



Answers

Questionnaire Research A Practical Guide

Third Edition

Chapter 1: Planning Questionnaire Research

1. Questionnaires. **2.** Questionnaires. **3.** Because research indicates that nonrespondents often are less well educated and from lower socioeconomic groups, which creates a bias. **4.** The tendency to give answers that are socially acceptable. **5.** So that you can learn how others formulated their objectives, approached particular problems, and how successful they were in collecting data. Also, you may locate a questionnaire that may be used or adapted for use in your study. **6.** Superfluous items may make the questionnaire lose its cohesiveness and make respondents wonder what your objectives are. Also, longer questionnaires could lower the response rate. **7.** To be generous in the allotment of time. **8.** Answers may vary. **9.** Answers may vary.

Chapter 2: Writing Items to Collect Factual Information

1. The blank is in the middle of the item. Choices are not mutually exclusive (e.g., 0–2 overlaps with 2–6). **2.** Asks two questions: political party (Democrat, Republican, etc.) and orientation (liberal, conservative). Does not provide a line or space to write in the explanation for “Other.” **3.** Asks three questions: whether marijuana was used, how often it was used, and whether it was used in the past year. **4.** Choices are not exhaustive; needs a choice called “Other.” **5.** *Topography* is a difficult term that should be defined. **6.** “Yes-No” choice may pose a problem for someone who found it moderately easy or moderately difficult. An item that asks *how easy* it was to use probably would be better. **7.** Asks two questions (exercise and diet). “Yes-No” choices could be changed to ask to what extent they think each is done. **8.** The choices “Always” and

“Never” may be dead because few things are always or never. It would be better to use “Almost always” and “Almost never.” **9.** Timeframe is unlimited; respondents probably will find it hard to recall the specific number of times they felt pressured. **10.** No obvious problem. “Yes-No” format is fine because a woman either did it or did not do it in the past 30 days. **11.** Ranking will not give as much information as having respondents rate each choice separately for its importance. **12.** Respondents may feel that they are being asked to write an essay, which may be threatening. **13.** Overuse of underlining, italics, and boldfaced type. **14.** Choices are not mutually exclusive; for example, 2–3 overlaps with 3–4. **15.** The “don’t know” choice is probably not needed. **16.** Answers may vary.

Chapter 3: Writing Items to Collect Demographic Information

1. The longer list in Item A may be preferable because some people may be offended by having their religion included in “Other.” In Item A, Atheist and Agnostic technically are not religious affiliations. The item writer might consider including the choice “None” in both items. **2.** Item D is probably better because it is more inclusive. Also, Item D uses African American instead of Black and includes the alternative term *Latino* for Hispanic. *Note:* Ask students to compare the items with those used by the Census Bureau, which are presented in Appendix A. **3.** Because almost all people know their age, Item E might be acceptable except that some people might feel more comfortable revealing a range of ages instead of a specific age. Item F is mislabeled as “Your age”; it should be labeled “Date of birth.” Because Item G uses broader ranges, respondents who are sensitive about their age may be more likely to answer it than to answer Item H. **4.** The item writer might consider defining what is meant by *in a relationship* to distinguish between casual dating, long-term dating, friendship, marriage, and so on. **5.** Someone who lives off campus with his or her parents would have to check two choices to answer accurately. **6.** The choice “High school degree or less” presents a broad range of values, making it difficult to differentiate between someone who has had very little schooling and someone who graduated from high school. It is not clear whether someone with a two-year degree should check “Some college” or “College degree.” **7.** Some students may not be able to recall their precise GPA such as 2.73. It probably would be better to give choices with ranges of GPA. **8.** The choices are not standard, such as “Northeast,” “Southeast,” “Central Plains,” and so on. The choices overlap; for example, someone who lives in New York lives in both the North and the East. **9.** Some parents might consider the topic of the item to be a personal matter; it might invade their right to privacy. **10.** Someone who lives with both a family member and a nonfamily member would need to mark both choices. The choice “family

member” could be broken down into separate choices such as “Spouse,” “Sibling,” and so on to get more information. **11.** Answers may vary.

