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# ‘Leveling’: showing the person behind the police uniform

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*A qualitative research to the impact of interactions between police officers and youths on trust in the police.*

Master Thesis

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*Central to this master thesis is the question how interactions between police officers and youths impact trust in the police in the city of Rotterdam. Especially youths from marginalized groups have a low rate of trust in the police. The goal was to come to effective strategies that police officers can use in an interaction with youths. In order to get there, micro-sociological theories about interactions were elaborated and were proliferated with procedural justice theory. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with police officers and youths in Rotterdam to detect different meanings from interactions. The findings suggest that strategies lead to trust in the police if police officers can 'level' with youths and show them that they are as much human as they are. This was especially true for people from marginalized groups who fear the authority role of the police. Future research should focus on these groups and analyze if 'leveling' lead to trust in the police on a wider scale.*

**Keywords:** interactions, police, trust, youths.

## 1. Introduction

Trust in the Dutch police differs substantially for different groups in Dutch society. Especially people from marginalized groups do not trust the police as much as people from non-marginalized groups (CBS, 2015). This is especially the case for younger people (15-24) with a lower education, non-western migration background and people in vulnerable neighborhoods (KIS, 2018). Police officers can improve trust of people from marginalized groups by improving the level of procedural justice in interactions (Bezemer, 2018; Tyler, 2004). Tyler (2004) found that procedural justice is of greatest importance for general trust in the police. Procedural justice consists of how police officers treat the people they deal with; the interpersonal interactions (Tyler, 2005). Conversely, interactions are important for police officers to determine if they can trust someone. The most important determinant for a police officer to see if a young person is a possible delinquent is the behavior or demeanor (Piliavin & Briar, 1964; Werner et al. 1974). In summary, interactions seem to be very important for trust in the police.

That is why the research question of this research is: *'How do interactions between police and youth in Rotterdam impact trust in the police in Rotterdam?'* This research question is further divided into sub-questions in the theory section (chapter 2).

The scientific relevance of this research is based on the limitation of quantitative research on institutional trust in the literature of politics and society. The micro-processes of institutions are usually overlooked in the academic literature (Malsch & Geldron, 2013). Institutional trust is predominately measured with survey questions (f.e. Hakhverdian & Mayne, 2012; Hudson, 2006). While these types of questions are very helpful in measuring trust, what they do not measure are the micro-explanations of trust. How trust is formed or broken through interactions between representatives of institutions and the public is usually not measured, and is not fully understood. This research uses micro-sociological theories such as role theory to theoretically proliferate the theory of procedural justice. Proliferation is the expansion of a central theory with a new explanatory domain (Wagner, 2007). The micro-sociological theories and procedural justice will also be elaborated in this research.

The societal relevance of this research is based on the importance of trust in our society. If there is no trust in institutions, nobody would listen to authorities such as the police. Trust entails a positive relationship between police and the public and this decreases the chance of arrest (Scheffer, 1987). Youths are often only arrested because of the escalation of the interaction; they offend the police officer for example (Thureau, 2009). If this escalation in interactions is prevented, the number of arrests also declines. This research could thus help in the decline of the overrepresentation of youths in the criminal justice chain. This is especially important for neighborhoods with a high percentage of people from marginalized groups. They usually have a difficult relationship with the police and are overrepresented in criminal activity (Leerkes & Bernasco, 2010). Interactions can therefore be of great importance for the cooperation between youths and police officers.

The policy relevance of this research is based on the practical assumption that it can make recommendations for police officers. This research can help the police in formulating new strategies they can use in their interactions with youths. The resulting strategies of this research could be used by police officers, the police academy, 'bureau Halt' and primary and secondary schools.

For this research the city of Rotterdam was used as strategic research site. This city has a large variety of neighborhoods with different levels of marginalized groups (Wijkprofiel Rotterdam, 2018). In part due to asking to the neighborhood, meaningful conclusions about the difference in trust in the police between marginalized and non-marginalized youths could arise.

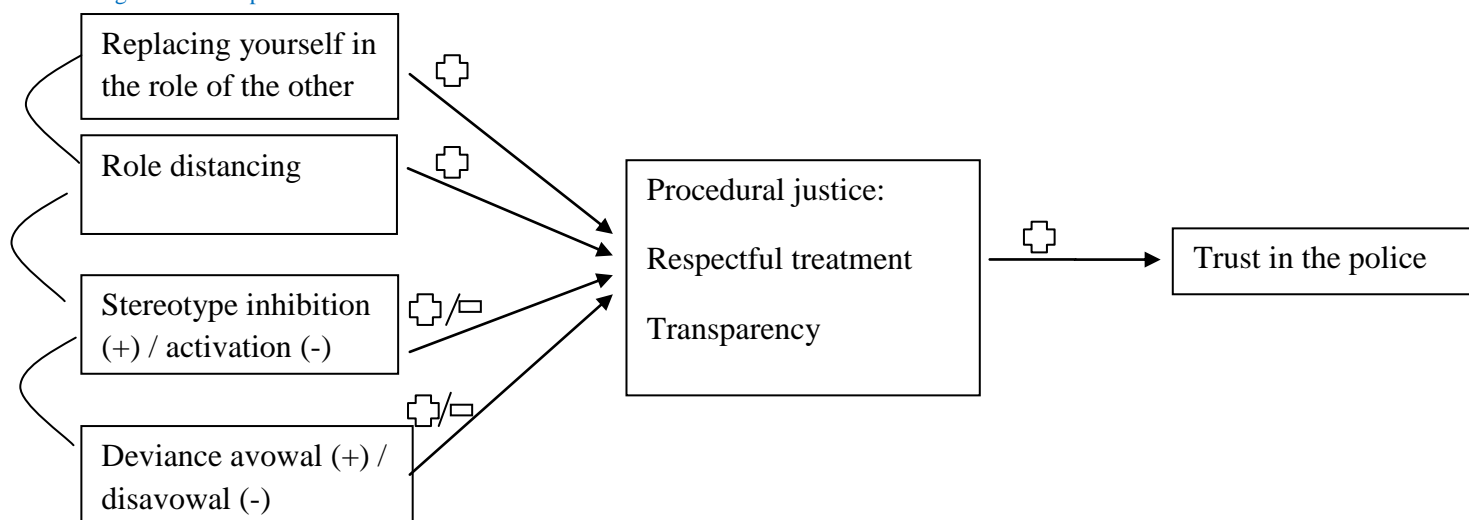
## 2. Theories: understanding how interactions lead to trust in the police

Procedural justice in interactions leads to trust in the police (Tyler, 2004). This theory of procedural justice was proliferated by micro-sociological theories such as role theory and stereotype activation (figure 1). The micro-sociological theories are most likely related to each other but how and how they lead to procedural justice is unsure. This research tries to study how they affect each other and how they impact procedural justice. In order to explain how interactions impact trust in the police, the concepts of trust and police first need to be defined.

The police are responsible for crime prevention, enforcement of the law and the detection of criminals (Waddington & Wright, 2010). There are two different types of policing with two different sets of tasks. Emergency policing is called when there is an emergency crime such as a robbery or an act of violence. In contrast, community police officers are responsible for keeping order and peace in a particular neighborhood (Thureau, 2009). In recent years the Dutch government has made cutbacks in community policing and together with the centralized National Police this resulted in emergency policing being more dominant (Bezemer, 2018).

Trust in the police is described as believing that police officers have the right intentions and are competent at what they do (Jackson & Bradford, 2010). Tyler (2005) says that there are different ways of looking at trust in the police with different implications. The outcome-based model discusses how effective crime control leads to more trust. According to the fairness-based model, trust in the police results from fair distribution of services. The last model is important for this research and explains how interpersonal treatment impacts trust; the process-based model (Tyler, 2005). The collection of interpersonal procedures, also called procedural justice, leads to more trust in the police (Tyler, 2005). Trust is reinforced through implementation of fair procedures in an interaction. This research focuses on two aspects of procedural justice that are relevant for interactions: respectful treatment and transparency.

Figure 1: Conceptual model



### *2.1 Respectful treatment*

The first category of procedural justice is respectful treatment. This entails the respect, dignity and attention someone gives to another person in an interaction. People's social status and self-image is dependent upon the treatment they receive from others (Tyler, 2004). When they do not receive fair interpersonal treatment, their self-image is harmed and they will act angry towards the police (Thureau, 2009). This is especially relevant for youths because their view of themselves is still forming and is thus dependent on the view of others (Thureau, 2009). Thanking someone for the interaction or for someone's participation or ideas is a sign of dignity and respect (Mazerolle, Antrobus, Bennett & Tyler 2013). But respectful treatment also depends on the consideration of someone's input. People want to voice their concerns and ideas about procedures and laws that control them (Tyler, 2004). In an interaction it would be to listen to someone and ask what they think about a decision (Mazerolle et al, 2013).

### *2.2 Transparency*

The second category is transparency. According to Tyler (2004) transparency is about explaining the decisions taken by police officers. For the interaction between police officers and youths it would be helpful if the officers explained why they approached them. Transparency means that people from outside can judge how decisions are taken by means of information provision (De Boer, 2020). As a result of information provision, police officers can also show that they have made objective decisions that are not biased or personal (Tyler, 2004). People always search for a playing field where no one is unfairly treated (Tyler, 2004). If police officers and youths are more transparent, this playing field can be realized.

### *2.3 Needs in an interaction*

Because interactions between police and youth form an important basis for procedural justice, it is relevant to delve deeper inside interactional needs. According to Turner (2007), all people have certain things that they want from an interaction. The most important emotional need described is self-verification.

