

# Questionnaire Design

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  - How many soft drinks did you drink last week?

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  - Do you approve/disapprove of President Obama?

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  - Which party did you vote for?
  - How much did you pay/receive in child support?
  - What is your income?
  - How many soft drinks did you drink last week?
- ▶ Opinions cannot, in principle, be checked
  - Do you approve/disapprove of President Obama?
  - Which party do you think will win the presidency in 2012?



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- ▶ Goals: Consistent answers (reliability)
  - Same answers on multiple survey occasions/variations in wording
- ▶ Goals: Avoid misreporting

# Factual Information

- ▶ Standards:

- Question should match goal of research

*How many soft drinks did you drink yesterday?*

*How many soft drinks did you drink in the last week?*

# Factual Information

- ▶ Standards:

- Question should match goal of research

*How much money did you make last month in your current job?*

*What is your total family income?*

# Factual Information

► Standards:

- All people should understand the question in the same way

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*What is your total family income?*

*What is your total family income? (the total income of all family members, including wages and other sources)*

*What is your total wage income?*

*... And what about other members of your family*

*What about your income from other sources (for example, rent, interest, social security, etc.)*

*And what about other members of your family*



# Factual Information

- ▶ Standards:

- All people should understand the question in the same way

*In the past 12 months, were you the victim of a robbery?*

# Factual Information

► Standards:

- Respondents should be able to answer the question (except when measuring knowledge is the goal)

*What is your blood pressure?*

# Factual Information

## ► Standards:

- Respondents should be able to answer the question (except when measuring knowledge is the goal)

*How many soft drinks did you drink in the last week?*

*How many soft drinks did you drink in the last year?*

# Factual Information

## ► Standards:

- Respondents should be able to answer the question (except when measuring knowledge is the goal)

*Did you purchase a used vehicle in the last year?*

# Factual Information

## ► Standards:

- Respondents should be able to answer the question (except when measuring knowledge is the goal)

*Who is the current Supreme Court chief justice?*

# Factual Information

- ▶ Standards:

- Type of answer desired is communicated to respondent

*How far do you live from the nearest hospital?*

# Factual Information

► Standards:

- Type of answer desired is communicated to respondent

*How far do you live from the nearest hospital?*

*How far do you live from the nearest hospital—0-2 miles, 2-5 miles, 5-10 miles, or more than 10 miles?*

# Factual Information

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- Respondents must be willing to answer question

*Have you ever been convicted of a felony?*



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*Have you ever been convicted of a felony?*

*Did you vote on Election Day?*

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*Have you ever been convicted of a felony?*

*Did you vote on Election Day?*

*Do you own a library card?*

# Factual Information

► Standards:

- Respondents must be willing to answer question

*Do you own a library card?*

*Many people borrow books from libraries. Others buy books or subscribe to newspapers or magazines, or get their reading material in some other way. Do you own a library card?*

# Factual Information

► Standards:

- Respondents must be willing to answer question

*On days when you drink alcohol, how many drinks to you typically have? 0, 1-2, or 3 or more?*

*On days when you drink alcohol, how many drinks to you typically have? 0, 1-2, 3-4, or 5 or more?*

# Factual Information

## ► Options:

- Open (exploratory)
- Long list (self-administered)
- Short list (interviewer administered)
- Short list w/ branching (interviewer administered)

# Factual Information

## ► Example: Issue importance

- National Annenberg Election Study—Most Important Issue/Coded later on

Gay Marriage  
/ Moral values  
Abortion  
Iraq \  
War on Terror  
Terrorism /

# Factual Information

## ► Exit polls

[E] Which ONE issue mattered most in deciding how you voted for president?  
(Check only one)

- 1 ☐ Taxes
- 2 ☐ Education
- 3 ☐ Iraq
- 4 ☐ Terrorism
- 5 ☐ Economy/Jobs
- 6 ☐ Moral values
- 7 ☐ Health care

# Factual Information

- ▶ Technical items
  - Technical terms
  - Simple terms
  - Provide definition



# Factual Information

## ► Technical items

- Technical terms
- Simple terms
- Provide definition

## ► Example:

- Do you support prop. 201?
- Do you support assault weapons ban?
- Prop. 201 will ban assault weapons, which are semi-automatic firearms with both a detachable magazine and a pistol grip.  
Do you support proposition 201?

