

Design of business research project



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The title of the event: Research workshop – Questionnaire Design and Construction

The date of the event: 10 /02 /2016.

Description.

Developing a good survey questionnaire is a helpful tool in business. Survey questionnaires are a simple method of obtaining market research data which you need in order to acquire relevant and accurate insight on your target market or responses to a particular product you introduce. Apart from knowing abstract concepts in class, I browse different sets of questionnaires and I can tell a good questionnaire from a bad one. I have had experience administering survey questionnaires for academic and professional purposes but I never had the opportunity to design or develop a questionnaire suited to my specific needs. From my point of view, the research workshop I attended provided me with the information I needed in order develop a questionnaire which will be helpful in obtaining perceptions data on what potential consumers need from a startup computer business.

In a business, market research data involves a strategic process which will ensure that you know your audience and your data reflects objective reality (Webb, 2000). For this purpose, it is necessary to have the skill in developing an instrument which can inform me at the onset what the target market wants and what customers expect from an efficient computer company. In addition, it is also necessary to develop a questionnaire which can also gauge customer satisfaction so that I may be informed what makes customers happy and unhappy with the services my company intends to

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offer. In a way, designing a questionnaire can be used to jumpstart the communication process between the customers and the management and provide baseline data for a business relationship.

Self-analysis.

At first, I thought questionnaires were pro-forma documents that researchers distribute to people and that answering them was boring and tedious. I realized that the questionnaires which I have had the opportunity to answer may not have been constructed well. In my experience, some questionnaires have redundant items written and some items seem errant and off topic. Some questionnaires are really unnecessarily lengthy so that some items are left unanswered or unmarked. Some questionnaires become spoiled because the respondents ticked two answers for an item that required only one answer. Market research data is everything when you are trying to start a business. It provides you with legs to stand on by gathering data that can help you make sound business decisions (Miller & Dickson, 2001). Hence, if the questionnaire does not collect the data you need to make those decisions, then the purpose is defeated (Canada Business Network, 2016). I began to appreciate that the design and construction of a good and reliable questionnaire must be a systematic process that requires skill and diligence in making.

Analysis of learning.

As a result of the research workshop and the subsequent further reading I made on design and construction of questionnaires, I gathered the important concepts on designing a good questionnaire.

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1. The design depends on what information you need.

A questionnaire's design depends on the research needs and specifications. If the researcher wishes to collect numerical data in order to determine the perceptions of a target market, then it will need to take the form of a standardized questionnaire (Webb, 2000). However, if the aim is also to explore in a more in-depth manner the perceptions and views of a target audience regarding a product, then a qualitative interview questionnaire will be suitable. Exploratory questionnaires will require only a brief guide with perhaps ten open-ended questions with prompts and probing questions per interview questions (Trochim, 2008). For the formal standardized questionnaire however, which is what I need, the task is lengthier and more tedious because it needs (FAO, 2012):

1. Prescribed wording and ordering of questions in order to assure receipt of similar stimuli
 2. Variables need to be operationalized or defined clearly in order for respondents to answer consistently
 3. A prescribed response format in order to ensure fast completion of the questionnaire
2. A good questionnaire meets research objectives.

Designing a good questionnaire requires that it accomplishes the research objectives (Schonlau et al., 2001). This entails substantial preparatory work on my part. By preparatory work, this means that before I set out to design a questionnaire I need to do research on relevant literature on the topic or issue I want to solicit perceptions about. The workshop teacher reiterated

that questionnaires fail due to poor understanding and research work on the issue or topic.

3. Complete and accurate information makes a good questionnaire.

If respondents do not understand the questions outlined in the questionnaire, then the more likely it will be that they do not answer or refuse to answer (Canada Business Network, 2016). The questionnaire should be simply and adequately worded so as to elicit the proper and accurate answer from the respondents.

4. A well-arranged questionnaire is important.

Questionnaires must not only be easily understood on the part of the respondents but it should be well-arranged and structured so that it will be easier to analyze and interpret (Trochim, 2008). It is also important to ensure that the questionnaire is short and it flows in a manner as to keep the respondent interested in answering. Unnecessary or irrelevant questions should be dealt away with.

5. Response scale

An important feature of a well-designed questionnaire is the selection of an appropriate response scale where respondents may rate their experience or perception on a scale of, for instance, one to five, one being lowest and five being the highest (Trochim, 2008).

6. Ensure pre-testing of the questionnaire

It is very important to pilot test your questionnaire in order to point out what changes need to be made and how the instrument can be improved.

7. Finalization

After pre-testing the questionnaire, a final version will be produced based on the feedback and evaluation.

Application in context.

Learning about questionnaire design and construction allowed me to make a strong connection on the importance of surveys in market research. Based on my actual circumstances, I am interested on starting up a digital marketing business and my target audience are individuals who are inclined to use the Internet and social media in their commercial transactions. When I visit social media websites, several short online questionnaires pop up and asks the user certain questions on website usage. These questions are meant to map the frequency of user engagement with a particular social media platform, in what I could hypothesize is an attempt by the company to pull out of a profile of their user base. User data will be extremely important in making market decisions and offering suitable product choices for users. I was also able to evaluate the online survey forms that some websites offer in order to get to know their customers better. Most just deal with demographic data which are actually boring and length. I was able to link the lessons I obtained from the research workshop to come up with an initial design for a questionnaire to determine user preferences in online shopping.

Evaluation.

Learning more about questionnaire design and construction has allowed me to appreciate the science of survey-making especially its relevance in market research (Brown, 2008). I was able to tie the connection between a good and <https://assignbuster.com/design-of-business-research-project/>

well-design survey questionnaire to more sound decision-making process in marketing and management (Webb, 2000; Schonlau et al., 2001).

Understanding the impact of surveys in ascertaining user perceptions and employee satisfaction provided better insight for me of its importance. Due to the additional insight I learned from the research workshop, I was able to evaluate with certainty and guidelines some of the previous questionnaires I had constructed in relation to my work and I was able to assess its strong and weak spots.

Based on the learning outcomes of the research workshop, I can say with confidence that I now have a clear appreciation of the importance of a good questionnaire design. I now also have a newfound appreciation on how important preparatory work is in designing the questionnaire and identifying clear what your research objectives are. I am now more challenged to design future market survey questionnaires in the future for my own personal use as well as those related to the demands of my profession.

Self-concept.

There was a great deal of unlearning which occurred as a process of engaging in the research workshop. The difference between being a respondent in a survey questionnaire is immense compared to when you have to design the questionnaire yourself. You need to appreciate the relevance of the content in the questionnaire as well as the suitability of the design. In short, I now consider questionnaire design both a science and an art. It is a science because it needs to be systematic; on the other hand, it

becomes an art because you need to be creative and innovative so that the questionnaire keeps the respondent engaged and interested.

Action

In light of the learning outcomes of the research workshop, I have undertaken the construction of a preliminary survey questionnaire to produce a demographic profile of the users of a website that I manage as well as to determine user satisfaction on the design, layout, and ease of use of the website. I have scheduled it to be pre-tested among a circle of my friends in order to determine what parts of the survey needs to be improved.

References

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