EFFECTS OF NOTE-TAKING AND TRUST LEVEL
ON SELF-DISCLOSURE OF PRISONERS

THESIS

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By

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This study investigated the effects of trust level and note-taking upon the level of self-disclosure among prisoners. Sixty inmates at a federal prison were administered the Rotter Interpersonal Trust Scale. Next, using a median split, participants were divided into two groups of high and low mistrust. Subjects within each of these groups were then randomly assigned to a high, low, or no note-taking condition. Each prisoner then discussed an intimate topic for thirty minutes. Level of self-disclosure was measured by an abbreviated version of the Rotter Incomplete Sentences Blank. No significant differences were found as a function of trust level or note-taking condition. Some implications for further research are suggested.
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EFFECTS OF NOTE-TAKING AND TRUST LEVEL ON SELF-DISCLOSURE OF PRISONERS

Note-taking is a relatively common practice among psychologists. Psychologists not only take notes about background information, but also about more personal information. This practice is especially common during initial intake interviews in which background information is recorded.

Previous research has indicated that certain behaviors of the therapist affect clients' attitudes. For example, studies have demonstrated that therapists who smoke are viewed less positively by their clients than therapists who do not smoke (Schneider, 1985). Similarly, clients perceptions appear to be adversely affected by therapists' use of profanity (McIlvain, 1978), by therapists' attire (Kerr & Dell, 1976) and by therapists' lack of eye contact (Barak, Patkin & Dell, 1982). Clients' attitudes have been examined because clients' positive impressions of therapists increase therapists' effectiveness as agents of change (Dorn & Day, 1985).

However, one area which has not been explored extensively is the effect of note-taking on clients' willingness to disclose intimate information. In view of the prevalence of the practice of note-taking, it seems
desirable to investigate the possible effects it may have. The practice of note-taking has been a constant source of disagreement among mental health professionals. Some therapists consider note-taking to be detrimental to the therapeutic process. In contrast, others have maintained that taking notes during an initial interview has no adverse effect upon either the clients' perceptions of the therapist or their willingness to provide intimate information. Freud contended that note-taking during the session makes an unfavorable impression on clients, impedes the attention of the therapist, and is generally not necessary in most situations (Rieff, 1977). The distracting nature of note-taking is further addressed by Edinburg, Zinburg and Kelman (1975) and MacKinnon and Michels (1971). Sullivan (1970) disapproved of note-taking for purposes other than the collection of social data, maintaining that clients are less able to talk openly when written records are being kept than when written records are not kept. Similarly, Langs (1979) opposes note-taking of any kind as it implies violations of privacy and confidentiality and precludes secure therapeutic relationships. Finally, some therapists maintain that the practice may cause clients to focus more on topics that elicit note-taking (Seligman, 1986; MacKinnon & Michels, 1971).

One of the strongest proponents of note-taking is
Benjamin, who describes the practice as "an integral part of the interviewing process" (Benjamin, 1987). Benefits include refreshing the therapist's memory, facilitating professional discussions of cases, and providing a means of self-monitoring in order to aid the therapist in professional development. Benjamin states further that clients may interpret lack of note-taking as indifference. Leon (1982) also approves of note-taking. He maintains that clients expect a certain amount of record-keeping and that, when properly explained, the practice need not adversely affect clients' perceptions.

It is generally assumed that the promise of confidentiality is an essential ingredient in inducing people to reveal important and intimate information to therapists. A study by Woods and McNamara (1980) investigated this question by means of an interview analogue. Undergraduates were administered a standardized interview composed of items requiring various levels of intimate responding under conditions that promised confidentiality, nonconfidentiality, or no expectation of confidentiality. Individuals receiving the promise of confidentiality were more open in the disclosure than those given nonconfidentiality instructions. To the extent that note-taking, regardless of reassurance by the interviewer, may imply nonconfidentiality, it would seem as if this variable may effect the extent to which individuals are
willing to disclose.

The debate on the merits of note-taking has been supported by relatively little systematic research. Hickling, Hickling, Sison and Radetsky (1984) used videotapes of simulated clinical interviews to assess clients' perceptions of therapy with and without note-taking. Their results indicate that therapists who do not take notes are rated higher on effectiveness, client reactions to sessions and total therapeutic impact, suggesting that note-taking is indeed detrimental to the therapeutic process.

**Correlates of Self-Disclosure**

One area in which note-taking may play a major role is in the client's willingness to disclose. This may be especially critical if the client is asked to discuss sensitive information. In a study by Miller, Ingham, Plant and Miller (1977) the relationship between self-disclosure and alcohol consumption was investigated. Among abstainers and moderate drinkers it was found that self-disclosure increased with increased levels of alcohol consumption for both men and women. However, among heavy drinkers self-disclosure tended to be somewhat lower.

The positive relationship between self-disclosure and mental health has been commonly espoused in both theory and practice. Among the dominant white population, the relationship has received some empirical support. Within
the black population, this relationship has received somewhat less empirical scrutiny. In a study by Duckro, Duckro, and Beal (1976) relationships between self-disclosure and three facets of diminished mental health among black college females were examined. The variable of anxiety was significantly related to self-disclosure in the direction opposite to that predicted by the theory of self-disclosure, (i.e., increased self-disclosure was not related to positive mental health).

