

South West London Research Support Network

How not to lose Friends and
Alienate People with Surveys
Dr Catherine Heffernan




Lunch

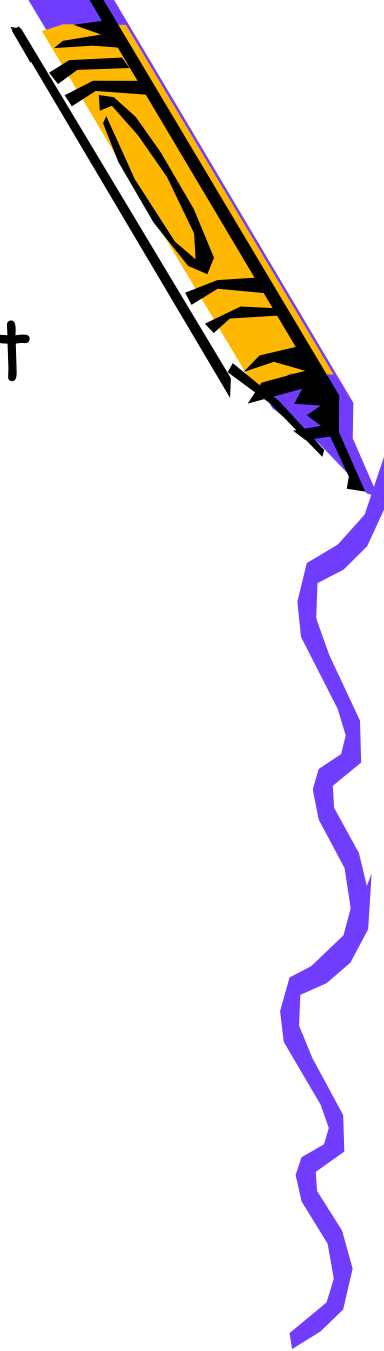
Housekeeping

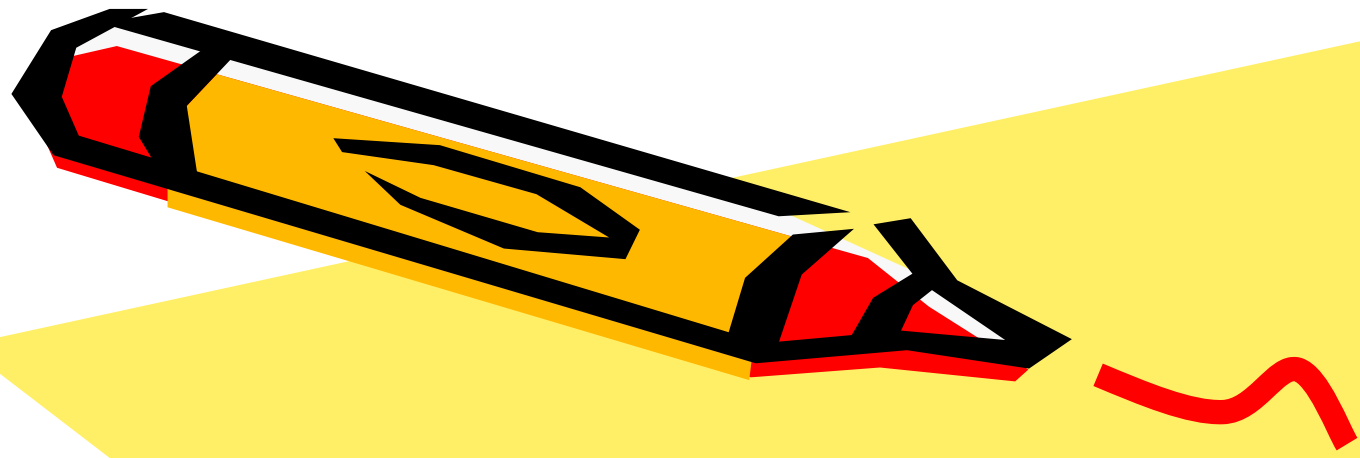
- Welcome to the 2nd network café of the South West London Research Support Network
- We are recording this session for people who cannot attend
- This is an interactive session so please use the chat function to place questions or raise your hand to ask a question
- For everyone's comfort, please do wait your turn to speak so that everyone gets a chance to contribute
- There is no such thing as a silly question!



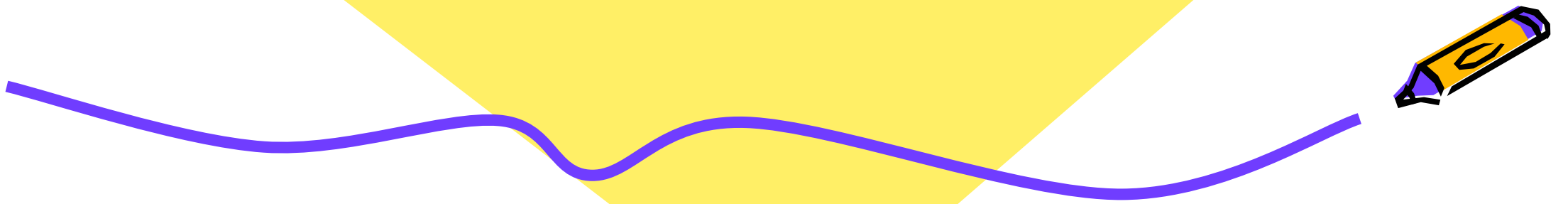
Outline of Today's Network Cafe

- We will focus on surveys and how to get the most from them
- First, we will recap quantitative and qualitative research approaches
- Then we'll look at types and steps in surveys
- Survey instrument (questionnaire)
- Group work on a 'bad questionnaire'
- Meet your codebook!
- Scales and indices (if we have time)
- Q & A





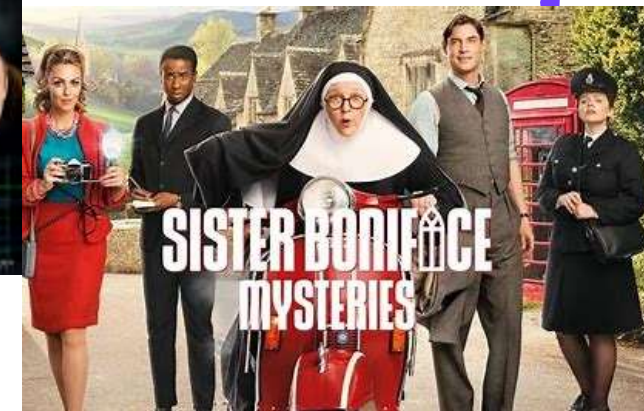
Qualitative versus
Quantitative Approaches - why
is this important for surveys?



Quant versus Qual

- Have a 'hunch'
- Build a case to prove/disprove the theory

- What does the evidence tell you?



