

QDDS III: A tool for documenting survey
questionnaires for researchers and
data archives

European Survey Research
Association

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Projektteam

- Rainer Schnell; University of Duisburg-Essen, Germany
- Anja Zwingenberger; University of Duisburg-Essen, Germany
- Max Stempfhuber; GESIS – Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences, Germany
- Oliver Hopt; GESIS – Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences, Germany

Outline

- Needs and challenges in survey documentation
- Alternative systems
- Description and structure
- Short example
- Search for structural attributes
- Future work

Alternative Systems

- Tool for the Analysis and Documentation of Electronic Questionnaires (TADEQ) (Bethlehem & Hundepool 2002)
- Microdata Management Toolkit – Nesstar (Heus, 2006)
- Q-Bank (Maitland, Miller & Ridolfo 2009)
- Survey Documentation Management System (Mohler, Pennell & Hubbard 2008)

Current lack of
documentation

- Designing and developing new instruments is a complex and lengthy process
- Once the instrument is finalized, the rationale behind details in phrasing and formatting is no longer evident
- A manual change log, on the other hand, containing full documentation of changes and the underlying reasons results in an unwieldy, hardly manageable document
- The insight which prompted modification of a question, (category of) answer, format or sequence is almost inevitably lost

Tool description

- QDDS III is a freeware supporting the development and documentation of questionnaires
- Documents are based on the Data Documentation Initiative (DDI) standard plus extensions
- Software is implemented as a desktop application
- Current status: QDDS is available in German and English
- Software and existing questionnaires can be found at <http://www.qdds.org>
- Search for structural attributes

Tool structure

- Menu based
- Tree view (hierarchical structure of the questionnaire), split screen, icons
- Object oriented (questionnaire, blocks of questions, questions)
- Example: German Socio-Economic Panel Study (SOEP) 2007 Questionnaire Metadata

SOEP 2007 main questionnaire

The screenshot shows the QDDS 0.7.3.4 interface. The main window displays a tree view of a questionnaire titled "Living in Germany - Survey 2007 on the social situation of households". The tree includes sections like "Expenses for house or flat" (questions 2-20), "Does your household have ...?" (questions 56-69), and "Interviewer's remarks" (A, B, C). A "View:" panel at the bottom left shows options for "deleted elements", "question type", "changes", and "additional information", all of which are checked.

The right-hand panel, titled "Questionnaire Meta Data", contains the following fields and options:

- Title: Living in Germany - Survey 2007 on the social situation of households
- Author: Anja Zwingenberger (with an "add author" button)
- Keywords: Household
- Source: (empty field)
- Comment: (empty field)
- Mode: paper (dropdown menu)
- Template file: Standard (with a "select template" button)
- Style: display question numbers
- Survey specific features:
 - serial number
 - interviewer number
 - date of interview
 - response date
 - begin of interview
 - end of interview
- Interviewer Instruction: (empty field)
- Texts for non-substantial answers:
 - don't know: I don't know
 - refusal: No Comment
 - not applicable: No Answer
 - question not asked: Question not asked

Questionnaire

Block of questions

Question

Example: SOEP 2007
question 6

6. XH06 What kind of a house is it in which you live?

Farm house

Free standing one or two family house

One or two family house as row or double house

Building with 3 to 4 flats

Building with 5 to 8 flats

Building with 9 or more flats

(but no more than 8 floors/stories)

High-rise (9 or more floors/stories)

Question 6
in QDDS

QDDS 0.7.3.4 - C:\Dokumente und Einstellungen\anja\Eigene Dateien\QDDS\Test\examples\SOEP\09_02_21 SOEP Household en.qdds - version 4 - anja ...

File Edit Questionnaire Block Question Help

Living in Germany - Survey 2007 on the social ...

- Expenses for house or flat
 - 2
 - 3
 - 4
 - 5
 - 6**
 - 7
 - 8
 - 8a
 - 9
 - 10
 - 11
 - 12
 - 13
 - 14
 - 15
 - 16
 - 17
 - 18
 - 19
 - 20
- Only for homeowners
 - 28
 - 29
 - 30
 - 31
 - 32
 - 33
 - 34
 - 35
 - 36
 - 36a
- Applicable for all
 - 37
 - 38

View:

- deleted elements
- question type
- changes
- additional information

Question Data | Intro/Extr | Answer defaults | Documentation of Changes | History | Change Index | Notes

Type of question: question with answer defaults

Construct:

Relevance: middle

Question category:

Description: 6

Question: What kind of a house is it in which you live?

