

## The Use of Web-Based Questionnaires among Teachers/ Researchers during the Pandemic of Covid 19.

استخدام الأساتذة الباحثين للاستبيانات عبر الخط خلال جائحة كوفيد 19

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### Abstract:

A questionnaire is one of the most used research tools among researchers. Due to the pandemic covid 19, many researchers have shifted from the traditional modes of research to digital ones. This study investigates the effectiveness of online surveys and their advantages in research. Seventeen permanent teachers of English in the department of English language at Belhadj Bouchaib University were asked to answer an online questionnaire. Results showed that teachers of English at Belhadj Bouchaib University had a positive attitude towards online surveys. However, they rarely used them in their research, and online surveys could replace traditional ones due to the advantages provided by this innovative research tool.

### Keywords:

Online surveys, questionnaire, research, research instruments, teachers of English

### الملخص:

يعد الاستبيان من أكثر أدوات البحث استخدامًا بين الباحثين. بسبب جائحة كوفيد 19، تحول العديد من الباحثين من الأساليب التقليدية للبحث إلى الأساليب الرقمية. تبحث هذه الدراسة في فعالية الاستطلاعات عبر الإنترنت ومزاياها في مجال البحث. طُلب من 17 استاذ باحث للغة الإنجليزية في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة بلحاج بو شعيب الإجابة على استبيان عبر الإنترنت. أظهرت النتائج أن معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية في جامعة بلحاج بو شعيب لديهم موقف إيجابي تجاه الاستبيانات عبر الإنترنت رغم قلة استعمالهم لهذه الأداة في البحث ويمكنهم استبدال الاستبيانات التقليدية نظرًا للمزايا التي توفرها أداة البحث المبتكرة.

### الكلمات المفتاحية:

الدراسات الاستقصائية على الإنترنت، استبيان، بحث، أدوات البحث، اساتذة اللغة الإنجليزية.

## 1. Introduction

Collecting data from a population sample requires using surveys, defined as quantitative and qualitative research strategies or procedures (Ponto, 2015). Surveys are administered through face-to-face interviews, telephone interviews, or questionnaires (self-administered questionnaires) (Ponto, 2015).

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Online surveys are an innovation to the older, traditional methods that have existed with technological advances. Researchers used online surveys due to their lower costs and faster processing modes (Szolnoki and Hoffmann, 2013). However, they have become more popular than traditional surveys due to the effects of the pandemic of covid 19, as all populations were advised to minimise face-to-face interactions. Hence, this study attempts to investigate the use of online surveys among teachers of English at Belhadj Bouchaib University and to seek the advantages of online surveys compared to traditional ones. For those reasons, the following research question is asked :

- What is the attitude of teachers towards online surveys?

In order to answer the following research question, the following hypothesis is put forward:

- Teachers of English at Belhadj Bouchaib university have a positive attitude towards the online surveys

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Definition of Questionnaire**

The quantitative method of data collection is through the use of a survey questionnaire. According to Macintyre (2000), a questionnaire is a "...survey of different opinions from (usually) a large number of people who provide anonymous replies. The questions are standardised, i.e., each respondent receives the same number and kind."

A valid questionnaire is relevant, complete, and accurate, i.e., the questionnaire must cover all the desired information that is intended to gather, and the responses to the questions must be precise<sup>1</sup>

### **2.2 Online Surveys**

Web-based questionnaires, also called online surveys, are an increasingly used surveying tool to gain knowledge about the attitudes and sentiments of a given population essential for understanding quality of life (White, 2014). The emergence of Web-based questionnaires like google forms has promoted and given broad access to the online tools of survey research.