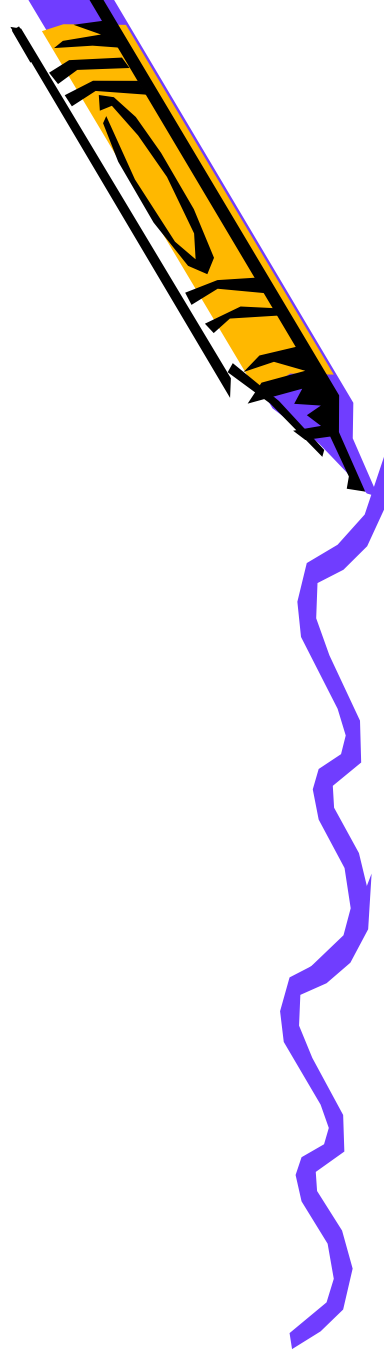
Quantitative and Qualitative Methods

Quantitative:

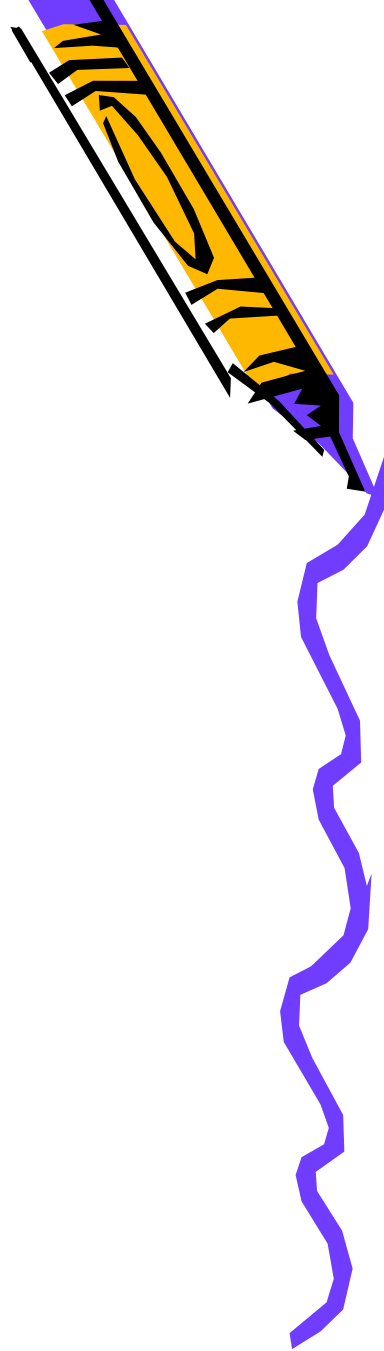
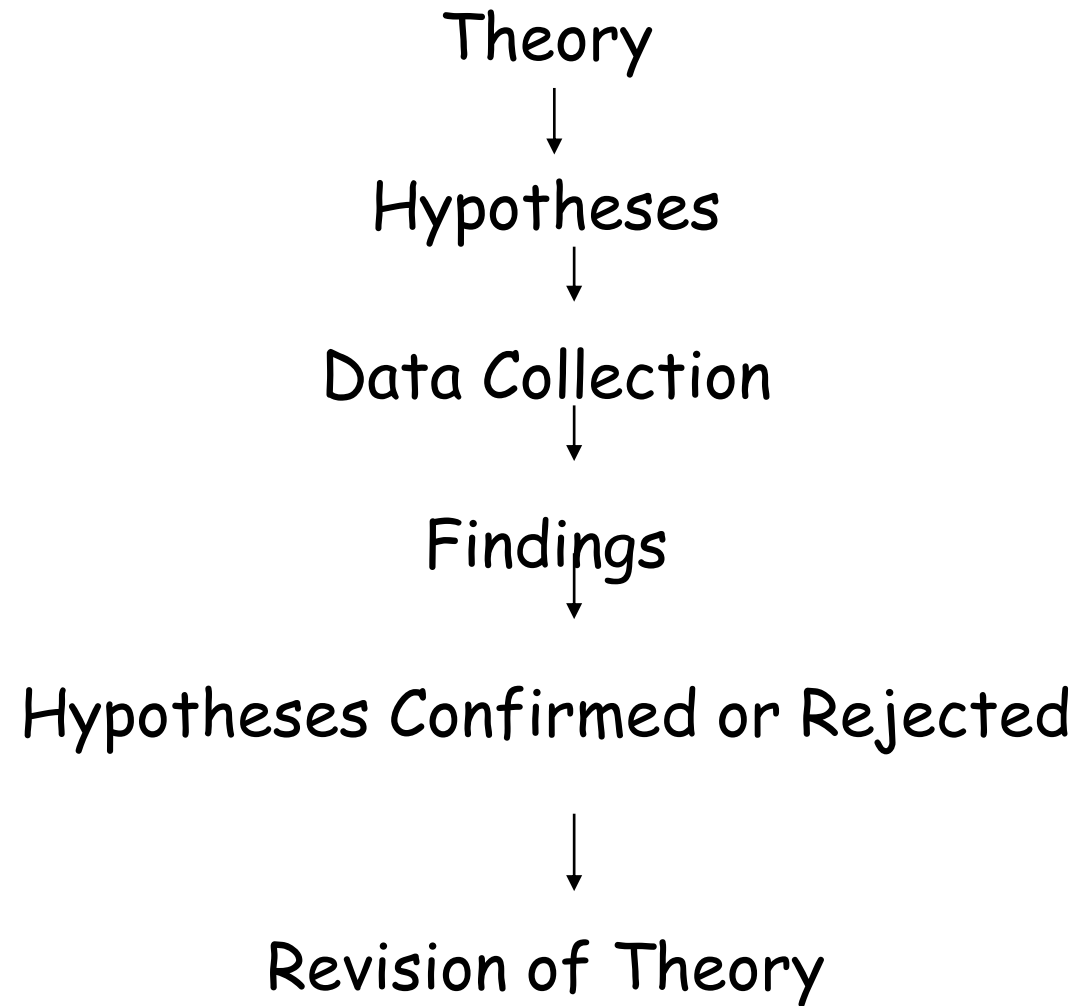
- Deductive
- Tests hypotheses
- Positivism
- Objectivism
- Employs measurement
- Macro
- Detached researcher

Qualitative:

- Inductive
- Produces hypotheses
- Phenomenology
- Constructionism
- Does not employ measurement
- Micro
- Involved researcher



