

## **Bonus Table 6.C**

### **Strengths and Weaknesses of Interviews**

#### Strengths of interviews

- Good for measuring attitudes and most other content of interest.
- Allows probing and posing of follow-up questions by the interviewer.
- Can provide in-depth information.
- Can provide information about participants' internal meanings and ways of thinking.
- Closed-ended interviews provide exact information needed by researcher.
- Telephone and e-mail interviews provide very quick turnaround.
- Moderately high measurement validity (i.e., high reliability and validity) for well constructed and tested interview protocols.
- Can use with probability samples.
- Relatively high response rates are often attainable.
- Useful for exploration as well as confirmation.

#### Weaknesses of interviews

- In-person interviews usually are expensive and time consuming.
- Reactive effects (e.g., interviewees may try to show only what is socially desirable).
- Investigator effects may occur (e.g., untrained interviewers may distort data because of personal biases and poor interviewing skills).
- Interviewees may not recall important information and may lack self-awareness.
- Perceived anonymity by respondents may be low.
- Data analysis can be time consuming for open-ended items.
- Measures need validation.