual offence victims by investigative agencies and the CJS has historically been poor (Caringella, 2009). This has been highlighted as a result of various high-profile cases in the UK which have been in the media (e.g., Rolf Harris, Jimmy Saville etc.) and that in turn have prompted reactions from the Government Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC). The Government has responded by conducting reforms/reviews of practice (e.g., see Home Office Circular 69/86; HMCPSI/HMCI, 2007; Stern Review, 2010) whilst PCCs around the country have taken action by forming Rape Scrutiny Panels whose purpose is to ensure that police decision-making is appropriate and based on sound principles. Despite such efforts, there are still some police officers who are sceptical of sexual offence victim claims (Jordan, 2004; 2008) and endorse common misconceptions (Brown & King, 1998; Feldman-Summers & Palmer, 1980; Page, 2007; 2008a; 2008b). This is supported by research that has focused on the perspective of sexual offence victims who have had previous interactions with the CJS and found that they reported negative and traumatising experiences (Campbell, 2006; Campbell & Raja, 2005; Campbell *et al.,* 2001; Chen & Ullman, 2010; Felson & Pare, 2008; Filipas & Ullman, 2001; Frazier & Haney, 1996; Frohmann, 2002; Konradi & Burger, 2000; Larcombe, 2002; Monroe *et al.,* 2005; Patterson, 2011; Ullman & Townsend, 2007; see also chapter three).

When investigating a crime that involves a sexual offence, the victim may be required to explain the offence repeatedly and in great detail (Logan *et al.,* 2005). As the first point of

contact that a victim has with the CJS, the quality and nature of the early intervention provided by police officers is likely to impact on the subsequent quality and quantity of evidence obtained. The evidence obtained from the victim during the interview must be examined to check whether it is relevant to the investigation and it is essential that all interviews produce good *'quality'* information that deduces: (i) what happened; (ii) how the crime was committed; (iii) the persons involved; (iv) when and where the crime took place, and; (v) any items used (if any) to assist in committing the offence/s (Milne & Bull, 2006). These are the components of IRI that have been used in the present study to code investigative interviews of female adult rape victims.

If a victim is going to provide IRI, then the officer must initiate a discussion and begin extracting information from the victim by using a series of different question typologies and interview techniques (as highlighted in chapter one). Previous research has focused on assessing the efficacy of the different questioning techniques used during investigative interviews (see Table 4.1) with different suspects, witnesses and victims (see Clarke *et al.,* 2011; Myklebust & Bjørklund, 2006; 2009; Oxburgh *et al.,* 2012; 2013; Shepherd & Griffiths, 2013). As discussed in chapter one (p. 14), it is widely accepted that using *open-ended* and more *probing* forms of questions are the most productive and encourage interviewees to freely recall events, that in turn, are also associated with more fulsome and accurate accounts (Aldridge & Cameron, 1999; Cederborg *et al.,* 2000; Davies *et al.,* 2000; Loftus, 1982; Milne & Bull, 2006; Myklebust & Bjørklund, 2006). Conversely, questions categorised as *inappropriate* encourage interviewees to respond on the basis of recognition memory, rather than on the basis of free recall, which can dramatically increase the probability of error in the provided answers (Dent, 1982; 1986; Dent & Stephenson, 1979; Lamb & Fauchier, 2001; Orbach & Lamb, 2001). It has been argued that an interviewer's ability to maintain the use of *open-ended* questions is the best predictor of a good investigative interview (Poole & Lamb, 1998). The present study utilised a range of question typologies that were adapted by Oxburgh *et al.* (2012) from Griffiths and Milne (2006).

Campbell (2008) noted that when engaging with a sexual offence victim, an empathic and supportive manner from the police officer could help alleviate how difficult that process is for them. Due to the 'unique' nature of such offences officers are required to demonstrate interviewing skills that are not utilised during 'everyday' interviews (Cherryman & Bull, 2001). The guidance available to officers (that focuses on their interview practice) has been reviewed on numerous occasions by different authors and two of the specific qualities that have been identified include rapport-building and empathy (Bull & Cherryman, 1995; Clarke

& Milne, 2001; see also chapters one and three of this thesis). Previous research has highlighted the importance of both these concepts in an investigative interview and how their incorporation into the interview can help facilitate communication with a victim that, in turn, yields more IRI (see Holmberg & Christianson, 2002; Holmberg & Madsen, 2014; Kebbell *et al.,* 2006; Oxburgh & Ost, 2011; Oxburgh *et al.,* 2012; 2013; 2015; Patterson, 2012). As discussed in Chapter one (pp. 16 & 17) there are multiple definitions that attempt to describe empathy and so attributing an appropriate definition to this concept/skill when concerned with the operational setting of an investigative interview can be problematic. The present study utilised a model developed by Dando and Oxburgh (2016) that expanded the work of Oxburgh *et al.* (2013) to code for empathic exchanges between the officer and the victim (see Table 4.3).

The findings from the empirical study discussed in chapter three suggest that there may be some confusion amongst officers understanding of the literal definition and practical usage of rapport and empathy. The subsequent results indicated that officers reportedly use and perceive rapport-based practices to be more effective with sexual offence victims compared with empathy-based practices. However, the qualitative responses with regards to how officers would facilitate an interview with a sexual offence victim is contradictory, with many linking the concept of empathy with how they could help assist the interview process.

The Present Study

The aims of the present study were to establish whether: (i) the use of empathy; and (ii) the use of different question typologies impacted on the 'quantity[13]' and 'quality[14]' of the IRI obtained in video-recorded interviews with female adult rape victims. In light of previous research, it was hypothesised that:

H_1. More *inappropriate* questions would be asked in comparison to *appropriate* questions (Bull & Cherryman, 1995; Davies *et al.,* 2000; Myklebust & Bjørklund, 2006; Oxburgh *et al.,* 2012; 2013).

H_2. Responses to *appropriate* questions would contain more items of relevant information than responses to *inappropriate* questions (Aldridge & Cameron,

[13] The measurement of 'quantity' relates to the total amount of relevant information obtained from the victim.
[14] The measurement of 'quality' relates to two different measures. The first was concerned with the balance of *appropriate* and *inappropriate* questions used by the interviewer (a higher proportion of *appropriate* questions would be classed as a good quality interview). The second focused on the manner in which the interview had been conducted and whether it could be described as being empathic (see Holmberg & Christianson, 2002; Kebbell *et al.,* 2006; Oxburgh & Ost, 2011).

1999; Cederborg *et al.,* 2000; Davies *et al.*, 2000; Loftus, 1982; Milne & Bull, 2006; Myklebust & Bjørklund, 2006; 2009; Oxburgh *et al.,* 2012).

H_3. Interviews classified as *empathic* would contain more *appropriate* than *inappropriate* questions (Oxburgh *et al.,* 2013)

H_4. Interviews classified as *empathic* would contain more IRI than those interviews classified as *non-empathic* (Alison *et al.,* 2013; Holmberg & Christianson, 2002; Kebbell *et al*., 2006; Oxburgh *et al.,* 2013).

There were also two exploratory elements that were formulated in light of the findings from Myklebust and Bjørklund (2009) who found that in interviews of children, cases that resulted in a conviction contained, on average, significantly more IRI. Therefore, the present study also sought to ascertain whether the overall investigation outcome was influenced by: (i) the ratio of *appropriate* and *inappropriate* questions asked by the interviewer, and; (ii) the type and amount of IRI obtained.

Method

Sample

After receiving ethical approval from the Faculty of Medical Sciences Ethics Committee, Newcastle University (see Appendix G), one police force based in England agreed to collaborate (see Appendix H) and provided actual video-recordings of investigative interviews with female adult rape victims (N=29). All of the interviews were conducted between 2011 and 2017, however, some interviews had to be excluded due to being partly inaudible, leaving a final sample of 25 interviews. Included interviews were from investigations that resulted in 'no detection' (*n*=13), 'victim retraction' (*n*=6) and 'offender charged' (*n*=6).

All included interviews were conducted by officers who were trained to at least PIP Level Two (see chapter one for explanation of this term), and from investigations that had been categorised as 'closed' and already processed through the CJS. The participating force also provided additional information including: (i) the interviewing officers' gender; (ii)

whether interviewers were Sexual Offence Investigative Technique (SOIT)[15] trained; (iii) when the case was finalised, and; (iv) the investigation outcome.

Procedure for the Coding of Interviews

Each interview was analysed within police premises (for confidentiality purposes) using a specially designed coding framework (see Appendix I) that was developed by the researcher (a guidance document was also devised to be used when coding an interview – see Appendix J). To attain inter-rater reliability and address any concerns regarding inaccuracy and bias an independent source[16] coded three interviews (12%) for: (i) question type; (ii) amount and type of IRI, and; (iii) use of empathy. Inter-rater reliability was assessed using the percentage of agreement method and after initial coding the raters had 88% agreement; raters reached 100% following discussion.

During this process, no identifiable characteristics were recorded to ensure anonymity of all concerned. Detailed coding then took place that included:

(i) The number and type of questions used in each interview, broadly categorised into *appropriate* (open, probing and encouragers/acknowledgments) and *inappropriate* questions (echo[17], closed, forced choice, multiple, leading and opinion/statement). Table 4.1 outlines the different types of questions coded for (Oxburgh *et al.,* 2012);

[15] A Sexual Offence Investigative Technique (SOIT) officer will have completed a PIP level two training course that specifically provides them with the necessary knowledge and skills required to deal with victims of rape and serious sexual assault. The label provided to this course varies throughout the country with some forces/constabularies referring to it as the Sexual Offence Liaison Officer (SOLO) course or the Specially Trained Officers Development Programme.

[16] Identifying an independent source to code a sample of the interviews was problematic due to the very sensitive nature of the video-recorded interviews being analysed. The respective Police force who owned the data required that all those persons accessing the data had to be vetted and pass an Enhanced Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) check.

[17] It has been argued that *echo* questions are *appropriate,* but there is some evidence that suggests they are simply *closed* questions. Whilst they are a good conversation management technique, it is argued that they predominantly receive a *yes/no* response; hence why they were coded as *inappropriate* that also corroborates previous research (Fiengo, 2007; Milne & Bull, 1999; Oxburgh *et al.,* 2012).

Table 4.1. Examples of the different question typologies coded.

Broad category	Specific category	Example
Appropriate	Open	"Tell me what happened." "Explain to me what happened on Friday evening." "Describe the layout of the bedroom."
	Probing	"What happened after that?" "Where did you go then?"
	Encourager / Acknowledgment	"Oh, I see." "Okay, carry on."
Inappropriate	Echo	Interviewee: "I went to the garage." Interviewer: "You went to the garage?"
	Closed	"Did you go back to his house?"
	Forced Choice	"Was his top red, black or brown?"
	Multiple	"Did you consent to the intercourse? How sure can you be? Could he have misinterpreted something you said or did?"
	Leading	"You've had consensual sex with him before then?"
	Opinion/statement	"I think you wanted to go back to his house and that you are now trying to excuse your actions."

(ii) The amount of IRI obtained during the interview that included: **P**erson information, **A**ction information, **L**ocation information, **I**tem information and **T**emporal information (PALIT; see Hutcheson, Baxter, Telfer, & Warden, 1995; Oxburgh *et al.,* 2012; 2013). Each item of information was only coded once with all repetitions ignored (because it would not be new information if it was repeated). The total number from each PALIT category (see Table 4.2 for a description of each category) were summed to provide an individual score, then all categories were summed to provide an overall IRI score for each interview. The following phrase outlines the way in which coding took place: *"We went back to Dale's apartment* (1 x Action; 1 x Person; 1 x Location) *on the Friday* (1 x Temporal) *and I drank some vodka* (1 x Action; 1 x Item)";

Table 4.2. Description of the different IRI categories.

IRI type	IRI category description
Person	**The who**: Any information about people (e.g., names, age, clothing, appearance, shoes, hair, tattoos, voice, accent, injuries, profession etc.). Can refer to witnesses, suspects, self, victim, bystander, etc.
Action	**The how**: Any information that describes an action in some way (e.g., 'I went to the house', 'I gave him a cuddle', 'I tried to fight him off). Could include offence related or unrelated actions.
Location	**The where**: Information relating to places (e.g., address, streets, houses, descriptions of same, etc.). Could include where the offence took place, where suspect, victim or witness lives, work addresses, alibi addresses etc.
Item	**The what**: Any information that describes an item used, or mentioned, by the victim. Could include weapons, drugs, alcohol, animals, furniture items etc. NOT PERSON SPECIFIC ITEMS LIKE TATTOOS.
Temporal	**The when**: Any information that relates to dates, times, before, after, later, following etc. Not person specific age (in years – this should go into Person information).

(iii) The presence of empathy using a model devised by Dando and Oxburgh (2016) that elaborated on the four key variables (*empathic opportunities, empathic continuers, empathic terminators* and *spontaneous empathy*) that was initially devised by Oxburgh *et al.* (2013). Due to having video-recordings, the presence of both *verbal* and *non-verbal empathy* were coded. Table 4.3 provides examples of empathic exchanges between the interviewer and interviewee. The total number of empathic instances was recorded in each interview.

Table 4.3. Examples of empathic exchanges between interviewing officer and interviewee.

Empathy type	Example
Empathic *opportunity* (EO)	Interviewee: "Can I please take a moment…I'm really struggling with this."
Empathic *opportunity continuer* (EOC)	*A response from the interviewer that serves to continue the empathic exchange* (as outlined below).
Continuer comfort (CC)	Interviewer: "Take as long as you need…would you like to take a break?"
Continuer understanding (CU)	Interviewer: "I appreciate how difficult this is for you…what can I do to help?"
Empathic *opportunity terminator* (EOT)	Interviewer: "We need to get this finished. Carry on."
Spontaneous empathy (SE)	*Interviewer goes beyond the formal information provided, despite not having any preceding content (or 'opportunity') from the interviewee.*
Spontaneous comfort (SC)	Interviewer: "We have been in here a while now…are you okay to carry on? Would you like a quick break?"
Spontaneous understanding (SU)	Interviewer: "I appreciate how difficult this is but it's important that you try to remember as much as you can."
Non-verbal empathy (NVE)	*Observation of the interviewer passing the interviewee a box of tissues.*

Following detailed coding, each interview was classified as either being *empathic* or *non-empathic*. An interview was classified as *empathic* if it had at least one instance of either an *empathic opportunity continuer* or *spontaneous empathy.* The second requirement to determine whether an interview was classified as empathic related to rapport-based interactions/behaviours which included *active listening* and *reflective listening* (see chapter one, pp. 14 – 16 for a review). These interactions/behaviours were coded as either *low* (allocated a score of one) or *high* (allocated a score of 2). A combined rapport score was then calculated for each interview by adding the *active listening* and *reflective listening* scores together. An interview was then classified as having high levels of rapport if it had a combined score of at least three.

In summary, for an interview to be classified as *empathic,* it had to contain at least one instance of either an *empathic opportunity continuer* or *spontaneous empathy*, and a rapport score greater than three. For an interview to be classified as *non-empathic,* it would not contain any instances of *empathic opportunity continuers* or *spontaneous empathy,* and a rapport score of two or lower.

Results

The aim of the present study was twofold. Firstly, to establish whether: (i) the use of empathy; and (ii) the use of different question typologies impacted on the 'quantity' and 'quality' of the IRI obtained in video-recorded interviews with female adult rape victims. Secondly, to explore whether the investigation outcome was influenced by: (i) the ratio of *appropriate* and *inappropriate* questions, and; (ii) the type and amount of IRI obtained. The measurement of 'quantity' related to the total amount of IRI obtained from the victim, whilst the measurement of 'quality' related to two different measures: (i) the balance of *appropriate* and *inappropriate* questions used by the interviewer (a higher proportion of *appropriate* questions would be classed as a good quality interview), and; (ii) the manner in which the interview had been conducted and whether it could be described as being empathic (see Holmberg & Christianson, 2002; Kebbell *et al.,* 2006; Oxburgh & Ost, 2011).

Data Screening

Initial analyses revealed large differences in the interview lengths across the sample (M = 62 minutes; SD = 30.64; range 23 – 149 minutes). Such differences in the length of interviews were largely due to the victims' motives for making a disclosure and the nature of the case/s being discussed. The shortest of the sampled interviews took place due to a victim being informed by a social worker that if she did not report the offence, then an investigation may take place as to whether she was fit to care for her children (the victim articulated during the interview that this was the only reason she disclosed the offence and attended the interview). In contrast, the longest of the sampled interviews involved discussions of four separate incidents that were all related to her being raped by the same suspect. To control for these length differences, all interviews were corrected for interview length with the number of each question type, IRI elicited, and the instances of empathy corrected to produce 'per minute' data. This decision was taken after reviewing research that had analysed similar data using the same measure of control (see Oxburgh *et al.,* 2013).

The Use of Appropriate and Inappropriate Questions

The totals of all questions asked by the interviewers were coded into the nine individual question typologies (see Table 4.1), then categorised as either *appropriate* or *inappropriate*. Due to all parametric assumptions being met, a paired-samples *t-test* revealed significantly more *appropriate* questions were asked in interviews (M = 1.82, SD = 0.75) than *inappropriate* questions (M = 1.35, SD = 0.74), t (24) = 3.89, p = 0.001 one-tailed, 95% CI:

[.22 to .70], thereby rejecting hypothesis one (Table 4.4 shows the mean number of questions asked). The eta squared statistic (.39) indicated a large effect size.

Table 4.4. Mean number of questions asked by interviewers (corrected for interview length).

Category	Question type	Range	Mean
Appropriate	Open	0.02 – 0.52	0.17 (0.11)
	Probing	0.24 – 2.53	1.31 (0.66)
	Encouragers/Acknowledgments	0.00 – 0.99	0.34 (0.29)
	Total	**0.50 – 3.24**	**1.82 (0.75)**
Inappropriate	Echo	0.00 – 0.49	0.16 (0.13)
	Closed	0.02 – 2.33	0.99 (0.58)
	Forced Choice	0.00 – 0.32	0.08 (0.08)
	Multiple	0.00 – 0.16	0.02 (0.02)
	Leading	0.00 – 0.08	0.04 (0.04)
	Opinion/statement	0.00 – 0.30	0.06 (0.06)
	Total	**0.05 – 2.63**	**1.35 (0.74)**

Note: Standard deviation in brackets.

Investigation Relevant Information

Due to parametric assumptions not being met for this element, a Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test was used and revealed that responses to *appropriate* questions (Md = 2.47) compared to *inappropriate* questions (Md = 1.05) contained significantly more items of IRI, z = -4.372, p < 0.001 (one-tailed), with a large effect size (r = .87; see Table 4.5), thereby accepting hypothesis two. The median value decreased from 2.47 items of IRI to 1.05 in response to *appropriate* and *inappropriate* questions.

Table 4.5. Total IRI elicited from appropriate and inappropriate questions (corrected for interview length).

Broad question category	Median
Appropriate	2.47
Inappropriate	1.05

Table 4.6 indicates how *Action IRI* was the most often reported closely followed by ***P****erson* IRI. There is then a somewhat substantial decrease in the elicitation of ***L****ocation,* ***I****tem* and ***T****emporal* IRI.

Table 4.6. Total IRI elicited from questions (corrected for interview length).

IRI category	Range	Mean
Person	0.86 – 3.11	2.09 (0.53)
Action	0.89 – 5.13	2.34 (1.02)
Location	0.15 – 0.82	0.47 (0.21)
Item	0.07 – 1.32	0.51 (0.28)
Temporal	0.08 – 0.83	0.50 (0.21)
Total IRI	**3.30 – 9.89**	**5.90 (1.59)**

Note: Standard deviation in brackets.

The Presence of Empathy

The next step of the analysis focused on the presence of empathy within each interview. Table 4.7 ranks the mean prevalence for each type of empathic exchange that occurred during the interactions between the sample of interviewers and victims from most to least used. It is evident that the most frequently demonstrated type of response involved the empathic *terminators*. The *termination* of empathic exchanges was twice as likely to occur as when compared with the interaction being *continued*. An example of how the interviewers would *terminate* an empathic exchange could be seen when the victim became embarrassed whilst discussing a particular topic area (i.e., the type of underwear worn, the viewing of pornography or specific details regarding how a sexual act was committed etc.) often culminating with the victim apologising to the interviewer. This was observed across a range of different interviews and the *termination* of the empathic exchange was fulfilled by no

response being offered from the interviewer. When comparing the type of empathy demonstrated by the interviewer across both *continuer* and *spontaneous* empathy, interviewers demonstrated *continuer comfort* more regularly than they did *continuer understanding*. A common example of *continuer comfort* was observed when the interaction involved the victim becoming upset and the interviewer would respond by offering them a comfort break, encouraging them to take their time or asking if they were happy to proceed. One example of how an interviewer demonstrated *continuer understanding* involved them reassuring the victim that they were *'okay to use their own words'* if it helped ease the process. Finally, there was a larger presence of *verbal*, as opposed to *non-verbal*, empathy within the sample.

Table 4.7. Descriptive statistics ranking empathy related instances per interview from most to least used (corrected for interview length).

Empathy type	**Mean**
Empathic opportunity (EO)	0.082 (0.057)
Empathic opportunity terminated (EOT)	0.059 (0.050)
Empathic opportunity continuer (EOC)	0.023 (0.020)
Continuer comfort (CC)	0.017 (0.017)
Spontaneous empathy (SE)	0.012 (0.014)
Spontaneous comfort (SC)	0.009 (0.011)
Continuer understanding (CU)	0.007 (0.012)
Spontaneous understanding (SU)	0.003 (0.007)
Non-verbal empathy (NVE)	0.001 (0.005)

Note: Standard deviation in brackets.

As outlined earlier (see p. 99), interviews were classified as either being *empathic* or *non-empathic* with a contributing factor being the amount of rapport-based interactions/behaviours demonstrated by the interviewer (incl. *active and reflective listening*). These interactions/behaviours were coded using the following criteria:

- Active listening was classified using a median split half method as either being low (*n*=13; range 0 – 0.8400) or high (*n*=12; range 0.8401 – 2.4500), which received scores of one and two, respectively.

- Reflective listening was classified using a median split half method as either being low (n=12; range 0 – 0.39020) or high (n=13; range 0.39021 – 0.88), which received scores of one and two, respectively.

A combined rapport score was then calculated for each interview by adding the recoded *active listening* and *reflective listening* scores together. There were a total of seventeen interviews (68%) that satisfied this criterion with the remaining eight (32%) being classified as having lower levels of rapport. Thus, there were thirteen interviews that satisfied the *empathic* requirement criteria (52%) and eleven that were then classified as being *non-empathic* (44%). However, one interview was excluded as no *empathic opportunities* or *spontaneous empathy* were demonstrated (this was the shortest of the sampled interviews alluded to on p.100 of this thesis).

Question typologies used within empathic interviews.

This analysis was conducted to examine what *empathic* interviews contained in terms of question type and the amount of IRI. Due to parametric assumptions not being met, a Mann-Whitney U test was conducted which was not significant in terms of the total number of *appropriate* questions asked in *empathic* (Md = 1.92, n = 13) versus *non-empathic* interviews (Md = 1.35, n = 11), U = 45.00, z = -1.535, p = 0.067 (one-tailed), r = .31, thereby rejecting hypothesis three. Notably, a further Mann-Whitney U test revealed a significant difference in the total number of *inappropriate* questions asked in *empathic* (Md = 1.59, n = 13) and *non-empathic* interviews (Md = 0.96, n = 11), U = 35.00, z = -2.115, p = 0.035 (two-tailed), r = .43, indicating that *empathic* interviews contained more *inappropriate* questions.

Effects of empathy on the amount of IRI obtained.

The final analysis was conducted to establish whether any differences existed between *empathic* and *non-empathic* interviews regarding the type and amount of IRI obtained. Rejecting hypothesis four, a series of Mann-Whitney U tests were conducted but were not significant: ***P****erson* information obtained between *empathic* (Md = 2.33, n = 13) and *non-empathic* interviews (Md = 2.00, n = 11), U = 41.000, z = -1.767, p = 0.077, r = .36; ***A****ction* information obtained between *empathic* (Md = 2.35, n = 13) and *non-empathic* interviews (Md = 2.13, n = 11), U = 65.000, z = -0.377, p = 0.706, r = .08; ***L****ocation* information obtained between *empathic* (Md = 0.44, n = 13) and *non-empathic* interviews (Md = 0.44, n = 11), U = 70.000, z = -0.087, p = 0.931, r = .02; ***I****tem* information obtained between *empathic*

(*Md* = 0.60, *n* = 13) and *non-empathic* interviews (*Md* = 0.38, *n* = 11), *U* = 44.000, *z* = -1.593, *p* = 0.111, *r* = .33; ***Temporal*** information obtained between *empathic* (*Md* = 0.52, *n* = 13) and *non-empathic* interviews (*Md* = 0.50, *n* = 11), *U* = 57.000, *z* = -0.840, *p* = 0.401, *r* = .17, and; total amount of ***IRI*** obtained between *empathic* (*Md* = 6.65, *n* = 13) and *non-empathic* interviews (*Md* = 5.06, *n* = 11), *U* = 43.000, *z* = -1.651, *p* = 0.050 (one-tailed), *r* = 34.

Exploratory Analyses

The use of appropriate and inappropriate questions.

The present study also wanted to explore whether the proportion of *appropriate* and *inappropriate* questions asked by the interviewer influenced the investigation outcome (e.g., 'no detection' [*n*=13], 'victim retraction' [*n*=6] and 'offender charged' [*n*=6]). Parametric assumptions were not met, so a Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted which revealed no significant differences in the number of *appropriate* questions asked (x^2 (2, *n* = 25) = 1.306, *p* = 0.520 (two-tailed) or *inappropriate* questions asked x^2 (2, *n* = 25) = 0.018, *p* = 0.991 (two-tailed).

Investigation relevant information.

This final analysis that attempted to address the other exploratory aspect aimed to establish whether investigation outcome was influenced by the type and amount of IRI obtained. Due to parametric assumptions not being met, a series of Kruskal-Wallis tests were conducted. However, no significant differences were found: ***Person*** (x^2 (2, *n* = 25) = 0.351, *p* = 0.839), ***Action*** (x^2 (2, *n* = 25) = 0.017, *p* = 0.992), ***Location*** (x^2 (2, *n* = 25) = 3.064, *p* = 0.216), ***Item*** (x^2 (2, *n* = 25) = 2.490, *p* = 0.288), ***Temporal*** (x^2 (2, *n* = 25) = 2.029, *p* = 0.363), and total ***IRI*** (x^2 (2, *n* = 25) = 0.741, *p* = 0.690 (two-tailed)). See Table 4.8 for the mean ranks as a function of interview outcome.

Table 4.8. Mean ranks as a function of interview outcome (corrected for interview length).

	No detection (n = 13)	Victim retraction (n = 6)	Offender charged (n = 6)
Person	13.77	11.67	12.67
Action	13.08	13.17	12.67
Location	15.15	8.83	12.50
Item	15.23	10.67	10.50
Temporal	12.58	16.42	10.50
Total IRI	**14.15**	**11.17**	**12.33**

Discussion

The overall aim of the present study was to examine the effect of interviewer empathy and whether its incorporation and the use of specific question types impacted on the 'quantity' and 'quality' of IRI obtained. The study also sought to explore whether the investigation outcome was influenced by: (i) the ratio of *appropriate* and *inappropriate* questions asked and; (ii) the type and amount of IRI obtained during interviews.