In a study conducted by Lombardo and Fantasia (1976) the hypothesis that a high level of self-disclosure is indicative of psychological adjustment and self-actualization was tested. The Self-Disclosure scale, Social Avoidance and Distress, Fear of Negative Evaluation, Alienation and Repression-Sensitization scales were administered to 60 subjects. The results for all scales indicated that a high level of disclosure was associated with adjustment as measured by these scales. A second group of 94 subjects completed the Self-Disclosure scale and the Personal Orientation Inventory, a measure of self-actualization. The results indicated that high disclosers compared to low disclosers had achieved a higher level of self-actualization. That is, there were significant correlations between self-disclosure and measures of self-actualization such as Time Competence, Internal Support, Existentiality, Self-Acceptance and
Capacity for Intimate Contact.

Jourard (1964) has postulated a curvilinear relationship between self-disclosure and mental health. Too much or too little self-disclosure suggests relatively poor psychological adjustment. Strassberg and Kangas (1977) designed a study to examine some psychological adjustment correlates of self-disclosure within a population of psychiatric inpatients. Self-disclosure scores derived from a sentence completion test were correlated with MMPI performance for 25 male and 25 female adult psychiatric inpatients. Greater self-disclosure by female patients was found to be associated with higher elevations on Sc, Pt, and Si. High levels of disclosure by male patients were associated with higher levels on D and Pt and lower levels on Ma. These results suggest the possibility of an inverse relationship between self-disclosure and adjustment within a relatively disturbed population. Johnson and Dabbs (1976) conducted a study in which 72 subjects answered questions of low, moderate, and high intimacy value at one of three distances from an experimenter who adopted a neutral manner, induced liking, or disclosed about himself. Argyle and Dean’s "distance-equilibrium" hypothesis was supported. When answering questions of low and moderate intimacy value, subjects placed in close proximity to the experimenter spent significantly less time self-disclosing than did subjects placed further away. Further, subjects exposed to the
positive affect induction, who reported increased liking for the experimenter, disclosed no more than subjects in the neutral condition, and the effect of distance was independent of the relationship effect. The results suggest that modeling, rather than liking or distance facilitated self-disclosure, and Jourard and Friedman's assertion that subjects who liked the experimenter would disclose more when distance was reduced was called into question.

In another study Davis and Sloan (1974) found that interviewee disclosure was strongly facilitated by disclosure on the part of the interviewer, but was sustained at a high level only if the interviewer continued to disclose. Davis and Sloan also found that deep disclosures by interviewees showed somewhat greater originality of content than more shallow disclosures. These results suggested that the facilitating effect of the interviewer's self-disclosure was best interpreted in terms of social exchange theory rather than in response disinhibition or discriminative cuing terms.

Shapiro and Swensen (1977) hypothesized that the amount of self-disclosure in a dyadic interaction would be a function of self-concept level and subject gender. High self-concept individuals of both genders disclosed more than low self-concept individuals. Thelen and Brooks (1976) predicted that high-social-desirability subjects would make more positive statements about themselves than would
low-social-desirability subjects but that there would be no difference in level of self-disclosure. Additionally, because of a high need for social approval, it was predicted that high-social-desirability subjects would be influenced by modeled self-disclosure, whereas their low-social-desirability counterparts would not be influenced by modeled self-disclosure. Participants consisted of 60 male undergraduates divided into three treatment conditions designated as: positive disclosure model, negative disclosure model, and no model. Based on the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale, equal numbers of high and low scorers were assigned to the three conditions. Results indicated that high-social-desirability subjects in the no model condition failed to demonstrate a higher level of self-disclosure. However, as predicted, high-social-desirability subjects in the positive model condition made significantly more positive self-references and a lesser percentage of negative self-references than did high-social-desirability subjects in the negative model conditions. No differences between conditions were obtained for low-social-desirability subjects. Analysis of the data on level of self-disclosure revealed that subjects in the negative model condition were significantly more disclosing than subjects in the positive model condition or subjects in the no-model condition.

Allen (1974) asked the question, "When does exchanging
personal information constitute self-disclosure?" Sixty pairs of undergraduate males were paired. One of each pair then interviewed the other about sexual experience. Four measures of self-disclosure were obtained: respondents' questionnaire scores, experimenter's ratings of respondents' behavioral self-disclosure, respondents' post-interview self-ratings of self-disclosure, and interviewers' ratings of respondents' self-disclosure. Respondents sexual experience and sex guilt were also measured. No significant relationship among interviewers' and experimenter's self-disclosure ratings were found. However, respondents' self-disclosure questionnaire scores were positively correlated with their self-ratings. The authors conclude that exchanging personal information cannot be equated with "self-disclosure," and that interpersonal factors determine when such communication will be perceived as "self-disclosure."