### **2.3 Google Forms**

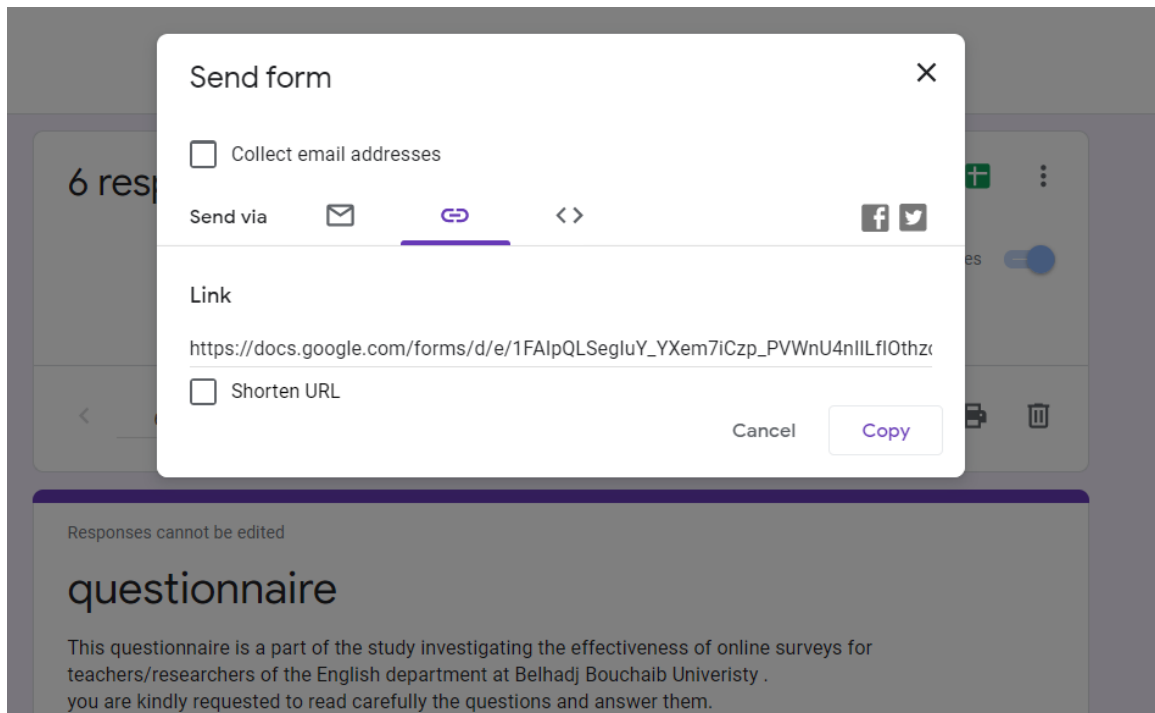
Google Forms is a free web-based used to make online surveys and quizzes. The form can be sent through an email link or embedded into Facebook and Twitter. Data gathered using the state is stored in a spreadsheet<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup>[https://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:LO2lj6nxtvUJ:https://www.who.int/foodsafety/publications/foodborne\\_disease/Annex\\_4.pdf+&cd=1&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=dz](https://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:LO2lj6nxtvUJ:https://www.who.int/foodsafety/publications/foodborne_disease/Annex_4.pdf+&cd=1&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=dz)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.google.com/forms/about/>