Deductive Theory



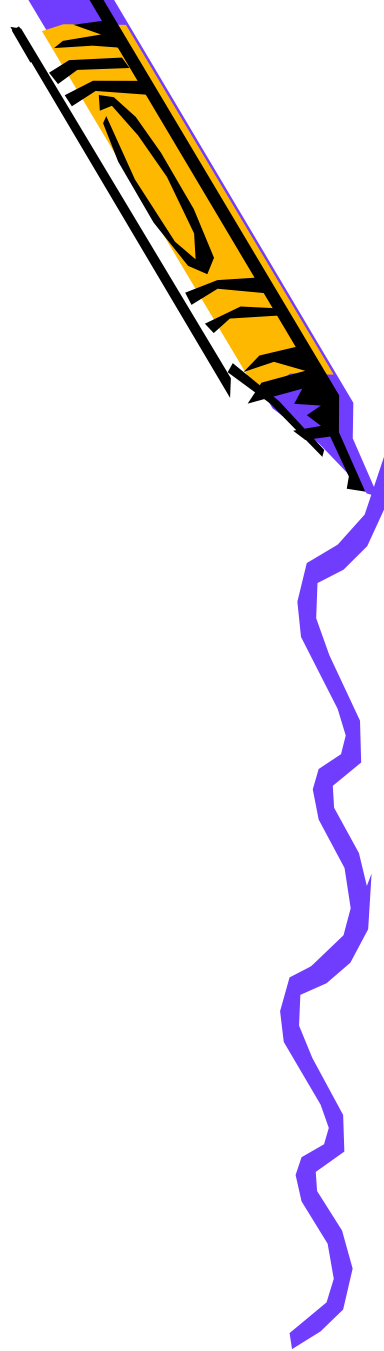
Induction

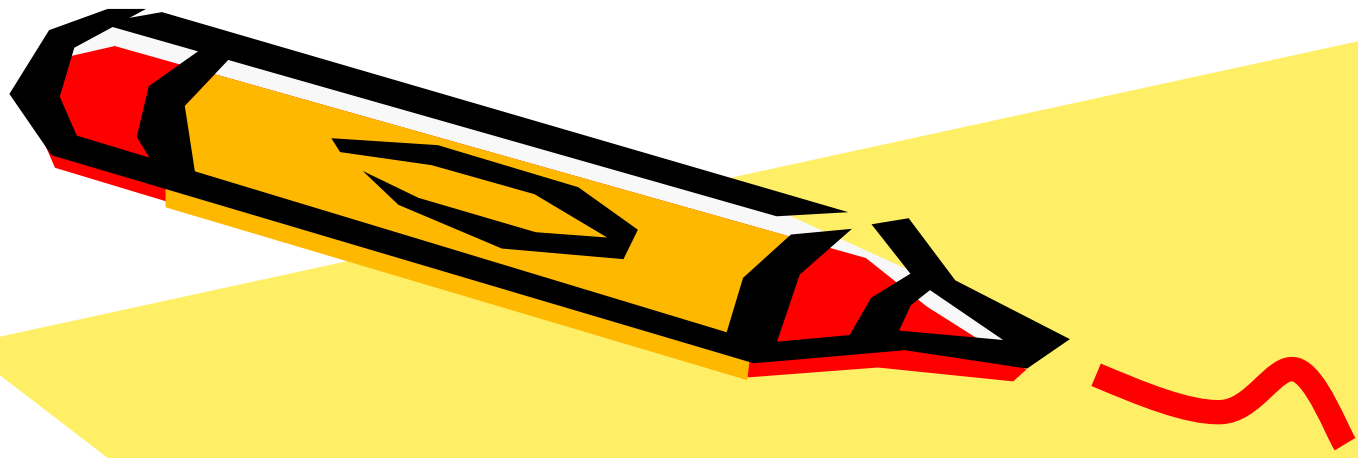
[General research question]

Observation

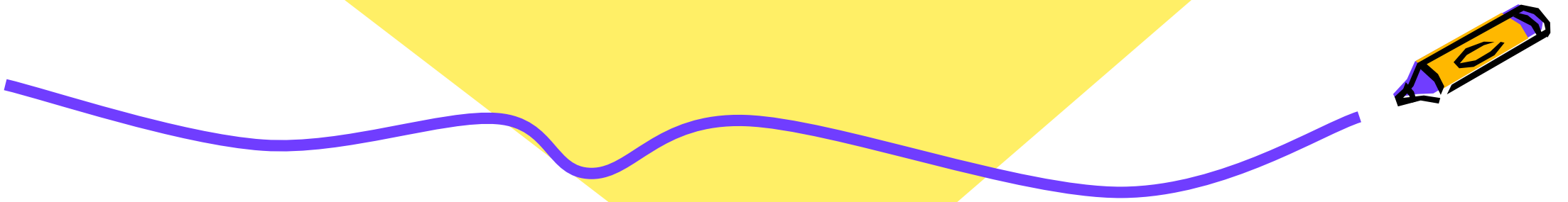


Theory Formulation



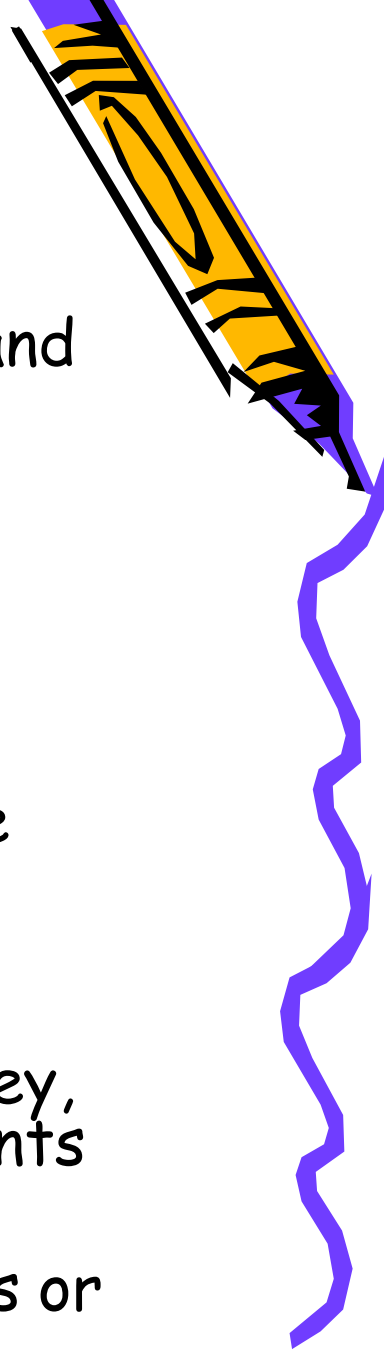


Types and Steps in Surveys



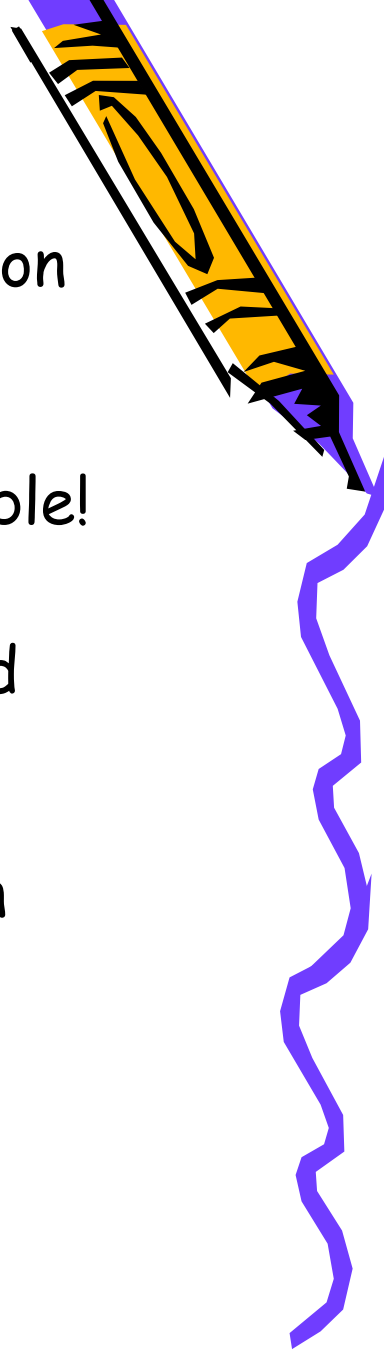
Surveys

- Surveys are the most commonly used quantitative descriptive method.
- Social surveys aim to measure attitudes, knowledge and behaviour.
- Surveys can also be descriptive (cross-sectional) or analytical (longitudinal).
 - Descriptive surveys describe population characteristics & study associations between variables (e.g.: opinion surveys).
 - Analytical surveys are conducted at more than one point in time and aim to identify trends or analyse cause and effect relationships. Can use trend, cohorts or panel.
 - Retrospective survey is a type of descriptive survey, asking respondents to recall or report on past events (e.g. evaluation of a pilot)
- Sometimes, surveys are used to identify interviewees or are exploratory.