Self-Disclosure and Gender Differences

Various factors seem to effect the extent to which individuals will disclose to others. One variable which has been found to consistently effect self-disclosure is gender differences. Stokes, Fuehrer, and Childs (1980) conducted a study in which male and female college students reported their willingness to self-disclose about 14 topics to each of three same-gender target persons: a stranger, an acquaintance, and intimate friend. An interaction of gender
by the target person, demonstrated that males are more willing than females to disclose to strangers and acquaintances. Also females are more willing than males to disclose to intimate friends. These results suggest a tendency for men to avoid emotional intimacy with one another. Competition among men and homophobia were suggested as explanations for this lack of intimacy among men.

Similarly, Pearson (1980) studied the relationship between sex-roles and self-disclosure. Women and men enrolled in a large midwestern university, completed the Bem Sex-role Inventory and the Self-Disclosure Situations Survey. Based upon scores on the femininity and masculinity scales of the Bem, participants were separated into three groups of low, moderate, or high on masculinity as well as low, moderate, or high on femininity. No significant differences in the total self-disclosure of men and women were found. However, masculine women self-disclosed more total information than women low in masculinity and women low in masculinity and women high in masculinity differed significantly in their self-disclosure. Also, feminine men self-disclosed more extensively than men low in femininity. Men high in femininity make more total disclosures than men who are moderate in femininity and make more total disclosures than men low in femininity. Pearson concluded that sex roles appear to provide a more accurate predictor
of self-disclosure than biological sex. Previous conflicting findings on self-disclosure may be a result of ignoring sex roles, an apparently important mediating variable.

In a study by Chelune in 1976 the roles of sex and target differences in behavioral samples of disclosure were examined using a multidimensional procedure for five major parameters: amount, intimacy, rate, affective manner of presentation, and self-disclosure flexibility. Females did not disclose a greater percentage of information than males but did disclose more intimate information and at a higher rate than did males. Significant differences in affective manner of presentation and rate of disclosure were also demonstrated between interview conditions. The multidimensional assessment of disclosure in terms of basic parameters seemed to allow a more meaningful and systematic explanation of the effects of independent variables upon self-disclosure within the context of specific relationships and settings than previous single dimensional approaches.

Self-Disclosure and Ethnic Differences

Differences in the level of self-disclosure has been found between blacks and whites. Specifically, researchers report that whites typically disclose more than blacks (Jourard & Lasakow, 1958; Dimond & Hellkamp, 1969). However, Jaffee and Polansky (1962) studied the self-disclosure patterns of both lower class blacks and
lower class whites and found no differences. This suggests that racial differences may be due to social class factors.

**Self-Disclosure and Situational Variables**

The situation or context in which an individual is interviewed seems to effect the extent to which an individual is willing to discuss intimate information. For example, Kent (1975) devised two situations consisting of the presence or absence of others. Undergraduate females were then asked to disclose personal feelings, thoughts, and perceptions. Individuals in the absence of others disclosed more than females interviewed in the presence of others. Overall, the situation variable explained the greatest portion of variance in the discomfort and negative disclosure criteria. However, females with lower expectancies of favorable outcome were more guarded and reluctant to disclose personal information and feelings than those with higher expectancies, especially in the interpersonal situation. They also took longer to respond to the questions and reported more discomfort and dislike for the task.

A study by Williams (1974) investigated two models of counseling to determine which best facilitates self-disclosure and trust in black college students. It was hypothesized that persons participating in a peer counseling experience will trust and self-disclose at a higher level than persons participating in a professional counseling
experience. One model involved professional counselors; the other consisted of minimally trained peer counselors. Participants were systematically assigned to one of the two models and given five 60 minute counseling sessions with either a professional or a peer counselor. Results did not support the hypothesis. Both groups disclosed and trusted at a significantly higher level after treatment.

**Self-Disclosure and Counselor Differences**

It is generally agreed that characteristics and behaviors of the interviewer affect client behavior. Hoffman-Graff (1977) conducted a study designed to explore the relationship between interviewers' use of positive versus negative self-disclosure on interviewees' perceptions of the interviewer and of their own behavior. Results indicated that: a) interviewers who disclosed negative information about themselves were perceived as significantly more empathic, warm, and credible than interviewers who disclosed positive information about themselves; b) subjects interviewed by a negatively disclosing interviewer indicated that they procrastinated significantly less after the interview than before while the opposite was true for subjects in the positive disclosure condition; and, c) no significant differences were found as a function of interviewer-subject sex pairings.

Feigenbaum (1977) also hypothesized that therapist self-disclosure effects the intimacy of self-disclosure of
interviewees. Male and female college subjects were interviewed individually by a male graduate student, using standardized interviews. Intimacy of subjects' self-disclosures during the interviews was investigated in relation to interviewing style (reflecting versus disclosing), seating arrangement (presence or absence of intervening desk), sex of subject, and the temporal sequence of the interview. Results showed significant correlations between intimacy of therapist self-disclosure, as measured by judges' content ratings of the interviews and subjects' use of self-referent words. Intimacy of self-disclosure did not differ significantly as a function of sex or seating arrangement but increased significantly over time in response to both reflecting and self-disclosing comments by the interviewer.

