

Generation of False Memory Using Real Life Setting

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Two experiments were conducted in this study: Experiment 1 investigated whether subjects were misled by leading questions when remembering a mugging event. Thirty police recruits participated as subjects. Subjects' memory was tested immediately after they observed a staged mugging event. The results of Experiment 1 showed that subjects were easily suggestible to misleading questions about the mugging event. Experiment 2 used a face recognition test. Sixty police recruits participated in Experiment 2. The results showed that there was no significant effect of the instruction factor (warning/without warning) or the time after which subjects were tested (immediately/a week after). However, there was a significant interaction between the two factors. Subjects were more affected by the warning instructions only when they were tested a week after watching the staged event. Findings are discussed in relation to memory theories and the validity of eyewitness testimony.

Keywords: false memory, real life setting , mugging event, face recognition

Dua eksperimen dilakukan dalam studi ini. Eksperimen 1 meneliti apakah para subjek terkecoh pertanyaan penuntun ketika mengingat kejadian perampokan. Tiga puluh anggota polisi berpartisipasi sebagai subjek. Ingatan subjek diuji segera setelah mereka menyaksikan adegan kejadian perampokan. Hasil Eksperimen 1 menunjukkan bahwa para subjek mudah tersugesti pertanyaan pengecoh tentang kejadian perampokan tersebut. Eksperimen 2 menggunakan uji pengenalan wajah. Enam puluh anggota polisi berpartisipasi dalam Eksperimen 2. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa tak ada akibat signifikan dari faktor instruksi (peringatan/tanpa peringatan) atau waktu setelah para subjek diuji (segera/seminggu kemudian). Namun, terdapat interaksi signifikan antara kedua faktor. Para subjek lebih terpengaruh instruksi peringatan hanya bila mereka diuji seminggu setelah menyaksikan adegan perampokan tersebut. Temuan dibahas dalam kaitan dengan teori ingatan dan validitas kesaksian saksi mata.

Kata kunci: ingatan palsu, tatanan kehidupan nyata, kejadian perampokan, pengenalan wajah

“Innocent until proven guilty” is a statement that is taken seriously by most modern judicial systems. It is, thus, important for judicial systems to have evidence to prosecute a criminal for the crime that has been committed. It is the responsibility of the prosecutor to make sure that the evidence presented in a court case is reliable and valid so that a person will not be punished unduly. Consequently, investigators, such as police offic-

ers who are among the first persons to be in contact with a crime scene, play a significant role in ensuring the validity of evidence. Evidence of a crime comes from many sources, one of which can be statements from eyewitnesses. Sometimes statements or information from witnesses are supported by statements made by professionals such as doctors and psychiatrists. Other times, the judge or jury in a court case has to rely solely on statements made by witnesses. In the latter case, statements made by witnesses are critical to the prosecution.

The main concern is for cases where the courts have made mistakes in prosecuting innocent people. Often the mistakes were in relation to crimes like theft, rape and murder because of community's pressure to punish someone for the

The author would like to acknowledge and thank Lee Siew Kee for her assistance in data collection.

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