The Use of Appropriate and Inappropriate Questions

It was found that interviewers asked significantly more *appropriate* than *inappropriate* questions and whilst this finding contradicts other research (e.g., Bull & Cherryman, 1995; Davies *et al.,* 2000; Myklebust & Bjørklund, 2006; Oxburgh *et al.*, 2012; 2013), their focus was on the interviewing of adult suspects and child sexual abuse victims. Although hypothesis one was rejected, when comparing the ratio of *appropriate* and *inappropriate* questions with the ratio of *open* and *closed* questions, the former had a much closer ratio of approximately 4:5.5 (i.e., for every four *appropriate* questions asked, there were over five *inappropriate* questions asked), whereas the latter had a ratio of approximately 1:6 (i.e., for every *open* question asked, there were six *closed* questions asked). This suggests that although interviewers were asking other forms of *appropriate* questions, following more detailed analysis, it was found that interviewers were asking more *probing* questions. This latter aspect corroborates the findings of Oxburgh *et al.* (2013) who also found that interviewers used more *probing* questions. The final observation focuses on how *echo* questions have been categorised in the present study (see p. 96). Previous research has highlighted how this question type predominantly receives a *yes/no* response and consequently is coded as *inappropriate* (Fiengo, 2007; Milne & Bull, 1999; Oxburgh *et al.,*

2010). This is understandable if the presentation of the *echo* question is done so in a challenging manner. However, an *echo* question could also be presented in a manner that encourages the victim to continue discussing something, and if so, this question typology should then be coded as *appropriate*. The coding of *echo* questions will continue to be an issue and until the context, tone and volume in which it is used are explored this question typology should be interpreted with caution.

Investigation Relevant Information (IRI)

Accepting hypothesis two, responses to *appropriate* questions contained significantly more items of IRI than responses to *inappropriate* questions, which corroborates other research (e.g., Aldridge & Cameron, 1999; Cederborg *et al.,* 2000; Davies *et al.*, 2000; Loftus, 1982; Milne & Bull, 2006; Myklebust & Bjørklund, 2006; 2009; Oxburgh *et al.*, 2012). The specific type of IRI that was most often reported related to ***A**ction* IRI (i.e., the way in which a suspect may have 'pushed' or 'grabbed' the victim). This finding contradicts that of Oxburgh *et al.* (2012; 2013) who found that ***P**erson* IRI was the most regularly reported, however, in both those studies orchestrated by Oxburgh, ***A**ction* IRI was the second most regularly reported. This is not a wholly unexpected result and could be entirely due to the circumstances of the crime. For example, acquaintance rapes are more prevalent then stranger rapes (Kelly *et al.,* 2005; Stanko & Williams, 2009) and the circumstances of the relationship between the suspect and victim within the former category would indicate that the victim has personal knowledge of the suspect. On such occasions, the amount of detail required form the victim in relation to the suspect (***P**erson* IRI) might not (arguably) be as crucial. A contentious subject within all sexual offence investigations is the issue of consent, thus, in an attempt to ascertain a better understanding and/or appreciation of this issue, it is wholly likely that an interviewer may focus more heavily on the actual act of the crime itself (e.g., ***A**ction* IRI). This would be achieved by asking questions on how the suspect committed certain acts or how the victim indicated that they did not give consent.

The Presence of Empathy

Question typologies used within empathic interviews.

Rejecting hypothesis three, no significant differences were found in relation to the total number of *appropriate* questions asked in *empathic* versus *non-empathic* interviews. This contradicts Oxburgh *et al.,* (2013) who found that in suspect interviews containing *spontaneous* empathy also contained a significantly higher number of *appropriate* questions.

It was also found that interviewers asked significantly more *inappropriate* questions in *empathic* interviews than they did in *non-empathic* interviews. Again, this finding contradicts that of Oxburgh *et al.* who found no significant difference in the number of *inappropriate* questions asked during interviews with and without *spontaneous* empathy. One possible explanation for this finding could stem from the difficulties associated with conducting such interviews. As highlighted by Oxburgh *et al.* (2006) interviewers appear to find the investigation of sexual crimes 'technically difficult' and 'stressful' to conduct due to having to make sense of painful emotions. To combat those difficulties, Oxburgh (2011) proposed three factors (control, speed and power) that could allude to why interviewers more readily employ the use of *closed* (or *inappropriate*) questions as opposed to *appropriate*. When interviewing a sexual offence victim, an interviewer may utilise *inappropriate* questions more regularly as this is a quicker way of confirming or obtaining information from the victim (as opposed to asking for an uninterrupted account using *appropriate* questions). This could, potentially, reduce the length of time the interview takes and subsequently reduce the likelihood of being exposed to personal and sensitive material that could make such interviews 'stressful' and 'difficult' to conduct.

Another possible explanation for this finding could be the ease in which a victim is able to answer various questions. The recommended use of *appropriate* questions, in particular *TED* questions, is not a type of interaction that a victim (or indeed any person) is accustomed to. Every-day interactions involve turn-taking, whereby the speaker and the listener exchange utterances in response to the elicitation of information or specific questions (Wright & Powell, 2006). Chapter five discusses how some victims find it easier to respond to *inappropriate* questions when required to discuss highly sensitive and personal details. Previous research has highlighted that an individual's ability to process information (i.e., cognitive load) has a limited capacity and once the load exceeds that capacity, the performance suffers (Jansen, Lakens, & Ijsselsteijn, 2017). The following chapter also provides an explanation as to how the cognitive load that a victim experiences during an investigative interview could potentially impact on their ability to respond to certain question typologies. The initiation of a discussion that focuses on a very complex and potentially upsetting experience, from the victim's point of view, could be made easier through the use of *inappropriate* questions (i.e., *echo* or *closed* questions) as opposed to the more open-ended use of *appropriate* questions (i.e., *TED* questions), however, it is acknowledged that this is somewhat controversial.

Effects of empathy on the amount of IRI obtained.

No significant differences were found in relation to the total amount of IRI obtained (inclusive of total and the five individual categories) as a function of whether the interviews were classified as *empathic* or *not.* Again, this finding contradicts previous research (e.g., Alison *et al.,* 2013; Holmberg & Christianson, 2002), however, it is worthy of note that there are subtle differences with the way the present study classified empathic interviewing style with the humanitarian or more empathic, rapport-based strategy. These findings corroborate Oxburgh *et al.* (2013) who also found that interviews classified as being *empathic* did not contain more IRI (inclusive of total and the five individual categories), when compared with *non-empathic* interview. As a consequence, hypothesis four was rejected.

One possible explanation as to why the use of an *empathic* interviewing style does not appear as effective as using *appropriate* questions (with regards to the total amount/type of IRI being obtained), could be due to a lack of understanding of what empathy is, how to demonstrate it and when to demonstrate it. As outlined in chapter one, empathy is a multi-dimensional concept and officers receive almost no training in relation to how useful it can be within an interview setting. Research has also indicated how some officers find it difficult to differentiate between empathy and sympathy (Oxburgh 2011; Shepherd & Griffiths, 2013). This was discussed in chapter three where findings from the present thesis indicated that a small number of officers confused the practical definition of sympathy with empathy. It is conceivable that the use of *appropriate* and *inappropriate* questions is a more straightforward and easier to understand set of instructions/guidance to train.

Exploratory Analyses

The use of appropriate and inappropriate questions.

Given that no previous research has analysed question typology as a function of investigation outcome (when interviewing adult suspects, victims or witnesses), this first exploratory analyses found no significant differences in the number of *appropriate* or *inappropriate* questions asked across the three different investigation outcome groups (i.e., ‘no detection’, ‘victim retraction’ and ‘offender charged’).

A possible explanation for this finding could be the purpose of the investigative interview. The role of an interviewer is to gather accurate and reliable information from the interviewee, whereas the decision on the outcome of the investigation lies with the Crown

Prosecution Service (CPS). In addition, interviewers are limited in terms of their knowledge and understanding of 'ground truth' regarding the details of the alleged crime. Furthermore, the result could also be as a consequence of how the interviewer responds to the elicitation of IRI. The ABE guidelines state that a victim/witness should be treated with a 'unique set of needs' and that the interviewer should convey to them that they have 'respect' for how they feel. For a victim of rape, the need to be believed is crucial, and being met with a disbelieving or over-challenging manner could well have a detrimental effect on the interview (discussed further in chapter five). Finally, it is also plausible that the sample size could have impacted on the lack of significance for this exploratory analysis. The sample of interviews included thirteen (52%) that resulted in 'no detection', six (24%) that resulted in 'victim retraction' and six (24%) that resulted in 'offender charged'. The total number of interviews analysed is relatively small and so it comes as no surprise that there were no significant effects when the number of cases belonging to a specific investigation outcome was as small as six in some instances.

Investigation relevant information.

The second exploratory aspect sought to investigate whether the investigation outcome was influenced by the type and amount of IRI obtained. No significant differences were found in the total amount of IRI obtained (inclusive of all five categories) as a function of investigation outcome. When a case progresses to the prosecution services (the CPS in England & Wales), other evidential information (e.g., video footage, DNA samples, electronic data etc.) is considered which may have more of an impact on the overall outcome. This type of evidence can also add clarity to the issue of consent and a determination can be made whether any offence may (or may not) have been committed. Thus, although an interviewer might well obtain large amounts of IRI, this is not the same as understanding specific circumstances of the offence.

The two exploratory elements both produced non-significant results in that investigation outcome was not influenced by: (i) the ratio of *appropriate* and *inappropriate* questions asked by the interviewer, and; (ii) the type and amount of IRI obtained. Explanations have been presented from a practical perspective as to why each separate exploration resulted in a result that was not significant. However, as previously highlighted the sample size could also have impacted upon this. The total number of interviews that resulted in 'no detection' was more than double those that either resulted in 'victim retraction' or 'offender charged'. This is particularly concerning when nearly a quarter of the sampled

interviews resulted in a ‘victim retraction’. What was the cause of this? Is it something that was relevant for more than one of the victims? The previous chapter outlined how some victims have reported negative experiences of the interview process, which could explain why some victims retract their statement. However, further insight is required to ascertain a better understanding of the reasons why a victim may make a retraction.

Strengths and Limitations of Study

A major strength of the present study is that it was based on actual video-recordings of interviews with female adult rape victims and is the first known empirical study to utilise such interviews. As with all empirical research, there were limitations. The data was obtained from only one English police force and the sample size was relatively small (N=25). Whilst the results are high in ecological validity, the generalisability of the findings to other force areas may be construed as somewhat limited. All of the forces within England and Wales provide training that adheres to specific standards set by the College of Policing, however each force may have a unique approach in how they communicate the content. Given the lack of empirical research evaluating such interviews, in addition to the nature of the crime and the involvement of such sensitive and personal data, this sample size is respectable as it offers a rare insight into what actually occurs during investigative interviews with rape victims. In addition, despite having actual video-recordings, their quality (in terms of sound and graphics) was often poor and difficult to understand. Due to the set-up of the ABE interview rooms (where the microphones were placed in the ceiling), not all of the utterances from the interviewer and interviewee were understandable. In addition, the set-up also restricted the researcher from being able to observe all of the facial and body movements – both key components when analysing *non-verbal* empathy. Therefore, the majority of analysis was based on verbal exchanges at a literal level (Dickson & Hargie, 2006), which has its limitations. The interaction that occurs between an interviewer and interviewee involves many different aspects. The reliance on verbal exchanges only may omit important behaviours such as how interviewers respond to the elicitation of IRI.

Future Directions

Given that research assessing the efficacy of investigative interviews with rape/sexual offence victims is in its relative infancy, it is paramount that further research is conducted to increase our understanding of these interviews. Future research analysing the impact of the complete investigative process (including the interview) on the victim in terms of their

likelihood to cooperate and engage is of paramount importance. The parameters of observation need to be widened to include how the victim is managed, not just during the interview, but from making that initial disclosure and then after they have provided their account. The sensitive nature of this type of offence is always going to result in difficulties arising when researchers attempt to gain access to such data, however, this should not deter or prevent research of this kind being conducted.

Future research could also focus on the quality of evidence which can vary, and subsequently, the sort of influence that may have on the investigation outcome. The present study assessed quality in relation to two different measures: (i) the balance of *appropriate* and *inappropriate* questions used by the interviewer, and; (ii) the manner in which the interview had been conducted and whether it could be described as being empathic (see Holmberg & Christianson, 2002; Kebbell *et al.,* 2006; Oxburgh & Ost, 2011). This approach did not consider the nature of the content that was provided by the victim. Tidmarsh, Powell and Darwinkel (2012) developed an interviewing protocol (the 'Whole Story') that focused on the elicitation of narrative detail together with contextual evidence. It is well known that the most useful witness/victim statements are those provided in a narrative format, however, there is also evidence to support the elicitation and use of contextual evidence in sexual offence cases (Darwinkel, Powell & Sharman, 2015). Contextual details regarding how the relationship between the suspect and victim materialised before the actual offence/s occurred (e.g., how the suspect may have isolated and/or gained control of the victim over time) could enhance professionals' understanding of the incident in question and subsequently why the victim may have behaved in counter-intuitive ways (Tidmarsh *et al.,* 2012). In an Australian study, prosecutors encouraged the elicitation of contextual information and suggested that it may improve legal professionals' and jurors' understanding of the victim's behaviour, facilitating their decision making in sexual offence cases (Darwinkel *et al.,* 2013a). A suggestion that was later confirmed by the authors who discovered that investigators trained in understanding the importance of contextual evidence, rated the likelihood of authorising sexual offence cases higher, compared to those who had not received that training (Darwinkel, Powell, & Tidmarsh, 2013b). This raises questions as to whether the disclosure of contextual information may influence the interviewing practices used by an officer. The nature of that contextual information could serve to influence the officer's perception regarding the guilt or innocence of the suspect. This phenomenon, referred to as confirmation bias, is a fundamental cognitive tendency that has an impact on performance in almost every professional domain

(Nickerson, 1998). But would such findings be obtained from officers conducting interviews in England and Wales?

Implications for Practice

In England and Wales, the ABE guidance document (MoJ, 2011) only refers to the term ‘empathy’ on one occasion: “A guiding principle for developing rapport is to communicate empathy” (p. 189). However, at no point is guidance provided on how to ‘communicate empathy’ or indeed how interviewers should ‘identify’ and ‘understand’ what empathy actually means. As highlighted in chapter one, there continues to be much debate within the available academic literature about how best to describe the multi-dimensional concept of empathy. As a consequence, it would be naïve to expect a police officer (with limited guidance) to understand this complex concept and then incorporate it into their interview practice with no training provided (Oxburgh *et al.,* 2012). There is no doubt that empathy can be an effective tool, but an officer can only be expected to understand and demonstrate such a skill if they receive suitable training (Barone *et al.,* 2005). Corroborating previous research on suspect interviews (e.g., Oxburgh, 2011), the present study found that officers use empathy sparingly, which could be the result of not having a clear understanding of what empathy means (Oxburgh *et al.,* 2013). Further research is vital in increasing our understanding of this concept that could be shared with officers who could then incorporate such guidance into their practice. This would provide a point of comparison that would enable a more in-depth assessment of the concept of empathy and how it can impact on the investigative interviewing of rape/sexual offence victims.

Chapter Conclusion

The findings of the present study indicate that interviewers ask significantly more *appropriate* than *inappropriate* questions, which contradicts previous research (e.g., Bull & Cherryman, 1995; Davies *et al.,* 2000; Myklebust & Bjørklund, 2006; Oxburgh *et al.*, 2012, 2013). Conversely, *appropriate* questions were also found to elicit larger amounts of IRI, corroborating previous research (e.g., Aldridge & Cameron, 1999; Cederborg *et al.,* 2000; Davies *et al.*, 2000; Loftus, 1982; Milne & Bull, 2006; Myklebust & Bjørklund, 2006; 2009; Oxburgh *et al.*, 2012). However, *empathic* interviews did not contain more *appropriate* questions than *inappropriate* questions and, surprisingly, the use of an *empathic* interviewing style actually resulted in significantly more *inappropriate* questions being asked, which contradicts the findings of Oxburgh *et al.* (2013). The outcome of the investigation was not

influenced by the ratio of *appropriate* and *inappropriate* questions asked by the interviewer. Furthermore, the type and amount of IRI obtained during the investigative interview did also not influence the outcome of the investigation. The next chapter (an empirical research study) will attempt to establish a better understanding of sexual offence victims' experiences of the investigative interviewing process. The upcoming study provides an insight into rape/sexual assault victims' experiences when being interviewed by officers and what it was that encouraged them to cooperate and engage during the interview process.

Chapter five. A victim's perspective: Factors impacting on their participation, co-operation and engagement with the interview process.

Chapter Summary

The ABE framework in England and Wales (MoJ, 2011) advises interviewers to use particular practices to ensure a vulnerable victim or witness is interviewed appropriately (i.e., establishing rapport, initiating an uninterrupted free narrative account etc.). This guidance is supported by research that has found that specific question typologies (see Aldridge & Cameron, 1999; Cederborg *et al.,* 2000; Davies *et al.,* 2000; Loftus, 1982; Milne & Bull, 2006; Myklebust & Bjørklund, 2006) and a humane approach (see Alison *et al.,* 2013; Holmberg & Christianson, 2002; Kebbell *et al.,* 2006; Oxburgh *et al.,* 2013; Shepherd, 1991) are more effective. This chapter (an empirical research study) provides an insight into the interaction of six adult rape/sexual assault victims (five females, one male) experienced when interviewed by officers, and what encouraged them to co-operate and engage during the interview process. The aims were threefold: (i) to establish a better understanding of rape/sexual assault victims' experiences of the investigative interviewing process; (ii) to ascertain what factors influence a victim to participate and co-operate (or not) during those interviews, and; (iii) to investigate whether there were any aspects of the officers' approach they perceived as being effective (or non-effective) or any aspect the victims particularly liked (or disliked). Semi-structured interviews took place and were analysed using an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) approach with three key themes being identified: (i) *Heading into the unknown* including a lack of clarity and/or understanding and a feeling of isolation; (ii) *The impact of the interview process* including dissociation, cognitive load, the magnitude of disclosing and secondary revictimisation/life sentence, and; (iii) *Interviewer approach* including humane style, the guiding chaperone and rigidity. The chapter concludes with a discussion of possible implications for practice and how the findings can be acted on to further our understanding of this type of interviewing.

Introduction

The interviewing of suspects, witnesses and victims is a key component of policing (Kebbell & Milne, 1998). Hope (2013) identified how the process of witness testimony is a fundamental aspect of the CJS, regardless of whether the testimony is provided by a victim of a crime or an onlooker. The information provided is valuable to the CJS and if officers are to gather those details, then they must communicate via the platform of an interview (Milne & Bull, 2006). The investigation of sexual crimes requires the interviewer to demonstrate a set of skills that are not used as frequently as in volume crimes (Cherryman & Bull, 2001). This could explain why such interviews have been found to be 'technically difficult' and 'stressful' to conduct (Oxburgh *et al.,* 2006). The quality of an investigation can be largely influenced by how officers conduct themselves and it is essential that officers involved in such investigation are aware of how important their conduct could be (Patterson, 2012). How an officer interacts with a victim is pivotal and it has been widely reported that the police have adopted the role of 'gatekeeper' to the later stages of the CJS (Frazier & Haney, 1996; Seneviratne, 2004). The implications of how an officer interacts with a victim are not solely restricted to the outcome of the investigation but also to how it could impact on their psychological well-being (Alderden & Ullman, 2012; Campbell, 1998; Madigan & Gamble, 1991; Maier, 2008; Martin & Powell, 1994).

To help ensure that witnesses/victims are able to provide reliable testimony that results in the provision of justice, psychologists have reviewed what components are known to contribute toward optimum interviewing conditions (La Rooy & Dando, 2010), which then informs guidance and methods of interviewing (Oxburgh & Dando, 2011). The guidance provided to officers conducting such interviews makes reference to various different issues that they should be aware of (see chapter one). Notably, the seven core principles of investigative interviewing, the PEACE model of interviewing, and the ABE in criminal proceedings guidelines all share a similar ethos as to how a victim should be treated during such interactions. This ethos is epitomised by key components of the PJT (Lind & Tyler, 1992; see pp. 22 & 23) that suggests that people want to be treated fairly by authorities, independent of the outcome of the interaction. The position that sexual offence victims find themselves in is unique in the sense that no other victim of crime is perceived with such disbelief, suspicion and blameworthiness (Williams, 1993). How an officer engages with that victim can play a pivotal role in determining how difficult that process will be for them (Campbell, 2008). As with any investigation, the officer is aiming to obtain an accurate and reliable account from the victim (Westera, Kebbell, & Milne, 2016). To ensure that the victim

elicits a complete and accurate account, it is of paramount importance that the officer creates a social and cognitive environment that encourages the victim to recall and communicate what happened.

A social factor that is integral to the creation of this environment focuses on the attitude of the officer and ensuring that they provide support and encouragement to the victim as opposed to attitudes of disbelief (Felson & Pare, 2008; Jordan, 2001). If an officer adopts an approach that is conducive to the victim participating during the interview process then they are going to feel as though they are being listened to and not judged (Fisher & Geiselman, 1992; Milne & Bull, 1999). This could be demonstrated through an empathic reaction to the disclosure and regular communication about how the case is progressing (Jamel *et al.,* 2008). The investigation of sexual crimes requires that sensitive and personal details (i.e., the exact details of how a sexual act was committed) need to be obtained from the victim and this relevant information may be more easily elicited if the victim feels comfortable (Kebbell & Westera, 2011). Whilst specific aspects of a sexual offence may be distressing and embarrassing for both the officer (Oxburgh *et al.,* 2006) and the victim (Westera *et al.,* 2016), it is this type of relevant information that could influence the CPS, thus, officers should not be deterred from attempting to obtain such information. Despite research and guidance advocating the creation of an interview atmosphere that is conducive to the victim actively participating, victims often report feeling judged and their allegation not taken seriously. This results in them being treated with disbelief or scepticism (Felson & Pare, 2008; Jordan, 2001; McMillan & Thomas, 2009; Patterson, 2012). The judgemental nature of some officers has been found to impact on the amount of relevant information elicited from victims and how they were less likely to provide specific details about the offence (Patterson, 2012). These findings align with the PJT (Lind & Tyler, 1992) and how individuals are more likely to co-operate and engage with the authorities (e.g., the police) if they believe they will be treated fairly, politely and with respect.

Sexual Offence Victims' Experiences of the Investigative Interviewing Process

Investigative interviewing is a highly complex and cognitively demanding process that involves a wide range of competencies and skills (Powell, 2002). Interviewers are just as vulnerable to the same influences and biases that are associated with the processing of general information (McEwan, 2003). Chapter three introduced some of the various tools that have been used to measure those common misconceptions, widely known as rape myths, and how these are present in those who have direct contact with victims (Barber, 1974; Goodman-

Delahunty & Graham, 2011, Page, 2008a; 2010; Sleath & Bull, 2012). When discussing rape myth acceptance the levels of endorsement are predominantly concerned with how an officer perceives those issues concerned with the crime of rape, rapists and rape victims. The endorsement of different rape myths can have various implications for how an interview will be conducted and rape myth acceptance research predominantly focuses on the views of an officer. What about the perspective of the victim? How do they perceive the interview process?

The interaction between an officer and a sexual offence victim has attracted attention over the past two decades, however, very little is known about the victims' experiences of this process (Patterson, 2012). The limited research that is available suggests their experiences can vary. For example, Campbell *et al.* (2001) noted that some rape victims were treated in a manner that was upsetting. There is also research suggesting that almost half of all victims regard their experience as being negative due to being told their stories were not credible, believable, or serious enough to pursue, and being questioned in a blaming manner (Campbell & Raja, 2005; Filipas & Ullman, 2001; Monroe *et al.,* 2005). Such factors subsequently impact on their level of disclosure (Patterson, 2012).

The research conducted by Patterson (2012) had a large influence on the present study. Her research focused on exploring how the interactions between rape victims and interviewing officers could strengthen or weaken the investigation. The findings were obtained from a series of interviews with 20 rape victims in the USA. In cases that did result in a prosecution, many victims reported that their interviews began with the officer consoling them, building rapport and then asking questions. Once the questioning began, these were asked at a comfortable pace with the victims being told to take their time and given breaks when they became emotionally distressed. This all contributed to them feeling safe, comfortable and protected by the officers. Victims also indicated that they felt believed due to the positive behaviour of the officer/s and/or the comments that they made when in the interview room. In contrast, cases which did not result in a prosecution, many victims reported that the officers' pace of questioning was 'rapid and forceful', there was no rapport-building, and the victims felt unsafe or uncomfortable, and disbelieved. Such verbalisations were often accompanied with discourse such as they could "back out" if they were lying or warned that they could be charged if their accounts were not truthful. Victims from this group also relayed how their accounts had been scrutinised by officers who were "picking their stories apart", which led victims to believe that their accounts were not perceived as being credible. As indicated, the research by Patterson was conducted in the USA where

interviewing officers receive different guidance as to how they should conduct an interview (see chapter one pp. 2 & 3). Therefore, some caution must be adopted before generalising her findings to those interactions that take place between rape victims and interviewing officers in England and Wales.

The Present Study

The present study will utilise a similar approach to Patterson (2012) and investigate whether comparable findings will be obtained from rape/sexual assault victims in England. The aims were threefold: (i) to establish a better understanding of rape/sexual assault victims' experiences of the investigative interviewing process; (ii) to ascertain what factors influence a victim to participate and co-operate (or not) during interviews, and; (iii) to investigate whether there were any aspects of the officers' approach they perceived as being effective (or non-effective) or any aspect the victims particularly liked (or disliked).

Method

Design

This study utilised a qualitative method, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), which aims to thoroughly explore the way in which participants make sense of their personal and social world. IPA enables the researcher to ascertain a better understanding of the nature and quality of the specific phenomena under investigation (Willig, 2013). A key component of IPA is its approach to understanding how participants make sense of their lived experiences (Hanway & Akehurst, 2018; Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014). The research process is dynamic and requires an active role from the researcher so as to ensure they get close to the participant's personal world gaining an 'insider's perceptive' (Conrad, 1987). To interpret those lived experiences, IPA relies on the three fundamental principles of phenomenology, hermeneutics and idiography.

The eidetic principle of **phenomenology** is the process by which one attends to how things appear to individuals experiencing them. In essence, it aims to identify the key components of particular phenomena or experiences that make that experience unique or identifiably different from others. Thus, phenomenological studies concentrate on how people perceive and articulate about objects and events, as opposed to describing phenomena in accordance with predetermined categorical systems, conceptual and scientific criterion. **Hermeneutics** involves the attempt to enhance the understanding of another's mind-set and

the language they use to communicate their experience of the world in order to translate their message (Freeman, 2008). The researcher envisages what it would be like to stand in the shoes of the participant and through the interpretative process, attempt to understand and then translate that experience. Smith and Osborn (2008) termed this analytical process as a double hermeneutic (or dual interpretation) process given that participants initially make meaning of their world and then the researcher attempts to decipher that meaning to make sense of the participant's meaning-making. This process also enables the researcher to begin formulating key questions in response to the details being provided by the participant. Pietkiewicz and Smith (2014) suggest that due to containing elements of both interpretation types, the analysis conducted within IPA studies is richer and more comprehensive. **Idiography** involves a thorough analysis on a case-by-case basis whereby each individual perspective is examined, from the sample of participants, in their own unique context. This approach ensures that prior to the development of any general statements, each single case must firstly be explored. This principle has been identified as a key strength given that researchers focus on the particular as opposed to the universal (Smith, Harré, & Van Langenhove, 1995).

