

[anonymized] Survey *Discussion Document*

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August 2020

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Overview

1. Challenges with Questions and Logic
2. Challenges with Visual Experience
3. Challenges with Methodology

Challenges with Questions and Logic

1

Age Question

If respondent does not want to answer this question they must enter nonsense data to proceed.

Allows text values.

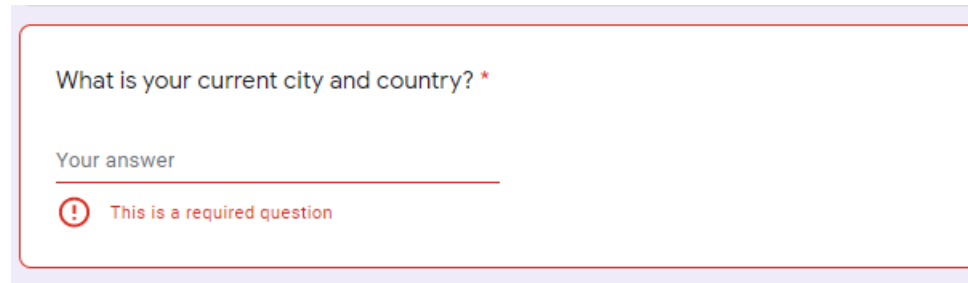
The diagram illustrates a survey question interface. It features a light purple rounded rectangle containing a white text entry field. The field is labeled "What's your age ? *" in a dark grey font. Below the field, the text "text entry" is displayed in a smaller, lighter grey font. To the right of the main field, there is a smaller, overlapping rounded rectangle with a red border. This inset box also contains the question "What's your age ? *" and a label "Your answer" above a red horizontal line. Below the line, a red warning icon (an exclamation mark inside a circle) is followed by the text "This is a required question" in a red font.

Location Question

If respondent does not want to answer this question they must enter nonsense data to proceed.

Assumes respondent lives in 'a city'.

Does not provide a drop-down, resulting in variable open-text answers.



What is your current city and country? *

Your answer

⚠ This is a required question

Zip Code Question

Zip Code is a US-specific concept. Best-practice for non-US-specific surveys would be e.g., 'postal code' or 'ZIP or postal code'.

Question requires numeric values only. Postal codes outside of the US often include letters and numbers (e.g., UK postal codes).

The diagram illustrates a survey question and its validation. It consists of two overlapping rectangular boxes. The top box, with a light purple border, contains the text "What is your zip code?" and a placeholder text "Your answer" with a blue underline. The bottom box, with a light red border, also contains the text "What is your zip code?". Below this text, the input "W1T 00B" is shown with a red underline. Underneath the input, there is a red circular icon containing a white exclamation mark, followed by the text "Must be a number" in red.

Education Question

If respondent does not want to answer this question they must select *Other* and enter nonsense data to proceed.

What's the highest level of formal education that you've attained or are currently enrolled in? *