Self-verification is about feeling good about oneself in an interaction (Turner, 2007). If people feel that they are treated respectfully and if there is transparency in an interaction, then self-verification will likely be reached. There are three levels of the self: core self, sub-identities and role identities. Core self is the most emotional state but also has the highest level of unconsciousness; people are usually not aware of their core self. Sub-identities are linked with your core-self but are also adapted to societies' norms. Role identities are identities completely adapted to societies norms. If someone moves to a role identity, they are aware of their role in a particular interaction. However, people cannot reach an emotional state while playing a role (Turner, 2007).

### *2.4 Replacing yourself in the role of the other*

Self-verification in the form of transparency and respectful treatment can be achieved by a number of strategies explained in micro-sociological literature shown in the conceptual model (figure 1). The first strategy explained in this research is replacing yourself in the role of the other.

Mead (1934) states that before people interact with one another, they first have to be

aware of the meaning they attach to the things they do and say. As a result, people can see how these things affect the other in the interaction and adjust their demeanor or behavior accordingly (Mead, 1934). It sometimes takes preparation to delve in the roles of the other to understand how their roles are formed (Mead, 1934, as cited in Turner, 2001). When people learn about the roles of the other, they set up new roles in order to interact with them. Learning about the other usually results in mutual empathy (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). Empathy will likely lead to more transparency and respectful treatment.

If a police officer wants to be respected in an interaction it could be helpful to replace his or herself in the role of the youth. Youths also want to be treated with respect and dignity (Thureau, 2009). If police officers are aware of this, they will likely treat them with respect. Self-image such as wanting the verification of your friends is important for youths. The police could replace themselves more in the role of the other by recognizing this need for self-image in an interaction with a group of youths. The police could do this by learning about how to interact with youths or to think about their own past; how they also were young once and wanted to fit in.

Wanting to fit in and simultaneously not choose self-interest over self-image is hard for many youths (Thureau, 2009). Especially if they only know the code of the street: how to talk to their fellow youths and no other codes: for example talking to the police (Anderson, 2019). Youths can switch between codes if they can replace themselves in the role of the other and interact according to a set of rules which are seemingly appropriate for that other (Anderson, 2019). Code switching is a way of replacing yourself in the role of the other and can be used by youths to interact in a respectful manner with the police. If police officers are treated with respect, they will likely treat youths more respectfully (Piliavan & Briar, 1964).

The following sub-question is formed: *'How does replacing yourself in the role of the other by youth and/or police impacts transparency and respectful treatment of police officers in the eyes of youths?'*

### *2.5 Role distancing*

Replacing yourself in the role of the other can be used while imagining about the role of the other. People can also distance themselves from their own role. According to Goffman, role distancing is used to show the other in the conversation that one does not take a particular role over-seriously. By this, one could let the other in the interaction know that they are just as much human as them (Goffman, 1961, as cited in Turner, 2001, p.249). A police officer could for example say something about the car a youth is driving. This way, police officers distance themselves from the role they are playing; the role of a police officer. As a result, the quality of the conversation leads to more respectful treatment of the police.

In an interaction people also want to establish who they are and that the other person in the conversation knows who they are. This means that they do not want to enact roles that go against their core-selves or statuses. When some roles go against their core-selves or do not stand close to their core-selves, role distancing and replacing yourself in the role of the other will not work. When police officer values 'an authority figure' as part of their core-selves, it will be difficult to talk to youths on a horizontal level. Moreover if police officers feel that they have a higher status than the youth, they will have more difficulty interacting with them. Turner (2007) says that procedures of fairness, such as transparency and respectful

treatment, are different for different groups in the status system. Police could think that because they are older than youths that they should be treated with more respect. Conversely, if youths value their self-image and membership of a gang as part of their core-selves, they do not want to talk to the police (Thureau, 2009). It will then be difficult to switch to ‘a good boy or girl’ when interacting with the police (Chambliss, 1973). As a result of the absence of role distancing, respectful treatment will be negatively impacted in the eyes of youths.

The following sub-question is formed: *‘How does role distancing by police officers impact respectful treatment of the police in the eyes of youths’*

## *2.6 Stereotype activation and inhibition*

At the beginning of each interaction people want to make an assessment of the other person, thereby putting this person in a category (Allport, Clark & Pettigrew, 1954). Those categories become stereotypes if they are being accounted for all the people of a particular group (Allport et al., 1954). Stereotypes exist on both sides: police officers have stereotypes about youths and youths have stereotypes about police officers (Graham & Lowery, 2004). In a police-youth interaction, these stereotypes could both negatively and positively impact the perceived transparency and respectful treatment of police officers by youth and vice versa.

Negative stereotypes are formed through previous interactions and influences from the environment someone is in. These stereotypes are ‘activated’ when people come to interact with the person belonging to the stereotyped group. Police officers who had bad experiences with certain types of youths will likely treat ‘comparable’ youths with restraint and resentment (Piliavin & Briar, 1964). As a result, youths also act distant from the police, which police officers see as a sign of disrespect and this negatively impacts respectful treatment in the eyes of youths (Piliavin & Briar, 1964; Thureau, 2009). This vicious circle will continue if the stereotypes about the particular group are confirmed and not changed (Graham & Lowery, 2004). This process will also lead to biased decisions of police officers and to a playing field where youths are unfairly treated. It thus leads to less transparency in the eyes of youths.

The vicious circle will end if stereotype change of inhibition takes place (Graham & Lowery, 2004). Seeing that certain stereotypes do not apply to the person you are talking to, stimulates the idea that people are not different, but similar to you (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). When someone develops a good impression of the stereotyped group and/or forms a relationship with a person from such a group, automatic stereotype activation is inhibited (Graham & Lowery, 2004). Police officers come to think of minority youth not as troublemakers but as people who may be valuable assets for cooperation and/or the eyes and ears of a community. Consequently, people reduce false stereotypes about the police when they develop positive attitudes towards them. This leads to more transparency and more mutual satisfaction about interpersonal treatment.

Youths also could have positive stereotypes about the police being always right because of their authority position. The police are authorities who are responsible for crime prevention (Waddington & Wright, 2010). According to the outcome-based model, people can trust the police because of good outcomes, such as crime reduction (Tyler, 2005). That could be a reason for youths to have respect for them. If youths show respect to police officers, they will likely treat youths respectfully.



The following sub-question is formed: *'How do stereotype activation and inhibition impact transparency and respectful treatment of police officers in the eyes of youths?'*

### *2.7 Deviance disavowal and avowal*

Instead of thinking about stereotypes of the other, people can also think of themselves as belonging to a stereotyped group. If people see themselves as a stereotyped group that is also deviant, they can 'manage' this deviance in two different ways. First of all they could not accept or deny their deviance in the interaction with the other, which is called deviance disavowal (Adler & Adler, 2006; Turner, 1972). People use deviance disavowal according to Turner (1972) because the assumed deviance makes a normal conversation difficult; one person is deviant and the other is not. Disavowal is also used when the deviant role has a negative effect on some people for instance in the form of discrimination (Turner, 1972). If youths feels discriminated by the police they can resist cooperation and deny the criminal label. As a result they will likely be treated poorly by the police, which lead to less respectful treatment. This relates to the vicious circle of stereotype activation explained in the subchapter above.

However, people could also accept their deviant role in an interaction with the other; this is called deviance avowal (Adler & Adler, 2006; Turner, 1972). According to Adler and Adler (2006) people use deviance avowal to let the other know that they are more than their deviance. This is for instance achieved by making jokes about their deviant role. As a result the other realizes that the deviant can see themselves from the perspective of the 'normal' (Adler & Adler, 2006). Police officers can use deviance avowal in interaction with youths if they joke about stereotypes of a police officer. This process leads to more openness about who they really are as a person and thus positively impacts transparency. This relates to the process of stereotype inhibition.

The following sub-question is formed: *'How do deviance avowal and deviance disavowal impact respectful treatment and/or transparency of police officers in the eyes of youths?'*

### 3. Research method

This research collaborated with a doctoral research of a PhD-student working at the Erasmus University Rotterdam (see: Bezemer, 2018). The doctoral research studies youth-police interactions with a mixed methods model in which this particular research is a qualitative counterpart. One other Master-student and two Bachelor-students were also part of this research project; the topic lists were made collaboratively and we shared transcripts with each other.

For this research non-participant observations were meant to be used, supplemented by semi-structured interviews. This way, the material interactions could have been observed in which the interviews could detect meaning and context to these interactions. Unfortunately, there were external complications to this research. The pandemic 'covid-19' caused a semi lock-down in which people were advised to stay inside. As a result it was not possible to do non-participant observations. The interviews could continue, but were held via Skype and by phone. This affected the validity of this research as explained in the limitations (chapter 7. Discussion. With semi-structured interviews the subjective experiences of police-youth interactions can best be captured (Boeije, 2010). However, being dependent on subjective stories can also negatively affect the validity, especially if the respondents want to leave things out of the experience or tell it differently.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with youths from 16 to 25, with a few exceptions, that had one or multiple interactions with police officers in Rotterdam. We included youths with different levels of education and from different neighborhoods. Police officers active in Rotterdam or surrounding cities were sampled. We included police officers from all ages and active in different neighborhoods. Social media such as WhatsApp and Facebook were used to sample youths and police officers for interviews. After the interviews they were asked if they knew other people that were interested, this way activating snowball sampling. The youths were promised an incentive of 15 euro at the end of the interview to ensure participation.