After reviewing the methodological characteristics of IPA, it was deemed that this approach would be the most appropriate for the present study given: (i) the potential fragility of some participants given their experiences, and; (ii) that the aim was to establish a better understanding of rape/sexual assault victim's experiences of the investigative interviewing process. Whilst Thematic Analysis (TA) also involves the coding and development of themes, this process starts much sooner when compared with IPA. Unlike IPA, TA involves developing each stage of analysis across the entire dataset, as opposed to developing each stage of analysis for each individual case before proceeding to the next case. The initial comments, notes and observations that are made during the early stages of IPA enhance the researcher's familiarity with the data and each case. This was particularly important given the sensitive nature of the topics that were discussed and it was crucial that each account was treated with the attention and respect it deserved. Finally, the aim of the present study was not to develop any kind of theory, thus, Grounded Theory (GT; used to develop a theory in respect of the phenomena being investigated) was ruled out. Rape/sexual assault victims each have a unique experience when the police interview them and so developing a theory, in respect of this interaction, would be difficult. To develop a reliable theory would have required a large sample size and it was felt that this would not be feasible given the strict inclusion criteria for the present study. Therefore, an approach utilising IPA was chosen for the present study. Semi-structured interviews were used to explore participants' experiences

of the investigative interviewing process. This provided participants with the opportunity to use their own words when explaining their personal experiences as opposed to using pre-defined categories (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). An analysis of participants' observation was then conducted which considered how they interpreted their experience of the interview process.

Participants

Six individuals (five females; one male[18]) over the age of 18 who had either been the victim of a rape and/or sexual assault[19] took part in the study. They had all been interviewed by an English police force and those experiences that they were recalling had occurred between three and ten years ago. All cases involved were categorised as 'closed' and had been processed through the CJS.

Participant recruitment.

After receiving ethical approval from the Faculty of Medical Sciences Ethics Committee, Newcastle University (see Appendix K) several agencies were approached to ask if they would be interested in supporting the research. Prior to commencing the study, various meetings took place with two agencies that provide support to rape/sexual assault victims. It was agreed that the best course of action would be for the agencies to make an informed decision as to who they felt would be capable and suitable to participate. This was deemed a sensible precaution given that those members of staff had already built up a rapport with the service users and could speak with potential participants (in a safe environment) about what the study entailed and then make a joint decision as to whether they would participate.

[18] The empirical research previously discussed in this thesis (see chapter four) specifically referred to the interviewing of female adults. However, an opportunity arose whereby an adult male expressed an interest in participating in the present study and it was felt his inclusion would add weight to the findings and possibly help inform the direction of future research.
[19] Specific terminology that is used to categorise the type of crime will now be used when discussing the research project as this had to be included within the research documentation when recruiting participants and liaising with support agencies.

Reflective Box 1

The dialogue between the participants and myself helped to break the ice and the use of email to communicate (where applicable) also provided them with a sense of anonymity. This gave participants a platform where they could query any aspects of the research that they were not entirely sure about and also ensured that they had time to contemplate if they actually wanted to participate. I also felt that it was important to empower each of the participants by giving them control as to when, where and how the interviews would be conducted. All of the participants were very courteous and flexible as to when the interview could take place – this also helped alleviate my own anxieties. One participant enquired if their interview could take place at an alternative venue (to coincide with their daily routine) and so the Forensic Interviewing Laboratory at Newcastle University was suggested, which the participant happily agreed to. On reflection I feel that how I approached collecting the data was appropriate (for both the participants and myself).

In total, nine potential participants were identified by the two separate agencies and arrangements were made for the respective interviews to take place. However, only six of the nine interviews took place. Two of the potential participants failed to attend with no explanation as to their absence. One potential participant contacted the relevant agency to apologise and indicated that they were due to move away to University and after reflecting on their decision to participate they felt that it would not be in their best interest to go ahead with the study. Three of the interviews took place at a Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC), two at a designated Barnardo's premise and the remaining interview was conducted at Newcastle University in the Forensic Interviewing Laboratory.

Reflective Box 2

After only one interview took place during the first couple of months I met with my supervisor to discuss a potential contingency plan. Whilst I had anticipated that gaining access to the participant group would be difficult I had not envisaged that the difficulties would persist. It was at this point that the inclusion criterion was broadened to include sexual assault victims. This resulted in two more participants being identified who were willing to participate in the project.

The level of interest then subsided, which resulted in me contacting another support group. I began corresponding with the Manager of a local Barnardo's centre and after circulating details about the research to their staff and clients, three participants volunteered to speak with me and possibly arrange meeting. After interviewing the three participants I decided to begin transcribing and analysing the interviews that I had collected as I had met the sample size that I had set out to obtain. The project remained live for two more months, however no further participants expressed any interest.

When reflecting on how the journey of data collection progressed – yes there are aspects that I would change but I am sceptical as to whether they would improve response/participation rates. Given the small pool of participants who have actually experienced the phenomena being investigated this drastically reduces the total number of individuals who are able to participate in the project. The difficulties in acquiring participants for studies of this nature could possibly explain why there is a dearth of research focusing on rape/sexual assault victim's experiences of the interview process.

The final sample of six participants was considered a sufficient sample size given that the main concern of IPA is to give full appreciation to each participant's account. Given the sensitive and unique nature of the present study and the total number of people for whom this is a relevant experience the parameters for a possible sample size were formulated early in the research process. Whilst there have been IPA studies that have been published with up to fifteen participants there is also guidance that states how sample sizes consisting of between six and eight participants is appropriate for a study utilising this approach (Turpin *et al.,* 1997). It is argued that such sample sizes provide the researcher with qualitative data that is not too overwhelming and enables them to explore similarities and differences between participants (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014).

Materials and Procedure

All potential participants were provided with an information sheet (see Appendix L) and if the individual was happy to participate, they proceeded in one of two ways: (i) a member of staff from the relevant agency acted as a co-ordinator and arranged a suitable time, date and location for the interview to take place, or; (ii) they gave consent for the member of

staff to inform the researcher who would then contact them via email to arrange a time, date and location for the interview to take place. Each participant was ‘in charge’ of when and where the interview would take place and s/he were also informed that should they wish to have another person present during the interview that would not be an issue.

All six participants underwent a one-to-one semi-structured interview conducted by the researcher. Each participant was asked if they were happy with this arrangement and informed that somebody else could conduct the interview if they wished. On arrival at the interview location, each participant was welcomed, thanked and invited to re-read a copy of the information sheet that they had previously been provided with. The researcher asked each participant if they had any questions regarding the study and then provided them with a consent form (see Appendix M) which all signed. Before commencing the interview, each participant was given an explanation of what to expect during the interview. Each interview was audio-recorded and the length ranged from 25 to 56 minutes ($M = 43$ minutes, $SD = 11.52$ minutes). Following each interview, participants were thanked for their time, asked if they had any questions, and provided with a debrief letter (see Appendix N).

The interview schedule used for the research (see Appendix O) was broken down into five different sub-sections that focused on the participants’ experiences relating to:

1. The pre-police interview;
2. The beginning of the police interview;
3. The main account;
4. Closing the interview, and;
5. Their overall experience of the interview process.

Each participant was then asked whether they could provide any details in relation to the final outcome of the investigation. The use of the interview schedule contributed towards the elicitation of rich and detailed accounts of the participants’ experiences of the interview process (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014) whilst maintaining a flexible manner (Bryman, 2008). A mixture of question typologies (e.g., *open* and other *appropriate* questions) was used in the interview schedule as this enabled the victim to provide detailed information relating to each sub-section of the interview schedule.

Despite not specifically asking any questions in relation to the offence they were interviewed about, it was anticipated that some participants might digress to discussing such details. As such, a series of contingency prompts were devised to redirect the focus of the

participant back to their experience of the actual interview itself (if required); this precaution was incorporated into the interview schedule to reduce any possible psychological harm that may have occurred as a result. The researcher monitored how the discussion was affecting the participant throughout the interview and was particularly observant to whether the participant did not want to discuss certain issues, started feeling awkward, ashamed or became emotional.

Data Analysis

All of the digitally recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim and included utterances from both the researcher and the participant. Whilst transcribing the audio recordings, the predominant focus was placed on the actual text of the interview (Willig, 2013) and obtaining as much information from each of the interviews as possible (Smith *et al.,* 2009). Details associated with the length of pauses and inaudible utterances were not documented given that the primary aims of IPA is to analyse the content of the account (Hanway & Akehurst, 2018). To ensure the researcher was immersed in the data, each transcript was read a number of times whilst simultaneously listening to the accompanying audio recording. Each recording was listened to once prior to making any notes. Notes and comments were then made in relation to the content, language use (features such as metaphors and repetition), context and initial interpretative comments of the transcript wording (Smith *et al.,* 2009). An example of this stage of the analysis can be reviewed in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1. An extract from an interview with P1 about their experience of the interview process, with accompanying notes from the researcher based on their initial thoughts.

Original transcript	Exploratory comments
Interviewer: So, you say he put you at ease, was there anything in particular that he did?	
No, it was just his whole manner.	More than training can provide? Not taught instinctive?
Interviewer: So just his demeanour, how he was with you?	
How he came across and how he spoke.	Non-verbal in addition to the language used?
Interviewer: Okay, so obviously before going into the interview, could you describe the expectations you had?	
I didn't know what to expect, I know he told me that we needed to talk about it and I needed to say in detail, but I was still reluctant, but I did do it and it wasn't nice.	Heading into the unknown? Loss of control? Why the delay until the disclosure?
Interviewer: So, in terms of the expectations you had developed in terms of when you were waiting to go in. Where do you think they came from?	
What do you mean?	
Interviewer: So, say for example, there are various other things out there in the media, you've got TV programmes things like that. Do you think they had some sort of shape in term of what you were expecting when going in there? You said there that you went into autopilot.	
I just went into autopilot, I'd lived with it for so long on my own.	Autopilot? Automatic response?? Thought processes?? A burden to herself – support?
Interviewer: Right, so if we turn our attention to the actual police interview. So, upon entering the interview room you said you'd been in beforehand and he'd pointed out the cameras the microphones and where best to sit. How did your feeling of when you'd gone in there the first time to look at those cameras to actually going in for the actual interview itself, how did they change, what was the difference between those? If there was.	
I don't think there was because I was still petrified and also knowing that I had to speak about it because obviously I hadn't. It was just horrific.	Could the apprehension and how scared she is be eased? Dealt with the memories herself? Other support? Very negative language!
Interviewer: When you went in there were you comforted by anyone, was Fred present?	
Fred was there, there was a police lady there as well, but Fred was the main.	Anchor point – focus of her attention. Key to the interview – almost ignores the other ER.

The next stage of analysis involved transforming each set of notes into emergent themes. This stage of analysis involved working more closely with the notes made as opposed to the separate transcripts. Each of the transcripts was separately analysed, and subsequently, each transcript produced its own set of emergent themes. A summarising phrase was assigned when referring to a particular extract from a transcript. Table 5.2 demonstrates how the emergent themes developed from the same interview with P1 (as presented in Table 5.1) and

how those themes stem from the initial account of the participant.

Table 5.2. The development of emerging themes from the researcher's notes (extract is from the same interview with P1 as outlined in Table 5.1).

Original transcript	**Exploratory comments**
Interviewer: So, you say he put you at ease, was there anything in particular that he did?	
No, it was just his whole manner.	Interview approach – more than language
Interviewer: So just his demeanour, how he was with you?	
How he came across and how he spoke.	Interviewer approach – humane style
Interviewer: Okay, so obviously before going into the interview, could you describe the expectations you had?	
I didn't know what to expect, I know he told me that we needed to talk about it and I needed to say in detail, but I was still reluctant, but I did do it and it wasn't nice.	What are they doing? Lack of clarity Impact of the interview process - magnitude of disclosing
Interviewer: So, in terms of the expectations you had developed in terms of when you were waiting to go in. Where do you think they came from?	
What do you mean?	
Interviewer: So, say for example, there are various other things out there in the media, you've got TV programmes things like that. Do you think they had some sort of shape in term of what you were expecting when going in there? You said there that you went into autopilot.	
I just went into autopilot, I'd lived with it for so long on my own.	Interview approach – autopilot Impact of the interview process - life sentence
Interviewer: Right, so if we turn our attention to the actual police interview. So, upon entering the interview room you said you'd been in beforehand and he'd pointed out the cameras the microphones and where best to sit. How did your feeling of when you'd gone in there the first time to look at those cameras to actually going in for the actual interview itself, how did they change, what was the difference between those? If there was.	
I don't think there was because I was still petrified and also knowing that I had to speak about it because obviously I hadn't. It was just horrific.	Impact of the interview process - magnitude of disclosing Who is helping? Feeling of isolation
Interviewer: When you went in there were you comforted by anyone, was Fred present?	
Fred was there, there was a police lady there as well, but Fred was the main.	Interviewer approach – guiding chaperone

Once a set of emergent themes was formulated for each interview transcript, connections between themes (across all of the transcripts) were formed, grouping them together based on conceptual similarities and providing each collection with a descriptive label. Notably, it was during this process where some themes were removed because the

evidential base supporting them was lacking. The emergent themes developed for each transcript were accompanied with brief annotations in addition to line numbers of a particular extract that exemplified that theme.

Reflective Box 3

To ensure that my interpretation of the participant's experiences was accurate, I liaised with my supervisor on a regular basis whilst analysing the transcripts. One (17%) of the interviews was analysed separately by an independent source. A discussion then took place regarding both of our observations and any differences in opinion were resolved. On-going discussions took place with my supervisor about the emerging themes and the quotations that had been identified to support those themes. Triangulation ensured that the analysis was a true reflection based on interpretations of the experiences communicated by the participants.

As with most qualitative methodologies, the subjectivity of findings can be questioned as a result of how the data is collected and subsequently analysed. IPA is an interpretative process that involves the researcher attempting to understand and translate the experience being discussed by the participant. To address any concerns regarding misinterpretation, inaccuracy or researcher bias, regular meetings took place with the research team throughout data analysis. This particular process of triangulation was advantageous as it enabled the researcher to present the sub-ordinate themes and the quotations that justified their development and why they were grouped with each of the super-ordinate themes. Any disagreements were discussed and helped guide the analysis to enhance the credibility of the findings. However, there are some disadvantages of using triangulation within qualitative research. As a process, it can be time-consuming and requires all researchers involved to be familiar with the data being discussed to ensure they can give reliable feedback on the discussions that ensue. Overall, the positives of triangulation outweighed the negatives as it ensured that the findings were a reliable interpretation of the participant's experiences.

Results and Discussion

The aims of the this study were to: (i) establish a better understanding of rape/sexual assault victims' experiences of the investigative interviewing process; (ii) ascertain what factors influence a victim to participate and co-operate (or not) during interviews, and; (iii) investigate whether there were any aspects of the officers' approach they perceived as being effective (or non-effective) or any aspect the victims particularly liked (or disliked).

A total of three super-ordinate and nine sub-ordinate themes emerged from the data analysis of what rape/sexual assault victims perceived and experienced during the interview process (see Table 5.3). The focus of the themes that emerged did vary, including both positive and negative reflections from the participants. Each of these will now be discussed.

Table 5.3. Summary of the superordinate and subordinate themes and which participants referred to those themes.

	Participants who referred to a specific theme						
	P1	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**P5**	**P6**	**Total**
1 – Heading into the unknown	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	**6**
1A – Lack of clarity and/or understanding	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	6
1B – Feelings of isolation	✓	✓		✓		✓	4
2 – The impact of the interview process	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	**6**
2A – Dissociation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	6
2B – Cognitive load		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	5
2C – Magnitude of disclosing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	6
2D – Secondary revictimisation/life sentence	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	5
3 – Interviewer approach	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	**6**
3A – Humane style	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	6
3B – The guiding chaperone	✓	✓					2
3C – Rigidity	✓		✓	✓		✓	4

Super-ordinate Theme 1: Heading into the Unknown

The first super-ordinate theme that emerged was concerned with the victims understanding of what was going to occur during the interview (and investigation) process and where the guidance/direction would come from. The level of uncertainty felt by the victims was perceived to be a result of: (i) a lack of clarity and/or understanding, and; (ii) a feeling of isolation.

Sub-ordinate theme 1A: Lack of clarity and/or understanding.

All participants reported that a lack of clarity and/or understanding of what to expect during the interview (and investigation) process impacted negatively on their overall experience. They referred to a lack of transparency provided by the interviewing officer and how this was evident at various stages of the interview process. Some commented on how added clarity would have been useful in helping them prepare for the interview.

"I don't know what I expected, you know what I mean. I think had I been told a bit more about what was going to happen then it might have been different, you know what I mean." (participant 5)

"I would have liked some information or maybe some leaflets to say what the process was going to be, who would have my information, where it's gone to and a little bit about them themselves, it would have been a little more personalised." (participant 6)

"Going back to right at the beginning, the only thing that I would say is that I wasn't aware that he would have been told that I had made a complaint" (participant 3)

"I didn't know what to expect" (participant 1)

Other participants highlighted how if they had a better understanding of what was going to happen during/after the interview, this could have made their experience more positive:

"I kind of understand why the police said no because they might have thought I was tired or upset or whatever, but I would have liked to maybe have that explained to me' (participant 2)

"I think a bit more detail about what was going to happen next would help because once you have given that information, you don't know where it has gone. You have told them but what is the next thing?" (participant 6)

All participants made reference to this sub-ordinate theme and were very explicit in how they were left wondering what was going to happen.

"Because it was the unknown" (participant 1)

"I did feel a little bit left, just a little bit in the air" (participant 2)

"I didn't know what to expect to be honest" (participant 3)

"Very apprehensive because I didn't know what to expect, anxiety levels were really high" (participant 6)

The details that officers failed to communicate to the victims ranged from how the interview would be structured, what would happen with the information they obtained, why certain decisions were made and how the investigation would proceed following the interview. The experiences described support previous research that encourages regular communication about how the case is progressing as this is conducive to the victim participating during the interview process as they are going to feel as though they are being listened to, not judged and at ease (Fisher & Geiselman, 1992; Jamel *et al.,* 2008; Milne & Bull, 1999). The PEACE model of interviewing guidance (see chapter one, pp. 4 – 6) encourages officers to discuss with the interviewee what they should expect from the interview (i.e., how long the interview will last, that notes will be taken during the interview etc.). Following a rape/sexual assault,

many victims feel vulnerable and are cautious as to how they will be perceived by police officers and whether they will be blamed or not believed (Herman, 1992; Patterson *et al.,* 2009). A victim will be more comfortable with an officer who is transparent in what they are doing as opposed to one who is suspicious and guarded (Patterson, 2012).

Sub-ordinate theme 1B: Feeling of isolation.

A major obstacle that each victim must overcome is the process of disclosing a rape/sexual assault to the police (Maddox, Lee, & Barker, 2011). Given the invasive and often traumatic nature of what they have experienced, this can be daunting and upsetting, especially as they are required to describe specific details of the offence repeatedly (Logan *et al.,* 2005). Therefore, ensuring that the victim does not feel vulnerable or alienated should be a priority for interviewing officers as this could help indicate to the victim that their account is perceived as being credible. Four of the participants described moments during the interview (and investigation) process where they felt isolated and how some form of support would have eased the process:

> *"I could have really done with that support from people that I knew and were in the same boat as me"* (participant 1)
>
> *"For some reason I think it may have been helpful to have another person there"* (participant 4)
>
> *"If they were offered more support and things like that, it would be better for them. Knowing that the support is there for them"* (participant 5)

The sources of support identified as potentially being beneficial by the victims varied from the officer conducting the interview to support groups/counsellors that they relied upon.

> *"I used to go to harbour and harbour had a group and on a Tuesday we would meet up for two hours, have a cup of coffee and a biscuit and a little chat. The police stopped me from doing it."* (participant 1)
>
> *"She just asked if I was alright and everything and I said yeah. That was about it really, she never offered me any support or anything like that, no leaflets, nothing…well I thought I would have been, like offered something, you know what I mean. Going through all that and you know what I mean so."* (participant 5)

The feelings of isolation were epitomised by the participants having to seek support from elsewhere, as officers conducting the interviews failed to alleviate these concerns:

> *"I did I had a meeting with the police in here and he said that he would get the group* (support group) *put back on but they didn't."* (participant 1)

> *"It took a while, I think I asked xxxxx* (staff member from the agency) *to phone to find out what happened."* (participant 6)

Participants' experiences of isolation could be eased if officers adhered to the guidance offered in the first stage of the ABE (as discussed in chapter one, pp. 19 – 22), which advises that interviewers should establish rapport and put interviewees at ease by establishing a sense of trust for future, successful, communication. If the guidance is followed, then they will reduce tension and insecurity felt by the victim.

Ahrens (2006) argued that victims may feel personally blamed for the crime and 'silenced' by the response of others. Given the prevalence of rape myths (see chapter three) and how such common misconceptions can allocate blame and responsibility for the crime this is a particular concern for rape/sexual assault victims. Patterson (2012) noted that in cases resulting in a prosecution, victims reported feeling safe, comfortable and protected by the officers. These components could all help to reduce any anxieties felt by the victim, ensuring that they are treated with a unique set of needs are not viewed as being *just another victim.* This increased level of comfort could then result in the victim being more likely to disclose the sensitive and personal details that are required and have been found to influence decision-makers (Kebbell & Westera, 2011; Westera *et al.,* 2016).

Super-ordinate Theme 2: The Impact of the Interview Process

The second super-ordinate theme was developed as a result of the participant's experience of how the interview process impacted on them. The extent of its impact centred around four main focal points which are the sub-ordinate themes: (i) dissociation; (ii) cognitive load; (iii) magnitude of disclosing, and; (iv) secondary revictimisation/life sentence.

Sub-ordinate theme 2A: Dissociation.

All participants made reference to how they struggled to recall specific items of information regarding two particular components. Firstly, participants communicated how they were unable to accurately recall what actually happened during their respective interviews.

> *"I can't remember really, he just sort of said I'd made allegations, could I tell him what had gone on in as much detail as possible"* (participant 1)
>
> *"I'm trying to think. I can't remember, I think I only had a brief, I don't think it was a proper interview on the night."* (participant 2)

> *"You know I don't really remember that much…Or I've chosen not to remember, probably the latter."* (participant 4)

> *"I can't remember if I asked her questions afterwards or… I can't remember if they said, 'how many times?' or 'how many incidences?' but further down the line I think I would have said more. I don't know, I don't really know."* (participant 6)

Secondly, participants also referred to how they had repressed, blocked out or not spoken about those memories regarding the offence that as a victim they were expected to disclose to the officer.

> *"I'd never talked to anybody about it you know what I mean, it was the first time ever."* (participant 5)

> *"The cops just wanted very explicit detail, detail which I hadn't even thought about. Strangely enough, detail which I didn't even know was there"* (participant 4)

> *"I hadn't even told my mother, my ex-husband so I hadn't even opened to him about details and things like that"* (participant 6)

The psychological impact of rape/sexual assault is severe and wide-ranging with at least one in three victims developing PTSD or some other form of anxiety problem (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2006). Dissociation has been defined as, *"An experienced loss of information or control over mental processes that, under normal circumstances, are available to conscious awareness, self-attribution, or control"* (Cardena & Carlson, 2011, p. 251). Previous research has identified the development of dissociative coping strategies by individuals who have experienced a traumatic incident (Gershuny & Thayer, 1999). Symptoms associated with PTSD, such as dissociation and emotional numbness, are likely to affect how a victim discloses relevant information during an interview (Maddox *et al.,* 2011). The impact of such symptoms may prevent victims from being able to show signs of emotional distress and therefore may be less likely to demonstrate the stereotypical behaviours of a rape/sexual assault victim (Ask & Landstrom, 2010). Whilst the repercussions of not being able to recall what actually happened during their experience of the interview are minimal, the issue concerning their ability to recall details relating to the crime are a cause for concern. It is this relevant information that assists in determining what has actually happened or who committed the crime (if a crime has in fact been committed).

Sub-ordinate theme 2B: Cognitive load.

Five of the participants reported how they struggled throughout the interview to process what was actually happening. They referred to having other priorities that resulted in them being unable to fully concentrate on the actual interview itself:

> *"…and I was panicking about things I shouldn't have even been thinking about sort of thing."* (participant 2)

> *"There was a lot of that and some of the stuff I couldn't say because family, my sister, my dad abused my sister but she said that if I ever said what had happened, she would take her own life"* (participant 6)

> *"The thought process you're thinking about, is it worthwhile, should I be doing this, is it going to upset the family because the cops are going to interview others, you know."* (participant 4)

Participants also made reference to how they were preoccupied with how they were performing during the interview and how this would then impact on the officer's perception of them and the subsequent outcome of their investigation:

> *"There are lots of things going on in your brain at the same time when I'm telling a story and I'm watching them* (the interviewing officers) *to see if they are listening"* (participant 6)

> *"I've always said that it is easier for you to say yes, I know they are not allowed to do yes or no answers but sometimes it helps because once you've said yes then you can describe it. But for you to bring up that piece of information is quite hard, whereas for you to confirm that piece of information is easier as you just nod your head."* (participant 2)

The final aspect related to cognitive load and involved participants making reference to how the interview process was almost an automatic response, with no structure, almost a 'say it as it pops into your head' experience:

> *"What tends to happen is that you start here and want to go there but you end up all over the place. The thought process is just not logical when it comes to sexual abuse at all, it is absolutely all over the place and trying to make sense of it can be very difficult at times."* (participant 4)

> *"She understood that I'm going to have blanks and I'm going to be saying one thing and then perhaps contradicting what I've said because it's not straight in my head. I had a habit of blurting things out how I was remembering them, which wasn't in a chronological order"* (participant 3)

Cognitive Load Theory (CLT; Paas & van Merriënboer, 1994; Sweller, van Merriënboer, & Paas, 1998) is concerned with the development of instructional methods that

efficiently use an individual's limited cognitive processing capacity to stimulate their ability to apply knowledge and skills that they have learnt to new situations. CLT is founded on cognitive architecture that involves a limited working memory with partly independent processing units for auditory/verbal information that interact with a comparatively unlimited long-term memory. A major factor when considering CLT is the notion that working memory architecture and its limitations should be a taken into account when designing instructions, especially given that it is limited to the processing of around seven items/elements of information at any one time (Baddeley, 1992). Once that load exceeds capacity then the individual's performance on any given task will suffer (Jansen *et al.,* 2017).

When applied to the operational setting of an investigative interview – the task relates to the victim's ability of recalling IRI, whilst the instructions are concerned with the various different question typologies used by the interviewer to obtain that information. Given the possible traumatic nature of the crime they have experienced, it can be assumed that the disclosing of sensitive and personal details relating to the crime by the victim could be a distressing and embarrassing experience (Westera *et al.,* 2016). Needless to say, the experience of having to recall such details is difficult enough without having concerns and thoughts about issues outside of the interview room (e.g., what other family members may think or do if they were made aware of their participation in the investigation). Previous research has noted that some anxiety-related responses, such as changing the subject, initial omission of details, or concentration/memory problems, may be the result of disclosing intimate details regarding the offence to which they were a victim (Kaysen *et al.,* 2005). The participants made reference to not necessarily remembering things in the correct order, changing the subject of discussion and remembering things at a later point. If an officer is unfamiliar with trauma symptoms (e.g., PTSD) then such behaviours may well suggest fabrication that could potentially have an impact on their treatment of the victim and subsequently the overall outcome of the case (Lonsway *et al.,* 2009). This feeds into another aspect that the participants made reference to, in that they were concerned with what the interviewing officer was thinking during the interview and how they, as a victim, were performing.

