

SELF-COMPLETION VS. INTERVIEWER-ASSISTED: DOES IT MATTER IN SURINAME?

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Acknowledgements

- Refer to these slides as: Sno, Tamira E, Nancy Gooding & Harry BG Ganzeboom. 2026. *Self-Completion vs Interviewer-Assisted: Does It Matter In Suriname? Presentation at ISSP Research Session. Prague CZ, April 26 2026.*
- Please note that these are only provisional results.
- Send comments to TamiraSno@hotmail.com

ISSP-SR Data collection & response

- Address sample. Very high response: > 80%.
- Substitution only allowed for address, not for HH-members.
- Household composition (18-74) available from contact form (gender, age) and HH-box (gender, age, education, main activity).
- Respondents selected at doorstep via birthday method (random date on contactform)
- Interviewer offers a face-to-face interview with selected respondent or leave-behind / self-completion with selected respondent
- Known biases:
 - Overrepresentation of **women**: 55-65%
 - Underrepresentation of **young adults**

Conclusions

- 25% chooses SELF-completion. Chosen by: urban districts, higher educated, women, employed, young
- Determinants of SELF completion have significant but only weak effects.
- Most significant determinant: Self-completers are >4 years younger. → Selfcompletion reduces age bias in respons.
- NO statistically significant effects of SELF-completion on consistency of answers).
- ‘Almost’ significant effects on finding the right respondent and number of missing values.

→ *SELF-completion does not harm the quality of the SR data.*

THEORY

Advantages of self-completion

- Time-reduction for respondent: 35 vs 60-75 minutes (guestimate)
- Time-reduction for interviewers (idem).
- More flexibility for the respondent: may speed up fieldwork time. Less delay in effective turn-around.
- Can Increase likelihood of finding the selected respondent (when not at home).
- Safer, anonymity → fewer missing values, in particular at sensitive topics, such as income.
- No possibility of (systematic) interviewer effects. Measurement errors are more likely random than systematic.
- When respondent can read the question and the answers, they will likely understand them better → reduces random error.

Disadvantages of self-completion

- Streamlining: respondents chooses always the same answers, or according to some fixed pattern.
- Incomplete / partially complete questionnaires?

Advantages of interviewers

- Interviewer monitors finding the selected respondent.
- Interviewer coaches → fewer empty or ambiguous answers (less item non-respons).
- Better able to prompt respondents in complicated (e.g. filtering) parts of questionnaires.
- Answers to open questions (e.g. occupations) are more specific → easier to code.

Disadvantages of interviewers

- Interviewers can **cheat**. Armchair interviewing is easy to do and hard to detect.
- Interviewers make **mistakes**. The interviewing process is a multistep chain:
 - INT reads question
 - RESP hears
 - INT reads answers
 - RESP chooses
 - INT records

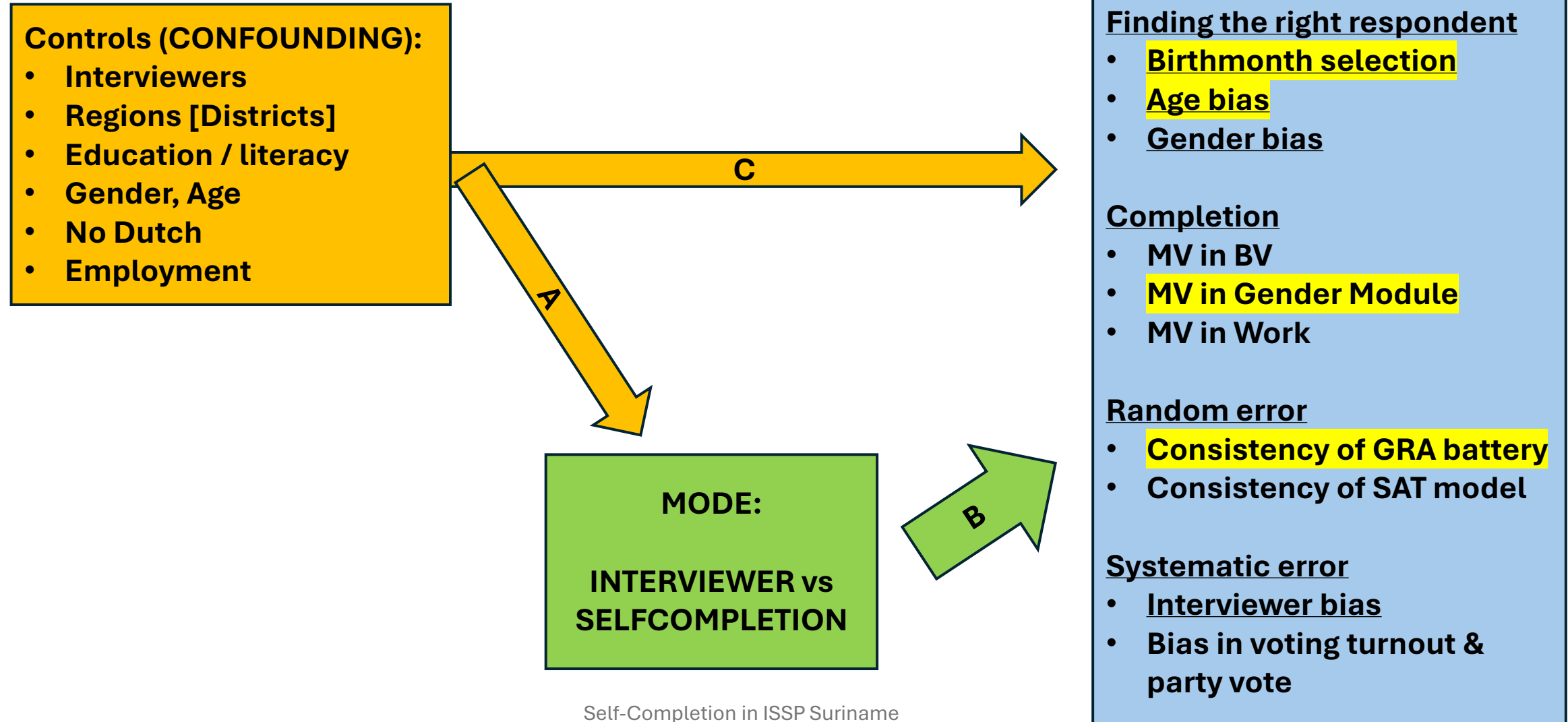
At each of these steps things can go wrong and will go wrong. These errors are sequential: if you go wrong in one step, this is not corrected in the next.
- Interviewers create **bias** (systematic error). These can be detected by comparing answering patterns between multiple respondents within interviewers.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Research Question and Research Design

