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IAAP DIVISION 10 - PSYCHOLOGY, LAW & ETHICS

NEWSLETTER

Member research

From the 26th Days of Criminal Justice and Security's Book of Abstracts:

Judicial Bias: The Often Unfulfilled Right to an Impartial Trial

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Although the Constitution guarantees the right to an independent and impartial trial, empirical research shows that this right is often not realized in practice. The primary cause lies in the inherent limitations of human objectivity and in the failure to apply scientifically validated methods to prevent bias. Judicial bias can manifest in various ways, including an overreliance on the conclusions of court-appointed experts. Courts generally presume such experts to be impartial. However, studies reveal that experts can be just as biased as laypersons. Confident in their own knowledge, experience, self-discipline, and motivation, many experts believe themselves to be objective, yet neglect to implement measures for monitoring their subjectivity.

This can result in conclusions that, whether consciously or unconsciously, favor one party to the detriment of another. In fields such as psychology—where ideological bias can be particularly pronounced—expert witnesses may be predictably non-objective from the outset.

Without safeguards such as hypothesis testing, the use of validated psychological instruments, and systematic verification of findings, initial biases often intensify over the course of proceedings. Consequently, conclusions may rest not on scientific evidence but on personal beliefs and expectations.

When courts fail to rigorously evaluate the validity of expert findings against established standards, they effectively rely on untested assumptions. The absence of proven strategies to mitigate bias undermines the fairness of judicial proceedings, compromising the courts' ability to serve as true guardians of justice.

Keywords: judicial bias, reliance on expert witnesses, psychology, unavoidable subjectivity, trial fairness.



iIIRG

INTERNATIONAL
INVESTIGATIVE
INTERVIEWING
RESEARCH GROUP

A co-ordinated global initiative to enhance interview practice

A research article

Investigative Interviewing: Research & Practice (II -RP)

Dave Walsh, **Igor Areh**, Steven Barela, Hedvika Boukalova, Ray Bull, et al.

Article PDF: https://iirg.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/IIRP_20250303_Walsh_Final-1.pdf



Abstract

Interviews with suspects, victims, and witnesses are among the most important and regular tasks undertaken by police/law enforcement agencies to progress criminal investigations. The present article addresses a critical gap both in the literature and practice of investigative interviewing—namely, the lack of a coordinated global action to establish and implement a universal standard. While countries like England and Wales, Norway, and Australia have successfully adopted rapport-based practices, these efforts remain largely confined to individual national contexts. Broader collective efforts involving academics, activists, and practitioners worldwide—focused on expanding the adoption of investigative interviewing—are scarce. To address this gap, the article outlines developments in the last few years that have attempted to provide a more universal approach to investigative interviewing and introduces a pioneering global action to support its implementation. The initiative and action are justified by their potential to improve global consistency, fairness, and effectiveness in investigative practices while fostering international collaboration. Its significance lies in broadening the reach of investigative interviewing, improving justice outcomes globally, and establishing a framework for sustained cooperation and knowledge exchange.

Keywords: Mendez Principles, ImpleMéndez, investigative Interviewing, coercive interrogation, criminal investigation.

A field study on cultural differences in South African eyewitness reports

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Purpose

Eyewitness testimony is crucial for police investigations. One important factor affecting testimony is culture, which is known to play a role in memory and reporting. Yet there are few studies on cultural differences in eyewitness testimony, especially in ecologically valid settings. Therefore, this study aims to examine cultural differences in real eyewitness interviews in the multicultural context of South Africa.

Design/methodology/approach

This study qualitatively analysed 103 video-recorded eyewitness interviews conducted by the South African police. Witnesses first described the crime and then gave a description of the perpetrator for facial composite construction. Eyewitnesses and police officers were drawn from three cultural groups, and interviewees often belonged to a different cultural group than their interviewer. This study used thematic analysis to explore cultural differences in eyewitness reports.

Findings

This study identified six main cultural differences, centering on: (1) details and specificity of the reports, (2) confidence in one's memory, (3) (sub)culturally specific terms and euphemisms, (4) assertiveness during the interview, (5) justifying one's victimhood and (6) description of perpetrators. The findings are explained in light of cultural dimensions such as collectivism and power distance, communication styles and trust in the police. Recommendations for future research are provided.

Originality/value

Both research using field data and research in African contexts is scarce. This study represents both, involving an in-depth analysis of a large sample of real police interviews from the multicultural context of South Africa. As such, it provides unique qualitative insights into cultural differences in actual eyewitness testimony.

Upcoming events/deadlines



The International Congress of Applied Psychology (ICAP) is held every four years, alternating every other biennium with the International Congress of Psychology (ICP) which is also held every four years. The ICAP is organized under the auspices of the International Association of Applied Psychology (IAAP). The ICP is organized under the auspices of the International Union of Psychological Science (IUPsyS).

It takes many years to plan and organize an ICAP. For this reason, the IAAP Board of Directors considers proposals and chooses a host for an ICAP so long as eight years before the event is held. It is then the responsibility of the host (and its scientific community) to organize the Congress - including developing the program, issuing calls for participation, publicizing the Congress, arranging accommodation, arranging special programming, and usually arranging additional funding through grants, sponsorship, and the like.

Call for Bids for ICAP 2034.

Application / Decision Timeline

Before September 30, 2025 - Send a formal letter of intent to the President of IAAP, expressing the willingness to organize an ICAP for the year 2034.

Before January 31, 2026 - Fill out the Application Form for Submitting a Bid for an International Congress of Applied Psychology and send it to the President

March 1, 2026 - IAAP Officers will review your application and, if needed, will request additional information before it goes to the Board.



2025 Association for Psychological Science (APS) Global Summit



**The 2025 APS Global Psychological Science Summit will take place virtually
October 21-23, 2025.**

APS launched the online Global Psychological Science Summit in 2024 to offer an additional avenue for scientific exchange and collaboration among psychological scientists. The program is designed to provide participants with opportunities to talk with and identify other scientists interested in developing and using new products, practices, and tools to strengthen and advance the emerging field of global psychological science. The program includes plenary panel sessions with leading global psychological scientists, invited workshops, submitted roundtable discussions, and scientific poster presentations.

Registration Deadlines:

Rate:	Available Until:
Early-Bird	Wednesday, September 17, 2025 , 5:00 PM EDT (21:00 UTC)
Regular	Thursday, October 23, 2025 , 7:00 PM EDT (23:00 UTC)

PSYCHOLOGY'S GLOBAL VOICE



International Union of Psychological Science

CALL FOR BIDS FOR THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF PSYCHOLOGY (ICP) 2032



Join a distinguished tradition that has shaped global psychology since 1889.

The International Congress of Psychology (ICP) stands as the premier global event for psychological science. Hosting ICP2032 offers a rare opportunity to welcome thousands of delegates, showcase your country's scientific excellence, and make a lasting scientific and cultural impact locally, regionally, and globally.

Organising ICP2032 is more than an organisational undertaking – it is a powerful opportunity to lead, inspire, and leave a meaningful legacy that serves humanity.

View the full bid guidelines [here](#).

Letter of intent submission deadline: **October 31, 2025**



31ST INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS
OF APPLIED PSYCHOLOGY



Florence, 21st-25th July, 2026

Call for abstracts is open!

Deadline: 18 September 2025



If you have any information, news, or upcoming conferences you'd like to share in the newsletter, please send it to Lara Maria Pezzicoli (lara.pezzicoli@student.um.si).

Until next time!

