

Ch. III.K. Reference period

473. All retrospective surveys of victimization must define a timeframe for the reporting of crimes experienced by the survey population. This is known as the 'reference period for victimization.' The reference period for victimization can vary from lifetime experience to the last month. NCVS methodological notes state that:

Generally, respondents are able to recall more accurately an event which occurred within three months of the interview rather than one which occurred within six months; they can recall events over a six-month period more accurately than over a 12-month period. However, a shorter reference period would require more field interviews per year, increasing the data collection costs significantly. These increased costs would have to be balanced by cost reductions elsewhere (sample size is often considered). Reducing sample size however, reduces the precision of estimates of relatively rare crimes (<http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/NACJD/NCVS/>).

474. In light of these trade-offs of cost and precision, a reference period of six months is used for the United States' NCVS. The British Crime Survey uses 12 months, and in Italy the recall period is three years and 12 months. The majority of surveys use a one year reference period although there are different approaches to achieving this.

475. Regardless, one must consider the intended use of the data before selecting the reference period. Lifetime experience may be important for some forms of victimization (e.g., rare but serious crimes, such as sexual abuse) but in general a shorter more recent time period will be of more use to give a more up-to-date picture of crime and (when the survey is repeated) to show how crime levels are changing over time. Different types of crime may benefit from different recall periods, although that needs to be balanced with confusion caused for the respondents, and what is considered 'rare' or 'serious' can vary according to the country, culture or over time.

476. Multiple timeframes can also be used, which can help balance the need for accurate prevalence levels over a longer time period while providing more detail on recent events, including estimates of numbers of incidents. Multiple time frames also allow a longer term picture of experience (e.g., experience over a lifetime) compared with the greater detail for recent events. Examples of multiple time frames include the ICVS which uses five years and one year for all crime types and the BCS which uses lifetime (since age 16) and last 12 months for domestic and sexual violence. The Canadian victimization survey also uses mixed reference periods – a rolling 12 months for most crimes, and the last five years for some more sensitive modules. The NCVS uses a 6 month reference period but re-interviews the same people up to seven times and so builds up the reference period by adding across interviews.

477. The use of lifetime experience or 'since age 16' questions have some advantages but can also give rise to issues in interpreting the results. In surveys of violence against women, for example, lifetime experience can be useful as an explanatory variable for levels of fear or concern about crime. However, the results are also equivocal as sometimes lower levels of victimization for older victims could be due to

lower levels of violence in the past, a reluctance to disclose events or recall problems due to the greater period of elapsed time.

Definition

478. In addition to the length of reference period the definition also needs to be considered. This is a particular issue for a reference period of a year. Some victimization surveys use the 'last calendar year' but others use the 12 months prior to the interview ('last 12 months'). The advantage of the calendar year is that it is clearly defined in the respondent's mind but this can have implications for the timing of the interviews.

479. The reference period should be as close as possible to the date of interview to reduce memory errors. Where the reference period is a calendar year then interviews should take place in the early part of the following year, ideally in the January but this is not always possible so the aim should be to complete interviews by March. A reference period covering the latest 12 months prior to interview allows greater flexibility. Fieldwork can take place at any time of year and can be extended over any time period. Where the time period is extended so that fieldwork takes place over the course of a year or is continuous, the 12 months referenced would then change over the interview period. This introduces some complications in reporting the data.

480. Where the reference period is the 12 months prior to interview this time period needs further definition. Is it from the day before the interview or the previous 12 calendar months (i.e., does the reference period from an interview on the 12th June include incidents in June?). Taking the 12 calendar months makes defining the start of the reference period clearer ('back to June of last year' rather than 'back to 12th June last year') and can also be useful in analysis if a specific time period is required.

481. In 2001 changes were made to the design of the British Crime Survey, including a move from using fixed calendar year reference period to continuous fieldwork with a reference period of the 12 months prior to interview. As part of these design changes a 'spliced design' or 'split-sample design' was carried out during the first 6 months of 2001 in order to assess the impact of moving to a different reference period on victimization rates (see 2001 British Crime Survey (England and Wales) Technical Report available from <http://www.data-archive.ac.uk/doc/4786/mrdoc/pdf/4786userguide.pdf>). Testing of differences between the two reference periods showed little differences in estimates as a result of this change and where there were differences these were identified as improvements.

Summary - Reference Periods

The choice of reference period will largely depend on the frequency and timing of the survey. In all cases, the reference period should be as close as possible to the date of interview. Shorter reference periods tend to produce more accurate estimates, but can add to the cost of the survey since sample sizes need to be larger to provide useful estimates of crimes. Longer reference periods can be useful to

estimate lifetime prevalence or particularly rare crimes, although results can sometimes be more complicated to explain.

It is possible to use multiple reference periods in a single survey. For instance, one may ask a series of questions about victimization experiences in the last six months. And in a following section of the survey, questions may be asked regarding victimization experiences during one's lifetime.

Another issue to consider when determining reference periods is whether to use a fixed reference period (e.g., calendar year). Practical issues may determine whether to use fixed reference period or a moving period (e.g., during the last 12 months).

Interview techniques to improve recall

482. Methodological considerations include accuracy of recall, 'telescoping' and timing of the interviews. Accuracy of recall is dependent on the salience of an event, the frequency and the time that has elapsed since the event occurred. If crime is an infrequent event it may be more likely to be remembered whereas those who experience crime frequently may have more problems recalling each individual incident (for example, this can be a particular problem with reporting domestic violence). In addition, minor crimes may be easily forgotten irrespective of their frequency. Clearly the time that has elapsed since the crime will affect the likelihood of the respondent remembering it, so the length and definition of the reference period is important, as is the timing of interview in relation to the period which it is intended to reference.

483. There are a variety of different strategies which can be used to cope with the problem of locating incidents precisely in time. Use of memory aids can help both to prompt people's memories and to set the crime in the correct time period. For example an events calendar where birthdays, other anniversaries and important events are identified through the reference period can help people think back and anchor their victimization events around more easily remembered life events. Events calendars also help to reduce the problem of 'telescoping' whereby respondents incorrectly identify crimes to have taken part in the reference period – partly through faulty recall and also through trying to 'help' the interview process.

484. Clearly defining dates of the reference period can help to reduce 'telescoping' (the inclusion of events outside of the reference period). It is also useful to repeat the dates of the reference period at regular intervals during the questions about victimization (e.g., 'during 2007'). Where the reference period is the 12 months prior to interview, the start date must be mentioned in the initial question (in the last 12 months, *that's back to ...*) and again this must be repeated at regular intervals. Dates can also be used in more detail. For example, work conducted in Italy suggested that clearly defining dates of individual incidents of crime reduced the telescoping effect (although this will have cost and timing implications for the interview).

485. A further technique to reduce the effects of telescoping is to use bounding. This is a technique where some information gathered is used to ensure no duplication

of victimizations is counted. One example of bounding includes using two reference periods. The two reference periods can include one probing if a type of victimization 'ever' happened, followed by questions pertaining to 'the last 12 months.' This strategy means that people are less likely to include in the main reference period incidents that happened prior to the last 12 months. Italy introduced a 3 year period followed by the last 12 months and experimental evidence suggested this reduced the prevalence of crime rates. Additionally, it is possible to begin by asking about the most recent occurrence of a crime, in addition to crimes within a specific reference period, in order that the respondent does not feel that they cannot 'report' crimes which may still be on their mind. For example, where the calendar year is being used, incidents that took place in January of the following year can be mentioned by respondents interviewed in February (but must then be removed from the analysis).

486. It is possible to expand these techniques, for example, in a panel survey situation where the whole of the first interview could be used as a bounding interview and the results excluded from analyses. The NCVS has until recently used this technique but, of course, this significantly adds to the cost of the survey.

Moving reference periods

487. It is important to note that the reporting of results is more complicated with a moving reference period than with a fixed one. For example a victimization survey with a fixed reference period reports on crime for that period. A survey with a moving reference period (of the 12 months prior to interview) reports on crime which happened to respondents over an elapsed period beginning with 12 months before the *start* of the fieldwork period and ending with twelve months before the *end* of the interview period. In the case of a year of fieldwork this means the reporting period for crime spans 2 years (see chart below). This has implications for how the data can be used, for example it is difficult to identify the effect of any new policy and there is a longer time delay between the crime happening and the results being available. It also has other implications, for example with regard to how to present the period covered by the survey. It can be complicated to describe results derived from a moving reference period, and results are often reported according to the period of interviews rather than by trying to estimate precisely which crimes occur in a particular year. It is important that commissioners of the survey appreciate this element of the design and the implications for reporting.

Ch. III.L. Questionnaire design

488. Victimization surveys gather a broad array of information from the respondent's fear of crime, their perception of safety, neighbourhood conditions, actions taken to prevent crime, experiences with crime and personal characteristics. Translating these topics (and more) into a questionnaire is not an easy task. Many things must be considered as there are general difficulties common to the wording of any survey. Plus, there are specific critical aspects related to the subject of victimization.

Victimization screener instrument

489. The main objective of most victimization surveys is to offer a precise estimate of the criminal victimization. To do this, it is necessary to use a technique called screening which consists of a series of questions aimed at determining whether the respondent experienced a crime (or crimes). Simply, screener questions determine if, and how many, criminal victimizations the respondent sustained in the given reference period.

490. Screening questions also serve to prompt the respondent's memory of criminal events. The wording of screening questions can be brief or very detailed. They can come in the form of a list describing different situations, or as examples of victimization stories. In general, questions describing the situation are preferred. An example of this is utilizing a specific screener question related to intimate partner or family violence. Experience shows that such a screening question elicits incidents far better than a generalized screener since many victims do not view intimate or family violence as a victimization in general.

491. Care should be taken when surveys are administered in areas characterized by large differences in languages and ethnicity. In these instances, some wordings could inhibit recall in some people while stressing it in others.

BOX: Example of questions recalling crime experience

In the first part of this is box, some examples of questions regarding the screener section used are reported. This exercise is useful to look at the similarity and differences of wording questions of different crime.

In the second part of this box an example from the *United State National Crime victimization Survey (NCVS)* show a different construction of screening it-self.

In fact the NCVS uses as screening technique, instead of the description of a crime for each question, a complex set of questions regarding individual and household crimes as well as violent and property crime, trying to describe the victimization experience, where each collected crime is reconstructed ex-post.

THEFTS OF PERSONAL BELONGINGS

The Italian Citizens' Safety Survey (ISTAT)

In the last 3 years, has anyone attempted to steal or stolen money or things you didn't carry with you, for example money or jewels in a changing-room, bags or cases in a train, books at school or at work, money, cash card or cheque-book at work (don't consider things stolen from your car, house or outside the house)?

The Canada General Social Survey (GSS)

(Other than the incidents already mentioned,) was anything of yours stolen during the Past 12 months from your place of work, from school or from a public place, such as A restaurant?

The British Crime Survey (BCS)

And [apart from anything you have already mentioned], in that time has anything (else) of yours been stolen, from a cloakroom, an office, a car or anywhere else You left it?

The European International Crime Survey (EUICS)

Apart from theft involving force there are many other types of theft of personal property, such as pickpocketing or theft of a purse, wallet, clothing, jewellery, sports equipment. This can happen at one's work, at school, in a pub, on public transport, on the beach, or in the street. Over the past five years have you personally been the victim of any of these thefts?

DAMAGE

The Italian Citizens' Safety Survey

In the last 3 years, has your house or parts of your house ever damaged or destroyed deliberately (soiling, broken windows, scratched doors)?

In the last 3 years, have your belongings or your family's belongings ever damaged or destroyed deliberately?

The Canada General Social Survey (GSS)

During the past 12 months did anyone deliberately damage or destroy any property belonging to you or anyone in your household, such as a window or a fence?"

The British Crime Survey

And again, [apart from anything you have already mentioned], in that time did anyone deliberately deface or do damage to your house/flat or to anything outside it that belonged to someone in your household?

BURGLARY OR THEFT AT HOME

The Italian Citizens' Safety Survey

In the last 3 years, has anyone ever stolen or attempted to steal something in the house where you live or in a house at your's disposal or that you used for example during your holidays? Do not

consider the theft of objects outside the house, such as the mat, the watering hose, or things from landing.

The Canada General Social Survey (GSS)

Was anything of yours stolen during the past 12 months from the things usually kept outside your home, such as yard furniture?

The British Crime Survey

Has anyone got into this house/flat without permission and stolen or tried to steal anything?

The European International Crime Survey (EICS)

Over the past five years, did anyone actually get into your home without permission, and steal or try to steal something? I am not including here thefts from garages, sheds or lock-ups.

THEFT

The USA National Crime victimization Survey (NCVS)

I'm going to read some examples that will give you an idea of the kinds of crimes this study covers.

Was something belonging to you stolen, such as –

(a) things that you carry, like luggage, a wallet, purse, briefcase, book –

As i go through them, tell me if any of these happened to you in the last 6 months, that is since _____, 20 ____.

(b) clothing, jewelry, or cellphone –

(c) bicycle or sports equipment –

(d) things in your home – like a tv, stereo, or tools

(e) things outside your home such as a garden hose or lawn furniture –

(f) things belonging to children in the household –

(g) things from a vehicle, such as a package, groceries, camera, or cds –

(h) did anyone attempt to steal anything belonging to you?

37a. (other than any incidents already mentioned,) has anyone –

(a) broken in or attempted to break into your home by forcing a door or window, pushing past someone, jimmying a lock, cutting a screen, or entering through an open door or window?

(b) has anyone illegally gotten in or tried to get into a garage, shed, or storage room?

(c) illegally gotten in or tried to get into a hotel or motel room or vacation home where you were staying?

492. Sometimes crimes are collected using a single screening question, while other times multiple screeners based on the type of crime are administered. For instance, the NCVS uses multiple screener questions. In general, each screener is designed to elicit victimizations for a specific type of crime. Some screeners identify personal crimes against the individual (e.g., purse snatching), others screen for violent crimes (e.g., robbery, aggravated assault), while others screen for crimes against the household (e.g., motor vehicle theft, burglary).

493. Screeners can also be used to identify non-physical violence. Psychological violence by a male intimate partner, for instance, can be identified through a series of screener questions.

Box: Example of Intimate Partner Violence screener questions

Your husband/ wife/ live-in partner/ your fiancé:

1. Does he get angry if you speak with another man?
2. Does he humble or insult you when faced with other people, e.g. treating you badly, ridiculing your ideas, telling others your intimate details?
3. Does he criticize the way you looks, your attire or hairstyle, e.g. telling you are less charming, and/or inadequate?
4. Does he criticize you for your managing the home, your cooking, or for how you educate children, e.g. telling you are not able and you are good for nothing?
5. Does he neglect you, not speaking and not listening to you, e.g. not considering what you say or not answering to your questions?
6. Does he insult you or bad mouth you?

494. A useful approach used in the NCVS is to screen for victimizations based on the victim and offender relationship. Without such screeners, there is the real possibility of underestimating violence such as sexual violence by an intimate partner. This is a useful screener question to include because some respondents do not view violence by an intimate or a family member as a personal or violent victimization. In this case a set of questions is used to define one unique concept. Sensitivities about what is acceptable to ask in an interview may differ across cultures, and this should be taken into account when considering whether to apply a question used in one country as such, or if it is necessary to reformulate the question.

Box: Questions used for Violence against women survey Screening

The following items represent the questions used for violence against women survey screening.

The blue questions are used both the IVAWS survey and the Iatlian survey, in Yellow only those added in Italian version of Violence against women Survey.

PHYSICAL VIOLENCE

- Has your partner ever THREATENED to hurt you physically in a way that frightened you? Please keep in mind that we are focussing here only on threats to hurt you.
- Has your partner ever THROWN SOMETHING AT YOU OR HIT you with something that hurt or frightened you?
- Has your partner ever PUSHED OR GRABBED YOU OR TWISTED YOUR ARM OR PULLED YOUR HAIR in a way that hurt or frightened you?
- Has your partner ever SLAPPED, KICKED, BIT OR HIT YOU WITH A FIST?
- Has your partner ever tried to STRANGLE OR SUFFOCATE YOU, BURN OR SCALD you on purpose?
- Has your partner ever used or threatened to use a KNIFE OR GUN on you?
- Excluding sexual violence, has your partner ever been physically violent towards you in a way that I have not already mentioned?

SEXUAL VIOLENCE

- Has your partner ever FORCED YOU INTO SEXUAL INTERCOURSE by threatening you, holding you down, or hurting you in some way? Please at this point exclude ATTEMPTS to force you.

- (IF NO, in the previous question) Has your partner ever FORCED YOU TO OTHER SEXUAL FORMS, such as anal penetration or made by hands or objects, or oral sex, that is, made by mouth?
- (Apart from anything you have just mentioned,) has your partner ever ATTEMPTED TO FORCE YOU INTO SEXUAL INTERCOURSE by threatening you, holding you down or hurting you in some way? This is an attempt where sexual intercourse did not take place.
- Has it ever happened you have sexual intercourse with your partner even if you didn't really want it, FOR FEAR OF HIS REACTION?
- Has your partner ever forced you to do something of sexual that YOU FOUND DEGRADING OR HUMILIATING?
- Has your partner ever forced or attempted to force you into SEXUAL ACTIVITY WITH SOMEONE ELSE, including being forced to have sex for money or in exchange for goods?
- Has your partner ever been sexually violent towards you in a way that I have not already mentioned?