In addition to differences between counselors, gender differences between interviewer and interviewee have also been found to effect the extent to which participants are willing to share intimate information. Brooks (1974) obtained 40 male and 40 female college students who were rated on self-disclosure in interviews with either male or female interviewers of high or low status. It was found that: (a) males disclosed more to females and females disclosed more to males; (b) dyads containing a female resulted in more disclosure than all male dyads; (c) males revealed more to high status interviewers while females
disclosed more to low status interviewers; and (d) high- as opposed to low-status males interviewers elicited more disclosure from all subjects, while status of female interviewers resulted in no significant differences.

Trust

Trust has been shown to be related to clients' willingness to disclose. McKee and Smouse (1983) assigned male and female clients to one of eight treatment conditions based upon: counselor status (high versus low), counselor weight (normal versus overweight), and client gender. Participants then completed the Counselor Rating Form. A significant main effect was found for status of counselor as well as an interaction between counselor status and counselor weight on the expertness and trustworthiness variables. The factor of client gender did not produce significant effects.

Loeb and Curtis (1984) investigated the relationship between counselors' self-disclosure and clients' impressions of the counselors' empathy, competence and trustworthiness. Subjects were randomly assigned to one of three disclosure conditions, personal self-reference, indirect self-reference, and no self-reference. Written dialogues were read by the subjects and the counselors were rated on these qualities using three standardized relationship inventories. Those counselors using personal statements received the lowest ratings, while those using only reflective, non-
revealing statements were given moderate evaluations. Among other things, it was concluded that counselor use of self-disclosure early in treatment may be inappropriate as it may cause clients to form negative impressions about the counselor, thereby interfering with the development of a strong therapeutic alliance.

Quigley-Fernandez, Malkis, and Tedeschi (1985) utilized a message-modified Prisoner's Dilemma game in which the first impressions of a source of non-contingent promises were manipulated to be either good-impotent or bad-potent. The source, utilizing either individualistic or competitive instructions, was 100 or 1 percent reliable in fulfilling his promises. The results indicated that subjects' initial trust was affected by the source's reliability as well as first impressions. However, the most overall trust was displayed by subjects when they perceived the source as good and impotent. Subjects were more cooperative on non-message trials when a good-impotent impression conflicted with competitive instructions.

Merluzzi and Brischetto (1983) examined the effect of a breach of confidentiality on perceptions of counselor trustworthiness. Subjects heard audiotaped counselor-client interactions that resulted in a decision by the counselor to breach or maintain confidentiality. Several variables were manipulated, including the degree of seriousness of the client's problem, type of presenting problem, the counselor,
and the level of counselor experience. The results indicated that with highly serious client problems, breaching confidentiality was related to significantly lower trustworthiness ratings compared to all other conditions. Overall, the literature indicates that counselor behavior does affect the extent to which a client will trust a counselor. Other literature indicates that clients who do not trust their counselor are more likely to discontinue treatment prematurely (Terrell & Terrell, 1984) and will experience difficulty disclosing to the counselor (Watkins & Terrell, 1988).

**Suspiciousness Among Inmates**

It seems reasonable to expect that note-taking would especially affect the extent to which highly suspicious individuals are willing to disclose. No studies are available specially exploring the willingness of suspicious individuals to disclose. However, there is ample evidence suggesting that inmates are highly suspicious. For example, the validity of the MMPI Pd and Pd+.4K scales to discriminate levels of social deviance among young black men was investigated in a study by Elion and Megargee (1975). The first study established that black inmates at a federal correctional institution had significantly higher scores on both scales than culturally deprived black university students. The second study demonstrated that among the inmates, recidivists had significantly higher scores than
first offenders and that among the students, there were significant differences in the expected directions among subgroups differing in self-reported delinquency. The third study showed that the black subjects had higher scores than comparable samples of white subjects. It was concluded that the Pd and Pd+.4K both validly differentiate levels of social deviance among young black men but that the norms for the scales appear to show racial bias.

Kingsley (1960) designed a study to test the following hypothesis: Are MMPI scales, with particular reference to Pd, Welsh’s Anxiety Index (AI) and Internalization Ratio (IR), significantly higher in psychopaths than in a matched group of non-psychopathic prisoners compared to non-incarcerated "normal" controls? Prisoner groups were matched individually for age and education with 50 enlisted men who gave no history of crimes. Seven of the MMPI scales significantly differentiated these two groups. The prisoner population studied may be described as possessing hostile tendencies, somatic complaints, paranoid ruminative worries, and as socially withdrawn. Thus, these findings indicate that prisoners tend to be more suspicious and less revealing than non-prisoners.

The findings by Elion and Megargee (1975) and Kingsly (1960) have been replicated by other investigators. For example MMPI protocols of all male and female prisoners in the North Carolina Correctional System in 1971 were compared
by Joesting, Jones, and Joesting (1975). Females inmates had significantly higher IQs than did the males. With the exception of the Ap, L, and K scales, males had statistically significant higher means on all MMPI scales. Women were only higher on the Ap and K scales. These results not only indicate that suspiciousness is common among incarcerated prisoners, but gender differences exist. More specifically, males tend to be more suspicious than females.

