CHERRIES is a Checklist for Reporting Results of Internet E-Surveys. Whenever sending a survey via the internet or via a link, there are ethical considerations and other issues relating to E-Surveys that needs to be checked against this checklist.This checklist has been modified from Eysenbach G. Improving the quality of Web surveys: The Checklist for Reporting Results of Internet E-Surveys (CHERRIES). J Med Internet Res. 2004 Sep 29;6(3):e34 [erratum in J Med Internet Res. 2012; 14(1): e8.]. Article available at <https://www.jmir.org/2004/3/e34>/; erratum available <https://www.jmir.org/2012/1/e8/>. Copyright ©Gunther Eysenbach. Originally published in the [*Journal of Medical Internet*](http://www.jmir.org) *Research*, 29.9.2004 and 04.01.2012.

**Checklist for Reporting Results of Internet E-Surveys (CHERRIES)**

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| ***Checklist Item*** | ***Explanation*** | ***Explanations*** |
| Describe survey design | Describe target population, sample frame. Is the sample a convenience sample? (In “open” surveys this is most likely.) | A cross-sectional survey design was used. The target population was South African practicing audiologists registered with the HPCSA and purposive sampling was used. |
| IRB approval | Mention whether the study has been approved by an IRB. | N/A |
| Informed consent | Describe the informed consent process. Where were the participants told the length of time of the survey, which data were stored and where and for how long, who the investigator was, and the purpose of the study? | As soon as participants clicked the link to the survey, the informed consent page loaded immediately. The consent form contained the purpose of the study, a description of the target audience, a description of ethical principles applicable to the study (e.g., voluntary participation, participants’ right to withdraw at any time, how confidentiality and anonymity would be ensured), outlined that there is no risk to the participants in participating in the study, described how the data would be stored, for how long and who would have access to the data, the contact information of the primary researcher and that it would take participants approximately 15 minutes to complete the survey. |
| Data protection | If any personal information was collected or stored, describe what mechanisms were used to protect unauthorized access. | Qualtrics captured participants’ IP addresses and the statistician, as well as the primary researcher, had access to this information. The statistician signed a non-disclosure statement, and no identifying information will be released by the statistician who analyzd the data. Upon completion of the study, all relevant data will be stored electronically at the Department of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology at the University of Pretoria for a period of 15 years, as per the university’s policy on data storage. The data will also be available on the University of Pretoria’s Repository (Figshare), with an embargo of at least two years. Before the data will be uploaded onto the UP Figshare data repository, any identifying or sensitive information will be removed. The data obtained from this study may be used in future research projects |
| Development and testing | State how the survey was developed, including whether the usability and technical functionality of the electronic questionnaire had been tested before fielding the questionnaire. | A self-developed electronic survey was compiled based on a compilation of published articles and protocols on school-age hearing screening. The the usability and technical functionality of the electronic questionnaire had been tested by the primary investigator, the supervisors and the statistician before being distributed. |
| Open survey versus closed survey | An “open survey” is a survey open for each visitor of a site, while a closed survey is only open to a sample which the investigator knows (password-protected survey). | This was an open survey, as prospective participants did not need a password to access the survey. |
| Contact mode | Indicate whether or not the initial contact with the potential participants was made on the Internet. (Investigators may also send out questionnaires by mail and allow for Web-based data entry.) | This survey was distributed through various channels. Three different professional boards were contacted to share the survey with the audiologists registered with them (SAAA, SASLHA, APPF). A social media post was also published on different social media platforms. Additional invites were also sent to potential participants via social media. |
| Advertising the survey | How/where was the survey announced or advertised? Some examples are offline media (newspapers), or online (mailing lists – If yes, which ones?) or banner ads (Where were these banner ads posted and what did they look like?). It is important to know the wording of the announcement as it will heavily influence who chooses to participate. Ideally the survey announcement should be published as an appendix. | The survey was sent through the mailing list of three different professional boards and was posted on social media (with an electronic link) with the permission of group administrators. Additional invitations to participate were sent to audiologists who were not able to access those social media platforms. The survey announcement is published as an appendix in the dissertation of the primary investigator. |