- **How does the choice for self-completion affect the quality of the data?**
- NOT a randomized-group experimental design, respondents opt in to self-completion, possibly stimulated by the interviewer.
- ➔ We need to control determinants of opting-in to test effects of self-completion vs interviewer.
- Interviewers are nested within districts → hard to distinguish district and interviewer effects.

Model



MODE in ISSP-SR-2025

Table 1: SELF

	Frequency	Percent
.0 F2F interview	500	57.3
.5 Self-completed with iinterviewer assistance	107	12.3
1.0 Self-completed	226	25.9
Total	833	95.4
Missing	40	4.6
	873	100.0

Who chooses self-completion? Expectations:

- Fluency in Dutch [language of questionnaire]
- Higher educated
- Additional fluency in other European languages
- Gender: female (why?)
- Employment (time)
- District [urban – rural – interior]
- Ethnicity of interviewer
- Ethnicity of respondent
- Difference in ethnicity interviewer - respondent

Table 2: Determinants of choice of SELF-completion

Parameter	Metric	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
		B	t	B	t	B	t
Intercept		.306	9.6	.257	6.7	.360	6.4
ZURBRURAL	Z	-.055	-3.0	-.042	-2.4	.011	0.4
ZAGE	Z	-.047	-3.1	-.017	-1.1	-.019	-1.2
NoDutch	0/1	-.183	-2.5	-.117	-1.6	-.125	-1.7
FEMALE	0/1	.093	3.0	.087	2.8	.091	3.0
ZEDUC	Z			.077	4.5	.079	4.6
EMPLOYED	0/1			.078	2.5	.078	2.5
Interviewers	16x	Yes		yes		yes	
Districts	8x	no		no		yes	
adj R2		13.2%		16.3%		19.6%	

Finding the target respondent (birthmonth)

- No doubt interviewers do not always contact the target respondent and some form of within-household substitution (not allowed!) takes place.
- Does self-complete affect finding the target respondent?
 - Self-completed gives the household more opportunity which may lower the number of within-household substitutions.
- We can examine this by measuring the time between the random selection month (on contact form) and the actual month of birth reported by the respondent. Finding the wrong person will increase the distance between birthmonth and selection month.
- (A closer look is possible by comparing the birthmonth of the respondent to the birthmonths listed on the household-box – but this analysis takes too much time now.)

Number of missing values (MV)

- We distinguish:
 - Number of MV in compulsory BV of respondent: main activity, education, incomes, topbottom, distrikt of birth, years of education.
 - Number of MV in compulsory family background: education and occupation of father & mother.
 - Number of MV in Gender Role module: skips (no answer) and don't knows

Consistency

- Batteries are supposed to measure an underlying concept by multiple statements.
- Gender & Family Life contains the beautiful GRA [Gender Role Attitudes] battery consisting of 10 agree/disagree statements
- Cronbach alpha (internal consistency): 0.704
- We examine consistency by splitting the instrument in two random 'parcels': these parcels correlate 0.609.
- This method allows for introducing control variables.

Table 3: Effects of SELF-completion on criterium variables, uncontrolled and controlled for confounders, B and |t|, N=873

	<u>range</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>model 1</u>	<u>model 2</u>	<u>model 3</u>	<u>Significant Confounders</u>
AGE	18-74	45.7	15.4	-4.431	-1.6	-2.1	EDUC, Employment, Interviewers
				3.4	1.2	1.6	
Time between birth month and selection month	1-11	3.90	3.2	-0.439	-0.251	-0.467	AGE, District, Interviewers
				1.6	0.9	1.6	
GRA No answer	0-58	4.91	8.2	-0.871	-1.238	-1.147	Urbrural, District
				1.5	2.0	1.7	
GRA Cannot choose	0-45	2.29	4.7	0.159	0.401	0.511	Female, Age, Employed, District
				0.4	1.0	1.2	
Consistency of GRA battery		0.609		0.068	0.028	-0.038	EDUC,
				1.0	0.4	0.5	

Model 1: no controls, **model 2:** Female, EDUC, Urbrural, NoDutch, Employed, Age; **Model 3:** also controls for interviewers (14x) and districts (8x). Effect is statistically significant (**p < .10, two-tailed when |t| > 1.64.**)

Conclusions

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NB

- We have examined not even half the hypothesized effects. Not yet considered:
 - Ethnicity controls
 - Reduction of sampling efficiency by interviewer effects
 - Consistency of SAT model
- Sample is provisional, final N will be much larger. Two districts are missing.