**Figure 1: Different Options for the Administration of the Online Survey**

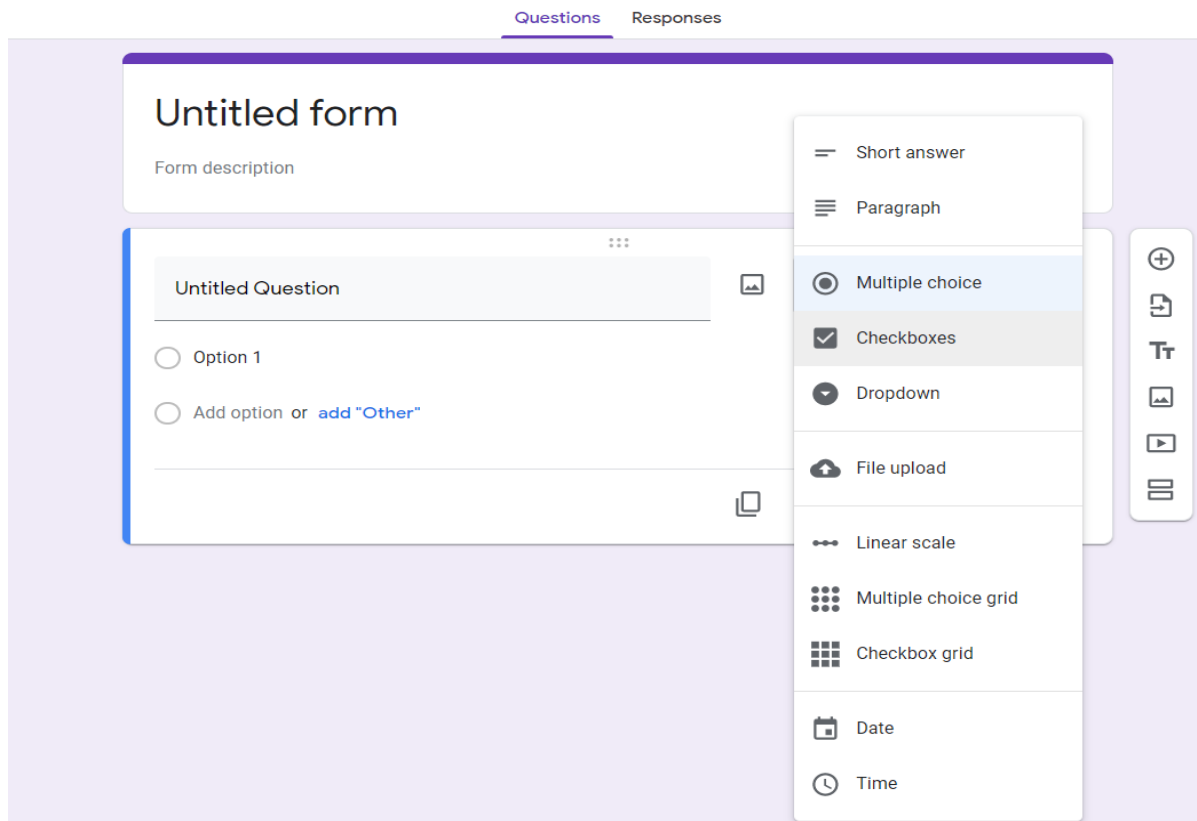


**Source :** Adapted from Google Forms : <https://docs.google.com/forms/>

Google Forms allows using both open-ended and closed-ended questions. Different types of questions are used in Google Forms: short answer, paragraph, multiple-choice, checkboxes, dropdown, file upload, linear scale, multiple choice grid, checkbox grid, date, and time<sup>3</sup>.

**Figure 2: Different Types of Questions Offered by Google Forms**

<sup>3</sup> [https://support.google.com/docs/answer/6281888?hl=en&ref\\_topic=6063584](https://support.google.com/docs/answer/6281888?hl=en&ref_topic=6063584)



**Source:** Adapted from Google Forms: <https://docs.google.com/forms/>

## 2.4 Online Surveys Vs. Traditional Surveys

Online surveys have upgraded the traditional surveys. According to Wright (2005), traditional surveys usually take more time to reach respondents with no guarantees to be opened, completed, and sent back immediately. Moreover, Hard paper responses are handwritten, which are vulnerable to smudges and smears. While understanding the survey responses of these handwritten papers are at the mercy of the respondents' handwriting. Finally, respondents may feel uncomfortable answering questions with minimal anonymity, especially in the interviewer's presence (Wright, 2005).

On the contrary, online surveys provide anonymity despite the demographic information and the ease of allowing only the targeted demographics to participate. The use of an online survey is cost savings, as usually, researchers use google form, which is a free platform with faster results since it is digital; answers are submitted immediately to the survey platform (Ekman, Dickman, Asa, Weiderpass & Litton, 2006)

According to White (2014), online surveys can reduce survey bias from the "interviewer effect" since participants can sit alone and fill out the form conveniently. Moreover, online surveys provide faster results analysis since a platform such as Google forms automatically provides charts and graphs of the results.

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1 Context

The study was based on a quantitative model to collect data from English teachers concerning their attitudes toward online surveys. The research tool used in this study was an online closed-form questionnaire.

### 3.2 Participants

The participants of the study were 17 permanent teachers of English at the department of letters and English language, the faculty of letters and languages and social science at Belhadj Bouchaib University. The participants of the study are composed of 4 males and 13 females; however, gender was not considered in the study.

### 3.3 Instruments

A google form questionnaire was used in the study. It was composed of three parts. The first part included personal information such as gender. In contrast, the second part sought whether teachers of English at Belhadj Bouchaib University used online surveys in their research. This part used a five-point Likert scale to calculate the data using these indicators (5= always, 4= often, 3= sometimes, 2 = rarely, 1= never). The final part comprises six items to determine the attitude towards the online survey. A five-point Likert scale was also used in this part (5= strongly agree, 4= agree, 3= neutral, 2 = disagree, 1= agree).

The online questionnaire link was sent via email to all permanent teachers of English in a group mail. It was published for one week. There are 23 permanent teachers of English at the department of English language at Belhadj Bouchaib University; however, only 17 teachers replied.

## 4. Results and Discussions

The online questionnaire results revealed that 76.5% of the participants were females while 23.5% were males. However, gender was not considered in the study.

