



## RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS N° 32

### DOES THE SURVEY MODE INFLUENCE THE RESULTS ABOUT PARTNERSHIP QUALITY?

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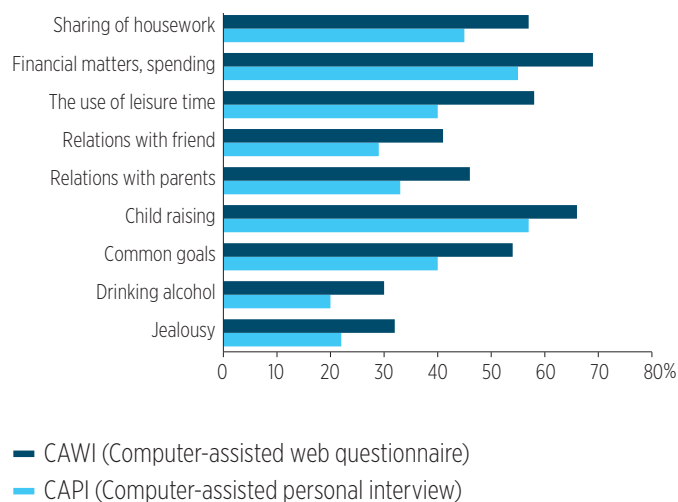
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Due to the development of technology and respondents' changing needs, survey modes are also rapidly changing. Nevertheless, we know only a little about how the different modes influence our final data. In the 2012 wave of the Hungarian Generations and Gender Survey we used a mixed-mode survey design: before the face-to-face interviews respondents had the chance to answer a part of the questionnaire via self-completed web questionnaire (CAWI), while other respondents were interviewed only with face-to-face method (CAPI). The sample size was 12437 and 14 percent used the online survey. We compare the CAWI and CAPI results for a sensitive research topic: partnership quality and conflicts with the partner. We asked respondents how often they had an argument with their partner due to some certain reasons like sharing housework, managing leisure time, because of alcohol problems or jealousy. Our assumption was that social expectations influence CAWI respondents less, and

therefore their answers will be more straightforward than of those who were asked by interviewers.

According to our findings, CAWI respondents mentioned disagreement with their partners significantly more often than CAPI respondents (Figure 1). Moreover, respondents who answered the questions online mentioned that they thought about divorce or breaking up with their partner more often in the previous year (Figure 2). In order to filter out the selection effect of the survey mode (web-respondents were younger, higher educated than CAPI respondents) we also used regression models. These models suggested that controlling for many socio-demographic factors, the CAWI respondents still report about arguments with their partner significantly more often. They are almost twice as much likely to admit that they thought about ending their relationship than CAPI respondents. These results suggest that researchers need to take into account the survey-mode when they interpret their data.

**Figure 1.** Disagreement with the spouse/partner – Proportion of respondents who said at least sometimes happen



**Figure 2.** Thinking about divorce / breaking up with the partner last year