The following items represent the questions used for the National Violence against women study screening of USA survey (2000) for rape and for physical assault:

Rape was defined as an event that occurred without the victim's consent, that involved the use or threat of force to penetrate the victim's vagina or anus by penis, tongue, fingers, or object, or the victim's mouth by penis. The definition included both attempted and completed rape. The survey used questions adapted from the National Women's Study to screen respondents for rape victimization:

- Has a man or boy ever made you have sex by using force or threatening to harm you or someone close to you? Just so there is no mistake, by sex we mean putting a penis in your vagina.
- Has anyone, male or female, ever made you have oral sex by using force or threat of force? Just so there is no mistake, by oral sex we mean that a man or boy put his penis in your mouth or someone, male or female, penetrated your vagina or anus with their mouth.
- Has anyone ever made you have anal sex by using force or threat of harm? Just so there is no mistake, by anal sex we mean that a man or boy put his penis in your anus.
- Has anyone, male or female, ever put fingers or objects in your vagina or anus against your will or by using force or threats?
- Has anyone, male or female, ever attempted to make you have vaginal, oral, or anal sex against your will but intercourse or penetration did not occur?

Physical assault

After you became an adult, did any other adult, male or female, ever . . .

- Throw something at you that could hurt?
- Push, grab, or shove you?
- Pull your hair?
- Slap or hit you?
- Kick or bite you?
- Choke or attempt to drown you?
- Hit you with some object?
- Beat you up?
- Threaten you with a gun?
- Threaten you with a knife or other weapon?
- Use a gun on you?
- Use a knife or other weapon on you?

Crime incident instrument

495. When screening questions reveal the respondent was victimized, additional questions must be asked to gather details of these victimizations. These incident-based questions are generally located on a second survey instrument dedicated to incident characteristics.

496. If during the screening process, the respondent identifies more than one type of crime suffered, the following strategies can be chosen: Using a separate incident detail form for different types of crime, or using a single incident form that is flexible enough to be used for all crime types.

Separate incident form for each crime type

497. The incident questionnaire can have as many in-depth incident question sections as the number of crimes revealed in the screener. Alternatively, it might sometimes be enough to concentrate only on the consequences of only some crimes. In each incident question section the same kind of questions regarding “when”, “what”, “how” the crime occurred should exist. However, using this method, there should be items related to specifics of each type of victimization investigated. For example:

If the crime is pick-pocketing, what was stolen?

- Pocket money _____ 1
- Identity documents _____ 2
- Money _____ 3
- Credit cards, bancomat, check book _____ 4
- Watch, jewelry _____ 5
- Keys _____ 6
- Other personal objects, mobile _____ 7
- Other (i.e., Miscellaneous documents) _____ 8

If the crime is theft of personal objects, what was stolen?

- Pocket money _____ 1
- Credit cards, bancomat, check book _____ 2
- Money _____ 3
- Documents _____ 4
- Bags, suitcases _____ 5
- Watch, jewelry _____ 6
- Camera, Videocamera _____ 7
- Mobile _____ 8
- Computer _____ 9
- Walkman, radio, cassette tape _____ 10
- Keys _____ 11
- Books and stationery (pens etc.) _____ 12
- Personal dresses _____ 13
- Tools and dresses for working and/or sport _____ 14
- Personal objects (make-up, eyeglasses umbrella, etc.) _____ 15
- Other (specify) _____ 16

Single incident form for all crime types

498. This structure suggests that the questionnaire should have as many in-depth sections on the incident as the number of investigated victimizations. Further, this approach suggests that the list of questions should be the same for each type of crime reviewed. Using this format, the survey designed must provide an exhaustive list of responses for each type of crime examined. For example:

For pick-pocketing and theft of personal objects, what was stolen?

Pocket money_____	1
Identity documents_____	2
Money _____	3
Credit cards, bancomat, check book_____	4
Watch, jewelry_____	5
Keys _____	6
Other personal objects, mobile_____	7
Bags, suitcases_____	8
Camera, Video camera _____	9
Mobile_____	10
Computer_____	11
Walkman, radio, cassette tape_____	12
Books and stationery (pens etc.) _____	13
Personal dresses_____	14
Tools and dresses for working and/or sport _____	15
Personal objects (make-up, eyeglasses, umbrella, etc.)__	16
Other (i.e., Miscellaneous documents)___	17

499. In some instances, the victim suffers multiple victimizations of the same type. When this is the case, researchers must make decisions whether to gather incident level information about one or all of these similar events. This decision will greatly influence the incident instrument design. Options about which events to gather incident level data on include:

- Gather incident details on the victimization the victim views as most serious
- Gather incident details on only the most recent event
- Gather incident details about all victimizations
- Gather incident details about a subset of the victimizations (e.g., the last three)

500. Each of these options affects the quality of the data, the cost of the data and the questionnaire length. For example, the choice to gather data on the most serious crime will bias the data toward more serious crimes and threaten a representative description of victimization. The option to gather information on the most recent victimization (or the most recent three) will offer a more precise picture of the qualitative aspects of victimization but it will provide only a partial accounting of the quantity of victimization. A clear disadvantage of opting to collect only the most recent victimization is that it may not accurately represent the other victimizations experienced. For instance, in some intimate partner violence scenarios, violence

escalates over time. One strategy to avoid that problem is the possibility of collecting information regarding a longer series of violence (the last three victimizations). That is, gathering information on injuries, long term consequences, costs, presence of children, when the violence occurred, etc. that better represents the series of violence.

Series Victimizations

501. There are some victimizations that are on-going in nature and difficult to view as a single event. These victimizations, called series victimizations include bullying, mobbing, and intimate partner violence. Series victimizations are on-going in nature and tend to be similar in character. Further, series victimizations are characterized by the respondents' inability to offer detailed incident characteristics about each event or the exact number of incidents.

502. Survey design must take into account series victimizations. Several decisions must be made – all of which are reflected in the survey design. First, the survey designer must clearly define what a series victimization is. For example, must there be three events similar in character for which the victim cannot give detailed incident information? Or must there be six or more events before one is considered as suffering from series victimization?

503. A second decision is how to handle these series incidents. Recall that counting victimizations requires one to know the details of each incident to ascertain if an in-scope crime occurred and if so, what type of crime occurred. A common way to deal with this is to note the number of times the respondent feels they were victimized, and to gather incident level characteristics on the most recent victimization.

504. The third major decision is then how to count or include series victimizations in estimates. One method is to exclude all series victimizations from estimates. This option obviously will underestimate victimization. A second method is to use the details of the most recent event and include it as many times as the respondent states they were victimized. That is, if someone stated they were victimized ten times in the reference period and offered that the most recent event took the form of a robbery, the estimates would include ten robberies. This may offer greater precision in the quantity of violence, but it offers less precision in the qualitative aspects of the violence if the victimizations were not very similar or changed in character over time. A third option utilized is to include the series victimization in estimates as one incident. Obviously this underestimates the true scope of victimization. However, it does not introduce additional error into the qualitative aspect of victimization by assuming all victimizations in the series were identical in nature.

How to formulate questions

505. When writing survey questions, two fundamental components must be considered. First, one must take into account the population of interest. When interviewing the general population, education levels, age and cultural experiences may vary. Second, the topic of the question must be considered. When writing survey questions, each question must be clear to the reader. Ensuring clarity means taking

into account the target population. The goal is to provide such clear questions that no respondent is forced to interpret any question. Interpretation by respondents means they will use their own personal reference system jeopardizing the data gathered. Also in national survey different languages may need to be used (where there are more than one national language, or where emphasis is put to including linguistic minorities). After first translation the wording of questions may need to be considered again, also in the original language, in an effort to find formulations that would carry the same meaning in different languages.

506. In an effort to avoid common pitfalls, several approaches are recommended. These include:

- Use simple terms
- Avoid technical terms
- Use precise terms, avoiding ambiguous words or those with multiple meanings
- Avoid depreciative words
- Avoid colloquialisms
- Avoid long questions that may confuse the reader
- Avoid double-barrelled questions (e.g., Do you fear you will be victimized and that the police will be unresponsive?)
- Avoid constructing questions containing too many specifications, since the question could appear rather burdensome and difficult to understand
- Avoid using negative language (i.e., Don't you disagree that...)
- Use examples to clarify the correct interpretation for complex questions

507. Victim surveys should avoid using legal language as most are unfamiliar with the precise meaning of legal terms. In addition the use of common terms associated with crime and victimization are frequently confused by respondents. For instance, many respondents will state that their home was robbed when robbery is a term generally applied to a person. Thus, even common terms such as burglary and robbery are frequently confused by the general population. Further, in violence against women surveys, for example, some respondents may not feel that what they have experienced was a crime, and they might not report an incident if the emphasis is on breaking the law. Rather than using such words, it is preferred to describe an event in terms of its elements: The use of force, the threat, weapon presence, physical contact, physical injury, loss of property, etc. Below is an example of a poorly worded question followed by preferable question wording.

<p>Box: Poor question wording:</p> <p>In the last ... years, has somebody purse-snatched you, or has anyone attempted to purse-snatch you?</p> <p>Preferred question wording:</p>

In the last ... years, has somebody taken or attempted to take from you your bag, purse or an object of value (for example a watch, a bracelet, a necklace, a fur...), using force, but without verbal threat or the use of a weapon?

508. Questions on victimization surveys are often very similar. Often, only small portions of the questions (e.g., the reference period) change from question to question. Because of this, the structure of a victimization survey may be somewhat repetitive. And, even though theory suggests the avoidance of long sentences, victimization survey questions often need to be long to be precise. This is in part due to the inclusion of examples designed to enhance respondent recall. To cope with these important aspects, special graphic styles (bold and color font ...) can be used to let a greater emphasis in interviewers reading to keep alert the interviewee interest.

509. How to word a particular question is in part related to where the question resides on the instrument. For example adjacent placement of questions regarding violence against women may require some examples to distinguish the two questions. If one is to place a question about sexual violence before another question about sexual harassment, it is advisable to add some examples in the second question emphasizing the differences in the two events just asked. An example from the Italian experience illustrates this.

Box: The Italian violence against women survey

During the pilot study of domestic violence it was learned that placing a question about rape by non partner before a question about sexual harassment without utilizing examples confused respondents. Respondents mistakenly perceived that the question about rape and harassment referred to equally serious crimes.

Consequently an alternative questionnaire formulation was used which underlined specific aspects of each crime, providing concrete examples to better assist the respondents.

When estimates from the two approaches were compared, results showed that failure to use examples of the victimization of interest led to an under-estimation of about six percentage points.

The alternative questions used are as follows:

(Besides anything you have already mentioned,) (Since the age of 16,) Has any man ever **TOUCHED YOU SEXUALLY** when you did not want him to in a way that was **DISTRESSING** to you?

(Besides the events we have already talked about) since you were 16th until today, were you touched by a man **IN A SEXUAL WAY AGAINST YOUR WILL** in a way you did not like?

Please consider that we are referring also to less serious events that can happen to a

woman for example: at school, in a disco, at work, at home, at the cinema, on the bus.

You can take all the time you need to think of it.

Box: How to survey violence: Do not mention violence

Research suggests that asking about situations versus using a term such as “violence” “rape” “assault” increases disclosure of victimization events. Stated differently, questions should not ask about any physical or sexual violence directly. Instead, they should describe episodes, examples, or incidents that the respondent can recognize as real in their life. The details used in these scenarios or prompts should include a variety of situations, locations and offender relationships. Such variation assists victims in remembering events and decreases possible underestimation of the phenomena of interest.

Answers modalities

510. When planning a questionnaire, it is important to define the type of questions to be included. A questionnaire can contain closed-ended or open-ended questions. These modalities are discussed in greater detail below.

Closed-ended questions

511. A closed-ended question is a question in which the interviewee must choose between a fixed set of response categories. Closed-ended questions are useful when it is possible to define beforehand mutually exclusive and exhaustive list of response categories. Mutually exclusive refers to the fact that the response categories listed should have no overlap in meaning. Exhaustive response categories imply that all options for response are offered. Should there be any question whether the response categories are exhaustive, it is recommended that the modality “Other, please specify”

be included. The use of including an “Other, please specify” option avoids two problems:

- The selection of incorrect response categories (an interviewee who does not find a right answer could decide to choose any one among those provided)
- An increase in the number of non-responses (interviewees may otherwise become frustrated if they feel that they cannot answer the question or that the categories do not take into account what they have experienced).

512. Of course, to include the item “*Other, please specify*” among the answer alternatives entails that the researcher must do more work during the data entry and correction phase. During this phase, the researcher would have to carefully read the respondents’ answers and, where necessary, assign these to pre-existing answer modalities. The option of “*Other, please specify*” also enables the researcher to expand some of the answer modalities previously defined to include some that were found through the use of “*Other, please specify*” category. It allows the researcher to create new categories when a substantial number of “*Other, please specify*” indicate the need to. The responses in the “*Other, please specify*” also allow the researcher to see if the respondent has failed to understand the meaning of the question asked.

Box: A new response category in the Italian Victimization survey

In the “Citizen Safety” 2002 survey, the analysis of the answers provided in “*Other, please specify*” relative to the type of objects a thief had stolen led to the inclusion of a previously unused response category: Mobile phone. Between 2002 and 1997 when the survey was first conducted, the theft of mobile phones had increased enough to warrant its inclusion as a response category.

Box: How to use information from “Other, please specify” in crime classification

In the pick-pocket section of the survey, respondents sometimes answered the question “How did the crime take place” with “I left it on the table.” Because pick-pocketing refers to be removed from the respondent’s person, these responses clearly indicated the respondent misunderstood the type of crime the researchers were asking about. In these cases, the interviewer had to survey the misunderstanding of the respondent, ticking the answer with the code relative to this type of error (Example 1). Questions relative to what had been stolen also help in understanding if there has been a misunderstanding in crime classification. For example, respondents sometimes answered the question regarding thefts of personal objects, declaring to have been deprived of some car parts.

Considering that the screening question was: «In the past three years, has somebody stolen or attempted to steal from you money or objects that you did not directly wear, such as money or jewels in a locker room, purses or luggage on a train, books at

school or at work, money, credit cards or cheques at work (do not consider the objects stolen from your car, house or external parts of your house)?», it is clear that the respondent misunderstood the question addressed to him or her.

Example 1:

HOW DID THE CRIME TAKE PLACE? (PICKPOCKETING)

- You were approached with an excuse while walking _____ 1
- Somebody deceitfully approached you, for example
you got involved in a false brawl or somebody hugged you _____ 2
- You were knocked or pushed in a crowded place _____ 3
- Your attention was attracted by a noise or
an event whose purpose was to distract you _____ 4
- You do not know, you did not notice anything right then _____ 5
- They took advantage while you were distracted _____ 6
- Other (please, specify) _____ 7
- OBJECT LEFT UNATTENDED _____ 96**
- THE OBJECT WAS IN THE CAR _____ 97**
- THE OBJECT WAS TAKEN BY FORCE _____ 98**
- THE OBJECT WAS LOST _____ 99**

Here too, the interviewer was given the possibility of putting right the error using code 99 present among the answer alternatives (Example 2), unburdening the researcher work in the data correction phase.

Example 2

WHAT WAS STOLEN?

(Ask the question again, more than one answer possible)

- Wallet, purse _____ 1
- Credit cards, chequebook,
luncheon vouchers _____ 2
- Money _____ 3
- Documents _____ 4
- Purse, luggage _____ 5
- Jewels, watches _____ 6
- Camera, telecamera _____ 7
- Mobile phone _____ 8
- Computer _____ 9
- Walkman, radio, musicassette _____ 10
- Keys _____ 11
- Books and writing material (calculator, pen, etc.) _____ 12
- Clothes _____ 13
- Work and sport equipment and gear _____ 14
- Personal object (make-up, eyeglass, umbrella, etc.) _____ 15
- Other (please, specify) _____ 16
- CAR OBJECTS AND PARTS _____ 99**

513. Closed-ended questions have great advantages. They provide uniform responses and save time and intellectual energy of both the respondent and interviewer. Because closed questions are designed to help respondents concentrate on the aspects important to the researcher, the cognitive effort necessary for providing an answer is minimal: They only need identify one category among those submitted. In addition, the easy coding, especially in the case of self-compiled structured questionnaires, greatly helps reduce transcription errors and saves time.

514. On the other hand, closed-ended questions have some disadvantages. Their main flaw is “over-determination of the reference scheme” (Morton-William and Sykes, 1984). The respondent can only choose one category among those provided, and cannot clarify nor express further their position. Hence, it encourages the passiveness of the respondents, providing them with a way to hide ignorance or disinterestedness on the topic. Consequently, subjects who answer a closed question invariably appear to have a higher than average level of information higher than subjects who answer an open-ended question on the same topic.

