

University of Nebraska - Lincoln

DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln

2019 Workshop: Interviewers and Their Effects
from a Total Survey Error Perspective

Sociology, Department of

2-26-2019

Interviewer Variation in Third Party Presence During Face-to-Face Interviews

Zeina N. Mneimneh

Julie de Jong

Jennifer Kelley

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/sociw>

 Part of the [Quantitative, Qualitative, Comparative, and Historical Methodologies Commons](#)

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Sociology, Department of at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in 2019 Workshop: Interviewers and Their Effects from a Total Survey Error Perspective by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.



**INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH
SURVEY RESEARCH CENTER**

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

**Why do Interviewers Vary on Interview Privacy
and Does Privacy Matter ?**

Zeina Mneimneh
Julie De Jong
Jennifer Kelley

Interviewer Workshop
February 26-29, 2019
Lincoln, Germany

Background

- Interview privacy: the absence of a third person during an interviewer-administered survey
- Most common rate of third party presence across surveys is 40% or higher (Mneimneh et. al, 2015 & 2018)
- Lack of privacy during the interview may affect the response process leading to some unwarranted measurement variation within and across samples
 - Some studies show no association between third party presence and the reporting of sensitive information (Aquilino, 1997; Pollner & Adams, 1997)
 - Reduces the reporting of undesirable outcomes (W. A. Aquilino, 1993; W. S. Aquilino, Wright, & Supple, 2000; Moskowitz, 2004)
 - Increases reporting of undesirable outcomes (Bulck, 1999; Edwards, Slattery, & Ma, 1998; Hoyt & Chaloupka, 1994)

Background

- Neglected aspect : the role of iwer in establishing a private setting
 - Achieving and maintaining privacy is a difficult request
 - Iwers are only “instructed” to conduct the interview in private
 - Instructions are usually very general (Mneimneh, Wittrock, Le, Elmaghrabi, 2018)
 - Not well emphasized and elaborated on during training sessions or material (W. A. Aquilino, 1993; T. W. Smith, 1997; Taietz, 1962, Mneimneh, Wittrock, Le, Elmaghrabi, 2018)
- There is significant between-iwer variance in interview privacy; even larger than estimated between-country variation (Mneimneh et al, 2018)
- Very little is known about iwer-characteristics that predict interview privacy; how such characteristics contribute to the between-interviewer variation

Research Objectives

1. Quantify between-interviewer variation in interview privacy
2. Investigate interviewer characteristics that predict interview privacy
3. Estimate the contribution of interviewer socio-demographic characteristics & interviewers' opinions and attitudes towards privacy to interviewer variation in interview privacy
4. Investigate the effect of interview privacy on reporting sensitive information

Methods: Sample & Instrument

- Saudi National Mental Health Survey (SNMHS)
 - National multi-stage are probability sample
 - Administered to Saudi citizens, age 15 – 65 years old
 - Composite International Diagnostic Interview 3.0 (CIDI 3.0)
 - CAPI mode with two ACASI sections that collect sensitive information
 - Gender matched interview
 - Average interview length is 2 hours
 - Overall response rate : RR1= 61% (N for this paper =2340)
 - Number of interviewers =69

Methods: Measures

- Interview Privacy:
 - Based on interviewer observations collected at the end of each questionnaire section
 - 36% of the interviews had a third-party present
- Interviewer characteristics
 - Citizenship, marital status, age, educational level, prior survey experience, paid job in addition to interviewing, level of religiosity, and views on privacy
- Respondent characteristics
 - Gender, marital status, age, educational level, having a diagnosis of social phobia in the past 12 months, presence of disability, number of household members, living in a rural or urban area, and region
- Respondent's Social conformity Score
 - Shorter version of the Marlow Crowne scale
- Substantive sensitive outcomes
 - Survey items that collect information about sensitive behaviors and attitudes

