

Problems with surveys among ethnic minorities in the Netherlands

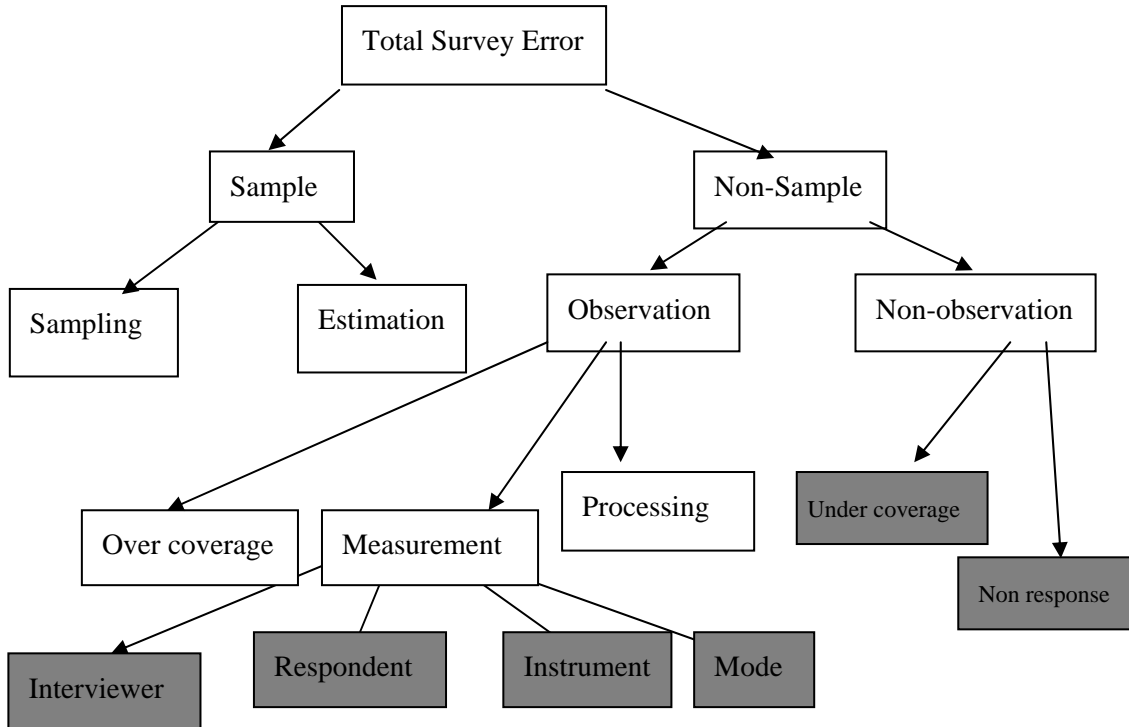
JWS Kappelhof

1. Introduction

In Dutch research the most used definition of a non-native is “a person who is resident in the Netherlands and of whom at least one of the parents is born in a foreign country”(CBS, 2001). According to this definition almost 3.2 million of the Dutch inhabitants are considered non-natives, which makes up 19% of the total population in the Netherlands. This group of non-natives consists of approximately 45% western and 55% non-western non-natives (CBS-statline, 2007). People that came from Turkey, Africa, Latin America and Asia (with the exception of Japan and Indonesia) are considered non-western non-natives. Conducting large-scale survey among non-western non-natives is considered difficult in the Netherlands (Kemper, 1998; Martens, 1999; Reep, 2003, Schmeets, Reep & Snijkers, 2003, 2005; Schothorst, 1999, 2002; Stoop, 2005; Van 't Land, 2002). They are seen as difficult to (observe and measure) survey due to cultural differences, language problems, (social)-demographic characteristics and a higher mobility (CBS, 2005; Dagevos & Schellingerhout, 2003; Groeneveld & Weijers-Martens, 2003; Kemper, 1998; Reep, 2003; Van 't Land, 2000). For instance, non-western non-natives tend to be city dwellers (CBS, 2005; Stoop, 2005; Schmeets, 2005) and it is harder to make contact with city dwellers and city dwellers are also less inclined to cooperate with surveys (Couper & Groves, 1996; Groves & Couper, 1998; Stoop, 2005; CBS, 2005). Furthermore, they tend to move more often thereby making them harder to reach (CBS, 2005). The response rates among non-western non-natives in large-scale surveys have also been dropping and this increases the possibility of selective response (CBS, 2003; Stoop, 2005; Voogt, 2004). It becomes clear from aforementioned that there are many possible reasons for distortion of the survey measurements among the non-western non-natives population. In recent years the Social and Cultural Planning office (SCP) conducted two large-scale surveys among non-western non-natives population. A large-scale survey was conducted about the living conditions of non-western non-natives city dwellers (LAS) in 2004 and a large-scale survey about the integration of ethnic minorities (SIM) in 2006. In the design and the implementation phase of both surveys the SCP used much of the earlier research findings (Meloan en Veenman, 2002; CBS, 2005; Van 't land, 2000; Kemper, 1998) that focused on causes for measurement error in surveying non-western non-natives. These difficulties with survey research among non-western non-natives are described using a form of the total survey error model (table 1) whereby the areas that need specific attention are tinted grey. This article describes how the SCP dealt with the difficulties and the trade-offs that they are accompanied by while conducting these surveys. The lay out of the article is as follows. First there will be a brief description of the history of survey research among non-western non-natives in the Netherlands and the choices and problems with defining the target population. The second part will give a brief description of the problems associated with the sample-side while conducting survey research among non-western non-natives in the

Netherlands. The next section deals with the non-sample side and the final part discusses the role of the organisation of the fieldwork and how it effects the quality measurement. Conclusions will be drawn in section 5.

