

From Events to Identity: The Effectiveness of Investigate Interviewing Principles in Identity-based Asylum Claims

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Psychology at the Frontiers: Asylum Interviewing and Decision Making [Psych-AID]

Assessing Asylum Claims



*“A person who "owing to **well-founded fear** of being **persecuted** for reasons of **race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion**, is outside the country of [their] nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail [themselves] of the protection of that country.”*

Importance of asylum interview!

The Complexity of Human Identity

Coherent sense of self-sameness

Multiple perspectives:

- Visible vs nonvisible traits
- Assigned vs chosen traits
- Social identity vs personal identity

Reconstructive nature

Experienced, expressed and presented differently in different contexts

Cultural differences

Difficult to disclose

(Erikson, 1986; Branje et al., 2021; Galliher et al., 2017; Hope et al., 2022; Markus & Kitayama, 1991)

Are the investigative interviewing principles applied to gather information in asylum contexts efficient in obtaining disclosures regarding identity?

As a starting point, yes.

What specific **considerations** and **adaptions** are needed?

Investigative interview principles

Pre-interview planning

Rapport-building

Ground rules and expectation management

Questioning strategies

Investigative interview principles:

Pre-interview planning

Aim	Asylum interviews	Key challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduce errors and bias• Based on already known case information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Physical, mental, case-related arrangements• Issues: Lack of time and information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Personal characteristics of interviewer and interpreter• Interview content not based on Western stereotypes!

Investigative interview principles:

Rapport-building

Aim

- Integral to eliciting disclosures!

Asylum interviews

- Lack of rapport-building skills

Key challenges

- Sensitive claims
- Distrust of authorities

Investigative interview principles:

Ground rules and expectation management

Aim	Asylum interviews	Key challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clarify rights & obligations• Promote accurate reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A lot of instructions, at times unclear instructions• Lack of knowledge of social identity as a legal ground for asylum	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Timing, format and content of information about the legal grounds

Investigative interview principles:

Questioning strategies

Aim	Asylum interviews	Key challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Open-ended questions• Limited number of closed question for fact-checking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overreliance on closed questions• Issues: difficulties in giving elaborate answers, difficulties in keeping focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How to direct applicants without imposing Western stereotypes?• Effectiveness of memory-retrieval techniques?

Next steps?

How to create an interview setting and atmosphere that facilitates disclosures – preparation, rapport- and trust building, ground rules and expectation setting?

How to prepare the interview strategy and conduct interviews without directing the applicant toward topics that are based on Western stereotypes?

What specific questioning techniques are suitable for eliciting detailed accounts about identity-related topics?

Thank you for your attention!

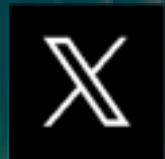


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