Chapter 4: Writing Items to Measure Attitudes

1. Likert-type item. **2.** The statement asks about two points: believing in God and feeling close to God. **3.** Some respondents may choose it rather than ponder an item. Some respondents may use it instead of revealing their position on a controversial topic. **4.** Some respondents may truly feel neutral and be frustrated by the absence of the choice. **5.** No, it should be placed on a separate line (or off to the side) because some respondents may mistake it for a neutral position. Not knowing and being neutral are not the same thing. **6.** Yes, because it is a specific program about which the respondent may know little. (Note: If the program is described at the beginning of the questionnaire, “Don’t know” is not as necessary.) **7.** No, because an attitude toward physicians is a complex construct; a number of items would be more appropriate for measuring it. **8.** Salient characteristics are ones that stand out because they are important to respondents. Examples for attitude toward computers might be the ease or difficulty of using various types of software and the possible misuses of computerized databases. **9.** To encourage respondents to carefully consider each item. This may reduce the tendency to respond globally (the *halo effect*) or to rely on response sets. **10.** The statement is not clearly indicative of a favorable or unfavorable attitude. Being powerful may be regarded as either desirable or undesirable. **11.** Faces (happy, so-so, and sad), “Yes-No,” and “True-False.” **12.** Answers may vary.

Chapter 5: Writing Items to Evaluate Products, Services, and Programs

1. Answers may vary. Note that the items are not specific. For example, speed could refer to processing speed or speed of printing (because the item is for a computer *system*). Likewise, size and usefulness could refer to any or all of the components of the system. **2.** Put it at the end when you want respondents to consider the content of the other items first. Put it at the beginning if you want an overall evaluation not influenced by the other items on the questionnaire. **3.** When some respondents have not had an opportunity to observe an element to be rated. **4.** By examining the literature on the topic or conducting a preliminary study in which a small number of individuals are asked for important characteristics of the product, service, or program to be evaluated. **5.** The services and objectives stated in the proposal for the program. **6.** Formative is evaluating the process of delivering services while summative is evaluating the outcomes of services. **7.** Items 1 through 4 relate to formative evaluation; item 5 relates to summative evaluation. **8.** To allow respondents to elaborate on their

responses to earlier items and to address issues not covered by earlier items.

9. Answers may vary.

Chapter 6: Conducting Item Tryouts and an Item Analysis

1. Say aloud what they are thinking while they consider the items. **2.** Answers may vary. A possibility is to use some who have had recent claims experiences with auto insurers and some who have not. **3.** 10. **4.** 25 or more. **5.** The number and percentage of respondents who marked each choice. **6.** Consider rewriting the choices or eliminating the item. The item should not always be eliminated because it may be asking for needed information. **7.** 14. (Note that items 1 and 2 express positive feelings while 3 and 4 express negative feelings. Thus, the respondent gets the following score for each item: Item 1 = 4 points, Item 2 = 3 points, Item 3 = 4 points, and Item 4 = 3 points. The total is $4 + 3 + 4 + 3 = 14$.) **8.** No, because the overall pattern for high scorers is similar to the overall pattern for low scorers. The item fails to discriminate between high and low scorers. **9.** Yes, because high scorers tend to agree with the item (which expresses a positive belief) and low scorers tend to disagree. The item is discriminating properly between high and low scorers. **10.** Answers may vary.

Chapter 7: Preparing a Questionnaire for Administration

1. The first title, "Reactions Survey Questionnaire," fails to describe the topic of the questionnaire. The other two are much better in this regard. **2.** The purpose of the questionnaire and an appeal for the respondents to answer it. **3.** Yes. **4.** By content. **5.** The content of each group. **6.** Yes, it should be given because some respondents may misplace the envelope. **7.** Possibilities are printing the name and address on the envelope rather than applying labels, using a stamp instead of a bulk-rate insignia, and using a teaser on the envelope. **8.** Because a large percentage probably will not reply to the initial mailing. A follow-up letter will usually lead to additional responses. **9.** Answers may vary.

Chapter 8: Selecting a Sample of Respondents

1. The population of interest is the one the researcher is interested in, while the accessible population is the one to which the researcher has access. **2.** As pilot studies. **3.** 0916 and 0915. (Note: The number 7038 should be skipped because there are only 3,452 members of the population.) **4.** 191 and 618. (Note: The number 845 should be skipped because there are only 818 members of the population.) **5.** Systematic sampling. **6.** It ensures that no one has tampered with the list or arranged it in an order that might affect your results. **7.** Stratified random sampling. **8.** It reduces sampling errors by eliminating certain specific