Custom Survey of Local Policymakers

Reference Guide

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Table of Contents

Survey Overview 4
- Survey Description 4
- Sample Composition 4

Survey Metadata 5
- Respondent_ID 5
- StartDate 5
- EndDate 5
- Weight 5
- Total_duration 5
- Survey_change_20220919 5

Questionnaire 6
- Downside 6
- Receive 6
- Vignette1_disrespect 6
- Vignette1_GRID 7
- Vignette1_prejudice 7
- Vignette1_opinion 7
- Vignette1_dislike 7
- Vignette1_discourage 7
- Vignette1_citizen 7
- Vignette1_politician 8
- Vignette1_users 8
- Concern 8
- Govt_action 8
- Vignette2_disrespect 8
- Vignette2_GRID 9
- Vignette2_prejudice 9
- Vignette2_opinion 9
- Vignette2_dislike 9
- Vignette2_discourage 9
- Vignette2_citizen 9
- Vignette2_politician 10
- Vignette2_users 10

Conjoint1_disrespect 10
Conjoint2_disrespect 10
Conjoint3_disrespect 10
Conjoint_open 10
SocialMedia_use 10
SocialMedia_use_TEXT 10
SoMe_use_pol 10
Non_SoMe_use_pol 11
SoMe_disrespect 11
Non_SoMe_disrespect 11
SoMe_behavior 11
Demographics 12
Gender 12
Age 12
Education 12
Ideology 12
Party 12
Party_other 12
Geographic Variables 13
Gov_type 13
State_code 13
State_abb 13
Census_area_college_bin 13
Census_area_population_bin 13
Census_area_urban_bin 13
County_voteshare_pres_2020_bin 14
Timer Variables 15
page2_First.Click; page2_Last.Click; page2_Page.Submit; page2_Click.Count 15
page3_First.Click; page3_Last.Click; page3_Page.Submit; page3_Click.Count 15
page4_First.Click; page4_Last.Click; page4_Page.Submit; page4_Click.Count 15
page5_First.Click; page5_Last.Click; page5_Page.Submit; page5_Click.Count 15
page6_First.Click; page6_Last.Click; page6_Page.Submit; page6_Click.Count 15
page7_First.Click; page7_Last.Click; page7_Page.Submit; page7_Click.Count 15
page8_First.Click; page8_Last.Click; page8_Page.Submit; page8_Click.Count 15

page9_First.Click; page9_Last.Click; page9_Page.Submit; page9_Click.Count 15
Embedded Data Variables 16
V.1.1.1, V.1.1.2, V.1.1.3, …, V.2.1.4, V.2.1.5, V.2.1.6 16
F.1.1.1, F.1.1.2, F.1.1.3, …, F.3.2.4, F.3.2.5, F.3.2.6 16
Sample Representativeness 17

Survey Overview

Survey Description

The accompanying dataset includes the responses from 482 respondents. The survey was fielded from September 7, 2022, to October 19, 2022. The sample of respondents consisted of elected policymakers that were randomly drawn from U.S. local governments (i.e., township, municipality, and county governments) with a population over 1,000 residents. Elected policymakers include top elected officials and governing board members. There were 11,126 elected policymakers were invited to the survey. The overall response rate is 4.3%.

Sample Composition

Table 1: Government Level of Respondents

Level of Government	Number of Respondents
County	64
Municipality	308
Township	110
Total	482

Survey Metadata

Respondent_ID

A random number generated to uniquely identify each survey respondent.

StartDate

The time and date when the survey was started.

EndDate

The time and date when the survey was completed.

Weight

Probability weights created with a post-stratification raking procedure using the Census and presidential vote share variables. This procedure follows the methodology outlined in DeBell and Krosnick (2009) for the American National Elections Study (ANES).

Total_duration

The duration of the survey in seconds.

Survey_change_20220919

‘1’ if the survey was started after an error on page 3 of the survey was resolved on September 19, 2022
‘0’ if the survey was started before an error on page 3 of the survey was resolved on September 19, 2022

Note: *On September 19, 2022, the CivicPulse team became aware of an error in the survey questionnaire. On page 3 of the survey that contained Vignette 1, the responses for* Concern *and* Govt_action *were linked for some survey respondents, such that answering one question caused the selected response for the other question to change. This error was resolved within hours of discovering it.* Survey_change_20220919 *was created to indicate whether respondents completed the survey that had the possible error in it or if they completed a version after it was resolved.*

Questionnaire

Downside

To what extent do you agree or disagree that being exposed to disrespectful messages on social media is a major downside to being a politician?