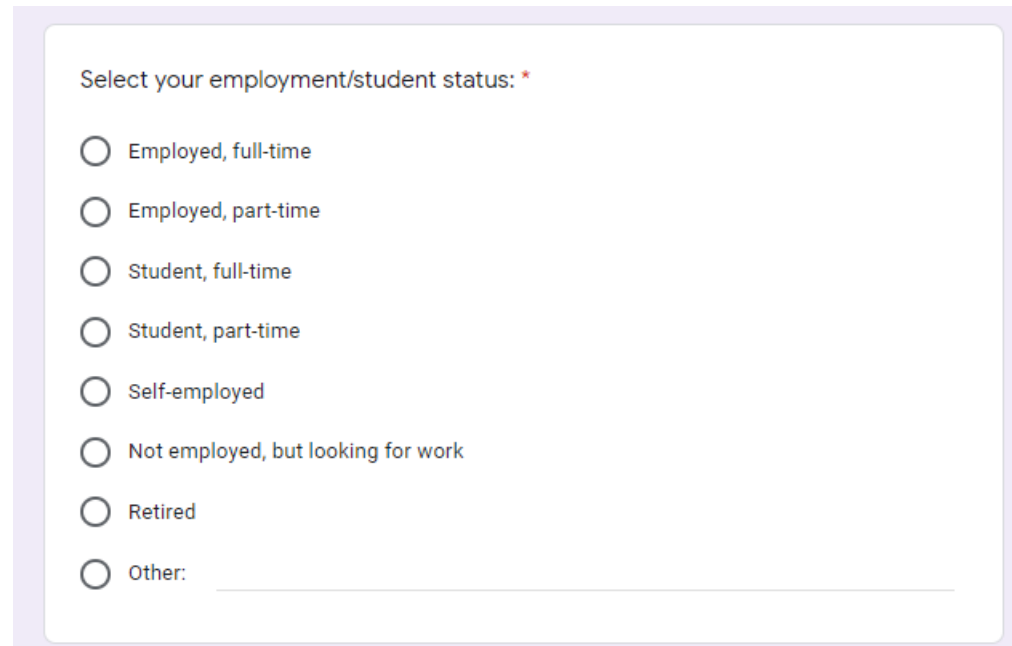
- ☐ High school
- ☐ Undergraduate (bachelors)
- ☐ Masters
- ☐ Doctoral
- ☐ Other: _____

Employment Question

If respondent does not want to answer this question they must select *Other* and enter nonsense data to proceed.

Unpaid home or care work requires user to enter manually. Coupled with the specific wording of 'Not employed, but looking for work', questions could be interpreted as explicitly privileging paid labor.

Iterations on this taxonomy are commonly used, but often without due consideration. Unless you intend to join your dataset with another that uses this taxonomy, consider building one that better fits your respondents' experiences.



Select your employment/student status: *

- ☐ Employed, full-time
- ☐ Employed, part-time
- ☐ Student, full-time
- ☐ Student, part-time
- ☐ Self-employed
- ☐ Not employed, but looking for work
- ☐ Retired
- ☐ Other: _____

Company Size

Question is required but incompatible with many answers to previous question such as 'unemployed', 'retired' or 'other: home care work'.

Along with being a break in user experience, respondent could perceive a privileging of paid labor.

Select your employment/student status: *

☐ Employed, full-time

☐ Employed, part-time

☐ Student

☐ Self-employed/student

☐ No

☒ Retired

☐ Other

What's the size of the company where you're employed? *


☐ 1-10

☐ 11-50

☐ 51-250

☐ 251-1000

☐ 1000+

 This is a required question

Member Identification

Question is both set as optional and includes a 'decline to answer' response.

'Decline to answer' is inconsistent wording with prior questions, which have all used 'Prefer not to say'.

Do you identify as a member of any group(s) that has been underrepresented in

☐ Yes

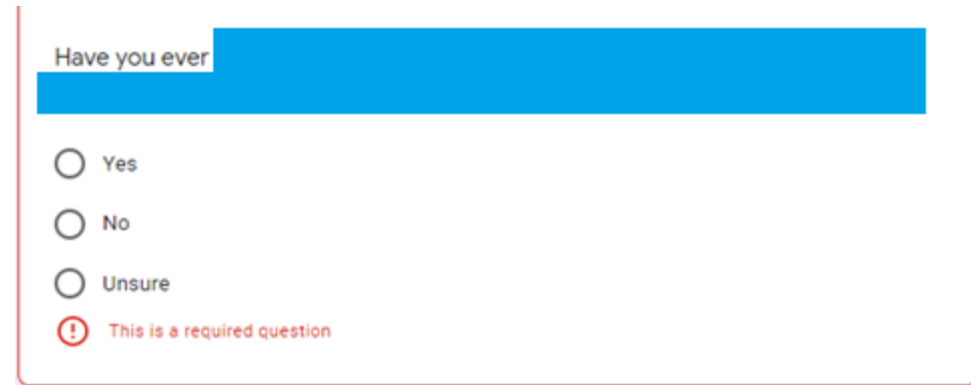
☐ No

☐ Decline to answer

☐ Unsure

Attendance

If respondent does not want to answer this question they must select 'unsure' rather than being permitted to decline to answer (e.g., 'prefer not to say').



