

GUIDE FOR AN

Interactive Survey Activity



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Do you have difficulty in conducting traditional research activities?

If so, then this is for you!

Like most non-scientific public, migrant workers are unaccustomed to participating in surveys and other research activities.

Previously, online surveys shared through the My Brother SG Facebook page garnered extremely low level of participation, if any, and no completed entries. Pen-and-paper surveys distributed during ground outreaches also resulted in low levels of participation and completion until facilitators were assigned to guide participants in completing the surveys.

However, this is very coercive as participants might feel compelled to participate, answer all questions and respond in ways that they feel the facilitators expect them to respond—as evidenced by the high levels of satisficing observed in the data collected.

This interactive survey activity opened up the possibility for more honest and enthusiastic participation as they found the gamified presentation of the activity more engaging and the codifying of answers with coloured objects allowed for a semblance of confidentiality and/or anonymity of responses.

Objectives

To obtain simple, straightforward anonymized answers which can be translated into action from a large number of target community members in a gamified and engaging manner.

Preparation

Step 1: Brainstorm Questions

- Pick 2-3 questions that you need answered
- Make sure the questions are straightforward, specific and easy to understand.
- Avoid double-barreled or open-ended questions
- Clarify context if needed.

Step 2: Investigate Possible Responses

- Identify possible answers to the question through past interactions with target community members and secondary research
- Consult key target community members to get their opinions about community needs and concerns.