The interviews with youths started off with open questions about interactions with the police. Questions such as: 'What do you think about the police in Rotterdam?' were asked. Through these open questions most likely the concepts that were described above in the theories section would arise. If this did not happen then probing was used to deduct the sensitizing concepts out of the interviews. The concepts were trust, transparency, respectful treatment, role distancing, replacing oneself in the role of the other, stereotype activation and inhibition, deviance disavowal and avowal. A topic list was established on the basis of these sensitizing concepts (appendix I)

First of all, trust was measured in the beginning of the interview by asking on a scale from 1-10 how much youth have trust in the police. Secondly, respectful treatment was assessed with questions such as: 'could you explain how the police have treated you?' Thirdly, transparency was probed by asking to the feeling of objectivity that youths had when interacting with a police officer. Fourthly, for role distancing and taking the role of the other we used probing questions such as 'how does a police officer speak to you' and 'does a police officer put effort in a conversation'. Fifthly, stereotypes and deviance (dis)avowal were assessed by asking if youths ever felt that a police officer had a prejudice towards them. When all the concepts are discussed, new concepts could arise by doing inductive research.

Questions such as: ‘are there other ways for a police officer to interact with you’ will be asked.

The interviews with police officers started off with open questions about interactions with youths. Questions such as: ‘what kind of image do you think youths in this neighborhood have of the police?’ were asked. From there on, probing was used to ask to the same strategies that we asked the youths. The same sensitizing concepts were used for a topic list to interview police officers (appendix II).

This research used data from different researchers. As a result of researcher triangulation, the internal validity was ensured (Boeije, 2010). The construct validity was realized by internalizing questions from previous studies (f.e. Mazerolle et al., 2013). This research was supposed to be externally valid by including persons from different groups to match the research population (Boeije, 2010). However, due to sampling via the network of the researcher via social media the variation of different groups was limited. This negatively affected the external validity. Purposive sampling was used to sample a wider variety of youths via Facebook groups.

The theoretical generalization of this research was established by the use of grounded theory. This means a constant process of doing interviews and theorizing. When there were no new insights or concepts discussed in the interviews, saturation was reached and we could stop interviewing participants (Boeije, 2010; Creswell, 2013).

To ensure the privacy of the respondents, personal data such as names were anonymised by using numbers (see: Appendix III: Ethics and Privacy checklist). Other personal data that could be traced back to the respondents was intentionally left out. To ensure the transparency of the research project, informed consent was used (see: Appendix III: Informed consent form). The respondents were told about the goal of the research, the actors involved and the anonymity of their personal information. All youths were 16 years or older so parental approval to participate in this research was not needed. We mentioned in the informed consent form that this research collaborated with a doctoral research. What was not mentioned however was that their data will be stored until 2022. This could be a problem for the transparency and honest communication to the respondents.

## 4. Data

Together with the Master and Bachelor students, we conducted interviews with 37 youths and 15 police officers. The data of the youths are described in table 1 with the categories: age, neighborhood, level of education, reason for contact and trust in the police on a scale from 1-10. The neighborhoods were used to assess the percentage of people with a non-Western migration background (CBS, 2019). The chance that someone has a non-Western migration background is higher when the percentage is higher. Level of education can be comprised into three levels: higher; university and college, middle; high school and lower; practical schools (CBS, 2016). The reason for contact with police officers was also included in table 1. It was divided into five categories: alerting the police, ‘hanging around’ (Muller, 2016) being apprehended, getting a fine and getting arrested by the police (Tyler, 2011). The data of the police officers are described in table 2 with the categories: years active, district and type of police officer. There was an even distribution in policing with 5 emergency and 7 community police officers.

Table 1: Data Youths

Youth' respondent	Age	Neighborhoods' percentage of people with a Non-Western migration background	Level of education	Reason for contact	Trust in the police
1	25	56%	Higher	Alert	6
2	19	37%	Higher	Apprehension	6
3	24	37%	Higher	Alert	8,5
4	23	18%	Higher	Apprehension	9
5	23	37%	Higher	Alert/Hanging around	8
6	25	37%	Higher	Fine	8
7	22	25%	Higher	Alert	7
8	18	38%	Middle	Arrested	6
9	20	38%	Middle	Apprehension	6
10	21	38%	Higher	Apprehension	7
11	23	38%	-	Arrested	3
12	18	-	Middle	Apprehension	7,5
13	23	38%	Higher	Fine	9
14	16	-	Middle	Arrested	5
15	17	38%	Middle	Alert	8/9
16	21	25%	Middle	Alert	7
17	19	-	Middle	Fine	7
18	16	56%	Middle	Apprehension	7,5/8
19	17	25%	Middle	Arrested	3
20	22	38%	Higher	Alert	8,5
21	23	38%	Higher	Apprehension	7
22	29	56%	-	Arrested	6,5
23	23	56%	Higher	Fine	7
24	24	47%	Middle	Alert/Apprehension	6,5
25	28	47%	Higher	Apprehension	8
26	21	56%	Higher	Alert/Apprehension	7,5/8
27	23	56%	Higher	Hanging around	6
28	19	38%	-	Hanging around	7,5

				Arrested	
<b>29</b>	-	37%	Higher	Arrested	5/5,5
<b>30</b>	25	38%	Higher	Fine	7
<b>31</b>	27	38%	Higher	Apprehension	- (little trust)
<b>32</b>	21	37%	Higher	Alert	4
<b>33</b>	23	28%	Higher	Apprehension	7
<b>34</b>	23	-	-	Arrested	7
<b>35</b>	21	28%	-	Hanging around	7
<b>36</b>	25	-	-	Arrested	6
<b>37</b>	19	56%	Higher	Arrested/Fine	5,5/6

Table 2: Data Police officers

Police officer	Years active	District	Type of officer
<b>1</b>	Academy	Rotterdam	Academy
<b>2</b>	3	Marconiplein	Emergency
<b>3</b>	5	Marconiplein	Community/youth officer
<b>4</b>	7	Marconiplein	Community/youth officer
<b>5</b>	41	Roermond	Community
<b>6</b>	25	-	Community
<b>7</b>	13	Zeeland – West-Brabant	‘Flex team’
<b>8</b>	31	-	Community/Detective
<b>9</b>	20	-	Emergency
<b>10</b>	8	-	Emergency
<b>11</b>	26	-	Emergency
<b>12</b>	15		Community
<b>13</b>	12	Assen/Eden	‘Everything’
<b>14</b>	11	-	Community/youth officer
<b>15</b>	19	-	Emergency

## 5. Findings

The findings will first explain replacing yourself in the role of the other not as an active strategy but as a precondition for the strategies (figure 2). After that, the main strategy and emic term: ‘leveling’ is divided into ‘intrarole’ and ‘extrarole’ leveling (figure 3). Lastly, the findings will show the meaning of respectful treatment and transparency for youths and how they are related to the needs in an interaction. Almost all interviews were in Dutch; the original quotes are enclosed in Appendix IV.

Figure 2: Proliferation of strategies on procedural justice

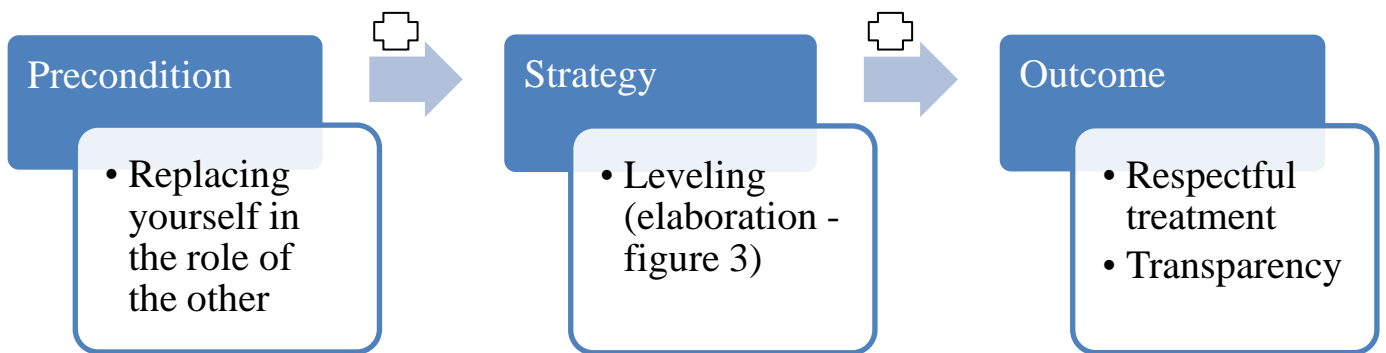
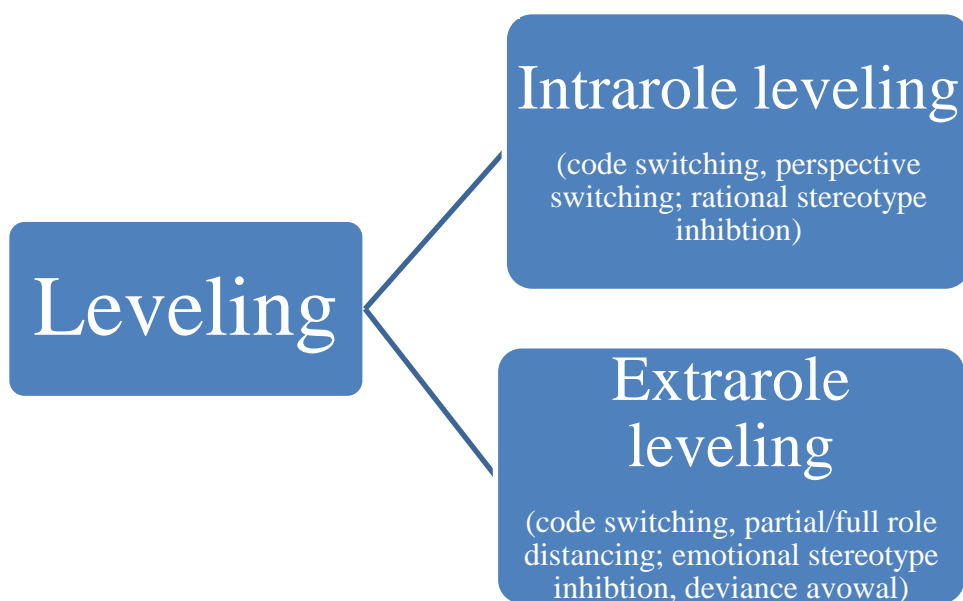