Previous research has also highlighted how conducting an investigative interview is a highly cognitively demanding task for officers involved in such cases and that they find them 'technically difficult' and 'stressful' to conduct (Fisher, Compo, Rivard, & Hirn, 2014; Oxburgh *et al.,* 2006). Interviews where officers ask questions at a comfortable pace, encourage the victim to take their time, and suggest breaks when they become emotionally

distressed, result in victims feeling safe, at ease and the suspect being prosecuted (Patterson, 2012). In contrast, victims who were involved in cases that did not result in a prosecution reported that the officers' pace of questioning was 'rapid and forceful'. This supports the notion that careful consideration must be given to how the instructions (question typologies used) are presented. Although the work of Patterson was conducted in the USA, there appears to be some overlap in the findings of the present study given that five of the six victims reported experiences associated with cognitive load.

Sub-ordinate theme 2C: Magnitude of disclosing.

This sub-ordinate theme concerns the impact and magnitude of disclosing during the interview. All participants shared experiences of how they felt in the build up to their respective interviews and the emotive language used expressed how daunting a task it was:

> *"I was petrified. Absolutely petrified!"* (participant 1)
>
> *"Then when I get into it, you go fuck."* (participant 4)
>
> *"Very nervous, very scared, upset. I think I cried most of it."* (participant 5)
>
> *"Extremely anxious because I had given out that information and reported it"* (participant 6)

The language used by the participants also provided connotations as to how the magnitude of disclosing was comparable with a loss of control. Many had not previously told anyone else about the incident and the subsequent disclosure of those details during the interview was like an explosion in that all of a sudden they were sharing the responsibility (or burden) of that sensitive and personal information.

> *"As I sat down and it was being recorded that's it you know, I'm about to explode my world in every way, shape and form."* (participant 2)
>
> *"You tend to go explode."* (participant 4)
>
> *"Having it all out, you know what I mean. It just messed with me completely"* (participant 5)
>
> *"It was just like telling everyone your dirty washing and your secrets"* (participant 6)

Throughout police training they speak of the 'golden hour' whereby immediately after an offence has been committed the evidence and information is readily available in high volumes. Any delay in protecting, preserving or gathering evidence and information may result in it being contaminated or lost (College of Policing, 2018). The experiences that

participants referred to epitomised how following a decision to disclose, there is a similar window of opportunity for officers to obtain that information from them.

> *"I don't think that they get that once you open your mouth, you want to get it out before you decide not to open your mouth anymore. Because, and I've said it a million times to people, there is only a very small window in people who are suffering,"* (participant 2)

> *"I just think it was good that she got me in as quick as she did, as I could see how people do back out of it, if you have to wait any longer because I think, especially with historical, when you've made the decision to do it, you want to do it there and then."* (participant 3)

> *"I wish it had been sooner, not taken so long, you know what I mean. I just wanted to get it over and done with"* (participant 5)

Naturally, the participants also spoke about how they reflected on their experience of the interview and how the magnitude of disclosing impacted on them. Participants were explicit as to how their experiences impacted on their well-being both at the time of the interview and after the process came to a conclusion. During the disclosure, they shared experiencing feelings of embarrassment, guilt and how they were unable to cognitively function. Following disclosure, the feelings and experiences were portrayed through psychological indicators of being exhausted, both physically and mentally:

> *"It has a big psychological impact on you"* (participant 3)

> *"When you actually disclose it to the police, it's not as an adult, your brain is working as an adult but inside when you're talking to the police, you're a child basically."* (participant 6)

> *"I felt trashed absolutely trashed, emotionally and physically trashed. I just, the rest of the day I did nothing"* (participant 4)

> *"I probably should have gone to the doctors but I never, I never even give it a thought"* (participant 5)

The quotations highlighted above support previous research that has examined how rape/sexual assault victims perceive the experiences that they would have with officers as a result of co-operating during an interview or investigation. Patterson *et al.* (2009) argued that regardless of who the crime is reported to, for a rape/sexual assault victim, the disclosure is still a daunting prospect and one that brings with it notable concerns. The trauma associated with sexual crimes extends far beyond the assault itself, and the nature of the response they are met with can also impact on their well-being (Campbell *et al.,* 2001). Previous research has highlighted how the majority of rape/sexual assault victims do not report the crime to the

police, and of those that do, there is a mixed response when reflecting on how they were treated by the CJS (Venema, 2016). Such negative experiences could act as a deterrent to other victims who may be considering reporting such a crime to the police. The impact of an officers actions/behaviour extend beyond the individual that they are interacting with and it is important that this is recognised and acknowledged.

Every individual is different and this was evident in each of the interviews. Whilst all of the victims spoke about experiences that shared a common ground their individual interpretations were unique. The quotations used to highlight how, when and what circumstances were conducive to them disclosing their accounts supports the need for a tailor-made approach to interviewing, acknowledging that each case is unique and what works well for one victim may not necessarily work well for another. If such issues are considered then the stress felt by the victim could be alleviated somewhat, which in turn could increase their comfort levels that could result in larger amounts of relevant information being elicited (Patterson, 2012). This then leads on to the management of the interview process and how important it is for the officer to be aware of how the victim is responding. The disclosure of sensitive and personal details relating to a sexual crime can be a distressing and embarrassing experience for the victim (Westera *et al.,* 2016). Therefore, ensuring that the process is as 'stress free' as possible is crucial and the use of a victim focused approach to interviewing, one that utilises breaks and encourages the victim to take their time, has also been found to increase the likelihood of a prosecution (Patterson, 2012). This is particularly important when considering the potential physical and mental implications of participating in such interviews.

Sub-ordinate theme 2D: Secondary revictimisation/life sentence.

Five of the six participants made reference to how the interview process impacted on them. Participants commented on what their experience of the interview process was like and the language used to describe and explain the interaction:

> *"Whatever people want to call it but you're in an altered state of consciousness and you are there and I think probably one of the things that he* (the interviewing officer) *didn't get at all is where I was. I mean I was in the room with my dad and I don't think he got that at all."* (participant 4)

> *"But I'm just so glad it was one (interview) because the thought of having to tell people over and over and over again, its reliving it and its bad enough as it is."* (participant 1)

> *"It's horrible having to re-explain and go into re-service."* (participant 2)

"Horrible really, because you're re-living it really, you know, I mean, you get flashbacks and while you're sitting there, and you have to try and move on…You go back into it, you start to relive some of it so...yeah." (participant 3)

Secondary revictimisation was described in chapter three as, "…victim-blaming attitudes, behaviour and practices engaged in by community service providers, which further the rape event, resulting in additional trauma for rape survivors" (Campbell *et al.,* 2001, p. 1240). This particular issue has been identified as a significant concern in cases involving rape/sexual assault victims (Maier, 2008). However, from the above quotations it does not appear as though officers are intentionally trying to evoke secondary revictimisation, rather it is occurring purely as a consequence of the practices they are using. The quotations also concur with previous research that discovered how those officers conducting such interviews do not understand just how much of an impact their actions can have on the victim they are interviewing (Campbell, 2005). Maddox *et al.* (2011) argue that additional training is needed for the police in recognising how important the disclosure stage is for a victim and that an increased psychological understanding of this stage could be beneficial. This observation by Maddox and her colleagues is epitomised in the following quotes from one of the participants.

"I think getting the information is one thing, but understanding is a very different thing. I think the more they have an understanding, the more they'll get the better information." (participant 4)

When participants elaborated on their own unique interpretation of what secondary revictimisation was there was a general consensus that being a rape/sexual assault victim was comparable with having a life sentence in prison. It was evident that the numerical value placed on the sentence that the suspect (if prosecuted) had to serve was insignificant, as it was they, the victim, who had been dealt a life sentence.

"He got a life, well 12 years. I've got a life sentence." (participant 1)

"He was sentenced to 15 years custodial and then four years extended licence, so he has to serve ten, and I thought ten years yeah that's fine. But I didn't see it has his sentence I saw it as mine, like I've got ten years, I've only got five now but I've got ten years to get to a place in my life where I'm not vulnerable…I never saw it as his sentence, I always saw it as my time and I wish he had longer because I need more time." (participant 2)

"The problem is massive and it's not massive about what happened on that particular day at that particular time. That's what they need to process, what's important to survivors or the surviving is the after effect, the behaviours that come out as a result of it. Of how it affects my life." (participant 4)

Super-ordinate Theme 3: Interviewer Approach

The final super-ordinate theme was notable for all of the participants and encompasses how the officer approached the interview. Unlike the super-ordinate themes previously discussed, the final super-ordinate theme predominantly highlights good practice and how this eased the participants' experience of the interview process. Participants paid particular attention to three specific aspects: (i) humane style; (ii) the guiding chaperone, and; (iii) rigidity.

Sub-ordinate theme 3A: Humane style.

All participants commented on how some officers' humane approach to the interview assisted them by creating a safe and comfortable environment where they felt at ease. These components were repeatedly referred to and identified by some participants as being integral to the interview process and that officers, at all costs, should strive to ensure that they are not under pressure and able to move through the process at their own pace:

> *"He tried to make me feel at ease, he was very, very caring and he didn't push, he just let me take my time."* (participant 1)

> *"Yeah I mean the police officer, she was nice, you know, take it at your own pace sort of thing, yeah I felt fine that way, I didn't feel pressurised or anything like that."* (participant 2)

> *"Like obviously the whole interview process, wherever you do it, make them feel comfortable, whatever sort of room they're in, make them feel comfortable"* (participant 5)

> *"She was very thoughtful, very caring and acknowledged when I was getting upset so I think she was really good. She had feelings, she showed empathy"* (participant 3)

An additional component valued by the participants was being made to feel important, that the officer was committed to their case, and that they felt believed. Again, all of the participants highlighted how such behaviours from the officer were key to improving their experience of the interview process. If a participant felt as though the officer believed them, this resulted in them developing a sense of trust.

> *"He did reassure me that he took his job very seriously and this is what they worked on, so I did feel as if they were in my corner"* (participant 6)

> *"I always felt believed which was a lovely feeling I have to say, because I would hate to think I didn't be believed, which must be horrible, I don't know how people can cope when there is any doubt or that sort of thing."* (participant 2)

"If there is no empathy there…it isn't going to work. That's probably the basis of all therapy really, there has got to be a trust there between the two people, you know." (participant 4)

"I got embarrassed, you know what I mean, and I can remember saying to her, its coming back at some point I can remember stating to her, this is really embarrassing but, and she would say things like 'its not embarrassing this happened' you know, don't, you know, like. So, you have to trust somebody when you're letting things out, like that its, you know, you just couldn't do it otherwise, so she was special in my eyes." (participant 3)

The final comments made related to how the approach was about their whole demeanour, not just about the language they used:

"I think it was just the way she was herself you know what I mean" (participant 5)

"He was just so very good, he was really good at his job and he showed that he cared, and it wasn't just words that come out it was the way he said it, his whole demeanour. He did make me feel at ease a bit, if you can be at ease" (participant 1)

"They were smiling and nodding. I was watching a lot of their body language; their body language was positive." (participant 6)

The list of quotations collated supports previous research that has highlighted the need for a humane approach to interviewing. In those interviews with suspects of crime, many authors have highlighted the importance of being empathic, respectful and humane as this is associated with more admissions and larger amounts of IRI (e.g., Alison *et al.,* 2013; Holmberg & Christianson, 2002; Kebbell *et al.,* 2006; Oxburgh *et al.,* 2013; Shepherd, 1991).

Sub-ordinate theme 3B: The guiding chaperone.

The second sub-ordinate theme to emerge relates to the role that the interviewing officer/s played during the interview process. The experiences of two participants highlight just how integral the guidance was for them, how having that continuity with the same officer/s enabled them to get through the interview:

"I'm just so glad it was one (the same officer) *because the thought of having to tell people over and over and over again, it's reliving it and its bad enough as it is."* (participant 1)

"I had the same officer, apart from the initial interview that was done by the solo officer, I was then only dealt with by those two officers and it was, the continuity was lovely. You knew you didn't have to explain everything over and over again because they knew everything, they knew you and how you worked…And I think because I had the same officer all the time, she got to know that and we did have a brilliant

relationship, I couldn't praise her enough for that but I'm not sure everyone gets that same continuity." (participant 2)

The comments made by two of the participants highlight how important it was to have the same officer throughout the case. Participants spoke of the officer/s as an anchor or point of focus that provided support, which was crucial during the interview process. Officers conducting such interviews could alleviate comfort levels further by reducing the likelihood of secondary revictimisation occurring. This experience was so prominent amongst the participants that a sub-ordinate theme (2D) specifically emerged relating to this phenomenon.

Sub-ordinate theme 3C: Rigidity.

The final sub-ordinate theme also relates to how participants perceived the approach of the officer during their respective interviews. Participants felt the type of crime being investigated had little impact on how the officer approached it, almost adopting a 'one size fits all' approach.

"She just said go and get yourself food, drink, you know, we've got coffee and teas there and comeback and meet me at such and such a place and at a time so." (participant 3)

"I've been interviewed by the police before just for a minor offence…Looking back, it was identical, they were very, very similar processes, you know, they just want to know facts." (participant 4)

The above quotations highlight how the participants perceived their interviews to be lacking a personal touch or how they felt that they did not differ from a volume crime interview. The participants elaborate on this issue further stating that although there is a need for a caring approach, if this is not genuine (or perceived to be genuine), then it can be detected and the implications will be detrimental to the interview process:

"They need to put somebody in that does genuinely care because you can tell." (participant 1)

"He was trying to get that, he was going quite well at it, but I could see it, I could read it, you know, it was textbook." (participant 4)

In contrast, when the officer is not perceived to be utilising a 'one size fits all' approach and the participant views them as being genuinely invested in the case, this has a positive impact on their experience of the interview:

"Yeah, because if somebody doesn't really give a shit you're not going to open up as much, and he did care." (participant 1)

"*He was genuinely interested and committed to what they did"* (participant 6)

It is paramount that officers involved in such investigations are aware that how they conduct themselves can influence the overall quality of that investigation (Patterson, 2012). This could be in relation to the outcome of the investigation or how their approach to an interview, or investigation, impacts on the psychological well-being of the victim.

General Discussion

The aim of the present study was to: (i) establish a better understanding of rape/sexual assault victims' experiences of the investigative interviewing process; (ii) ascertain what factors influence a victim to participate and co-operate (or not) during interviews, and; (iii) investigate whether there were any aspects of the officers' approach they perceived as being effective (or non-effective) or any aspect the victims particularly liked (or disliked). The IPA conducted resulted in three themes being identified.

First, participants identified the interview process as an experience that required changes in the form of added clarity and the removal of feelings of isolation. The participants referred to being uncertain and not sure as to what they should expect before, during and after the interview. It is possible that due to the cognitive demands of interviewing rape/sexual assault victims, that officers may feel under pressure and consequently exhibit behaviours that do not comply with guidance (Hanway & Akehurst, 2018). Whilst the experiences that the participants referred to were, overall, critical of the interview process, suggestions were made, as to how the process could be improved. It is evident that the guidance/training currently being offered is not sufficiently addressing the issue of such stressors and given the traumatic experiences that a rape/sexual assault victim goes through it may be beneficial to review such materials.

The second emergent theme related to the participants experience of the interview as one that involved a series of complex cognitive processes. The impact of participating in an interview extends far beyond the interview itself. Factors include the build-up to the actual interview and the magnitude of making a disclosure, which for some victims, could be the first time they have spoken about the crime. This is a potentially daunting and distressing task for victims (Maddox *et al.,* 2011) and so being attentive to their needs and easing that initial 'explosion' of sensitive and personal information is key to ensuring that they are capable of continuing with the interview and subsequent investigation. The responsibility of the officer does not cease there. They are then required to manage the interview and obtain relevant

information that could influence the outcome of the investigation. For some victims, the elicitation of such details could be problematic, especially if they have never verbally discussed the details or blocked out the traumatic incident in question. The officer needs to be conscious of how they conduct themselves and the manner in which they ask questions. The unique circumstances that are relevant to each individual victim should be considered and efforts made to alleviate any concerns that are going to be detrimental to their performance during the interview (i.e., organising childcare or how the investigation could impact on their family). Each investigation should be treated as a unique case by the officer giving due consideration to the individual differences that exist amongst those victims who report an offence and subsequently could have an impact on how they may present or need to be treated. The final and most significant issue that must be considered by officers is the potential for secondary revictimisation. Whilst some participants commented how re-living the experience was the only vessel that enabled them to recall the required details, the use of contextual reinstatement is a process that must be managed very carefully. The physical and mental implications of secondary revictimisation do not just impact on the victim during the interview but afterwards also. There is a need for best practice guidelines to develop an increased awareness of the implications of PTSD and other anxiety related issues, which could then enhance the understanding of those officers conducting such interviews.

The final theme to emerge related to the approach of the interviewer. Participants identified various different components that had both a positive and negative impact on their experience of the interview process. The interview guidance that officers receive in England and Wales is very specific as to how they should conduct themselves during the interview with regards to their approach and the questions that should be asked. Participants in the present study discussed how specific components helped ease their experience of the interview process by making them feel safe, comfortable and believed. However, the participants did raise some notable concerns and stressed how some had a detrimental effect on their experience of the interview process. Firstly, the investigation of sexual crimes is not comparable with volume crimes. Therefore, a different approach that is sensitive to the various issues highlighted above is absolutely necessary. Secondly, the officer conducting the interview must be invested in the case. If they are not, this will be apparent and victims will detect this. This could potentially reduce the amount of relevant information that the officer obtains. Again, there is a need for this information to be circulated to ensure that officers are aware of the many different facets that could influence the victims' experience of the interview process.

Strengths and Limitations of Study

The present study aimed to establish a better understanding of rape/sexual assault victims' experiences of the interview process. Like most applied research projects, there are many strengths and limitations. Firstly, the data that informed the development of the three super-ordinate and nine sub-ordinate themes emerged from the analysis of how and what rape/sexual assault victims actually perceived and experienced during the interview process. This type of research is high in ecological validity and provides a rare insight into what actually occurs during the interview process between an interviewing officer and rape/sexual assault victim. Given the dearth of research that specifically focuses on rape/sexual assault victims' perspective of the interview process, it is essential that further research be conducted as this can only enhance our understanding of such interactions.

A limitation of the present study developed due to the sampling method recommended for IPA research, the sample size recruited is a relatively small representation of the thousands of rape/sexual assault victims. However, the participants who took part are also unique in that they were willing to participate in academic research. Wheatcroft and Wagstaff (2009) highlight how this topic is still very much a taboo subject with many victims being unwilling to speak out about it. Whilst the participants' views and experiences may not be representative of all rape/sexual assault victims, the findings discussed can be viewed as a general consensus of some who were willing to discuss their personal experiences. Another limitation emerged due to the specific inclusion criteria that stipulated each participant's case had to have been processed through the CJS. It was paramount that participation in the study would not influence or impact on the participant's well-being or the judicial process. Due to these concerns, it was decided that all investigations had to be 'closed'. Whilst this precaution was a positive consideration for the participants, it did highlight a limitation of the present study. The time delay for rape/sexual assault victims between the actual crime and the initial disclosure to the police can vary (in some non-recent cases this has been known to be over 30 years e.g., those cases concerning Jimmy Saville). Such inconsistencies also occur after a disclosure is made whereby there is no specific timeframe on how long it takes for an interview to take place. Another time related parameter that could not be avoided relates to the length of time since participants had their respective interviews. As time goes by the ability to access memories begins to degrade and so the accuracy of their accounts could be scrutinised (Memon *et al.,* 2010). However, given the unique nature of the participant group and the dearth of research currently available, whilst the findings must be treated with

caution, they act as a foundation for future exploration into the dynamics involved in rape/sexual assault victim interviews.

Future Directions

It is hoped that the present study will act as a catalyst for further exploration of how interviews of this nature could be improved, both from the perspective of the police and the victim. First, it appears that the interview process is a complex interaction that involves a certain level of cognitive functioning from the victim. An observational study could explore how rape/sexual assault victims' cognitive load fluctuates during the interview process and how this impacts on the elicitation of relevant information and how difficult the interaction is for them. Second, to address concerns about how time impacts on a victim's ability to recall memories, future research should attempt to shorten the timeframe between the actual crime, the police interview and then participating in research. A potential solution could involve obtaining a video-recording of the ABE interview that the victim participated in and then ask them to reflect on their experience whilst viewing the recording. However, such a project would have to be managed with careful consideration so as to ensure that no psychological harm occurred to the victim. The findings of the present study provide a vivid illustration of how the interview process can impact on the victim. Unfortunately, it is felt that this is merely the 'tip of the iceberg' and conducting research of this ilk is key to enhancing our understanding of just how complex such interactions are. That insight must then be shared with officers who have the capacity and responsibility to action that knowledge.

Interviewing has been identified as a highly complex process that involves a wide range of competencies and skills (Powell, 2002). Those skills are even more exclusive when investigating a sexual crime and officers are often required to use skills that are not used during 'everyday' interviews (Cherryman & Bull, 2001). Given the complex and sensitive details associated with crimes of this nature, the improvement and regular updating of training/best practice guidance is crucial. Such amendments can only be enforced as a result of evaluating current practice. The need for collaboration between practitioners and academics is especially applicable to sexual crimes. The psychological effects, both short and long term, which occurs as a result of this crime, can be (and often are) huge. Therefore, it is imperative that research focuses on the perspective of the victim and a better understanding is attained of what stressors and triggers are present during the interview process. In contrast, we should also strive to highlight good practice and then ensure that this information is circulated so that other officers are able to benefit from practice that is effective.

Chapter Conclusion

The findings of the present study are based on the experiences of participants who provided information with the hope that it would be warmly received, circulated through best practice guidance and acted upon (i.e., demonstrated by those officers conducting such interviews). Three main themes emerged from the six semi-structured interviews. Firstly, that victims are not entirely sure as to what they should expect before, during and after the interview process. This transpires into them experiencing feelings of isolation. Secondly, a victim's experience of the interview is one that involves a series of complex cognitive processes. This is prevalent before the interview, throughout and once the interview concludes. The interview requires a high level of cognitive functioning from the victim and this is something that can be problematic. Lastly, victims are very aware of what components are required to ease the process and are very comfortable articulating this. A humane approach is valued in addition to the officer being present throughout and demonstrating a genuine concern for the victim.

The next chapter will provide an overall discussion of the thesis by considering the findings of the SSA and each of the empirical studies. It will then conclude with recommendations and implications for practice towards a more effective framework for the interviewing of rape/sexual assault victims.

Chapter six. Final discussion and conclusions.

Chapter Summary

It is evident through reporting rates that the crime of sexual offending is increasing both nationally and internationally (Garcia-Moreno & Watts, 2011). Such crimes are viewed as a 'unique' form of offending (Benneworth, 2007; Marshall, 2001) and interviews that form the basis of these investigations are highly 'specialist' requiring interviewers to demonstrate skills that are not used during 'everyday' interviewing (Cherryman & Bull, 2001). Research has identified how interviewers find the investigation of sexual crimes 'technically difficult' and 'stressful' to conduct given they have to make sense of painful emotions (Oxburgh *et al.,* 2006). Individuals on the opposite side of the interview – the sexual offence victims – also experience such stressors. If an officer adopts an approach that is conducive to the victim participating during the interview process, then they are going to feel as though they are being listened to and not judged (Fisher & Geiselman, 1992; Milne & Bull, 1999). Given the complexity of the interaction that occurs between the interviewer and the victim, it is essential that our understanding of the investigative interviewing process is enhanced – the particular topic area that was the focus of this thesis. This final chapter introduces the key conclusions from the SSA and the empirical research that has been presented here. It acknowledges the limitations and difficulties associated with conducting research on this particular topic area and reflects on what could possibly have been done differently with the benefit of hindsight. Recommendations are provided for the direction of future research, a discussion of the implications for police practice is included and how they could contribute towards the development of a more effective framework for police interviewers.

Investigative Interviewing in England and Wales

This thesis has explored the various different guidance documents that are provided to officers in England and Wales and how developments have been made over the past 30 years. It has outlined the advantages of the PEACE model of interviewing in comparison with the guilt-presumptive and confrontational processes that are associated with accusatorial techniques (Inbau *et al.,* 2001; 2013). Since its introduction in 1993, the efficacy of the PEACE model of interviewing has been examined and the framework for the interviewing of suspects, witnesses and victims has been evaluated. Initial research was positive and found that improvements had been made in interviewing overall and improvements were sustained over the first six months following training (McGurk *et al.,* 1993). However, that sample only consisted of suspect interviews, raising questions as to whether the skills were transferable to witness and victim interviews. Notably, Bull and Cherryman (1995) found that interviewers utilised poor questioning techniques, a lack of rapport development (and maintenance) and shortfalls in empathy and flexibility. Such findings laid the foundation for future research that would focus on evaluating the efficacy of police interviewing.

Almost a decade after its introduction, Clarke and Milne (2001) set out to further explore the efficacy of the PEACE model of interviewing by examining the extent to which interviewing techniques for suspect, witness and victim interviews had been incorporated into workplace practice. Similar to Bull and Cherryman (1995), Clarke and Milne found that improvements were still lacking with regards to rapport-building in suspect interviews. There were also some notable concerns with how witnesses and victims were being interviewed. They highlighted that the actual interviewing of a witness/victim only constituted approximately a quarter of the time recorded, with interviewers focusing on writing a statement. This resulted in interviewers asking predominantly *closed* questions to clarify the content of what they were writing (the statement). Although interviewers involved in serious crime did perform better (compared with interviewers involved in volume crime), a large proportion of the mean scores congregated around the mid-point of the rating scale used indicating that they were not necessarily performing to a high enough standard. The discussion will now focus on examining what research has contributed to the literature-base specifically applied to improving the overall efficacy of interviews with sexual offence victims.

Previous Research on the Investigative Interviewing of Sexual Offence Victims

As previously outlined (see chapter two), sexual offending *per se* is increasing as demonstrated by national and international reporting rates (Garcia-Moreno & Watts, 2011). However, such figures must be interpreted with caution given the strong suspicion that the disparity between actual incident and reporting figures is due to underreporting (Du Mont *et al.,* 2003). A sudden increase in the number of reported cases could be a result of the public becoming more aware of such crimes due to the various high profile cases that have been in the media and then subsequently feeling more comfortable making a disclosure. Often viewed as a 'unique' form of offending (Benneworth, 2007; Marshall, 2001), interviews for a sexual offence are regarded as being highly 'specialist' and require interviewers to practice skills that are not used during volume crime interviews (Cherryman & Bull, 2001). The literature-base that examines investigative interviewing and how the practice of an interviewer can impact on this process is still growing worldwide. The predominant focus has been on the interviewing of suspects and their perceptions of the interviewing process (e.g., Holmberg & Christianson, 2002; Kebbell *et al.,* 2006; Kebbell *et al.,* 2010; Oxburgh & Ost, 2011; Oxburgh *et al.,* 2014; 2015). However, the body of research that has focused on the interviewing of witnesses and victims, specifically adult sexual offence victims, is not as extensive. The findings discussed in chapter two highlight the areas of concentration and inattention in relation to this particular topic area.

After reviewing the literature that has focused on improving the overall efficacy of interviews with sexual offence victims, there appears to be a particular area of concentration. When reviewing the quantitative studies included in the SSA, the majority measured some form of *police officers' professional perspective/opinion, personal belief* or *career related experience* to ascertain what sort of influence an *interviewing officer characteristic* had on one of these outcome categories. This observation was also noted when the entire sample was considered (including qualitative research) with almost half of the articles measuring an outcome associated with *police officers' professional perspective/opinion, personal belief* or *career related experience.* As highlighted within chapter two, this was not wholly unexpected given the notable concerns that can arise when conducting research of this nature. What was surprising was the lack of research that manipulated an *investigation-related issue.* The SSA identified only six different outcome categories that have been used as a form of measurement when manipulating a predictor concerned with this issue. Three of those involved *victim perspective/opinion, police officers' professional perspective/opinion,* and *case outcome.* Such research investigated how rape victims have been questioned, the perceived legitimacy

of their complaint and how this relates to the case outcome. However, one aspect concerned with *investigation-related issues* that has not yet been explored is how officers, who interview sexual offence victims, both use and value specific interviewing techniques.