**Table 1.** Gender of the Participants

	Frequency	Percentage
<b>male</b>	4	23,5%
<b>female</b>	13	76,5%
<b>Total</b>	17	100,0%

When participants were asked if they used online surveys in their research, the responses were as follows:

**Table 2.** Descriptive Statistics on the Frequency Use of Online Surveys

	N	Minimum	Maximum	mean	Standard deviation
<b>Do you use online surveys in your research?</b>	17	1	5	2,47	1,179

<b>total</b>	17				
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**Note:** 1 never, 2 rarely, 3 sometimes, 4 often, 5 always

The five-point Likert scale is considered an interval scale. Hence, from 1 to 1.8, this means never. From 1.81 to 2.60, this means rarely. From 2.61 to 3.40, this means sometimes. Moreover, from 3.41-4.20, this means often, and finally, from 4.21 to 5 means always.

The mean of this question is (mean=2.47), which indicates that teachers of English at Belhadj Bouchaib University rarely used online surveys in their research.

The following section was addressed to teachers of English in the department of English language at Belhadj Bouchaib University to determine their attitude towards online surveys.

**Table 3:** Descriptive Statistics on the Attitude towards Online Surveys

	<b>N</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
<b>Online surveys provide anonymity to participants</b>	17	1	5	3,59	1,228
<b>online surveys are cost saving than traditional ones</b>	17	1	5	3,71	1,263
<b>online surveys provide faster results</b>	17	1	5	3,82	1,286
<b>online surveys reduce bias from "interviewer effect."</b>	17	2	5	3,47	1,007
<b>online surveys provide faster results analysis</b>	17	1	5	3,00	1,173
<b>online surveys can replace traditional ones</b>	17	1	5	3,24	1,348
<b>Total</b>	17				

**Note:** 1 strongly disagree, 2 disagree, 3 neutral, 4 agree, 5 strongly agree

The five-point Likert scale is considered an interval scale. Hence, from 1 to 1.8, this means strongly disagree. From 1.81 to 2.60, this means to disagree. From 2.61 to 3.40, this means neutral. Moreover, from 3.41-4.20, this means to agree, and finally, from 4.21 to 5 means strongly agree.

The mean of the first statement is 3.59, which revealed that participants of the study agreed with the idea that online surveys protected participants' privacy. The second statement's mean is (mean= 3.71), indicating that participants agreed with the information that online surveys are cheaper than traditional ones. Moreover, the third statement's mean is (mean= 3.82), which showed that participants agreed that online surveys offered faster results than the manual option.

Participants were asked to give their opinion about the absence of the interviewer when answering online surveys. The results showed that participants agreed with the statement as the mean of this statement is found to be (mean = 3.47). On the contrary, participants were undecided in their responses since results showed that participants were neutral in their answers as the mean of the statement is 3.00. Finally, the last statement was about the possible substitution of traditional surveys with online surveys. Results showed that participants agreed with the statement as the mean is found to be (mean= 3.24).

The overall results showed that teachers of English at Belhadj Bouchaib University rarely used online surveys in their research, as the mean of this question is (mean=2.47). This result can be linked to the fact that most teachers traditionally conducted their studies due to the lack of knowledge of existing tools or difficulty accessing the internet. According to UN News Centre (2015), people living in low- to middle-income countries do not have internet access.

The overall results showed that participants of the study had a positive attitude towards online surveys. These results are compatible with the study of Andrews, Nonnecke & Preece (2003) and Evans and Mathur (2005), which revealed that participants believed that online surveys offered more advantages over other formats.

The last statement revealed that participants agreed with the idea that online surveys could replace traditional ones; however, Brandt (2012) believed that online surveys could not substitute but be used as an addition to the traditional ones.

## **5. Conclusion**

Technological advances have enabled researchers to move away from traditional surveys. However, Algerian university teachers, especially Belhadj Bouchaib University's English teachers, do not use it often. Hence, the conventional surveys are still significant for several reasons, such as lack of training and willingness to change. This article highlights the advantages of using online surveys and the drawbacks of using traditional ones in research.

To conclude, traditional surveys still have their place in the field of research. Nevertheless, the changes of attitude with the new generation of teachers/researchers can gradually reduce that demand. However, researchers should choose the appropriate data collection method based on their needs and visions.