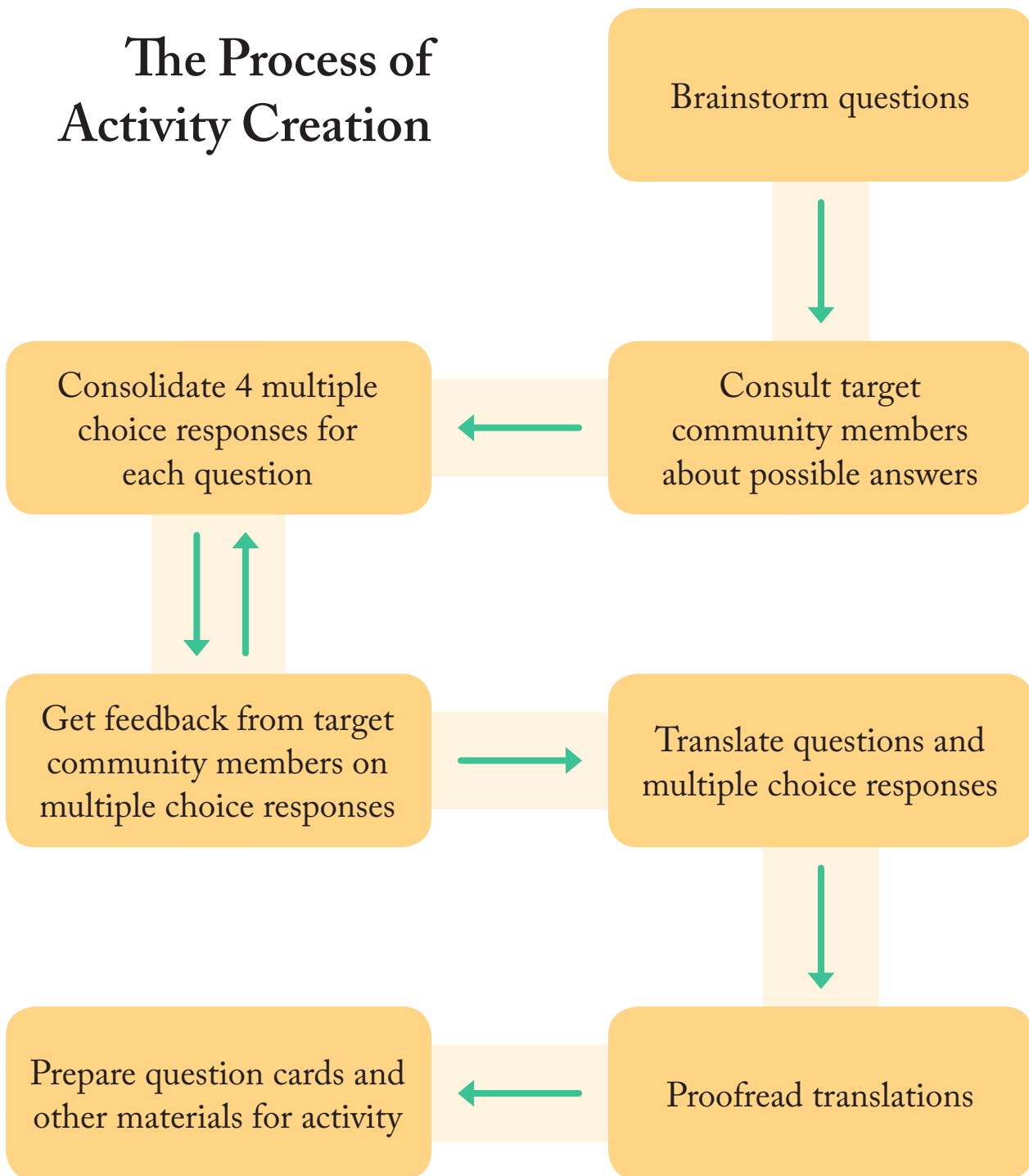
Step 3: Create MCQ Questions

- From your findings, consolidate 4 multiple choice responses for each question.
- Run responses past key target community members to get their feedback
- Edit the responses accordingly

Step 4: Finalise Materials

- Translate and proofread the multiple choice questions and responses
- Prepare the question cards

The Process of Activity Creation

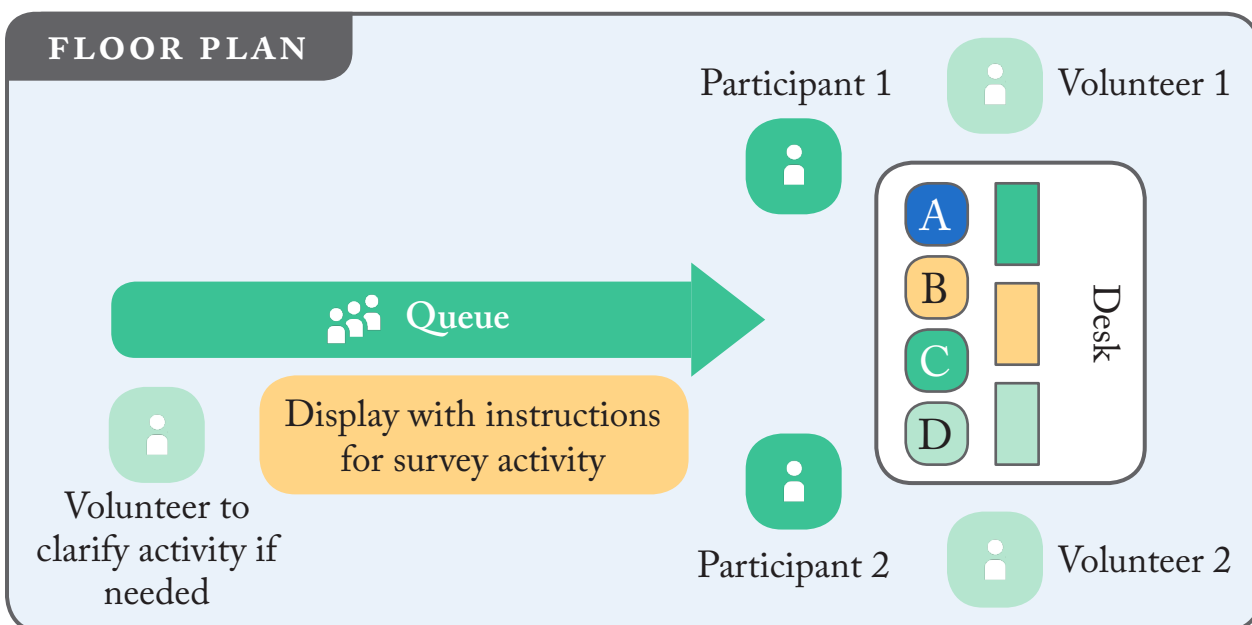


Setting Up

Resources Needed

- Coloured MCQ question cards
- Large transparent jars or other containers for display, each labelled to correspond with one question card
- 4 small containers with 4 different colours of small objects, such as beads, labelled with the MCQ options (e.g. A, B, C, or D)
- 1-2 volunteers/facilitators to guide participants through this activity, especially if the format of this activity is unfamiliar to them
- Instruction sheet for volunteers/facilitators on how to simplify and explain each question and response options so that the explanations to all participants are standardized
- Display with clear instructions for participants on what to do

A Sample Set-Up



DESK SET-UP



How to Conduct the Activity

Step 1: Obtain informed consent

- Display the instructions for the activity (e.g. what the participant would be invited to do, why is the activity being conducted) for potential participants to view while they are queuing up for the activity.
- Before starting the activity, ask them if they would like to participate, and make it clear that they can choose to stop taking part in the activity anytime.