Table 1: Total Survey Error



1.1 Background

The Dutch government has a minority policy mainly aimed at non-western non-natives because there is societal backlog (Reep, 2003). For this policy the research focuses mainly on four non-western non-native groups, which are Antilleans¹, Surinamese, Moroccans and Turks. The reason for aiming the research for the minority policy on those groups is both their lower social-economic position in general (CBS, 2002; Dagevos & Schellingerhout, 2003, Stoop, 2005) and the fact that these four groups make up 2/3 of the total non-western non-native population in the Netherlands (table 2). In 2003 a survey was conducted among ‘new’ ethnic minorities, but the focus of the Dutch government is aimed at the four largest minorities.

Table 2: Overview of the largest four non-western non-native groups in the Netherlands.

	Total	Moroccans	Turks	Antilleans	Surinamese	Other
N	1739365	329634	368718	129590	333478	578215
%	100	19	21,2	7,4	19,2	33,2

cbs statline 2007

¹ Including Aruba

In the Netherlands government and other institutes have conducted a number of large-scale surveys specifically aimed at the non-western non-native groups in the last 3 decades. See table 3 for a short overview.

Table 3 Short overview of survey research done by (government) institutes among non-western non-native in the last 3 decades

<i>Institute(s)</i>	<i>Target population</i>	<i>Survey topic</i>	<i>Year</i>
Statistics Netherlands	Turks, Moroccans	Living conditions	1984
Statistics Netherlands	Antilleans, Surinamese	Living conditions	1985
Institute for Social-Economic Research (ISEO)	Moroccans, Antilleans, Surinamese, Turks	Living conditions (SPVA)	1988,1991, 1994
Statistics Netherlands	Turks	Health	1989
Institute for Social-Economic Research (ISEO) Social Cultural Planning Office (SCP)	Moroccans, Antilleans, Surinamese, Turks	Living conditions (SPVA)	1998, 2002
Veldkamp TNS NIPO	Moroccans, Antilleans, Surinamese, Turks	General	1999,2000
Statistics Netherlands Veldkamp	Moroccans, Antilleans, Surinamese, Turks	Budget	2000
Social Cultural Planning Office (SCP)	Moroccans, Antilleans, Surinamese, Turks	Living conditions (GWAO)	2003
Social Cultural Planning Office (SCP)	Somalians, Iranians, Iraqi, Afghans, Yugoslavs	Living conditions (SPVN)	2003
Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute (NIDI)	Moroccans, Antilleans, Surinamese, Turks	Kinship Panel Study (KNPS)	2003
National Institute for Expenditure Information (NIBUD)	Moroccans, Antilleans, Surinamese, Turks	Expenditure	2003
Statistics Netherlands	Turks, Moroccans	Family planning (OGJA)	2004
The Netherlands Institute for Healthcare Research (NIVEL)	Moroccans, Antilleans, Surinamese, Turks	Health	2004
Social Cultural Planning Office (SCP)	Moroccans, Antilleans, Surinamese, Turks	Living conditions (LAS)	2004

<i>Institute(s)</i>	<i>Target population</i>	<i>Survey topic</i>	<i>Year</i>
Social Cultural Planning Office (SCP)	Moroccans, Antilleans, Surinamese, Turks	Integration (SIM)	2006

Besides the large-scale surveys specifically aimed at the ethnic minorities in the Netherlands there obviously have been many other surveys conducted in the Netherlands by the same and other institutes where non-western non-natives were part of the sample and also data regarding these minorities was published. Also from these surveys much knowledge has been gathered regarding the methodology with research among non-western non-natives.

1.2 Who is what? Differences and problems with defining, marking out and the coverage level of the non-western non-native target population.

Defining and marking out

Marking out a population that is difficult to observe is tricky. First there has to be a clear definition of the target population whereby for each potential element it can be unquestionably determined whether it belongs to the target population (CBS, 2004). That definition should both be defensible from a theoretical viewpoint and measurable to come to a careful operationalisation (CBS, 2005). Except an unequivocal definition of who belongs to the target population, the timeframe should also be clearly established (Groves, 1989; CBS, 2004).