Have you ever [redacted]

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Unsure

! This is a required question

The screenshot shows a survey question interface. At the top, the question text "Have you ever" is followed by a large blue rectangular redaction box. Below the question, there are three radio button options: "Yes", "No", and "Unsure". At the bottom of the question box, there is a red circular icon with an exclamation mark and the text "This is a required question". The entire question box is outlined with a thin red border.

Challenges with Visual Experience

2

Response text is visually 'crammed'

Parsing text in this style is difficult for the user, resulting in lessened comprehension or skimming.

User experience is degraded.

For each question, select your response between 1 (not at all important/accurate) and 7 (extremely important/accurate). *

1 (not at all important)	2	3	4	5	6	7 (extremely important/accurate)
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Selecting answers require scrolling

Options are obscured, potentially
distorting response ('off-by-one').

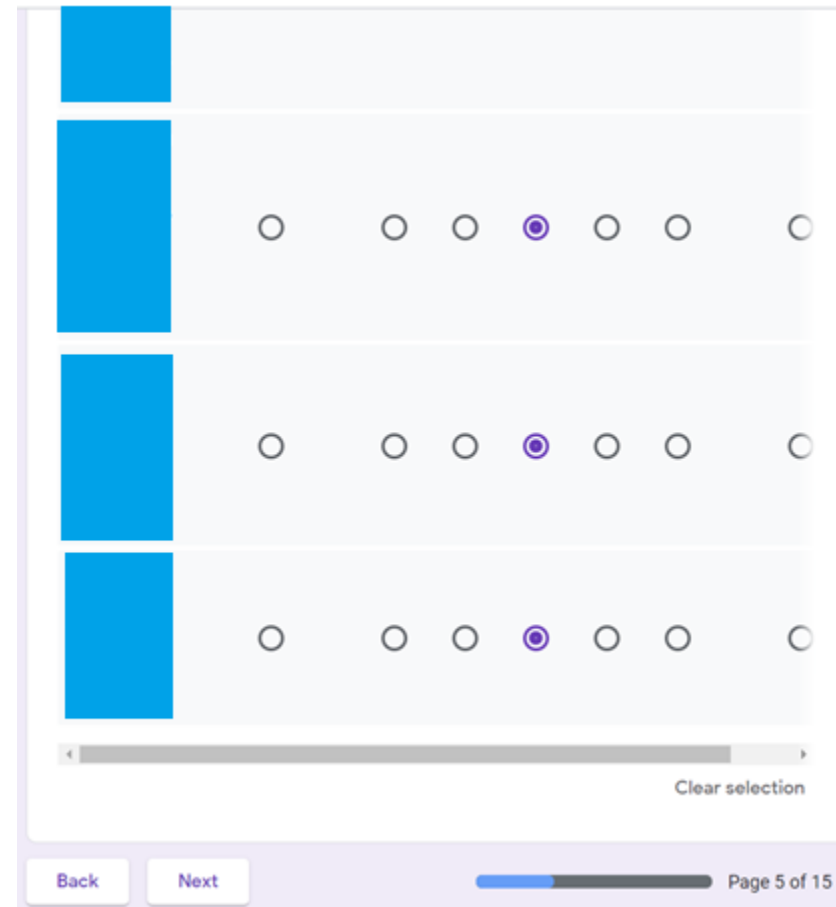
User experience is degraded.

The image shows a survey interface with two rows of radio button options. Each row has a blue square on the left and seven radio buttons to its right. A horizontal scrollbar is visible at the bottom, indicating the content is wider than the container.

