

Questionnaire

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A questionnaire is defined as a document containing questions and other types of items designed to solicit information appropriate for analysis. Advantages of questionnaires include increased speed of data collection, low or no cost requirements.

Types of Questionnaire

There are roughly two types of questionnaires, structured and unstructured.

Most of the quantitative data collection operations use structured questionnaires.

Unstructured questionnaires include open-ended and vague opinion-type questions.

These are following types of questionnaires:

Computer questionnaire- Respondents are asked to answer the questionnaire which is sent by mail. The advantages of the computer questionnaires include their inexpensive price, time-efficiency, and respondents can answer when they have time, giving more accurate answers. However, the main shortcoming of the mail questionnaires is that sometimes respondents do not bother answering them and they can just ignore the questionnaire.

Telephone questionnaire- Researcher may choose to call potential respondents with the aim of getting them to answer the questionnaire. The advantage of the telephone questionnaire is that, it can be completed during the short amount of time. The main disadvantage of the phone questionnaire is that it most people do not feel comfortable to answer many questions asked through the phone.

In-house survey- This type of questionnaire involves the researcher visiting respondents in their houses or workplaces. However, in-house surveys also have a range of disadvantages which include being time consuming, more expensive and respondents may not wish to have the researcher in their houses or workplaces for various reasons.

Multiple choice questions- Respondents are offered a set of answers they have to choose from. The downside of questionnaire with multiple choice questions is that, if there are too many answers to choose from, it makes the questionnaire, confusing and discourages the respondent to answer the questionnaire.

Dichotomous Questions- This type of questions gives two options to respondents – yes or no, to choose from. It is the easiest form of questionnaire for the respondent in terms of responding it.

Scaling Questions- Also referred to as ranking questions, they present an option for respondents to rank the available answers to the questions on the scale of given range of values (for example from 1 to 10).

The Essentials of the Questionnaire Construction

- A set of adequate and appropriate questions in a sequential order is required in a questionnaire.
- It should not be more than two or three pages as to the nature of the research.
- It should be constructed on a good quality paper and printing.
- It should have an attractive layout.
- The questions should be short, clear in terms, tenure, and expression.
- The question should be arranged according to the importance and preference.
- The questions of the questionnaire should be able to keep the interest of the respondents.
- There should be simple language
- Questions should be without bias
- Adequate answer options
- Question reference should be avoided.

- Merging of two questions into one should be completely avoided.