Rosenblatt and Pritchard (1978) suggest that racial differences on the MMPI do not occur in all racial comparisons, but instead, are restricted to low IQ groups. They performed multiple discriminant analysis of MMPI scores between high IQ white, high IQ black, low IQ white, and low IQ black subjects which yielded two significant canonical variates.

Megargee and Carbonell (1985) investigated the degree to which eight MMPI scales specifically derived to assess correctional criteria related to six criteria of subsequent adjustment in prison. In addition, the scales were tested for racial bias. The eight scales used were Panton’s Adjustment to Prison-Revised, Religious Identification, Homosexuality, Habitual Criminalism, and Parole Violation; Beall and Panton’s Escape; Clark’s Recidivism; and Wattron’s Prison Maladjustment. Subjects were 1,214 inmates at a federal correctional institution who were admitted over a
two year period. Although some statistically significant correlations with the criteria were obtained, their magnitude was quite low, indicating the scales had little practical usefulness. Further, comparisons of black and white subsamples did not indicate that any of the scales are more or less valid for one racial group.

Type of Crime

Although differences in level of suspiciousness have been found as a function of gender and ethnic differences among prison inmates, the type of crime committed apparently is unrelated to suspiciousness. In a study by Adams (1976) six MMPI scales were investigated in an attempt to isolate significant differences between imprisoned multiple and first offenders. The Pd scale of the regular MMPI clinical scales and five additional scales (Es, Re, Pr, Ap, HC) that have been found of value in prison settings were evaluated. The two groups were controlled for age and IQ and also reflected the appropriate racial composition. No significant differences in the overall group profiles were found, however, three scales did differentiate significantly between the first and multiple offenders. The groups presented significant differences on Pd, Ap, and HC; the multiple offenders scored in the higher direction. These differences imply that the multiple offenders tend to have more of an antisocial pattern than first offenders, and they probably will present more prison adjustment difficulties or
disciplinary problems.

Similar findings have been reported by Scott (1980) who administered the MMPI to a sample of 168 minimum security incarcerated female felons. Escapees scored significantly higher than non-escapees on the F, Pd, Pt, Sc, and Ma scales and significantly lower on the L scale. In addition, female escapees were significantly younger and more often imprisoned as a juvenile than non-escapees. However no significant differences between the two groups with respect to IQ, educational level, sentence length, number of adult incarcerations, psychiatric hospitalizations or children were found. The lack of differences in personality, including level of suspiciousness, would seem to suggest that the frequency of incarcerations and the type of crime are not salient variables to consider when exploring willingness to disclose.

Summary and Hypotheses

A relatively common practice among psychologists is note-taking, especially during intake interviews. However, differences of opinion exist over whether this is an appropriate practice. Some authors maintain that clients expect professionals to take notes and failure to do so suggests that the interviewer is not interested in the client and thereby adversely affecting the clients behavior. Others have proposed that note-taking effects the clients' willingness to share information because taking notes
increases the risk of loss of confidentiality.

Previous research has shown that self-disclosure is affected by a variety of factors including gender differences between the interviewer and interviewee, interviewer-interviewee ethnic differences, willingness of the interviewer to self-disclose, situational variables, and intimacy of the content of the interview topic.

In addition to the above, it seems plausible that clients who are mistrustful would be less disclosing than less suspicious clients. Previous research has relatively consistently demonstrated that prisoners are more suspicious than non-prisoners. Therefore, it seems reasonable that taking notes in the process of interviewing prison inmates would be especially inhibiting to the extent to which they self-disclose. The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of trust level and note-taking on the extent to which prisoners disclose. It was hypothesized that prisoners asked to talk about intimate topics while notes were being taken would be less disclosing than those who were asked to discuss important topics while notes were not being taken. It was also hypothesized that highly mistrustful individuals would be less disclosing than more trustful participants.

Method

Participants

Participants consisted of 30 adult male and 30 adult
female inmates incarcerated in a minimum security federal prison. All participants were volunteers.

**Measures**

Fifteen items from the Rotter Incomplete Sentences Blank (Rotter, Rafferty, & Schachtit, 1949) were used to assess participants' level of self-disclosure. Those sentence stems which did not provide a pronoun or include a reference to a belief, emotion or action were selected (see Appendix A). The criteria for selection was first described by Doster, Matloff, and Samelson (1977). These sentences were then scored for level of self-disclosure using the Disclosure Rating Scale (Doster, 1972; Doster & Strickland, 1971). This rating scale is a 7-point descriptively anchored rating scale with higher ratings representing greater self-exploration and personal communication. Previous studies using the Disclosure Rating Scale report significant Pearson product-moment correlations between raters ranging from .73 to .93. An interrater reliability coefficient of .80 was obtained for this study.

The 40-item Rotter Interpersonal Trust Scale (ITS) was used to assess participants' level of interpersonal trust (see Appendix B). This Likert-type rating scale is an additive scale in which higher scores indicate a greater degree of trust. Test-retest reliability coefficients range from .56 to .69. More recently, other studies have explored the validity of the ITS.
Numerous studies have been done using the ITS. Kumar, Rehill, Treadwell, and Lambert (1986) found that disguising the Rotter Trust Scale through the use of an innocuous title, filler items, or a combination of the two had no effect on the scale's validity. The correlations of the different forms with the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale were significantly different from zero; however, they were not significantly different from each other. The correlations of the different forms with self-ratings of trust were equally low and nonsignificant.