Nationality of a person has lost its use for large-scale surveys among non-western non-natives since many members of the target population have Dutch or duo citizenships. Also the overlap between 'non-western non-native' and 'person of an ethnic minority' is not complete. The term 'non-western non-native' implies that a person is originating from elsewhere and living in the Netherlands, but the term 'person of an ethnic minority' also implies that the minority on average has a lower social-economic position in the Dutch society and larger cultural differences (CBS, 2002).

In the remainder of this article the precise definition of what constitutes a non-native or member of an ethnic minority is left out of consideration. The focus is on the research methodology used for the target populations that are the focal point of the Dutch government's minority policy; Moroccans, Antilleans, Surinamese and Turks.

Changes due to time have also forced the most common definition of non-native, "a person who is resident in the Netherlands and of whom at least one of the parents is born in a foreign country (CBS, 2001)", to be a more operational definition that decides to which generation persons are considered non-native and to which ethnic minority a person belongs when they are born out of interethnic parents (CBS, 2002).

In the Netherlands a distinction is made between first and second-generation ethnic minority. First generation ethnic minority are persons of an ethnic minority where both they and also at least one of their parents has been born abroad (e.g. Morocco). Second-generation ethnic minority are persons born in the Netherlands, but at least one of the parents is born abroad. This excludes for instance ambassadors' children but includes children of immigrants. The country of birth of a person is decisive in determining whether someone belongs to a western or a non-western first generation ethnic minority and for determining a second-generation

ethnic member the mother's country of birth is decisive. In case the mother is born in the Netherlands, the father's country of birth is decisive in determining the ethnic minority (De Beer, 2001). Although sometimes for pragmatic reasons the distinction is not completely followed (Van 't Land, 2000) in general the consensus on the definition of what constitutes a non-western non-native, a member of an ethnic minority and a first and second generation ethnic minority in the Netherlands is high.

2. Coverage level

Since the start of conducting surveys among Moroccans, Antilleans, Surinamese and Turks in the Netherlands many of the researched populations have varied greatly in coverage level. For the subsequent living condition surveys (SPVA) conducted by ISEO and SCP a household sample was drawn from a limited number of municipalities (10-13) were contacted. These surveys varied greatly in the coverage level for each of the total target populations² (Groeneveld & Weijers-Martens, 2003; Zeijleman, Braat & Martens, 1989). The argument behind the choice for these few municipalities³ was the desire to have a good geographical distribution, but also to have enough potential respondents living in those municipalities for sampling purposes (Zeijleman, Braat & Martens, 1989). The family planning survey (OGJA) conducted by Statistics Netherlands was done among a sample of Turks and Moroccans in the age of 18 till 27 living in the Netherlands⁴ (CBS, 2005). The LAS2004 Survey was conducted among a sample of the urban population of Turks, Antilleans, Moroccans, Surinamese and Dutch⁵ (age 15-65) of the 50 largest cities in the Netherlands⁶ (Schothorst, 2005). The SIM2006-survey was conducted among a sample of the Turks, Antilleans, Moroccans, Surinamese and Dutch population (15+) living in the Netherlands. The differences between the researched populations have consequences for the possibility to generalize to the whole target population of interest. The possibility to generalize to the whole target population of interest can only be done by a clearly defined target population (on age, region, ethnicity, etc) where all the potential elements have a chance of inclusion in the sample. Due to the initial set up⁷ of the SPVA-surveys it was recognized that about certain topics of interest there were no clear, undistorted data from partners and children in the households (Zeijleman, Braat & Martens, 1989).

When potential elements of the target population of interest have no chance of being in the sample coverage level is important, but not all. The preferred choice in the trade-off here would be a clear possibility to generalize to a *smaller* target population where the target

² The level of coverage of the total target populations for these municipalities in 1988 varied from 35% of the Antilleans, 44% of the Turks, 52% of the Moroccans to 63% of the Surinamese. In 2002 the level of coverage of the total target populations for these municipalities 44% of the Antilleans, 46% of the Turks, 54% of the Moroccans and 64% of the Surinamese. Except the 5% increase among Antilleans the coverage level in 2002 was the same as in 1988.

³ For reasons of comparability the same design was used for determining the targetpopulation in the subsequent SPVA-surveys. The only variation was the choice of municipalities, they varied from survey to survey (except for Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Utrecht, Den Haag, Eindhoven and Enschede) based on coverage level of the targetpopulations. In 1988 the other municipalities were Groningen, Apeldoorn, Gorinchem and Veghel. In the 1998, 2002 and 2003 editions of the SPVA-survey the other municipalities were Almere, Alphen a/d rijn, Bergen op Zoom, Hoogezand-Sappemeer, Delft, Dordrecht and Tiel.

⁴ Not including residents of institutions.

⁵ Dutch could be anything but Turks, Antilleans, Morrocans and Surinamese.

⁶ According to the Nyfer-classification (Marlet & Woerkens, 2003).

⁷ The male and also the Surinamese and Antilleans female head of households (18+) were interviewed first as it was thought that the way into a household for an interviewer was to interview the head of the household first and afterwards the rest of the householdmembers.

population is unequivocally defined and each potential element of that target population has a known chance larger than 0 to be included in the sample.