Surveys

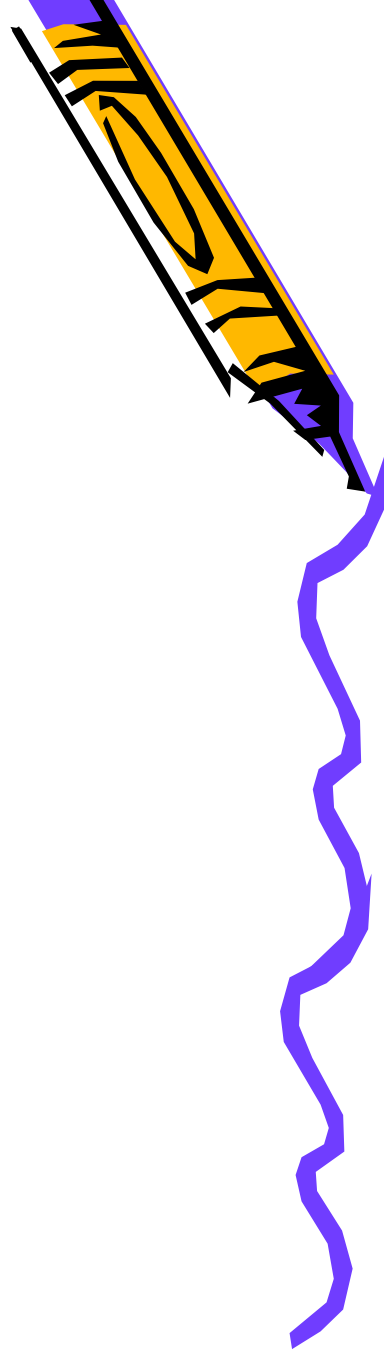
- In quantitative research, you should be looking at generalisation and representation of the population.
- To do that you can do *census* or *sample*.
- You can do self-selecting surveys **but** they are not generalisable!
- Report using phrases like "Of those who chose to respond....."
- Most often those who volunteer to respond to a self-selected survey have a strong opinion (frequently negative) about the issue in question.
- Be cautious in drawing any conclusion about what the public, in general thinks based on the results of a survey when the respondents are volunteers



Types of Surveys

Main Types:

- Online survey - e.g. 'survey monkey', MS Forms
- Postal survey
- Telephone survey
- Face-to-Face Interview
- Computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI)
- AI Surveys

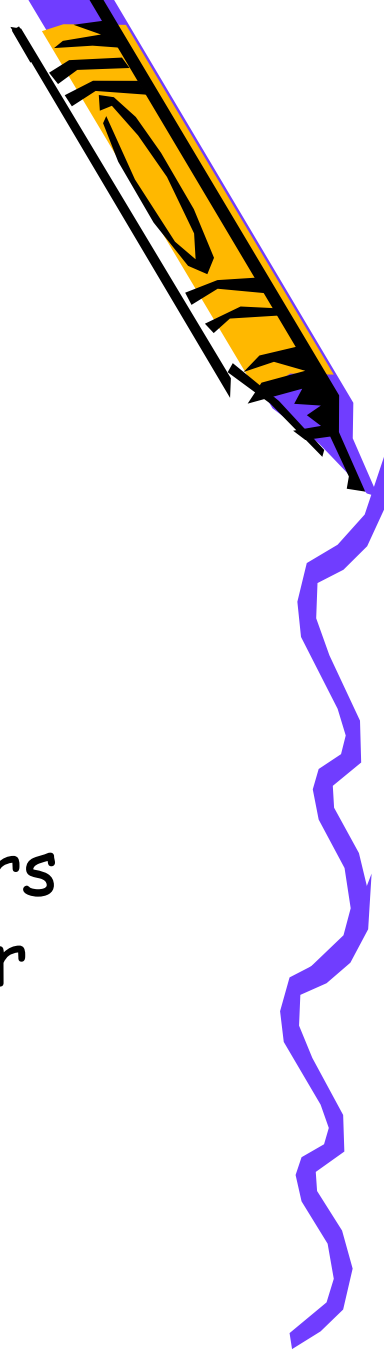


Key Terms and Concepts

- **Survey Instrument:** schedule of questions or response items.
- **Response Items:** individual survey questions or statements for which a response is solicited.
- **Interviews:** refers to face-to-face administration of a survey instrument.
- **Questionnaires:** refers to post, email or other indirect methods of administration.

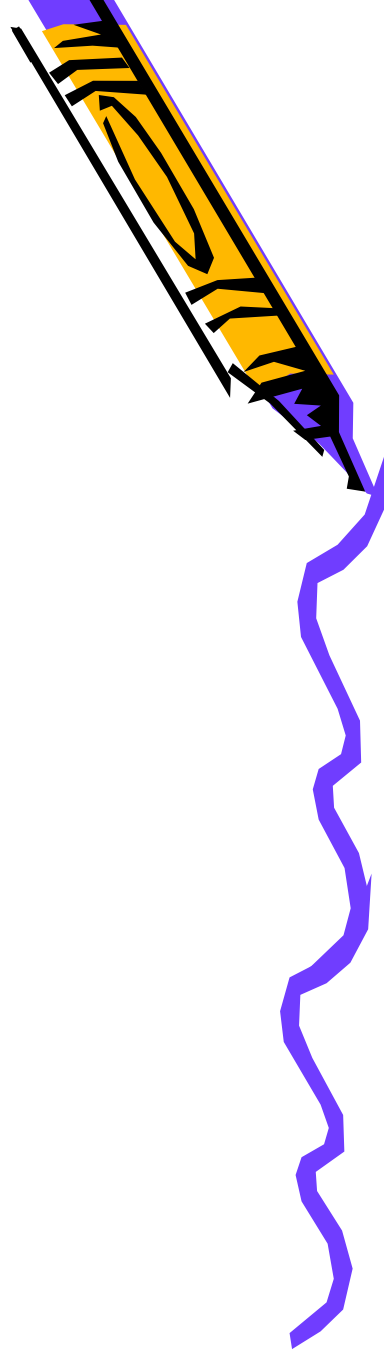


Unit of analysis is usually the individual, though can be an organisation (called cases).



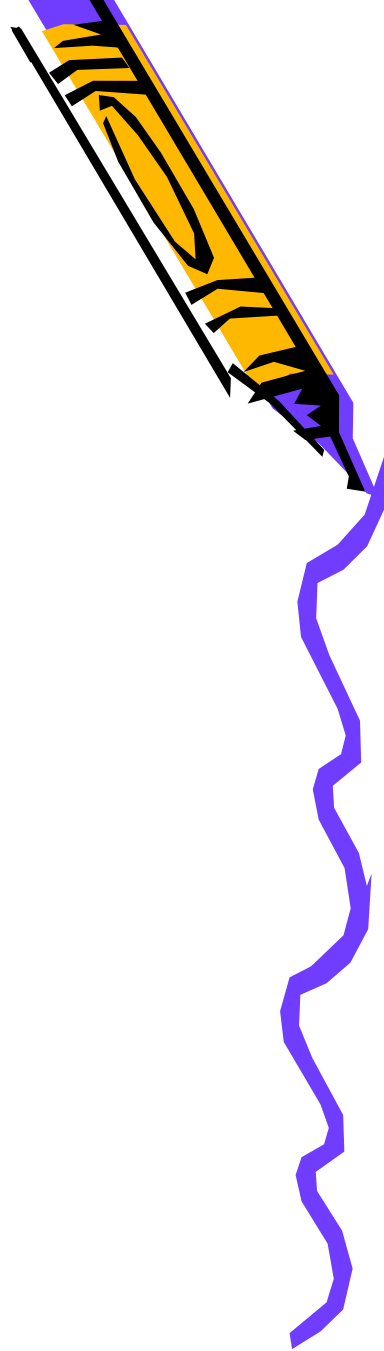
Stages in Survey Research

1. Survey Design (what topic and population to be studied and which form of survey to use).
2. Sampling
3. Instrument Design and Measuring attitudes (scale and index construction)
4. Evaluation of Survey (pretest and pilot)
5. Collection of Data
6. Collating and Managing Data
7. Analysis of Survey Data