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### Appendices

#### Appendix I



Questions Responses 17

## questionnaire

This questionnaire is a part of the study investigating the effectiveness of online surveys for teachers/researchers of the English department at Belhadj Bouchaib Univeristy .  
you are kindly requested to read carefully the questions and answer them.

what is your gender \*

- Female
- Male

Do you use online surveys in your researches ? \*

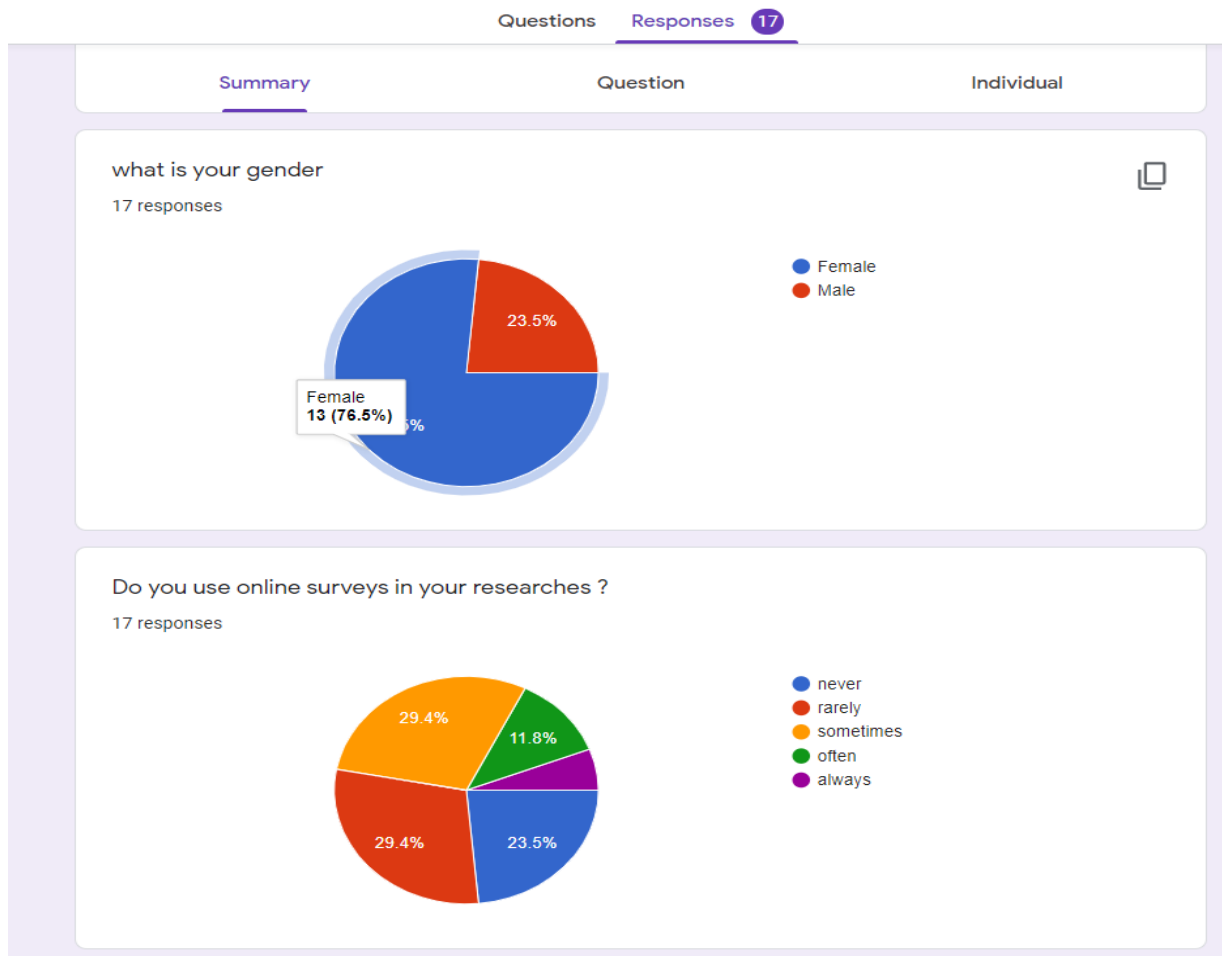
- never
- rarely
- sometimes
- often
- always



tick the box based on your level of agreement.

	strongly disagr...	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree
online surveys p...	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
online surveys a...	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
online surveys p...	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
online surveys r...	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
online surveys p...	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
online surveys c...	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Appendix II



tick the box based on your level of agreement.