3. Sample

This section deals with sample errors. Sample errors arise because not the whole target population is surveyed, but only a sample (Bethlehem, 2004). Surveys conducted among ethnic minorities could suffer from sample errors because of sampling errors and estimation errors. Sampling errors spring from incomplete sampling frames and errors in the sampling procedure when the actual and the anticipated probability of inclusion in the sample for a potential element differ. Estimation errors happen with all sorts of research and surveys among ethnic minorities don't seem to be more susceptible to it. Steps to limit the estimation error such as sufficient sample size and a correct sample design should be done carefully. For both the LAS and the SIM survey sample size calculations were performed to limit the estimation error and have sufficient sample size for different analysis. The sample design for the LAS-survey was a 2-stage sample design for Turks, Moroccans, Antilleans, Surinamese plus a Dutch control group living in the 50 largest cities. For each separate minority group first municipality were randomly drawn and in the second stage respondents were randomly drawn from the sampling frame (the selected municipal personal records database of the 50 largest cities in The Netherlands). The method used in the SIM2006 study was a stratified 2-stage sampling method with proportional to size allocation done separately for each group. The Netherlands was divided into three strata (regions). Region1 were the cities with population >200.000, region2 50.000 to 200.000 and region3 < 50.000. Within region 1 the cities (PSU) were self-selecting and the number of respondents were randomly drawn proportional to the size of the strata. Within region 2 and 3 the cities (PSU) were not-self selecting and in region 2 the number of desired respondents was 10 per PSU and in region 3 it was 5 per PSU. The sampling frame were the municipal personal records database of all selected municipalities in the Netherlands. One reason for incomplete sampling frames comes from the fact that municipal personal records database are not up-to-date due to moving, invalid addresses, etc. These sampling frame errors happen more often for ethnic minorities and will be discussed in the section about non-response (3.2).

4. Non-Sample

Non-sample errors are errors that could also happen with census surveys. A distinction is made between two types of non-sample error (observation and non-observation error). The observation error is the part of the non-sample error that happens due to the incorrect obtaining, recording and processing of data and could only arise because observations are made (Bethlehem, 2004). The non-observations error only happens when it is impossible to make observations.

Observation error

Observation error has three sources: over coverage, measurement error and processing error. It is not uncommon for survey research among ethnic minorities in the Netherlands to have respondent in the gross sample who do not belong to the target population, but there is no evidence that survey research among ethnic minorities is more susceptible to it than survey research among other populations. For this reason error due to over coverage will be set-aside

in the remainder of this article. In addition over coverage can easily be discovered during fieldwork by simply verifying if a respondent satisfies the target population criteria. One related interesting finding about over coverage in research among ethnic minority is that it sometimes happens that respondents do not know they belong to the target population. They have never known that at least one of their parents is born in a country that makes them a target population (ref).

The same brief remark can be made about processing errors that arise because of a misrepresentation during data processing. They happen in all sorts of surveys and are not specific for surveys among ethnic minorities. A more general warning about data processing applies for household surveys. The data from each member of household in a household survey should not be processed as independent data since at least some of the characteristics of household members are correlated (Lynn, 2002).

Measurement error will be discussed in more detail here since survey research among ethnic minorities in the Netherlands clearly suffers from it more than other survey research. The researcher can be unaware of specific cultural influences and or language problems in the survey data gathered among ethnic minorities and these data thereby do not necessarily match the reality. The interviewer, the respondent, the measurement instrument and the measurement mode can cause bias in surveys among non-western non-natives.

5. The interviewer

When conducting surveys among ethnic minorities in the Netherlands several choices can be made regarding the interviewers. Since a considerable proportion of the ethnic minorities do not speak Dutch one could choose for bilingual interviewers. The bilingual interviewers share the same ethnic background as the target population and speak both Dutch and the language of the target population (for instance Turkish, Arabic or Berber). An additional advantage of these bilingual interviewers is their familiarity with both the culture and customs and therefore a shorter social distance with the target population (Veenman, 2002). There are also downsides to using a bilingual interviewer. Schothorst (2002) found that bilingual interviewers need more training and instructions than Dutch interviewers. They need more training in the use of the questionnaire and while giving these training instructions it is better to give them orally instead of written down, because written instructions are not always read correctly. Also other researchers have comments on the use of bilingual interviewers (Kemper, 1998; Land van 't, 2000). They both find that although their knowledge of language and culture is an advantage, there is also an advantage for using Dutch interviewers because of their perceived neutrality regarding regional, political and religious divisions within the ethnic community. Research has shown (Land van 't, 2000) that ethnic origin of the interviewer and the language spoken during the interview has a clear influence on ethnic-related subjective questions. According to Kemper (1998) a Dutch interviewer who knows both language and the cultural etiquette would be best, however these interviewers are scarcely available. He also suggests interviewer duos made up of ethnic and non-ethnic interviewers to oppose the influence of language and cultural differences. To summarize it can be said that when conducting surveys among ethnic minorities the choice and training of interviewers is an important step where both ethnic as Dutch interviewers have the advantages and disadvantages. The use of bilingual interviewers leads to more interviewer mistakes and the use of Dutch interviewers leads to more non-response due to language problems. The ethnicity of the interviewer influences the answers in multiple ways with no clear 'best