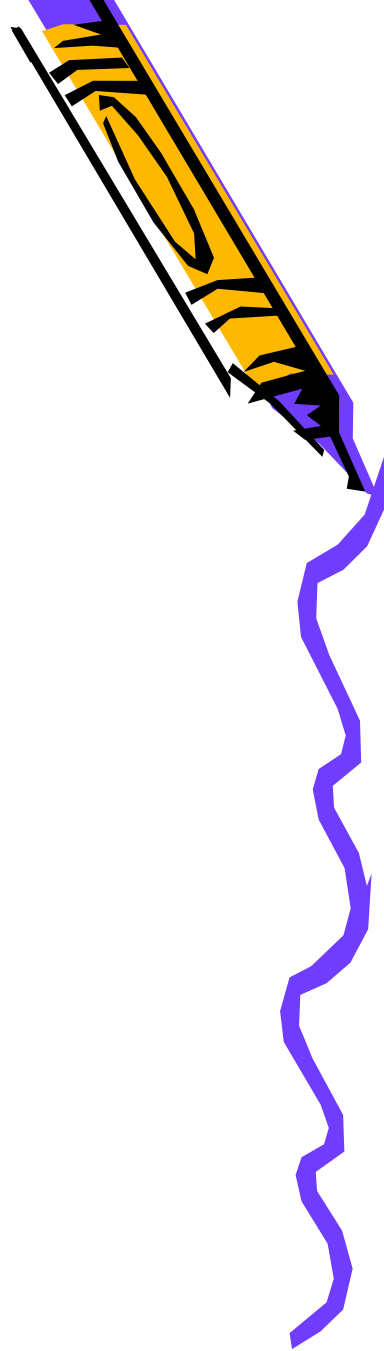
Initial Steps.

- Pick your topic - what theory or concept are you testing?
- Decide on your population then select the sampling frame and method.
- Your sample must be representative of the population you are surveying.



Sampling

- Random or probability sampling.
 - Used in descriptive and explanatory studies (testing of hypotheses).
 - Examples - simple, systematic, stratification and cluster sampling.
- Non-random (purposive)
 - Used in theory and instrument development.
 - Example - quota, volunteer sampling.
- Sampling of small-scale: network or snowball sampling



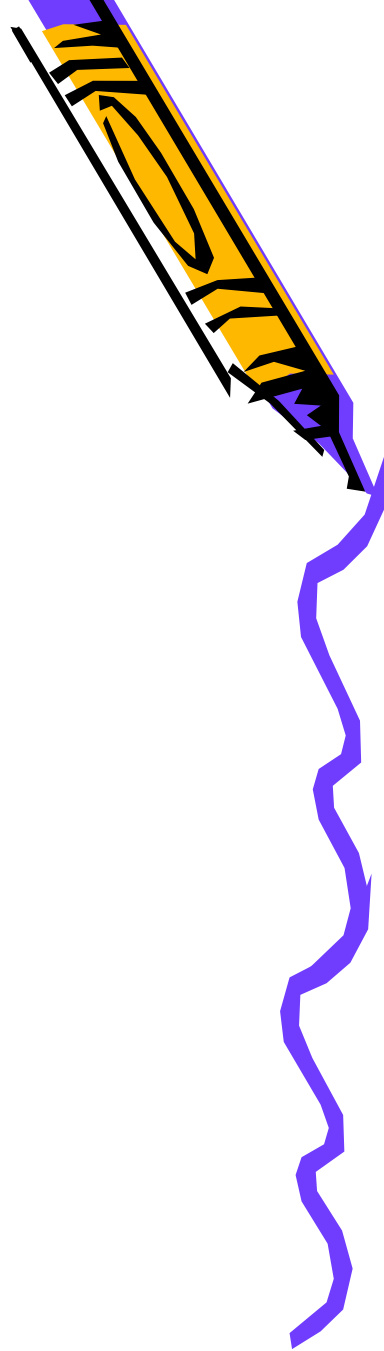
Random Sampling.

- Principle of sample sizes:
 - *the smaller the population the bigger the sampling ratio has to be for an accurate sample.*
 - Larger populations allow for smaller sampling ratios for equally good samples.
 - As the population size grows, the returns in accuracy for sample size shrink.
- Best sample size depends on degree of accuracy required, degree of diversity in the population and the number of different variables being examined simultaneously in the data analysis.
- Loads of sampling calculators available online - e.g. [Sample size calculator, formula, and examples \(surveymonkey.com\)](https://www.surveymonkey.com/sample-size-calculator)



Pre-testing & Piloting the Questionnaire.

- Pretest with a convenience sample (can be friends/co-workers).
- This is to test that the questions make sense
- Ask participants to interpret each question in their own words.
- Ask participants for their thoughts, questions and ideas about the questionnaire.
- You should then pilot it with a small sample of the intended audience - this involves conducting the questionnaire under simulated or actual research project conditions.
- Do not issue a questionnaire without a pre-test and a pilot!

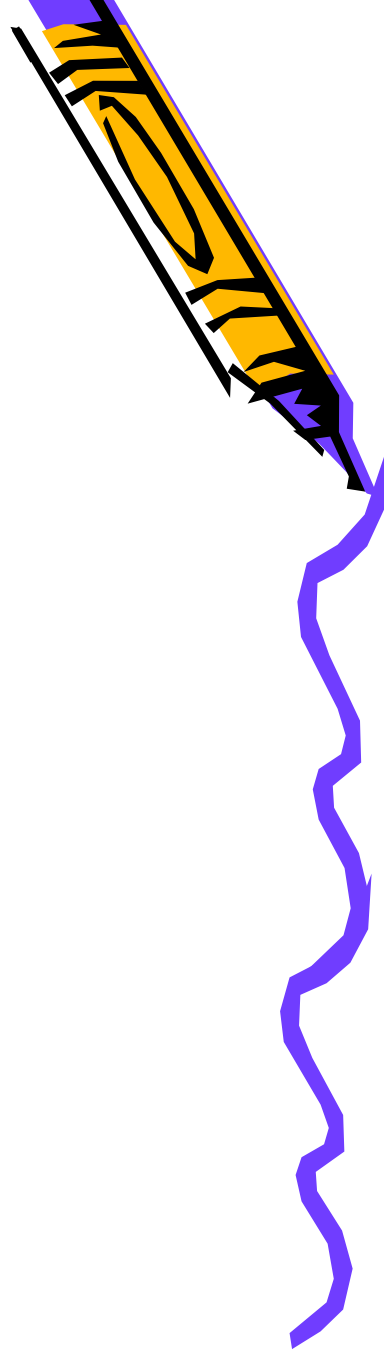




Questionnaire Construction

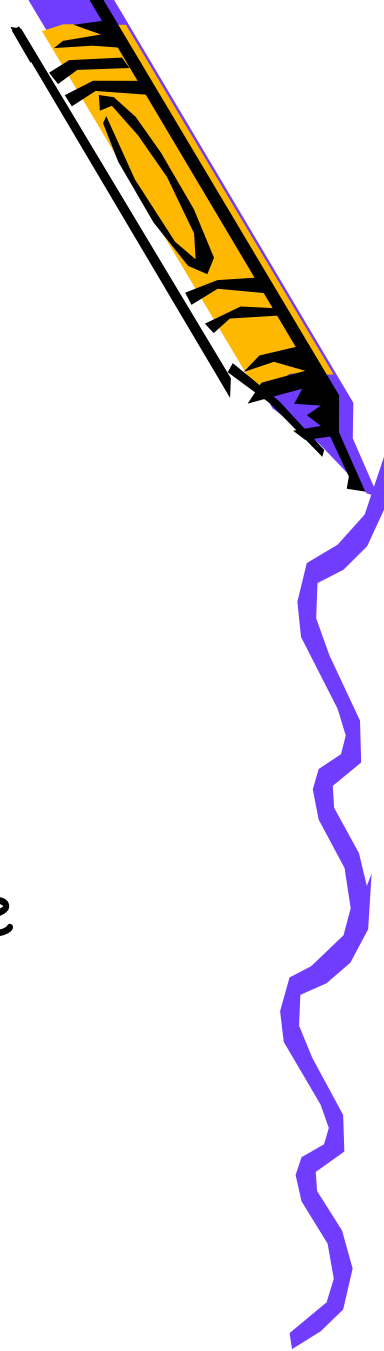
Questionnaire Construction.