515. Another disadvantage that occurs with closed-ended questions at times is the use of too many alternatives, particularly in surveys where the alternatives are read out to the respondent. Research suggests that an average person can evaluate a maximum of seven alternatives at a same time. This suggests that when a long list of alternatives is provided, the order in which the answers are presented can influence the respondents responses and possibly distort frequencies. One way of resolving this problem is to structure the question as an open-ended question. The interviewer then can mark the appropriate closed-ended category. This technique clearly places an important burden on the interviewer as he or she must decide how to register the answers. Clearly, this methodological option requires highly trained interviewers. In personal interviews showcards are sometimes used to present the alternatives to the respondents, making it easier for them to evaluate the options.

Box: Managing a long list of response categories

Pre-tests of the Italian Violence against women survey (Safety women survey 2006) highlighted some of the difficulties with a long list of response categories. In this survey, the field representatives code the respondent’s answer. When more than seven categories were present, the interviewers had difficulty in doing so precisely.

This was especially the case when the questions included multi-response answers, where more than one answer could be given. It appeared that the interviewers may have been involuntarily modifying what the respondent stated. Pre-test data analysis revealed a concentration of frequencies on particular alternatives, as well as an excessive use of “*Other, please specify*”.

To address this problem, it was decided to correct the formal and substantive structure of some of these questions. In other words, it was decided to alter the editing of these questions and, after reading the responses provided in “*Other, please specify*”, to offer new response categories. Specifically, the researchers made several important changes:

- Grouped previously separate response categories into a single category. This change enabled interviewers to more easily mark the correct response category.
- Expanded some response categories based on the responses transcribed in “*Other, please specify*”. This reduced the overuse of “*Other, please specify*”.

516. Clearly it is very important to closely monitor when and how to adjust semi-closed or closed-ended answer questions.

Open-ended questions

517. The alternative to closed-ended questions is open-ended questions. These questions allow respondents to express their answers in their own words. Though open-ended questions are more commonly found in smaller surveys, they are used in large surveys as well. For example, open-ended questions were utilized in the Italian Victimization Survey, under the “abuse and violence” section regarding the sexual blackmail women suffer at their workplace. Rather than offering a battery of occupations from which the female respondent would choose, the respondent was able to state what her occupation was at the time of the blackmail. The primary purpose of using open-ended questions in this instance was to avoid errors in classifying jobs on a pre-designated list of occupations. Clearly, this approach required additional work during the data cleaning and coding phase. Each response had to be formalized, and the responses given had to be categorized into the categories offered in the “Labour Force” and “Economic activity” surveys (NACE classification).

518. The primary disadvantages to open-ended questions are that the cognitive effort required from the respondent and the greater potential for distortion by the interviewer when recording the response. In addition, open-ended responses require a considerable amount of time in coding, as well as higher costs and time during each phase following the interview. This has been documented in several international survey experiences where it was learned that sometimes open-ended questions, despite being useful for obtaining a certain quality, do not help the “economy” of the research. The efforts put forth during subsequent data analysis and cleaning phases require great time and cost. Finally, open-ended questions may be more difficult to persons who are not accustomed to expressing their thoughts, attitudes and behaviors in detail.

519. In contrast, the main advantage of open-ended questions is that they guarantee spontaneous answers. There is no risk of conditioning the answer or of “under-determining the stimulus”. And, based on the respondent’s answer, the interviewer can better evaluate whether the respondent really understood the question. Open-ended questions are advisable when closed-ended questions require too many options, responses are anticipated to be complex or the response categories are not fully known. Hence, non-structured answer questions are often used in pre-test phases to help ascertain which response categories should be included in closed-ended questions later appearing on the final survey instrument.

Hierarchical questions

520. Hierarchical questions are those that ask the respondent to classify in order of importance a certain number of responses relative to the phenomenon. In this case, the researcher knows and proposes the alternatives. Interviewees must place the list presented to him or her in the order of importance. Like all questions, it is important that the respondent clearly understands all items. Because these questions require considerable effort, the number of items to be hierarchically ordered should not be too large unless it is absolutely necessary.

521. One aid that can be used in face-to-face surveys is a set of small cards. Each card has written upon it one response category. The respondent can use these cards to order the categories. Another option is to request that the respondent put a subset of the categories in order of importance. Such a strategy is referred to as a *partially-measured hierarchical* question. These are particularly useful during telephone interviews.

522. Because hierarchical questions allow structuring of the respondents’ preferences, the information gathered is superior to the one drawn from non-hierarchical multi-response questions. Nonetheless, they should be used with caution due to the increased burden placed upon both the interviewer and the respondent.

Scaled items

523. Scaled questions offer response categories using a verbal or numerical scale. The scaling technique is mainly used to measure attitudes, opinions, motivations, judgements, and values. Directly interviewing the individual using questions with scaled answers is the easiest and most reliable way to obtain such information.

524. Scaled questions can be administered in several ways. The first is to present answers as independent in semantic terms, that is their own intrinsic meaning does not need to be related to the other available alternatives in the scale to be understood (nominal scale). The second method is to provide response categories that are partially independent. For example, response categories can be: “much”, “enough”, “few”, “not at all” (ordinal scale). Third, one can offer response categories that are self-anchoring. For example, the respondent may be asked to express their pleasure with a particular crime fighting law using a scale from “1” (least favourable) to “10”

(most favorable). That is, only the two extreme categories are meaningful, while between them is a continuum where the respondent identifies his or her position.

525. When using scaled items, one may include a neutral and impartial option such as “Do not know” or “No opinion”. A disadvantage of including a neutral option is that respondent may opt to go for this cognitively easy option. Some research suggests it is best to avoid using neutral categories “forcing” respondents into a position.

526. Another response category sometimes offered when using scaled items is a central possibility. That is, the numerical scale offered may range from 1 (most desirable) to 5 (least desirable) with the central option 3 representing “no preference”. In general, it not advised to use a central possibility since the respondent will be inclined to indiscriminately select the central value. This is especially the case in self-administered questionnaires.

527. The number of items in the scale is contingent on the type of interviewing. In phone interviews it is suggested to offer respondents the opportunity to choose among fewer items such as “often”, “sometimes”, “occasionally”, “never”. It should be left up to the interviewer to record “Doesn’t know” or “Refusal” should the respondent state that is the case.

Likert Scale

528. A Likert measurement scale is a technique according which respondents are given a list of items, each of which expressing positive and negative attitudes towards a specific object. Each item provides for five different possible answers: Fully agree, Agree, Uncertain, Disagree, Fully disagree. By adding the ratings expressed, it becomes possible to delineate, in a reasonably precise way, how the subject feels about the problem, object of survey.

529. The specific qualities of this measurement scale can be synthesised as follows:

- 1) Each item is expressed as a statement and subjects are request to rate it by means of a rating scale. Such answer scale has a partial semantic autonomy → the meaning of each category is only partially autonomous.
- 2) Because each item must represent an indicator of the theoretical construct that the scale intends surveying and measuring, it is called latent variable: latent because not directly observable and variable because some of its properties, such as strength and width, may vary according to persons or conditions.
- 3) The scores of each item must be added.
- 4) The fact that the items do not have a “correct” answer makes it different from the multiple-response tests; rating scales cannot be used to test knowledge and ability.

530. Among its main qualities, this scale is able to graduate the respondents’ behaviours and opinions regarding a specific survey topic and reveal the beliefs closest to their experiences.

531. One of its main advantages is that it can be easily administered to respondents. The answer recording is formally very simple: the answer categories are clear and follow a preset scheme. To express their viewpoints, interviewees can choose from several answer alternatives, unlike scales that simply provide for a dichotomy reaction (yes/no or I agree/I disagree). In addition, the answers can easily be ordered on a continuum.

532. Consequently, the Likert method, quicker and simpler than the Thurstone scales, is still used in many sectors of applied research.

533. Since the typical battery-structure of the items requires interviewees to carefully read and reflect on them, Likert behaviour scales can legitimately be used in self-administered interviews where respondents can calmly reflect and evaluate the answer that most reflects their opinions.

534. Multi-dimensional analyses of the answers obtained through the Likert scales can help identify and understand what type of relation, if any, there is between structural aspects and socio-psychological features of the respondents. The picture that emerges is certainly complete and exhaustive thanks to the fact that objective data are put in relation with subjective elements. In the victimisation survey for example, Likert scales could be included in the section that deals with feelings of fear of crime and feelings of socio-environmental decay (Example 1). The data processing phase could then involve carrying out multi-dimensional analyses that relate the personal profile of the respondent defined based on his subjective opinions expressed through the scales, with the results that emerged in the sections relative to crimes suffered and thus, to objective experiences of victimisation.

Example 1

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

(one answer per row)

	Fully agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Fully disagree
Neighbourhoods where immigrants live are more degraded.....	1	2	3	4	5
Good lighting and cleaner streets allow for a better life quality.	1	2	3	4	5
Who commits acts of vandalism against public properties must be punished with social services.....	1	2	3	4	5
“Life quality” is a problem that affects only who lives in the city	1	2	3	4	5
Were the police to patrol more the streets, many acts of vandalism would not occur.	1	2	3	4	5
Homeless and nomads should not be allowed to beg for money on the streets	1	2	3	4	5

535. Nonetheless, the Likert scales do have some disadvantages, some of which linked with the scale’s typical closed-answer structure. Because interviewees must choose between few alternatives, they are not encouraged to reflect. What is more, if they have nothing to say about the argument, they could be induced to give a non-

reasoned answer or even a casual answer, maybe to hide their own ignorance or disinformation on a given argument. On the other hand, particularly informed and interested persons could be prevented from “giving an original contribution to the research, thereby generating at times frustration and irritation in who has an opinion that cannot be expressed in any of the preset categories” (Pitrone 1984, 62). In this case, the interviewee could decide to not answer so that his opinion is not conditioned by the scarce and closed alternatives provided for by the survey instrument.

536. Another problem is that "the items of a Likert scale are presented to the interviewees not separately, [...] but always as a sequential battery, and that to save time by repeatedly using the same answer scheme" (Cacciola - Marradi 1988, 69). Consequently, interviewees might be induced to always give the same mechanical answer, whatever the content of the question (such phenomenon is called response set). Moreover, the Likert scales can also produce the so-called acquiescent response set, that is, the tendency to always agree with every item. Clearly, such a distortion of the instrument will produce negative consequences also during the data analysis phase. Hence, the polarity of some statements is sometimes inverted in order to make any contradiction more noticeable.

537. Despite the limits inherent to the nature of the Likert scales, it is extremely efficient to adopt this type of questions during pre-test phases, phases necessary for exploring scantily surveyed arguments and/or for defining better the definitive structure of questions pertaining to delicate and not very known arguments. For example, in the case of the «International Violence Against Women Survey» (Ivaws) promoted by «The European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control» (Heuni), to evaluate the temporary survey instrument prepared, it was decided to test the questionnaire an international workgroup had drawn and proposed, administering it face-to-face to some privileged witnesses who, either because of their work or by experience, deal with violence and abuse on women. In the version used during the pre-test phase, in the section “General characteristics of the respondent”, four questions were included relatively to examples of violence a woman might suffer in her life. Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which such episodes could be acceptable or not. To the four statements relative to the relationships between men and women, respondents were asked to declare whether they agree or disagree (Example 2).

Example 2

I would now like to ask you some questions on the relationships between men and women within the domestic walls. In our country and elsewhere, people think differently as regards families and what is acceptable for men and for women

I will list you some statements and I would like you to tell me whether you agree or disagree with these. There are no correct or wrong answers.

	Agree	Disagree
A man is not a real man if he cannot keep his wife under control	1	2
Female work and male work is two different things and one should not do the work of the other	1	2
Physical abuse within a couple is a private matter and should stay private	1	2

A woman should never ask her husband/cohabitant partner/boyfriend to cook or clean the house, even if she works outside of the house

1

2

538. Now, comparing the distance points with the real Likert scale, one can immediately notice that it is based on a dichotomy answer modality and not a traditional five-categorisation, and that the battery of statements involves only items with negative semantic polarity. Nevertheless, the analysis of the results obtained during the scale explorative phase has allowed understanding the aspects of the phenomenon that require further examination and the best method for drawing up questions to be added in the final questionnaire.

Box: How to build a likert scale

Some assumptions of this technique allow for easy registration and codification:

- 1) Unidimensionality of behaviours object of survey: the different statements used must refer to the same concept, that is, the items must survey the same property and measure the same thing.
- 2) Conceptualisation of the survey object into a *continuum*: a behaviour is considered a *continuum*; the answer modalities are ordered on a continuum expressing the subjects' orientations on the matter surveyed: the subjects' answers determine their own position. Thus, the scale-based continuum reflects a psychological continuum.
- 3) Equidistance between the answer categories: despite the many critics, it is taken for granted that the positions perceived are the same for each category and for all interviewees. It is assumed that the distance between "I completely agree" and "I agree" is equal to the one between "I disagree" and "I fully disagree", just as for the category "uncertain".

The procedure applied for constructing a Likert scale can be synthesised into five operative steps:

1. Drafting of the items. An empirical rule to be used when planning a scale suggests not using less than 20-25 items per dimension, divided into positive and negative feeling toward the object. Since the purpose of the item is to elicit agreements/disagreements, they must be chosen from clearly favourable to unfavourable while no neutral items must be included. Particular attention must be given to structuring statements that do not involve answers linked with social desirability, as it would risk invalidating the results offered by the measurement scale. To this purpose, it is important to conduct, before the instrument planning, qualitative studies on the experiences of the object being surveyed in the reference population. Generally, these items are monotonous or formulated in a unidirectional way compared to the object to be measured, so that more the subject is favourable towards the object, higher will be his score for the item.

To prepare a pool of items (description of feelings, emotions, judgments, beliefs regarding the construct to be measured) is a very delicate operation since the scale items determine themselves the metric properties of the scale (fidelity, validity). Thus, every item must represent the theoretical construct; should this not occur, then the whole scale will not be able to gather its meaning. The researcher can refer to: literature, interviews, and focus groups.

2. Classification of items. The items are given to a sample of subjects to whom the definitive scale will be applied, in order to evaluate them in a five-category system: 1=I completely agree, 2=I agree, 3=uncertain, 4=I disagree, 5=I fully disagree.

3. Calculation of the item-score. Scores are attributed based on a process Likert defined as "simple method", one that has become the standard in codifying the ratings expressed on items.

- The favourable items are separated from the unfavourable items.
- Scores are attributed (e.g., on a five-step scale where 1 corresponds to "I disagree" and 5 to "I agree").
- The scores of the unfavourable items are reversed so that they can be summed to the favourable scores. For example, if during the codifying phase, it was decided that the "I agree" item provides high scores, then, the negative statements must obtain low scores. On an operative level, this is done "turning around" the scores associated to negative items as follows: if 1 corresponds to "I strongly disagree", and 5 to "I strongly agree", the scores associated with the item "I like this

cinema” will not be modified. However, as regards the item “the seats of this cinema are too uncomfortable” (revealing a negative attitude towards the object “cinema”), it will be modified as follows: scores 1 will be re-codified as 5, scores 2 as 4, scores 3 will remain unchanged. Hence, all respondents with a positive experience will have answered 5, while those with a negative experience will have answered 1.

- Now, the total score of a subject indicates his position on the attitude continuum (here hypothesised as unidimensional). It will result as quantified and, though there is no zero score in this measure, it will be available for comparison with other data.

4. **Selection of the items for the final scale.** After attributing to the subjects a score equal to the average of all their answers 1-5, they are ordered based on such score, from least favourable to highly favourable. Subsequently, 25% (or some other arbitrary fraction) of the least favourable and 25% of the highly favourable are taken and the items considered as the best ones are those that best distinguish the two subject groups.

5. **Application of the scale.** The definitive scale is constructed based on the items selected. The interviewee must classify the 50 or more items from 1 = ‘I fully agree’ to 5 = ‘I fully disagree’; his score on the scale will simply be the average of his scores on the items" (Perrone 1977, 119). Or, since the Likert scale takes into consideration the fact that answer categories must be expressed with natural numbers, “the individual score on the scale can also be made up of the [...] sum of numeric codes attributed to the answers chosen by a person to the various items of the scale" (Cacciola - Marradi 1988, 72).

539. Of course, whatever way the Likert behaviour scales are used, it is important to follow some general rules, especially to pay much attention when formulating the items. The terms used must indeed reflect the current language and should not be ambiguous, etc. The items chosen must be semantically simple, and double-barrelled items must particularly be avoided, that is, statements that refer to two different situations of the same object. Moreover, “(...) most people have only an approximate cognition on everything that is distant from their own vital world, but make sophisticated distinctions on everything that relates to work and free-time activities. Hence, it is important that interviewees understand the item text in order to express their own opinions on the argument and that the items given to them be drawn up with much cognisance of the case in order not to make them seem vague and/or inaccurate. The items must be structurally simple and involve only one statement referred to one object only” (Marradi – Gasperoni, 2002). These recommendations reveal once more the double nature of such technique: simple in structure and understanding, complex in preparation and conceptualisation.

