THINGS TO CONSIDER IN WRITING A SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

by:
Katheryne R. Huertas
Teacher II, Orani National High School - Main

Research is defined as “asking questions and looking for answers to those questions” (Ruben E. Faltado III, et al, 2016). Answers to these questions are the data that are collected and then analyzed to provide findings and results for a given research. Some research problems can be answered by merely conducting a survey. A survey research is a kind of quantitative research that is used to gather information from groups of people by selecting and studying samples chosen from a population. Research instrument such as questionnaire is used as a testing device “for measuring a given phenomenon”.

Results and findings on any survey research depend greatly on the usability, validity and reliability of the questionnaire floated among the respondents. To ensure that you formulate a good quality questionnaire which provides a valid and reliable data, make sure that the questionnaire possesses the essential features of a good questionnaire which include the cover letter, directions for completion, appearance, length, order and coding.

A cover letter provides the theme of the questionnaire. It is important to introduce the researcher and state the purpose of the study so that it may serve as a primer to the respondents of what kind of questions they would expect in the survey. Through the cover letter, the researcher also assures that data provided by the respondents are treated as confidential and their identity would remain anonymous.

A clear direction for completion must be provided to eliminate any ambiguity on the instructions. Make every single instruction understandable and concise for the reader. This will ensure that the data supplied are in full understanding of the respondents. Conde, B.T., (2011) emphasized that the general and specific instructions must be
separated. Also, the method on how they would be answered should be specified (i.e. check/tick, cross, encircle etc) for clarity.

The questionnaire’s appearance should look adept to motivate the respondents to read your survey thoroughly. If series of similar questions will be given, make sure that you use table to separate each item to avoid confusions on the part of the respondents. Thoughtfully plan the layout of the questionnaire to aid in your analysis.

Be mindful of the questionnaire’s length for it will affect the interest of the respondents. Conde (2011) suggested that if a long questionnaire is necessary, it is best to leave pages unnumbered. This will minimize the tendency of the respondents to skim on pages and reduce discouragement for a lengthy questionnaire.

Consider that the order is subsequently written from the most important to the least important information. In case that the questionnaire is not completed, at least the most important information were collected. Another consideration is the level of difficulty. Place the easiest questions or questions that they will not think much like biographical data at the beginning to encourage respondents to answer until the last page.

Coding is important when data is to be processed and a statistical treatment is to be carried out. It is better to indicate the code for the non-numerical responses before the questionnaire are given out. Lastly, don’t forget to write “Thank You”. This is the simplest gesture that you appreciate the time and effort that your respondents took in completing the questionnaire.

References:

Chapter 1: Nature of Inquiry and Research, pp. 1 and 4
Chapter 4: Understanding Data and Ways to Systematically Collect Data, p. 64
2.1 DATA COLLECTION METHOD (DATA GATHERING TECHNIQUE)

Source: Belinda T. Conde Ph. D
Statistics and Probability with Computer Application for Business and Social Sciences,
pp. 35-37