solution'. In both the LAS and the SIM survey the choice was made to use both bilingual (Turkish-Dutch, Arabic-Dutch and Berber-Dutch) and Dutch interviewers⁸. The interviewers got instructions according to the guidelines given by Schothorst (2002). During the fieldwork phase of the SIM survey the drop out rate among bilingual interviewers was quite high and the recruitment of bilingual interviewers was difficult. It was so difficult that an additional research company, who specialises in the use of bilingual interviewers among ethnic minorities, was contacted to supply us with additional bilingual interviewers. The bilingual interviewers were used during regular fieldwork and also among initial refusals where the Dutch interviewer determined it was because of language problems. (Numbers are forthcoming). A further analysis of fieldwork data and survey data has to determine if the choice for both interviewers did a better justice to the diversity of the cultural and language influences among ethnic minorities.

6. The respondent

The non-western non-native respondent differs from the Dutch respondent. In order to get reliable answers from a non-western non-native respondent one has to take different question phrasing and methods of approach into consideration. Non-western non-native respondents like to talk more and during the interview time should be made available for a talk. In general the length of an interview takes one and a half to two times as long compared to Dutch respondents (Schothorst, 2002). The often used precoded answering categories function less well because of non-attitudes among non-western non-native respondents. There is a difference between the "us"-culture of non-western non-native respondents and the Dutch research culture (Kemper, 1998). Question about aspects that are considered important in the Dutch culture are not always considered equally important to Moroccan and Dutch respondents. In order to adequately measure the same construct among Moroccan respondents questions based on Moroccan aspects are essential (Land van 't, 2000). Social desirability in combination with cultural norms and values could have a major influence on the answers. In some cultures it is considered impolite to say 'no'. Other role-dependent respondent characteristics such unfamiliarity with surveys, scepticism and distrust occur more often when interviewing non-western non-native respondents (Veenman, 2002). Besides all the aforementioned measurement problems while conducting surveys among non-western non-native respondents there are other factors that should be taken into account. Most of these factors concern the interview setting and the interviewer-respondent relation. In these cases other rules apply for non-western non-native respondents compared to Dutch respondents. For instance, with Turkish and Moroccan respondents the influence of a mismatch between the interviewer and the respondent on sex, religion, education, age and or ethnic origin should be taken into consideration (Veenman, 2002). Even within an ethnic minority group these differences could cause an effect (Veenman, 2002). Examples of divergent interviewing settings are the difference in balance of power within many families of ethnic minorities; more often there are other family members in the direct vicinity while conducting the interview and the dominant presence of a television (Veenman, 2002). An option to stop some of the disrupting influences is to do the interview somewhere else instead of the house, but a different interview setting there would be other disrupting influences such as peer influences.

⁸ Surinamese and Antilleans speak among other languages native Dutch so bilingual interviewers were not used.

The message seems to be that with sensitive topics or opinions the actual answers could differ from the reality due to all sorts of disrupting effects. Some of these disrupting effects could be taken into consideration in advance such as matching of respondents and interviewers, simpler language, extended interview length, more 'ethnic' topics, avoiding 'sensitive' topics, improved navigational path to single out non-attitudes, with other effects one can only be aware of their disruptive influence and one should be more careful with claims based on these answers. In both the LAS and the SIM survey we made use of many of the recommendations concerning the disrupting effects and we also attempted to map the illusive other effects by means of checklists. The interviewer was asked to fill out a small checklist after the interview with questions regarding the quality of the interview, such as if the respondent had understood the topics in the survey, if there was someone else present during the interview and if yes; who was it? (Forthcoming: the usefulness of the checklist is still being analysed)

Measurement instrument

In survey research also the ethnicity of the respondent plays a part in the choice of the measurement instrument. A structured questionnaire with short and concrete questions is preferred. The questionnaire should not be too lengthy and when dealing with a sensitive topic one should make use of longer introductions, indirect or open questions or gradually increase the sensitivity of the questions via routing (Kemper, 1998). Questions or beliefs regarding the future should be avoided when interviewing the respondent of an ethnic minority and the question order can be different in comparison with interviewing a Dutch respondent (Schothorst, 2002; Veenman, 2002). Questions about income do not necessarily have to come at the end of the questionnaire and extra attention should be paid to the difficulty of the questions and answering categories. The wording of the questionnaire should relate to the level of the respondent and translated as much as possible (Schothorst, 2002). The LAS and the SIM survey both made use of different language versions (Dutch, Turkish and Arabic) of the questionnaire. Questions or beliefs regarding the future were avoided and the wording was adapted. A company specialised in language problems among ethnic minority (Bureau Taal) checked the wording of the questionnaire and made the wording more accessible when needed. A specific language problem among Moroccan respondents is the fact that some predominantly speak Berber, which is not a written language. In those cases a questionnaire cannot be translated in advance and consensus needed to be made with bilingual interviewers about which words they would use in Berber to clarify potentially difficult words and or topics.