Figure 3: Code tree: elaboration on strategies



### 5.1 Replacing yourself in the role of the other

A precondition for leveling is always to replace yourself in the role of the other, to see things from the perspective of the other. If police officers or youths are not able to do this, they stay on their own level. This police officer said:

*“Well, you also have to understand someone else's situation and also have to be able to place yourself in someone's situation in order to be able to make contact with them. And then you come to leveling; you can't go into the situation aggressively because you won't get good interaction out of it”* (police officer 1).

Replacing yourself in the role of the other leads to an understanding of the other, which can be used to level with the other. A police officer said the following about a group youths that always get together near a football stadium:

*“For us that was weird, but if you keep asking questions during a conversation, a youth says: ‘listen we live in a small social house because uh my mother does not work and my dad has low schooled work. But I have five brothers and sisters in all ages; I’m going mad at home.’ Then I can understand that a youth like that goes outside with his buddies”* (police officer 2).

Police officers can also learn about the other by placing themselves in their shoes. Police officers for instance said that they can understand that an apprehension is not a pleasant experience for a youth. Next time an officer apprehends someone, it can be done in a more respectful manner.

Youths can also replace themselves in the role of the police officer. This leads to an understanding why they act aggressive in a situation and more respect for their role as police officer. A youth’ respondent notes that police officers could experience traumatizing things that affect their interactions with the next person.

### 5.2 Leveling

Police officers already have power, but when they stay on their own level they unnecessary show off this power according to youth’ respondents. Most youths do not accept this; they want to speak to police officers on equal ground. Deviance disavowal can be used by police officers and youths to not talk about the assumed deviance by the other. This way the two people do not level with each other. For example when this youth’ respondent talked about a police officer:

*“They also said leave your phone here and don't run away when that wasn't my intention at all. Then I said this is a prejudice you're making now, then they said ‘no just in case’. (...) so he denied it while... That was just a very nasty prejudice they made. (...) that they constantly have a prejudice on the basis of skin color”* (youth’ respondent 14).

Police officers can also say that they they treat everyone equally and thereby not accept the deviant stereotype that a youth gives them. For example when this police officer is accused of discrimination: *“how the hell can I discriminate against you? (...) Whether you were purple, black or pink; you're a group causing some nuisance, not someone else. So that's why I'm talking to you”* (police officer 11).

'Leveling' is an emic term; a word said by the respondents, and is described as interacting on the same level as the people in the group you interact with. In the interaction with youths, leveling is predominately about interacting without being too authoritarian, as this police officer said: *"yeah you know, with young people you just have to have a sense of what they think. You shouldn't be too authoritarian, like I'm the boss and I'm going to tell them what to do. No, you have to level with them a bit"* (police officer 7).

There are two types of leveling defined, 'intrarole' leveling and 'extrarole' leveling. Intrarole leveling is about leveling inside the role of police officer and by using extrarole leveling police officers step out their role to interact with youths. For example:

*"Um... well, not asking for ID right away might help. First we have a chat (...) and at the end we ask: oh by the way, do you have some ID on you? Instead of asking for proof of identity right away, that is a strategy"* (police officer 13).

By not choosing to ask for ID right away, this police officer moves away from one's role and starts chatting; starts extrarole leveling. At the end the police officer kindly asks for an ID, which can be described as intrarole leveling.

### 5.3 Intrarole leveling

Intra role leveling can be defined as interacting at the same level as a specific target group while staying inside one's role. In this subchapter the examples of how intrarole leveling can be used in an interaction will be described. Examples of intrarole leveling are code switching, perspective switching and rational stereotype inhibition.

First of all, if police officers and youths just look at the role of the other, they can use code switching to make the other understand them. Police officers explain code switching as choosing how they interact dependent on the target audience. They can choose for informal use of words when they interact with youths and get closer to them. Like this police officer said: *"Yeah I wouldn't use expensive fancy words they don't understand I'd just try to level with them. (...) Because that way you can win them over on your side. And if you go in a different way you create more distance than you get closer to them"* (police officer 1). Youths can also switch to codes that seem appropriate in an interaction with a police officer. For example in the following fragment:

*"when I talk to a police officer I will show my highest vocabulary because I don't want to get into trouble. And in general you have less problems if you're clever in that sense. So in general I manage to get out of it very well. (...) If you talk with a very good ABN (Generally Accepted Dutch) and a strong vocabulary, they look at you very differently than if you start talking street slang"* (youth' respondent 4).

However, not all youths are able to switch between different codes. Especially youths from non-marginalized groups are more able to code-switch than youths from marginalized groups (Anderson, 2019). This respondent said: *"If I come to interact with the police, they'll always think I'm a very decent guy. And that's what I want to show them. But that's very easy for me as a boy who grew up in Hillergersberg and has a light r, is white"* (youth' respondent 4).

Code switching is also a way of judging a situation dependent on what needs to be done. *"You do not always have to be the police officer who punishes by giving fines, sometimes you*



*have to make sure of social assistance”* (police officer 1). Youths view that they are treated with respect when they are helped by the police.

Secondly, police officers can go further than looking at the role of the other by looking at their own roles as police officers from the point of view of others; this can be called perspective switching. According to youth respondents police officers can best ask themselves how they appear to the people they talk to. Because police officers do sometimes not know how they are perceived by youths. A respondent said:

*“For example, he reacts aggressive and then he doesn't realize it and then I react aggressively. So he doesn't know why I react aggressively. But if he would look from my perspective he might think: I started out aggressively and maybe that's why he's reacting this way”* (youth' respondent 8).

Perspective switching is also about learning about the other first (Mead, 1934, as cited in Turner, 2001). A respondent talked about an arrest in a mosque where the police used a police dog: *“It's a house of faith and you know Islamic people don't like dogs. And if you then run in there with dogs. Then I don't think they're very willing to give tips about extremism or other things that are happening in the community”* (youth' respondent 1).

Perspective switching can also be done by youths replacing themselves in the roles of police officers. A youth would then see how a police officer sees a situation and by doing so the youth realizes that the action of the police officer was not personally directed against the youth.

*“For example you see a car coming at you from 400 metres and you say: ‘okay tell me what is the skincolor of that person driving toward us.’ Then that person says: ‘I cannot see that’, then we say ‘yeah we cannot either’. The person says: ‘yeah you're right’, then you solved the situation and you can continue with your job”* (police officer 3).

The fragment above is also an example of rational stereotype inhibition which is related to perspective switching. Almost all youths said that they feel police officers have prejudices and act on stereotypes. Most stereotypes described are on the basis of age, gender and clothing style. A lot of respondents also talked about stereotypes on the basis of ethnicity. Youths also hold stereotypes about the police. For example that all police officers are violent and aggressive. Stereotype activation leads to profiling youths as hostile or criminal. This profiling leads to a more aggressive interactive strategy of police officers with youths. For example a youth respondent talked about a police officer with an aggressive approach just outside a football stadium: *“yeah I think that that particular cop finds it okay to treat me that way because he thinks there are just idiots who should be treated as such because they do not listen. But I do not find that a modus operandi (...) He thought I was a hooligan or something”* (youth' respondent 10).

Rational stereotype inhibition takes place when police officers give more clarity about why they stopped a person. If the youth thought at first this was because of ethnicity, then police officers sometimes can explain it is a random stop. Police officers can also verify stereotypes by asking them about it. A youth' respondent talks about a confrontation with police officers:

*“They immediately suspect something and step towards me. They could have stepped up to you in an open way (...) just normal greetings and, uh, how's it going? I have questions about this and stuff. And then good night and then they go back to what they were doing”* (youth' respondent 12).

Youths said that media increases the negative stereotypes police officers have of them. But media also impact stereotypes youths have of police officers. Police officers can talk to youths to let them know that those stereotypes are not applicable to them: *“Well, yeah, just a chat usually has a positive effect. Because then... those guys live with the idea that police abroad only come to deliver beatings and, uh, write fines”* (police officer 2)

#### *5.4 Extrarole leveling*

If police officers really want to level with youths, they also really have to be on equal ground. That means moving away from the role of police officer, which is a role inherently more powerful than the role of the youth. Extrarole leveling is interacting on the same level as a specific group while moving away from one's role. The examples of extrarole leveling such as code switching and role distancing will be discussed in this subchapter.

