

Paper – Project

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TOPIC-PREPARE QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PROJECT

Question Types: Usually, a questionnaire consists of a number of questions that the respondent has to answer in a set format. A distinction is made between open-ended and closed-ended questions. An open-ended question asks the respondent to formulate his/her own answer, whereas a closed-ended question has the respondent pick an answer from a given number of options. The response options for a closed-ended question should be exhaustive and mutually exclusive. Four types of response scales for closed-ended questions are distinguished –

- Dichotomous, where the respondent has two options.
- Nominal-polytomous, where the respondent has more than two unordered options.
- Ordinal-polytomous, where the respondent has more than two ordered options.
- Continuous (Bounded), where the respondent is presented with a continuous scale. A respondent's answer to an open-ended question is coded into a response scale afterwards. An example of an open-ended question is a question where the testee has to complete a sentence (sentence completion item).

Question Sequence: In general, questions should flow logically from one to the next. To achieve the best response rates, questions should flow from the least sensitive to the most sensitive, from the factual and behavioural to the attitudinal, and from the more general to the more specific. There typically is a flow that should be followed when constructing a questionnaire in regards to the order that the questions are asked.

The order is as follows –

- **Screens**
- **Warm-ups**
- **Transitions**
- **Skips**
- **Difficult**
- **Changing Formula**

Screens are used as a screening method to find out early whether or not someone should complete the questionnaire.

Warm-ups are simple to answer, help capture interest in the survey, and may not even pertain to research objectives.

Transition questions are used to make different areas flow well together.

Skips include questions similar to 'If yes, then answer question 3. If no, then continue to question 5'.

Difficult questions are towards the end because the respondent is in 'response mode'. Also, when completing an online questionnaire, the progress bars lets the respondent know that they are almost done so they are more willing to answer more difficult questions.

Classification or demographic question should be at the end because typically they can feel like personal questions which will make respondents uncomfortable and not willing to finish survey.

Basic Rules for Questionnaire Item Construction:

The basic rules are –

- Use statements which are interpreted in the same way by members of different subpopulations of the population of interest.
- Use statements where persons that have different opinions or traits will give different answers.
- Think of having an 'open' answer category after a list of possible answers.
- Use only one aspect of the construct you are interested in per item.
- Use positive statements and avoid negatives or double negatives.
- Do not make assumptions about the respondent.
- Use clear and comprehensible wording, easily understandable for all educational levels.
- Use correct spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- Avoid items that contain more than one question per item (e.g. Do you like strawberries and potatoes?).
- Question should not be biased or even leading the participant towards an answer.