- A questionnaire is not a haphazard collection of questions but is a carefully formulated sequence of questions.
- The questionnaire is structured to obtain information that meets the requirements of your research project.



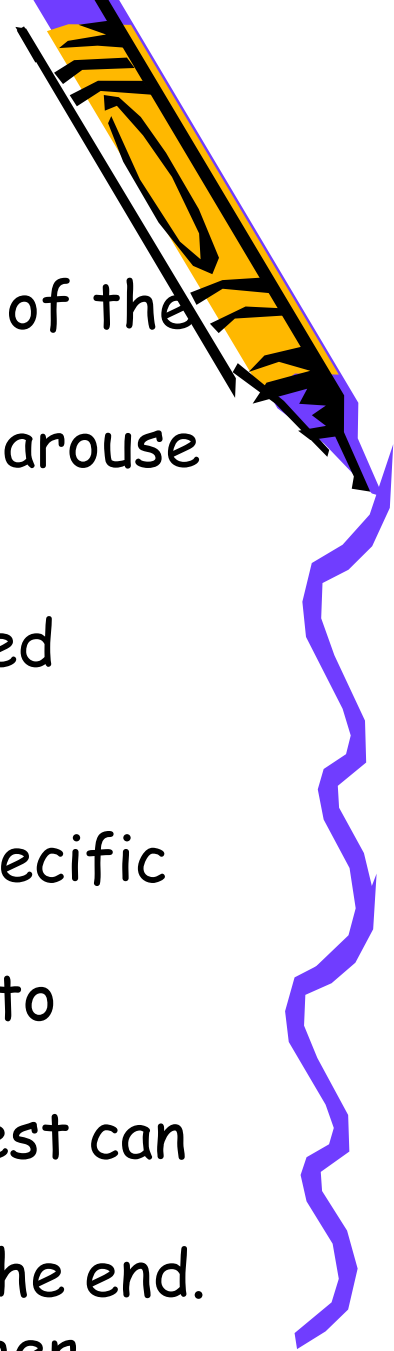
General Rules of Questionnaire Construction.

- Include only the questions that address your research concerns and which you plan to analyse.
- Make the questionnaire as appealing as possible.
- Keep the questionnaire as short as possible but do include all necessary questions to cover all aspects of the research problem.
- Consider in advance all possible issues that the respondent may raise.
- Minimise use of open-ended questions!



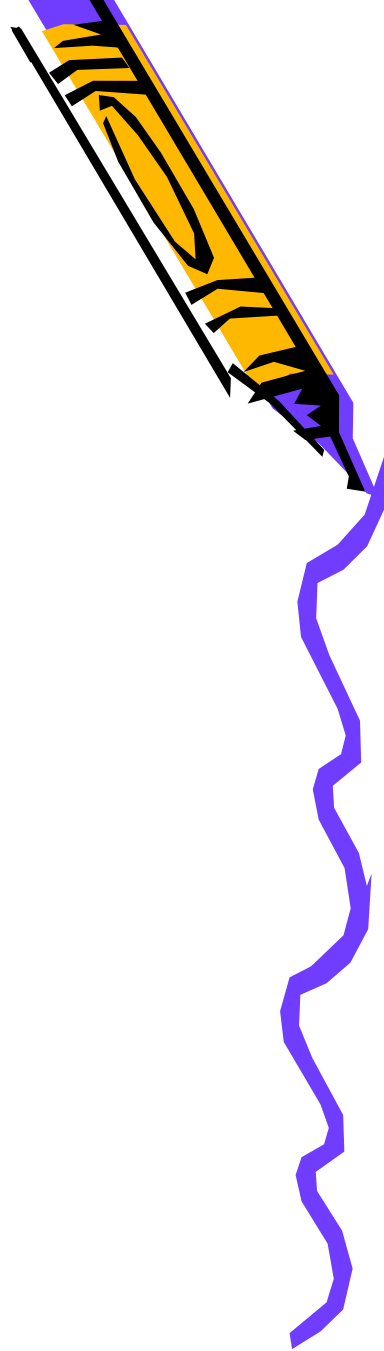
Must Do Order for a Questionnaire

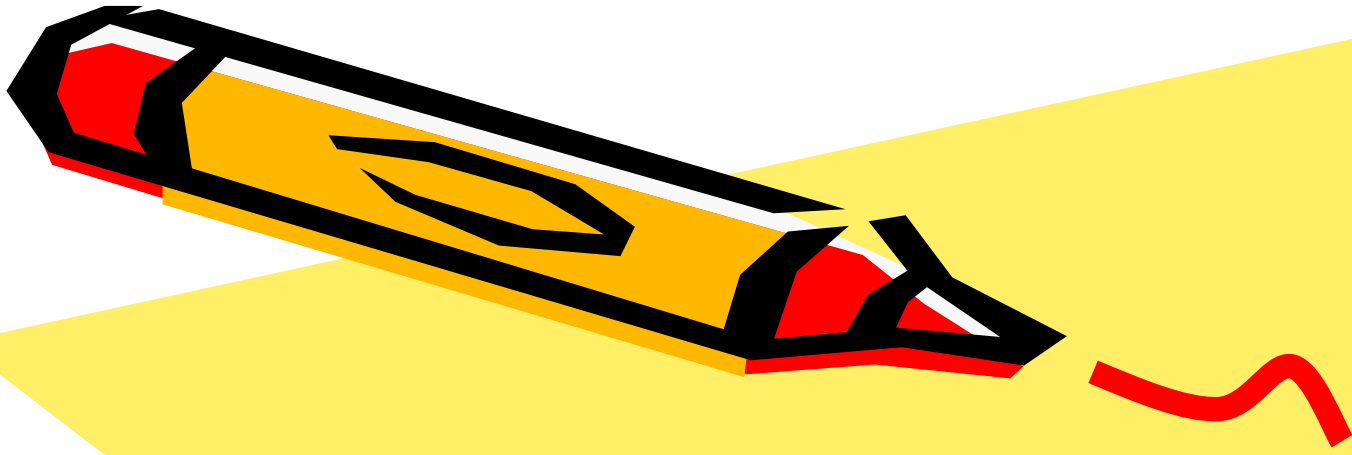
- An introduction disclosing the purpose and sponsorship of the survey followed by the instructions.
- Survey should follow with non-threatening items which arouse interest (can include filter questions and open-ended questions)
- First question should be clearly related to the announced purposes of the survey (not a background item)
- Survey can then proceed with attitudinal questions.
- Group items into logical coherent sections, i.e. under specific topics.
- Open-ended questions should be dispersed throughout to avoid loss of information due to fatigue.
- Minimise use of open-ended questions (pilot and pre-test can help you create closed ended questions)
- Sensitive background items (e.g. income) should be at the end.
- You can end with one open ended question for any further comments or to request details for interviews.



Item Bias - What to Avoid.