First of all, police officers could use code switching as a form of extrarole leveling. If they really want to level with them, police officers can use language that seems more appropriate to youths while simultaneously moving away from their role as authority figure. This police officer said for example:

*“Yeah, but it depends on what age group you're talking about. With children you do it in a childish way but with young people you try to get in touch with them in a nonchalant way. If you want to be above them in terms of behavior and want to play the boss, I think you turn them against you. And if you are just a little accessible and apply their style a little bit that they are much more open towards you”* (police officer 1).

Secondly, police officers can partially distance themselves, from the role of 'the police'. Doing so, they let the other in the interaction know that their as much human as they are (Goffman, 1961 as cited in Turner, 2001, p. 249). Police officers could show the person behind the uniform. Youths do not feel anymore that police officers have power over them or that they are their enemies. Officers can achieve this simply with making jokes:

*“Yes... I think it's a good thing that they can also make jokes during work because (...) most people think that police officers are always aggressive and tough but there are plenty of police officers who are also relaxed and can laugh and chat. And that's okay with me. (...) I prefer a policeman who can have a bit of a chat and just treat me like a normal person”* (youth' respondent 15).

Emotional stereotype inhibition is related to partial role distancing and takes place when a police officer and a youth talk more on a personal level and see that they are not the stereotypes of their group. This leads to the feeling that the police is human just like the youth or the other way around (Graham & Lowery, 2004; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006).

*“I didn't expect that you could have such a nice conversation with a police officer. I never really did... I never really got in touch with the police but what I hear from people and what I see on social media does bring out an image in you but uh... we didn't see that image that day just... far from it... so I was a bit shocked, I thought: officers can be really relaxed and chill”* (youth' respondent 15).

These little talks also help youths realize that the police is not against them and this helps in the long run. This police officer said the following: *“that only starts to change when there are people in that group, um... that uh... who've known me longer or better. Uh, and actually sticking their necks out from that group in front of me saying, "Yeah, but he's not like that" (police officer 4).*

Thirdly, police officers could fully distance themselves from the role of the police and say that they are not going to act on their role. For example, due to the corona virus outbreak people could risk a fine when they come together as a group:

*“He also said if I want I can give you a fine but what use does that have. He said there are enough situations on the street that are far more dangerous and deadly such as people who drive too fast. I will give a fine to those people but not to you who are just sitting and talking and doing nothing” (youth’ respondent 15).*

The police officer in this fragment distances himself completely from his role. He can give a fine as police officer but he will not do that because he understands the situation of the youth.

However, when police officers distance themselves from their roles and move to their core-selves, they are also more vulnerable (Turner, 2007). This police officer said: *“you shouldn't make it too personal. It's not about what happens to you, it's about what your uniform does to the other person. So the uniform is the reason they react like that” (police officer 14).* Some police officer that do take it too personal may react aggressively to defend their core-selves, thereby treating youths less respectfully.

When police officers fully move away from their role they also can use deviance avowal and joke about deviant stereotypes that police officers have. This way they can show that they are not those stereotypes. As a result officers create clarity about what they are actually going to do. For instance like this youth’ respondent said: *“the police officer came driving next to us and I think he was joking of ‘hey may I see your ID you get a fine’ and after that he started laughing and said ‘no that’s a joke’ and we immediately had a nice conversation” (youth’ respondent 15).*

Youths can also show they are more than the deviant stereotype. For example when this youth’ respondent went biking without a bicycle light: *“They said, ‘ ma'am, you don't have any lights.’ And I said: ‘you're absolutely right about that!’ (laughs) (...) ‘And I understand very well if you'll give me a uh... if you have to fine me for that.’ And then we had a little chat about it and they finally let me go without a fine.(...) because I feel like they've calmed down a bit. Kind of like, oh we're just really dealing with a human here” (youth’ respondent 30).*

### *5.5 Respectful treatment*

What youths want the most in an interaction with a police officer is being treated respectfully. Respectful treatment means taking the other seriously and showing them dignity, respect and attention (Tyler, 2004). For most youths this means that an officer is relaxed, kind and takes the other in the conversation seriously. If a youth wants self-verification in an interaction this is important. For example this youth’ respondent said:

*If they talk calmly with you, that is very important to me; if they are going to react angry then the other person also gets agitated but if they talk calmly with you then I also talk very calmly. And the friendliness, like you're on an equal level, you know. You know that in theory they have power over*

*you. But I don't want to have a conversation like I'm talking to the king. I want to have a conversation with an equal"* (youth' respondent 4).

However respectful treatment also means that officers just have to their jobs without authority and violence but also without overly-friendly gestures. Youths want this in an interaction because they want to leave as soon as possible and they do not want to become friends with a police officer. If police officers do their job and nothing more, then youths that did nothing wrong can leave. Both parties have what they want and profitable exchangeable payoffs are reached (Turner, 2007).

### *5.6 Transparency*

There are two different aspects of transparency defined: clarity and honesty. Clarity means giving a reason and an explanation (De Boer, 2020). But it also means that all police officers need to communicate on the same level. If one police officer says A and the other says B, trust of the youths in the police quickly declines. Like this youth' respondent said:

*"We thought it was very weird because I had asked specifically from you that we can be helped there is that really guaranteed, and then they said yes I'm sure. And then we arrive and he says no we can't help you. And then we said but we just heard that you can and that it was guaranteed"* (youth' respondent 7).

Honesty means, of course, being honest and open in the interaction with a youth. Youths value honesty because of two different reasons. First of all, if a police officer is honest, then a youth sees it as a sign of equal treatment this is related to self-verification (Turner, 2007). This police officer said:

*"I'm not going to drive around somewhere and stop some group of 4 or 5 Moroccans and say: 'hey may I have your ID'. That's no reason, there has to be something for it before I stop someone. And for me it makes no difference whether it's 4 white guys or 4 tinted guys. If they don't bother me I'm fine"* (police officer 11).

Secondly, honesty leads to a certain pattern of what they can expect from an interaction; this is related to profitable exchangeable payoffs (Turner, 2007).

## 6. Conclusion

The research question that guided this research was: *'How do interactions between police and youth in Rotterdam impact trust in the police in Rotterdam?'* This research question was relevant because of the assumed scientific benefits of elaboration and proliferation. Societal relevance lay in the importance of interactions for trust in the police, especially for marginalized groups. The policy relevance of this research would be to suggest effective strategies to interact with youths for the police in Rotterdam.

The micro-sociological strategies and procedural justice were elaborated in the findings. Replacing yourself in the other was explained as a precondition for the strategies intrarole and extrarole 'leveling'. Intrarole leveling was described with examples of code switching, perspective switching and rational stereotype inhibition. Extrarole leveling consists of partial role distancing which includes emotional stereotype inhibition and full role distancing which includes deviance avowal.

To answer the research question, first the sub-questions that represent the different strategies must be answered. In order to have the micro-sociological strategies proliferate respectful treatment and transparency which both lead to trust in the police, the elaborations are used.

Replacing yourself in the role of the other is a precondition of the strategies intrarole and extrarole leveling. Replacing yourself in the other leads to empathy via intrarole leveling such as code switching and perspective switching. Empathy leads to treating the other more with ease and this results in more respectful treatment (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). With code switching, youths will understand police officers better which will lead to better communication between the two. Improvements in the interaction will likely lead to respectful treatment in the eyes of youths. Furthermore, by speaking on their level, youths will see that police officers are not rigid authority figures. Youths feel that they are treated more equal and thus more respectful. Perspective switching is learning about the other and then seeing how your actions affect them (Mead, 1934). This will lead to learning more effective ways to treat youths, in their eyes more respectful treatment. Perspective switching also leads to more clarity about a situation which positively impacts transparency.

Role distancing is an example of extrarole leveling that results from replacing yourself in the role of the other and positively impacts respectful treatment. If police officers distance to a humane role, youths see this as a sign of respect. With role distancing they can let the other in the conversation know that they do not take their role over-seriously (Goffman, 1961, as cited in Turner, 2001, p.249). In the interaction, the police officer has no power over the youths; they are on equal ground. Treating a youth on equal ground positively impacts respectful treatment. If police officers move away from their role as police officer they really can talk as human to human to a youth. Moreover, police officers can fully distance themselves from their role. For example not giving a fine is seen as an act of kindness and thus as respectful treatment in the eyes of youths.

However, police officers that distance themselves from their roles could negatively impact outcome-based trust. If a police officer does not give someone a fine this could negatively affect someone's sense of crime reduction (Tyler, 2005). This is mostly found for non-marginalized groups that see police officers mostly as crime fighters. This is because this group demands something from an officer: crime reduction. Moreover, when police officers

move away from their role they are more vulnerable in interactions with youths. Because when people move away from their roles to their core-selves, they are in a more emotional state (Turner, 2007). Moving to a more emotional state can be helpful in an interaction with youths who want to level with police officers. However, it can be negative when faced with youths that see interactions as a time-waste of their real job: crime reduction. Police officers could therefore choose to move away from their role depending on the target group.

Stereotypes activation leads to an aggressive interactive strategy which negatively impacts respectful treatment (Graham & Lowery, 2004). This is reinforced by youths also reacting in a hostile way which leads to even more aggressiveness from police officers and less respectful treatment in the eyes of youths (Piliavin & Briar, 1964). Emotional stereotype inhibition leads to seeing that police officers or youths are not the negative stereotypes they previously believed (Graham & Lowery, 2004). This leads to more empathy which positively impacts respectful treatment (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006).

