

# RESEARCH METHODS FOR MARKETERS

## MARK5069



### Lecture 8

## *“Quantitative Research: Collecting Primary Data using Questionnaires”*

### **Part 2**

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# Lecture Outline

## PART 1

1. Questionnaire Definition
2. Introduction to Questionnaires
3. When to use a Questionnaire
4. The Choice of Questionnaire
5. The Questionnaire Design Process Part 1

## PART 2

1. The Questionnaire Design Process Part 2



# The Questionnaire **Design** Process

## *Choose question wording*

*“The translation of the desired question content and structure into words that participants can clearly and easily understand”*

➤ The most critical and difficult task in developing a questionnaire

➤ **To avoid problems:**

1. Define the issue
2. Use ordinary words
3. Use unambiguous words
4. Avoid leading or biasing questions
5. Avoid implicit alternatives
6. Avoid implicit assumptions
7. Avoid generalisations and estimates
8. Use positive and negative statements

➤ Poorly worded questions



➤ Participants may refuse to answer, or answer incorrectly



➤ Problems in data analysis, and response error

# Choose question wording - *Define the Issue*

*“Which brand of shampoo do you use?”*

**Who?** ——— The participant personally or the household?

**What?** ——— What if more than one brand of shampoo is being used?

Should the participant mention the **most-preferred brand**, the brand **used most often**, the brand used **most recently**, or the brand that **comes to mind first**?

**When?** ——— Last time? Last week? Last year? Or ever?

**Where?** ——— It is implied that the shampoo is used at home, but it could be used at the gym

*“Which brand, or brands, of shampoo have you personally used at home during the last month? In the case of more than one brand, please list all the brands that apply”*







# Choose question wording

## Avoid leading or biasing questions

*“A leading question is one that clues the participant to what answer is desired or leads the participant to answer in a certain way”*

➤ **Do you think that patriotic French people should buy imported cars when that would put French workers out of employment?**

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

➤ **Do you think that French people should buy imported cars?**

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

# Choose question wording

## Avoid implicit alternatives and assumptions

### Implicit alternatives

*“An alternative that is not explicitly expressed”*

1. Do you like to fly when travelling short distances? **Implicit alternative**
2. Do you like to fly when travelling short distances, or would you rather drive?

**Explicit alternative**

### Implicit assumptions

*“An assumption that is not explicitly stated in a question”*

1. Are you in favour of a balanced national budget? **No consequences mentioned**
2. Are you in favour of a balanced national budget if it would result in an increase in personal income tax? **Consequences mentioned**

# Choose question wording

## Avoid generalisations and estimates

### ➤ Questions should be:

- ✓ Specific, not general
- ✓ Worded so that the participant does not have to make generalisations or compute estimates

*“What is the annual per capita expenditure on clothing in your household?”*

- Respondent have to determine the annual expenditure on clothing by multiplying the monthly expenditure on clothing by 12, or even expenditure by 52
  - Then they would have to divide the annual amount by the number of persons in the household
- Unwilling or unable to perform these calculations**

*“What is the monthly (or weekly) expenditure on clothing in your household?”*

*“How many members are there in your household?”*

# The Questionnaire **Design** Process

*Arrange the questions in proper order*

## ➤ Opening Questions

- ✓ Should be interesting, simple and non-threatening
- ✓ Opinion questions, or qualifying questions
- ✓ No demographics! (age, occupation, income) → Can make participants very concerned about the purpose of the survey

## ➤ Type of information

- ✓ Basic information – *Relates directly to the problem* **1**
- ✓ Classification information – *Socio-economic and demographic characteristics* **2**
- ✓ Identification information – *Name, postal address, email, Tel. number* **3**

## ➤ Difficult Questions

- ✓ Sensitive, embarrassing, complex or dull
- ✓ Must be placed late in the sequence!



