

Survey

A questionnaire with the same questions for many people, designed to measure in numbers how many think, do or prefer something.

In Spanish

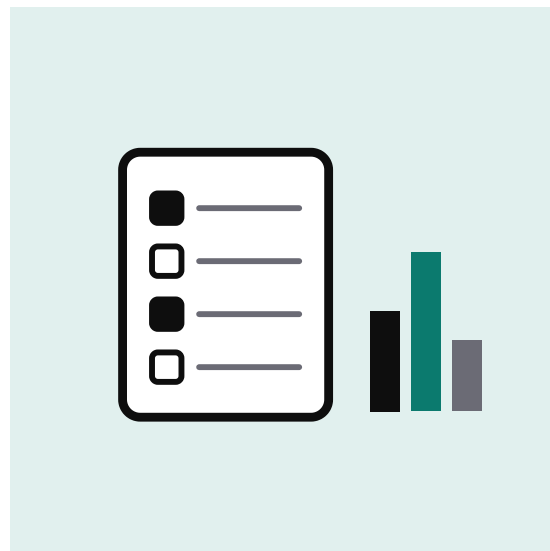
Encuesta

Origin

Social research; questionnaire design by Dillman (1978), updated in Dillman, Smyth and Christian (2014)

Output

Numerical data on what many people think, do or prefer



What it's for

It answers how much and how many: how many people have a problem, how often and in which groups.

Key elements

One question, one idea

If a question asks two things at once, you won't know which one people answered.

In their words

Terms the respondent understands, not the team's.

Who answers matters

The sample decides what you can conclude.

How it's done

1



Define what to measure. Which decision depends on the answer.

2



Write and test. Test the questionnaire with a few people before sending it.

3



Send and analyze. Count, compare groups and read carefully.

Applications in design

 **When to use it**
After researching with a few people, to find out how many share what you found.

 **Avoid**
Asking about what they will do in the future ("would you use it?"): what people say they will do isn't what they later do.

 **Don't fall for it**
Test the questionnaire first: one ambiguous question spoils all its answers.

Connections

Builds on

 Qualitative and quantitative research

 Say vs. do

 HEART framework

Related to

 System Usability Scale (SUS)

 UX research

 Delphi method

 Kano model

Authors and works

2014	Don A. Dillman, Jolene D. Smyth and Leah Melani Christian	Updated the tailored design method: fitting questions, contacts and format to each survey to get more responses with fewer errors.
1978	Don A. Dillman	Set out a method for designing mail and telephone surveys that attended to every detail to get more responses.

Sources

Original sources

- Dillman, D. A. (1978). Mail and telephone surveys: The total design method. Wiley.

Secondary sources

- Dillman, D. A., Smyth, J. D., & Christian, L. M. (2014). Internet, phone, mail, and mixed-mode surveys: The tailored design method (4th ed.). Wiley.

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