Aside from highlighting the variables of potential importance and those that have gone unnoticed, the SSA also identified key issues within the topic area that policy makers should consider (see p. 50 of the present thesis). The issues highlighted are wide-ranging along with their potential solutions, however, the review of current best-practice/training guidelines appears to be the most frequent suggestion. The incorporation of psychologically-informed guidance could enhance interviewers' understanding of how/why mental health problems impact on vulnerable individuals (i.e., rape/sexual assault victims). This could then alleviate some of the common misconceptions regarding how a 'real victim' should behave and how those behaviours are not necessarily indicators of reduced credibility.

Rape Myth Acceptance amongst Police Officers

Rape myths are prevalent amongst people of all ages, genders and across different races (Burt, 1980; McGee *et al.,* 2011; Suarez & Gadalla, 2010). If police officers responsible for investigating sexual crimes endorse such myths, then this could be problematic (Sleath & Bull, 2015). Research has indicated that rape myths were not only present in the belief systems of lay persons, but also in those professionals who have direct contact with sexual offence victims (Barber, 1974; Goodman-Delahunty & Graham, 2011, Page, 2008a; 2010; Sleath & Bull, 2012). More specifically Lonsway and Fitzgerald (1999) found that police officers had a higher level of rape myth acceptance than when compared with the general population. However, more recent research indicates that the level of endorsement amongst officers varies and that further exploration is required (Campbell, 2005). The results from empirical research conducted in chapter three of the present thesis concur with previous research in that rape myths are not uncommon and that their acceptance rates can vary (O'Neal, 2017; Sussenbach & Bohner, 2011). Chapter three also demonstrated how female interviewers reportedly find it easier to remain impartial and free from prejudice when interviewing a sexual offence victim than their male counterparts. However, no gender differences were found in relation to interviewers' perceptions of rape myth prevalence and the extent to which they could potentially impact on the interviewing process.

Chapter three also explored how the varying beliefs of rape myth prevalence could impact on interviewers reported usage and perceived efficacy of recommended interview techniques. These findings will be discussed in the following section.

Police Officers' Reported Use and Perceived Efficacy of Interview Techniques

This thesis has outlined how specific interviewing skills are highlighted and referred to within the various guidance documents (e.g., the principles of Investigative Interviewing, PEACE model of interviewing, and the ABE guidelines; see chapter one) that are provided to interviewers, inclusive of those who interview sexual offence victims. These guidance documents all share a similar ethos as to how they advise a sexual offence victim should be interviewed. Two areas that were initially identified as requiring additional attention are the use of rapport-building and empathy (Bull & Cherryman, 1995; Clarke & Milne, 2001). Since those observations were made, the research that has focused specifically on assessing interviewers' perceptions regarding the use and perceived efficacy of these two concepts has been limited. The concept of rapport within an investigative interview (in general) has been examined more often than empathy. Research has found that rapport-based techniques are used more regularly and perceived to be the more effective type of interview practice (Dando *et al.*, 2008; Kebbell *et al.*, 1999; La Rooy *et al.,* 2011). The limited research that has focused on the concept of empathy has noted the positive impact it can have on the interview process (see Dando & Oxburgh, 2016; Holmberg & Christianson, 2002; Kebbell *et al.,* 2006; Oxburgh *et al.,* 2012). However, no research has sought to specifically ascertain how often interviewers use this concept as a practice or how effective it is perceived to be when interviewing sexual offence victims.

Interviewers' reported use of interview techniques.

The quantitative results from empirical research conducted in chapter three support previous findings that rapport-based techniques are the most regularly used interview practice (Dando *et al.*, 2008; Kebbell *et al.*, 1999; La Rooy *et al.,* 2011). In comparison, the empathy-based techniques did not rank as high despite mean values indicating that the sampled interviews *'usually'* use such techniques. An interesting finding to emerge from the study conducted in chapter three of the present thesis was how interviewers explained (qualitatively) how they would facilitate an interview with a sexual offence victim. Whilst rapport was referred to more regularly than empathy, the words/phrases used by the interviewers in relation to the former concept were discussed regarding its practical usage and

when it should be demonstrated during the investigation process. The findings imply that rapport is perhaps only used in the early stages of an investigation (pre-interview) and momentarily in the early stages of an interview. In contrast, some of the more regularly mentioned words/phrases by interviewers were strongly linked to the concept of empathy and were mentioned in conjunction with how they could help assist the interview process. These findings concur with previous research that indicates how the use of an empathic interviewing style can lead to more confessions and more IRI when used in conjunction with appropriate forms of questions (Kassin & Gudjonsson, 2004; Oxburgh *et al*., 2013; 2015).

Interviewers' beliefs in the prevalence of rape myths.

The empirical study conducted in chapter three found that interviewers reported usage of some recommended interview techniques was influenced by their views on rape myth prevalence. Interviewers who believed that rape myths have a higher level of prevalence use the two empathy-based techniques (*encouragement to take their time* and the *use of empathy*) more often than those who perceive rape myths to be less prevalent. Similarly, interviewers who believe that rape myths have a higher level of prevalence reportedly use the rapport-based technique (*instruction not to fabricate or guess*) less so than those with lower prevalence beliefs. Whilst there is no definitive link between the beliefs concerning rape myth prevalence and rape myth acceptance, a possible explanation is that those individuals who believe rape myths have a higher level of prevalence would generally have reduced rape myth acceptance. The increased awareness and understanding of the various difficulties associated with such investigations could influence their perception regarding such issues. It could be hypothesised that interviewers then, in turn, have a greater appreciation and understanding of how strenuous and/or difficult the investigative interview could be for the victim and consequently incorporate empathy-based techniques more often.

Interviewers' perceived efficacy of interview techniques.

Similar to the quantitative results for the reported usage of the recommended interview techniques, the findings for the perceived efficacy of those techniques also support previous research that found rapport-based techniques are considered the most effective (Dando *et al.*, 2008; Kebbell *et al.*, 1999; La Rooy *et al.,* 2011). Similarly, the empathy-based techniques did not rank as high. However, the mean values for both rapport and empathy-based techniques suggest that the sample of interviewers, as a minimum, perceive both techniques to be '*quite effective'*. The qualitative responses from the sampled interviewers when asked how

they would facilitate an interview with a sexual offence victim presented a notable discrepancy. The large number of interviewers who justified using rapport before the interview so as to ensure the victim could focus on the relevant information being discussed suggests that some interviewers may not view rapport as being effective or crucial to the interview process itself. This is clearly a problem if interviewers feel that rapport maintenance prevents them from being neutral and could potentially have serious implications (i.e., how comfortable the victim feels could then influence the manner in how the investigation proceeds). This finding contradicts previous research that highlights the importance of rapport and how it can help facilitate communication with a victim (Holmberg & Christianson, 2002; Holmberg & Madsen, 2014; Kebbell *et al.,* 2006; Oxburgh & Ost, 2011; Oxburgh *et al.,* 2012; 2013; 2015; Patterson, 2012).

Interviewers' beliefs in the prevalence of rape myths.

Chapter three found that interviewers perceived efficacy of one of the recommended interview techniques was influenced by their views on rape myth prevalence. Interviewers who believed that rape myths had a higher level of prevalence perceived the empathy-based technique (*encouragement to take their time*) as being more effective than interviewers with beliefs that rape myths have a lower prevalence. This finding strengthens the suggestion previously made that interviewers with higher rape myth prevalence beliefs have a more developed understanding of the potential factors that could influence such investigations.

ABE Interview Observations

Questioning techniques.

The use and impact of different question typologies within the context of an interview has historically (within academic research) been used as a measure for overall quality. The findings from research has resulted in the police service receiving criticism due to the *inappropriate* questioning techniques used by officers when interviewing – regardless of whether the interviewee was an adult, child, suspect, witness or victim (Baldwin, 1993; Davies *et al.,* 2000; Milne & Bull, 2006; Myklebust & Bjørklund, 2006; see chapters one and four of the present thesis). People are not accustomed to using *appropriate* questions, in particular *TED* questions, as a type of normal interaction. Every-day interactions involve turn-taking, whereby the speaker and the listener exchange utterances in response to the elicitation of information or specific questions (Wright & Powell, 2006). Research has highlighted the importance of using *open-ended* and more *probing* forms of questions as they elicit more

fulsome and accurate accounts (Aldridge & Cameron, 1999; Cederborg *et al.,* 2000; Davies *et al.,* 2000; Loftus, 1982; Milne & Bull, 2006; Myklebust & Bjørklund, 2006; see chapters one and four of the present thesis). The empirical study conducted in chapter four found that interviewers asked significantly more *appropriate* than *inappropriate* questions. This finding contradicts previous research (Bull & Cherryman, 1996; Davies *et al.,* 2000; Myklebust & Bjørklund, 2006; Oxburgh *et al.*, 2012; 2013), but their focus was on the interviewing of adult suspects and child sexual abuse victims. The study outlined in chapter four of the present thesis also found that responses to *appropriate* questions contained significantly more items of IRI than responses to *inappropriate* questions, which corroborates other research (e.g., Aldridge & Cameron, 1999; Cederborg *et al.,* 2000; Davies *et al.*, 2000; Loftus, 1982; Milne & Bull, 2006; Myklebust & Bjørklund, 2006; 2009; Oxburgh *et al.*, 2012). The final observation regarding question typology indicated that the number of *appropriate* and *inappropriate* questions asked did not differ across the three different investigation outcome groups ('no detection', 'victim retraction' and 'offender charged').

The use of empathy.

It has been suggested that when engaging with an interviewee, but especially sexual offence victims, if a police officer is empathic and supportive then that could help alleviate how difficult the process is for the victim (Campbell, 2008). The distinctive nature of such offences requires that officer's use interviewing skills that they may not be accustomed to using on a regular occurrence (Benneworth, 2007; Cherryman & Bull, 2001). To date, there is a dearth of empirical research examining empathic (or humane) interviewing styles in relation to its impact and efficacy during the investigative interviewing process, especially with sexual offence victims. The research that has been conducted has tended to focus more on the investigative interviewing of suspects/offenders and their perceptions of the police interview (Holmberg & Christianson, 2002; Kebbell *et al.,* 2006; Kebbell *et al.,* 2010; Oxburgh & Ost, 2011; Oxburgh *et al*., 2013; 2015; see chapter one). Research has found that the use of an empathic (or humane) interviewing style leads to: (i) more confessions when interviewing suspects (Kassin & Gudjonsson, 2004); (ii) more IRI when used together with *appropriate* forms of questions (see Oxburgh *et al*., 2013, 2015), and; (iii) that offenders are more likely to admit to their crimes when interviewed in such a non-judgemental manner (Holmberg & Christianson, 2002; Kebbell *et al*., 2006; Oxburgh & Ost, 2011). The empirical study conducted in chapter four of the present thesis also explored how the use of empathy impacted on the balance of *appropriate* and *inappropriate* questions asked and the quality of IRI obtained – these results will now be discussed.

Using a sample of video-recorded interviews with female adult rape victims, the results from the empirical study outlined in chapter four found that the sampled interviewers used empathy sparingly. There was no significant difference in the total number of *appropriate* questions asked in *empathic* versus *non-empathic* interviews. This contradicts previous research that found during suspects interviews where *spontaneous* empathy was demonstrated interviewers asked significantly more *appropriate* questions (Oxburgh *et al.,* 2013). A more striking finding from the study in chapter four was that interviewers asked significantly more *inappropriate* questions in *empathic* interviews than they did in *non-empathic* interviews. Again, this finding contradicts that of Oxburgh *et al.* who found no significant difference in the number of *inappropriate* questions asked during interviews with and without *spontaneous* empathy. The empirical study conducted in chapter four also found no significant differences in the total amount of IRI obtained (inclusive of total and the five individual categories) as a function of whether the interviews were classified as *empathic* or *not.* This finding contradicts past research (e.g., Alison *et al.,* 2013; Holmberg & Christianson, 2002), however, corroborates the findings of Oxburgh *et al.* (2013) who also found that interviews classified as being *empathic* did not contain more IRI (inclusive of total and the five individual categories), when compared with *non-empathic* interviews.

The empathy-related findings obtained from the empirical study conducted in chapter four could be due to the difficulties associated with conducting such interviews. As highlighted by Oxburgh *et al.* (2006), interviewers appear to find the investigation of sexual crimes 'technically difficult' and 'stressful' to conduct given they have to make sense of painful emotions. When interviewing a rape victim, an interviewer may revert to asking a larger number of *inappropriate* questions as this is a quicker way of confirming or obtaining information from the victim (as opposed to asking for an uninterrupted account using *appropriate* questions). This could, potentially, reduce the length of time the interview takes and subsequently reduce the likelihood of being exposed to personal and sensitive material that could make such interviews 'stressful' and 'difficult' to conduct. An explanation as to why the use of an *empathic* interviewing style did not result in larger amounts of IRI (inclusive of total PALIT and the five individual categories) could be due to a lack of understanding of what empathy is, how to demonstrate it and when to demonstrate it (from the interviewers perspective). As outlined in chapter one, empathy is a multi-dimensional concept and officers receive almost no training in relation to how useful it can be within an interview setting. Research has also indicated how some officers find it difficult to differentiate between empathy and sympathy (Oxburgh 2011; see chapter three). It is

conceivable that training on the use of *appropriate* and *inappropriate* questions would be more straightforward and easier to understand.

The Victim's Perspective

The quality of an investigation can be largely influenced by how officers conduct themselves and it is essential that officers involved in such investigations are aware of how important their conduct could be (Patterson, 2012). It has been widely reported that the police have adopted the role of 'gatekeeper' to the later stages of the CJS, therefore, how an officer interacts with a victim is pivotal (Frazier & Haney, 1996; Seneviratne, 2004). To ensure that the victim elicits a complete and accurate account, it is of paramount importance that the officer creates a social and cognitive environment that encourages the victim to recall and communicate what happened. A social factor that is integral to the creation of this environment focuses on the attitude of the officer and ensuring that they provide support and encouragement to the victim as opposed to attitudes of disbelief (Felson & Pare, 2008; Jordan, 2001). If the officer adopts an approach that is conducive to the victim participating during the interview process then the victim is going to feel as though they are being listened to and not judged (Fisher & Geiselman, 1992; Milne & Bull, 1999). This could be demonstrated through an empathic reaction to the disclosure and regular communication about how the case is progressing (Jamel *et al.,* 2008). In contrast, the judgemental nature of some officers has been found to impact on the amount of relevant information elicited from victims and how they were less likely to provide specific details about the offence (Patterson, 2012). The empirical study conducted in chapter five of the present thesis identified three themes that could be used to inform best practice guidelines and provide justification for further exploration into how specific components influence the interview process (from the perspective of rape/sexual assault victims). A large number of the sub-ordinate themes that emerged were concerned with how the interview process needed to be improved, there were some that identified positive aspects that were viewed as being helpful. These will now be discussed.

The first theme identified by the six interviewed participants was concerned with how the interview process was an experience that required changes in the form of added clarity and how feelings of isolation needed to be removed. Whilst the experiences that formed the basis of the first theme were, overall, critical of the interview process, suggestions were made, as to how the process could be improved. The second emergent theme related to the participants experience of the interview process as one that involved a series of complex

cognitive processes. The responses indicated that the impact of participating in an interview extends far beyond the interview itself, inclusive of the build-up to the actual interview and the magnitude of making a disclosure. The officer has a responsibility to manage the interview and obtain relevant information that could influence the outcome of the investigation. For some victims, the elicitation of such details could be problematic, especially if they have never verbally discussed the details or blocked out the traumatic incident in question. Therefore, the officer needs to be conscious of how they conduct themselves and the manner in which they ask questions. This particular issue is crucial, if ignored then the potential for experiencing secondary revictimisation could be increased. Some participants commented how re-living the experience was the only vessel that enabled them to recall the required details; the use of contextual reinstatement is a process that must be managed very carefully. The physical and mental implications of secondary revictimisation do not just impact on the victim during the interview but afterwards also. The final theme to emerge related to the interviewer's approach and how there are different components that had a positive and negative impact on their experience of the interview process. Participants made reference to how specific components helped ease their experience of the interview process by making them feel safe, comfortable and believed. However, some areas of concern were highlighted and comments made as to how they had a detrimental effect on the interview process. These included how there is a need for officers to adopt a different approach, as the investigation of a sexual crime is not comparable with volume crime. The participants also stressed how the officer conducting the interview must be invested in the case. If they are not, this is apparent and victims will detect this.

Limitations of Thesis Research

As with any empirical research, there are strengths and limitations and the present thesis is no exception. The questionnaire used to collect data for chapter three relied on the self-reporting of officers. Consequently, there is no way of being entirely sure that the respondents completed the questionnaire alone with no help from colleagues or without consulting other sources (i.e., the Internet or guidance/best practice documents). When considering the reported usage of the recommended interview techniques, there is also no way of confirming whether or not the respondents did indeed use those techniques when conducting interviews with sexual offence victims. There is also no sure way of gauging how truthful their responses were regarding the three issues associated with rape myths. It is plausible that some respondents may have altered their answers due to concerns about how it would reflect on their perceived level of competence.

The sample size of video-recorded interviews used in chapter four of the present thesis was relatively small (N=25) and was only representative of one English police force. Given the lack of empirical research evaluating the investigative interviewing of adult rape victims, in addition to the nature of the crime and the involvement of such sensitive and personal data, this sample size is respectable. Furthermore, despite having actual video-recordings, their quality (in terms of sound and graphics) was often poor and difficult to understand. This resulted in some of the utterances from both the interviewer and the victim not being fully audible. The set-up of the ABE interview rooms (the positioning of the dual cameras) also made it difficult to observe all of the facial and body movements – both key components when analysing *non-verbal* empathy. Therefore, the majority of analysis was based on verbal exchanges at a literal level (Dickson & Hargie, 2006), which has its limitations.

The empirical study conducted in chapter five of the present thesis also had a relatively small sample size (N=6) and was a result of the sampling method recommended for IPA research. Wheatcroft and Wagstaff (2009) highlight how the topic concerned with rape/sexual assault victims' experiences is still very much a taboo subject with many victims unwilling to speak out about it. The disparity between incidence, reporting and conviction rates for rape/sexual assault is huge and so it is appreciated that the small number of participants who agreed to be interviewed may not be representative of all rape/sexual assault victims. However, the findings discussed can be viewed as a general consensus of some who were willing to discuss their personal experiences.

There are always going to be issues when conducting empirical research that focuses on evaluating the efficacy of investigative interviews with rape/sexual assault victims. Whilst there is a general enthusiasm from police forces when asked to collaborate and participate in academic research, given the busy schedules, cut backs and daily pressures, the return rates from questionnaire studies that require officer completion has always been traditionally low (Cherryman & Bull, 2001). The study outlined in chapter three of the present thesis was no exception. Questionnaires were disseminated throughout different police forces in England and Wales but the return rate was low and some officers took considerable time to return their completed questionnaires.

The final limitation of the present thesis was apparent in the studies outlined in chapters four and five. Due to the involvement of such sensitive and personal information, the process of obtaining data was difficult and numerous precautions/steps had to be taken to ensure that all research was conducted ethically. Prior to acquiring any data for the empirical

study conducted in chapter four, ethical approval had to be granted and numerous meetings took place with representatives from the respective police force to ensure that the information sharing agreement benefited both parties. Members of the research team that would have access to the data then had to be thoroughly vetted by the police force. All three precautions are understandable given the sensitive nature of the data being analysed, however, the process (which was predominantly out of the researcher's control) took almost a year to commence, from application to the acquirement of video-recorded interviews. Similar difficulties were also experienced when attempting to acquire data for the empirical study outlined in chapter five. Again, relevant ethical approval had to be granted and numerous meetings took place with representatives from agencies that provide support to rape/assault victims so as to ensure that no psychological harm would be experienced by victims who were willing to participate. Despite having a collaboration agreement with a local support agency and victims who were willing to participate, the approval of ethics was the main hurdle due to concerns that the individuals participating were previous victims of rape or sexual assault. The discussion will now provide suggestions on how such issues could be addressed and the direction future research should take.

As with any programme of research that spans over several years (in this case, 6 years) the benefit of hindsight is a useful tool when reflecting on what could have been done differently. Firstly, it is felt that the findings from the final empirical research study reported in chapter five could have been valuable when developing the coding framework for the empirical research discussed in chapter four. The qualitative feedback from rape/sexual assault victims about their experiences of the interview process and what encouraged them to engage and co-operate provided a more in-depth understanding of that interaction. That information, in conjunction with PJT (Lind & Tyler, 1992) could have contributed to the development of a new model of empathy that may have resulted in a more accurate and reliable definition which could, in turn, have resulted in an increased identification of empathy-related behaviours/interactions. Finally, the method of recruitment for participants in the final empirical research study (see chapter five) could possibly have been amended to increase participation rates. Whilst a small response was expected – other avenues of recruitment could have been explored (e.g., online advertisement, support groups etc.). However, given the sensitive nature of the research (and the researcher's relative inexperience of interacting with rape/sexual assault victims) it was crucial that each stage of the research process was managed carefully so as to ensure that no psychological harm came to any of the victims agreeing to participate and/or expressing an interest in the research.

Recommendations for Future Research

Given that research assessing the efficacy of investigative interviews with sexual offence victims is in its relative infancy, it is paramount that further exploration occurs to increase our understanding of these interviews. The need to further investigate and explore this area has been recognised by various government reforms/reviews and has been the subject of regular scrutiny (see e.g., Home Office Circular 69/86; HMCPSI/HMCI, 2007; Stern Review, 2010). The findings outlined in chapter two indicate the areas of research in relation to this topic that have and have not received intervention in the form of academic research. Wolchover and Heaton-Armstrong (2008) previously argued that Government reforms should focus more on police forces conducting quality investigations and case preparation, thereby refining ways of detecting unreliable allegations. Academic research that focuses on the investigative interviewing of suspects appears to have already adopted this approach by specifically investigating how particular interviewing practices impact on the quality of the investigation (i.e., the amount of IRI obtained). Those principles of research now need to be transferred to the investigative interviewing of sexual offence victims.

The findings from chapter three of the present thesis indicate that there may be some confusion amongst officers regarding the concept of empathy. The confusion appears to stem from officers being unable to accurately differentiate between the literal and practical definitions of this concept. This was illustrated in the words/phrases used by the respondents when explaining how they would facilitate an investigative interview, as opposed to asking how often they used or the perceived efficacy of the recommended interviewing techniques. Whilst not as prevalent, there also appears to be some confusion between the concepts of empathy and sympathy. The observations from chapter three suggest that the training/guidance currently being provided to officers in relation to the concept of empathy is not as detailed or explicit as the content that is provided in relation to the concept of rapport. Future research could deliver amended guidance to interviewers that elaborates on the concept of empathy and then evaluate: (i) their perceptions of the concept; (ii) how useful they perceive it, and; (iii) their understanding of its practical and literal definition.

The study outlined in chapter four demonstrated how sparingly interviewers when interviewing rape victims use empathy. It is crucial that research continues to analyse video-recorded interviews as this provides a more detailed understanding of the complete social interaction that occurs between interviewer and victim, as opposed to relying on the self-reported views of officers conducting such interviews (see chapter three). Future research

should strive to obtain results that are high in ecological validity by continuing to analyse video-recorded interviews. Such research should elaborate on the findings from chapter four by analysing *non-verbal* empathy – an observation that is not possible when analysing interview transcripts. The exploration of how interviewing practices may differ between interviewers from different police forces could provide an insight into how guidance/training impacts on practice. Interviewers reviewing a sample of the investigative interviews they have conducted could further enhance our understanding of why specific practices are used and then enquire how those practices helped manage the interview and what they may do differently in future.

The final recommendation for future research emerged as a result of the findings discussed in chapter five. First and foremost, it is imperative that future research explores how the interviewing of rape/sexual assault victims could be improved, both from the perspective of the police and the victim. Future research should explore how rape/sexual assault victims' cognitive load fluctuates during the interview process, how this impacts on the elicitation of relevant information and how difficult this makes that interaction. The majority of research that focuses on the perspective of the victim involves cases that are categorised as 'closed' and have already been processed through the CJS, which on occasions can result in large timescales between the actual crime, the police interview and then participating in research. To address concerns about how time impacts on a victim's ability to recall memories, future research could obtain a video-recording of the ABE interview that the victim participated in and then ask them to reflect on their experience whilst viewing the recording. Understandably, this would have to be managed with careful consideration so as to ensure that no psychological harm occurred to the victim but it could provide an alternative insight into how they interpreted that interaction with the interviewer.

Practical Implications: Towards a more effective framework

It is essential that academic researchers and practitioners collaborate effectively, together, with the aim of enhancing best practice through psychologically-informed guidance. The findings of the SSA and each of the empirical studies will now be applied to how they could inform future policy/practice and contribute towards the development of a more effective framework for police interviewers. It was apparent from the SSA that there is a dearth of research specifically focusing on the interviewing of sexual offence victims. There is a particular absence of research concerned with how interviewer practice could potentially impact on the interview process. The SSA highlighted a range of issues that could potentially

influence policy (with regards to sexual offence investigations) and the most common solution was to review the current best-practice/training guidelines. This observation is further supported by the empirical findings obtained from chapters three, four and five.

The use of rapport-building and empathy has historically been identified as an area of interviewing that requires improvement (Bull & Cherryman, 1995; Clarke & Milne, 2001). The disparity between the quantitative and qualitative findings from chapter three indicates that some level of confusion exists in understanding the literal definition and practical usage of these concepts. The best practice/training guidelines currently being delivered to interviewers has a void in that it is not utilising psychologically-informed guidance based on the evaluation/reflection of interviewer interview practice. It is crucial that a larger focus is placed on the use and understanding of empathy and how this, in conjunction with rapport-building and appropriate questioning, could improve the efficacy of interviews. If an interviewer is to fully appreciate the positive impact that such skills can have on the interview process then their understanding of them must be improved. The current revision of the ABE guidelines (MoJ, 2011) only refers to the term 'empathy' once: "A guiding principle for developing rapport is to communicate empathy" (p. 189). More alarming is that at no point is guidance provided on how to 'communicate empathy' or indeed how interviewers should 'identify' occasions when empathy should be demonstrated. This could possibly explain why empathy was used so sparingly by the interviewers in the sample of video-recorded interviews analysed in chapter four.

Within academic research a common gauge for measuring the overall quality of an interview is the use and impact of different question typologies. This thesis has highlighted the importance of using *appropriate* questioning techniques, in particular, *open-ended* and more *probing* forms of questions. The guidance offered to interviewers in England and Wales (PEACE model of interviewing and the ABE guidelines; see chapter one) reinforces this further. The findings from chapter four are promising in that they show that when interviewing (adult) rape victims, interviewers ask significantly more *appropriate* than *inappropriate* questions. However, the regular use of *appropriate* questions does not necessarily mean that an interview will be considered *empathic.* There was no significant difference between the total number of *appropriate* questions asked by interviewers during *empathic* interviews than when compared with *non-empathic* interviews. In actual fact, interviewers asked significantly more *inappropriate* questions in *empathic* interviews than they did in *non-empathic* interviews. On face value this finding is surprising and somewhat concerning, however the findings from chapter five add much needed clarity to this. Given the

complexity of participating in the interview process and the specific requirements (from the perspective of the victim i.e., the accurate recollection of relevant information), sometimes the use of *inappropriate* questions, such as *closed* questions, were in fact easier to answer or act as a cue to elicit sensitive/embarrassing details.

