

EMPL4005

INFORMATION, DATA AND ANALYSIS

Primary Data Collection Methods

Questionnaires

- May be delivered in different ways:
 - self completion (e.g. online or postal)
 - telephone survey
 - face to face interview
- May seek to discover any of the following types of information:
 - factual
 - behavioural
 - opinion based
 - attitudes
 - beliefs

Questionnaire Design

Good Design:

- Respondent knows exactly what to do
- Clear, neat, attractive layout
- Polite and professional tone
- Questions ask what you need to know – no more, no less

Poor Design:

- Too long
- Inappropriate design or language
- Poor questions

Questionnaire Design

Poor Question types:

- negatives or double negatives
- ambiguous
- questions with the words 'usually' or 'recently' etc.
- leading questions
- questions that don't itemise alternatives
- Inconsistent questions
- potentially embarrassing questions
- direct classification questions (how old are you)

Questionnaire Design

- Avoid double-barrelled questions
- A double-barrelled question combines two or more issues or attitudinal objects (the person place or thing (**object**) that one has feelings opinions about (**attitudes**) in a single question.

Questionnaire Design

Example

Do you think professors should have more contact with university staff and university administrators?

Clearly, this question asks about two different issues:

1. Do you think professors should have more contact with university staff?
2. Do you think that professors should have more contact with university administrators?

Questionnaire Design

- Combining the two questions into one question makes it unclear which attitude is being measured, as each question may elicit a different attitude.
- Tip: if the word “and” appears in a question, check to verify whether it is a double-barrelled question.

Which method to use?

The need to know how many staff would like training in IT skills development.

This requires a little information, in the same format, from a large number of staff. Use questionnaires.

The need to know in detail how people feel about a new product.

This requires detailed information on personal views. Use interviews (either individual or group).

The need to know how many shoppers enter the store each day of the week.

This requires information about consumer behaviour, most easily obtained by counting events. Use observation.

Who do you include in your survey?

- **Census** – include 100% of the relevant group (population)
 - Rarely used for research, unless the population is very small
- **Sampling** – include a specially selected subset of the population

Sampling

- Virtually all statistical results are based on the measurements of a sample drawn from a population.
 - E.g., Nielson ratings gather information on a small sample of homes for TV ratings
- Measuring the entire population could be very expensive or even impossible
- We can get very accurate information from samples