Advantages and disadvantages of scaled items

540. Scales offer many advantages. The greatest advantage is their simplicity. Scales are easily administered to respondents, respondents understand them, and responses are easily recorded and coded. Scales allow respondents to express their viewpoints from several alternatives in contrast to dichotomous responses (i.e., yes/no, agree/disagree). And scales allow answers to be easily ordered on a meaningful continuum.

541. Scales are prone to some disadvantages however. First, because respondents must choose between relatively few alternatives, they are not encouraged to reflect deeply on the topic of interest. Further, if the respondent has nothing to say about the topic, they may be induced to a non-reasoned or even a casual answer. On the other

hand, particularly informed and interested persons could be prevented from “giving an original contribution to the research, thereby generating at times frustration and irritation in who has an opinion that cannot be expressed in any of the preset categories” (Pitrone 1984, 62). In this case, the respondent may decide to not answer so that his opinion is not conditioned by the alternatives provided for in the survey instrument.

542. A problem to be avoided in scaled items is *response set bias*. This can occur when a survey instrument offer a series of questions in which the response category are the same. For instance, a series of questions may be answered by marking either “yes” or “no”. This can be a problem in a Likert scale, where "the items of a Likert scale are presented to the respondents not separately, [...] but always as a sequential battery using the same answer scheme" (Cacciola - Marradi 1988, 69). Consequently, respondents may be inclined to give the same answer regardless of the question asked. When the respondent identifies a pattern in response categories, they may stop reading the questions and simply mark the entire column of responses as “yes” or “no” or “Agree” or “Disagree”. Obviously this behavior jeopardizes the value of the data collected and should be avoided. One way to do this is to break the blocks of questions into smaller blocks and to reverse the polarity of the questions asked.

543. And finally, scales can produce *acquiescent response set*. This refers to the tendency that individuals have to be agreeable. Therefore, in a survey situation, respondents are more likely to agree with items than they are to disagree with items. Clearly, acquiescence bias will distort the data. Therefore, the polarity of some statements should at times be inverted in order to make the presence of this bias measureable.

Box: Instructions to the respondent

After having selected the type of question to be used (e.g., single response, multi-response, hierarchical, scale, etc.), it is necessary to provide clear instructions to the respondent for answering the question. These directions should tell the respondent exactly what they are expected to do. Depending on the type of question, this portion of the instructions may include:

- select only 1 response
- provide a maximum of 3 answers
- check all that apply
- please rank the following items from most preferred to least preferred
- please select the three most preferred options, and then rank order those three from most to least favourable

Aside from the specific instructions, more general instructions for the respondent are important to include. This includes instructions such as:

- carefully read all items
- please take your time to reflect upon the best response

Retrospective questions

544. Victimization surveys generally involve asking the respondent to consider events from the past. Hence, the questions used are referred to as retrospective questions. A problem with retrospective surveys is ensuring that the respondent both correctly recall that an event occurred, and correctly recall when the victimization took place. Errors in memory increase as the reference period becomes longer.

545. One possibility to minimize error associated with retrospective questions is to repeat the survey after shorter periods of time (for example after six months instead of one year). If the budget or other constraints disallow this approach, the use of particular wording can help the respondent recall an event. In particular a funnelling question technique could be used. This technique suggests that the respondent be asked about any event (e.g., victimization) during their lifetime. Then, if an event was revealed, the interviewer can ask about a smaller period of time (e.g., last three years). And again, if the event occurred during that shorter time period, the respondent can be asked about a short time period such as the last 12 months or last calendar year.

546. At times a respondent can recall an event, but be unclear as to exactly when it occurred. An approach that is useful for this situation is the 'cue data' technique. Using this approach, the interviewer would ask the respondent about how he or she was dressed when the event occurred. This may aid in recognizing the season or if it occurred during a particular celebration (national celebration, Christmas, Easter, holidays, family or friend birthdays).

The reference period used in victimization and violence surveys: Analysis from the UNODC–UNECE Crime Survey Inventory

Most used reference period to report crimes is “1 year” or “12 month before interview” (more or less 89% of surveys), the following are also indicated by higher frequency: “5 years”, “lifetime”, “last 6 months” and “3 years before the interview”. In many case both 5 year and 1 year before the interview are considered, as it will be stressed when dealing strategies to reduce the telescoping effect (21 surveys out of 26 using 5 year reference period also ask for events occurred 1 year before the interview). Italy considers 3 year reference period instead of 5, but in this phase it was joined with surveys using 5 year ref.period for brevity.

It is important to notice that when the reference period is 1 year, many surveys indicate the calendar year as a fixed reference period, while some surveys, using a moving reference period, underline to consider the first month of the last 12 months period before the interview, as a reference to collect events. That first month becomes an anchor to delimitate the reference period, which will shift according to the survey length.

Other surveys, specifically panel surveys, link the reference period to the previous interview which can occur every 9 to 15 months, with a moving estimates period of about 11 months on average (Switzerland) or about every 6 months for NCVS- USA.

When considering lifetime periods we concern also reference periods defined as “from 16 or 18 years old” which clearly are used when collecting physical and/or sexual violence events.

Type of reference period used.

Reference period	N	%
Six Months	7	9,0
One year /12 months	62	79,5
Three years	2	2,6
Five years	26	33,3
Life time (or > 16/18years)	18	23,1
Other	2	2,6

When considering the type of surveys collecting data about victimisation in term of dedicated surveys or multipurpose surveys with an included module about victimisation and/or crimes (55,6% are victimisation survey; 33,3% are multipurpose surveys with the inclusion of a module on victimisation; 12,3% are violence against women surveys; 7,4% are other types), victimisation surveys most frequently consider 5 years, 6 months and/or 1 year as reference periods. Except for very few cases, surveys collecting events for last 5 years also collect events for the last 12 months period. In those cases estimates are published referring to the 12 months reference period.

Multipurpose surveys adopt most frequently 1 year and 6 months as the reference periods for collecting crime events.

Violence surveys usually refer to lifetime or a long period starting when respondent was 16 or 18 years old (77,8% of all the violence against women surveys).

Victimisation surveys use lifetime period only to collect sexual violence events, with the only exception of the International Crime in Business Survey – Lithuania.

Sequencing questions

547. Aside from careful wording of questions, statements and response categories on a survey, the order of these items requires attention. The first section of the interview should include a suitable introduction in which the survey goals are outlined. This step opens communication between the interviewer and the respondent and increases the respondent's willingness to participate in the complete interview.

548. Following the introduction, questions in the instrument should be grouped based on themes. In an effort not to confuse the respondent, questions should be ordered so that sudden changes in themes are avoided. And when themes do change, a few sentences alerting the respondent to a change in theme – transition statements - are advisable. This enables the respondent to prepare for and think about the new topic.

549. As far as specific questions within each thematic area, it is advised that a funnelling technique be utilized for question ordering. That is, each thematic section should begin by first asking general questions, next increasingly detailed and sensitive questions should be asked, and finally, the questions should move to simple or mundane topics. This technique takes into account the level of interest and attention of respondents. Research suggests that respondent attention and interests starts high and increases until it reaches a maximum point. It remains at this maximum for some time before it drops rapidly due to respondent fatigue (Pitrone, 1986). Thus, easier questions should be placed at the beginning of the interview, more difficult and sensitive ones in the middle, and demographic and social characteristics of the respondent (sex, age, employment, etc...) asked at the conclusion.

550. Where a question is placed in the questionnaire can influence the response. That is particularly relevant for questions about respondent opinion on subjective arguments, such as perception (e.g. fear of crime and insecurity) and satisfaction questions. Experience offers some lessons about this. In the "Italian Women's safety" survey, the complexity of the structure of the questionnaire necessitated a test to evaluate the best placement for the screening sections and for detailed victimization sections regarding violence by a partner and a non-partner. The results obtained from a pre-test of about 200 showed that placing questions regarding all non partner violence before the corresponding questions regarding actual or past partner violence worked better. It appeared that asking women about violence suffered by her partner at the beginning of the questionnaire upset the women, shut down communication, and in many cases ended the interview. In contrast, asking first about non-intimate partner violence followed by partner violence resulted in better rapport and completion of the interviews.

551. In addition, the sections are arranged so that the population groups for whom some questions are not relevant can run through the questionnaire quickly and interrupt the interview as soon as they have answered all the questions that concern them. This is true above all for the Paper and Pencil interview (PAPI).
552.

Other considerations

How many questions?

553. Determining how many questions should be included on a questionnaire is an important issue. Clearly it is important that the final version of the questionnaire have questions that fully cover all relevant issues needed to properly investigate the topic of interest, including an adequate number of background variables to ensure that results can be examined by sub-groups. Further, the questionnaire should not include irrelevant or redundant information. The number of questions on a questionnaire also depends on the interview technique used. If one is conducting a face-to-face interview more questions may be included than when a self-administered survey is being fielded. And self-administered questionnaires generally contain more questions than telephone interviews.

554. As described above, an option is to design surveys so that fewer questions will be asked to the entire sample, while some of the more specific questions will be asked only to particular category of respondents. For instance in some victimization surveys only victims of selected crimes are asked more detailed questions about the victimization. Of only adults should be queried regarding insurance and number of children.

555. In general it is not easy to identify an optimal number of questions for a questionnaire. It should be emphasized that the length of the interview is not related only to the number of questions, but also to the level of difficulty of questions, the number of open-ended questions, the respondent's involvement in the topic and above all the fluidity of the questionnaire.

Box: Average survey length: Analysis from the UNODC –UNECE Crime Survey Inventory

The time it takes to conduct an interview using a victimization survey varies greatly. One interview may last one minute, while others may take 60 minutes. The time a survey takes depends on many factors such as the number of individuals interviewed in a households and the number of questions asked to the respondents. Aside from these factors, other characteristics such as the number of victimizations experienced will dictate the time it takes to survey.

Average time to complete survey

	N	%
Less than 15 minutes	16	26%
15 to 30 minutes	19	31%
30 to 45 minutes	16	26%
Greater than 45 minutes	11	18%
Total	62	100%

Results shown in the table reveal that most surveys – 31% - lasted 15 to 30 minutes. A slightly lower percentage of surveys took less than 15 minutes (26%) and 30 to 45 minutes (26%). Only 18% of surveys too over 45 minutes to administer.

Another important issue related to the length of an interview is the technique used to collect data. Some interviews take more time due to the particular methodology. For example face-to-face and self-administered questionnaires take more time than a telephone interview. By definition, telephone interviews tend to be short to avoid the negative influence that fatigue, boredom and respondent burden can have on data quality. Finally combining different strategies leads to longer interviews with the exception of mixed mode involving CATI. Surveys on special groups such as minorities may take longer than a comparably survey on the general population, for example due to language problems.

Questions and respondents: the problems of respondent age and of foreigners

556. Some questions are not suitable for all persons. For example, questions about delicate issue such as sexual habits, faith and religion, political preferences, health, or racial origins may not be appropriate for some in a sample. In addition, questions dealing with issues not suitable for minors such as insurance and income should not be asked of minors. To avoid asking questions to those who should not be asked, such questions should be placed within specific thematic areas in the questionnaire so that only a part of the target population will be asked.

557. If some important ethnic minority groups are part of the reference or target population, or in countries with more than one official language, the researcher has to provide a translation of the questionnaire, taking particular care that no bias is introduced in the meaning of questions when changing the language. From a

methodological point of view much care has to be paid to assure that stimulus for the minority group of respondents is the same as the majority one, to assure the reliability of the tool that is the questionnaire. Consequently an accurate and focused training of interviewers of foreign languages is recommended, and the interviewers will be asked to fully understand the basic aims of the questionnaire. A wide variability of dialects within the country is another reason to encourage the researcher to fully be careful to the meaning of the terms used in the wording of sentences and questions.

558. Particularly in some face to face surveys whose target are some ethnic and social minorities, for instance migrants or disabled persons, can be helpful the use of showcards. This tool is very useful for persons with difficulties in mental concentration and attention, as well as language comprehension, because these respondents can quietly and attentively read and choose their answer between a number of categories already defined.

559. However, in some contexts the showcards can be not useful and counterproductive, as source of distraction and misunderstanding. This means to evaluate with attention which are the social and demographic characteristics of target population apt to use the showcards tool.

Box: from Fra (Sami Nevala and Jo) ?????

Showcards are often used to help the respondent select their response from a number of available answer categories. However, literacy may be an issue, particularly with certain population groups, which limits the use of show cards.

Question sensitivity

560. When designing a questionnaire, special care is required for questions that deal with sensitive issues such as a violent victimization. It is recommended that the questionnaire be structured to gradually introduce the potentially upsetting theme with a brief introduction suggesting that such troubling experiences can happen to people at any time. Providing an introduction of this sort helps the respondent feel freer to answer the question. Aside from increasing the probability of response and disclosure by the respondent, this strategy will minimize possible psychological harm or embarrassment of a respondent asked to discuss a traumatic experience.

561. Some examples of sensitive issues can be considered are the drug consumption (topic that is collected in the British Crime Survey), the violence suffered, the ethnicity, race and religion, the minority groups belonging, the sexual orientation, some health questions, the political beliefs, etc..

562. The concern of their sensitiveness depends on the culture and the habits of each country, what is sensitive for a culture can be indifferent for an other. This aspect also means that the tools to face to these problems have not to be generically but appropriate to different context.

Proxy responses

563. Special attention should be given to proxy respondents in the designing of a questionnaire. If proxy respondents are allowed, it is important to collect data related to this. This includes which responses were provided by a proxy, who the person serving as the proxy is, and the relationship of the proxy to the absent respondent. Using this information, later analysis can investigate whether there is a proxy effect. Results from the Every day life Aspects survey show an influence of proxy respondent on data, particularly on the items “Not at all safety” and “Never go out” . The next steps could be the analysis of the age, gender differences and relationship between the proxy respondent and the absent respondent.

Table: Safety perception when alone and it is dark, by proxy-not proxy answer

Title: Safety perception when alone and it's dark, by proxy-not proxy answer		
Safety perception	Proxy/not proxy	
	Self-administered (no proxy)	Administered by an household member (proxy)
Very safety	13,77	12,67
Enough safety	53,62	54,08
Few safety	20,69	18,46
Not at all safety	7,32	5,43
Never go out	4,6	9,37

Istat, Every day aspects of life Survey - Year 2003

Developing and pre -testing questionnaires

The design

564. Designing the questionnaire is a critical step in a research project. The coherence of the questionnaire affects the quality and quantity of collected information and related interpretation. When designing the questionnaire, it is important to plan not only the overall structure of the instrument, but also the number,

the order and the sequence of questions. The instrument must also be suitable for the chosen interviewing technique to assure optimal communication between the researcher and respondents.

565. The questionnaire is both a measuring and a communicating tool and for that reason it should be pre-tested. The suitability of the instrument needs to be evaluated, both with a focus on the ease in understanding the questionnaire by respondents, and in managing it by the interviewers.

566. When assessing a questionnaire, several qualitative methodological tools may be used. These include focus groups, preferential witness meetings, the questionnaire pre-test, not participating observation, pilot survey. Findings from these tasks will be used to elaborate and refine the instrument until a final questionnaire is created.

Qualitative methodologies as support to the analysis of the survey feasibility and pre-testing

Focus groups

567. Qualitative methods such as focus groups can be used in explorative analysis to clarify the goals of the study, refine the primary theme, and to acquire more knowledge about the topic of interest. Methods such as focus groups are also useful when a preliminary questionnaire is available and one wants to engage in a pre-test of the instrument.

568. Generally, focus groups are conducted with a homogeneous group. For instance, when studying violence against women the focus group participants could be shelter operators and victims. These types of situations allow the researcher to focus on a particular element of the research topic. For instance, one may be able to gain insight into the psychological aspects of victimization. Also in the case of a general population survey, focus groups on young or elderly respondents or minority respondents may help in determining any differences in how different respondent groups approach the survey topic.

569. Based on feedback from the focus group discussions, survey instruments and questions can be refined to better gather the desired information and reduce respondent confusion.

Expert revision

570. Expert revision is a very important tool available for all survey design. This technique suggests that the instrument draft be given to experts in the field for review and comment. Along with the instrument, the experts should be given a document outlining the study aims, the available resources and the interviewing technique which will be used. The document should also indicate any part of the instrument that has

proven especially difficult. Each expert is asked to write a review containing all suggestions and critiques of the questionnaire. From these reviews, the questionnaire should be modified. This is an inexpensive method to improve any questionnaire. Further, it is one that can be repeated during the design phase to ensure the best instrument possible.

The alternatives test

571. The alternatives test is an option that consists of verifying two versions of the questionnaire by two balanced samples. The two versions of the questionnaire differ in one way such as the wording of one question, the interviewing technique, question sequence, or reference time periods. If well performed, test outcomes can be analyzed to assist researchers in selecting the best approach to the phenomenon (e.g., question wording, reference period) of interest.