Patterson (2012) highlighted the importance of an officer's role during an investigation and suggested that its quality could be influenced by how the officer conducts themselves. The themes that emerged from the empirical study conducted in chapter five supports the view that the interview process is a complex interaction that needs to be managed carefully. It is essential that those officers who are expected to interview rape/sexual assault victims, as part of their duties, are aware of how difficult it could potentially be for the victim. As a minimum the best-practice/training guidelines should ensure that those interviewers are aware of the magnitude of making a disclosure and how the interview process can be one that involves a series of complex cognitive processes (i.e., secondary revictimisation). Factors identified as being integral to easing the interview process, from the perspective of the victim, involve: (i) ensuring that the process is transparent and inclusive; (ii) the use of a 'humane' (empathic) style of interviewing that is present throughout the interview process, and; (iii) the need for interviewers to acknowledge that rape/sexual assault investigations require a different approach that must be genuine, if not, this is apparent and could be detrimental to the relationship they build with the victim. The time may have come for the best-practice/training guidelines to be reviewed so as to ensure that they are current, relevant and acknowledge the ever-growing issues associated with rape/sexual assaults. It is hoped that the present study will act as a catalyst for further exploration of how interviews of this nature could be improved, both from the perspective of the police and the victim.

Thesis Conclusions

It is apparent from the present thesis that further exploration is required into evaluating the efficacy of investigative interviews with sexual offence victims. To ascertain a well-balanced and rounded understanding of the investigative interviewing of sexual offence victims the researcher sought to do this from three different perspectives. Firstly, by getting the perspective of those officers conducting such interviews. Gender differences were found amongst those officers with regards to how rape myths might influence the interviewing process, and officers with differing beliefs regarding their prevalence also perceive and report using the recommended interview techniques rather differently. The sampled officers did reportedly use and perceive rapport-based techniques to be more effective than empathy-

based techniques, however that gap is not as expansive as first thought. Secondly, the researcher examined a sample of ABE video-recorded interviews to analyse first-hand what interview practices are in fact used. Interviewers ask significantly more *appropriate* questions and those questions were found to elicit larger amounts of IRI when compared with *inappropriate* questions. Interestingly, *empathic* interviews did not contain more *appropriate* questions than *inappropriate* questions and, surprisingly, the use of an *empathic* interviewing style actually resulted in significantly more *inappropriate* questions being asked. Furthermore, the type and amount of IRI obtained during the investigative interview did not influence the outcome of the investigation. The final piece to the jigsaw involved interviewing rape/sexual assault victims about their experiences of the interview process. It transpired that the participating victims are not entirely sure as to what they should expect before, during and after the interview process. This resulted into them experiencing feelings of isolation. The victim's experience of the interview is one that involved a series of complex cognitive processes. This is prevalent before the interview, throughout and once the interview concludes. The interview requires a high level of cognitive functioning from the victim and this is something that can be problematic. Lastly, victims are very aware of what components are required to ease the process and are very comfortable articulating this. A humane approach is valued in addition to the officer being present throughout and demonstrating a genuine concern for the victim.

Appendices

Appendix A – List of the articles included within the SSA

Appendix B – SSA predictor categories

Appendix C – SSA outcome categories

Appendix D – Interviewing officer questionnaire (for chapter three)

Appendix E – Teesside University ethics approval for research relating to chapter three

Appendix F – Newcastle University ethics approval for research relating to chapter three

Appendix G – Interviewing officer questionnaire consent form (for chapter three)

Appendix H – Interviewing officer questionnaire debrief sheet (for chapter three)

Appendix I – Newcastle University ethics approval for research relating to chapter four

Appendix J – Data processing agreement with Cleveland Police for research relating to chapter four

Appendix K – Coding framework for the analysis of ABE interviews (for chapter four)

Appendix L – Coding framework guidance for the analysis of ABE interviews (for chapter four)

Appendix M – Newcastle University ethics approval for research relating to chapter five

Appendix N – Victim interview information sheet (for chapter five)

Appendix O – Victim interview consent form (for chapter five)

Appendix P – Victim interview debrief sheet (for chapter five)

Appendix Q – Victim Interview Schedule (for chapter five)

Appendix A:
List of the articles included within the SSA

[1]Ahrens, C. E. (2006). Being silenced: The impact of negative social reactions on the disclosure of rape. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 38,* 263-274.

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[18]Patterson, D. (2012). The impact of detectives' manner of questioning on rape victims' disclosure. *Violence Against Women, 17 (11),* 1349-1373.
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Appendix B:
Interviewing officer questionnaire

Newcastle University

Participant Number:

Participant Questionnaire

Study 1

Section One – About You

1. Age: ___________ (in years)

2. Gender: Male/Female* *Please circle appropriate response

3. a. Which police force/constabulary are you employed by?

   ____

   b. Which country is this force/constabulary based in?

   ____

4. Length of service: Years: ______ Months: _____

5. Rank: ________________

6. a. Current police duties: ________________________________

   ____

   b. Is this a specialist role? Yes/No

Section Two – Interviewing Experience

The following questions relate to interview experience. Please answer all questions as accurately as you can.

7a. Other than your probationary training have you attended any other investigative interviewing training courses?

Yes/No* *Please circle appropriate response

b. If 'yes', please state which courses you have attended including brief details of content and duration.

____
____
____
____
____
____
____

8. Do you interview sexual offence victims as part of your current duties?
(For the purpose of this questionnaire, sexual offence victims refers to female or male adults who have been the victim of rape).

Yes/No* *Please circle appropriate response

9. On average, how many sexual offence victim interviews do you conduct during a 12 month period?

□	□	□	□	□
0	1-5	6-10	11-15	More than 15

Section Three – Interview Technique

The following questions relate to the interview technique/s you choose to implement when interviewing a victim of a sexual offence. Using the scale provided after each question, place a tick/mark in the appropriate box, which best describes your response to each question. If you make a mistake, simply place a cross through the error and mark correctly.

10a. During an interview with a victim, do you try to build a rapport to put them at ease?

(Rapport involves developing a relationship with the victim through discussing matters not directly linked with the matter at hand).

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
never	rarely	usually	almost always	always

b. When you do try and build rapport, do you find this an effective way of putting a victim at ease?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
not at all effective	not very effective	quite effective	very effective	always effective

c. If you do not build a rapport, please explain the particular method that you use to help put the victim at ease.

____

____

____

____

____

____

____

____

11. Do you fully explain the interview process (e.g., a plan of how the interview will unfold and what can be expected)?

□	□	□	□	□
never	rarely	usually	almost always	always

12a. To begin an interview, do you ask the victim to give an uninterrupted account of what they have experienced?

□	□	□	□	□
never	rarely	usually	almost always	always

b. If you do ask for an uninterrupted account do you find this an effective way of beginning an interview?

□	□	□	□	□
not at all effective	not very effective	quite effective	very effective	always effective

c. If you do not ask the victim for an uninterrupted account, please explain the particular method that you use to begin an interview.

____

____

____

____

____

13. Can you give an example of what you might say to a victim to get them to give an account of what they have experienced.

____

____

____

____

____

____

14a. Do you instruct the victim to report absolutely everything they remember even those details that they might consider irrelevant, insignificant or upsetting?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
never	rarely	usually	almost always	always

b. If you do use this instruction how effective do you find it?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
not at all effective	not very effective	quite effective	very effective	always effective

c. If you do not instruct the victim to report absolutely everything they remember; please explain how you ask them to report all details.

____

____

____

____

____

____

15a. Do you instruct the victim not to fabricate or guess during an interview?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
never	rarely	usually	almost always	always

b. If you do use this instruction how effective do you find it?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
not at all effective	not very effective	quite effective	very effective	always effective

c. If not, please explain how you instruct the victim not to fabricate any aspects of the interview.

____

____

____

____

____

____

16a. If the victim is struggling to control their emotions during the interview, do you comfort them?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
never	rarely	usually	almost always	always

b. If so, how effective do you find it is on the interviewing process?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
not at all effective	not very effective	quite effective	very effective	always effective

c. In what way do you comfort them?

____

____

____

____

____

____

17a. Before asking a victim to recall the incident do you encourage the victim to take their time reminding them that you are there to help?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
never	rarely	usually	almost always	always

b. If you do use this instruction, how effective do you find it is on the interviewing process as a whole?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
not at all effective	not very effective	quite effective	very effective	always effective

c. Do you encourage the victim to concentrate “really hard” on the event that they are trying to remember?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
never	rarely	usually	almost always	always

d. If you do encourage a victim to reinstate the conditions that were present at the time of the incident how easy/difficult do you find this?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
very easy	fairly easy	neither	fairly difficult	very difficult

18a. When interviewing the victim do you use empathy to help ensure that the victim feels as comfortable as possible?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
never	rarely	usually	almost always	always

b. If you do use an empathic interviewing style how easy do you find it is to implement this?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
very easy	fairly easy	neither	fairly difficult	very difficult

c. If you do use this technique how effective do you find it?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
not at all effective	not very effective	quite effective	very effective	always effective

19. What is your understanding of the term "empathy"?

____

____

____

____

____

____

20a. How useful do you think the use of empathy is on the investigative interviewing of sexual offence victims?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
not at all useful	not very useful	quite useful	very useful	always useful

b. If you do use this technique what are the reasons for its inclusion?

____

____

____

____

____

____

c. How easy/difficult do you find it to distinguish the difference between "empathy" and "sympathy"?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
very easy	fairly easy	neither	fairly difficult	very difficult

d. What is your understanding of these two terms?

____

____

____

____

____

____

Section Four – Your Impressions of Interviewing Victims of Sexual Offences

The following questions relate to your own personal impressions of interviewing victims of sexual offences. Using the scale provided after each question, place a tick/mark in the appropriate box which best describes your response to each question. If you make a mistake simply place a cross through the error and mark correctly.

Before completing this section, some popular examples of rape myths are listed below.

"Women who are sexually assaulted 'ask for it' by the way they dress or act"
"Everyone knows when a woman says no, she often means yes"
"Women eventually relax and enjoy it"

21a. How prevalent do you believe "rape myths" are in today's society?

◻	◻	◻	◻	◻
not at all	rarely	average	common	very

b. Please indicate the other types of "rape myths" you are aware of?

____

____

____

____

22. Do you believe that these could have an impact on the way that an interviewing officer would conduct an interview with a sexual offence victim?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
never	rarely	usually	almost always	always

23. If so, in what way do you think this may impact on the interviewing process?

____

____

____

____

____

____

24. How easy/difficult is it to remain impartial and free from prejudice when interviewing a victim?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
very easy	fairly easy	neutral	fairly difficult	very difficult

25a. Do you believe that all victims of sexual offences are treated in the same manner as victims of a non-sexual offence?

☐	☐
Yes	No

b. Please clarify you answer:

____

____

____

____

____

26a. Overall, do you feel that the victims of sexual offences that you have interviewed believe the interview process was helpful and positive?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
never	rarely	usually	almost always	always

b. Please clarify your answer.

____

____

____

____

____

____

27. Do you feel that that the basic interview training you received during your probationary period effectively equipped you with the necessary skills to interview victims of sexual offences?

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
not at all well	not very well	quite well	very well	extremely well

28. Are there any comments you wish to make concerning your experience of investigative interviewing training and its practical application for interviewing victims of sexual offences?

____

____

____

____

____

29. Are there any aspects of the investigative interviewing training specifically concerning victims of sexual offences that could be improved?

____
____
____
____
____
____
____
____

30. Concerning your operational experience of interviewing victims of sexual offences are there any further comments you wish to make?

____
____
____
____
____
____
____

This is the end of the questionnaire. Thank you for taking the time to complete it.

Appendix C:
Teesside University ethics approval for research relating to chapter three

Dr Mark Simpson
Dean
School of Social Sciences & Law
Teesside University Middlesbrough
Tees Valley TS1 3BA UK

T: +44 (0)1642 342301
F: +44 (0)1642 342399
tees.ac.uk

13 November 2013
Gavin Oxburgh

Dear Gavin

School Research Ethics Committee

Project title: Interviewing officers' perceptions of rape myths and their impact on the interviewing process

Researcher(s) Names: William Webster

The above proposal has received ethical clearance and the project may proceed.

If the research should change or extend beyond the indicated dates, the researcher must report the nature of the proposed changes and the revised end date to the Chair/Secretary of the Research Ethics Committee.

Yours sincerely

Dr Martin Tayler
Chair
Research Ethics Committee
School of Social Sciences and Law

VAT REG NO. GB 686 4809 81

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE | Gold   INVESTORS IN PEOPLE | Bronze   POSITIVE ABOUT DISABLED PEOPLE

Appendix D:
Newcastle University ethics approval for research relating to chapter three

02/10/14
William Webster
29 Warsett Crescent,
Skelton,
SALTBURN,
Cleveland,
TS12 2AJ

Faculty of Medical Sciences
Newcastle University
The Medical School
Framlington Place
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE2 4HH United Kingdom

FACULTY OF MEDICAL SCIENCES: ETHICS COMMITTEE

Dear William,

Title: Interviewing officers' perceptions of rape myths and their impact on the interviewing process.
Application No: 00812
Start date to end date: 01/06/13 to 31/12/2014

On behalf of the Faculty of Medical Sciences Ethics Committee, I am writing to confirm that the ethical aspects of your proposal have been considered and your study has been given ethical approval.

The approval is limited to this project: **00812/2014**. If you wish for a further approval to extend this project, please submit a re-application to the FMS Ethics Committee and this will be considered.

During the course of your research project you may find it necessary to revise your protocol. Substantial changes in methodology, or changes that impact on the interface between the researcher and the participants must be considered by the FMS Ethics Committee, prior to implementation.*

At the close of your research project, please report any adverse events that have occurred and the actions that were taken to the FMS Ethics Committee.*

Best wishes,

Yours sincerely

K. Sutherland.

Kimberley Sutherland
On behalf of Faculty Ethics Committee

cc.
Professor Andy Hall, Chair of FMS Ethics Committee
Ms Lois Neal, Assistant Registrar (Research Strategy)

*Please refer to the latest guidance available on the internal Newcastle web-site.

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The University of Newcastle upon Tyne trading as Newcastle University

Appendix E:
Interviewing officer questionnaire consent form (for chapter three)

Participant Number:

Participant Consent Form

Title of Research: Interviewing officers' perceptions of rape myths and their impact on the interviewing process.

Research Team: PhD Candidate – William Webster (w.s.webster@newcastle.ac.uk)
Director of Studies – Dr Gavin Oxburgh
2nd Supervisor – Professor Vicki Bruce
3rd Supervisor – Professor Coral Dando

Description of procedure: The purpose of this study (using a questionnaire) is to determine the views of serving police officers with regards to the investigative interviewing of sexual offence victims. All information gained will be used as part of a doctoral research programme entitled, '*The impact of investigative interviewing on rape victims: Towards a more effective framework for police investigators'*.

You are under no obligation to complete the questionnaire, which will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. If you agree to take part, you will be required to sign this consent form. You should be aware that all information recorded on this form will be kept confidential and that only the research team will have access to it. Your anonymity will be maintained and we will not be asking for your name or collar number, unless you decide to provide those details. In addition, the researcher will not report any information (in written reports or otherwise) that links specific data from this questionnaire to specific individuals. Furthermore, the researcher will not divulge the identity of any participant involved in this questionnaire, or information that may give clues to the identity of specific participants or other persons.

All data collected will be kept in a locked filing cabinet for a period of at least five years after the appearance of any associated publications and only the research team will have access to this. Any aggregate data (e.g. spreadsheets) will be kept in electronic form for up to five years, after which time they will be destroyed.

Your participation is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw from this study at any time, you can do this by contacting any member of the research team (see above). You can obtain general information about the results of this research by contacting the Principle Investigator (details above), although it is departmental policy not to provide individual feedback on questionnaire performance. All data collected will be used for the purposes of research and teaching purposes.

I confirm that I have read and understood the above information relating to the study and agree to take part in the research. ☐

-----------------------------	--------------	------------------------------------
Name of Participant	Date	Signature
-----------------------------	--------------	------------------------------------
Researcher	Date	Signature

Appendix F:
Interviewing officer questionnaire debrief sheet (for chapter three)

Participant Number:

Participant Debrief Form

Title of Research: Interviewing officers' perceptions of rape myths and their impact on the interviewing process

Research Team: PhD Candidate – William Webster
Director of Studies – Dr Gavin Oxburgh
2nd Supervisor – Professor Vicki Bruce
3rd Supervisor – Professor Coral Dando

Description of procedure: Thank you very much for taking the time to participate in this study. The purpose of this research was to determine the views of serving police officers with regards to the investigative interviewing of sexual offence victims. All information gained will be used as part of a doctoral research programme entitled, *'The impact of investigative interviews on rape victims: Towards a more effective framework for police investigators.'*

The purpose of this study was to investigate interviewing officers' perceptions of conducting interviews with victims of sexual offences and survivors' of rape, paying special attention to the actual interviewing techniques used, and how effective you believe them to be. The conviction rate for this type of offence, in comparison with the number of offences reported, is low. As an officer who has interviewed survivors of rape you are uniquely placed to provide information as to how the interview process might be improved. This research specifically focuses on the use of an *'empathic interviewing style'* and whether or not this has an impact on the investigative interviewing of sexual offence survivors.

Obtaining feedback: If you would like to discuss your experience of the study with me you can do this after completion of the study, or via the supervisor's email address (provided below).

How to withdraw your data: If, having participated, you decide you would prefer to withdraw your data you can do so by contacting me at the email address below, and quoting the participant number at the top of this sheet.

If you have any further questions or concerns about your participation in this study please do not hesitate to get in touch with me at the email address below. Once again I would just like to thank you for your participation.

William Webster
w.s.webster@newcastle.ac.uk

Appendix G:
Newcastle University ethics approval for research relating to chapter four

Response ID	1441
Date submitted	20/09/2015 21:55:53
Last page	10
Start language	en
Date started	15/09/2015 17:18:38
Date last action	20/09/2015 21:55:53
Applicant Details	
Is this approval for a:	Student Project [A2]
What type of degree programme is being studied?	Postgraduate Research (e.g. PhD) [A3]
Name of Principal Researcher:	William Webster
Please enter your email address	w.s.webster@newcastle.ac.uk
Please select your school / academic unit	Institute of Neuroscience (IoN) [A29]
Please enter the module code	
Please enter your supervisors email	gavin.oxburgh@newcastle.ac.uk
Please select your supervisior's school/unit:	Institute of Neuroscience (IoN) [A29]
Project Details	
Project Title	Empathic Interviewing: Does this produce more Investigation Relevant Information when interviewing female adult rape victims?
Project Synopsis	This research will be using secondary data ONLY. The researcher will be analysing anonymised police interviews of victims of sexual offences that have already taken place and the case now closed by the police and the courts. Consequently, consent for participating in the research will be provided by the specific Police Force whereby the interview has taken place, as opposed to the actual interviewing officer or victim involved within the investigative interview. In accordance with the Data Protection Act (1988), the police are the data controllers and have the requisite authority to release anonymised data, such as this, for the purposes of training and crime prevention/reduction. Each Police Force that is approached by the researcher will be informed that their participation is entirely voluntary. All data obtained will be secured (in agreement with the Police Force) at Newcastle University and if participating Police Forces do not want any interview materials to leave their premises, then all relevant analysis will be conducted a t their premises. All interviews used will be completely anonymised and at no point will any person (police officer, victim, witnesses) be identifiable.
Project start date	01/10/2015
Project end date	31/03/2016
Is the project externally funded?	No [A3]
Does your project involve collaborators outside of the University?	Yes [Y]
Please provide a list of the collaborating organisations?	Cleveland Police
Existing Ethics, Sponsorship & Responsibility	
Has ethical approval to cover this proposal already been obtained?	No [N]
Will anyone be acting as sponsor under the NHS Research Governance Framework for	No [N]

Health and Social Care?	
Do you have a Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals (NUTH) reference?	No [N]
Will someone other than you (the prinicpal investigator) or your supervisor (for student projects) be responsible for the conduct, management and design of the research?	No [N]
Animals (I)	
Does your research involve the observation, capture or manipulation of animals or their tissues? (If you are unsure please tick YES and complete the sub-questions).	No [N]
NHS, Health & Social Care: Facilities, Staff & Patients (I)	
Will the study involve participants recruited by virtue of being NHS patients or service users, their dependents, their carers or human tissues or the use of NHS & Health/Social Care Facilities or otherwise require REC approval? (If you are unsure please tick YES and complete the sub-questions).	No [N]
Human Participants in a Non-Clinical Setting (I)	
Does the research involve human participants e.g. use of questionnaires, focus groups, observation, surveys or lab-based studies involving human participants? (If you are unsure please tick 'Yes' and complete the sub-questions)	No [N]
Data (I)	
Does the research involve the usage or transfer of Sensitive Personal Data as defined by the Data Protection Act 1998 or data governed by statute such as the Official Secrets Act 1989, commercial contract or by convention e.g. client confidentiality? (If you are unsure please tick YES and complete the sub-questions).	No [N]
Environment (I)	
Will the study cause direct or indirect damage to the environment or emissions outside permissible levels or be conducted in an Area of Special Scientific Interest or which is of cultural significance? (If you are unsure please tick YES and complete the sub-questions).	No [N]
International Projects (I)	
Will the research be conducted outside of the European Economic Area (EEA) or will it involve international collaborators outside the EEA?	No [N]
Summary and Submission	
Principal Investigator name: William Webster	
Project Title: Empathic Interviewing: Does this produce more Investigation Relevant Information when interviewing female adult rape victims?	
No high risk areas have been flagged by your proposal.	
Your project has been identified as low risk and requires no further University ethical review before progressing. Once you have submitted the survey please print your answers and save a copy for your records. Declaration I certify that	
Your project has been identified as low risk and requires no further University ethical review before progressing. Once you have submitted the survey please print your answers and save a copy for your records. Declaration I certify that [the information contained within this application is accurate.]	Yes [Y]
Your project has been identified as low risk and requires no further University ethical review before progressing. Once you have submitted the survey please print your answers and save a copy for your records. Declaration I certify that [the research will be undertaken in line with all appropriate, University, legal and local standards and regulations.]	Yes [Y]
Your project has been identified as low risk and requires no further University ethical review before progressing. Once you have submitted the survey please print your answers and save a copy for your records. Declaration I certify that [I have attempted to identify the risks that may arise in conducting this research and acknowledge my obligation to (and rights of) any participants.]	Yes [Y]
Your project has been identified as low risk and requires no further University ethical review before progressing. Once you have submitted the survey please print your answers and save a copy for your records. Declaration I certify that [no work will begin until all appropriate permissions are in place.]	Yes [Y]

Appendix H:
Data processing agreement with Cleveland Police for research relating to chapter four

DATA PROCESSING AGREEMENT

THIS AGREEMENT is made the 1st day of July 2016.

BETWEEN

The Parties

The Chief Constable of Cleveland Police (herein after called the "Data Controller") of Cleveland Police Headquarters, Ladgate Lane, Middlesbrough.

William Webster BSc (Hons), MSc, MBPsS, (herein after called the "Data Processor"), of the Institute of Neuroscience/ School of Psychology, Ridley Building 1, Queen Victoria Rd, Newcastle University, Newcastle Upon Tyne NE1 7RU.

Dr Gavin Oxburgh (Director of Studies) *PhD, (*herein after called the "Project Manager"), Consultant Forensic Psychologist, of the School of Psychology, Ridley Building 1, Queen Victoria Rd, Newcastle University, Newcastle Upon Tyne NE1 7RU.

Purpose

The purpose of the disclosure is to:

1) Facilitate a study by Newcastle University Institute of Neuroscience/ School of Psychology to analyse the interviewing style and technique of officers when interviewing female adult rape victims and the effect this has on the overall interview process.

As described in the research proposal attached at **Appendix A** ("the Purpose").

This Agreement sets out the terms and conditions under which Data held by the Data Controller will be disclosed to the Data Processor. This Agreement is entered into with the purpose of ensuring compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 ("the Act"). Any processing of data must comply with the provisions of this Act.

The Purpose is consistent with the original purpose of the Data collection.

For and on behalf of the Chief Constable of Cleveland Police (Data Controller)

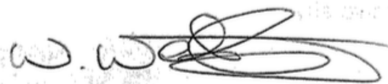
Signature:

Date: 1/7/2016

Name: **Mark Dimelow**

Job Title: **Detective Inspector 1405, Major Crime, Crime & Justice Command**

For and on behalf of the Data Processor

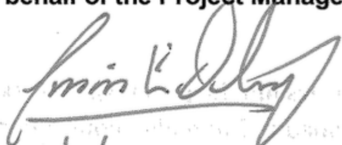
Signature: 

Date: 01/07/16

Name: **William Webster**

Job Title: **PhD Researcher, Instute of Neuroscience/ School of Psychology, Newcastle University**

For and on behalf of the Project Manager

Signature: 

Date: 3/8/16

Name: **Dr Gavin Oxburgh**

Job Title: **Director of Studies, Newcastle University**

Appendix I:
Coding framework for the analysis of ABE interviews (for chapter four)

IRIS.

Analysis of investigative interviews of rape victims

Data Coding Framework

Section 1 – Details of interview

1.1. Date of interview:…………………………………………………………………

1.2. Location of interview:……………………………………………………………

1.2.1. Interview force/constabulary:………………………………………

1.3. Length of interview: ……………… minutes

1.3.1. Any other interviews carried out with this victim? **Yes/No/Unsure**

1.3.2. If 'yes', how many (with dates)?..

1.4. Number of interview tapes/DVDs (for current interview):………………………….

1.5. Number of breaks taken during interview: …………………………………………

1.5.1 Reason for breaks:……………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………

1.6. Interview outcome:

1.6.1. Victim was co-operative throughout **Yes/No**

………………………...

1.6.2. Victim was reluctant to disclose details **Yes/No**

………………………...

1.6.3. Victim was uncooperative throughout and provided little information **Yes/No**

………………………...

1.6.4. Victim was uncooperative throughout but gave full disclosure **Yes/No**

………………………...

1.7. Investigation outcome:

No detection | Victim retracted | Offender Charged
☐ ☐ ☐

Notes:……………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………

Section 2 – Interviewer (ER) and other person(s) present details

2.1. Number of interviewers present:…………………………………………………..

2.2. Interviewer 1: **Male/Female** Interviewer 2: **Male/Female**

2.3. Interviewer 1 SOIT trained: **Yes/No** Interviewer 2 SOIT trained: **Yes/No**

2.4. Other persons present:

Appropriate Adult | Registered Intermediary | Other (state)
☐ ☐ ☐

Other: ……………………………………………………………………………..

