

## **ECO-SE-3014: Data Collection and Presentation**

### **UNIT 2: Questionnaires and Schedules**

Questionnaire:

Questionnaire refers to a technique of data collection which consists of a series of written questions along with alternative answers.

There are nine steps involved in the development of a questionnaire

1. Decide the information required.
2. Define the target respondents.
3. Choose the method(s) of reaching your target respondents.
4. Decide on question content.
5. Develop the question wording.
6. Put questions into a meaningful order and format.
7. Check the length of the questionnaire.
8. Pre-test the questionnaire.
9. Develop the final survey form.

Schedule:

Schedule is the tool or instrument used to collect data from the respondents while interview is conducted. Schedule contains questions, statements (on which opinions are elicited) and blank spaces/tables for filling up the respondents.

The features of schedules are:

The schedule is presented by the interviewer. The questions are asked and the answers are noted down by him/her.

The list of questions is a more formal document, it need not be attractive.

The schedule can be used in a very narrow sphere of social research.

The main purposes of schedule are three fold:

- To provide a standardized tool for observation or interview in order to attain objectivity.
- To act as memory tickler i.e., the schedule keeps the memory of the interviewer/observer refreshed and keeps him reminded of the different aspects that are to be particularly observed.
- To facilitate the work of tabulation and analysis.

Essentials of a Good Schedule:

A good schedule must have the following features-

- **Content:** Should cover questions or statements relating to all significant aspects of the study.
- **Dis-sectional:** Should look into the problem analytically, dissecting every, major and significant components of the problem.
- **Context:** Should suit the context in which it is applied. Different types of studies need different schedules.
- **Criterion:** Should use sound logic in classifying respondents based opinions expressed.
- **Construction:** Should be constructed in such a way that questions statements progress gradually and in order. Better it is sub-divided into parts, each part dealing with a certain sub topic of the issue studied. For each objective, a separate part may be devoted.
- **Language:** Should be linguistically superbly designed. Clear and straight forward language is used.
- **Reliable:** Should be reliable such that same results are obtained whenever the schedule is used when everything else remains same.
- **Mechanical Aspects:** Paper used, margin space given, spacing, printing, size of letters, etc. should be normal.
- **Size:** Should not too length nor too short. Should give fair coverage to the topic.
- **Qualities to be avoided:** Long, complex, presumptuous, personal, embarrassing, hypothetical issues, morality oriented, upsetting type and necessary questions must be avoided.

Differences between questionnaire and schedule:

Questionnaire	Schedule
The questionnaire is one of the methods used for data collection. The questionnaire will have many questions, with each question having multiple choices.	The schedule is also one of the methods of data collection. It will have a set of statements, questions and space given to note down the answers.
Questionnaire method of data collection is preferred when the respondents are willing to cooperate. In addition, to deploy this method	The Schedule method of data collection can be utilised irrespective of the respondent's literacy. It can be used when the respondents

the respondents need to be literate.	are literate and can be used even when the respondents are illiterate.
The type of technique used in the Questionnaire method is Quantitative.	The type of technique used in the Schedule method is Qualitative.
In the Questionnaire method, the grouping is made on the basis of different categories like location, age, gender etc.	In the schedule method of data collection, the grouping may exist or may not exist.
Informants receive questionnaires through emails, posts and the answers will be given as per instructions given in the cover letter.	Answers in the Schedule method of data collection are filled by research workers/enumerators.
In the Questionnaire method, there is no scope for direct personal contact with the respondents.	In the Schedule method, there is direct personal contact of the respondents with the enumerators.
The cost incurred in the questionnaire method of data collection is economical in comparison with the schedule. The cost is less even if the sample size used is very large. Predominantly the money is spent on preparing questionnaires only.	The cost incurred in the Schedule method of data collection is very expensive since there is the cost involved in preparing the schedule, cost incurred on enumerators in addition to the training imparted to them.