

# The How-To Guide for Developing Survey Questionnaires

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# Schedule for Today's Workshop

- Session 1: *Figuring out what you want to know*; 9-10:30am
- Morning break: 10:30-10:45am
- Session 2: *Tips and tricks for developing survey questions*; 10:45am-12:15pm
- Lunch break: 12:15-1pm
- Session 3: *Tips and tricks for developing survey answer options*; 1-2:30pm
- Afternoon break: 2:30-2:45pm
- Session 4: *Putting together a survey questionnaire*; 2:45-4pm



# Session 1: Figuring out what you want to know





# Where to start when developing a survey questionnaire?

- With your research goals and questions, of course!
- Research question = statement of the purpose of your study (research goal) in the form of a question
- The question drives the method (and the survey questionnaire)
- What do you want to know?



# Example for today's workshop

- 2023 International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) module on National Identity and Citizenship
- [issp.org](http://issp.org)
- 60 survey questions on attitudes towards democracy, immigration, national identity and more
- **Example of a more descriptive research question: How close do second-generation immigrants feel towards Canada and towards their province of residence?**



# Example for today's workshop (continued)



- Survey questions needed from the 2023 ISSP module in Canada:
  - Respondent's as well as their mother's and father's country of birth
    - To determine generational immigration status

45) How close do you feel to...

	Very close	Close	Not very close	Not close at all	Can't choose
a. your town, <u>city</u> or municipality?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> -8
b. your province?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> -8
c. Canada?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> -8
d. North America?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> -8



# Example for today's workshop (continued)



- **Example of a more analytical research question:**
  - **How do first- and second-generation immigrants compare when it comes to their levels of closeness felt towards Canada and towards their province of residence?**
- Same survey questions needed as in the previous slide
- What information was not gathered by the survey questions in the previous slide, but might be interesting for our example research questions?

# What data can you realistically gather by asking a respondent?

- In other words, when is it best to use a survey as a method to answer your research question(s)?
- Needs to be information a respondent can consciously provide
  - They need to know it
  - They need to be honest about it



# What data can you realistically gather by asking a respondent? (continued)

- Sounds obvious, but...
  - Many things a respondent doesn't know
    - Are they the best source for the information you want to gather?
  - Recollection bias
    - People tend to remember things more as they are now than what they were in the past
  - Social desirability bias
    - People tend to think of their own attitudes and behaviours as what they want them to be (and what they want others to think they are) than what they actually are

# Types of survey questions, their usefulness and their limitations

- Attitude/value/sentiment questions
- (Level of) knowledge questions
- Factual questions
  - Behaviours
  - Characteristics
  - Factual knowledge about...
    - Respondent (personal factual questions)
    - Others known to the respondent
    - Entity/event
- Closed vs. open questions
- Filter questions
- Vignette/scenario-based questions



# Types of survey questions, their usefulness and their limitations (continued)

- Can you measure your key concept with only one survey question?
- Or would you like to measure your key (complex) concept with multiple survey questions?
  - Do you need multiple survey questions to measure your concept's multiple dimensions?

# Example of a battery of survey questions, measuring one concept (or trying to) = populism

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Please, check one box on each line.)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Can't choose
34) The people, and not politicians, should make our most important policy decisions.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> -8
35) Politicians talk too much and take too little action.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> -8
36) There is a conflict between the ordinary people and those in power in Canada.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> -8
37) Business leaders make their money at the expense of ordinary people.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> -8
38) It is better to rely on the opinions of experts than the experiences of ordinary people.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> -8



# Literature and survey reviews, to help you develop your survey questionnaire

- When developing your survey questionnaire, go see what others have used before in terms of survey questions to measure what you want to measure
- If existing survey measures are useful for your study, then use them in your own survey
- Can also allow for comparisons with:
  - Previous samples (for sample quality)
  - Previous results

# **1. WORKSHOP GROUP ACTIVITY**

# Instructions

- Pick one of the following provided research questions (or use your own), and develop 5 survey questions (and their answer options) that could help you gather data from respondents to answer this research question.
  - Write each survey question (and answer options) on a post it, and post them on the front board below the research question you picked.

# Instructions (continued)

- Pick one of the following research questions (or use your own):
  - Q1: What factors encourage city residents to compost?
  - Q2: To what extent are individuals' attitudes towards the police impacted by their prior experiences with police officers?
  - Q3: How do the big five personality types relate to religiosity?
  - Q4: What is the relationship between remote work from home and overall levels of happiness?



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**Morning Break**