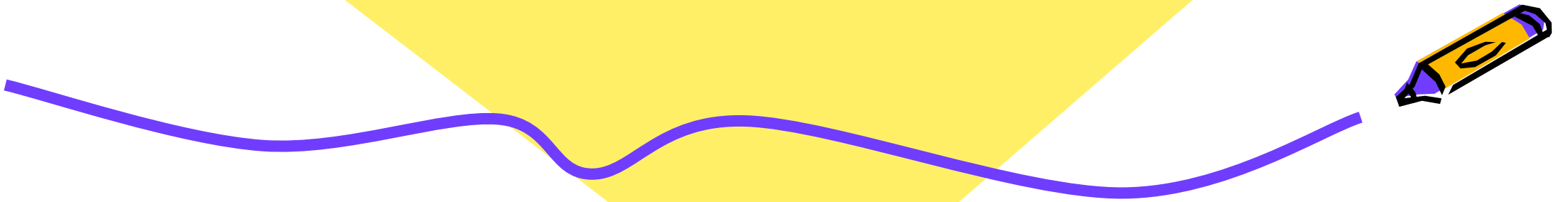
- Ambiguity
- Non-exhaustive response set (e.g. leaving out 'neutral' or 'don't know' and 'not sure')
- Ranking lists and multidimensionality
- Loaded terms
- Leading questions
- Unfamiliar terms and jargon
- Compound items and complexity.
- Social Desirability and hypothetical questions.
- Note recall bias!





Bad Questionnaire

Criticise each of the following survey questions.
Also note the overall structure of the questionnaire.



SURVEY ON ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION.



South West London

Answer all questions.

1. What is your sex?

- Male _____ Female _____

2. How old are you?

- Under 18 _____
- 18 to 21 _____
- 21 to 33 _____
- 33 to 40 _____
- 40 to 50 _____
- 51 to 65 _____
- 65 and over _____

3. What is your marital status?

- Single _____
- Married _____
- Separated _____
- Divorced _____
- Widowed _____

4. What is your ethnic background?

- White _____
- Black Caribbean _____
- Black African _____
- Asian _____
- Other _____

5. What is the highest level of education you attained?

- None _____
- Incomplete primary _____
- Primary completed _____
- Secondary completed _____
- Third level certificate or diploma _____
- Third level degree _____

6. What is your religion?

- Roman Catholic _____
- Church of England _____
- Presbyterian _____
- Methodist _____
- None _____



7. How often would you say you attend religious services?

- More than once a week 1
- Once a week 2
- Two or three times a month 3
- Once a month 4
- Several times a year 5
- Less frequently 6
- Never 7
- Refused 8
- Don't know 9
- No answer 10

8. How much do you earn? _____

9. Do you find your job satisfying?

Yes ____ No ____

10. How much do you drink per day?

- Less than 1 unit _____
- 5 to 10 units _____
- More than 10 units _____

11. What are your views on the increased alcohol consumption per capita?

12. Do you drink?

Yes ____ No ____

If not, why not?

13. Would you say that you are a moderate or a heavy drinker?

Yes ____ No ____

14. Have you been drunk recently?

Yes ____ No ____ Don't know ____

15. Do you feel influenced by your peer group to drink?

Yes ____ No ____

16. 'Everyone knows that drink causes more road accidents'.

Agree ____ Disagree ____

17. 'Britain should increase the opening hours of its pubs'

- Very strongly agree ____
- Strongly agree ____
- Agree ____
- Disagree ____



Meet your Codebook!

Why Codebook is important

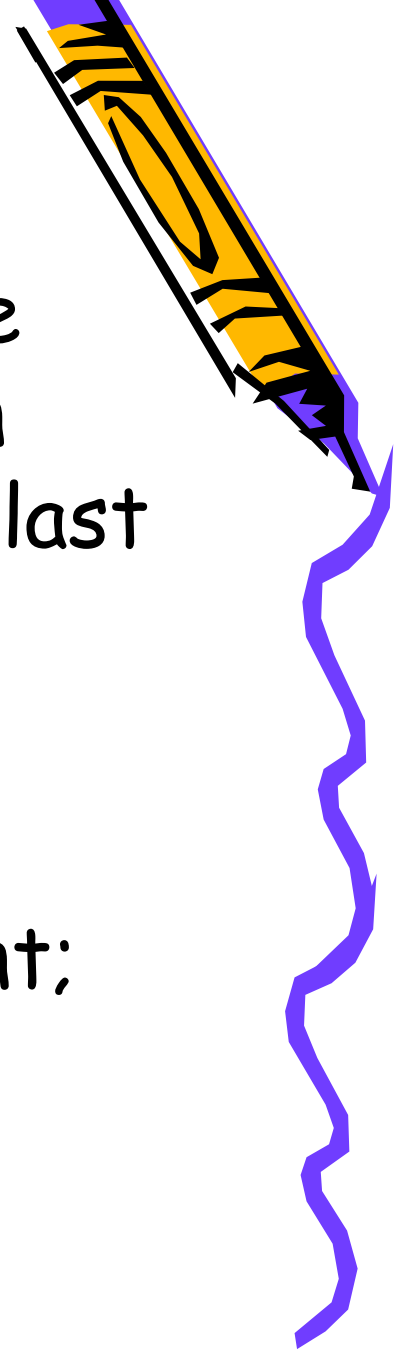
- Using MS Forms etc can make it easy to collect the responses and do simple analysis
- However, they don't cope well with open-ended questions (create 'word clouds')
- Always do a codebook alongside your questionnaire!
- This helps you to understand how you will analyse your data
- Absolute key to coding 'open ended questions' - you will need to post-hoc code.
- You need to summarize/quantify results not provide a list of quotes!



Doing the Codebook

1. Did you attend the training session on health and safety last week?
 - Yes
 - No
 - If you answered no, please explain why you missed the session

1. Did you attend the training session on health and safety last week?
 1. Yes
 2. No
 - Post-code. 1=absent; 2=other work commitments



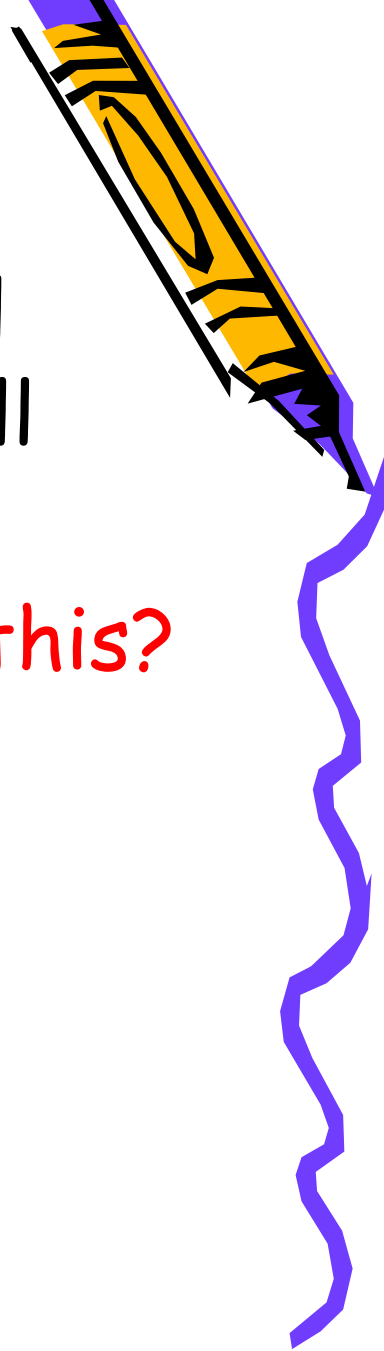
Doing the Codebook

1. How did you travel to work this week? (Tick all that apply)

1. Bicycle
2. Train/Tube/Tram
3. Bus
4. Walk
5. Car
6. Other (please specify)

1. How did you travel this week? (Tick all that apply)

How should we code this?

