

Methodological report on the Cognitive Survey on Disability conducted in Mauritius

1. Introduction

At the request of the Washington Group on Disability Statistics, the CSO conducted a cognitive survey on disability from 1 to 14 April 2006 in the Island of Mauritius, using a sample of 24 respondents. The main objective of the survey was to test the six core questions formulated by the Washington Group.

This report covers the methodological aspects of the survey including the data collection and data processing.

2. Preparation of the survey

a. Contents of questionnaire

In addition to the questions put forward by the Washington Group, the questionnaire included the questions on disability from the 2000 Population Census of Mauritius. (see annex A for questions derived from the 2000 Census of Mauritius).

b. Translation of questionnaire

The translation of the survey questionnaire into the local language (creole) was one of the first steps towards the preparation of the survey. The questionnaire was translated by Mr Chettun Kumar Arianaick. The translation was then reviewed by several fellow statisticians and the acting Deputy Director of the division, following which it was finalised.

c. Testing of questionnaire

The questionnaire was then tested by conducting trial interviews among several colleagues. During the trial interviews, it was found that with the questions starting with “without your equipment”, the respondents who never used the equipment replied by saying that they did not use the equipment instead of replying to the actual question. Examples of such questions were: VSDIFF, VSEFF, VPDIFF, VPEFF, VPNEAR, VPFAR, HSDIFF, HSEFF, etc....

The interviewer was thus instructed not to repeat the part “without your equipment” of the question when dealing with respondents who previously reported never using the equipment.

d. Sampling frame

We decided to use census 2000 data as the sampling frame. The population census data however did not contain the names of individuals and their addresses. It therefore became necessary to merge housing census data with population census data in order to secure the name and address of the heads of households. This was done by first extracting the records of all individuals with disabilities from the population census records. These records were then matched with the corresponding housing census records to produce a merged file.

e. Selection of region

Three districts out of a total of nine were selected for the survey. Given that around 60% of the island is rural, it was decided to select two rural regions out of three. The districts selected were (i) Riviere du Rempart (rural) situated in the North (ii) the district of Plaines Wilhems (urban) situated in the centre and (iii) the district of Flacq (rural) situated in the east of the Island of Mauritius. In order to concentrate the fieldwork, a specific locality was selected within each district. For the district of Riviere du Rempart, the village of Goodlands was selected, for the district of Plaines Wilhems, the town of Quatre Bornes was selected and for the district of Flacq, the village of Quartier Militaire was selected.

f. Recruitment of field staff

Following a circular issued in November 2005 informing members of the staff about the forthcoming cognitive survey and requesting those interested to work as interviewer/supervisor to submit their names. From the resulting list, a supervisor and three interviewers were selected. It should be noted that several prospective interviewers refused the offer on various grounds, such as, perceived difficulties in interviewing people with disabilities or due to their unavailability being currently involved in other surveys.

g. Sampling of respondents

From the master frame, frames for the selected localities were drawn. The following variables were available for each record: the names and addresses of the head of household, the household size and the age, sex and type of disability of the person with disabilities within the household. It had not been possible to get the name of the person

with disabilities from the census files since no name was captured from the population census questionnaires at the data entry stage.

The records for each region was sorted by type of disability (see section 8 for details), followed by sex and then by age. The variables used for the sampling were: type of disability (1-9), age (divided into three broad groups: 16-39, 40-59 and 60+) and sex.

The samples were drawn in such a way that each successive respondent was drawn from successive disability groups. The sex as well as the age bracket of the respondents would also change from one selected respondent to the next. This process would ensure representativeness with respect to type of disability, sex and age.

Instructions to interviewers concerning the selection of proxy respondents were as follows: to select 2 children (aged 5-15 years) and 6 adults, among whom, 4 would be males and 4 females. This procedure would ensure representativeness of the sample (self and proxy) with respect to age distribution. Also, each interviewer was instructed to interview one non-disabled person (the respondent as well as the proxy-respondent would be non-disabled) for one of the selected households. In assigning the respondent into the various age brackets, account has been taken for the fact that respondents were currently 5-6 years older than the age reported at census 2000.

Each interviewer was given a list containing the name of the head of household, the detailed residential address, the household size and the characteristics of the person with disabilities such as age, sex and type of disability.

The interviewer, however, was required to identify the disabled person within the household.

h. Briefing of field staff

The briefing session was conducted by Mr Chettun Kumar Arianaick on Saturday 01 April 2006 from 09.00 hrs to 14.00 hrs at the Head Office, Port Louis. Two days prior to the briefing session, all field staff was given a flip file containing a sample questionnaire, instruction manuals, a list of selected respondents and a ball point blue pen.

At the end of the briefing session, a mock interview was conducted with the supervisor as the respondent. Each interviewer in turn interviewed the supervisor. Any queries were cleared on the spot.

3. The fieldwork

The fieldwork started on Sunday 02 April 2005. The interviews were completed within a fortnight. During the fieldwork, the interviewers worked in close collaboration with the supervisor. The supervisor accompanied the interviewers for their first interviews. The

supervisor also monitored the fieldwork so that any problem arising was tackled on the spot. The supervisor did the replacement of respondents that could not be contacted after consultation with the senior supervisor.

