Questionnaire Design

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Questionnaire Design

- A planned, thoughtful process based on systematic principles.
- Involves the simultaneous integration of four layers:
  - Questions
  - Objectives
  - Words
  - Layout or format
A Framework for Questionnaire Design

- Respondent Orientation
- Layers of a questionnaire
- Objectives
- Questions
- Words
- Layout/Format

General Principles

Specific Principles
Principle

- The respondent defines what you can do
  - the types of questions you can ask
  - the types of words you can use
  - the concepts you can explore
  - the methodology you can use
“Overall, if you were to sell off all of your property and combine it with your liquid assets, about how much money would that be?”

*Please include also property or possessions you may own other than real estate (such as businesses or cars).*

- Difficult concepts, difficult calculations
- Not recommended in Turkey!
Principle

- Let the respondent tell you what he or she means, and don’t impose your values, perceptions or language on the respondent.

  Eg, “heavy traffic”, religiosity, “household”
32. Which of the following categories describe your ethnic origin?

PLEASE TICK AS MANY AS YOU NEED TO SHOW WHICH ETHNIC GROUP(S) YOU BELONG TO

- N Z Maori (✓)
- N Z European or Pakeha
- Other European
- Samoan
- Cook Island Maori
- Tongan
- Niuean
- Chinese
- Indian
- Other (such as Fijian, Korean)
Principle

- Don’t overestimate the respondent’s awareness or knowledge.
Awareness or Consciousness

- Do respondents understand the implications of their answers?
  - Do you agree or disagree that in order to protect the environment New Zealand needs economic growth?
Knowledge

- Do respondents know what you are talking about?

- For example, inflation, profit, greenhouse effect, victims of crime, scolded
Principle

- In general, keep questions short, simple and concrete.

- Sometimes you have to balance the conflicting objectives of clarity, conciseness and information sought.

- Use closed rather than open-ended questions where possible.
Principle

- The layout and presentation of a questionnaire should help the respondent to “navigate” through it and encourage the respondent to respond.
The Overriding Principle: Respondent Orientation

- See:


  On-line at: http://marketing-bulletin.massey.ac.nz
7-10 Age Group Questionnaire

Please circle the one best answer in this column for each question.

How old are you today?
7........................................1
8........................................2
9........................................3
10......................................4

Are you a boy or a girl?
Boy................................. ♂
Girl................................. ♀

Practice Question 1. Do you like eating ice-cream?
Yes.............................. ☺
No................................. ☹

1. How sweet was the sample?
Not Sweet Enough......... ☹
Sweet Enough............... ☺
Too Sweet ................... ☹

2. When you ate the piece did it taste like strawberries?
Yes.............................. ☺
A Little Bit.................... ☺
No................................. ☹
Open Vs Closed Questions

- What do you think is the single most important problem facing New Zealand right now?

- Would you please look at this card and tell me which of these is the single most important problem facing New Zealand right now?
  - AIDS
  - INFLATION
  - HIGH EXCHANGE RATE
  - LAW AND ORDER
  - INTEREST RATES
  - UNEMPLOYMENT
  - THE ECONOMY IN GENERAL
  - RACIAL PROBLEMS
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most important problem facing New Zealand</th>
<th>Closed Question %</th>
<th>Open Question %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economy in general</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law and order</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial problems</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AIDS</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unstable government</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Declining moral standards</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Question Wording

- Avoid:
  - Unfamiliar or difficult words
  - Many information-carrying words
  - Broad concepts (e.g., children)
  - Qualifying clause at end of a question
  - Two questions in one
  - Leading or loaded questions
  - Questions that require a lot of effort
Unfamiliar or difficult words

May be misunderstood by respondents

- “Restitution and compensation”

- “Should the Maori language be compulsory in our schools?”
Jargon

Respondents may not understand technical terms

“Which of the following diseases can smoking cause…

*Emphysema*

Cancer

Impotence
Many information-carrying words

“Do you think our armed forces, rather than some other organisations should be responsible for aerial surveillance of the exclusive economic zone of South Pacific Island countries, if requested?”
Broad concepts

Respondents may narrow or widen concepts such as children, government, family

- “Do you think that children suffer any ill-effects from watching television programmes with violence in them, other than ordinary Westerns?”

- “Children” variously interpreted as “my children”, “children under 5”, “well brought up children”, etc
Qualifying clause at the end of a sentence

Respondents likely to ignore it, particularly in a telephone or face-to-face survey

- “How often have you been to the movies *in the last month*?”
Two questions in one

Respondents may agree with one concept but disagree with another

- “Would you vote for someone who is young and who has never held office before?”

- “When shopping for cheese, do you find much difference in the price for the same type of cheese in different stores?”
Leading or loaded questions

“When did you stop beating your wife?”

“Most modern passenger aircraft replace their cabin air once every three minutes. In addition, airlines have a policy of separate sections of their aircraft for smokers and non-smokers. Do you agree that this policy of having a smoking and a non-smoking section should continue?”

Commissioned by: NZ Tobacco Institute (1998)
Questions that require a lot of effort

“The New Zealand Government gives $97 million, about 0.2% of its Gross Domestic Product, in economic aid. About 80% goes to the Pacific Islands and the other 20% to developing countries. Do you think the total sum should increase, decrease or stay the same?”
Questionnaire formatting

- Questions should follow a logical sequence, commonly a downward funnel.