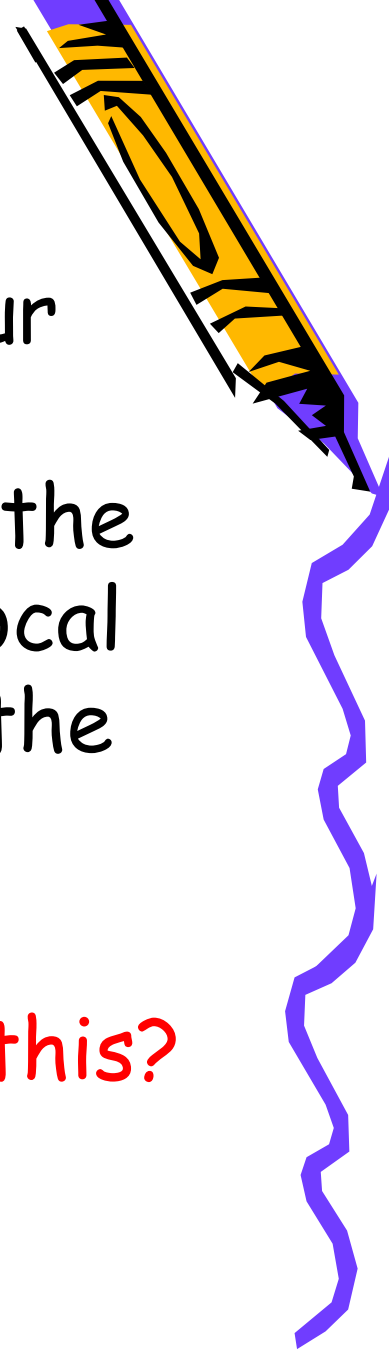


Doing the Codebook

1. Thinking about your most recent conversation with the librarian at your local library, what was the nature of your request?

1. Thinking about your most recent conversation with the librarian at your local library, what was the nature of your request?

How should we code this?



Quick Exercise

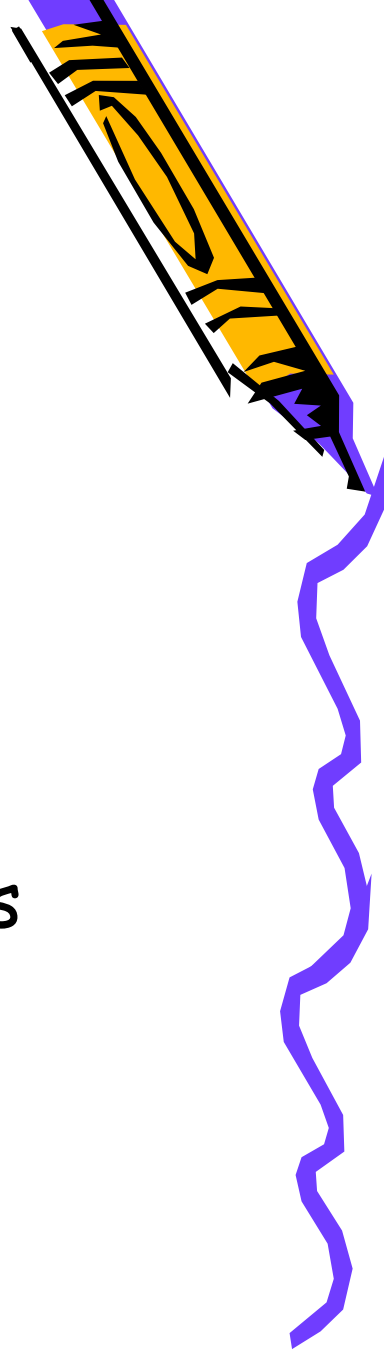
Attendance for 'flu vaccination for over 65 year olds has dropped in general practice in South West London. Qualitative interviews have suggested that it is due limited availability of appointments at convenient times.

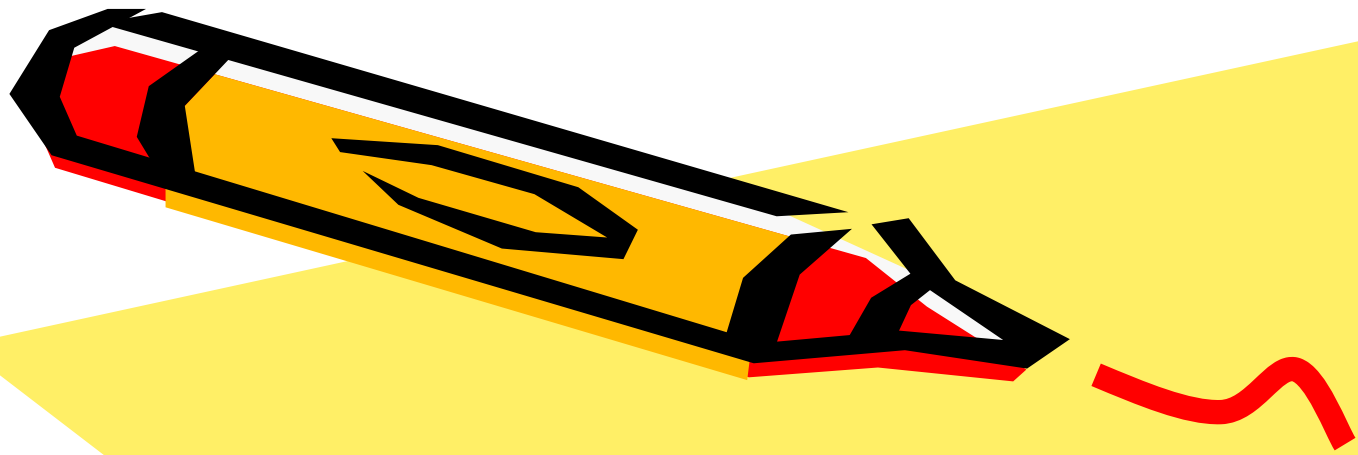
- Design two closed-ended questions to test this assumption.
- What socio-demographic characteristics would you use?
- Any thoughts on how you'd sample?



Indices and Scales.

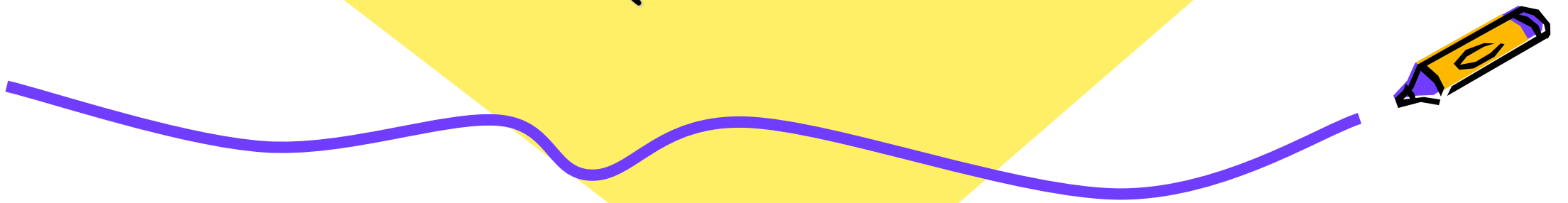
- Both are ordinal measures of variables.
- Index is constructed through the simple accumulation of scores assigned to specific responses to the individual items comprising the index.
- A scale is constructed through the assignment of scores to response patterns among the several items comprising the scale.
- It recognises that some items reflect a relatively weaker degree of the variable.





Over to you...

Q & A time



Share Your Experience and Help Us
Make Our Events Even More
Awesome!



Thank you!