Methods: Analysis

- Design adjusted multi-level random intercept regression models to predict the presence of third party and each of the substantive outcomes
 - Respondents in level 1, interviewers in level 2, and PSUs in level 3
- Models predicting third party presence included respondent-level characteristics and interviewer level characteristics
- Models predicting the sensitive outcomes included the type of third person present as the main independent variables, respondent's social conformity score, and an interaction term between the type of third person presence and social conformity
 - Only significant interaction terms were retained in the models
 - Control variables included other respondent characteristics and interviewer characteristics

Weighted Estimates From Random Intercept Three-level Model Predicting Third Party Presence

Respondent-level Sociodemographics	Coefficient	SE
Male vs. Female	-1.013	0.287**
Currently married vs. not	-0.246	0.130
Age (ref. 16-18 years old)		
Age 18 – 29	-0.340	0.173*
Age 30 – 44	-0.177	0.207
Age 45 – 54	-0.418	0.237
Age 55 – 65	-0.925	0.278**
Education (ref <=6 yrs.)		
7 – 9 yrs education	-0.678	0.181**
10 – 15 yrs education	-0.525	0.160**
16+ yrs education	-1.035	0.184**
Social phobia 12-month diagnosis	0.325	0.167
Disability (ref: no disability)		
Physical disability	0.501	0.240*
Other disability	0.365	0.167*
Household Size (ref: 1-4 members)		
HH size 5 – 7 members	0.500	0.134**
HH size 8+ members	0.356	0.139*
Rural vs. Urban area	0.221	0.143
Region (ref.: central)		
Eastern region	-0.046	0.249
Northern region	0.294	0.196
Southern region	0.176	0.177

(Continued) Ident, Level 2=interviewer, Level 3=PSU, Part I weight. * p<0.05; **p<0.01

Weighted Estimates From Random Intercept Three-level Model Predicting Third Party Presence

Continued	Coefficient	SE
Interview conducted (vs. outside working hours)		
Interview during working hours	-0.278	0.135*
Interview during & outside working hours	0.178	0.117
Interviewer-level Sociodemographics		
Higher education vs. lower	0.279	0.383
Saudi citizen vs. foreign	-0.150	0.331
Married vs. not		
Income (ref: low)	-0.047	0.401
High income	-0.129	0.372
Middle income	-0.132	0.350
Prior interviewing experience vs. none	-0.017	0.387
Concurrent job vs. none	0.421	0.399
Religion important vs. not	0.512	0.464
Interviewer-level Attitudes regarding privacy		
Local culture does not respect privacy	0.840	0.354*
Difficult to ask for privacy in KSA	0.108	0.292
Like Asking for a private setting (ref: a little/none)		
Very much like	-0.631	0.404
Somewhat	-0.357	0.374
Preference for non-private interviewer (vs. refusal)	-0.086	0.282

Level 1=respondent, Level 2=interviewer, Level 3=PSU, Part I weight. * p < 0.05; **p < 0.01

How Much of The Interviewer Variance in Privacy Was Explained ?

- Base model included only respondent- level variables
- Only interviewer sociodemographics added to the base model, the variance was reduced by 45%
- Only interviewer's attitudes and opinions toward privacy added to the base model, the variance was reduced by 55%

Weighted Estimates from Random Intercept Three Level Logistic Regression Model Predicting Each of the Behaviors

	Ever Smoke		Ever Suicide		Anger attack: Hit or Threaten		Ever Abuse		Ever Abused	
	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.
Social Conformity Score	-0.298**	0.079	-0.093	0.120	-0.339**	0.061	-0.081	0.082	-0.129	0.092
Spouse/Another Adult Family Member Present	-0.766	0.512	1.347**	0.500	0.694*	0.344	0.774	0.496	0.116	0.551
Parent/Parent in-law Present	-1.686**	0.624	-0.173	0.548	-0.203	0.328	-1.147	0.731	0.608	0.600
Child/Teenager Present	-1.086**	0.486	-0.534	0.833	-0.164	0.377	-0.293	0.480	-0.011	0.480
Unspecified Others Present	-1.384**	0.628	0.243	0.552	0.121	0.266	0.531	0.456	0.137	0.497
Other*Social Conformity score	0.751**	0.254	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Model also controls for respondent sociodemographics (gender, marital status, age, education, social phobia, disability, household size, timing of interview, use of ACASI, and interviewer attitudes about respect for privacy in KSA). Only significant interactions were entered in the model; * p< 0.05; ** p< 0.01, --- Not included in the model