Measurement mode

The ethnicity of the respondent also influences the choice of the measurement mode in survey research. The (not translated) written questionnaire is not a useful mode due to language problems and a higher illiterate rate among (older) members of ethnic minorities. This mode would increase the probability of selective response and this would also be the case with internet surveys. In addition to the aforementioned problems internet access and percentage of ethnic minorities, specifically Moroccans and Turks, owning and using a computer is also lower (Ingen van, Haan de & Duimel, 2007, forthcoming). Among younger members of ethnic minorities, especially the ones that had their education in the Netherlands, the written questionnaire is an option (Schothorst, 2002). The most suitable mode is the oral interview. Of all possible types of oral interview computer assisted personal interview (CAPI) is the best and computer telephonic interview (CATI) should be avoided (Schouten, 2005). Among ethnic minorities there are far less landlines and it is seen as highly unusual to do an interview

via CATI (Schothorst, 2002). To assess whether CAPI mode effects potentially ‘sensitive’ topics, Statistics Netherlands experimented with computer assisted self-interviewing (CASI) among young members of ethnic minorities in 2003. There did not appear to be an effect on the answers. Except the choice of the measurement mode the interview needs to be preceded by a letter introducing the interview (Schothorst, 2002).

In both the LAS and the SIM survey the CAPI mode was used and a letter introducing the interview preceded the interview.

Non-observation

Non-observation errors are due to the inability to do observations among the target population (Bethlehem, 2004). This is caused by under coverage and non-response. Both sources deserve extra attention when conducting surveys among ethnic minorities.

Under-coverage

Under-coverage happens when not all elements of target population can be found in the sampling frame. These errors in the sampling frame occur when a sampling frame is not up to date. In the Netherlands (semi-) governmental and scientific institutes mainly use the postal data service or municipal personal records database as a sampling frame when conducting research among (the largest four) ethnic minorities. Both frames suffer from sampling frame errors due to moving of respondents, no known address of respondents, death of respondents, or slow registration of new respondents. From the LAS survey and other surveys (Schmeets, 2005). It turns out that these sampling frame errors (in the Netherlands known as false non response) occur more often among ethnic minorities (table 3). The quality of the data and estimators can be affected by high drop out rates because the net sample size would get too small and the survey data would be under used or mistrusted.

Table 4: overview false non-response in LAS2004

Ethnicity	Dutch		Turks	Moroccans		Antilleans		Surinamese	
	N	%	N %	N	%	N	%	N	%
false non response	46	4	153 8	142	7	189	10	153	7

Source: LAS2004 veldwerkverslag

In conducting surveys among ethnic minorities in the Netherlands both household samples based on an address (SPVA) and persons samples (OGJA, LAS, SIM) have been used. If one chooses a persons sample in the design phase the sampling frame error due to the moving of a respondent could be reduced by ‘tracing’ the respondent to their new address, whereas the choice for a household samples based on an address excludes this possibility and there will be a substantial probability the new residents of the address are not eligible. Disadvantages of ‘tracing’ a respondent are the extra costs and time of the fieldwork. Another option of reducing the number of sampling frame errors is to sample more than once during the fieldwork phase. There are several drawbacks with this option. At the subsequent sample draws will be other potential respondents in the sampling frame that were not eligible at the initial sample draw. The second disadvantage with this method is the less than optimal

approach strategy by the interview corps. They may have to make several trips to the same area.

Another bias related to household samples based on an address in the Netherlands is the occurrence of multiple households on a single address (Schmeets, 2005). This occurs more often among ethnic minorities and there could be additional indistinctness about who needs to be interviewed. At the moment there seems no clear solution for sampling frame errors. As long as the accuracy of sampling frames is not up-to-date due to processing time it will limit the possibilities for the researchers to reduce it. One recommendation is to allow for sampling frame errors in the design phase by oversampling certain strata (for instance age- or ethnic groups or regions) by making use of detailed response reports of other surveys conducted among the same target population. Both LAS and SIM had their samples drawn only once and both made use of the (selected) municipal personal records database. In the design phase of the SIM survey this was done by using the detailed response data collected during the LAS survey fieldwork. This led to an oversampling in the 4 major cities of the Netherlands (Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Utrecht and Den Haag).

Non-response

In surveys the ethnic minorities in the Netherlands generally have lower response rates. There are multiple reasons for their higher non-response rates and a number of them have been already discussed. Language problems continue to be an important reason for a lower response rate among (older) Turks and Moroccans. Sometimes members of ethnic minorities can be persuaded to participate after an initial refusal if the interview can be conducted in the native language (Kemper, 1998).

Another reason for a higher non-response rate among ethnic minorities is caused by several socio-demographic characteristics. Big city dwellers and persons with lower social-economic positions have a lower response rate and ethnic minorities are overrepresented in those categories (Stoop, 2005). Statistics Netherlands compared Dutch and respondents of ethnic minorities with similar socio-demographic characteristics and they found only slight differences in the willingness to participate in survey research (CBS, 2005).