Scale is not always visible

As user scrolls down, the 'meaning' of the button selections is no longer visible to them, resulting in confusion or loss of focus.

User experience is degraded.

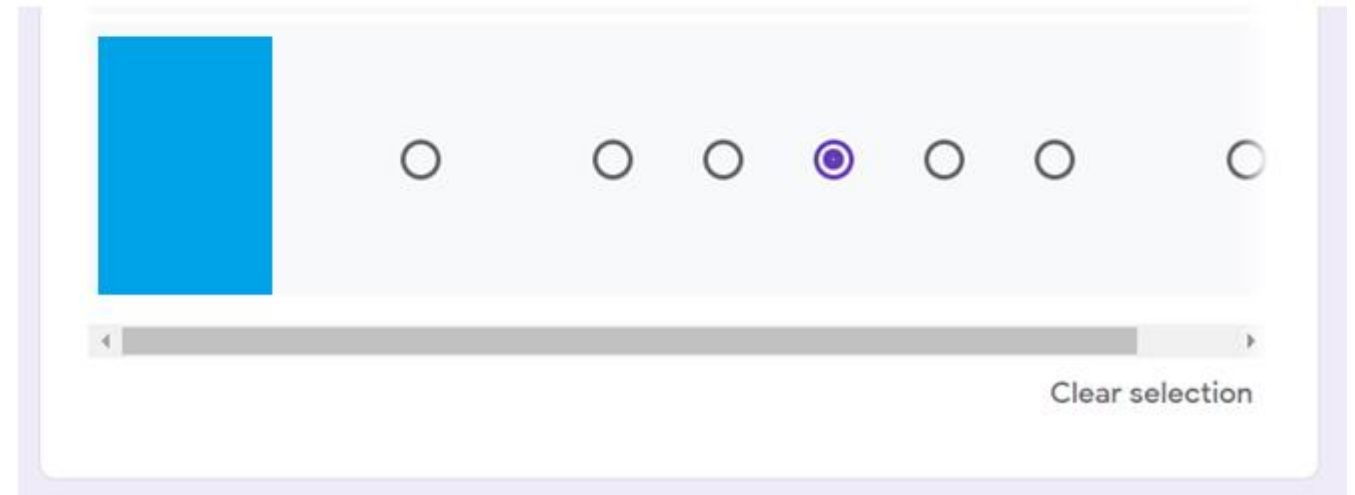
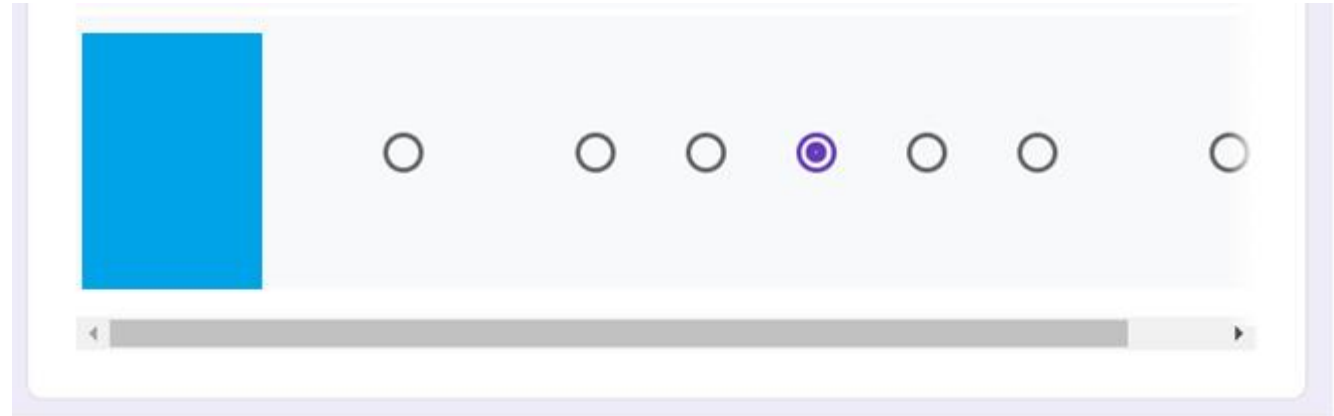




Inconsistent use of 'clear selection'

Appearance of option to 'clear selection' for some pages but not others may confuse user.