Cognitive testing

572. Cognitive testing is essential to developing questionnaires. Cognitive testing has several goals. First, a cognitive test can evaluate whether respondents understand the question as the questionnaire designers meant it to be. Second, the cognitive test can ascertain whether particular questions are too difficult or if they are clear to the respondent. Third, cognitive testing helps to reveal if certain topics are too sensitive or uncomfortable resulting in respondent refusals. And finally, cognitive testing can illustrate the degree to which respondents are interested in the topic, as well as if it is too long.

573. Cognitive testing methods include several approaches. First, one may simply observe respondents completing the questionnaire. Second, an interviewer encourages the respondent to “think aloud” while answering the questions. Respondents are encouraged to comment on each question and explain how the final response was selected. Third, interviewers may verbally probe the respondent. That is after the respondent answers the question, the interviewer may ask for other specific information relevant to the question or the answer. And finally, cognitive testing may involve the use of focus groups. This is the informal discussion of a selected topic by participants who are chosen from the population of interest.

574. Specially trained cognitive interviewers typically conduct cognitive interviews to a small sample of volunteer subjects. The “generic” cognitive interviewing procedure is conducted in a face-to-face mode, within a cognitive laboratory environment. In-person interviews are preferable because they allow observation of non-verbal cues and provide a more natural type of interchange between the subject and the interviewer than is possible over the phone.

575. It is also possible to conduct cognitive testing interviews over the phone. Telephone-based interviews can be useful for several specific purposes. For instance, if the respondents are elderly or disable and are unable to travel to an interviewing location, a telephone test is appropriate. A telephone cognitive test is also appropriate when the questionnaire is intended for future telephone administration.

576. Cognitive tests can be useful to test specific aspects of the questionnaire or even the survey methodology. For example, one may need to ascertain whether to allow proxy interviews. Or one may be testing the value of screening questions or the reference period.

Pre-testing

577. It is fundamental that a questionnaire be pre-tested. Pre-tests test the value of wording, the context of questions, the clearness of instructions and the ease of administering the instrument. To perform the pre-test, one must gather a sample of about 100 to 200 persons in the field and administer the instrument. At this stage the goal is not to draw a representative sample of the target population, but to assure that the instrument is tested in various difficult conditions to stress its reliability.

578. In countries characterised by wide geographical, social and cultural differences, sample units should be drawn across these areas and across social and cultural divisions. Interviewers for the pre-test should be particularly able to help in identifying problematic areas of the questionnaire or of the interview. Questions the interviewers should focus on in respect to the instrument include:

- the completeness of the questionnaire regarding the information to be collected
- if the questionnaire (either paper or electronic one) is an easy tool to be administered by the interviewer (in terms of time length, instructions, patterns and filters, sequence)
- how the questionnaire is perceived by respondents (if they are annoyed or tired, particularly if it happens in specific part of the questionnaire)
- the context and its effect – are respondent's answers being influenced by something? Are they more willing to agree than disagree?
- Specific attention to sensitive issues
- Difficulty in recalling incidents, as well as telescoping
- Clarity of the questionnaire
- Whether the questions are pertinent, correct and exhaustive
- If response coding is correct
- how filtering questions and skip pattern perform
- the efficacy of the graphic form of the questionnaire
- whether the interview technique is suitable to the topic of interest

579. It is recommended to provide interviewers a detailed list of the aspects of the questionnaire to be tested, and the feedback of the interviewers should be recorded (e.g. by using a separate questionnaire which the interviewers fill out after the interview) and analysed. In addition, it is advised that the researchers responsible for the survey also conduct some interviews. This is an excellent means to test the suitability of the instrument.

580. Based on the outcome of the pre-test, the survey manager can make the required changes to the instrument or methodology. If many changes are necessary,

some testing steps may have to be repeated until the final version of the questionnaire is generated.

Graphics and the instrument

581. Graphics are useful in questionnaires. In general, the use of graphics such as symbols, colored text, and bolded text accomplishes three basic goals. First, graphics support the questionnaire fluency. Second, graphics assists in the accurate recording of responses whether that task be conducted by the interviewer or the respondent. And finally, in the case of electronically administered surveys, graphics allow the automatic recording of data which is less prone to error and inexpensive.

582. There are several recommendations for using graphic tools in a survey instrument. One important recommendation is that the layout of the questionnaire should be uniform. A common way to introduce uniformity in an instrument is to adopt one style for questions and answers layout. For instance, questions should be placed on the left and answers on the right.

583. An important recommendation is that each question and all the associated answers must be place on the same page. If this is not done, respondents are likely to miss the answer options on the second page and instead use only response categories on the first page. Clearly this will lead to errors in the data.

584. Third, if a question has many answer options, there is the risk that either the interviewer or the respondent will concentrate on only the first alternatives. A graphic solution to this potential problem is to group the items within sub areas using graphic tools such as bolded text. This is demonstrated in the example below.

Box: Graphic Example 1

REP_NP29 Is there anything else the police should have done to help you?

<<MARK ALL THAT APPLY>>

Inform her

- 1 Informed her about what was going on
- 2 Provided information about legal procedures or services

Answered more quickly

- 3 Responded more quickly

Acting against the offender

- 4 Charged him / arrested him
- 5 Given him a warning
- 6 Taken him away / out of the house / should have given restraining order

Provide the woman immediate help:

- 7 Taken complaint more seriously / listened to me / been more supportive /

	helped me more
8	Provided her with some protection / helped her leave the house
9	Taken her to hospital / medical care
10	Referred her to a service or shelter
11	Other (specify)
<hr/>	
12	No, nothing
98	Don't know/Can't remember
99	Refused/No answer

585. A particularly useful way in which graphics are used in instruments is via “signposts” or symbols. For example, filtering questions should have a signpost such as an arrow that is particularly clear and easily to see and follow. Questions connected by signposts or symbols should be placed in the same page to avoid problems in following the path.

586. An important layout recommendation is not to place questions too close together. When one is trying to keep a survey as short as possible, crowding questions may be tempting. However, this is a bad strategy because when questions are crowded together they are easily skipped and difficult to read. When this occurs, there are more coding errors and missing data. It is important to place adequate space around each question.

587. If there are different sections in the instrument, it is recommended that only one font type be used. Easy to read fonts include Time New Roman and Courier. Related to font issues it is advisable that questions, sentences, and instructions each have a specific and different look using upper and lower case, italics or color. This should be consistent throughout the instrument.

588. In the instrument, each question should be numbered clearly, and these numbers should correspond to any related documents. Question numbering is as important for the interviewers as it is for the respondent. Clear numbering helps the interviewer understand which part of the questionnaire one is dealing with. Question numbering does not need to be restricted to actual numbers. For instance, in the “Women safety” survey, a section on reporting non-partner violence was indicated by a prefix REP_NP before the progressive question number. Similarly, section of the survey dealing with reporting of partner violence was denoted using the prefix REP_PR. To characterize screening sections, the prefix used for non-partner was SCR_NP and for partner was SCR_PR.

589. It is recommended that one use different colors as background for questions, particularly when groups of questions are to be administered to different sub samples of population. Obviously the same color should not be used for different functions. That is true especially with paper questionnaire, while for electronic ones it is easier that particular colors be used to distinguish sentences having different functions. For example, green may identify the “online help” while blue may indicate “please read all the items”.

590. The use of pictures is particularly useful for self-administered questionnaires. In such cases a picture may be better than any wording explanation. This is especially the case if the explanation requires very technical and difficult to understand terms. When pictures are not feasible, underlining some specific words in very long sentences can help the interviewer read the question with the right tone, and with the accent on the most important part of it. This is especially the case in face-to-face interviews as illustrated below.

Box: Graphic example 2

Has your partner ever FORCED YOU TO ENGAGE IN SEXUAL INTERCOURSE
by threatening you, holding you down, or hurting you in some way?

<<If yes :>>

“Please at this point exclude ATTEMPTS to force you”.

591. A final recommendation is specific for computer assisted surveys. In these types of surveys, the segmentation effect must be minimized. The scrolling of the screen must be made fluid and pleasant, and the waiting times for messages and notifications on the screen must be minimized. Otherwise, the interview will be disrupted by continuous interruptions increasing the chances of early survey termination.

592. The graphic aspect of the questionnaire is very important for the success of the interview. Further, it can help the interviewer and the respondent to cope with what may be a complex skip pattern. Graphics used in questionnaires offer one easy way to increase the chances of a successful interview. They are especially useful when filter and complex skip patterns are utilized. Using different graphic characters, some color variation, and layout recommendations, one creates a survey that is easier to navigate and more likely to be completed.

Skip patterns

593. In victimization surveys not every person is asked every question on the survey instruments. Thus, depending on the answers to some questions, other questions will be skipped so that additional relevant questions are asked. Skip patterns like these make the interview flow smoothly while gathering all information needed.

594. Whether the survey is conducted using paper and pencil or using a computer, it is imperative that the skip pattern sequence be correct. Failure to check this may mean the loss of very valuable data as questions that should not be skipped are. Or a poorly sequenced skip pattern may mean that questions that should not be asked are asked making the respondent angry or bored and possibly lead to the early termination of the interview. Problems in skip patterns can be detected through piloting the survey and the analysis of the pilot results.

References

Cacciola S. - Marradi A. 1988 *Contributo al dibattito sulle scale Likert basato sull'analisi di interviste registrate*, Marradi A. (a cura di), *Costruire il dato*, Franco Angeli, Milano, pp. 63-102.

Galtung J. 1967 *Theory and Methods of Social Research*, Allen & Unwin, London.
Guidicini P. 1995 *Questionari Interviste Storie di vita. Come costruire gli strumenti, raccogliere le informazioni ed elaborare i dati*, Franco Angeli, Milano.

Hope S. 2005 *Scottish Crime and Victimisation Survey - Calibration exercise: a comparison of survey methodologies*, Research report for The Scottish Executive, MORI Scotland. <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/47121/0020932.pdf>

Likert R. 1932 *A Technique for the Measurement of Attitudes*, "Archives of Psychology", monografia n. 140.

Marradi A – Gasperoni G. (curr.), 2002 *Costruire il Dato 3: Le scale Likert.*, Franco Angeli, Milano.

Morton-Williams J. – Sykes W. 1984 *The communication process and respondent understanding of survey questions*, London.

Pitrone M.C. 1986 *Il Sondaggio*, Franco Angeli, Milano.

To be added:

Bcs

Nvaws usa

Ncvs usa

Ivaws

Istat

.....

Ch. III.M. Interviewing (if not a self response survey)

Interviewers' selection, interviewers' training and training materials

595. Interviewers are vitally important aspect of data collection. They can offer improved quality and or introduce bias into the data. Depending on their behavior and level of professionalism, they can prevent respondents' mistakes. For example, they can recognize and correct possible incongruencies in respondent's answers with the use of correct probing in recalling and reporting crime events. For these and others reasons it is very important to identify the best skills and training for interviewers.

Selecting interviewers and identifying skills/attributes required for interviewers

596. Essential features required for a successful survey are qualified, skilled and motivated interviewers. Regardless of whether the institute responsible for the survey selects interviewers or whether this task is outsourced, the sponsoring institute can define basic requirements of interviewers.

597. The first characteristic to consider is the gender of the interviewer. Victimization surveys generally collect sensitive information regarding violence such as sexual harassment, sexual assault and rape. It is thought that female interviewers improve the *disclosure* of these events regardless of the gender of the respondent. On the other hand, in countries where sexual discrimination is more prominent, a female interviewer may have additional difficulty in obtaining an interview. In these cases, it is wise to provide a male and a female interviewer acting in tandem. With the pair of interviewers, household contacts improve and refusals decrease.

598. The age of the interviewer is an additional consideration. While a specific age limit is not advised, survey experience suggests that interviewers who are not too young are preferred. It has been verified in telephone surveys that the tone of voice, overall warmth and reassurance emanating from adult female interviewers is better received by respondents compared to younger interviewers. Interviewers who are too young tend to be distrusted to a higher degree causing a greater lack of willingness to answer questions by respondents. This is especially the case when dealing with more sensitive topics such as sexual harassment or violence.

599. Educational attainment of interviewers is another aspect that should be considered. Due to the complex nature of most victimization questionnaires, it is recommended that interviewers have greater than a primary level education (as suggested from World Health Organization - WHO). In addition, it is preferred that the interviewer is familiar with and has basic skills in using personal computers in surveys using personal computers.

600. The last element to be evaluated is the activities of experience of the potential interviewer. It is recommended that individuals engaging in activities which strongly imply relational, communicative, expressive, and helping be selected as interviewers. This includes, but is not limited to teachers, organizers, help desk personnel, marketing, theater actors/actresses, and though engaged in assisting children, older persons, and handicapped people.

601. Aside from those items mentioned above, it is preferable that interviewer candidates have some basic knowledge of the interview technique to be used. In addition, they should have demonstrated ability in securing interviews, in effectively relating with respondents, and in the case of violence against women surveys, working well with women who have sustained sexual violence.

602. A possible summary of elements to be evaluated in potential interviewers is:

- Personal motivation in choosing work as an interviewer
- Language inflection, tone and cadence of the prospective interviewer's voice
- Capacity to think about the survey's theme

- Awareness of one's emotions related to problematic situations and difficulties that can arise when interviewing about violence. And related strategies the potential interviewer uses to control these emotions.
- Availability to participate, or experience in participating in active training including role-playings, simulations, discussions and group cooperation.
- The presence of any stereotypes or prejudices related to victims.

Continuous training

Aims and planning

603. Interviewers are an important part in a successful non-self-report survey endeavor. Interviewers represent the connection between the Institute conducting the survey and the respondents. It is only through interviewers that institutions can ascertain respondents' day-to-day life, experiences, opinions, and/or attitudes. Therefore it is imperative that the interviewer be well qualified, focused on the respondent, methodologically appropriate and rigorous

604. Training interviewers is an essential phase of any survey endeavor. Good training produces skilled and motivated interviewers maximizing the probability of the collection of reliable data.

605. Following training, interviewers should:

- Understand the survey
- Understand how to properly conduct the interview
- Be able to manage the relationship with respondent
- Be motivated and understand the importance of their role as interviewer

606. These important goals of training are discussed in greater detail below.

Understanding the survey

607. In part, the interview's quality is dependent on the interviewers' degree of preparedness. Part of this preparedness is understanding the overall purpose or goal of the survey. This includes understanding the concepts being investigated and why they are important. This means the interviewer must be well versed in why the survey is being conducted and the value of the data collected. With this knowledge the interviewer can provide the respondent with valuable information and further motivate their participation in the survey process.

Properly conducting the interview

608. One aim of training is to provide interviewers with specific skills related to how the questionnaire is to be administered. To complete the interview, the interviewer has to know in depth overall purposes of the survey (as discussed above). In addition, the interviewer must understand the specifics related to the questionnaire, as well as mastering the survey technique to be used.

609. Understanding the specifics of the survey includes being well versed in the questionnaire both in terms of its overall structure and specific parts (i.e., screening sections and detailed characteristics sections, filtering questions, multi-response, the use of “other, specify,” etc). In addition, the interviewer must understand how to properly ‘navigate’ through the questionnaire. This understanding enables smooth movement through various sections which is especially important when skip patterns are used. Such an understanding is critical regardless of the interview mode utilized, though it is even more important in face-to-face situations.

610. Properly conducting an interview also includes that the interviewer have full knowledge of the methodological rules utilized for the survey. For example, interviewers should understand fully why one individual should be interviewed versus another. Or, they must be knowledgeable as to how to appropriately and effectively convince a family or respondent to participate in the survey. This also includes an understanding of how to properly read the survey questions as well as how to properly record respondent answers.

611. Furthermore some additional aspects of victimization surveys must be understood. For example, the interviewers should have an understanding of what telescoping is and how it can affect survey results. In some cases, the interviewer classifies the crime and therefore must have an in-depth understanding of penal law definitions. During training, the more complex aspects of data collection that jeopardizes data quality must be addressed. One way to do this is via home-work assignments including administering the survey to friends and relatives when appropriate.

Managing the relationship with the respondent

612. Managing the relationship with a respondent is an essential aspect of interviewing. This includes the ability to become in sync with the respondent. This can be accomplished by matching the language of the respondent, listening to the respondent’s needs, responding to respondents’ doubts and calming respondent fears. The interviewer should view the interview as a natural conversation with the purpose of reaching a specific goal – the successful completion of the interview. Recognizing that emotions are an important part of the survey is key. Emotions are always present and being aware of this, the interviewer recognizes they cannot be neglected but instead they must be controlled. It is imperative that the interviewer not react with emotion to what the respondent is saying. At times, the respondent may irritate the interviewer by answering inappropriately, or the respondent may inspire compassion or sadness on the part of the interviewer. Regardless, it is imperative that the interviewer remain professional by having respect for the respondent without becoming involved by crying or displaying other types of emotion.