# Factual Information

- ▶ Example: Income
  - Personal vs. household income

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## ► Example: Income

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- Wage income vs. gross income (wages + rent + investments + etc.)?

# Factual Information

## ► Example: Income

- Personal vs. household income
- Wage income vs. gross income (wages + rent + investments + etc.)?
- Hourly wage vs. yearly income?

# Factual Information

## ► Social Desirability

- Simple Q
- Q + excuses (voter turnout)
- Minimize detail (as in income categories)

# Factual Information

- ▶ Example: Racial prejudice
  - Are you a racist?

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- Are you a racist?
- How concerned would you be if a Black family moved into your neighborhood? (0-10 scale with 0=not concerned at all and 10=very concerned)

# Factual Information

## ► Example: Racial prejudice

- Are you a racist?
- How concerned would you be if a Black family moved into your neighborhood? (0-10 scale with 0=not concerned at all and 10=very concerned)
- On a scale of 0-10, would you hire the person with the following resume (provided to respondent, name is randomly chosen to be DeShawn Johnson or Bill Johnson, resumes otherwise identical)



# Factual Information

- ▶ Concern: memory problems

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- ▶ Concern: memory problems
- ▶ Example: Measuring Television Viewership
  - Candidates in a Democratic/Republican primary would like to target their television ads towards viewers who are likely to vote in the Democratic/Republican primary
  - Design survey to measure whether individual is registered Democrat/Republican and which television shows the individual watched during the previous week

# Measuring Opinions

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  - Do you approve or disapprove of President Biden?

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- ▶ Opinions have no “correct” answer:
  - Do you approve or disapprove of President Biden?
  - Which of the following genres of music do you most enjoy listening too? Rock, country, jazz, hip-hop, or classical?

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  - How would you rate President Obama's handling of the economy? Very good, good, fair, or poor?

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- ▶ Self-perceptions:
  - How likely are you to vote in the upcoming election?

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- ▶ Self-perceptions:
  - How likely are you to vote in the upcoming election?
  - How interested are you in politics?



# Measuring Opinions

- ▶ Some bad questions:
  - How would you rate your physician?
    - ▶ Very competent and friendly
    - ▶ Very competent, but not friendly
    - ▶ Somewhat competent and friendly
    - ▶ Somewhat competent and unfriendly

# Measuring Opinions

- ▶ Some bad questions:
  - How would you rate your physician?
    - ▶ Very competent and friendly
    - ▶ Very competent, but not friendly
    - ▶ Somewhat competent and friendly
    - ▶ Somewhat competent and unfriendly
- ▶ Don't ask questions that involve multiple dimensions

# Measuring Opinions

- ▶ Some bad questions:
  - How satisfied are you with the way President Obama is handling the economy?
    - ▶ Very satisfied
    - ▶ Somewhat satisfied
    - ▶ Satisfied
    - ▶ Not satisfied

# Measuring Opinions

- ▶ Some bad questions:
  - How satisfied are you with the way President Obama is handling the economy?
    - ▶ Very satisfied
    - ▶ Somewhat satisfied
    - ▶ Satisfied
    - ▶ Not satisfied
- ▶ Don't ask questions that involve scales with ambiguous order

# Measuring Opinions

- ▶ Some bad questions:
  - Do you agree or disagree with the following statements:
    - ▶ I sometimes feel depressed

# Measuring Opinions

- ▶ Some bad questions:
  - Do you agree or disagree with the following statements:
    - ▶ I sometimes feel depressed
- ▶ Don't ask agree/disagree questions that fall in the middle of a continuum

# Measuring Opinions

- ▶ Some bad questions:
  - Do you believe that Obamacare should be repealed, or do you think the problems with the website will be fixed?