| Web/E-mail | State the type of e-survey (eg, one posted on a Web site, or one sent out through e-mail). If it is an e-mail survey, were the responses entered manually into a database, or was there an automatic method for capturing responses? | The survey was distributed via social media platforms. The Qualtrics™ XM software was used for the distribution of the survey and the survey was open from November 2022 to February 2023. Qualtrics automatically captures the data which can then be exported to various software packages such as Microsoft Excel and SPSS. |
| Context | Describe the Web site (for mailing list/newsgroup) in which the survey was posted. What is the Web site about, who is visiting it, what are visitors normally looking for? Discuss to what degree the content of the Web site could pre-select the sample or influence the results. For example, a survey about vaccination on a anti-immunization Web site will have different results from a Web survey conducted on a government Web site | South African Speech-Language and Hearing Association (SASLHA <https://saslha.co.za/>), the South African Association of Audiologists (SAAA <https://www.audiologysa.co.za/>) and the Audiology Private Practice Forum (APPF <https://appf.co.za/>) are professional boards that audiologists can register with. Additionally, Facebook (three different groups, the primary researcher’s personal account and the statistician’s personal account) as well as LinkedIn (the researcher’s personal account and the statistician’s personal account) were utilised for the distribution of the survey. Facebook is a social networking site, whereas LinkedIn is the world’s largest professional network on the internet. |
| Mandatory/voluntary | Was it a mandatory survey to be filled in by every visitor who wanted to enter the Web site, or was it a voluntary survey? | Voluntary survey |
| Incentives | Were any incentives offered (eg, monetary, prizes, or non-monetary incentives such as an offer to provide the survey results)? | No incentives were offered. |
| Time/Date | In what timeframe were the data collected? | November 2022 to February 2023 |
| Randomization of items or questionnaires | To prevent biases items can be randomized or alternated. | The questions in the survey were not randomized. |
| Adaptive questioning | Use adaptive questioning (certain items, or only conditionally displayed based on responses to other items) to reduce number and complexity of the questions. | The survey had a total of 15 questions, of which 14 were mandatory. If respondents provided conditional responses, they were prompted to answer additional questions more in detail for qualitative purposes. |
| Number of Items | What was the number of questionnaire items per page? The number of items is an important factor for the completion rate. | There was a total of 5 questions per page. |
| Number of screens (pages) | Over how many pages was the questionnaire distributed? The number of items is an important factor for the completion rate. | The survey was distributed over 5 pages. |
| Completeness check | It is technically possible to do consistency or completeness checks before the questionnaire is submitted. Was this done, and if “yes”, how (usually JavaScript)? An alternative is to check for completeness after the questionnaire has been submitted (and highlight mandatory items). If this has been done, it should be reported. All items should provide a non-response option such as “not applicable” or “rather not say”, and selection of one response option should be enforced. | If an item in a question was left unanswered, the field would be highlighted to show the respondent that they still need to complete that field. Most of the questions were mandatory but a “not applicable” option was provided where applicable. |
| Review step | State whether respondents were able to review and change their answers (e.g., through a Back button or a Review step which displays a summary of the responses and asks the respondents if they are correct). | Respondents did have the option of going back and changing their answers before final submission of the survey. |
| Unique site visitor | If you provide view rates or participation rates, you need to define how you determined a unique visitor. There are different techniques available, based on IP addresses or cookies or both. | Unless the researcher informs Qualtrics™ XM software not to capture IP addresses (this is done in Qualtrics by selecting “Anonymize response”), Qualtrics captures the IP address by default. In this study, Qualtrics captured the IP addresses which uniquely identifies a host. The statistician had access to each respondent’s IP address and checked for duplicates. |
| View rate (Ratio of unique survey visitors/unique site visitors) | Requires counting unique visitors to the first page of the survey, divided by the number of unique site visitors (not page views!). It is not unusual to have view rates of less than 0.1 % if the survey is voluntary. | There were 106 unique survey visitors. There were 106 unique site visitors. Thus, ratio = 106/106 = 1. Percentage = 100%. |
| Participation rate (Ratio of unique visitors who agreed to participate/unique first survey page visitors) | Count the unique number of people who filled in the first survey page (or agreed to participate, for example by checking a checkbox), divided by visitors who visit the first page of the survey (or the informed consents page, if present). This can also be called “recruitment” rate. | Although 106 unique respondents read the first page (consent page), one indicated that they did not give consent to participate in the study. Thus, recruitment ratio = 105/106 = 0.9906. Recruitment percentage = 99.06%. |