Value range: Min: Max: Label:

Respondent Instructions:

Instructions for Interviewer:

Incentive: show select

Incoming filter:

internal question id: q6q

Answer options question 6

The screenshot shows the QDDS software interface. On the left, a list of questions is displayed, with question 6 highlighted. The right panel shows the configuration for question 6, including answer options, alignment, and filter format.

Question List:

- Living in Germany - Survey 2007 on the social ...
 - Expenses for house or flat
 - 2
 - 3
 - 4
 - 5
 - 6**
 - 7
 - 8
 - 8a
 - 9
 - 10
 - 11
 - 12
 - 13
 - 14
 - 15
 - 16
 - 17
 - 18
 - 19
 - 20
 - Only for homeowners
 - 28
 - 29
 - 30
 - 31
 - 32
 - 33
 - 34
 - 35
 - 36
 - 36a
 - Applicable for all
 - 37
 - 38

Question 6 Configuration:

- new default
- paragraph
- headline
- import defaults set
- export defaults set
- Answers:
 - Free standing one or two family house
 - One or two family house as row or double house
 - Building with 3 to 4 flats
 - Building with 5 to 8 flats
 - Building with 9 or more flats (but no more than 8 floors/stories)
 - High-rise (9 or more floors/stories)
- Alignment: vertical
- Use of non-substantial answers:
 - don't know
 - question not asked
 - not applicable
 - refusal
- Layout style: plain
- Filter format: arrow with question number

View:

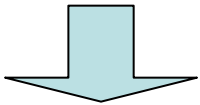
- deleted elements
- question type
- changes
- additional information

Documentation system

Documentation of changes

History of changes

Change Index



On every object:

- Questionnaire
- Block of questions
- Question

QDDS 0.7.3.4 - untitled.qdds - version 0 - anja - 4.3.2009

File Edit Questionnaire Block Question Help

Questionnaire Meta Data Intro/Extro Documentation of Changes History Change Index Project Meta Data Notes

Title: New Questionnaire

Author:

Keywords:

Source:

Comment:

Mode:

Template file:

Style: display question numbers

Survey specific features:

- serial number
- interviewer number
- date of interview
- response date
- begin of interview
- end of interview

Interviewer Instruction:

Texts for non-substantial answers:

don't know:	<input type="text" value="I don't know"/>
refusal:	<input type="text" value="No Comment"/>
not applicable:	<input type="text" value="No Answer"/>
question not asked:	<input type="text" value="Question not asked"/>

View:

- deleted elements
- question type
- changes
- additional information

Documentation of changes: Question 1

QDDS 0.7.3.4 - 09_02_21 SOEP Household en.qdds - version 1 - anja - 4.3.2009

File Edit Questionnaire Block Question Help

Question Data Intro/Extro Answer defaults Documentation of Changes History Change Index Notes

Change category:

Question

- wording
- question newly inserted
- question deleted
- position
- type
- emphasize parts of question

Filter

- wording
- filter deleted
- new filter
- layout
- target

Answer defaults

- wording
- default: added
- default: deleted
- changed order
- use of non-substantial answers
- placement
- layout
- emphasize parts of answers
- multiple answers (not) possible

Misc.

- missing answer option
- overlapping change

Cause for change:

- misunderstanding of question
- misunderstanding of answer option
- respondent paused
- skip pattern error
- respondent showed confusion
- request for repetition
- respondent asked for explanation

Category/Cause	Description
question deleted	not relevant
misunderstanding of question	pretest nr. 2 15.01.09 zwi

View:

- deleted elements
- question type
- changes
- additional information

History: Question 1

QDDS 0.7.3.4 - 09_02_21 SOEP Household en.qdds - version 1 - anja - 4.3.2009

File Edit Questionnaire Block Question Help

Question Data Intro/Extro Answer defaults Documentation of Changes History Change Index Notes