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Slightly agree
- Slightly disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

Receive

To what extent do you agree or disagree that politicians tend to receive disrespectful responses when they engage with constituents on social media?

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Slightly agree
- Slightly disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

Vignette1_disrespect

How disrespectful do you believe the conversation above is, where 0 indicates not disrespectful and 10 indicates extremely disrespectful?

- 0 (Not disrespectful)
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10 (Extremely disrespectful)

Vignette1_GRID

To what extent would you agree that the citizen's comment in the conversation is likely to be driven by the following reasons?

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Slightly agree	Slightly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Prejudice or discrimination						
Opinion differences with the politician						
Dislike of the politician's political party						
To discourage the politician from being in politics						
The citizen’s dissatisfaction with his/her own life						
To get a reaction from the politician						
To get a reaction from other users						

Vignette1_prejudice

This variable contains responses for the row “Prejudice or discrimination” in *Vignette1_GRID.*

Vignette1_opinion

This variable contains responses for the row “Opinion differences with the politician” in *Vignette1_GRID.*

Vignette1_dislike

This variable contains responses for the row “Dislike of the politician's political party” in *Vignette1_GRID.*

Vignette1_discourage

This variable contains responses for the row “To discourage the politician from being in politics” in *Vignette1_GRID.*

Vignette1_citizen

This variable contains responses for the row “The citizen’s dissatisfaction with his/her own life” in *Vignette1_GRID.*

Vignette1_politician

This variable contains responses for the row “To get a reaction from the politician” in *Vignette1_GRID.*

Vignette1_users

This variable contains responses for the row “To get a reaction from other users” in *Vignette1_GRID.*

Concern

How concerned are you about disrespectful comments sent to politicians on social media?

- Not concerned at all
- Slightly concerned
- Somewhat concerned
- Moderately concerned
- Extremely concerned

Govt_action

To what extent do you agree or disagree that stronger government action should be taken to restrict disrespect discourse on social media?

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Slightly agree
- Slightly disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

Vignette2_disrespect

How disrespectful do you believe the conversation above is, where 0 indicates not disrespectful and 10 indicates extremely disrespectful?

- 0 (Not disrespectful)
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10 (Extremely disrespectful)

Vignette2_GRID

To what extent would you agree that the citizen's comment in the conversation is likely to be driven by the following reasons?

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Slightly agree	Slightly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Prejudice or discrimination						
Opinion differences with the politician						
Dislike of the politician's political party						
To discourage the politician from being in politics						
The citizen’s dissatisfaction with his/her own life						
To get a reaction from the politician						
To get a reaction from other users						

Vignette2_prejudice

This variable contains responses for the row “Prejudice or discrimination” in *Vignette2_GRID.*

Vignette2_opinion

This variable contains responses for the row “Opinion differences with the politician” in *Vignette2_GRID.*

Vignette2_dislike

This variable contains responses for the row “Dislike of the politician's political party” in *Vignette2_GRID.*

Vignette2_discourage

This variable contains responses for the row “To discourage the politician from being in politics” in *Vignette2_GRID.*

Vignette2_citizen

This variable contains responses for the row “The citizen’s dissatisfaction with his/her own life” in *Vignette2_GRID.*

Vignette2_politician

This variable contains responses for the row “To get a reaction from the politician” in *Vignette2_GRID.*

Vignette2_users

This variable contains responses for the row “To get a reaction from other users” in *Vignette2_GRID.*

Conjoint1_disrespect

Which of the conversations above do you believe is more disrespectful?

- Conversation A
- Conversation B

Conjoint2_disrespect

Which of the conversations above do you believe is more disrespectful?

- Conversation A
- Conversation B

Conjoint3_disrespect

Which of the conversations above do you believe is more disrespectful?

- Conversation A
- Conversation B

Conjoint_open

Below you can share any comments you might have about this series of conversations before we move on with the rest of the survey. (Please limit your answer to 2-3 sentences.)

SocialMedia_use

Do you have accounts on any of the following social media sites? (Please select all that apply.)