Section 3 - Interviewee (EE) details

3.1. Gender: **Male/Female**

3.2. Age: **18-24** **25-30** **31-34** **35-40** **over 40**

3.3. Details of allegation being interviewed for: ……………………………………….

3.4. Has EE previously been subject to a similar investigation: **Yes/No/Unsure**

3.5. Are there other victims involved in the case concerning the suspect: **Yes/No**

3.5.1. If 'yes', how many others?:……………………………………………

3.6. Are there multiple suspects involved in the case?: **Yes/No/Unsure**

3.6.1. If 'yes' how many others: …………………..

Section 4 – Engage and Explain (PEACE)

4.1. Did the main interviewer provide the following?

Date	Yes/No
Time	Yes/No
Location	Yes/No

4.2. Did the main interviewer introduce themselves and explain their role:

Name	Yes/No
Rank	Yes/No
Police force/constabulary	Yes/No
Name of unit	Yes/No
Roles of interviewer/s	Yes/No

4.3. Identification of all other person's present and their role:

Yes/No/Partially

Notes:…………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

Overall quality score for section 4

Very Poor (0)	Poor (1 – 3)	Fair (4 – 5)	Good (6 – 8)	Very Good (9)

Section 5 – Account, clarify and challenge (PEACE)

5.1. Did the interviewer ask for first account? **Yes/No**

…………………………………………………………………………………………

5.1.1. If 'yes', was an open question used to elicit this? **Yes/No**

5.1.1.a What question was used?...

…………………………………………………………………………

5.2. Was EE encouraged to provide their first account? **Yes/No**

…………………………………………………………………………………………

5.2.1. Was EE asked to add anything further? **Yes/No**

……………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………

5.3. Did the ER/s provide regular summaries of what the victim had said throughout the interview? **Yes/No**

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

5.3.1. If ‘yes’, were the initial words and phrases used by the victim recounted by the interviewer when giving a summary? **Yes/No**

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

5.4. Did the interviewer/s ask the victim to clarify any aspects of their account that may have been misunderstood? **Yes/No**

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

5.4.1. If ‘yes’, was the request for clarification presented in the context of enquiry as opposed to suspicion? **Yes/No**

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

5.5. Did the interviewer ask the victim to confirm their understanding of what may have been said to them at various points throughout the interview? **Yes/No/Partial**

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

5.5.1. If ‘yes’, did the interviewer ask the victim to convey back to them their understanding of what had been said? **Yes/No**

……………………………………………………………………………………………

Overall quality score for section 5

Very Poor (0)	Poor (1 – 4)	Fair (5 – 6)	Good (7 – 9)	Very Good (10)

Section 6 – Interviewer behaviours and interactions

Rapport Building

Rapport Maintenance:										
6.1. Number of incidents of active listening (AL) by interviewer										
6.2. Number of incidents of reflective listening (RL) by interviewer										
6.3. Number of incidents of personification (PI) by interviewer										
6.4. Number of incidents of good initial contact (GIC) by interviewer										
Timing of incidents:										
Interaction	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time
AL										
RL										
PI										
GIC										

Notes:…………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

Communication accommodation by interviewer:									
6.5. Number of incidents where the interviewer demonstrates communication accommodation									
Timing of incidents:									
Interaction	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time
CAT									

6.5.1. Notable circumstances relating to why CAT was exercised? **Yes/No**

Notes:…………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

Overall score for section 6

Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very good
1	2	3	4	5

Details on how this section was scored:

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

Section 7 – Use of empathy

7.1. Total instances of empathic ‘opportunities’ (EO) by ER’s:…………………

Notes:………………………………………………………………………………………

7.1.1. How many were ‘continued’ (EOC)?...

Notes:……………………………………………………………………………..

……………………………………………………………………………………..

7.1.2. How many *continuers* related to ‘comfort’ (CC)?.........................

Notes:……………………………………………………………………………..

……………………………………………………………………………………..

7.1.3. How many *continuers* related to ‘understanding’ (CU)?................

Notes:……………………………………………………………………………..

……………………………………………………………………………………..

7.1.4. How many *continuers* were ‘terminated’ (EOT)?..........................

Notes:……………………………………………………………………………..

……………………………………………………………………………………..

7.2. Total instances of ‘spontaneous’ empathy (SE) by ER’s….. ………………

Notes:………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

7.2.1. How many related to 'comfort' (SC)?..

Notes:……………………………………………………………………………..

……………………………………………………………………………………..

7.2.2. How many related to 'understanding' (SU)?..................................

Notes:……………………………………………………………………………..

……………………………………………………………………………………..

7.3. Total instances of 'non-verbal' empathy (NVE):……………………………..

Details of the NVE behaviour:	Time

Notes:……………………………………………………………………………..

……………………………………………………………………………………..

……………………………………………………………………………………..

……………………………………………………………………………………..

……………………………………………………………………………………..

Overall quality score for section 7

Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very good
1	2	3	4	5

Details on how this section was scored:

………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………

Section 8 – Question types

8.1. Total number of appropriate questions asked:……………………………….

8.1.1. Open-ended 'depth' (TED):………..........

8.1.2. Open-ended 'breadth' (TED):……………….

8.1.3. Probing (5WH):……...……………..............

8.1.4. Encouragers/acknowledgements:..……………...

Notes:……………………………………………………………………..

……………………………………………………………………………..

8.2. Total number of inappropriate questions asked:……………………………..

8.2.1. Echo statements:………………………..

8.2.2. Closed:…………………………………..

8.2.3. Forced choice:…………………………..

8.2.4. Multiple:…………………………………

8.2.5. Leading:………………………………….

8.2.6. Opinion/statement:……………………..

Notes:……………………………………………………………………..

……………………………………………………………………………..

Overall quality score for section 8

Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very good
1	2	3	4	5

Details on how this section was scored:

……………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………

Section 9 – Investigation relevant information (IRI) obtained

	Person	Action	Location	Item	Temporal	Totals
Open-ended						
Probing						
Encouragers/Ack.						
Echo						
Closed						
Forced Choice						
Multiple						
Leading						
Opinion/statement						
Totals						

Overall quality score for section 9

Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very good
1	2	3	4	5

Details on how this section was scored:

…………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

Section 10 – Closure (PEACE)

10.1 Summary of events and future processes/agenda:

Overall summary of interview provided	Yes/No
Explanation of future processes/agenda	Yes/No
Encourages EE to add anything further to the interview	Yes/No
Encourages EE to ask any questions	Yes/No
EE is thanked for their time at the end of the interview	Yes/No

Notes:……………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

10.2. Managing the ABE recording:

Records date and time of interview finishing	Yes/No
Provides reminder of the purpose of the ABE i.e. to be played in court	Yes/No

Overall quality score for section 10

Very Poor (0)	Poor (1 – 2)	Fair (3 – 4)	Good (5 – 6)	Very good (7)

Overall quality rating score

Very Poor (0 – 4)	Poor (5 – 17)	Fair (18 – 27)	Good (28 – 39)	Very good (40 – 48)

NOTES

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Appendix J:
Coding framework guidance for the analysis of ABE interviews (for chapter four)

Analysis of investigative interviews for victims of sexual offences

Data Coding Framework Guidance

Introduction

This guidance is to provide assistance and interpretation for researchers engaged in coding data for study 3. It is to be used in conjunction with the Coding Framework. It provides reference sources and interpretation assistance for each proposed data point from the data content. The data will be in the form of video records of real-life victim interviews for sexual offences. The parameters for inclusion within the data set are as follows; the sexual offence alleged within the investigation will be rape and the victim (interviewee) will be over the age of 18 years at the time of interview.

The aim of the coding in the study is to identify the presence or absence of factors identified as contributing to achieving an effective investigative interview. The sections used follow specific guidance as set out in the Achieving Best Evidence in Criminal Proceedings (ABE; Guidance on interviewing victims and witnesses, and guidance on using special measures). Each section will have a brief overview and each coded element explained in detail. There is a notes section at the end to record any observations or expand on a coding decision.

Warning: The following is provided for anyone engaged in coding for inter-rater reliability purposes. These interviews may contain graphic and distressing descriptions of sexual offences. If you may be affected by the content of any interview, please speak to the lead researcher or supervisor before commencing any coding.

Section 1 - Details of interview

Sections **1.1** to **1.7** form the overview of the interview record to be coded and provide context to the later sections. It will not form part of the overall scoring matrix

1.1 *Date of interview* – This should be stated at the beginning of each interview.

1.2 *Location of interview* – This should be stated at the beginning of each interview.

> **1.2.1** Interview *force/constabulary* – The force where the interviewing officer works i.e. Cleveland Police.

1.3 *Length of interview* – The total interview duration in minutes (round down if <30 secs and round up if >30 secs) to complete the interview with the victim regarding the offence being investigated. The total interview time should be considered as the interview with the particular victim regarding the original allegation to completion. If there is indication that the victim is to be interviewed regarding unrelated matters or additional offences, then this should be recorded in the notes section and coding finished at termination of questioning regarding the allegation concerned with the rape.

1.3.1 *Any other interviews carried out with this victim* – If during the interview, either the interviewing officer or the victim elude to other occasions when they have been interviewed about the current allegation, please make a numerical note of these: **Y**es/**N**o/**U**nsure

1.3.2 *If 'yes', how many (with dates)* - If during the interview, either the interviewing officer or the victim elude to other occasions when they have been interviewed about the current allegation, please make a note of any dates mentioned.

1.4 *Number of interview tapes/DVDs (for current interview)* – If more than one recording needs to be viewed, please state how many.

1.5 *Number of breaks taken during interview* – This total should include short breaks taken within a single interviewing session and breaks as a result of multiple interview sessions within one period.

1.5.1 *Reason for breaks* – If justification is given for the use of a break, by the interviewing officer during the interview please state why.

1.6 *Interview outcome* – This is an assessment made by the researcher based on the overall level of interaction from the victim throughout the interview.

1.6.1 *Victim was co-operative throughout* – This is illustrated by a victim who engages throughout the interview and assists with the investigation. They respond positively to the interviewer and answer the question(s) asked.

1.6.2 *Victim was reluctant to disclose details* – This is illustrated by a victim who is not fully cooperative throughout the interview. The interviewer may have to repeatedly ask the same question(s) in order to elicit relevant information.

1.6.3 *Victim was uncooperative throughout and provided little information* – This is illustrated by a victim who does not cooperate or engage during the interview. The interviewer is not provided with relevant information despite their best attempts.

1.6.4 *Victim was uncooperative throughout but gave full disclosure* – This is illustrated by a victim who does not cooperate or engage during the interview. However, the interviewer is provided with relevant information based on the initial question(s) asked by the interviewer.

1.7 *Investigation outcome* – It should be remembered that in an assessment of the victims responses the researcher has no access to ground truth. The selection of the investigation outcome will be based on the information that will have been provided to the researcher by Cleveland Police on a detailed spreadsheet before analysing any of the DVD recordings.

If anything of note comes to the attention of the researcher when analysing the DVD recording this should be recorded in the space provided.

Section 2 – Interviewer (ER) and other person(s) present details

2.1 *Number of interviewers present* – This is the number of interviewers present in the interview room during the interview.

2.2 *Interviewer gender* – Please stipulate the gender of all those interviewing officers present during the interview. This will be relevant to determine whether gender has any significance in the differences noted for the type or frequency of empathic behaviours that are identified. Gender differences in empathic behaviours have been noted in previous research (Baron-Cohen & Wheelwright, 2004; Dando & Oxburgh, 2016).

2.3 *Interviewer SOIT (Sexual Offences Investigative Technique) trained* – This information will be provided to the researcher on a detailed spreadsheet before analysing any DVD recordings, it specifically states what level of training the interviewing officer/s involved in the case have received. Do those interviewing officers who are SOIT trained obtain a larger amount of IRI? Do SOIT trained interviewing officers achieve a better investigation outcome (i.e. the offender being charged).

2.4 *Other persons present*:

Appropriate Adult – The presence of this individual is relevant as it may be a strong indication of mental disorder given that all victims in the sample data will be over 18 years old.

Registered Intermediary – The presence of this individual is relevant as an indication of communication issues and may be an indication of a mental disorder ("mental disorder" means any disorder or disability of the mind, MHA 2007). An intermediary may be present for other reasons such as a learning disorder or communication issue so this needs to be determined from police records.

Other – For mention only (i.e. interpreter, social worker etc.). If the purpose of their presence is explained within the interview this should be recorded in the notes section of the coding document.

Section 3 – Interviewee (EE) details

3.1 *Interviewee gender* – Please stipulate the gender of the interviewee.

3.2 *Interviewee age* – Please indicate using the age categories provided. With regards to the perceived credibility of the victim and how their age may impact on this, the findings vary. Spohn and Tellis (2014) found that cases involving younger victims were more believable, whereas other studies suggested that practitioners were more likely to believe older victims (Page, 2008; Spears & Spohn, 1997). This could also be relevant in determining whether the age of the victim has any significance in the differences noted for the type or frequency of empathic behaviours being identified. To date there is no published research that has specifically investigated how the age of the victim may impact on the empathic behaviours that are demonstrated by the interviewing officer.

3.3 *Details of allegation being interviewer for* – If otherwise stated please note. However, this should be rape, as this was a requirement for the case to be included in the sample.

3.4 *Has EE previously been subject to a similar investigation* – This should be signified using one of the options: **Y**es/**N**o/**U**nknown.

3.5 *Are there other victims involved in the case concerning the suspect* – This information will be provided to the researcher on a detailed spreadsheet before analysing any DVD recordings, it specifically states whether or not the case is involved in a series of offences. This should be signified using one of the options: **Y**es/**N**o.

> **3.5.1** *If 'yes', how many others* – This should be signified either by using a numerical value or simply recording that it was not stated.

3.6 *Are there multiple suspects involved in the case* – This should be signified using one of the options: **Y**es/**N**o/**U**nknown.

> **1.6.1** *If 'yes' how many others* – This should be signified either by using a numerical value or simply recording that it was not stated.

Section 4 – Engage and Explain (PEACE)

This section is largely regulated by the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984, Codes of Practice, Code C (Detention, treatment and questioning), Code E (Audio interviews) and Code F (Visual interviews). These codes provide statutory guidance to police on the procedures to be observed when enacting their powers. Failure to comply can lead to evidence (i.e. recorded investigative interviews) being ruled inadmissible. An effective interview therefore should comply with these codes. This section will form part of the overall interview score. Be mindful during this phase of other behaviours from the interviewer such as rapport building, empathy (sec 5), and communication accommodation (sec 4). This is an opportunity for the interviewer to develop an operational accord with the interviewee setting out the tasks and goals of the interview to develop a shared expectation (Abbe & Brandon, 2013).

4.1 *Did the main interviewer provide the following* – It should be clearly stated at or near the beginning of the DVD recording where (e.g. ABE suite at Teesside Sexual Assault Referral Centre) and when (Monday, 1st February 2016 and time is 10:15) the interview is taking place.

> *Date* - **Y**es/**N**o
> *Time* - **Y**es/**N**o
> *Location* - **Y**es/**N**o

4.2 *Did the main interviewer introduce themselves and explain their role* – The interviewer should identify their name, rank and the unit to which they are attached. The role of the interviewer is to seek to obtain an account from the victim regarding the allegation that they have made that is accurate and reliable. It is also to make the victim aware of the nature of the evidence obtained within the investigation and to seek to obtain an explanation by questioning the victim to address any

inconsistencies that may exist between the information already obtained within the investigation and the victims account. A brief explanation of this role would suffice.

Name - **Y**es/**N**o
Rank - **Y**es/**N**o
Police force/constabulary - **Y**es/**N**o
Name of unit - **Y**es/**N**o
Roles of interviewer/s - **Y**es/**N**o

4.3 *Identification of all other person's present and their role* – This should include all other individuals present in the interview room. The second interviewer, if one is present. Anecdotally, it is considered good practice for other persons to introduce themselves and their role. This will also aid later voice recognition on audio recordings. The interviewer should not just assume, rather instead check, the understanding of the victim regarding those other people who are present and their respective roles. This should be signified using one of the following options: **Y**es/**N**o/**P**artially.

Overall score for Section 4
The section above is divided into 9 separate Yes/No binary options. The total yes options should be counted and the score entered in the corresponding scoring box.

Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good
0	1 – 3	4 – 5	6 – 8	9

Section 5 – Account, clarify and challenge (PEACE)

This section is grounded in the research finding that the most accurate memory recall will be obtained through initiating a free recall by means of an appropriate open question (Fisher, Geiselman & Raymond, 1987; Griffiths & Milne, 2006; Oxburgh, Myklebust & Grant, 2010). A cooperative victim interview should provide the victim with the best opportunity to provide an untainted account using questioning that supports accurate memory recall and minimises misinformation and suggestibility factors.

5.1 *Did the interviewer ask for a first account* – This will usually be initiated by the interviewer inviting the victim to 'Tell them what happened…' It is during this uninterrupted phase of recall that the victim will communicate their version of events in relation to the allegation they have made. This should be signified using one of the following options: **Y**es/**N**o.

5.1.1 *If 'yes', was an open question used to elicit this* – **Y**es/**N**o

5.1.1a *If 'no', what question was used* – Indicate the question that was used by the main interviewer to initiate the first account.

5.2 *Was EE encouraged to provide their first account* – Did the main interviewer use non-specific prompts to help encourage the victim when they were giving their first account, especially if they were struggling i.e. can you put it another way to help me understand better?, is there more that you can tell me? This should be signified using one of the following options: **Y**es/**N**o.

5.2.1 *Was EE asked to add anything further* – This should be signified using one of the following options: **Y**es/**N**o.

5.3. *Did the ER/s provide regular summaries of what the victim had said throughout the interview* – Interviewers should only summarise what the victim has said. This can help to ensure that the interviewer understands what is being disclosed and if not, provides the victim with an opportunity to correct them if their understanding of any details is incorrect. This should be signified using one of the following options: **Y**es/**N**o.

5.3.1. *If 'yes', were the initial words and phrases used by the victim recounted by the interviewer when giving a summary* – Where a summary is appropriate, the words and phrases used by the victim should be used as far as possible. This should be signified using one of the following options: **Y**es/**N**o.

5.4. *Did the interviewer/s ask the victim to clarify any aspects of their account that may have been misunderstood* – Victims can on occasion provide misleading accounts of events; these are often the result of misunderstandings or misremembering rather than deliberate fabrication. The most common cause of such misunderstandings is the interviewer failing to ask appropriate questions or reaching a premature conclusion that the interviewer then presses the victim to confirm. This should be signified using one of the following options: **Y**es/**N**o.

5.4.1. *If 'yes', was the request for clarification presented in the context of enquiry as opposed to suspicion* – Rather than questioning the victim with suspicion, almost in an accusatory nature, the questioning should be done as though the interviewer has not fully understood and is simply asking the victim to clarify specific details. This should be signified using one of the following options: **Y**es/**N**o.

5.5. *Did the interviewer ask the victim to confirm their understanding of what may have been said to them at various points throughout the interview* – This is to ensure the victims understanding of matters, interviewers should be aware of automatic positive responses. For this reason, they should ensure that the victim is fully aware of what is being discussed and that the victim is not simply attempting to answer questions by guessing as to what was meant. This should be signified using one of the following options: **Y**es/**N**o.

5.5.1. *If 'yes', did the interviewer ask the victim to convey back to them their understanding of what had been said* – This should be signified using one of the following options: **Y**es/**N**o.

Overall Score for Section 5

The section above has within it 10 separate yes/no binary options. The total yes options to be scored and then placed in the box.

Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good
0	1 – 4	5 – 6	7 – 9	10

Section 6 – Interviewer behaviours and interactions

Rapport building:
This section looks at the specific evidence of core skills such as rapport building behaviours and pro-social interaction associated with higher responsiveness and co-operation from the interviewee (Bull & Soukara, 2010). These skills are in support of the task of obtaining information from the interviewee, in this instance the victim (Abbe & Brandon, 2013). The development of rapport has previously been considered to be of particular importance, notably when conducting interviews with psychologically vulnerable interviewees and those suspects involved in sexual offence investigations (Gudjonsson, 2006; Gudjonsson, 2003; Kebbell, Hurren & Mazerolle, 2006).

The sections **6.1** to **6.4** identify behaviours associated with building and maintaining rapport (Kebbell et al, 2006; Oxburgh & Ost, 2001; Vanderhallen & Vervaeke, 2014).

6.1 *Number of incidents of active listening (AL) by interviewer* – This includes non-verbal communication, such as head nodding, in addition to the use of back channel responding to indicate interest and engagement by use of utterances, such as 'hum', 'ok' 'yes' and 'I see' all of which are evidence of active listening if used to encourage continuance by the interviewee (Abbe & Brandon, 2014). Other examples could be the use of echo probing by the use of minimal key words from the narrative given by the victim to encourage continuance, e.g. Victim "I stopped by the door as it was opened…" Interviewer: "the door was opened…"

6.2 *Number of incidents of reflective listening (RL) by interviewer* – The ability to accurately reflect something the interviewee has said to encourage further discussion or clarification (Alison, Alison, Noone, Elntib & Christiansen, 2013). This is evidenced by the use of accurate reflections indicating the interviewer is engaged and listening to the answer the interviewee has provided, e.g. interviewer: "You stopped to get some money at the cashpoint before you went to the pub, have I got that right?" A reflection would contain 2 or fewer points of information, 3 or more would be a summary.

6.3 *Number of incidents of personalisation (PI) by interviewer* – This will be evidenced by the interviewer sharing some personal information with the victim e.g. interviewer: "My friend went to the same University" etc. The exchange of some personal information can create a similarity-based liking and it was noted that 87% of interviewers reported that the rapport-development technique of liking was important (Goodman-Delahunty & Howes, 2014). The examples provided included finding a similarity or common ground, informality and the use of humour.
However, it is worth noting that this could be seen as a difficult and potentially inappropriate task, especially due to the sensitive nature of the interviews being conducted and the personal details being discussed.

6.4 *Number of incidents of good initial contact (GIC) by interviewer* – This is evidenced by how the interviewer uses the formal engage and explain phase to interact with the victim. Use of name, checking understanding and comfort e.g. "Claire, thank you for confirming your understanding of why we are here today, don't worry if there is something that you don't understand I'll try to explain everything as best as I can. Please let me know if you want to have a break at any time…"

It is understood that there are limitations in relying on the DVD recording, as there may have been a period of contact with the interviewer prior to the ABE interview commencing. However, the maintenance of rapport is just as important and ‘initial’ should be taken as referring to within the environment of the interview.

For each item a total numerical value will be noted. The timing of each rapport building behaviour/interaction will be recorded, the maintenance of rapport is more relevant to interview outcome than initial rapport building (Walsh & Bull, 2012). The timing of incidents will also be of use to the researchers, as and when they refer back to specific incidents i.e. referring to a particular interaction at a later point of the analysis.

Timing should be from the initiation of the specific behaviour taken from the electronic timing marker.

6.5 *Number of incidents where the interviewer demonstrates communication Accommodation* – This is evidence of particular importance when dealing with those victims who are particularly vulnerable (as most rape victims are). Communication Accommodation Theory (Gallois, Ogay & Giles, 2005; Myers, Giles, Reid & Nabi, 2008) indicates flexibility and accommodation in interactions on the part of the interviewer to promote convergence and are likely to lead to more trust and impressions of competence. It would include ensuring that the victim has understood the question posed e.g. interviewer: “I’m sorry, my fault, I did not ask that question in a clear way. Where did you first meet Billy?” It would include examples of the interviewer adopting words or phrases used by the victim in framing questions.

Timing should be from the initiation of the interaction taken from the electronic timing marker.

> **6.5.1** *Notable circumstances relation to why CAT was exercised* – Were there any specific questions or details disclosed that could be linked to the use of CAT by the interviewer. This should be signified using one of the following options: **Y**es/**N**o.
>
> Additional space has been provided to elaborate on such incidents.

Overall Score for Section 6

The scoring for this section will be a score based on the total number of incidents recorded for each interaction/behaviour that was noted and then considered holistically against the length of the interview, providing a score ranging from 1 (very poor) to 5 (very good). Additional comments can also provided underneath in relation to how the section was scored.

A small proportion of the total sample will be analysed by other coders to ensure that the analysis has inter-rater reliability and that each section is rated reliably.

Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good
1	2	3	4	5

Section 7 – Use of empathy

This section describes a taxonomy of the types of empathic behaviour displayed by police officers within the investigative interview and links in with one particular theory that derives from social psychology. The Procedural Justice Theory (PJT; Lind & Tyler, 1992) relates to the notion of fairness, dignity, respect and due process in legal proceedings, all of which are applicable to the circumstances involved within the investigative interviewing of rape victims especially when attempting to observe those empathic interactions. Key components of this theory include:

- Participation (being allowed to speak) – which involves having the opportunity to present one's (victim) side of the dispute and be heard by the decision maker (interviewer);
- Dignity – which includes being treated with respect and politeness, having one's (victim) rights acknowledged by the decision maker (interviewer); and,
- Trust – that the authority (interviewer) is concerned with one's (victim) welfare.

Lind and Tyler also suggest that people want to be treated fairly by authorities, independent of the outcome of the interaction. Fair treatment by an authority, defined in terms of voice (by coming forward and disclosing the crime to the authorities), dignity and trust; directly shapes procedural justice judgements and signifies that the individual in question is a valued member of the group. Tyler and Blader (2003) argued that this, in turn, would then facilitate co-operation by strengthening a person's tie to the social order. The strengthening of the tie promotes the value of membership within the group, which then increases the level of confidence in the authorities (i.e., the interviewer), which subsequently provides encouragement to others. In other words, rape victims will want to come forward and speak about the crimes that have been committed against them. Conversely, if police officers show disrespectful behaviour, this will reduce the likelihood of citizen co-operation (Mastrofski, Snipes, & Supina, 1996; McCluskey, Mastrofski, & Parks, 1999). These findings could also be associated with those of Bull and Cherryman (1996) who found that specific qualities, similar to those antecedents that make up the PJT (e.g., voice, dignity and trust), were also present within 'skilful' police interviews.

One specific quality identified by Bull and Cherryman (1996) that was present within 'skilful' police interviews was empathy and this coding framework seeks to identify the varying types and frequency that this behaviour is demonstrated. The four empathy interaction behaviour types identified by Dando and Oxburgh (2016) are labelled:

- Empathy 1; *spontaneous comfort* (SC),
- Empathy 2; *continuer comfort* (CC),
- Empathy 3; *spontaneous understanding* (SU), and
- Empathy 4; *continuer understanding* (CU)

7.1 *Total instances of empathic 'opportunities' (EO) by ER's* – An empathic opportunity is a statement or description from which a police interviewer might infer an underlying emotion that has not been fully expressed by the interviewee (e.g. see Table 1; Oxburgh & Ost, 2011, p.184). This should be the total numerical value.

7.1.1 *How many were 'continued' (EOC)* – An empathic opportunity continuer as described above is the interviewers response to an empathic opportunity

that would serve to continue the empathic exchange (e.g. see Table 1; Oxburgh & Ost, 2011). This should be the total numerical value.

7.1.2 *How many continuers related to comfort (CC)* - Continuer comfort is described as occurring when an opportunity is provided by the interviewee and the interviewer goes beyond the formal information provided, such as, the offering of refreshments (see Table 2 for examples of empathy types). This should be the total numerical value.

7.1.3 *How many continuers related to 'understanding' (CU)* – Continuer understanding occurs in response to an empathic understanding opportunity provided by the interviewee (see Table 2 for examples of empathy types). This should be the total numerical value.

7.1.4 *How many continuers were 'terminated' (EOT)* - An empathic opportunity terminator is the interviewers response to an empathic opportunity that would serve to terminate the empathic exchange (e.g. see Table 1; Oxburgh & Ost, 2011). This should be the total numerical value.

7.2 *Total instances of 'spontaneous' empathy (SE) by ER's* – Spontaneous empathy is described as occurring when the police interviewer goes beyond the formal information provided, despite not having a preceding description or statement from the interviewee. This should be the total numerical value.

7.2.1 *How many related to 'comfort' (SC)* – Spontaneous comfort is described as occurring when without a preceding description or statement from the interviewee by which an underlying emotion might be inferred, the interviewer goes beyond the formal information provided, such as, the offering of refreshments (see Table 2 for examples of empathy types). This should be the total numerical value.

