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Lies of Police Interrogators in the Ultimatum Game

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Abstract : The present study's purpose was to examine lyingand pretend fairness by police interrogators in sharing situations. Forty police officers and 40 laypeople from the community, all males, self-assessed their lie-telling ability, rated the frequency of their lies, evaluated the acceptability of lying, and indicated using rational and intuitive thinking while lying. Next, according to the ultimatum game procedure, participants were asked to share 100 points with a virtual target, either a male police interrogator or a male layman. Participantsallocated points to the target person bearing in mind that the other person must accept their offer. Participants' goal was to retain as many points as possible, and to this end, they could tell the target person that fewer than 100 points were available for distribution. The difference between the available 100 points and the sum of points designated for sharing defines lying. The ratio of offered and designated points defines pretend fairness. Results indicate that those police officers lied more than laypeople. Similar results emergedeven when the target person was a police interrogator. However, police interrogators presented higher pretend fairness than laypeople. The higher pretend fairness may be in line with interrogation tactics of persuasion used in the criminal interrogation. Higher-lying frequency reported by police interrogators compared with laypeople support the present results. Finally, lie acceptability predicted lying in the ultimatum game. Specifically, participants who rated lying as more acceptable tended to lie more than low acceptability raters.

Keywords : lying, police interrogators, lie acceptability, ultimatum game, pretend fairness
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