In another recent study, Hunt, Kohn, and Mallozzi (1983) tested the invariance of the factorial structure of Rotter's Interpersonal Trust Scale (ITS) in a noncollege population. The responses of 214 volunteers were analyzed and yielded three factors interpreted as Exploitation, Sincerity, and Institutional Trust. This factor solution was cross-validated in a confirmation sample of 196 volunteers. Cosines between corresponding factors were high across samples and across sex. The present factor structure was similar to the results of earlier studies with college students. Thus there is considerable evidence indicating that the ITS is a valid measure for assessing interpersonal trust level.

Additionally, participants were asked to complete a biographical questionnaire (see Appendix C).
Interviewers

Interviewers were two female students who have completed graduate courses in psychological assessment and interviewing techniques. In addition, both interviewers had completed at least one year of practicum training.

Procedure

Initially all participants were administered the Rotter Interpersonal Trust Scale. In this study, trust scores ranged from 49 to 110. Next, using a median split, participants were divided into two groups of high and low mistrust. Half of the participants in each of these groups were then randomly assigned to one of the following three groups: 1) High Note-Taking; 2) Low Note-Taking; and, 3) No Note-Taking. While all participants in the High Note-Taking Condition were talking, two pages of notes were written by the interviewer. While participants in the Low Note-Taking Condition were talking, one page of notes was taken during the interview. Finally, for participants in the No Note-Taking group no notes were written during the one-half hour interview. Previous studies exploring interview variables upon clients have utilized 30 minute sessions (see Bass, 1987 for a review). Therefore, participants in this study were interviewed for 30 minutes.

Each participant in both note-taking conditions were greeted by the interviewer, escorted to an empty room, and given the following instructions:
Hi, my name is ________________ and I am currently helping a student with her Master's thesis. We are currently in the process of doing two things. First, we are interested in learning more about why you are in prison and whether you feel as if you have been treated fairly. Therefore, I would like you to spend the next half-hour talking about what led up to your being sent to prison and your opinion about whether you feel this was fair. While you are talking, I will be taking notes so that I can remember what you said after we have finished. However, I can assure you that what you say will be held in strict confidence.

A second purpose of this project is to get some information about your feelings about this interview. So, after we are finished with the interview, I will ask you to fill out some questionnaires. Since you are being asked to talk about what you may think is a sensitive topic, you may withdraw from this study now if you wish without any penalty. Do you have any questions? Good. Now please tell me about what occurred which resulted in your being sentenced to prison and your opinions about this matter.

Participants in the No Note-Taking condition were given the same instructions with the following exception. That is, the last two sentences in the first paragraph of the instructions were deleted. Every five minutes while
participants in the High Note-Taking Condition were talking, the interviewer wrote one paragraph consuming approximately one-third of an 8 1/2 x 11 lined sheet of paper. For the Low Note-Taking Condition one paragraph of notes was written after every ten minutes of the interview had elapsed. In the No Note-Taking Condition no notes were taken during the entire interview. If an interviewee asked the interviewer what was being written or asked to see a copy of the notes, the interviewer responded by saying that the notes were personal and were simply some brief information to help the interviewer remember what was said. After these instructions were given to each participant, those who agreed to participate in the study were asked to sign a consent form (see Appendix D). All questions from participants regarding what they should talk about were answered by saying: "Talk about whatever you like" or a similar ambiguous answer. Following the interview, each participant was asked to sign a consent form and fill in the Rotter Incomplete Sentences Blank and the biographical questionnaire.

Results

Sample Characteristics

Prior to examining the hypotheses of the study, comparability of groups was explored. The mean age of the sample was 40.63, with a range of 20 to 73 years. Forty-eight percent of the sample were married, while 52% were not
married, i.e., single, separated, or divorced. Although information regarding occupation, education, and income level was compiled, these findings are not reported as all participants, being incarcerated, were unemployed and lacking income.

Statistical Analysis

It was hypothesized that prisoners asked to discuss intimate topics while notes were being taken would be less disclosing than those asked to discuss important topics while notes were not being taken. To investigate this hypothesis, a 2 (high versus low mistrust) x 3 (high note-taking, low note-taking, no note-taking) factorial design ANOVA was conducted. Nonsignificant differences between groups were found for the main effect of note-taking, $F (2, 54) = 1.84, p > .05$, mistrust level, $F (1, 54) = 0.00, p > .05$, and the interaction effect, $F (2, 54) = 0.41, p > .05$. The means and standard deviations of self-disclosure scores may be found in Table 1.

Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations of Self-Disclosure Scores for all Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Note-taking condition b</th>
<th>Trust level a</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>18.60</td>
<td>22.90</td>
<td>24.30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(table continues)
Pearson product-moment correlations were also computed between groups and self-disclosure scores. These results are summarized in Table 2. As can be seen, no significant correlations were found.