7.2.2 *How many related to 'understanding' (SU)* – Spontaneous understanding occurs when the interviewer spontaneously offers some understanding of the interviewee's situation without any preceding statement or description from the interviewee (see Table 2 for examples of empathy types). This should be the total numerical value.

7.3 *Total instances of 'non-verbal' empathy (NVE)* – Non-verbal empathic interactions will include those forms of communication that similar to a verbal exchange, serve to act as an empathic exchange i.e. the offering of a tissue or drink etc. The timing of incidents will also be of use to the researchers, as and when they refer back to specific incidents i.e. referring to a particular interaction at a later point of the analysis.

Timing should be from the initiation of the specific behaviour taken from the electronic timing marker.

Additional space has been provided to elaborate on such interactions. This should be the total numerical value.

Table 1.

Empathy type	Example
(EO) Opportunity	*Interviewee: I am finding this whole process extremely difficult to deal with…*
(EOC) Continuer	*Interviewer: That's ok, I completely understand how difficult it is, but please try and stay focussed…*
(EOT) Terminator	*Interviewer: I don't care how difficult this is for you, just answer the question…*

Table 2.

Empathy Type	Example
(SC) spontaneous comfort;	*Interviewer: If you want any more time let me know I can pause the interview and let that happen…*
(CC) continuer comfort	*Interviewee: This is really hard coz I am having trouble saying stuff* *Interviewer: Do you think you are able to carry on, or would you like to take a break…*
(SU) spontaneous understanding	*Interviewer: I appreciate how difficult this situation must be for you, but it is important that you try to remember what happened…*
(CU) continuer understanding	*Interviewee: What do you want me to say, that I am a terrible wife, what can I say?* *Interviewer: I can see that you are upset, can I help you in any way, what can I do to help?*

Overall Score for Section 7

The scoring for this section will be a score based on the total number of incidents recorded for each empathic interaction/behaviour that was noted and then considered holistically against the length of the interview, providing a score ranging from 1 (very poor) to 5 (very good). Additional comments can also provided underneath in relation to how the section was scored.

It should be noted that EOT is a negative score so if there are EOT within the interview a mark should be taken away.

A small proportion of the total sample will be analysed by other coders to ensure that the analysis has inter-rater reliability and that each section is rated reliably.

Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good
1	2	3	4	5

Section 8 – Question Types

The use of open questions in interviews has been found to yield longer, more detailed and more accurate responses than those containing closed questions and the questions asked by the interviewer may be one of the most important variables in the pursuit of information (Oxburgh, Myklebust & Grant, 2010). The use of open-ended questions is the predictor of a good investigative interview (Poole & Lamb, 1998).

8.1 *Total number of appropriate questions asked* – This should be the combined total from items 8.1.1 – 8.1.4.

8.1.1 *Open-ended 'depth' (TED)* – Can be defined as those which allow a full range of responses and are framed in such a way that the interviewee is able to give an 'open' and unrestricted answer (Milne & Bull, 1999). Be aware that it is possible to use other words i.e. 'take me through that' or 'give me some idea about that' all of which act in the same way as a 'TED' question (Shepherd, 2007). This should be the total numerical value.

8.1.2 *Open-ended 'breadth' (TED)* – This should be the total numerical value.

8.1.3 *Probing (5WH)* – Normally require a more topic-specific answer than open questions and are extremely useful when attempting to follow-up or obtain further detail from a previous question (Dickson & Hargie, 1997; Griffith & Milne, 2006). This should be the total numerical value.

8.1.4 *Encouragers/acknowledgments* – These may normally by seen via non-verbal communication, in the form of head nodding, in addition to the use of utterances to indicate acknowledgement, such as 'hum', 'ok' 'yes' and 'I see' all of which could serve to encourage the interviewee to continue with their account or signal that the interviewer is paying attention. This should be the total numerical value.

8.2 *Total number of inappropriate questions asked* – This should be the combined total from items 8.2.1 – 8.2.6.

8.2.1 *Echo statements* – Such statements can be defined as a repeat of the words used by the interviewee, which would then be echoed by the interviewer in the follow-up probe to the victim (Fiengo, 2007). This should be the total numerical value.

8.2.2 *Closed Questions* – These questions 'close down' the range of responses available to an interviewee and can be responded to (although not always) with a 'yes' or 'no' answer (Dickson & Hargie, 1997). This should be the total numerical value.

8.2.3 *Forced Choice* – These questions only offer the interviewee a limited number of possible responses, none of which may include the correct option. This should be the total numerical value.

8.2.4 *Multiple* – These questions (sometimes known as multipart questions; Kebbell, Hatton & Johnson, 2004) are those that constitute a number of sub-

questions (2 or more) asked all at once. This should be the total numerical value.

8.2.5 *Leading* – Such questions entice the interviewee to an expected or desired response and are assumption-laden. This should be the total numerical value.

8.2.6 *Opinion/statement* – Pose an opinion or involves putting a statement(s) to the interviewee, as opposed to asking a specific question (Griffiths & Milne, 2006). This should be the total numerical value.

Overall Score for Section 8
The scoring for this section will be a score for each different question type. A score based on the overall appropriate to inappropriate questions ratio will be noted and then considered holistically against the length of the interview, providing a score ranging from 1 (very poor) to 5 (very good). Additional comments can also provided underneath in relation to how the section was scored.

It should be noted that inappropriate questions are a negative score so if there are any within the interview a mark should be taken away.

A small proportion of the total sample will be analysed by other coders to ensure that the analysis has inter-rater reliability and that each section is rated reliably.

Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good
1	2	3	4	5

Section 9 – Investigation relevant information (IRI)

Case specific information
When considering the type of information that has been obtained, this will fall into one of the following five categories.

Person (The Who): Any information about people (e.g. names, age, clothing, appearance, shoes, hair, tattoos, voice, accent, injuries, profession etc.). Can refer to witnesses, suspects, self, victim, bystander, etc.

Action (The How): Any information that describes an action in some way (e.g. ‘I went to the house’, ‘I gave him a cuddle’, ‘I tried to fight him off). Could include offence related or unrelated actions.

Location (The Where): Information relating to places (e.g. address, streets, houses, descriptions of same, etc.). Could include where the offence took place, where suspect, victim or witness lives, work addresses, alibi addresses etc.

Item information (The What): Any information that describes an item used, or mentioned, by the victim. Could include weapons, drugs, alcohol, animals, furniture items etc. NOT PERSON SPECIFIC ITEMS LIKE TATTOOS.

Temporal (The When): Any information that relates to date, times, before, after, later, following etc. Not person specific age (in years- this should go into Person information).

Once the type of information that has been obtained has been classified, it will be recorded into the corresponding question type box that was used to obtain this information. The totals will then be recorded for each question type and the type of information obtained.

Overall Score for Section 9
A score based on the total amount of case specific details obtained will be noted and then considered holistically later providing a score ranging from 1 (very poor) to 5 (very good).

A small proportion of the total sample will be analysed by other coders to ensure that the analysis has inter-rater reliability and that each section is rated reliably.

Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good
1	2	3	4	5

Section 10 – Closure (PEACE)

The closure of the interview is important in order to ensure that the victim has had an opportunity to provide their full and detailed account and that any ambiguities and misunderstandings are resolved. The maintenance of rapport and a working relationship also remains important.

10.1 *Summary of events and future processes/agenda* – This allows the interviewer to review the interview and ensure that the victim has the same understanding of the interview process. It is the opportunity for the victim to add any final details that they feel may be important or relevant.

Overall summary of interview provided - **Y**es/**N**o
Explanation of future processes/agenda - **Y**es/**N**o
Encourages EE to add anything further to the interview - **Y**es/**N**o
Encourages EE to ask any questions - **Y**es/**N**o
EE is thanked for their time at the end of the interview - **Y**es/**N**o

10.2 *Managing the ABE DVD recording* – This covers the legal requirements of the PACE Codes of Practice.

Records date and time of interview finishing - **Y**es/**N**o
Provides reminder of the purpose of the ABE i.e. to be played in court - **Y**es/**N**o

Overall quality score for section 10

The section above is divided into 7 separate Yes/No binary options. The total yes options should be counted and the score entered in the corresponding scoring box.

Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good
0	**1 – 2**	**3 – 4**	**5 – 6**	**7**

Overall quality rating score

This contains the overall interview score from all scoring sections.

Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good
0 – 4	**5 – 17**	**18 – 27**	**28 – 39**	**40 – 48**

Appendix K:
Newcastle University ethics approval for research relating to chapter five

University Ethics Form Version 2.1

Date submitted
19/04/2017 16:02:03

Applicant Details

Is this approval for a:
Student Project [A2]

What type of degree programme is being studied?
Postgraduate Research (e.g. PhD) [A3]

Name of Principal Researcher:
William Webster

Please enter your email address
w.s.webster@newcastle.ac.uk

Please select your school / academic unit
Institute of Neuroscience (IoN) [A29]

Please enter the module code

Please enter your supervisors email:
gavin.oxburgh@newcastle.ac.uk

Please select your supervisor's school/unit:
School of Psychology [A23]

Project Details

Project Title
A survivor's perspective: Factors impacting on participation and cooperation with investigative interviews

Project Synopsis
As part of my PhD, this study will involve obtaining the accounts of survivors of rape. They will be requested to comment on their experiences of the police interview they underwent in relation to the reported offence. At no point will the survivor be asked to recall details relating to the actual offence itself - the research specifically focuses on their experiences of the interview (i.e. how the interviewing style of the officer influenced their decision [or not] to cooperate). Full ethical considerations will be taken into account – a list of these can be seen in the research proposal. This study involves full collaboration with the Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) Teesside who has already given approval for the research to commence (the research project has been discussed in detail with the SARC Manager at numerous meetings). This collaboration was developed on the back of work currently being conducted with Cleveland Police, who have also given their approval for other research matters in relation to my current PhD.

Project start date
24/04/2017

Project end date
31/12/2017

Is the project externally funded?
No [A3]

Does your project involve collaborators outside of the University?
Yes [Y]

Please provide a list of the collaborating organisations?
Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) Teesside Cleveland Police

Existing Ethics, Sponsorship & Responsibility

Has ethical approval to cover this proposal already been obtained?
No [N]

Will anyone be acting as sponsor under the NHS Research Governance Framework for Health and Social Care?
No [N]

Do you have a Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals (NUTH) reference?
No [N]

Will someone other than you (the principal investigator) or your supervisor (for student projects) be responsible for the conduct, management and design of the research?
No [N]

Animals (I)

The Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act defines protected animals as: 'any living vertebrate other than man…in its foetal, larval or embryonic form……from the stage of its development when— (a)in the case of a mammal, bird or reptile, half the gestation or incubation period for the relevant species has elapsed; and (b)in any other case, it becomes capable of independent feeding'. In practice 'Protected' animals are all living vertebrates (other than man), including some immature forms, and cephalopods (e.g. octopus, squid, cuttlefish). Using this definition, does your research involve the observation, capture or manipulation of animals or their tissues?
No [N]

NHS, Health & Social Care: Facilities, Staff & Patients (I)

Will the study involve participants recruited by virtue of being NHS patients or service users, their dependents, their carers or human tissues or the use of NHS & Health/Social Care Facilities or otherwise require REC approval?
No [N]

Human Participants in a Non-Clinical Setting (I)

Does the research involve human participants e.g. use of questionnaires, focus groups, observation, surveys or lab-based studies involving human participants?
Yes [Y]

Does the study involve any of the following? [a. The study involves children or other vulnerable groups; as defined in Section 59 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Act 2006 as those who are relatively or absolutely incapable of protecting their own interests, or those in unequal relationships e.g. participants who are subordinate to the researcher(s) in a context outside the research?]

Does the study involve any of the following? [b. The study requires the co-operation of a gatekeeper (defined as someone who can exert undue influence) for initial access to the groups or individuals to be recruited e.g. students at school, members of a self-help group, or residents of a nursing home? NB. The IoN & School of Psychology volunteer pools are not considered gatekeepers in this case.]

Does the study involve any of the following? [c. It is necessary for participants to take part in the study without their knowledge and consent e.g. covert observation of people in non-public places?]

Does the study involve any of the following? [d. Deliberately misleading participants in any way?]

Does the study involve any of the following? [e. Discussion of sensitive topics e.g. sexual activity or drug use?]

Does the study involve any of the following? [f. The administration of drugs, placebos or other substances (e.g. food substances, vitamins) to the study participants.]

Does the study involve any of the following? [g. Invasive, intrusive or potentially harmful procedures of any kind?*]

Does the study involve any of the following? [h. Obtaining blood or tissue samples?*]

Does the study involve any of the following? [i. Pain or more than mild discomfort?]

Does the study involve any of the following? [j. Psychological stress, anxiety, harm or negative consequences beyond that encountered in normal life?]

Does the study involve any of the following? [k. Prolonged or repetitive testing i.e. more than 4 hours commitment or attendance on more than two occasions?]

Does the study involve any of the following? [l. Financial inducements (other than reasonable expenses and compensation for time)?]

Data (I)

Does the research involve the viewing, usage or transfer of Sensitive Personal Data as defined by the Data Protection Act 1998 or data governed by statute such as the Official Secrets Act 1989 / Terrorism Act 2006, commercial contract or by convention e.g. client confidentiality? (If you are unsure please tick YES and complete the sub-questions).
Yes [Y]

Will the study involve any of the following? [a. The study involves sharing of sensitive data outside the European Economic Area.]

Will the study involve any of the following? [b. The study involves collection or analysis of sensitive data which will be identifiable within the project outputs and could potentially cause harm.]

Will the study involve any of the following? [c. The study involves collection or analysis of personal data without explicit consent.]

Will the study involve any of the following? [d. The study involves collection or analysis of information covered by the Official Secrets Act 1989, Terrorism Act 2006, commercial contract or license?]

Will the study involve any of the following? [e. The study involves the collection, viewing or dissemination of materials which could be considered; extremist, sensitive, or terrorism related?]

Environment (I)

Will the study cause direct or indirect damage to the environment or emissions outside permissible levels or be conducted in an Area of Special Scientific Interest or which is of cultural significance?
No [N]

International Projects (I)

Will the research be conducted outside of the European Economic Area (EEA) or will it involve international collaborators outside the EEA?
No [N]

Next Steps

Based on your responses your project has been categorised as (ethically) low risk and no further review is required before you start work. You will receive a formal approval email on submission of this form. Should your project change you may need to apply for new ethical approval.

Supporting Documentation

Please upload any documents (not uploaded elsewhere in the application) which you think are relevant to the consideration of your application.
Survivor%20Debrief%20Form.docx (162.274KB) -

filecount - Please upload any documents (not uploaded elsewhere in the application) which you think are relevant to the consideration of your application.
1

Summary and Submission

Thank you for completing the University's Ethical Review Form. Based on your answers the University is satisfied that your project has met its ethical expectations and grants its ethical approval. Please be aware that if you make any significant changes to your project then you should complete this form again as further review may be required. Confirmation of this decision will be emailed to you. Please complete the declaration to submit your application. Declaration I certify that: [the information contained within this application is accurate.]
Yes [Y]

Thank you for completing the University's Ethical Review Form. Based on your answers the University is satisfied that your project has met its ethical expectations and grants its ethical approval. Please be aware that if you make any significant changes to your project then you should complete this form again as further review may be required. Confirmation of this decision will be emailed to you. Please complete the declaration to submit your application. Declaration I certify that: [the research will be undertaken in line with all appropriate, University, legal and local standards and regulations.]
Yes [Y]

Thank you for completing the University's Ethical Review Form. Based on your answers the University is satisfied that your project has met its ethical expectations and grants its ethical approval. Please be aware that if you make any significant changes to your project then you should complete this form again as further review may be required. Confirmation of this decision will be emailed to you. Please complete the declaration to submit your application. Declaration I certify that: [I have attempted to identify the risks that may arise in conducting this research and acknowledge my obligation to (and rights of) any participants.]
Yes [Y]

Thank you for completing the University's Ethical Review Form. Based on your answers the University is satisfied that your project has met its ethical expectations and grants its ethical approval. Please be aware that if you make any significant changes to your project then you should complete this form again as further review may be required. Confirmation of this decision will be emailed to you. Please complete the declaration to submit your application. Declaration I certify that: [no work will begin until all appropriate permissions are in place.]
Yes [Y]

Appendix L:
Victim interview information sheet (for chapter five)

Newcastle University

Information Sheet

Title of Research: A survivor's perspective: Factors impacting on participation and cooperation with investigative interviews.

Research Team: PhD Candidate – William Webster (w.s.webster@newcastle.ac.uk)
Supervision team: Dr Gavin Oxburgh (Director of Studies),
Professor Dame Vicki Bruce and Professor Coral Dando.

Description of procedure: The purpose of this study (by means of an informal interview) is to determine the experiences from survivors of rape and/or sexual assault regarding the police interview they underwent in relation to the reported offence.

Previous research in this area has primarily focused on social perceptions of rape and sexual assault, in particular how rape myths and other common misconceptions impact on a survivor's willingness to come forward and report the offence they have been victim to. Some research has focused on the concern of survivors regarding how members of the criminal justice system would treat them, as opposed to how they were actually treated during the police interview. However, the manner in which a police officer interacts with an interviewee may impact on the outcome of the interview. As such, the aim of this research is to:

1. Establish a better understanding of the experiences of rape and sexual assault survivors during their police interviews, whether positive or negative;
2. Ascertain what factors influence the decision of rape and sexual assault survivors to participate and cooperate (or not) during the police interview;
3. Investigative whether there are any aspects of the police interviewers' approach that were perceived as particularly effective or were particularly liked or disliked? (e.g., behaviours, mannerisms, style of interviewing etc.)

It is also hoped that the findings and any subsequent reports constructed as a consequence of this research will provide police interviewers with a different perspective on the interviewing process.

You have been asked to take part in the current research project and, if you agree, you will provide written consent. The consent form will provide details of your rights regarding the study, but if there are any other details that you do not understand or wish to discuss please contact the principle researcher via the email address provided.

Your participation is entirely voluntary and you may take a break or stop at any point. You also have the right to withdraw from this study at any time prior to publication of any data - you can do this by contacting any member of the research team (see above) quoting your unique allocated reference number. Your anonymity will always be maintained and, if you do not wish, you do not have to provide your full name.

Appendix M:
Victim interview consent form (for chapter five)

Ref. Number:

Consent Form

Title of Research: A survivor's perspective: Factors impacting on participation and cooperation with investigative interviews.

Research Team: PhD Candidate – William Webster (w.s.webster@newcastle.ac.uk)
Supervision team: Dr Gavin Oxburgh (Director of Studies),
Professor Dame Vicki Bruce and Professor Coral Dando

Description of procedure: The purpose of this study is to determine the experiences from survivors of rape and/or sexual assault regarding the police interview they underwent in relation to the reported offence. All information gained will be used as part of a doctoral research programme entitled, '*The impact of investigative interviewing on rape victims: Towards a more effective framework for police investigators'.* You are under no obligation to participate, however, if you agree, you will be informally interviewed by the researcher about your experiences of your previous police interview. The research is not concerned with the actual offence, just your experience of the police interview itself. All interviews will take place in a private room, will be audio-recorded, and then fully transcribed.

All information recorded from the interview and on this form will be kept confidential and only the research team will have access to it. Your anonymity will always be maintained and, if you do not wish, you do not have to provide your full name. In addition, the researcher will not report any information (in written reports or otherwise) that links specific data from this interview to specific individuals. Furthermore, the researcher will not divulge the identity of any persons involved in this interview, or information that may give clues to their identity.

All data collected will be kept in a locked filing cabinet for a period of at least five years after the appearance of any associated publications and only the research team will have access to this. Any aggregate data (e.g., audio recordings and notes) will be kept in electronic form for up to five years, after which time they will be destroyed.

Your participation is entirely voluntary and you have the right to withdraw from this study at any time prior to publication of any data - you can do this by contacting any member of the research team (see above) quoting your unique reference number that the researcher will give you. You can obtain general information about the results of this research by contacting the researcher, however, it is policy not to provide individual feedback. The data collected may be used for the purposes of research and training.

I confirm that I have read and understood the above information, agree with the content and fully agree to take part in the audio-recorded interview that is part of this research. ☐

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Name	Date	Signature
______________________	__________	____________________________
Researcher	Date	Signature

Appendix N:
Victim interview debrief sheet (for chapter five)

Ref. Number:

Debrief Form

Title of Research: A survivor's perspective: Factors impacting on participation and cooperation with investigative interviews.

Research Team: PhD Candidate – William Webster (w.s.webster@newcastle.ac.uk)
Supervision team: Dr Gavin Oxburgh (Director of Studies), Professor Dame Vicki Bruce and Professor Coral Dando

Description of procedure: Thank you for taking the time to participate in this study that sought to determine your experiences of your previous police interview. There are various psychological theories (Procedural Justice Theory, Health Belief Model and the Group Engagement Model) that can help explain why a person may feel more or less inclined to co-operate with police interviewers. In addition, the use of empathy and rapport-building by officers are of interest as previous research has identified that these techniques obtain higher amounts of relevant information. However, the research surrounding interviews with rape and sexual assault survivors is very much in its infancy, and, as such, the focus of this research relates to specific factors that influenced you to co-operate and engage (or not) during your police interview. The overall research project seeks to:

1. Establish a better understanding of the experiences of rape and sexual assault survivors during their police interviews, including positive and negative aspects;
2. Ascertain what factors influence the decision of rape and sexual assault survivors to participate and cooperate (or not) during the police interview;
3. Investigative whether there are any aspects of the police interviewers' approach that are perceived as effective or that were particularly liked or disliked? (e.g., behaviours, mannerisms, style of interviewing etc.)

How to withdraw your data: If you would like to withdraw your data you can do so by contacting the researcher at the email address below, and quoting your unique reference number located at the top right of this sheet.

Support organisations: If you feel you would like support, please contact any one of the following:

- SARC Teesside – Tel: 01642 516888 – www.sarcteesside.co.uk
- Victim Support – Tel: 0808 1689 111 – www.victimsupport.org.uk
- Rape Crisis – Tel: 0808 802 9999 – www.rapecrisis.org.uk
- The Survivor's Trust – Tel: 0808 801 0818 – www.thesurvivorstrust.org
- Support Line – Tel: 01708 765200 – www.supoprtline.org.uk
- After Silence – www.afterslience.org

If you have any further questions or concerns about your participation in this research, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me at the email address below. Once again, thank you for your participation.

William Webster - w.s.webster@newcastle.ac.uk

Appendix O:
Victim Interview Schedule (for chapter five)

Interview Schedule

Title of research: A survivor's perspective: Factors impacting on participation and cooperation with investigative interviews.

Research aims:

1. Establish a better understanding of the experiences of rape and sexual assault survivors during their police interviews, whether positive or negative;
2. Ascertain what factors influence the decision of rape and sexual assault survivors to participate and cooperate (or not) during the police interview;
3. Investigative whether there are any aspects of the police interviewers' approach that were perceived as particularly effective or were particularly liked or disliked (e.g., behaviours, mannerisms, style of interviewing etc.)

Introductions and ground rules

- Provide brief explanation about the audio-recording.
- Introduce the ground rules, confirm the survivor's understanding of the interview, confirm consent and provide them with another opportunity to ask any questions in relation to the upcoming interview:
    - Remind them that their participation is voluntary, that if they wish to pause for a break or stop the interview they may do so.
    - Remind them that if, following the interview, they wish to withdraw their data from the research, they can contact the main researcher via the contact details provided. However, if such contact is delayed to the point where reports have already been written for publication this will not be possible.
- Remind them that the purpose of the interview is to discuss their experience of their previous police interview and what factors impacted upon their decision to participate with the interview, both positive and negative (as opposed to the actual offence they were interviewed for).

The following questions will then be asked during all interviews - follow a sequential order. If a participant begins discussing specific details about the offence then attempt to direct them back in-line with the interview schedule using one of the contingency prompts – see bottom of interview schedule.

Pre-police interview

The following questions relate directly to your police interview. Please try and avoid any discussion of the offence itself – this is just about the interview process:

- Thinking about after you made the decision to report the offence, please describe how you felt whilst waiting to begin the interview.
    - What made you feel like this?
    - Were you comforted by anyone?
        - If yes, who?
        - Describe its effect.
    - Describe any positive aspect of the 'wait'.
    - Describe any negative aspect of the 'wait'
    - If you could change any aspect of this part, what would it be?
        - Please explain your answer.
    - Is there anything else you want to add about the 'wait' and how you felt?
- Describe your expectations of the police interview?
    - Explain how you developed those expectations?
        - Please explain your answer.
    - Describe what influenced your expectations?
        - Please explain your answer.

Beginning of the police interview

The following questions relate directly to your police interview. Please try and avoid any discussion of the offence itself – this is just about the interview process:

- Turning now to the interview itself, describe how you felt when you entered the interview room to begin your interview.
    - What made you feel like this?
    - Were you comforted by anyone?
        - If yes, who?
        - Describe its effect.
- Please explain how the interviewing officer began the interview?
    - Describe how this made you feel?
        - Please explain your answer.
    - Please explain any aspect of how they began the interview that you would change?
- Did your thoughts regarding the interview change from before it took place and whilst you were being interviewed?
    - If yes, how?
    - Describe its effect.
- Describe the actions of the interviewing officer and how s/he played any role in changing your thoughts?
    - Describe any positive aspect of their approach.
    - Describe any negative aspect of their approach
    - If you could change any aspect of their approach, what would it be?
        - Please explain your answer.
- Please explain if there is anything else you would like to add about how the interviewing officer began the interview?

Main account

- Describe if the interviewing officer made the interview process (as a whole) easier for you.
    - If so, in what way?
    - Describe how this made you feel.
- If you could change anything, describe what it would be?
- If the interviewing officer encouraged you to cooperate and engage during the interview, please describe in as much detail as possible, how s/he did this?
    - Describe how this made you feel and its effect on you.
    - If there was any aspect of this that you could change, please describe what it would be.

Closing the interview

- Describe how the interviewing officer closed the interview down.
    - Describe how you felt at this point.
    - Were neutral topics discussed?

Overall

- Describe your overall experience of the police interview.
    - Explain what you think the interviewing officer did well.
        - How did this make you feel?
    - If you could change one aspect of the interview process, what would it be?
        - Please explain your answer.
    - How would this impact on future survivors' when they are being interviewed?
- If you had to highlight one specific aspect of the interview that assisted your ability in recalling the offence you reported, please explain what that was.
    - Were there any other aspects that also contributed?
- Please describe whether any particular aspect of the interview that did not assist your ability in recalling the offence you reported.
    - Were there any other aspects that also impacted on this?
- Was there anything you were expecting to happen during the interview that did not?
    - What was this?
    - How did this make you feel?
        - Describe its effect.
    - Overall, did the interview meet your expectations?
        - Please explain your answer.
- Tell me anything else you would like to add about the interview and how you felt.
    - Please explain your answer.
- Please tell me if there is anything else you want to add about how the interviewing officer managed the overall interview process.

Case outcome

If the survivor does not wish to provide this information they should not be pressured to answer.

- What was the outcome of your case?
    - How did this make you feel?
        - Please explain your answer.

Contingency prompts

- How did that affect your experience of the interview?
- How did the behaviour and manner of the interviewing officer make it easier for you to discuss those details?
- I appreciate that those details would be very difficult to discuss within the interview, how could the interviewing officer have made it easier?
- With regards to the manner in which you were interviewed, how could the interviewing officer have made it easier for you to discuss such personal and sensitive information?
- How did the interviewing style of the interviewing officer affect you in terms of discussing those sensitive and personal details?

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