A third reason for a lower response rates among ethnic minorities is the fact that they are hard to contact (Stoop, 2005). Members of ethnic minorities are harder to contact because they are out of their home more often (Kemper, 1998). To make an appointment to conduct an interview is also not a good strategy when surveying ethnic minorities, they seem to honour those appointments less than the Dutch respondents (Kemper, 1998).

Increasing the number of contact attempts, variations in time of contact attempts as well as variation in the location for contact attempt can reduce the non-response. Especially Sundays and evenings are very suited for surveying ethnic minorities (Kemper, 1998; Schothorst, 2002). Sundays are more suited for members of ethnic minorities who are Muslim since Friday is their day of worship and Sunday is more of a regular day for them. Schools seem a good location to conduct an interview with young members of ethnic minorities (Schothorst, 2002).

As mentioned before in both the LAS and SIM survey translated questionnaires and bilingual interviewers were used to reduce language related non-response. The number of contact attempts to at least 4 was another step to reduce the non response for the LAS and SIM survey as was the re-approaching of both respondents with language problems and initial refusals by bilingual interviewers were the initial interviewer thought they refused because of language

problems. Furthermore for the SIM survey incentives such as sending stamps and money were used to increase response rates. Also a special phone number was employed where potential respondents received money if they left a phone number where they could be reached by the interviewer to set up an appointment for an interview. (Response numbers about all efforts are forthcoming).

Fieldwork organisation

An aspect of survey research that can sometimes be what neglected, but does have a significant impact on the quality of the survey measurements is the fieldwork organisation. Especially during lengthy fieldwork periods, the fieldwork organisation affects the quality of the survey measurements because of selective response caused by (the use of) the interviewer but also the level of under-coverage and non-response are affected.

During the organisation of the fieldwork a trade-off should be made whether the focus is on the respondent or the interviewer. When the focus is on the respondent the fieldwork should be organised in such way that either the gross sample is evenly utilised based on several relevant (for the survey) background variables or respondents are drawn a select from the gross sample. Otherwise the quality of measurements of variables were timeliness in combination with background variables such as the level of urbanicity and age, affect each other could be comprised. In this way bias due to change in time or recent events during the fieldwork period that would cause a different opinion among certain groups can be avoided. Another option when focusing the fieldwork organisation on the respondents is to start the fieldwork with traditionally difficult or hard-to- contact groups because they are most time consuming. Part of the non-response due to 'element of gross sample not used' or 'no contact' that could be selective can be reduced if the focus of the fieldwork organisation is not the easy to contact or cooperative respondents but on the difficult or hard to contact groups (in the Netherlands for example young, Antillean males living in big cities). An additional advantage is the reduction in total survey error due to under-coverage because there is less chance that certain difficult or hard to contact groups with greater tendency to move have left.

When the focus is on the interviewer during the organisation of the fieldwork the goal will be to make efficient use of the interviewers corps by reducing travel time of the interviewer (and thereby the costs). Selecting respondents from the gross sample who live close together can do this. A common practice is to select the respondents from the gross sample that live close to the home address of the interviewer first. Another common practice is to select both the closely related and the easy respondents first to get an interviewer interested in the survey and thereby creating a smaller chance for an interviewer to quit the survey.

The choice for the interviewer is a choice for time and money and a choice for the respondent is a choice for increasing the quality of the measurements.

Other, related trade-offs that need to be made during the organisation of the fieldwork are the amount of 'freedom' given to the interviewers. When given number respondents to which degree are interviewers free in planning the order or route to approach the respondents? The maximum of interviews that one interviewer is allowed to do is another choice that should be given some thought during the fieldwork organisation. How much interviewer-effect is acceptable when the interviewer is good and motivated? Where and when to use bilingual interviewers is the next choice during the organisation of fieldwork when conducting this type of survey. Also the amount of training and check ups on interviewers needs to be given some thought during the organisation of the fieldwork.

In the LAS survey the focus was on the interviewer and in the SIM survey a more mixed mode was adopted due to careful monitoring of the fieldwork. When potential difficult groups were identified the focus shifted to the respondents by selecting and approaching them first, also the number of contact attempts was increased. Both surveys tried to make as much use of bilingual interviewers especially for elderly respondents of ethnic origin. Interviewers were given quite a bit of freedom to plan their own order and route in approaching respondents although they had to visit the respondent on both different times and days when no contact was made so far. Regarding interviewer effects there was no maximum number of interviews set for the interviewer. However, in combination with regular random checks on interviewers, respondents who had done an interview conducted by an interviewer with a very high response were sometimes contacted again to ask what they found of the interview.