Table 2
Correlations Between Groups and Self-Disclosure Scores (n = 60)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Note-taking</th>
<th>Self-disclosure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>-.016</td>
<td>-.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note-taking</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>-.207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-disclosure</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discussion

Differences exist among experts regarding the effects of note-taking on behavior. Freud contended that note-taking during the session makes an unfavorable impression on clients, impedes the attention of the therapist, and is generally not necessary in most situations (Rieff, 1977). The distracting nature of note-taking is further addressed by Edinburg, Zinburg and Kelman (1975) and MacKinnon and Michels (1971). Sullivan (1970) disapproved of note-taking for purposes other than the collection of social data, maintaining that clients are less able to talk openly when written records are being kept. Similarly, Langs (1979) opposes note-taking of any kind as it implies violations of privacy and confidentiality and precludes a secure therapeutic relationship. Finally, some therapists maintain that the practice may cause clients to focus more on topics that elicit note-taking (Seligman, 1986; MacKinnon & Michels, 1971).

In contrast, Benjamin (1987) argues that benefits include refreshing the therapist’s memory, facilitating professional discussions of cases, and providing a means of self-monitoring for the therapist. He states further that clients may interpret lack of note-taking as indifference. Leon (1982) also approves of note-taking. He maintains that clients expect a certain amount of record-keeping and that, when properly explained, the practice need not adversely
affect clients' perceptions. Results of this study are consistent with those theorists who maintain that note-taking is unrelated to client behavior, at least among prisoners.

One hypothesis of this study was that prisoners asked to discuss what was assumed to be intimate topics would be less disclosing while notes were being taken by an interviewer than prisoners asked to discuss intimate topics without notes being taken by an interviewer. However, contrary to what was predicted, no significant differences were found between groups as a function of the extent to which notes were taken by the interviewer. Several reasons for this lack of significance are possible. It may have been that the levels of note-taking were unnoticed between groups. Another possibility is that an inmate population, while probably more suspicious than the general population, may also expect more record-keeping in that record-keeping by staff, members of the legal profession, and courts is a common occurrence. Thus, it is possible that as a result of being exposed to note-taking situations on previous occasions, participants are no longer concerned about this activity.

An additional factor that may account for nonsignificance is that self-disclosure within the content of the interview discussion was not measured. Instead, a written self-disclosure scale unrelated to the content of
the interview was utilized. Self-disclosure scores on the actual content of the interview may have differed from scores obtained through the use of the written measure. Finally, the type of information revealed by participants, i.e., circumstances surrounding incarceration and opinion as to the fairness of treatment, may not have been perceived as sufficiently intimate by the inmates. As a consequence, inmates may not have felt uncomfortable during the interviews.

The second hypothesis of this study was that higher levels of trust would effect the extent to which participants were willing to self-disclose. However, findings of this study did not provide support for that hypothesis. Again, several explanations for this lack of significance may be proposed. Utilizing a median split to divide participants into high and low levels of trust may not have insured a significant difference among trust scores. Due to their similarity, those scores around the median may have negated the effect of the more extreme scores, resulting in nonsignificance in self-disclosure scores.

The nonsignificant results obtained may also be due to the type of population utilized with respect to the content of the interview. It may be that inmates were willing to disclose information regarding their incarceration because a breach of confidentiality on the part of the interviewer
held few negative consequences. In that the inmates had already been sentenced, disclosure of interview information by the interviewer would have little effect on the inmate. Additionally, it may be that inmates incarcerated in a minimum security prison may not be as mistrustful or suspicious as those incarcerated in a higher security level institution.

Although no significant differences were found, additional studies should be conducted prior to concluding that neither note-taking nor trust level affect self-disclosure. Future studies may utilize taped interviews in which a disclosure rating scale is used to score the actual content of the discussion. Such studies could also include a measure that would indicate participants' awareness of the manipulation of the dependent variable.

The utilization of a population that is not incarcerated, or inmates incarcerated in a higher security prison may also be conducted. Regardless of population, participants could be asked to discuss more intimate topics or topics in which a breach of confidentiality by the interviewer would hold some consequence. For example, note-taking may influence a participant's willingness to discuss his or her sexual attitudes and experiences, feelings regarding family members, embarrassing experiences, or situations in which a participant had lied or cheated and not been discovered. Future studies should also include
splitting participants into three levels of trust, high, medium, and low. Such a split may more accurately define the highly mistrustful individual.
APPENDIX A

SELF-DISCLOSURE BLANK
DIRECTIONS: Assume that the person who just interviewed you asked you to respond to the following sentence stems. Write your response in the space provided. Be sure to write something for each incomplete sentence. Be sure to make a complete sentence.

1. Back home ____________________________

2. The best ____________________________

3. People ______________________________

4. Mother ______________________________

5. At times of failure _____________________

6. In school ____________________________

7. As a child ____________________________

8. The future ____________________________

9. The only trouble ______________________

10. Secretly _____________________________
11. Friends

12. Sometimes

13. Affection

14. In the past

15. When
APPENDIX B

INTERPERSONAL TRUST SCALE
Please answer the following questions in this manner:

If you strongly agree------------------------Answer 1
If you mildly agree-------------------------Answer 2
If you agree and disagree equally----------Answer 3
If you mildly disagree----------------------Answer 4
If you strongly disagree-------------------Answer 5

1. Most people would rather live in a climate that is mild all year around than one in which winters are cold.

2. Hypocrisy is on the increase in our society.

3. In dealing with strangers one is better off to be cautious until they have provided evidence that they are trustworthy.