613. The boundaries of the interviewer’s role must be clarified during training. The interviewer should be welcoming, reassuring, and responsive. However, they should not play the role of a psychologist or social worker. The interviewer should not offer a shoulder to cry on. And the interviewer should not offer to solve respondent problems. Appropriate behaviors to be demonstrated are those of openness, reassurance, patience and tolerance.

614. A very important role of the interviewer is to be an active subject of the survey – not merely a reader of questions and recorder of responses. The interviewer must appear assertive, empathic, interested and listening. Interviewers must also display be capable of decoding non verbal messages of the respondent. This includes pauses, silences, changes in the voice tone, etc. Through a careful analysis of these and other non verbal messages, the interviewer can

ascertain if interviewee is tired, annoyed, unable to speak at that time, or not answering the questions in whole.

The motivated interviewer

615. It is extremely important to create and maintain highly motivated interviewers. Motivation is fundamentally important for the entire research process. It is particularly important during the data capturing phases since it increases the chances of finding and solving problems. A passion for research on the part of interviewers assures greater seriousness in properly conducting their work. A motivated interviewer feels part of the research team. A motivated interviewer feels they play an important role and are a legitimate part of the research team. This suggests that interviewers must acquire confidence in themselves and their professional skills, and they must believe they are legitimate and competent members of the research. In total, they must *believe* in the survey. Any doubts the interviewer may have must be addressed during training.

616. To assure the finest in trained interviewers, training should be on-going. In other words, training should be conducted during the entire period the survey is being fielded. This includes not only initial training, but also debriefings, group discussions and room assistance for interviewers.

617. Debriefing means gathering the interviewer's general impression of the survey process including the overall survey contents, as well as technical and methodological aspects of the survey. Debriefing of interviewers improves survey effectiveness and the information gained can be used to improve the training of all interviewers. Debriefing is especially important during the early phases of data collection. The longer the survey is in the field, debriefings can become less frequent (e.g., once a month) and they can be substituted by greater monitoring and group discussions. During debriefings, researchers solicit interviewer views on the problems and difficulties they encountered when interviewing. This includes difficulties related to technical aspects of the survey, contents of the survey, and rapport with respondents. Knowing these issues, researchers are better able to offer corrective interventions to solve these problems.

618. Interviewer group discussions can be informally carried out during the life of the survey with about one meeting per week. These discussions serve as psychological and content support for interviewers. It is suggested that they be organized as a group in which all interviewers contribute thoughts, strategies or opinions. Interviewers find these sessions enriching.

619. Room assistance applies to surveys conducted in a centralized location. These situations make it easy for researchers, training course instructors, and other survey institute personnel to be present as the data collection is ongoing. The presence of non-interviewing personnel demonstrates the importance of data collection. And their presence offers supports interviewers doing their work. Members of the survey team have specific tasks in a room assistance situation. The first task is to observe and collect in a notebook the impressions, ideas, criticisms, and feelings of both interviewers and interviewees, writing them down on a notebook. A second task is to work with interviewers by correcting methodological errors.

620. Personnel acting as supervisors must be sensitized and trained to display a supporting role of interviewers in order that their presence not be viewed as controlling. Instead, supervisors should be viewed as interested and caring members of the research team. This tact

means interviewers are more likely to ask questions or vent feelings without the fear of reprisal of some sort.

Initial training

621. The initial training of interviewers should cover the many phases of data collection. These include:

- Preliminary theoretical knowledge: collecting references on the subject – national and international publications, particularly scientific review articles, books, reports of surveys about the theme realised by research institutes or justice ministry;
- Planning: object and target of training, timing and phases of training
- Planning training days: didactic modules and their aims
- Preparing materials: questionnaire guide, interviewers manual, materials to be distributed and illustrated during training days, collecting newspapers, books and films if some part of them has to be used didactically during training;
- Developing tools to verify the learning (questionnaires, tests) to be done at the end of the training.

Methodologies

622. To actively involve interviewers during training, not only on contents but also on their inner motivation, change of them, it is convenient to alternate different technique and methods limiting front desk lessons and soliciting reflections about contents and methodology of the survey through:

- the use of films and/or trailers
- “circle time” moments and group discussion
- Alternating activating modules and theoretical modules

623. Role-playings and simulations can be video-recorded and reviewed later. During reviews, comments and suggestions for improvement can be discussed as a group. This exercise is a useful didactic tool.

624. Another useful tool is the development of techniques focused on communicative, expressive and emotional aspects such as those used by actors. In other words, interviewers should become good ‘actors’ able to convey the content of the survey questionnaire in a natural, authentic and expressive manner. Using drama techniques in the exercitation phase is a potentially very useful methodology for interviewers to develop these necessary skills.

Organizational aspects

625. The location of training should be hospitable, comfortable and functional. Further, the number of interviewers included in each training group should be not too numerous. Optimally, it is suggested that ten to 15 interviewers be included in a training group. At times however, groups of 20 persons can be managed. Aside from the location of the training and number of participants, it is recommended that training sessions not be too long. For example, five to six hours a day is adequate. This amount of time allows the material to be covered and allows the participants the possibility to reflect and elaborate what they learned during the

training. Attention levels decrease after a certain number of hours so attempting to make training day long is not a useful strategy.

626. Rooms for the theoretical training should have boards as well as instruments to project documents being discussed. Documents should be available on paper as well as projected. In the case of CATI training, each participant should have a computer terminal linked to a server. Each participant should be provided a chair and a desk to allow them to take notes.

Developing other interviewer materials

627. Training is aided by specific training documents. Interviewers will use these materials during training, when studying the addressed topics and during the data collection phase as an aid for their work.

Questionnaire guide

628. The questionnaire guide is the main tool helping the interviewer become familiar with the questionnaire both in term of *contents* as well as the *procedural aspects*. It has to include a complete, easy and operational description of the data collection instrument.

629. In regards to *contents* of the survey, the questionnaire guide should embrace one or more dedicated sections:

630. The first major section to be covered is one that describes the survey aims or goals. Understanding clearly and being able to convey the survey's goals is an important aspect of interviewer knowledge.

631. A second section covered in training deals with the definitions of crime types. This includes the terminology used to identify specific crimes. It is important to precisely describe each crime to assure correctness and reliability of collected information. For example in the case of crimes against property people use incorrect terms such as robbery (which is a crime against an individual. In addition, some crimes must be clearly defined and understood in a way that does not include the specific name of the crime. Finally, if in the survey there is a specific section on sexual harassments and violence, the various definitions should also include crime against sexual freedom. Considering the sensitive nature of the topic, particular care should be used when addressing the section.

632. A third section of training should cover a description of the survey methodology used to collect data. This section should cover the **screening technique** used to correctly collect the victimizations sustained during the reference period. In addition, this section should educate the interviewers about ways to prevent **telescoping**. Interviewers must be well trained to help respondents identify the time period in which the crime took place. Methods used include proposing to the respondent a variety of time periods. For example, they may first ask if an incident occurred in their life time, then during the last three years, then during the last twelve months, etc. This strategy helps respondents better remember the time in which a victimization occurred.

633. A fourth training section should cover the structure of the questionnaire by section and the relative main questions.

634. In regards to the *procedural aspects* of the survey, the training guide should include information about several aspects including:

- period and timing of the interviews
- the survey technique (PAPI, CATI or CAPI)
- the reference sample
- the survey units (individuals, households or both)
- the procedure to identify the reference person, if any
- the method of questionnaire administration. The quality of collected data depends on the carefulness and methodological rigor in which the questionnaire was administered. The training guide must include instructions on how to read questions, probing techniques and, in the case of multi-response questions, how to code answers not explicitly read.

Interviewer's manual

635. This manual is intended as an aid to training, where relational aspects of the interview pertaining to communication between the interviewer and respondent are addressed. This manual should provide suggestions to aid in problematic situations that can occur during any phase of the interview. This didactic aid should provide a clear definition of the role and specificity of the interviewer's work through the use of examples. At the same time it should offer tools and strategies useful for different situations and possible difficulties that can occur at any phase of the interview. For instance, the manual should cover how to efficiently introduce the interviewer, the survey and the Institute responsible for it. The manual should discuss how to encourage the respondent to participate including methods to persuade a wavering respondent. And finally, it should discuss how the interviewer needs to respond in difficult situations. It is important to insert in the training manual a list of the questions that are frequently asked by respondents. With these, the interviewer is prepared for what are likely to be questions they will often face.

636. If the survey covers sexual violence, it is recommended that a section be devoted specifically to this. The manual should summarize the daily life experiences of sexual violence victims as well as potential traumatic consequences of the sexual violence. The manual should include information on the risk of secondary victimization related to police reporting of the violence. At the same time the manual should identify and discuss possible interviewer fears of addressing sexual violence. This includes fears due to personal experiences of the interviewer. The manual should provide examples of how to deal with these fears when faced. Finally, the training manual should discuss how to minimize danger to a respondent during an interview. These techniques include reassuring the respondent, interrupting the call, making an appointment to interview at a later date, calling to a different phone number from another location, providing shelter numbers, etc.

Training structure and contents

637. According to the above considerations, the primary goals of training should be to make interviewers:

- aware of the importance and sensitive nature of the survey
- aware of the victimization survey contents and the implementation of the questionnaire

Ch. III.L. Questionnaire design

- able to administer interviews methodologically correct
- able to create a climate promoting disclosure by the respondent
- able to manage potential critical situations.

638. Tools considered essential to reach the above goals are:

- Motivating interviewers and assuring them of their legitimate and important role in the survey process. Motivation and legitimacy is best obtained by educating interviewers about how this survey fits within the context of the Institutes entire body of work.
- Assuring interviewers of the full value of their role and the importance of their professional skills. This is accomplished by equipping them to administer surveys in accordance with the selected methodology.
- Preparing them to gain respondent cooperation via a deep understanding of the survey contents, interviewing techniques and techniques for administering the questionnaire.
- Training them to create a welcoming, positive and empathic relationship with the respondent. This includes the enhancement of listening and communication skills.
- Ability to manage emotional situations with respondents. This includes the ability to handle suspicious, uncivil, frightened or apprehensive individuals.

Example of training modules

639. The following presents examples of modules that may be used in interviewer training.

640. *Module 1 - Introduction, presentation of the survey and the sponsoring Institute*

- Presentation and role of the sponsoring Institute
- Introduction of the team and interviewers group and redefinition of the training aims
- The interviewer's role and its importance
- Importance of quality
- The meaning of sample surveys, the respect of sampling rules; main reasons for refusals and characteristics of non-respondents.
- Techniques for administering the questionnaire. This includes questionnaire language, the importance of reading the complete question, assisting the respondent with responding without influencing their answers, coding of responses, and interpretation of silences.
- Exercises for dealing with emotions during the interview

641. *Module 2 - Organization and methodology of the survey*

- Organization: interviews to be completed, timing, time-table of the survey and interviews.
- Methodology: sample structure, the notion of household, technique to select persons to be interviewed within the household, technique to substitute the selected person (if any), the importance of respecting rules and of minimizing refusals of households and/or individuals selected.

642. *Module 3 – Contents of the survey: In-scope crimes*

- Legal classification of the crimes of interest
- The wording of questions about crimes

- Exercises about crime typology
- Techniques used to collect data on crimes. This includes problems and strategies, screening techniques, language issues, memory issues, telescoping, and prevention of crime classification errors.
- Analyses of items in the questionnaire.

643. *Module 4 – Listening and the effective communication*

- Effective communication as a critical feature for success in interviewing. This includes the importance of assertiveness and active listening.
- Managing emotions in critical situations of interviewing, handling refusals, and dealing with interviews on sexual violence and harassment.

644. *Module 5 – Technical training for computer assisted interviewing*

- Exercises directly on the computer terminal
- Simulation of several possible patterns during the flow of the questionnaire
- Examples of filtering
- Review of question explanation for respondents, repeating requests, and coding of answers.

Box: Training of interviewers concerning Violence Against Women Surveys

Surveying violence against women presents additional difficulties. In these situations, WHO suggests that additional goals of interviewer training include:

- To increase sensitivity of participants to gender issues at a personal as well as a community level
- To develop a basic understanding of gender-based violence, its characteristics, causes, and impact on women and children
- To understand the goals of the study
- To learn skills for interviewing, taking into account women safety and ethical guidelines
- To become familiar with the questionnaire and protocol of the study

As expressed in International Violence Against Women Survey (IVAWS) methodology materials, during the training the interviewers should gain a clear understanding of:

- How violence against women is defined
- The effects of violence on female victims
- Societal myths concerning violence and victims
- The importance of these myths for respondents and themselves
- How to ensure safety for respondents and themselves
- How to respond to emotional trauma that might be raised by responding to this survey, for both respondents and interviewers
- How to maximize honest disclosure of violence

Once goals and content of training are defined clearly, it is possible to better plan in detail the training modules, the flow of content, the number of training days as well as the length of each day of training.

A review of international training reveals a variable number of training days utilized for surveys. According to WHO, the Multi-Country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence required three weeks of interviewer training. The manual on sensitivity training for the IVAWS suggests that training consists of two, three day training sessions. The first day is dedicated to theoretical learning while the remainder is devoted to technical training. The Italian survey conducted by ISTAT utilized a seven-day training regime. Two of these days focused on technical training likely due to the CATI technique used in this survey.

In general, considering the sensitiveness of the themes addressed by victimization surveys, it is advisable to consider in-depth training distributed over several days. By spacing training over several days, the material presented can be better assimilated by the individuals in training. As discussed above, training should last four to five hours a day. This length of day enables those in training reflect on what was presented during the day at home. Plus, such training lengths should not lead to student fatigue and a decrease in student attention.

The theme of violence against women should be presented through definitions, theories, statistical data and legal references. Particular attention should be given to the *violence spiral* and its characteristic phases. It can be useful to present different typologies of violence providing and soliciting by interviewers' own personal examples.

Presenting life stories, news papers articles, inquiring-interviews or films focused on cases of violence can provide a useful way to introduce the theme of violence. Using visual tools as *slides* and video-recorded materials is also recommended to illustrate the emotional impact of violence. Through group discussion and *brain storming* it is possible to share ideas, stereotypes and prejudices about violence against women. This is especially important to consider since stereotypes and prejudices regarding violence against women may be particularly prominent in some countries and cultures. These prejudices and ideas must be prevented from becoming part of the interviewing experience.

The use of *role-playings* and of simulated interviews is very important as interviewers are given the opportunity to analyze their own reactions when faced with various possible scenarios. Such techniques allow interviewers to observe and analyze roles played. Plus it offers the opportunity for the group to observe these scenarios as well. In addition, should these role-playing activities be video-recorded, the group can review these situations repeatedly allowing extended time to comment, discuss and offer alternative ways to respond.

The use of *scripts* in simulations and in *role-playings*, besides possible stories of violence, can offer examples of interview models which are "right" and "wrong". Making interviewers listen to different voices and methods of administering surveys via audio- or video-recorded interviews is also an excellent method to demonstrate desired interviewing techniques.

Box: Minority group interviewing

The use of 'matched interviewers': In the case of surveys on immigrants or ethnic minorities there is divided opinion about whether interviewers from the groups being interviewed should be used, and what the effects are of using them. For example, Muslim interviewees may be unwilling to reveal cases of victimization that they feel have 'shamed' them or their family (under the meaning of 'izzat'). However, they may be more willing to reveal this information to a non-Muslim interviewer. Where minority interviewers are identified from within a community, there is the potential problem that they may know an interviewee, which has

implications concerning anonymity. On the other hand, minority interviewees have the advantage of perhaps speaking the minority respondent's language. Depending on the population groups that are targeted, the time frame needs to take into account religious and other holidays which may be specific to a certain population group.

Interviewers' influence on data collection

645. Interviewers can influence the quality of data collected. To prevent this selection of interviewers and training of interviewers must be done with great care. Attention to item non response as well as the accuracy of information collected is vitally important. Other issues include the under- or over-estimation of the phenomenon studied. The manner in which interviewers read questions, gain the cooperation of respondents, manage emotions are related to the ultimate quality and degree of error in the data collected.

646. Interviewers play an important role in all data collection methods and can directly influence the validity, reliability and overall quality of the data. The influence of interviewers can be better controlled with certain data collection efforts. For example a feature of CATI is the ability to implement some data quality controls during the data collection phase. With these controls, it is possible to verify collected information directly with the interviewer when he/she is on the phone with the respondent. This offers clear advantages as well as some latent dangers. Indeed if on one side it is possible to anticipate a part of data check, on the other side the data correction phase is divided in more steps. This can cause problems of non homogeneous correction criteria and an higher level of interviewers' responsibility than in other survey techniques.

647. When the survey is using CAPI interviewers, immediate corrections are still possible by the use of an observer. However, such a solution is difficult to apply because identifying and recording an interviewer error is difficult and correction involves increased survey costs. Furthermore it is not easy to control edited values in input and after the correction. Such a technique is usually applied only in pilot surveys or when testing the procedure.

648. To manage the interviews, personal and acquired skills of the interviewers are very important. The interviewer's educational background, increased knowledge obtained from training, and day-to-day experience collecting data, all are essential elements to be considered when addressing the problem of quality of the survey.

