WEB-BASED SURVEYS

By
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Introduction

SURVEY is a structured way to collect standardized information from individuals using a questionnaire.

- Surveys may be conducted once; at repeated intervals, or concurrently with multiple samples
- They may be used to collect information from a few or many
Types of surveys

1. Face-to-face
2. Telephone
3. Written questionnaire:
   a. Hand-out
   b. Mail
   c. Email
   d. Web-based survey
4. Mixed mode: uses two or more of above
Paper vs. Web-Based Surveys

Benefits/Advantages associated with web-based surveys

- eliminates printing for questionnaires;
- eliminates mailing costs for questionnaires;
- reduces costs for coding respondents’ data;
- reduced data entry time;
- reduces human-error;
Paper vs. Web-Based Surveys

- effectively reaches respondents in different geographic areas;
- reaches respondents in a relatively short amount of time (Bertot and McClure, 1996; Schmith and Leight, 1997; Teo, Lim, and Lai, 1997; Schmidt, 1997; Sackmary, 1998; Zhang, 2000).
- faster survey return rates.
Paper vs. Web-Based Surveys

Challenges/Disadvantages associated with web-based surveys

- Technology (problems with or limited access to)
  - Impact on sample or return rate
- Perceived concern with anonymity
- Mistakes in technology (i.e. code) can impact the results and responses
Paper vs. Web-Based Surveys

Previous literature

- Web-based surveys may generate incorrect results when:
  - multiple responses from the same participant are present;
  - empty (blank) responses;
  - incomplete responses;
  - invalid responses; or
  - biased responses are submitted (Strauss, 1996; Schmidt, 1997; Zhang, 2000).
Paper vs. Web-Based Surveys

- Higher (lower) response rates found for web-based surveys
- Mixed results over which mode lends to the most “skipped” or “missing” data
- One needs to consider the technology skills of the user and the technology of the user’s computer
- Presumed to have lower cost and take less time, but not always the case (must consider the entire survey process)
- Responses may not be “the same” for the different modes, Some research suggested more positive responses with web-based surveys
Planning a survey

1. Determine who should be involved in conducting the survey
2. Define what information you will collect
   - What do you want to know?
   - How will you use the information?
3. Identify the respondents
   - Determine sampling strategy, if a sample is to be used
4. Think about data analysis – what will the end product/final report include (keep ‘the end in mind’!)

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Planning a survey

5. Develop the questionnaire
6. Pilot test the questionnaire
6. Develop the web-based questionnaire
7. Pilot test the web-based questionnaire
8. Develop a communication strategy to garner support for the survey
9. Consider budget, timeline, and management process
   - What resources are available?
Planning a survey

“There’s never an option that reflects exactly what I want to say.”

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Things to consider with web-based surveys

- Screen-by-screen vs. scrolling
  - Research suggests improved response rates for multiple questions per screen
    - Completion time faster, fewer non-answered questions, more similarity in answers
- Plain vs. fancy web-survey
  - Research indicated that higher responses rates were obtained for plain surveys
Things to consider with web-based surveys

- First question
  - Research has shown that this is a major drop-out point for many respondents
- Open-versus closed-ended questions
  - Research suggests greater drop-out for open-ended questions
Things to consider with web-based surveys

- **Research suggests:**
  - **Do:**
    - Keep survey brief and concise
    - Place confidential or personal information at the end of the survey
    - Have response categories in progressive order (lowest to highest)
    - Write an introduction to the survey
    - Use filtering questions
    - Divide surveys into sections
    - Use a convention similar to paper surveys
    - Provide adequate instructions
    - Pay close attention to physical layout
    - Provide incentives
  - **Don’t (i.e. avoid):**
    - Use open-ended questions
    - Have the response category of “other”
    - Use response scale proliferation (i.e. 6 or 7 point scale)
    - Ask respondents to rank responses
    - Design long (excessive) surveys
    - Overuse “fancy” features
How to improve a response rate

- E-mail cover letters (invitation letter)
- Anonymity explanation
- Follow-up reminders via e-mail
- Pre-notification with intent of survey
- Simpler formats
- Plain design
- Mixed mode surveys (allow paper or web)
- Shorter surveys
Google Docs Application

- Data will be automatically recorded in the spreadsheet format;
- Present real time data;
Google Docs Application

- Survey can be sent to the respondents by email, a hyperlink or embedded on a web page (e.g. Facebook);
- It has a good appearance.
- It is a free web-based surveys tool;
How to

- You must have a gmail account.
- Sign-in to your gmail account, or directly sign in to docs.google.com
- Click create new - form.
There are many Themes that can be picked. The theme will affect the questionnaire appearance.

Form title

Form introduction

To share the form

Edit, duplicate, and delete

Save the form

To finish the question

Questions type

Option if the question is mandatory

Drag & drop question to move it up and down in the form

Questions type

Question and help text

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How to

Questions → Survey questions type:
• Text
  1. What is your age?

• Paragraph text
  2. Please describe your job:
How to

• Multiple choice

3. What is your current degree status?
   - B.A. or B.Sc.
   - Master
   - Doctorate

• Checkboxes

4. What is your sex?
   - Female
   - Male
How to

Choose from a list

5. What is your contract length?
- 9 months
- 10 months
- 11 months
- 12 months

How satisfied are you with your current position?

1 2 3 4 5

Very Dissatisfied ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ Very Satisfied

6. Overall, How satisfied are you with your current position?

1 2 3 4 5

Very Dissatisfied ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ Very Satisfied
How to Grid

7. How do you rate the importance of these activities?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Very Important</th>
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<td>Administrative duties</td>
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How to

- Other:
  - Section header – if you want to devide the questionnaire in sections to make it easier to read and complete.
  - Page break
How to share the finished-form?

- In the top of finished form you will find "email this form" menu, or
- In the spreadsheet, choose "Form" then "send form"
Respondents email

If you check this box then respondents can fill the form out directly in their email page.

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How to

Or, you can embed the form directly on the web page. Just copy and paste the link in the bottom of form.

You can view the published form here: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/viewform?formkey=dFF0OUI5aZGhGWFl0LWVqVZ5dTc5Y1E6MQ
How to

Spreadsheet appearance:

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</tbody>
</table>

1. What is your age?
2. Please describe your job.
3. What is your current degree status?
4. What is your sex?
5. What is your contract length?
6. Overall, how satisfied are you with your current position?
7. How do you rate the importance of these activities? [Professional development activities]
7. How do you rate the importance of these activities? [Multidisciplinary meeting]
7. How do you rate the importance of these activities? [Administrative duties]
7. How do you rate the importance of these activities? [Networking]
Exercise

- Open the ms-word file (exercise1) and create a web-based questionnaire using Google Docs.
- After that, send the questionnaire to your email.
- Fill-in the questionnaire and look at the Google Docs spreadsheet how your answers recorded.
- Report your test in written form by the end of this course week
References


References


"The world will not be destroyed by those who do evil, but by those who watch them without doing anything." - Albert Einstein