Stereotype activation also negatively impacts transparency. If police officers have little time they can use (unconscious) stereotypes to scan and handle a situation quickly. This is because of the need profitable exchangeable payoffs in an interaction, such as time (Turner, 2007). The situation is not scanned properly or with evidence and this negatively impacts fairness and transparency. With rational stereotype inhibition a police officer can explain that they are not acting on a stereotype but according to, for example, a protocol. This gives clarity and fairness in the eyes of the youths and thus positively impacts transparency. This particular form of inhibition is not described in the academic literature.

Deviance avowal is used by making jokes about the assumed deviance by the other. It is used to show the other that there is a person behind the deviance (Adler & Adler, 2006). As a result, the other treats that person more respectfully. Deviance disavowal is used to turn away from the assumed deviance by the other (Adler & Adler, 2006). Police officers could not talk about deviance at all, which leads to less transparency. However they could also explain that they treat everyone equally. This will lead to openness and more transparency.

This research is scientifically relevant because it presents an elaboration on the strategies, namely as replacing yourself in the role of the other as a precondition for the strategy of leveling. Intrarole and extrarole leveling lead to respectful treatment and transparency and thus proliferated procedural justice theory. The societal relevance is that of the importance of trust in the police. Especially people from marginalized groups do not have a high trust rate (CBS, 2015; Tyler, 2005). There are signals from this research that interactions could have a large positive impact on trust in the police for people in marginalized groups. Community policing can be used especially in neighborhoods with a high percentage of marginalized groups. The policy relevance was about developing strategies for police officers to effectively interact with youths. This research has shown that the ability to replace yourself in the role of the other can be easily learned. Trust in the police can be achieved even with a limited budget via the implementation of interaction strategies such as intrarole leveling and extrarole leveling.

The research question: *'How do interactions between police and youth in Rotterdam impact trust in the police in Rotterdam?'* can be answered by looking at the strategy of leveling. Youths want to level with police officers and see them as normal people where they interact with. This is comparable with the societal change of management by command to

management by negotiation (De Swaan, 1981), or from external force to self force (Elias & Jephcott, 1994). Youths do not want to be bossed around all the time by police officers but want talk to them as if they were equals. This research has also found signals that management by negotiation is especially important for youths from marginalized groups. This contrasts previous notions; that people at the margins of society need to be ruled by command or by external forces (Elias & Jephcott, 1994). If police officers and youths both realize person behind the uniform and the training suits then respectful treatment and transparency are reinforced and therefore trust in the police.

## 7. Discussion

The limitations of this research mainly stemmed from the pandemic ‘covid-19’ and the result of a semi-lockdown.

First of all it was not possible to interview face to face. As a consequence it was not possible to react to facial and body gestures. This made it more difficult to look for hidden layers behind the words we heard over the phone.

Secondly, the method to sample respondents via social media could also be regarded as a limitation. Especially in the early stages of data collection, we mostly interviewed people from our own network thereby not accounting for differences in education and (non-)marginalized groups. To overcome this limitation, purposive sampling was used to approach youths in Facebook-groups.

Lastly, and most importantly, it was not possible to do non-participant observations. As a result we were not able to see the strategies work in real life situations. It was more difficult to assess if a strategy that police officers explained in interviews also would work in real life. This affected the validity of this research.

Further research could test the same strategies with non-participant observations and see if they hold up in real interactions. In addition, further research could search an explanation for the differences found between people from marginalized groups and non-marginalized groups. Further research could study if interactions are indeed more important for youths from marginalized groups and why.

Due to the recent and global ‘George Floyd’ protests against a discriminating police it is hard to believe that youths from marginalized groups will ever have trust in the police. However this research shows that the least these two groups can do is choosing to interact and level with the other, before reacting with aggression and violence.

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## Appendix I: Topic list youths

- This interview is about the way you are treated by the police in Rotterdam and your thoughts about it.
- I'm not interested whether you have violated the law or anything, the purpose of this research is to investigate how youths feel about their interactions with the police.
- This research is collaborative with a promotion research and is shared with other students of the Erasmus University Rotterdam.
- Not all questions are mandatory; if you don't feel like answering a particular question, please tell me. We will skip the question and move on to the next one.
- This interview is of course completely anonymous, I will make sure your name and other personal details cannot be traced back to you.
- We want to offer you 15 euro's for your contribution to this research project.

Can you tell me a little bit about yourself?

- Age
- Neighborhood
- Study/school
- Hobbies

What do you think about the police in Rotterdam?

What mark would you assign to your trust in the police?

Would you call the police if necessary?

If a police officer would approach you, how confident are you that he will treat you right?

Why?

What mark would the police give you, based on their trust in you as a citizen?

Have you ever had a negative experience with the police?

- What happened?
- Where did it happen? Who was involved, what time of the day was it?
- What did you think about the attitude of the police officer? (unreasonable, authoritative appearance, friendly, calm)
- Was this police officer typical for other police officers in this neighbourhood?
- What could the police officer have done differently for this interaction to be positive?

How should an interaction like this ideally go? What were initially your expectations of this interaction?

Did you undertake any actions to make sure this interaction would go according to your expectations?

What do you think that the expectations of this police officer were?

What did you do to make sure you'd fulfill the expectations of the police officer?

What would you do differently if this interaction would happen again?

Did this experience change your opinion about the police? How?

Did you ever feel like a police officer has been prejudiced about you?

Did you ever consider to submit a complaint about a police officer?

Have you ever had a positive interaction with the police?

- \*insert same questions as negative interaction\*

Do you think the police functions well? Are they good at what they do?  
What makes a police officer a good one? What is needed for that?  
How should the police treat youth? Should it differ from adults?  
Do you think the Dutch police receive enough respect? Why?  
Can you identify with the police, do you think they are persons as you are or are they different? Would you consider working for the police for example?  
What can the police do to improve the mark you gave them at the beginning of the interview?

## Appendix II: Topic list police officers

At the beginning of each interview an introduction is given where the following topics are discussed:

### Introduction

- Subject: This interview is about dealing with youths and about the strategies you use to make this contact run as smoothly as possible.
- You are not obliged to answer all the questions, if there is something you would rather not talk about, please let us know.
- These interviews will be used for a scientific article on interactions between youths and police officers in Rotterdam.
- This interview is completely anonymous; names, contact details, addresses or other personal information will never be disclosed.
- We do not write about you as an individual in this article, but we put together all the stories we hear from all (about 80) interviews to understand the most common obstacles and possible solutions for interactions between youths and police officers.

We'll start with a few introductory questions about yourself

- Why did you choose to work for the police?
- How long have you worked for the police?
- What is your job at the moment?
- Are you still satisfied with your job at the moment?
- What do you think is the most fun and least fun aspect of your job?
- If your colleagues would describe you, what kind of policeman would they say you are?

Now we are going to talk about interactions with youths

- What kind of image do you think youths in this neighborhood have of the police? (Why?)
- And what kind of image do you have of youths in this neighborhood? (Different image of different groups?)
- In addition to your work as a policeman, do you have contact with youths in this neighborhood in any other way?-
- Do you interact differently with youths than with adults in your work? (In what way?)
- Are there any strategies you use to improve contact with youths?
  - o Ask for an example where such a strategy had a positive effect.
  - o For clarification: possible strategies include stepping out of your role as an agent, showing interest, listening to young people's stories, explaining rules.
  - o Keep asking: (think of concepts of code switching, emotional intelligence, meeting the needs of young people, procedural justice)
- How do you decide when to use such a strategy?
- Do you feel that youths trust you more because of this kind of strategies?
- Are there other ways you use to gain more trust from youths?
- What do you think a youth expects or needs when interacting with a police officer?
  - o Examples for clarification: a policeman who is honest, who explains things, who abides by the rules, who is humane, shows understanding.
- Do you think you can always meet these expectations? Why or not?
- What are your own expectations of a youth when you have contact during your work?
  - o Example: that they listen, show respect.
  - o How do you deal with a youth that does not meet these expectations?
  - o If you notice that a youth has a disrespectful attitude, how do you react to that?

- Are there certain signals you pay attention to that influence whether or not you find a youth trustworthy?
- Has it ever happened that youths feels personally attacked or thinks they are being discriminated against? (What do you do in such cases?) do you manage to convince the youth that you do not discriminate?
- Do youths sometimes show that they do not feel heard or understood? How do you deal with this?
- Can you remember an example of interaction with a young person that turned out to be very negative?
  - o Why did it go wrong and could you think of something afterwards that would have improved this interaction?

Now a few final questions:

- Would you like to change things in the work you do? Or to the way the police are organized?
- Do you have a picture of what would be the perfect police officer? And what would that look like?
- If you had to rate the trust between the police and young people, what would that be? (Is one person's trust in another higher or lower?) Why this grade? How could this grade be improved?
- That was the last question, do you want to say anything else about this subject?

## Appendix III: Ethics and Privacy checklist



### INSTRUCTION

This checklist should be completed for every research study that is conducted at the Department of Public Administration and Sociology (DPAS). This checklist should be completed *before* commencing with data collection or approaching participants. Students can complete this checklist with help of their supervisor.

This checklist is a mandatory part of the empirical master's thesis and has to be uploaded along with the research proposal.

The guideline for ethical aspects of research of the Dutch Sociological Association (NSV) can be found on their website ([http://www.nsv-sociologie.nl/?page\\_id=17](http://www.nsv-sociologie.nl/?page_id=17)). If you have doubts about ethical or privacy aspects of your research study, discuss and resolve the matter with your EUR supervisor. If needed and if advised to do so by your supervisor, you can also consult Dr. Jennifer A. Holland, coordinator of the Sociology Master's Thesis program.

### PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION

Project title: In search of trust: Understanding and improving youth-police interactions in superdiverse societies.

