

Lies and Pretended Fairness of Police Officers in Sharing

Authors : Eitan Elaad

Abstract : The current study aimed to examine lying and pretended fairness by police personnel in sharing situations. Forty Israeli 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 an imagined target, either a male policeman or a male non-policeman. Participants allocated points to the target person bearing in mind that the other person must accept or reject 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. We defined concealment or lying as the difference between the available 100 points and the sum of points designated for sharing. Results indicated that police officers lied less to their fellow police targets than non-police targets, whereas laypeople lied less to non-police targets than imagined police targets. The ratio between the points offered to the imagined target person and the points endowed by the participant as available for sharing defined pretended fairness. Enhanced pretended fairness indicates higher motivation to display fair sharing even if the fair sharing is fictitious. Police officers presented higher pretended fairness to police targets than laypeople, whereas laypeople set off more fairness to non-police targets than police officers. We discussed the results concerning occupation solidarity and loyalty among police personnel. Specifically, police work involves uncertainty, danger and risk, coercive authority, and the use of force, which isolates the police from the community and dictates strong bonds of solidarity between police personnel. No wonder police officers shared more points (lied less) to fellow police targets than non-police targets. On the other hand, police legitimacy or the belief that the police are acting honestly in the best interest of the citizens constitutes citizens' attitudes toward the police. The relatively low number of points shared for distribution by laypeople to police targets indicates difficulties with the legitimacy of the Israeli police.

Keywords : lying, fairness, police solidarity, police legitimacy, sharing, ultimatum game

Conference Title : ICAPP 2022 : International Conference on Advances in Police Psychology

Conference Location : Oslo, Norway

Conference Dates : June 23-24, 2022