| Completion rate (Ratio of users who finished the survey/users who agreed to participate) | The number of people submitting the last questionnaire page, divided by the number of people who agreed to participate (or submitted the first survey page). This is only relevant if there is a separate “informed consent” page or if the survey goes over several pages. This is a measure for attrition. Note that “completion” can involve leaving questionnaire items blank. This is not a measure for how completely questionnaires were filled in. (If you need a measure for this, use the word “completeness rate”.) | 105 of the 105 respondents that gave informed consent submitted the questionnaire on the last page, thus ratio = 105/105 = 1 and percentage = 100% |
| Cookies used | Indicate whether cookies were used to assign a unique user identifier to each client computer. If so, mention the page on which the cookie was set and read, and how long the cookie was valid. Were duplicate entries avoided by preventing users access to the survey twice; or were duplicate database entries having the same user ID eliminated before analysis? In the latter case, which entries were kept for analysis (eg, the first entry or the most recent)? | Qualtrics has the option to prevent multiple submissions by placing a cookie on the respondent’s browser. If the respondent tries the survey again and clicks on the survey link a second time, Qualtrics sees this cookie and will not permit them to take the survey again. This was not done in this study. The reason being that this setting is recommend by Qualtrics in circumstances where the researcher offers an incentive or when the researcher is conducting a sensitive vote. In this study, the researcher was not offering incentives nor was the researcher conducting a sensitive vote. Thus, Cookies were not used to prevent multiple submissions. However, multiple submissions were checked for using the IP addresses of the respondents and there was only one duplicate, which was not removed, as audiologists working in the same office could have used the same computer. |
| IP check | Indicate whether the IP address of the client computer was used to identify potential duplicate entries from the same user. If so, mention the period of time for which no two entries from the same IP address were allowed (eg, 24 hours). Were duplicate entries avoided by preventing users with the same IP address access to the survey twice; or were duplicate database entries having the same IP address within a given period of time eliminated before analysis? If the latter, which entries were kept for analysis (eg, the first entry or the most recent)? | Unless the researcher informs Qualtrics™ XM software not to capture IP addresses (this is done in Qualtrics by selecting “Anonymize response”), Qualtrics captures the IP address by default. In this study, Qualtrics captured the IP addresses which uniquely identifies a host. The statistician had access to each respondent’s IP address and checked for duplicates. There was only one duplicate, which was not removed, as audiologists working in the same office could have used the same computer. |
| Log file analysis | Indicate whether other techniques to analyze the log file for identification of multiple entries were used. If so, please describe. | No other techniques were used since the IP address uniquely identifies a host. Using the IP address to identify multiple entries were the only technique use to look for duplicates. There was only one duplicate, which was not removed, as audiologists working in the same office could have used the same computer. |
| Registration | In “closed” (non-open) surveys, users need to login first and it is easier to prevent duplicate entries from the same user. Describe how this was done. For example, was the survey never displayed a second time once the user had filled it in, or was the username stored together with the survey results and later eliminated? If the latter, which entries were kept for analysis (eg, the first entry or the most recent)? | IP addresses were used to check for duplicate entries. |
| Handling of incomplete questionnaires | Were only completed questionnaires analyzed? Were questionnaires which terminated early (where, for example, users did not go through all questionnaire pages) also analyzed? | Only data from respondents who completed the demographic questions as well as at least two other questions relevant to the study were analyzed. |
| Questionnaires submitted with an atypical timestamp | Some investigators may measure the time people needed to fill in a questionnaire and exclude questionnaires that were submitted too soon. Specify the timeframe that was used as a cut-off point and describe how this point was determined. | 40 survey responses were excluded based on time. Qualtrics captures the time that respondents take to complete a questionnaire. All times were investigated by the statistician and all responses that took less than 5 minutes were excluded to enhance the credibility of this study. |
| Statistical correction | Indicate whether any methods such as weighting of items or propensity scores have been used to adjust for the non-representative sample; if so, please describe the methods. | None such methods were used. This was not necessary as we clearly describe the sample in the article. |