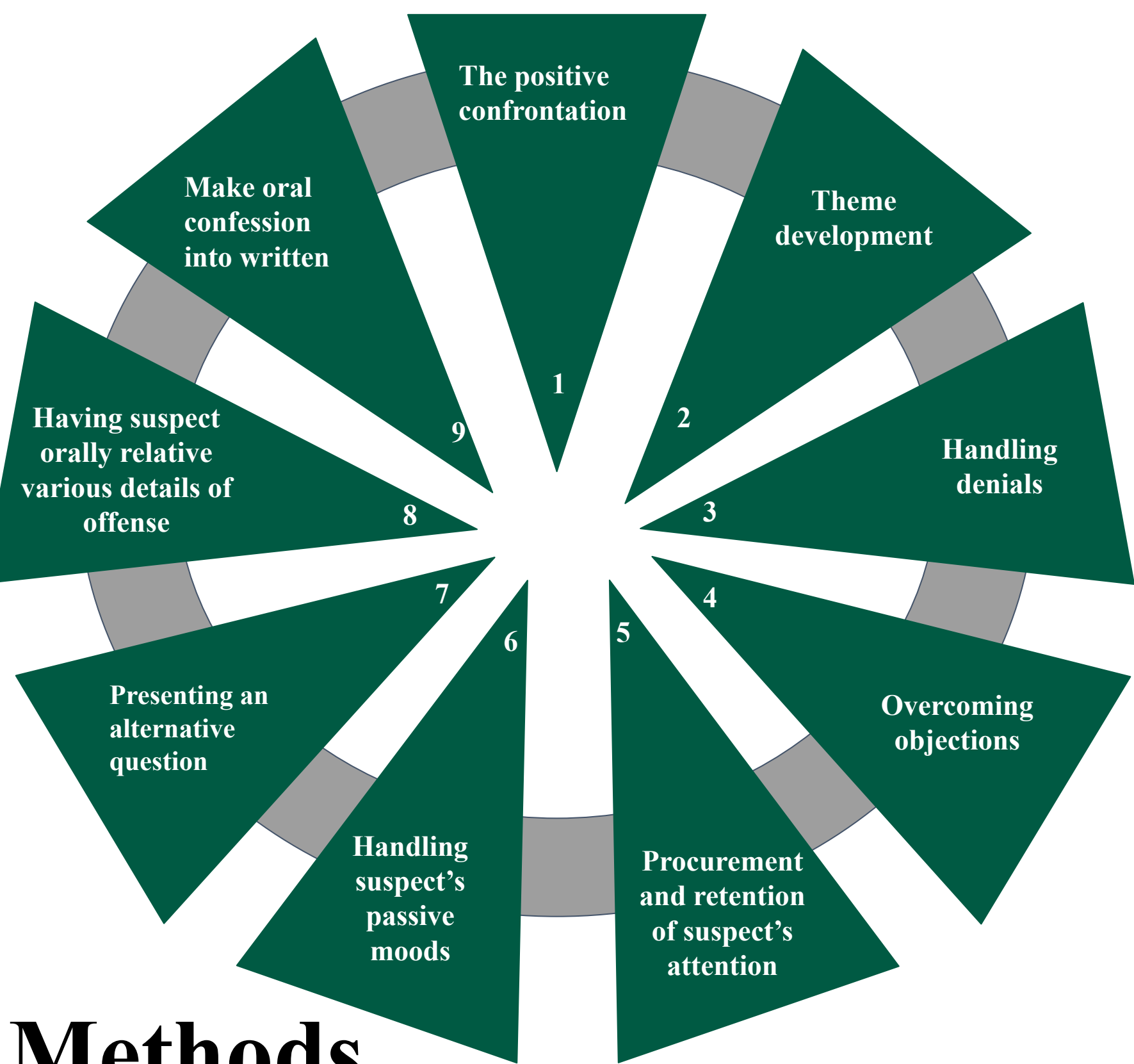


What is the Reid Technique?