Weighted Estimates from Random Intercept Three Level Logistic Regression Model Predicting Each of the Attitudes

	Higher Marriage rating		Higher Polygamy endorsement		Positive attitudes toward polygamy if finances is not an issue	
	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.
Social Conformity Score	0.125*	0.062	-0.277**	0.105	0.054**	0.019
Spouse/Another Adult Family Member Present	0.283	0.360	0.466	0.588	0.418**	0.115
Parent/Parent in-law Present	1.790*	0.724	0.347	0.445	0.115	0.082
Parent/Parent in-law*Social Conformity	-1.540**	0.247	----	----	---	---
Child/Teenager Present	0.657	0.360	-1.194*	0.533	0.094	0.124
Unspecified Others Present	1.166	0.754	2.323*	1.142	-0.069	0.093
Other*Social Conformity	-0.592*	0.280	-0.823*	0.384	---	---

Model also controls for respondent sociodemographics (gender, marital status, age, education, social phobia, disability, household size, timing of interview, use of ACASI, and interviewer attitudes about respect for privacy in KSA). Only significant interactions were entered in the model; * p< 0.05; ** p< 0.01; ---- Not included in the model

Discussion: Achieving A Private Interview Setting

- Interviewers varied significantly in the rate of interview privacy
- Interviewer's sociodemographics were not significantly associated with the private setting of the interview
 - Partially consistent with Lau et. al, 2017
 - Interviewer's experience was not significant contrary to Lau et. al, 2017
 - Only 30% of interviewers in our study had previous experience and it was minimal (i.e. few months)
- Interviewers who believed that the Saudi culture does not respect one's privacy were less likely to conduct an interview in privacy
 - These beliefs might hold back interviewers from asking for or insisting on a private interview
- The collective set of interviewer's views toward privacy explained more than half of the between-interviewer variation in interview privacy, a relative reduction rate higher than that explained by interviewers' sociodemographic characteristics
- Results point to the importance of interviewer's views toward privacy especially given the lack of training on requesting and achieving a private interview setting

Discussion: Achieving A Private Interview Setting

- Practical implications if higher rates of privacy are desired
 - Discuss interviewers' opinions towards privacy
 - Train interviewers on how to request privacy
 - Train interviewer on how to address respondent's concerns towards such a request
 - Use role play to train on requesting for privacy, identifying respondents' concerns and addressing them

Discussion: Interview Privacy Effect on Reporting

- Effect of privacy on reporting depends on:
 - Type of information collected: undesirable observable behaviors that are difficult to control (e.g. anger attacks) and might be known to certain family members vs. undesirable observable behavior unknown to family members (e.g. smoking) vs. attitudes (unobservable)
 - Type of third party who might already know this information
 - R's level of social conformity
 - People with high level of social conformity might confide only in certain very close members (e.g. friends, neighbors)
- Further research on mechanisms, e.g. information already held by the third person
- If measurement effects can go in different directions (depending on all those factors), what are the implications on training interviewers to achieve privacy ?

Discussion: Limitations

- Interview privacy measures were based on interviewer observations
 - Some interviewers might underreport the presence of a third person to show adherence to the study protocol
 - Unintentional measurement error in recording the type of third person present
- The pool of interviewers had a limited level of interviewing experience
- Could not measure how privacy was requested since interviews were not recorded
- The design does not ascertain what information (if any) is known to the third person



Thank you!
zeinam@umich.edu