649. Continuous monitoring (via analysis) of interviewers is necessary, because. during phone surveys the way the questions are read, the tone of voice (welcoming, quiet, not mechanical, and not cold), the speed at which the interview is conducted affect the quality of the interviews. Similarly, during face-to-face interviews, the way the interviewer approaches and addresses the respondent, how answers are recorded, coded and edited, how filters are managed in a paper questionnaire can affect the survey results.

650. All this means that the interviewer has to know the instrument he/she will have to administer, to understand contents and aims of the survey process he/she is involved in, as he/she is one of the main actors of it. This is important and prevents interviewers from modifying the meaning of the questions causing possible respondent misunderstandings. One example of such a situation can be found in the Italian Victimization Survey "Citizens' Safety" (2002). After the collection phase was started an anomalous trend was detected with respect to 1997/98 survey's outcomes, regarding the frequency of households intending to

change their residence due to their victimization experience. More in deep analysis involving de-briefing with some interviewers showed that the anomaly was actually due to an incorrect interpretation of the meaning of the question by the interviewers. Some of the interviewers thought they were to count both households who moved because of a sustained crime or a risk of victimization, as well as households that would have liked to have moved but did not. This error was detected among a few interviewers who did not receive a suitable explanation about the real investigative aim of the question during training. Such an experience underlines the importance of careful and accurate training, as well as the need to improve the question wording so it is more easily understood by both the interviewer and the respondent. The old and new wording of this series of questions are presented below.

<p>Box: Example</p> <p>1. HAVE YOU EVER MOVED YOUR RESIDENCE BECAUSE OF A CRIME OR BECAUSE YOU FELT YOU WERE IN A RISKY SITUATION?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ No 1▪ Yes 2 <p>Old question phrasing</p> <p><i>(If NO)</i></p> <p>1. <i>BIS</i> DO YOU INTEND TO DO SO FOR THIS REASON?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ No 1▪ Yes 2 <p>New question phrasing</p> <p><i>(If NO)</i></p> <p>1. <i>NEW.BIS</i> DO YOU INTEND TO MOVE YOUR RESIDENCE FOR THIS REASON, THAT IS BECAUSE YOU THINK YOU ARE IN AN UNSAFE SITUATION?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ No 1▪ Yes 2
--

651. The interviewer is the bridge between the sponsoring agency and the citizen. A quality approach influences the performance and the chance of a completed interview. Therefore, the longer and more complex the interview, the more the interviewer must calibrate times and methods of interviewing. The interviewer's role is fundamental at all phases of the survey process: At the beginning, when contacting the household for the first time, and during the course of the survey, with respect to contents and the managing of sensitive questions. Such aspects are more important in phone surveys, where the communication suffers of the lack of "non verbal" communication.

652. The first contact is important in gaining the cooperation of the family also to detect the family member to interview as well as the questionnaire skip patterns to follow. For example, in violence against women surveys, very important information is collected at the beginning of the survey. This includes the respondent's actual or past relationship (if she has a partner or

ex-partners, such as husbands or fiancés or cohabitant). Responses to these questions determine which questions the respondent will be presented with.

653. The interviewer's influence is evident also in questionnaires with sensitive questions. Indeed the "interviewer effect" may influence the possibility of obtaining answers especially when sensitive themes are covered. When questions regard personal attitudes or behaviors or values, such as questions about sexual crimes, or safety installed systems at home to prevent burglaries, or the use of drugs, people can react by building a wall between them and the interviewer. Once built, such walls are not easily removed. As a consequence it is very important that the interviewer establish a collaborative climate with the respondent. The sensitiveness of the considered themes can cause resistance in the respondent, so that an equilibrate attitude of the interviewer is needed. So, a too familiar or too confidential tone of the interview has the risk to decrease the respondent's confidence, because the respondents may feel their personal boundary has been overstepped and their anonymity is uncertain. On the contrary, a too formal style may lead a timorous respondent to close down even more.

654. Other factors related to interviewer behavior can negatively influence the pattern of respondent answers. For example questions regarding physical or sexual violence suffered by women may produce fear and anxiety in the respondent making them less likely to answer further questions. The same consequence can be caused by interviewers revealing personal stereotypes. Ideas held by interviewers such as "there are women that cause their own victimization" or "they could have been more careful" or "the 'offender' is her husband so it cannot be violence" will compromise the relationship between the interviewer and respondent.

655. Another important aspect is time: The interviewer has to read questions without rushing. Yet, they need to help the respondent understand the various concepts of crimes. And they must allow adequate time for the respondent to answer the question. Without appropriate time, misunderstanding errors or disclosure problems can be produced causing an over- or under-estimation of the phenomenon of interest.

656. Another potential problem is the influence of the perceived "social expectations" of interviewer on the respondent's answers. The interviewer must be certain not to generate a situation in which the respondent feels there "good/right" or "bad/wrong" response. For example, this may occur when the interviewer asks the respondent about whether a victimization was reported to the police. It is imperative that the respondent not answer in a way that they perceive will be pleasing to the interviewer.

657. The interviewer is a vitally important part of the survey process. Only a methodologically rigorous approach to this work will minimize difficulties and dangers throughout every phase of a social survey.

Training of interviewers: Role-playing

658. The purpose of role-playing for interviewers is to provide them examples of situations they will likely face in the field. It allows them to test the following skills:

- Acting in the role of an interviewer
- Handling interactions with a variety of respondents (e.g., fearful, talkative, dependent, shy, victim, etc.)
- Effective collection of non-verbal communication from a respondent

Ch. III.L. Questionnaire design

- Controlling the interview in an assertive yet non-threatening way
- Being effective when stressed
- Recognizing and retreating from threatening situations

659. There are many guidelines that are useful when preparing to role-play. First, the trainer in charge of role-playing prepares the scene of the mock-interview, chooses the topic of the interview, and chooses the participants. One “actor” (interviewers –in-training) is informed how she/he will play the role of co-trainer. Another actor is selected as the interviewer. This individual should not know the details of scene or characteristics of the person they will be interviewing.

660. It is recommended that the role-playing last about five minutes. Following this time, the trainer should stop the role-playing and ask the participants about their thoughts, opinions and comments about the interviewer’s behavior. After this discussion, the trainer should explain ways in which the interviewer’s behavior was correct as well as how the behavior could be improved. Some examples of role-playing scenes are as follows:

Scene 1. A threatening husband

661. Taking part:
An interviewer (participant of training)
A respondent (participant of training)
The respondent’s husband (co-trainer)

662. A husband talks to an interviewer in the hall, without letting her in. He interrogates her in an aggressive manner about the purpose of the interview. Ideally, the interviewer, though they feel endangered is competent and assertive.

Scene 2. An intimidated respondent

663. Taking part:
An interviewer (training participant)
A respondent (training participant)
The respondent’s husband (co-trainer)

664. A respondent agrees to participate in the interview and answers the initial questions. However, she starts to react with anxiety to the questions concerning her husband. She looks frightened and wants to finish the interview. Ideally, the interviewer will maintain contact with the respondent and demonstrate understanding and empathy. The interviewer should ask the next questions in more soft and slow manner.

Scene 3. An undisclosed rape.

665. Taking part:
An interviewer (participant of training)
A respondent (participant of training – co-trainer)

666. A respondent says that she was raped by a group of young men (ages 16 to 20) about 10 years ago. She has never told anyone about this incident and begins to cry. Ideally in this situation, the interviewer continues very cautiously and encourages her to continue.

Quality control in the process phase

667. Quality control in the process phase means that researchers must monitor the nature and extent to which interviews are not being completed as well as the quality of the data that are collected. Evaluating this is referred to as quality control. With a grasp on the nature and extent of non-response, one's ability to minimize future nonresponse is enhanced.

668. Performing quality control means that several elements be monitored during interviews. These include:

- Respondent characteristics
- Interviewer characteristics
- How the respondent and interviewer feel about each other
- Each interview phase, from the introduction to the survey, to the interview itself, to the end of it.

669. The important role of interviewers in the success of an interview is a widely accepted research finding. This is especially true in the case of telephone interviewing. To decide strategies to be adopted to best working with interviewers the following instances have to be addressed:

- What interviewer characteristics are related to interview success?
- What is the supervisor effect?
- Which training methods are to be used?

670. One possible way to study interview effect is to use a *multilevel cross classified* statistical model on data recorded in previous waves of the survey, or from similar surveys in terms of methodology and content. The aim could be to separate the interviewer effect from other variables when analyzing the partial non response rate in particular sections. The application of such models shows that the preliminary work of interviewers to create rapport is strategic in predicting response on sensitive questions.

671. To better define such a work it can be useful to divide the interview into two segments. First, the initial contact when one is trying to convince respondents to participate. And second, the actual interview. Research suggests that it is easier to predict success during the first segment – the initial contact – than it is during the interview itself. A qualitative kind of control could be to record interviews and to listen to a sample of them. Or one can re-contact a sub-sample of households in the sample and ask them to provide their opinion about the interview. For privacy reasons it is generally not allowed to record the phone calls. However, it is possible to plan a daily re-contact scheme to ask interviewed households only few questions. An additional qualitative control is an evaluation about the interviewer's behavior during the interview. This can be conducted by monitoring in the call room as well as the toll free number.

672. Tools that can be used to monitor the survey quality *in itinere* include:

- *Indicators* that can be automated, updated daily and made available on-line (if computer assisted systems are used)
- *control charts* that are elaborated daily

Ch. III.L. Questionnaire design

- *daily assistance in the calling room* coded on interviewer monitoring sheets (brief summary of the main observations and notes collected during the calling room monitoring)
- *re-contact sampling calls to interviewed households (randomly chosen)* to verify some of the collected information, and to collect some notes about the interviewer
- *the toll free number* as a tool of guarantee for citizens about the survey, but also to collect their observations and notes, doubts, and complaints

673. Quality control data need to be collected daily since the survey progresses rapidly. Furthermore, from the first days of conducting the survey, the response data on the questionnaires should be analyzed comparing it with external sources or previous editions of the survey so that any distortions in the frequencies observed can be noticed immediately.

674. For the entire data gathering period, the interviewers' activity is constantly kept under control via the analysis of a specific daily report with indicators calculated singularly for each interviewer. This tight control is not only to supervise the performances of the interviewers, but is also to give them support if they face particularly complex or difficult situations.

675. It is important to collect data on refusals. In the questionnaire questions may be included to gather information on why one is refusing, their age and gender.

Quality rates: Telephone surveys

676. In a CATI system of interviews indicators suggested by AAPOR (American Association for Public Opinion Research) international standards should be calculated as well. Indicators collected relates to each interview phase: Family contact, selection of the person to be interviewed, asking if they have received the introductory letter, and the interview. These indicators are useful in the monitoring phase, but also to evaluate the overall quality of the survey and to enable comparing results with other sources of data. These indicators are expressly developed to evaluate *in itinere* the suitability of the adopted methodology and to discover problematic situations that need to be quickly addressed.

677. These indicators are calculated on the basis of the final outcomes, and example of which is found in the table below. The quantitative indicators' set, whose daily analysis and study allows to continuously monitor the adherence to the fixed qualitative standards and the evaluation of the interviewers' performance, allows also to best organise the first contact with the family through the mailing of the introductory letters to make sure that households will receive them in the days just before the interview. Rates assure an in-depth analysis in all the phases of the interview. This provides an objective check about the actual understanding of definitions and adopted classifications.

EF1	Interviews
	EF1.1 Complete interview
	EF1.2 Partial interview
EF2	Eligible, No Interview (Non-response)
	EF2.1 Refusals
	EF2.1.1 Refusal before introduction
	EF2.1.2 Refusal after introduction
	EF2.1.3 Refusal of household member
	EF2.1.4 Refusal of selected respondent

	EF2.2	Break-offs
	EF2.3	Worked-out call-counting meter for appointments
	EF2.3.1	Too many appointments of household members
	EF2.3.2	Too many appointments of selected respondent;
	EF2.3.3	Too many attempts after an appointment
	EF2.4	Other cases
	EF2.4.1	Eligible household, but household is never available
	EF2.4.2	The respondent's physical and/or mental inability to do an interview
EF3		Unknown Eligibility, Non-Interview
	EF3.1	No answer
	EF3.2	Always busy
	EF3.3	A telephone answering message /fax
	EF3.4	Call-screening
EF4		Out target
	EF4.1	Non-working and disconnected number
	EF4.2	A group of friends
	EF4.3	Non-residential household
	EF4.4	Office, concern
	EF4.5	Death

678. Numerous outcome rates are commonly cited in survey reports and in the research literature. The same names are sometimes used to describe fundamentally different rates and different names are sometimes applied to the same rates. The most used are response rates, cooperation rates, refusal rates, and contact rates. To calculate outcome rates, the final disposition codes described above are used with the denominators described below:

Table: Response rate formulae	
$EF=EF1+EF2+EF3+EF4=$	All telephone numbers called
$EF1+EF2+EF3=$	Eligible households and households with unknown eligibility
$EF1+EF2=$	Eligible households
$EF1+EF2.1+EF2.2+EF2.3+ EF2.4=$	Eligible household who are not free to make the interview
$EF1+EF2.1+EF2.2=$	Eligible households who are free to make the interview ¹

679. Outcome rates are computed dividing the final disposition codes by the denominators.

680. Response Rate A, is the number of complete interviews divided by the number of interviews (complete plus partial) plus the number of non-interviews (refusal and break-off plus worked-out call-counting meter for appointments plus others) plus all the cases of unknown eligibility (unknown if existing housing unit). This is clearly the most important piece of meta-data in a sample survey and it has a strategic role in the whole monitoring process, but the joint analysis with other indicators and rates allows a better accuracy and

¹From these households are excluded those with final codes *Other* (Not be found, serious illness) and *worked-out call-counting meter for appointments*. The first ones don't have a real possibility to choose freely to be interviewed and the second ones present a situation in which the rules dictate not to continue to call.

oversight. Response Rate B, is the number of complete interviews divided by the number of interviews (complete plus partial) plus the number of non-interviews (refusal and break-off plus worked-out call-counting meter for appointments plus others). Response Rate B is a special case that assumes there are no eligible cases among the cases of unknown eligibility. 681. Refusal rate A is the proportion of all cases in which a housing unit or respondent refuses to do an interview, or breaks-off on interview of all potentially eligible cases.

682. Refusal rate B is the most appropriate and considers the proportion of all cases in which a housing unit or respondent refuses to do an interview, of completed interviews, interrupted interviews and refusals. The interruption rate considers the proportion of all cases in which a housing unit or respondent has interrupted the interview, of completed interviews, interrupted interviews and refusals. The contact rate measures the proportion of all cases in which some responsible member of the housing unit was reached by the survey. The *out of target rate* is defined on the basis of the familiar and individual eligibility criteria. So the out of target rate, calculated through the ratio between the number of calls to ineligible people and the total number of calls, is an optimal control tool of the right application in field of the specific methodologies adopted.

683. A further qualifying aspect is the *length of the completed interviews*. Knowing how long a completed interview should last in general allows one to identify problems when an interview lasts too long, or is completed in a rushed manner. Each of these indicate situations that may jeopardize data quality. In a victimization survey, for example, quantifying how long an interview in which information for one crime was collected is useful.

684. The territorial analysis of such indicators allows one to control for specificities due to cultural and social aspects related to coexistence of different realities in the country, while the analysis by interviewers allows one to verify their specific skills to face such a particular theme, their skills in gaining respondents trust and collecting their experiences. Rates in the table below are based on call outcomes and allow one to evaluate the process quality and are needed to build control charts.

Table: Important surveying rates	
Response rate	N. Interviews / Total dials
Response rate by eligibles	N. Interviews / Total dials to eligible households
Out of target Rate	Out of targets / Total dials
Not contact rate	Not contacted / Total dials to eligible households
Appointment rate	Appointments / Total dials to eligible households
Refusal rate	N. Refuses / Total dials
Refusal rate of selected	N. Refuses of the selected respondent / Total dials to eligible households

Monitoring PAPI surveys

685. The organizational structure of a PAPI survey is more complex than a telephone survey and generally foresees several levels of territorial articulation. Sometimes the regional offices are linked to the central office via computer networks. The control can be made during and after interviews are completed. Monitoring of interviews in progress is conducted by observation of methods, procedures and times. A sheet can be prepared to collect data on household outcomes, such as refusal, interruption, ineligibility, unreachable.

686. Recently some innovations have been introduced to enhance the monitoring phase for PAPI surveys enabling the collection of good data in real time. This is the case of the Interactive Voice Response. For each contact with a household interviewers have to fill a monitoring sheet transcribing the contact outcome codes (contact made both by phone and by person). As a second step each two days the interviewer has to transmit the monitoring sheet to a centralized free phone number to allow the control data to be recorded.