4. This country has a dark future unless we can attract better people into politics.

5. Fear of social disgrace or punishment rather than conscience prevents most people from breaking the law.

6. Parents usually can be relied upon to keep their promises.

7. The advice of elders is often poor because the older person doesn't recognize how times have changed.

8. Using the Honor System of not having a teacher present during exams would probably result in increased cheating.

9. The United Nations will never be an effective force in keeping world peace.

10. Parents and teachers are likely to say what they believe themselves and not just what they think is good for the child to hear.

11. Most people can be counted on to do what they say they will do.

12. As evidenced by recent books and movies morality seems on the downgrade in this country.

13. The judiciary is a place where we can all get unbiased treatment.
14. It is safe to believe that in spite of what people say, most people are primarily interested in their own welfare.

15. The future seems very promising.

16. Most people would be horrified if they knew how much news the public hears and sees is distorted.

17. Seeking advice from several people is more likely to confuse than it is to help one.

18. Most elected public officials are really sincere in their campaign promises.

19. There is no simple way of deciding who is telling the truth.

20. This country has progressed to the point where we can reduce the amount of competitiveness encouraged by schools and parents.

21. Even though we have reports in newspapers, radio and television, it is hard to get objective accounts of public events.

22. It is more important that people achieve happiness than that they achieve greatness.

23. Most experts can be relied upon to tell the truth about the limits of their knowledge.

24. Most parents can be relied upon to carry out their threats of punishment.

25. One should not attack the political beliefs of other people.

26. In these competitive times one has to be alert or someone is likely to take advantage of you.

27. Children need to be given more guidance by teachers and parents than they now typically get.

28. Most rumors usually have a strong element of truth.

29. Many major national sport contests are fixed in one way or another.

30. A good leader molds the opinions of the group he is leading rather than merely following the wishes of the majority.
31. Most idealists are sincere and usually practice what they preach.

32. Most salesmen are honest in describing their products.

33. Education in this country is not really preparing young men and women to deal with the problems of the future.

34. Most students in school would not cheat even if they were sure of getting away with it.

35. The hordes of students now going to college are going to find it more difficult to find good jobs when they graduate than did the college graduates of the past.

36. Most repairmen will not overcharge even if they think you are ignorant of their specialty.

37. A large share of accident claims filed against insurance companies are phony.

38. One should not attack the religious beliefs of other people.

39. Most people answer public opinion polls honestly.

40. If we really knew what was going on in international politics, the public would have more reason to be frightened than they now seem to be.
APPENDIX C

BACKGROUND INFORMATION QUESTIONNAIRE
Background Information Questionnaire

Register #__________________________________________________

1. Age:________________

2. Marital Status: single_____ separated_____ 
   married_____ divorced_____ 

3. Number of Children:________________________________________ 

4. Length of time you have been in this prison 
   6 months or less____ 2 years or less____ 
   1 year or less____ more than 2 years____ 

5. Vocation or job title________________________________________ 

6. Occupational plans upon release____________________________________ 

7. Father’s occupation:________________________________________ 

8. Mother’s occupation:________________________________________ 

9. Father’s educational level:____________________________________ 

10. Mother’s educational level:___________________________________ 

11. What would you estimate the population of your home 
    town to be? 
    under fifty thousand_____ over fifty thousand_____ 
    over one hundred thousand_____ 

12. What would you estimate your parents’ total income to 
    be? 
    under $30,000_____ $30,000 to $50,000_____ 
    $50,000 to $100,000_____ over $100,000_____
The research project in which you have agreed to participate is being conducted by Kim D. Lowrey and Barbara J. Gontz, graduate students in psychology at North Texas State University. Your participation in the project will involve approximately one hour of your time. During this time, you will be asked to discuss the general circumstances surrounding your offense and the fairness of your treatment and incarceration. Immediately following this discussion, you will be asked to complete several questionnaires about the interview. This study offers you the opportunity to freely express your opinions in a confidential setting. Your participation involves no discomforts or risks to you. You are free to withdraw consent and discontinue participation in the project at any time without any penalty. Should you have any questions about the study, we will answer them at the completion of the study.

This research is being conducted under the general authority of 18 U.S.C. 4001 (b) and 4042 (2) which permits the conduction of research on the correctional environment.

I, ____________________________ understand the purpose of the study as explained above, and I consent to participate in the study. My participation is voluntary. I understand that all research information will be handled in the strictest confidence and that my participation will not be individually identifiable in any reports. I further understand that there is no penalty or prejudice of any kind for not participating in the study.

(Signature) (Register No.) (Unit) (Date)

(Witness) (Date)

Return to the Psychology Department
References


experimental psychological interview. Psychological Reports, 55(3), 803-810.


Alcohol Consumption and self-disclosure. *British Journal of Addiction, 72,* 296-300.


Assessment, 41 (2), 144-149.


