

HANDOUT 10 ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

Introduction

This document identifies some advantages and disadvantages of the instruments for evaluation.

Group discussion

Advantage

- setting and situation are more natural than administering a questionnaire;
- Relations between group participants can be monitored;
- Spontaneous responses by participants to other participants;
- Issues the interviewer did not think of before hand can come up.

Disadvantage

- Does not provide valid information on attitudes, opinions, and behaviour that are easily influenced through social control within the group.

Questionnaire with open ended questions

Advantage

- Participants can answer in their own words;
- Participants can introduce issues not **explicitly** being addressed in the questionnaire;
- No social control effects.

Disadvantage

- It assumes an ability to express oneself. In the case of language problems, this can pose a **barrier**;
- More elaborate analysis;
- Can be time consuming to administer;
- Comparison between different courses is difficult.

Questionnaire with closed ended questions

Advantage

- Easy and fast to administer;
- Standardisation of instrument can be applied to several courses, enabling comparative analysis between trainings;
- No social control effects.

Disadvantage

- Design of questionnaire is time consuming;
- What is not addressed explicitly in the questionnaire will not be measured.

Diaries

Advantage

People can express in their own words

- Strong for self-reflection because of privacy of material;
- Raw material, not moderated.

Disadvantage

- Private material;
- Necessary to be able to express oneself;
- If made public, it requires more effort to analyse;
- Only at the disposal of the trainer/evaluator with participant's consent.