User experience is degraded.



Error thrown before user finishes page

User may believe they are entering data 'improperly' and be confused about how to proceed.

User experience is degraded.

Section I: What motivates you

Please select your response from 1 (not at all important/accurate) to 7 (extremely important/accurate) for the following questions. *

	1 (not at all important/accurate)	2	3	4	5	6	7 (extremely important/accurate)
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

This question requires one response per row

Challenges with Methodology

3

Use of wide (7 value) numeric scale

Issues

The use of a numeric scale is confusing for some respondents.

The use of a numeric scale both heightens and disguises incomparability problems across respondents.

The use of a numeric scale may result in analytics that imply the responses are interval not ordinal.

Commentary

When asking for sentiment from respondents, use of a numeric scale must be justified from the respondent's perspective, not the surveyor's.

The designer must ask themselves: what *respondent-centric* reason do I have for using a numeric scale? Consider abandoning a wide, numeric scale in favor of an accessible, respondent-centric design.

Helpful questions to ask:

- 'are my reasons for using a numeric scale e.g., *it is common –or– it was present in the source material –or– it will allow for more variety in the statistical summaries?*'
- 'what simple words could I use instead of numbers?'
- 'what would be lost in shifting from a 7 to a 5 value scale?'
- 'what would be lost in shifting to a simple *which of these are important to you* multiple choice question format?'

Large number of questions and pages

Issues

Each question asked of a respondent is a burden.

Each word of text the respondent is asked to read is a burden.

Commentary

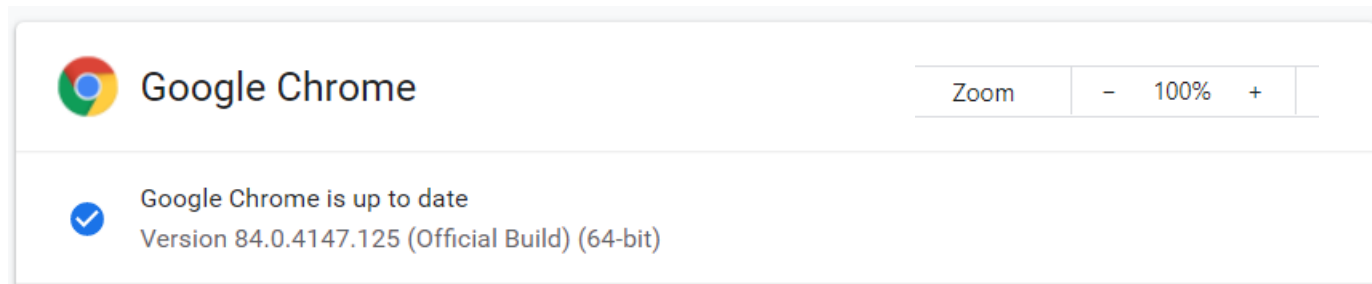
Being respectful of the respondent requires that the designer aggressively cuts and simplifies questions.

This has the benefit of improving comprehension and reducing drop-off.

Helpful questions to ask:

- 'what questions would I remove if I was required to drop 25% of the survey questions?' *how can I justify adding them back in?*
- 'would I be willing to pay respondents \$1 per question asked?' *how valuable are the individual data points?*
- 'would I be feel confident directly requesting that a professional acquaintance, who does not work for my organization, complete this survey without payment?' *how do I perceive and value my respondent?*

Appendix: Details of User Machine



Windows edition

Windows 10 Home

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Display resolution

1920 × 1080 (Recommended) ▼