Step 2: Conduct the activity

- Invite participant to pick a question card.
- Ask the participant to read the question and to pick an answer.
- Direct the participant to pick an object from the container labelled with the option number of their response (e.g. A, B, C or D).

- Place this object in the display jar that matches their question card (e.g. response to a blue question card to be placed in jar labelled blue).
- Facilitators may be required to simplify and/or further explain the questions and responses for the participants.
- Provide facilitators with a sheet with simplified further elaborations of each question and response option to standardize the implementation of the activity across multiple participants.

Repeat this process with each participant.

The display jar will get filled up with different coloured objects as more and more participants take part in the activity.



Analysis

At the end of the activity, you can easily preserve the responses by closing each jar with the objects inside. Count each type of coloured object inside each jar to evaluate responses. Please find a template table for your convenience below.

Question number:	
Question:	
Question card colour:	
E.g. Option X (colour): <i>Insert response here</i>	Number of Responses
Option ():	
Option ():	
Option ():	
Option ():	
Total Number of Participants	

Insights and Recommendations

Insight 1: Prevent Pressure to Participate

- When this activity is conducted as part of a larger outreach where activities are conducted one after another in a line, community members may feel pressured to participate in this activity to move on to the next activity, especially if gift items are distributed after this activity.

Recommendation:

- Explain the instructions (including what would be done, what it is for and if there are any reimbursements/gifts for participating).
- Verbally ask if they want to participate and give them the option of opting out.
- Clarify any questions or doubts they might have.

Insight 2: Ensure Sufficient Time and Prevent Fatigue

- Participants' reading time might vary based on:
 - » Familiarity with answering MCQ questions
 - » Reading level
 - » Vision problems
 - » Level of fatigue
 - » Interest in activity
- Facilitators might feel the pressure to clear long queues as quickly as possible.
- Facilitators might become fatigued quickly, depending on the amount of explanations needed and the size of the crowd they are managing.
- They may
 - » Inadvertently rush participants
 - » Be brusque/ patronizing in their explanations (e.g. oversimplifying the questions without allowing sufficient time for the participants to read and understand the questions on their own)

Recommendation:

- Reduce number of words.
- Include pictorial representations of questions and answers.
- Brief facilitators that community members' reading speed might not match their own and to only step in to further simplify and explain the questions and responses when they observe the participant struggling or when they ask for clarification.
- Provide facilitators with standardised scripts on how to simplify and explain questions and answers.
- Conduct activity in shifts so that facilitators can stop conducting the activity when they get tired.

Insight 3: Mode of Instruction Matters

- While American eurocentrism prioritises written communication, other communities may favour verbal communication as more important.
 - » For example, even though migrant workers were instructed to read and pick a response option, some migrant workers further discussed the question and options before responding, regardless of their ability to read and understand the written text.
 - » This coincides with observations from other research activities with migrant workers, where they responded better when engaged in verbal communication.

Recommendation:

- Understand the the linguistic-cultural characteristics of the target community.
- Assign a representative to provide live or recorded instructions about the activity if needed.
- Ensure facilitators are present to explain the activity.

Insight 4: Getting the most useful responses

- Difficult to evaluate reliability and validity of responses
 - » Only possible to collect a response to one question from each participant
 - » Not possible to implement accuracy checks
 - » Not possible to statistically analyse reliability and validity

Recommendation:

- Use for gauging responses to straightforward questions which can directly be translated to action.

About the Researcher

Divya Hemavathi is a research assistant with My Brother SG, who is keen about exploring new ways to conduct research to re-imagine power in knowledge production and researcher-participant relationships. She hopes that her work in My Brother SG can help raise awareness about the lived realities of migrant workers in Singapore and push for structural change.

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