7. Conclusion

While conducting surveys among ethnic minorities many things have to be taken into consideration to ensure a high data quality. Obviously the design and all related sample issues need to be given the proper amount of attention, but the main difficulty with conducting research among ethnic minorities lies with measurement error and non-response. To ensure higher data quality both response rate and measurement can be improved. It helps to increase the number of contact attempts, alternate time and days of contacts (evenings and Sundays for Muslims) and to re-approach respondents with (initial refusal due) language problems. (Conclusion about the use of incentives is forthcoming). More than one sample during the fieldwork period is not recommended. Selective use of bilingual interviewers is very useful. Especially with re-approaching (initial refusals) respondents with language problems and older members of ethnic minorities where there is an increased probability of language problems and or illiteracy. CAPI is the preferred way to conduct the survey. Translated questionnaires work well and can be conducted by Dutch interviewers. The translated questionnaire is given to the respondent so they can look up the questions they don't understand in Dutch. Interviews do take a longer time among ethnic minorities and make sure the length of the questionnaire is not too long. The use of simple language is recommended and the use of both questions about the future and sensitive topics should be avoided when surveying ethnic minorities. Finally, more time and attention should be given to both the organisation and the monitoring of the fieldwork.

References

- Beer, de J. (2001), De demografische prognoses van het CBS. CBS intranet, maart 2001.
- Bethlehem, J. (2004) Technieken voor survey-onderzoek. CBS-publicatie. (Centraal Bureau voor Statistiek, Voorburg/Heerlen)
- Couper, M.K. & Groves, R.M (1996) social environmental impacts on survey cooperation. Quality and Quantity, vol. 30. pp 173-188.
- Dagevos, J. & Schellingerhout, R. (2003) Sociaal-culturele integratie: contacten, cultuur en oriëntatie op de eigen groep. Rapportage Minderheden 2003. SCP-publicatie.
- Feskens, R.C.W., Hox, J., Lensveldt-Mulders, G. & Schmeets, H. Multivariate analyses of non-response among ethnic minorities. Paper presented at Statistics Canada Symposium 2004, Innovative methods for surveying difficult-to-reach-populations.

- Groeneveld, S. & Weijers-Martens, Y. (2003) *Minderheden in beeld*. SPVA2002. ISEO
- Groves, R.M (1989) *Survey errors and survey costs*. (Wiley, New York)
- Groves, R.M & Couper, M.P (1998) *Non response in household interview surveys* (Wiley, New York)
- Hilhorst, M. (2007) *Veldwerkverslag Survey Intergratie Minderheden*.
- Ingen, van E., Haan, de J.& Duimel, M. (2007) *Conceptrapport E-vaardigheden* (forthcoming). SCP-publicatie.
- Kemper, F. (1998) *Gezocht: Marokkanen. Methodische problemen bij het werven en interviewen van allochtone respondenten*. *Migrantenstudies*, 1, p. 43-57.
- Land, van 't H. (2000) *Similar Questions; Different Meanings*. Academisch proefschrift. Amsterdam:Vrije Universiteit te Amsterdam
- Lynn, P. (2002) *Sampling, Non-response and Weighting*. Workbook University of Essex.
- Martens, E.P. (1999) *Minderheden in beeld*. De SPVS-98 (NIWI, Amsterdam).
- Marlet, G. & Woerkens, C. van (2003) *Atlas voor Gemeenten 2003*
- ONS (2003) *Ethnic group statistics: A guide for the collection and classification of ethnicity data*. (Office for National Statistics, Newport).
- Reep, C. (2003) *Moeilijk waarneembare groepen: een inventarisatie*. CBS-rapport H1568-03-SOO (Centraal Bureau voor Statistiek, Voorburg/Heerlen)
- Schmeets, H., Dominguez, S. & Veenman, J. (2002) *Jaarboek minderheden*. Bohn, Stafleu en Van Loghum (Houten/Diegem 2002)
- Schmeets, H & Bie, van der. R (2005) *Enqueteonderzoek onder allochtonen* CBS. CBS-publicatie (Centraal Bureau voor Statistiek, Voorburg/Heerlen)
- Schothorst, Y. (2005) *Veldwerkverslag Leefsituatie Allochtone Stedelingen*.
- Schothorst, Y. (2002) *Onderzoek onder allochtonen: wat mag, wat moet en wat kan?* (In: Houtkoop- Steenstra H., Veenman, J. *Interviewen in de multiculturele samenleving. Problemen en oplossingen*. Koninklijke van Gorgum 2002.)
- Stoop, I.A.L. (2005) *The Hunt for the last respondent*. Academisch proefschrift. Amsterdam:Universiteit van Utrecht
- Veenman, J. (2002) *Interviewen in multicultureel Nederland* (In: Houtkoop- Steenstra H., Veenman, J. *Interviewen in de multiculturele samenleving. Problemen en oplossingen*. Koninklijke van Gorgum 2002.)
- Voogt, R. (2004) *"I'm not interested"*. Non response bias, response bias and stimulus effects in election research. Academisch proefschrift. Amsterdam:Universiteit van Amsterdam
- Zijleman, E.L.M., Braat, H.J.M & Martens, E.P (1989) *Kerncijfers S.P.V.A (Onderzoek Sociale Positie en Voorzieningsgebruik Allochtonen)*