Name, email of student:

Name, email of supervisor:

Start date and duration:

Is the research study conducted within DPAS

YES

If 'NO': at or for what institute or organization will the study be conducted?

(e.g. internship organization)

## **PART II: TYPE OF RESEARCH STUDY**

Please indicate the type of research study by circling the appropriate answer:

1. Research involving human participants.

YES

If 'YES': does the study involve medical or physical research?

NO

*Research that falls under the Medical Research Involving Human Subjects Act ([WMO](#)) must first be submitted to [an accredited medical research ethics committee](#) or the Central Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects ([CCMO](#)).*

2. Field observations without manipulations that will not involve identification of participants.

NO

3. Research involving completely anonymous data files (secondary data that has been anonymized by someone else).

NO

## **PART III: PARTICIPANTS**

**(Complete this section only if your study involves human participants)**



Where will you collect your data?

Respondents will be interviewed through phone- or videocall.

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*Note: indicate for separate data sources.*

What is the (anticipated) size of your sample?

A total number of around 80 interviews will be conducted among Rotterdam police officers and with adolescents living in Rotterdam who have experienced police interactions.

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*Note: indicate for separate data sources.*

What is the size of the population from which you will sample?

The Rotterdam police force contains around 6000 people. How many of those exactly are patrol officers is unclear. There are around 77.000 people living in Rotterdam between the ages of 16 – 25.

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*Note: indicate for separate data sources.*

- 1. Will information about the nature of the study and about what participants can expect during the study be withheld from them? NO
- 2. Will any of the participants not be asked for verbal or written 'informed consent,' whereby they agree to participate in the study? NO
- 3. Will information about the possibility to discontinue the participation at any time be withheld from participants? NO

- |     |  |     |
|-----|--|-----|
| 4.  | Will the study involve actively deceiving the participants?<br><i>Note: almost all research studies involve some kind of deception of participants. Try to think about what types of deception are ethical or non-ethical (e.g. purpose of the study is not told, coercion is exerted on participants, giving participants the feeling that they harm other people by making certain decisions, etc.).</i> | NO  |
| 5.  | Does the study involve the risk of causing psychological stress or negative emotions beyond those normally encountered by participants?  | NO  |
| 6.  | Will information be collected about special categories of data, as defined by the GDPR (e.g. racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data for the purpose of uniquely identifying a person, data concerning mental or physical health, data concerning a person's sex life or sexual orientation)?                | NO  |
| 7.  | Will the study involve the participation of minors (<18 years old) or other groups that cannot give consent?   | YES |
| 8.  | Is the health and/or safety of participants at risk during the study?  | NO  |
| 9.  | Can participants be identified by the study results or can the confidentiality of the participants' identity not be ensured?   | NO  |
| 10. | Are there any other possible ethical issues with regard to this study?   | NO  |

If you have answered 'YES' to any of the previous questions, please indicate below why this issue is unavoidable in this study.

Respondents between the ages of 16 and 25 will be interviewed, so the sample may include minors. However, people from the age of 16 and up are deemed to be capable to give informed consent.

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What safeguards are taken to relieve possible adverse consequences of these issues (e.g., informing participants about the study afterwards, extra safety regulations, etc.).

Each respondent is informed about issues surrounding data protection, voluntary participation and the way the data will be used by the researchers. The interviewers ensure before the interview starts whether the respondent understands these issues.

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Are there any unintended circumstances in the study that can cause harm or have negative (emotional) consequences to the participants? Indicate what possible circumstances this could be.

The topic of the interviews revolve around police interactions with youth. We anticipate that some respondents may have had negative or even traumatic experiences. Recounting these events may cause distress.

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*Please attach your informed consent form in Appendix I, if applicable.*

#### **PART IV: DATA STORAGE AND BACKUP**

Where and when will you store your data in the short term, after acquisition?

De recordings of the interviews and the transcripts will be kept in the data vault of the Erasmus University Rotterdam. The recordings will be kept until October 2020. The transcripts will be preserved until December 2022.

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*Note: indicate for separate data sources, for instance for paper-and pencil test data, and for digital data files.*

Who is responsible for the immediate day-to-day management, storage and backup of the data arising from your research?

Willemijn Bezemer

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How (frequently) will you back-up your research data for short-term data security?

The Erasmus data vault is automatically backed up.

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In case of collecting personal data how will you anonymize the data?

All the names of respondents are anonymised in addition to other identifiable information such as street names and detailed descriptions of specific people.

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*Note: It is advisable to keep directly identifying personal details separated from the rest of the data. Personal details are then replaced by a key/ code. Only the code is part of the database with data and the list of respondents/research subjects is kept separate.*

## **PART VI: SIGNATURE**

Please note that it is your responsibility to follow the ethical guidelines in the conduct of your study. This includes providing information to participants about the study and ensuring confidentiality in storage and use of personal data. Treat participants respectfully, be on time at appointments, call participants when they have signed up for your study and fulfil promises made to participants.

Furthermore, it is your responsibility that data are authentic, of high quality and properly stored. The principle is always that the supervisor (or strictly speaking the Erasmus University Rotterdam) remains owner of the data, and that the student should therefore hand over all data to the supervisor.

Hereby I declare that the study will be conducted in accordance with the ethical guidelines of the Department of Public Administration and Sociology at Erasmus University Rotterdam. I have answered the questions truthfully.

Name student:

Name (EUR) supervisor:

Willemijn Bezemer



Date:

Date: 21-06-2020

## **INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

Since all interviews will be conducted through phone or videocall. The informed consent will be discussed verbally.

Interviews with youth:

### **Introductie**

- Onderwerp: Dit interview gaat over de manier waarop politieagenten met jou omgaan en wat je daarvan vindt.
- Ik ben niet geïnteresseerd in of en wat je misdaan hebt. Je hoeft niks te vertellen over het breken van de wet als je dat niet wilt. Het gaat mij alleen om de manier waarop de agent met jou omging.
- Je bent niet verplicht om alle vragen te beantwoorden, als er iets is waar je liever niet over praat, geef dat gerust aan.
- Deze interviews worden gebruikt voor een wetenschappelijk artikel over interacties tussen jongeren en agenten in Rotterdam.
- Dit interview is volledig anoniem, je naam, contactgegevens, adres of andere persoonlijke gegevens worden nooit vrijgegeven.
- We schrijven in dit artikel niet over jou als individu, maar we voegen alle verhalen die we horen uit alle (ongeveer 80) interviews samen om te begrijpen wat de meest voorkomende obstakels zijn in de interactie tussen jongeren en agenten.
- Als dank voor je tijd willen we je graag een tegemoetkoming van 15 euro aanbieden aan het einde van dit interview.

Interviews with police officers:

Aan het begin van elk interview wordt er een introductie gegeven waar de volgende onderwerpen aan bod komen:

### **Introductie**

- Onderwerp: Dit interview gaat over de omgang met jongeren en over de strategieën die u gebruikt om dit contact zo soepel mogelijk te laten verlopen.
- U bent niet verplicht om alle vragen te beantwoorden, als er iets is waar u liever niet over praat, geeft dat gerust aan.
- Deze interviews worden gebruikt voor een wetenschappelijk artikel over interacties tussen jongeren en agenten in Rotterdam.
- Dit interview is volledig anoniem, namen, contactgegevens, adressen of andere persoonlijke gegevens worden nooit vrijgegeven.
- We schrijven in dit artikel niet over u als individu, maar we voegen alle verhalen die we horen uit alle (ongeveer 80) interviews samen om te begrijpen wat de meest voorkomende obstakels zijn en wat mogelijke oplossingen zijn voor interacties tussen jongeren en agenten.

## Appendix IV: Original quotes

### *Replacing yourself in the role of the other*

*“Nouja dat je ook begrip moet hebben voor iemands anders situatie en ook in iemand moet kunnen verplaatsen om juist contact met ze te kunnen maken. En dan kom je bij het levelen terecht; je kan niet met een gestrekt been de situatie ingaan want daar ga je geen goede interactie uit krijgen.” (page 15) (police officer 1)*

*“Voor ons is dat gewoon vreemd, maar... als je dan door gaat vragen, tijdens zo'n gesprek, zegt zo'n gast van, maar luister, wij wonen in een uh... in een kleine sociale huurwoning. Want uh... m'n moeder werkt niet en m'n vader die heb laaggeschool werk bijvoorbeeld, maar ik heb wel 5 broers en zussen in alle leeftijden, ik word helemaal gek thuis. Dan snap ik het wel dat een gozer naar buiten gaat met z'n matties.” (page 15) (police officer 2)*

### *Leveling*

*“Gelijk ook gewoon ... ze gingen eerst praten maar toen ze gegevens vroegen toen liep ik ff'tjes weg maar ... gewoon om te bellen met m'n zus maar toen zeiden ze ook gelijk van laat je telefoon hier en niet wegrennen terwijl dat helemaal niet mijn intentie was. Dat is gelijk een vooroordeel die ze trekken dat ik ga wegrennen. Ja dat vond ik niet fijn. Toen zei ik ook dit is een vooroordeel die u nu trekt, toen zeiden ze van nee gewoon voor het geval dat. (...) Ja hij ontkende het zeker terwijl.... Dat was gewoon een hele nare vooroordeel dat die maakte.” (page 15) (youth' respondent 14)*

*“Hoe kan ik jou nu in godsnaam discrimineren? (...) en ja als je nu paars zwart of roze was, jullie zijn een groep die wat de overlast veroorzaken en niet iemand anders. Dus daarom spreek ik jullie aan.” (page 15) (police officer 11)*