A psychological interrogation method used by police; elicits confessions through manipulative tactics that demonstrate unethical exploitation



Methods

This research consisted of case law analysis comparative legal reviews, empirical studies, and qualitative analysis.

Findings

- **High risk of false confessions:** 35% of known false confessions come from minors, 42% of exonerated minors were convicted due to confessions
- **Miranda Rights Misunderstood:** 80% of juveniles waive their rights, often unknowingly
- **Psychological Harm:** Increased anxiety, low self-esteem, depression, relationship difficulties
- **Legal Gaps:** Rulings such as *J.D.B*, yet deceptive tactics remain permissible
- **International Misalignment:** The U.S. remains one of the few nations to not ratify the CRC

Unveiling the Reid Technique: How Coercive Interrogation Tactics Impact Juveniles’ Human Rights

Sofia Kalaitzis

The Reid Technique is one of most widely taught interrogation strategies in the U.S. built on the ideals of psychological manipulation and deception. Its use on juveniles is a huge risk to the justice system.

“Every child alleged as having infringed the penal law has the right to be treated in a manner consistent with the child’s sense of dignity and worth”
- *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*

“Juveniles are categorically less culpable than adults because they have a lack of maturity and are more vulnerable to outside pressures.”
- *Supreme Court in Roper v. Simmons (2005)*

Why Juveniles Are Vulnerable

Legal	Social	Psychological
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Juveniles frequently waive their Miranda rights without understanding them● Supreme Court rulings in <i>In re Gault</i> and <i>J.D.B v. North Carolina</i> recognize juvenile needs for special protections● There is no requirement for parental presence during questioning in many states● Legal standards often treat children as adults despite known differences● Fifth Amendment is undermined when tactics are used on uninformed minors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Marginalized youth are disproportionately targeted● Juveniles of low-income often lack access for legal aid● Stigma and systemic bias heighten the vulnerabilities during arrests and interrogations● Lack of trust in the justice system may lead to youth to comply out of fear● Juveniles may not know they can ask for a lawyer or adult● Parents or guardians may be unavailable, uninformed, or misled by police themselves	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Juveniles’ brains are still developing, particularly in areas that relate to decision making and impulse control, (prefrontal cortex)● Children have an increased susceptibility to authority figures● Youth can misinterpret promises and threats● Longer interrogations create fatigue and false confessions because kids want to get it over with● Children are less likely to understand the consequences of a confessions



“It’s like having an 18-wheeler driving on your chest and you believe that the only way to get that weight off your chest is to tell the police whatever they want to hear...even admitting a murder.”
- *Marty Tankleff, age 17*



“I used nothing but standard, approved interrogation techniques and did not act maliciously...we showed the suspect our evidence, and unintentionally fed her details that she was able to barrot back to us at a later time... It was a classic false confession and without the video we would never have known.”
- *Jim Trainum, former detective*



“I had the perception that the police were there to help...I signed a confession under the pretense that I was going to go home later that night, but it didn’t work out that way.”
- *Terrill Swift, age 17*



“It was a pretty long two hours and all I could hear throughout those two hours was that they were going to give me help if I confessed...I never thought of the consequences. I just said it because they wanted me to.”
- *Nga Truong, age 16*

U.S Constitutional Law

Fifth Amendment: Protects against self-incrimination, application ensured with *In re Gault*

Eighth Amendment: Prohibits cruel and unusual punishment; Supreme Court recognizes juveniles have diminished culpabilities

International Law

Convention on the Rights of the Child: Article 40 emphasizes treating children alleged of infringing the law in a manner that promotes dignity, worth, and reintegration into society; to be presumed innocent until proven guilty

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights: Mandates fair treatment and due process for all, particularly giving more protections given to minors as seen through Article 24

Conclusion

- The Reid Technique is unfit to interrogate juveniles
- This interrogation method exacerbates developmental and legal vulnerabilities
- Without reforms, the justice system will continue to produce false confessions
- Legal reforms are not enough, practices must match protections
- The Reid Technique does not respect children’s human rights

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