# The Questionnaire **Design** Process

*Arrange the questions in proper order*

## ➤ Effect on subsequent questions

✓ General questions first, then  Specific questions

❖ **Q1:** *What considerations are important to you in selecting a restaurant?*

❖ **Q2:** *In selecting a restaurant, how important is convenience of its location?*

## ➤ Logical Order

✓ All questions that deal with a particular topic should be asked before beginning a new topic

✓ When switching topics, brief transitional phrases should be used to help participants switch their thoughts

### • Branching questions

“A question used to guide a participant through a survey by directing the participant to different spots on the questionnaire depending on the answers given”

# The Questionnaire **Design** Process

*Identify the form and layout*

*Reproduce the Questionnaire*

- The **format**, the **spacing** and **positioning** of **questions** can have a significant effect on results, particularly in self-administered questionnaires
- ✓ Divide the questionnaire into several parts! (part 1, part 2, etc.)
- ✓ The questions in each part should be numbered, particularly when branching questions are used
- ✓ Numbering questions makes the coding of responses easier
  
- **Reproduce (Publish) the questionnaire**
- ✓ The questionnaire should be designed to be visually engaging

# The Questionnaire **Design** Process

## *Pilot-testing*

### ➤ **Eliminate problems by pilot-testing**

✓ Pilot-testing refers to testing the questionnaire on a small sample of participants to identify and eliminate potential problems

### ➤ **Pilot testing helps to identify:**

- How long the questionnaire took to complete
- The clarity of instructions
- Which, if any, questions were unclear or ambiguous
- Which, if any, questions the respondent felt uneasy about answering
- Whether in their opinions the respondent felt uneasy about answering
- Whether in their opinion there were any major topic omissions
- Whether the layout was clear and attractive
- Any other comments




# Summary – Things to Remember


- A questionnaire has three objectives:
- It must translate the information needed into a set of specific questions that participants can and will answer,
- It must motivate participants to complete the survey
- It must also minimise response error

**SUMMARY**

# Summary – Things to Remember

- The steps involved in the questionnaire design process involve:
    1. *Specifying the information needed.* Understanding what information decision makers need and the priorities they face
    2. *Specifying the type of interviewing method.* Understanding which means of eliciting the information will work best, given the research design constraints that the researcher has to work with.
    3. *Determining the content of individual questions.* Understanding the purpose of each question and working out how a posed question may fulfil that purpose.
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## Summary – Things to Remember

- The steps involved in the questionnaire design process involve:
    4. *Overcoming the participants' inability and unwillingness to answer questions.* Understanding the process of approaching and questioning participants – from their perspective. Knowing the benefits they get from taking part in the survey process. Knowing what they find engaging and /or boring as a questionnaire experience
    5. *Choosing the question structure.* Understanding how individual questions help to elicit information from participants and help them to express their feelings
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# Summary – Things to Remember

- The steps involved in the questionnaire design process involve:
  6. *Choosing the question wording.* Understanding the meaning of words from the perspective of the participant.
  7. *Arranging the questions in a proper order.* Understanding what ‘proper’ means from the perspective of the participant. Recognising that, as each question is posed to a participant and the participant thinks about the response, he or she changes. Information is not only drawn out of participants, it is communicated to them and they change as each question is tackled.

# Summary – Things to Remember

- The steps involved in the questionnaire design process involve:
    8. *Identifying the form and layout of the questionnaire.* Understanding how, in a self-completion scenario, the form and layout motivate and help the participant to answer the questions in an honest and reflective manner. Understanding, when needed, how the form and layout help the interviewer to conduct and record the interview.
    9. *Publishing the questionnaire.* Understanding how the professional appearance of a questionnaire affects the perceived credibility and professional ability of researchers.
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# Summary – Things to Remember

- The steps involved in the questionnaire design process involve:

*10. Eliminating problems by pilot-testing.* Understanding that, no matter how much experience the researcher has in designing questionnaires, the issues, participant characteristics and context of questioning make each survey unique – pilot-testing is vital.