*“Ja zeker wel. Ja, ja weet je kijk met jongeren moet je gewoon een beetje aanvoelen wat vinden zij? Kijk daar moet je niet te autoritair, te naar toe stappen van ik ben het baasje en ik ga even vertellen hoe het moet. nee je moet een beetje met hun op hetzelfde niveau gaan levelen” (page 16) (police officer 7)*

*“ehm... nou ja niet meteen om een legitimatiebewijs vragen kan ook wel eens helpen. Eerst even een praatje aangaan (...) en op het einde pas vragen van oh trouwens heb je nog iets van een legitimatiebewijs bij je in plaats van he? In plaats van aan de voorkant meteen om een legitimatiebewijs vragen dat is een strategie.” (page 16) (police officer 13)*

### *Intrarole leveling*

*“Ja ik zou geen dure chique woorden gebruiken die ze toch niet begrijpen ik zou wel gewoon op niveau proberen te houden.(...) Omdat je op die manier hun ook aan jou zijde weet te winnen. En als je op een andere manier dr in gaat creëer je meer afstand dan dat je dichterbij ze komt.” (page 16) (police officer 1)*

*“wanneer ik met een politieagent praat dan komt mijn hoogste vocabulaire omhoog omdat ik niet in de problemen wil raken en over het algemeen heb je minder problemen als je slim bent in dat opzicht. Dan denken ze minder erg dat je een bedreiging bent. Dus over het algemeen kom ik er heel goed onderuit. (...) Als jij op een heel goed ABN en een sterkt vocabulaire dat gesprek aangaat dan kijken ze heel anders naar jou dan als jij met straattaal gaat praten.” (page 16) (youth’ respondent 4)*

*“als ik in aanraking kom met de politie dan zullen ze altijd denken dat ik een hele nette jongen ben. En dat wil ik ook wel uitstralen. Maarja dat is voor mij heel makkelijk als jongen die in Hillergersberg is opgegroeid en een lichte r heeft, blank is” (page 16) (youth’ respondent 4)*

*“lang niet altijd hoeft je de agent te zijn die een straf uitdeelt zoals een boete maar soms moet je ook zorgen dat er hulpverlening op gang komt.” (page 16) (police officer 1)*

*“Hij reageert bijvoorbeeld wat feller en dan heeft hij het niet door en dan reageer ik bijvoorbeeld ook fel toch. Hij weet dus niet waarom ik fel reageert. Maar als hij bijvoorbeeld vanaf mijn perspectief zou kijken zou hij misschien denken van ik ben fel begonnen en misschien dat hij daarom reageert.” (page 17) (youth’ respondent 8)*

*“t is een gebedshuis en je weet dat Islamitische mensen het niet zo hebben met honden. En als je dan bij een van de plekken die zij als heilige thuishaven ervaren, als je dan met honden daar naar binnen rent. Dan denk ik niet dat ze heel welwillend zijn om tips te geven over extremisme of over andere dingen die er spelen zoals over de gemeenschap.’ (page 17) (youth’ respondent 1)*

*“Dan zie je bijvoorbeeld een auto van 400 meter jouw kant op komen rijden en dan zeggen ze tegen diegene van nou zeg maar wat is de huidskleur van diegene onze kant op komt rijden. En dan zegt diegene ja dat kan ik niet zien, en dan zeggen wij ja wij ook niet. En dan is het ohja, en dan nou opgelost en dan ga je weer verder met je werk.” (page 17) (police officer 3)*

*“Ja ik denk dat die agent op dat moment goed handelen vind en dat die op dat moment goed handelen vind en dat die denkt dat er alleen maar mongolen rondlopen die alleen maar op zo’n niveau moeten worden aangesproken omdat ze dan niet luisteren maar ik vind dat niet echt een manier van werken.(...) Ja van hooligan ofzo alsof ik iets gek ging doen ofzo” (page 17) (youth’ respondent 10)*

*“Maar ze gaan dus gelijk van iets uit en stappen ze naar me toe. Ze hadden ook op een open manier naar je toe kunnen stappen. (...) Open manier gewoon normaal groeten en van uh hoe gaat het, ik heb vragen van hoe zit dit en zo. En dan fijne avond en dan gaan ze weer verder met waar je mee bezig was.” (page 17) (youth’ respondent 12)*

*“Nou, ja zomaar een praatje heeft vaak wel een positief effect. Want dan... die jongens leven natuurlijk met het idee dat politie in het buitenland alleen maar komt om klappen uit te delen en uh, bekeuringen te schrijven” (page 18) (police officer 2)*

### *Extrarole leveling*

*“Ja maar het ligt er dan aan over welke leeftijdsgroep je praat. Met kinderen doe je het wel op een kinderlijke manier maar met jongeren probeer je wel op een nonchalante manier in contact met ze te komen. Als je er hoog in gaat qua gedrag en dergelijke en de baas willen spelen denk ik dat je ze tegen je keert. En als je gewoon een beetje laagdrempelig en een beetje hun stijl weet toe te passen dat ze veel opener naar je toe zijn.” (page 18) (police officer 1)*



*“Ja... dat vind ik dus goed ook dat ze ook grapjes kunnen maken tussen het werk door want meeste mensen als je denkt aan de politie de meeste mensen denken dan van ja politie die altijd agressief is en hard overkomt maar er zijn genoeg politieagenten die ook relaxed zijn en die netjes kunnen lachen en praatje kunnen maken. En dat vind ik wel goed. (...) Ik heb liever een politieagent die een beetje een praatje kan maken en mij gewoon als een normaal mens kan behandelen.” (page 18) (youth’ respondent 15)*

*“Ja gewoon ... dat had ik niet verwacht dat je met een politieagent zo’n leuk gesprek kan hebben. dat had ik nooit echt ... want ik ben nooit echt met de politie in contact gekomen maar wat ik hoor van mensen en wat ik zie op social media brengt wel een beeld in je naar boven maar uh... dat beeld hebben we die dag helemaal niet gezien gewoon.. verre van dat... dus ik schrok wel een beetje, ik dacht van zo: politieagenten kunnen wel echt relaxed doen en chill zijn.” (page 18) (youth’ respondent 15)*

*“dat begint pas te veranderen op het moment dat er personen in die groep zitten uhm... die uh... die mij al langer of al beter kennen. Uh en eigenlijk vanuit die groep voor mij hun nek uitsteken door te zeggen van, ja, maar hij is niet zo.” (page 18/19) (police officer 4)*

*“Hij zei er zijn genoeg situaties op straat die gevaarlijker zijn en dodelijker van mensen die te hard rijden enzo. Zo iemand kan ik een boete geven maar jullie die hier gewoon niks aan het doen zijn gewoon een beetje zitten en een beetje praten maken.” (page 19) (youth’ respondent 15)*

*“Je moet het niet persoonlijk maken. het gaat op dat moment er niet om dat het met jou gebeurt, het gaat erom wat jij in jou uniform bij de ander doet. Dus het uniform is de reden waarom er zo wordt gereageerd.” (page 19) (police officer 14)*

*“En die politieagent kwam naast ons rijden en volgens mij maakte hij nog een grapje van eeh mag ik jullie id zien jullie krijgen boete en daarna begon die te lachen zei die nee joh grapje en gingen we gelijk een leuk gesprek hebben” (page 19) (youth’ respondent 15)*

*“ze zeiden van, ja mevrouw, u heeft geen lichten. Nou, oke, daar heb je helemaal gelijk in! (lacht) (...) als jullie mij een boete hiervoor moeten geven, dan begrijp ik het volledig. En toen hebben we er een beetje over gekletst en toen hebben ze me uiteindelijk laten gaan zonder boete. (...) Ja ja, ik heb het idee dat zij uh... dat ze... ja, een stukje rustiger werden. Stukje minder gepompt, opgepompt. Een beetje dat ze zoiets hadden van, oh we hebben hier ook gewoon echt met een mens te maken.” (page 19) (youth’ respondent 30)*

### *Respectful treatment*

*“En als ze rustig met je zijn dat vind ik heel belangrijk; ja gaan ze boos reageren dat raakt de tegenstander ook opgefokt maar als zij rustig zijn dan praat ik ook heel rustig. En de vriendelijkheid en alsof je op een gelijk level bent weet je. Je weet dat zij in theorie meer kunne maken. Maar ik hoef niet een gesprek te voeren alsof ik tegen de koning praat. Ik wil een gesprek voeren tegen een gelijke.” (page 19/20) (youth’ respondent 4)*

### *Transparency*

*“Wij vonden het heel raar want ik had nog specifiek gevraagd van je zegt dat we daar geholpen kunnen worden is dat echt gegarandeerd, en toen zeiden ze van ja ik weet het zeker. En dan komen we aan en dan zegt ie ja we kunnen je niet helpen. En toen zeiden we van ja we hoorden net dat het wel kan en dat het gegarandeerd was. En toen zei die van ja dat is niet zo en... ja toen reageerde hij niet meer.” (page 20) (youth’ repondent 7)*

*“Ik ga niet ergens rondrijden en ik zie een groepje waarvan 4 of 5 Marokkanen staan en ga ik stoppen van hey mag ik jullie legitimatiebewijs. Dat is geen reden, er moet iets voor zijn voordat ik ga controleren en voor mij heeft dat geen meerwaarde of het nu 4 blanke jongens zijn of 4 getinte jongens, ja. Als ik er geen last van heb dan vind ik het goed.” (page 20) (police officer 11)*