As and when questionnaires were completed, they were returned to the supervisor who performed another editing prior to submission to the senior supervisor.

4. Problems arising during the fieldwork

Given that the sampling frame was six years old, it was not possible to meet all selected respondents. In fact, around one third (9) of the respondents could not be contacted due to the following reasons: (i) death of the respondent (5 cases), marriage of respondent and change of residence (1 case) and untraceability of respondent (3 cases). The non-contacts were replaced by respondents with similar characteristics in terms of age, sex and type of disability.

The fact that the name of the respondent was not available from the sampling frame, the interviewer had to fill in the section on the members of the household first. From this list together with information on the person with disabilities available on the list of selected respondents, the interviewer had to spot the disabled respondent. However the interviewer did not have much problem identifying the disabled person.

5. Data editing and translation

In the office, the senior supervisor performed another complete editing of the questionnaires. An experienced statistical officer, under the guidance of the senior supervisor, then translated the answers to the open-ended questions from Creole to English.

6. Data Entry

The data entry was done on the excel worksheet provided by Washington Group. However, in order to facilitate data entry, two columns have been inserted at the extreme left of the worksheet in order to input the serial number of questionnaires and the interviewer number.

Also, thirteen additional columns have been inserted at the extreme right of the worksheet in order to give some additional information we considered pertinent to the survey. Eight of the columns contain answers to the census 2000 questions on disability, two columns give the age and sex of proxy respondents, two columns give the English translation of the questions GSWHY and GPWHY for the health section and one column is for general comments.

Also, the rows have been shaded different colours in order to help to follow the same row while entering data.

In order to ensure accuracy of the data, the system of double entry was adopted. One officer first entered the whole set of questionnaires. A second officer then re-entered the data except for the responses to the open-ended questions. The two sets of data were then compared and corrected for any inconsistencies by referring back to the questionnaires.

As regards the open-ended questions, the data entered were collated with data from the questionnaires.

It should be noted that all fields that were inapplicable to the respondent were left blank.

7. The income grid

The income grid provided at the end of the original questionnaire was inappropriate for Mauritius given that the salary range was too wide. A salary grid appropriate in the Mauritian context has been used instead. The monthly salary range used was as follows:

J	Less than Rs 1,000
R	Rs 1,000 to under Rs 2,000
C	Rs 2,000 to under Rs 3,000
M	Rs 3,000 to under Rs 4,000
F	Rs 4,000 to under Rs 6,000
S	Rs 6,000 to under Rs 8,000
K	Rs 8,000 to under Rs 10,000
P	Rs 10,000 to under Rs 12,000
D	Rs 12,000 to under Rs 16,000
H	Rs 16,000 to under Rs 20,000
U	Rs 20,000 to under Rs 40,000
N	Rs 40,000 or more

The current exchange rate is 1 euro = 37 Mauritian rupees.

8. Disabilities by type

The types of disability covered in the sample were as follows:

<u>Type of disability</u>	<u>code</u>
Speech and talking disabilities	1
Hearing and listening disabilities even with hearing aid	2

Seeing disabilities even with glasses	3
Walking, running and other ambulation disabilities	4
Manual activity disabilities such as fingering, gripping and holding	5
Disturbance of ability to learn and acquire education	6
Disturbance of behaviour, including anti-social behaviour, maladjustment and liability to self injury	7
Inability to look after oneself with regard to personal care and hygiene, feeding, etc...	8
Other disabilities	9

It should be noted that while interviewing the respondent, additional disabilities might have been detected over and above the disability registered at census 2000.

Also, in an attempt to select a few non-disabled respondents, some of them happened to have a few mild difficulties.

9. Conclusion

The conduct of this survey was very challenging for us given that it was the first time that we had the opportunity to conduct such a survey in Mauritius.

The know-how and materials that I gathered during the two workshops on disability statistics that I attended, that is, one in Kenya in June 2005 and the other in Rio in September 2005 was of invaluable help to me in the conduct of the cognitive survey. I would also like to acknowledge the help of Ms Margie Schneider, consultant of the African Region who cleared many of my doubts through our communications by e-mail.

As a last word, I would say that it was a very rich experience for us all involved in the survey.

**Central Statistics Office
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Annex A

The 2000 population census questionnaire on disability reads as follows:

Does the person experience any disability (i.e., any limitation to perform a daily-life activity in a manner considered normal for a person of his/her age), because of a long-term physical/mental condition or health problem?

Write yes or No

If yes, insert as many disabilities as applicable as follows:

SPCH – speaking and talking disabilities

EAR – hearing and listening disabilities even with hearing aid

EYE – seeing disabilities even with glasses

MTION – walking, running and other ambulation disabilities

MANU – manual activity disabilities such as fingering, gripping and holding

LEARN – disturbance of ability to learn and acquire education

BEH – disturbances of behaviour, including antisocial behaviour, maladjustment and liability to self injury

CARE – inability to look after oneself with regard to personal care and hygiene, feeding, etc.

OTHER – other disabilities (specify)