- Start with interesting, non-threatening questions.

- Use graphic design to enhance “navigation”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q.</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>If you were given the choice of going to one of these events in the city where you live, which one would you prefer most?</td>
<td>A symphony, An opera, A play, A rock concert, A sports test match</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>If you were given the choice of going to one of these events, which one would you most prefer to attend?</td>
<td>A cricket test match, A netball test match, A hockey test match, A rugby test match</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Who is your favourite rugby player?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>If asked to choose, which of the following kinds of music would you say you like the best?</td>
<td>Alternative, Blues, Classical, Folk, Country, Jazz, Pop, Rap, Rock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Who is your favourite musician or band?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>How often do you read books for pleasure?</td>
<td>Very often, Occasionally, Rarely or never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Do you currently belong to a public library?</td>
<td>Yes, No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Have you ever belonged to a public library?</td>
<td>Yes, No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>About how often do you go to a public library to check out books for pleasure reading?</td>
<td>Once a month or more, 4-9 times a year, Once a year or less, Doesn't apply to me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Which of the following best describes your general feeling about libraries?</td>
<td>I enjoy going to libraries, I think librarians are useful, but I do not enjoy going to them, I do not think libraries are useful nor do I enjoy going to them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>About how often do you go to the movies?</td>
<td>Once a month or more, 4-9 times a year, Once a year, Less than once a year, Not at all</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9. Where did you see or hear advertisements for prescription medicines?

Please tick as many boxes as you need to

- On television
- On the radio
- In a magazine
- In a newspaper
- On the Internet
- On a billboard
- In a letter or leaflet that came in the mail
- In an email

I have not seen or heard any advertisements for prescription medicines

10. Have you ever talked to your doctor about a prescription medicine after seeing or hearing an advertisement for that medicine?

- Yes
- No
- Can't remember/Not sure

11. Have you ever talked to your doctor about a health issue that you had not previously discussed after seeing or hearing an advertisement for a prescription medicine?

- Yes
- No
- Can't remember/Not sure

PLEASE THINK ABOUT THE LAST TIME YOU DISCUSSED A PRESCRIPTION MEDICINE YOU HAD SEEN ADVERTISED WITH YOUR DOCTOR

12. When you last discussed a prescription medicine you had seen advertised with your doctor, did you make a special appointment to discuss the medicine, or did you talk about it during a visit or check-up that you had made for another reason?

- I made a special appointment to discuss the medicine I had seen advertised
- I discussed the medicine during a visit I had made for another reason
2. PERFORMANCE OF THE INSTITUTE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Sports Turf Institute...

1. Provides a high level of service to clients................................. 0 1 2 3 4 5 16
2. Meets all of our turf consultancy needs...................................... 0 1 2 3 4 5 17
3. Provides affordable, value-for-money service.................................. 0 1 2 3 4 5 18
4. Should expand the range of services it offers.................................. 0 1 2 3 4 5 19
5. Should focus more on administrators than greenkeepers..................... 0 1 2 3 4 5 20
6. Would still be used by us even if it had no national body funding........... 0 1 2 3 4 5 21
7. Should continue to be funded by national organisations...................... 0 1 2 3 4 5 22
8. Overall, meets our expectations..................................................... 0 1 2 3 4 5 23

The NZ Turf Management Journal...

9. Is informative on technical topics.................................................. 0 1 2 3 4 5 24
10. Is informative on the NZ turf industry.............................................. 0 1 2 3 4 5 25
11. Is easy to read............................................................................... 0 1 2 3 4 5 26
12. Is kept and used as a reference...................................................... 0 1 2 3 4 5 27
13. Has a good balance of articles on different sports turf surfaces........... 0 1 2 3 4 5 28
14. Has an acceptable balance of articles and advertising........................ 0 1 2 3 4 5 29

15. Are there any comments or suggestions you would like to make about the NZ Sports Turf Institute, or the NZ Turf Management Journal, or any particular topics you would like to see covered in the Journal?

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

2
Are you the main grocery shopper for yourself or your household?

- I do all the grocery shopping
- I do most of the grocery shopping
- I share the grocery shopping equally
- I don't do much or any grocery shopping

Survey powered by Qualtrics
WATTIES CANNED APRICOTS

For each of the statements below, please click on the button that best expresses your opinion, or impression, of Watties canned apricots.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low quality</th>
<th>High quality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor value for money</td>
<td>Good value for money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inconsistent</td>
<td>Consistent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inexpensive</td>
<td>Expensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unreliable</td>
<td>Reliable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfamiliar</td>
<td>Familiar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inferior taste</td>
<td>Superior taste</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Questionnaire Pretesting

- Pretesting is essential.

- Methods include:
  - Peer review
  - “Think aloud” techniques
  - Belson’s double-back pretest
Questionnaire Pretesting

- Expensive and time consuming

- Traditional piloting methods don’t reveal serious question misunderstanding and misinterpretation

- Plausible answers don’t mean respondents have understood or interpreted a question as you intended

Where to Start

- With someone else’s questionnaire.

- In questionnaire design, plagiarism is good. No point in reinventing the wheel

- But don’t assume an existing questionnaire is necessarily a good one. Many aren’t.
Remember …

- Your questionnaire almost certainly means a lot more to you than to the respondent.

- The respondent is likely to be less well educated than you.

- You can’t write a good questionnaire unless you know a lot about your topic and your respondents.