Control charts

687. The use of control charts to monitor the overall process of surveying is now a well-established tool and is considered a recommended practice for surveys administered using CATI and CAPI. Experience from the 2002 wave of the Citizen's Safety survey suggests the value of in the field controls using Shewart Control Charts. These charts are widely used in the industry for statistical quality control in the production processes. They allow the verification of the stability of a process, the coherence with specific qualitative instances and to evaluate the outcome of corrective actions to put the process variability under control again. The control of the work in progress is based on daily measures of basic characteristics of the process quality.

688. In social surveys, the information gleaned from these charts can be used to better train interviewers. And in the worst cases, the data gathered can be used to dismiss interviewers who are the source of numerous errors. These charts allow the identification of key variables. That is, using this process, one can identify variables that are highly correlated with the output quality being monitored. Key variables are to be found among quantitative indicators and rates built taking into account the methodological specificity of the survey and trying at the same time to harmonize them with international standards of the AAPOR, as to assure comparisons with other sources of data. Control charts referring to the whole period of data collection can be built according to various time variables: For each data collection day, one week, two weeks, a month, etc. Therefore, trends in survey data quality can be analyzed.

689. The analysis of the charts allows one to monitor the collection process with respect to the time, following the indicators' evolution, evaluating some specific events and, for example, adding a new group of interviewers or new briefing actions if needed.

690. Beyond the analysis of the trends it is important to evaluate the performance of CATI operators.

691. This process allows the construction of control charts by each operator. Each operator is identified by a specific operator number which is related to the specific training group to which they belong. The training group to which one belongs has specific importance. On one hand, there should be no differences in training modules and number of training days for interviewers with an adequate level of interviewing experience before the survey. However, on the other hand, characteristics of each interviewer can influence outcomes due to specific dynamics that may have occurred during training for some groups. To evaluate the performance and better identify critical situations by operators, control charts are to be analyzed with the interviewer's code on the X-axis.

692. The analysis of charts built for the completed survey can suggest the need for more in-depth analyses of particular situations. For instance, one may note extreme values on certain variables or rates. This would lead to analyses of a particular interviewer, additional analyses of a specific day, or more in-depth attention to a particular variable. The figure below is based

on control charts for the Citizen's Safety Survey of 2002. It illustrates an extreme value that requires additional attention.

Figure: Example of control chart for the Citizen's Safety Survey of 2002.

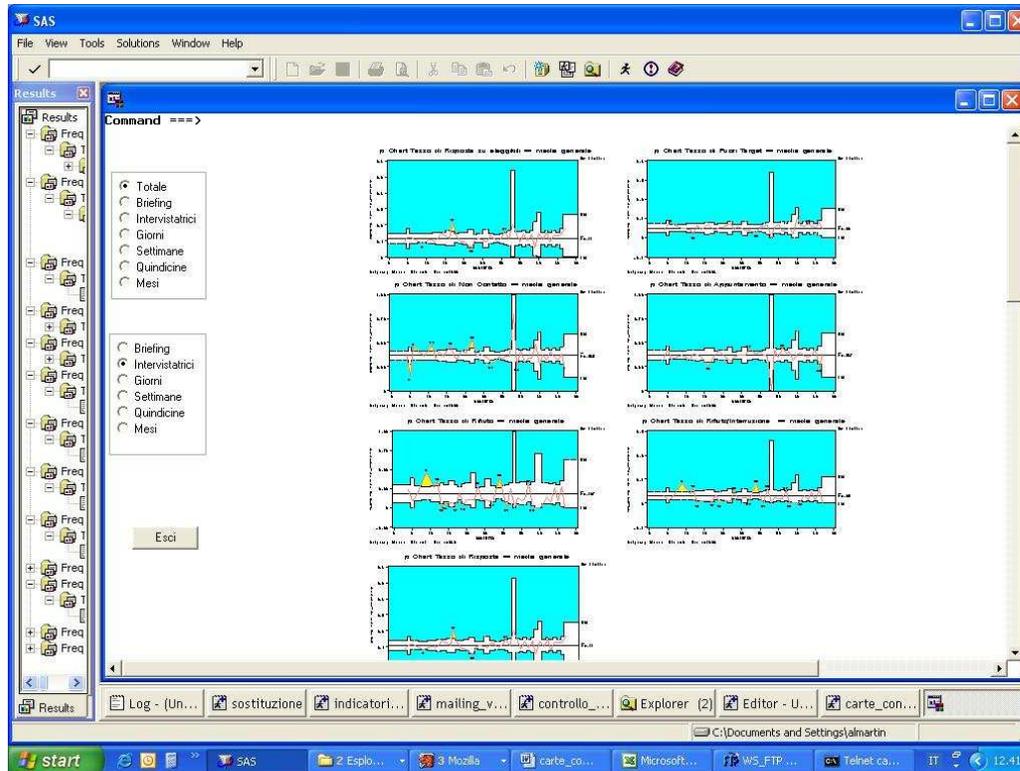
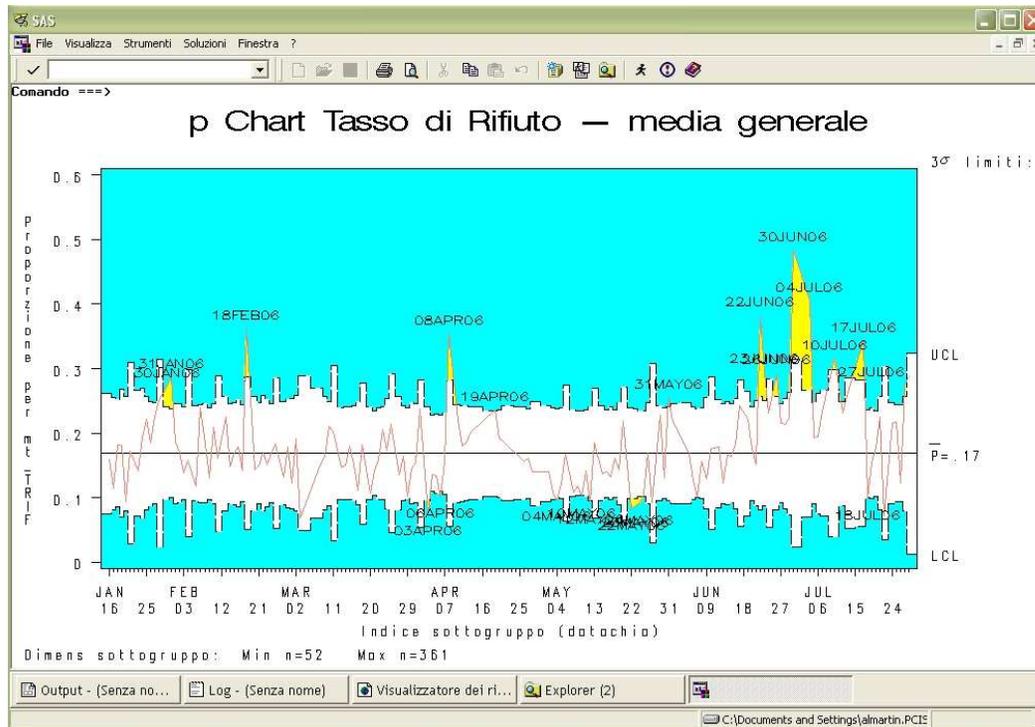


Figure: Refusal rate by time (Citizens' Safety Survey, 2002)



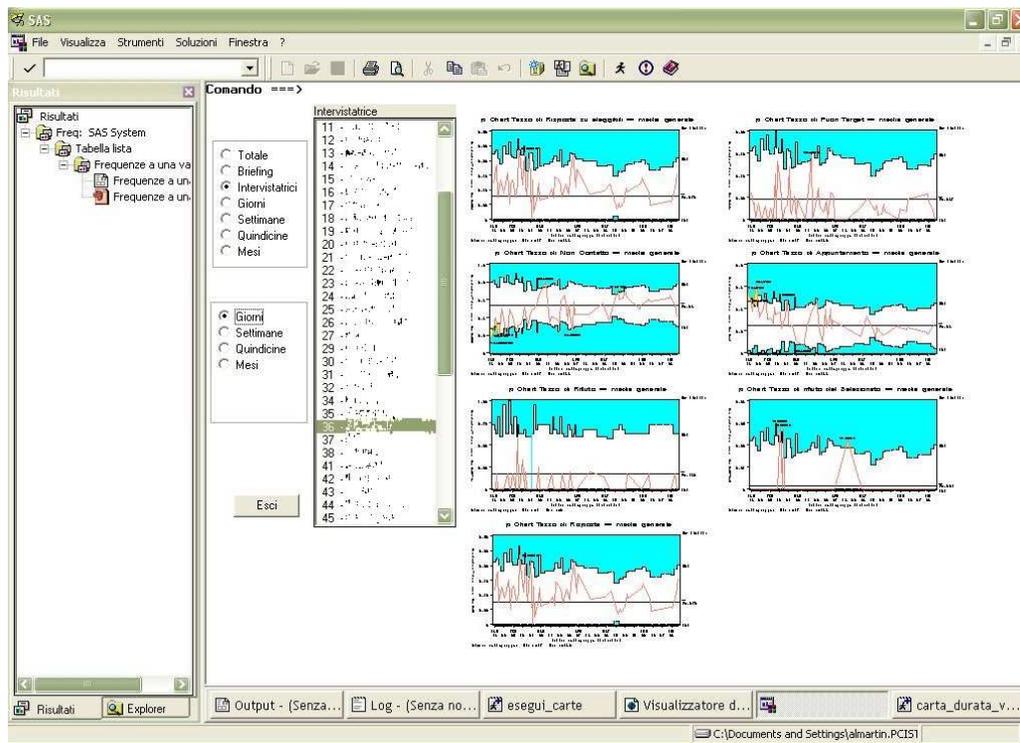
693. When one is focused on a single interviewer, these charts enable a quick overview as to their ability to properly manage the interview, adequately interact with the respondents, complete the interview, as well as their motivation and overall effort. Because the charts are easy to read and interpret, prompt briefing to solve problems can be arranged.

694. For example, in the “Citizen’s Safety Survey” of 2002, the outlier values of refusal rates found early in the survey prompted survey managers to enhance communication training of less experienced interviewers. Further, the findings prompted a need for continual assistance to new groups of interviewers. The efficacy of “targeted” debriefing like this is evident by the fact that a short time later, high number of refusals among new interviewers was no longer a problem.

695. Extreme refusal rate values were observed near the Easter holidays as well as on the last days of the survey. Knowing this, some improvements were obtained by defining specific strategies regarding the management of shifts and parameters managing the CATI system algorithm.

696. Interviewer analyses revealed some problems with even the most efficient interviewers. To address this, management scheduled discussions with the flagged interviewers where they were encouraged and motivated. This was done individually as well as in groups where they were able to share with one another how to better manage fatigue and difficult moments.

Figure: TITLE NEEDED



Box: Qualitative tools to monitor the survey during the data collection phase

Phoning room sheet

A well-structured data sheet can be used to analyze the interview as well as the interviewer's behavior. This sheet serves several goals. First, it should record significant situations that occurred during interviewing that may influence data quality. In other words, the data quality sheet should be structured to collect any problems to the actual interview. Second, it should evaluate the level of professionalism and overall ability of the interviewer during an interview. Analyzing the interviewer's abilities is important as it allows immediate knowledge about whether they administered the complete questionnaire, the rapport established with the respondent, whether the interviewer becomes too emotionally involved in the interview, as well as whether they handle rejection or other difficult situations professionally. Understanding fully the relationship between the interviewer and respondent is critical since multilevel statistical model analysis show a significant dependence of partial non-response and the interviewer's behavior, especially when dealing with sensitive themes. A final goal of this sheet is to document systematic and/or random errors that may occur during an interview. That includes the recording of the atmosphere of the center from which the interviews are conducted.

It is recommended that the assessment of the interview be made during three phases: the opening portion of the interview, the development of the interview, and the closing of the interview. For each phase of the interview, the room monitor should assess and record answers to closed-ended questions as well as open-ended questions expressing their doubts, thoughts or other notes. It is recommended that the data quality sheet be completed daily by appointed monitoring staff at the location where the data are collected. Given these recommendations, problems can be quickly identified and remedied.

Re-contact sheet

A second qualitative approach to data quality control is the household recontact sheet. To complete this sheet, households are randomly selected daily for recontact. The household recontact sheet gathers information on a variety of topics. First, it collects the respondent's feedback about the survey and the interview. Second, it collects the respondent's view of the professionalism of the interviewer. Third, the recontact sheet collects the respondent judgement regarding specific question and answer modalities. Fourth, it gathers general household information from the respondent. And finally, the respondent reveals if the interview was actually conducted, whether it was fully administered and whether it was conducted in the proper manner.

Toll free number sheet

As discussed previously, the toll free number represents a useful tool in survey research. The number represents a valuable opportunity to gain additional information about the quality of the interview process. It is recommended that a sheet be filled out by the toll free number operators to monitor and record important information that can be used for quality control purposes. The sheet should be constructed so that it allows reciprocal questions and answers between the respondent and the operator. Further, the form should gather information on the three phases of the interview process. The information collected should include territorial data, address and landline phone number, characteristics of the respondent, time of the call, and the reason for the call.

Table of content

Ch. III.K. Reference period.....	127
Definition	128
Summary - Reference Periods	128
Interview techniques to improve recall.....	129
Moving reference periods	130
Figure: Distribution of reference periods in one financial year of British Crime Surveys (April-March).....	131
Ch. III.L. Questionnaire design.....	132
Victimization screener instrument.....	132
BOX: Example of questions recalling crime experience	133
Box: Example of Intimate Partner Violence screener questions	135
Box: Questions used for Violence against women survey Screening	135
Crime incident instrument.....	136
<i>Separate incident form for each crime type</i>	137
<i>Single incident form for all crime types</i>	138
<i>Series Victimizations</i>	139
How to formulate questions	139
Box: Poor question wording:.....	140
Box: The Italian violence against women survey.....	141
Box: How to survey violence: Do not mention violence	142
Answers modalities.....	142
<i>Closed-ended questions</i>	142
Box: A new response category in the Italian Victimization survey	143
Box: How to use information from “Other, please specify” in crime classification ..	143
Box: Managing a long list of response categories	145
<i>Open-ended questions</i>	146
<i>Hierarchical questions</i>	147
<i>Scaled items</i>	147
<i>Likert Scale</i>	148
Example 1.....	149
Example 2.....	150
Box: How to build a likert scale	151
<i>Advantages and disadvantages of scaled items</i>	152
Box: Instructions to the respondent	153
Retrospective questions	154
The reference period used in victimization and violence surveys: Analysis from the UNODC–UNECE Crime Survey Inventory	155
Type of reference period used.	155
Sequencing questions.....	156
Other considerations	157
<i>How many questions?</i>	157
Box: Average survey length: Analysis from the UNODC –UNECE Crime Survey Inventory	158
<i>Questions and respondents: the problems of respondent age and of foreigners</i>	158
Box: from Fra (Sami Nevala and Jo) ??????.....	159
<i>Question sensitivity</i>	159
<i>Proxy responses</i>	160
Table: Safety perception when alone and it is dark, by proxy-not proxy answer	160
Developing and pre -testing questionnaires	160
<i>The design</i>	160

Qualitative methodologies as support to the analysis of the survey feasibility and pre-testing.....	161
<i>Focus groups</i>	161
<i>Expert revision</i>	161
<i>The alternatives test</i>	162
<i>Cognitive testing</i>	162
<i>Pre-testing</i>	163
Graphics and the instrument.....	164
Box: Graphic Example 1	164
Box: Graphic example 2.....	166
Skip patterns	166
References	167
Ch. III.M. Interviewing (if not a self response survey)	167
Interviewers' selection, interviewers' training and training materials	167
Selecting interviewers and identifying skills/attributes required for interviewers	168
Continuous training	169
<i>Aims and planning</i>	169
Understanding the survey.....	169
Properly conducting the interview.....	169
Managing the relationship with the respondent	170
The motivated interviewer	171
Initial training	172
<i>Methodologies</i>	172
<i>Organizational aspects</i>	172
Developing other interviewer materials.....	173
<i>Questionnaire guide</i>	173
<i>Interviewer's manual</i>	174
Training structure and contents	174
Example of training modules	175
Box: Training of interviewers concerning Violence Against Women Surveys	176
Box: Minority group interviewing	177
Interviewers' influence on data collection	178
Box: Example	179
Training of interviewers: Role-playing.....	180
<i>Scene 1. A threatening husband</i>	181
<i>Scene 2. An intimidated respondent</i>	181
<i>Scene 3. An undisclosed rape.</i>	181
Quality control in the process phase	182
Quality rates: Telephone surveys	183
Table: Final disposition codes	183
Table: Response rate formulae	184
Control charts	186
Figure: Example of control chart for the Citizen's Safety Survey of 2002.	187
Figure: Refusal rate by time (Citizens' Safety Survey, 2002)	187
Figure: TITLE NEEDED	188
Box: Qualitative tools to monitor the survey during the data collection phase	189
Phoning room sheet	189
Re-contact sheet.....	190
Toll free number sheet	190