Standard Survey Variables
for CivicPulse Omnibus Surveys

June 2019

This document contains a summary of the standard variables provided to all contributors to CivicPulse omnibus surveys. These variables consist of five categories: (1) survey metadata, (2) unmodified respondent demographics, (3) modified respondent demographics, (4) constituent demographics, and (5) survey weights.

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Survey Metadata Variables

**StartDate**
The time and date when the survey was started.

**EndDate**
The time and date when the survey was completed. For respondents that did not complete the survey, this variable records the time of their last activity on the survey.

**Finished**
1 = Respondent completed the survey
0 = Respondent did not complete the survey

**Gov_type**
A variable indicating the government position of the respondent. Its values are: “county,” “municipality,” and “township.”

**State**
A variable indicating which state the respondent resides in.

Unmodified Respondent Demographics
Responses to the following questions are provided generally without modification.\(^1\)

**Electoral_compete**
When you last ran for office, did you face an opponent in the general election?
- Yes
- No
- Other ____

**Professionalization**
Do you receive a salary for your government position?
- Full-time salary
- Part-time salary
- No salary
- Other ____

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\(^1\) The only responses which may be modified are the open-ended responses to questions which offer a write-in option; these responses may be modified to preserve respondent confidentiality.
**Ideo_5**
In general, do you think of yourself as:
- Very conservative
- Somewhat conservative
- Moderate, middle of the road
- Somewhat liberal
- Very liberal
- Not sure

**Ambition**
How would you characterize your interest in holding a higher elected office in the future?
- I have no interest in holding higher elected office at any time in the future.
- I am open to the possibility of holding higher elected office in the future.
- I am actively considering running for higher elected office.

**Gender**
Which of the following best describes your gender identity?
- Male
- Female
- Other

**Pid_3**
Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a …
- Democrat
- Republican
- Independent
- Other party (please specify): ___

**Pid_indep**
Do you think of yourself as closer to the Democratic Party or the Republican Party?
- Democratic Party
- Republican Party
- Neither

**Modified Respondent Demographics**
Responses to the following questions are coarsened into bins to preserve respondent confidentiality.
Gov_exp
How many years have you worked in government over your career?
(Please enter the number of years below.)

Age
In what year were you born?
(1910 or earlier, 1911-1915, … , 2006 or later)

Education
What is the last grade of school you completed?
• Less than high school
• High school graduate
• Technical/trade school
• Some college
• College graduate
• Some graduate school
• Graduate degree

Nonhispanic_white
Respondents are asked their race and ethnicity using questions taken from the US Census (see below). To maintain respondent confidentiality, the original answers to these questions are not provided. Instead, we construct ‘NonHispanic_white’ which takes on a ‘1’ if they indicate being non-Hispanic and White, and ‘0’ if they identify as Hispanic or non-white.

Ethnicity
Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?
• No, not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin
• Yes, Mexican, Mexican Am., Chicano
• Yes, Puerto Rican
• Yes, Cuban
• Yes, another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin

Race
Which of the following best describes your race/ethnicity? Please check all that apply.
• White
• Black/African American
• Asian/Asian American (includes East Asian, South Asian, Southeast Asian, and Pacific Islander)
• Native American
• Other (please specify): ___
Constituent Demographics

To provide additional information about the constituents which respondents represent, we match respondents’ geographic locations to the U.S. Census (97% match rate). Using this method, we provide three variables about respondents’ constituents: the proportion of the population that is college-educated (College_prop), the proportion living in an urban area (Urban_prop), and the population size (Population). To ensure confidentiality of the respondent, each variable is binned: College_prop and Urban_prop are binned into terciles.

**College_prop**
The proportion of 25-years-or-older residents in the given geographic unit who have completed a 4-year, post-secondary degree. This data was taken from 2015 American Community Survey.

**Urban_prop**
The proportion of residents in the given geographic unit who reside in an urban area. This data is taken from the 2010 Census.

**Population**
The total number of residents living in the given geographic unit. This data is taken from the 2015 American Community Survey.

Survey Weights

Unlike with surveys of the U.S. mass public—which rely on Census demographic data about the aggregate U.S. population to generate weights—we do not have demographic data about the aggregate population of elected local government officials (with the exception of gender, which we can code based on first names). However, we can mitigate some of the possible survey sample bias by reweighting based on the demographics of constituent areas. To this end, we employ a conventional post-stratification raking procedure using the Census variables listed in the previous section. We follow the methodology outlined in DeBell and Krosnick (2009) for the American National Election Study (ANES).²

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² [https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/26b8/ab6c0dd7e50c09c6af32a3c7469b080b63af.pdf](https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/26b8/ab6c0dd7e50c09c6af32a3c7469b080b63af.pdf)