Reduce Survey Fatigue Using Logic and Randomization

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What is Survey Fatigue?
The behavior observed by respondents that become tired of the task of taking the survey, that may cause the quality of the data to begin to deteriorate.

Why should you care about Survey Fatigue?
• Attention and motivation drop later in the survey
• Tired/Bored respondents answer “Not Applicable” or “I don’t know” more frequently
• Bad behaviors like cherry-picking answers or straight-lining
• Give up and abandon survey response

Types of Logic

Fatigue-fighting:
• Page skip / disqualify logic
• Question logic
• Piping (repeating)

Bias-fighting:
• Page skip / disqualify logic
• Randomization
• Percent branching

Page Skipping / Disqualify Logic

• Disqualify respondents who do not pass screening questions
• Skip respondents over several pages of survey questions that they do not need to answer
Question Logic

• Only display questions to respondents that they need to answer.
• Hide questions that they do not need to respond to.

Pipe Answer Options

• Display only the answer options that respondents selected/did not select

Pick 3 that you like:
☐ ☐ ☐
☐ ☐ ☐
☐ ☐ ☐
☐ ☐ ☐

Favorite?
☐ ☐ ☐

Repeat a Page of Questions

• Display a follow up page with questions, one or more times depending on how the source question was answered.

Which do you use?
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Smiles
Hearts
Sunshine

What is Survey Bias?

Any language, image, incentive, or other survey item that influences the participant to provide an inaccurate or untruthful response.

What types of Survey Bias exist?

• Emotional bias – loaded questions
• Corporate bias – asking neutral seeming questions about a company
• Option bias – Restrictive answer options
• Conversational Bias – respondents reply how they think you want them to

Randomizing

• Options – Respondents tend to select first and last options most frequently
• Questions – Can reduce number of questions respondents answer on a page
• Pages – Can help to increase coverage of responses on a lengthy survey
Percent Branch Logic

- Randomly assign respondents to see one specific set of questions (text, images, etc.) and not another.

- Academic and market researchers

Percent Branch Logic

- Unlike skip/disqualify logic the path the respondent is directed down is not dependent on a previous answer option (although it can be). Typically the path is not conditional.

- Branching is based on a percentage.
  - If you have 2 branches you can direct 50% of respondents to branch 1 and 50% to branch 2.