Living in Germany - Survey 2007 on the social ...
Expenses for house or flat

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
8a	
9	
10	
11	
12	
13	
14	
15	
16	
17	
18	
19	
20	
Only for tenants	
21	
22	
23	
24	
25	
25a	
26	
27	
Only for homeowners	
28	
29	
30	

View:
 deleted elements
 question type
 changes
 additional information

Question	Answer	Filter	Misc.
In version 0 from 21.2.2009 2 Did you live in this flat the last time we interviewed you about a year ago?	x		
New element			
In version 1 from 23.2.2009 2 Did you live in this flat the last time we interviewed you about a year ago?	x		
question deleted: not relevant misunderstanding of question: pretest nr. 2 15.01.09 zwi			

Report...

Change Index:
Question 1

QDDS 0.7.3.4 - 09_02_21 SOEP Household en.qdds - version 1 - anja - 4.3.2009

File Edit Questionnaire Block Question Help

Question Data Intro/Extro Answer defaults Documentation of Changes History Change Index Notes

Overview of changes of questionnaire from version 21.2.2009: Version 0

	Question	Answer	Filter	Misc.
A				
New element	x			
B				
New element	x			
C				
New element	x			
In version 1 from 23.2.2009				
1				
question deleted: not relevant				
misunderstanding of question: pretest nr. 2 15.01.09 zwi	x			
In version 2 from 27.2.2009				
Test Question				
question newly inserted: pretest	x			
In version 3 from 2.3.2009				
Only for tenants				
block deleted: not relevant				
21				
Element deleted				
22				
Element deleted				
23				
Element deleted				
24				

Report...

View:
 deleted elements
 question type
 changes
 additional information

Search databases

- The main new feature of QDDS III is the ability to document, store and retrieve questionnaires and survey metadata for large survey data archives
- It complies with DDI 3 Standards (July 2009)
- Surveys implemented to date:
 - European Social Survey (Round 1 to 4)- 17 Questionnaires
 - German General Social Survey (ALLBUS 1980 - 2008)- 21 Questionnaires
 - The German Socio-Economic Panel Study (1984 - 2007 Household; Person: German version)- 79 Questionnaires

Search for
structural attributes

- Research on question order effects: rival hypotheses and explanations (Bishop & Smith 2001)
- Response order effects (Bishop & Smith 2001; Holbrook, Krosnick, Moore & Tourangeau 2007)
- Difficulty of comprehending the question and response options is prominent research finding
- Effects of different question structures
- Length of questions
- Explicit “Don`t know“? (Sturgis 2009)

Search mask

Prototype

Open Question

Question with answer defaults

Question with answer defaults steering filter

Question with answer defaults (multiple answer)

Content

overall:

any word

description:

any word

survey:

Structure

type of question:

number of answer defaults:

"don't know" visible:

number of words in question:

number of words in answers:

Environment

type of previous question:

number of answer defaults:

type of following question:

number of answer defaults:

start search

clear

Example

Content

overall:

description:

survey:

any word

any word

Structure

type of question:

number of answer defaults:

"don't know" visible:

number of words in question:

number of words in answers:

Environment

type of previous question:

number of answer defaults:

type of following question:

number of answer defaults:

- <1 > hits: 6
- 1 F07
type: Open Question
survey/panel: ESS Round 1 Main Questionnaire
version: 0
 - 2 F07
type: Open Question
survey/panel: ESS Round 2 Main Questionnaire
version: 0
 - 3 F7

Future

- LaTeX Style

1. Seit wann leben Sie in Konstanz?

- Mehr als 20 Jahre
- 11 bis 20 Jahre
- 6 bis 10 Jahre
- 1 bis 5 Jahre
- Weniger als 1 Jahr
- Weiß nicht

2. Wie zufrieden sind Sie - alles in allem - mit der öffentlichen Sicherheit und der Bekämpfung der Kriminalität in Konstanz?

Bitte antworten Sie auf einer Skala von 0 bis 10 - wobei 0 bedeutet, dass Sie ganz und gar unzufrieden sind, und 10 bedeutet, dass Sie ganz und gar zufrieden sind. Mit Werten dazwischen können Sie Ihre Meinung abstufen.

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|--|---------------------------|
| ganz und gar
unzufrieden | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> | ganz und gar
zufrieden |
| | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | |

- Multilingual surveys

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