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Instagram
- TikTok
- Reddit
- LinkedIn
- Snapchat
- WhatsApp
- Other (please specify) [OPEN TEXT]

SocialMedia_use_TEXT

The responses if a person selected Other in *SocialMedia_use* and provided additional information.

SoMe_use_pol

How often do you use social media to talk about politics or make statements for political purposes?

- Several times a day
- About once a day
- 3 to 6 days a week
- 1 to 2 days a week

- Every few weeks
- Less often
- Never

Non_SoMe_use_pol

How often do you talk about politics or make statements for political purposes on television or in newspapers?

- Several times a day
- About once a day
- 3 to 6 days a week
- 1 to 2 days a week
- Every few weeks
- Less often
- Never

SoMe_disrespect

How often do you personally face disrespectful or hateful comments on social media?

- Several times a day
- About once a day
- 3 to 6 days a week
- 1 to 2 days a week
- Every few weeks
- Less often
- Never

Non_SoMe_disrespect

How often do you personally face disrespectful or hateful comments outside of social media (e.g. email, physical mail, face-to-face)?

- Several times a day
- About once a day
- 3 to 6 days a week
- 1 to 2 days a week
- Every few weeks
- Less often
- Never

SoMe_behavior

Have you personally experienced any of the following on social media? (Please select all that apply.)

- Sexist remarks
- Highly disrespectful comments
- Humiliating or sexually charged images of yourself spread through social media
- Threats of violence
- Harassment (exposure to insistent and uninvited behavior)
- None of the above

Demographics

Gender

What is your gender?

- Man
- Woman
- Prefer to self-describe

Age

When were you born?

[5-yr interval dropdown]

Education

What is the highest level of education that you have completed?

- Less than high school
- High school graduate
- Technical/trade school
- Some college
- College graduate
- Some graduate school
- Graduate degree

Ideology

In politics, people sometimes talk of "left" and "right". Where would you place yourself on this scale, where 0 means left and 10 means right?

- (Left) 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- (Right) 10

Party

Do you consider yourself close to a particular political party? If so, which party do you feel closest to?

- Republican Party
- Democratic Party
- Other (please specify) [open text]
- I do not consider myself close to a particular party

Party_other

The answer provided to “Other party (Please specify:)” in *Party.*

Geographic Variables

Merging. To provide additional information about the geographic areas in which respondents work, additional covariates were merged to the survey response data (99% match rate). Where merging failed, these variables are labeled with 'NA'.

De-identification. To ensure anonymity of the respondent, some variables were coarsened by binning them into terciles.

Gov_type

A variable indicating the type of government of the respondent. Its values are: "county," "municipality," and "township."

State_code

The state in which the respondent resides provided as the two-digit FIPS code.

State_abb

The state in which the respondent resides provided as the states' two-letter abbreviation.

Census_area_college_bin

The proportion of 25-years-or-older residents in the given geographic unit who have completed a 4-year, post-secondary degree. This data is from the 2015-2019 Five Year Data from the US Census American Community Survey, as compiled by IPUMS National Historical Geographic Information System (NHGIS). The terciles are:

- First tercile: 0 to 0.17
- Second tercile: 0.17 to 0.27
- Third tercile: 0.27 to 1.0

Census_area_population_bin

The total number of residents living in the given geographic unit. This data is from the 2015-2019 Five Year Data from the US Census American Community Survey, as compiled by IPUMS NHGIS. The terciles are:

- First tercile: 0 to 2301
- Second tercile: 2301 to 8492
- Third tercile: 8492+

Census_area_urban_bin

The proportion of residents in the given geographic unit who reside in an urban area. This data is taken the 2010 Census, as compiled by IPUMS NHGIS. The terciles are:

- First tercile: 0 to .1
- Second tercile: 0.1 to 0.94
- Third tercile: 0.94 to 1.0

County_voteshare_pres_2020_bin

The proportion of the votes, by county, for Joe Biden in the 2020 Presidential election. Each sub-county government is matched to the relevant county in which it is contained. The terciles are*:*

- First tercile: 0 to 0.31
- Second tercile: 0.31 to 0.46
- Third tercile: 0.46 to 1.0

Timer Variables

page2_First.Click; page2_Last.Click; page2_Page.Submit; page2_Click.Count

A set of timer variables output from the Qualtrics system. Page 2 includes the questions *Downside* and *Receive*.

page3_First.Click; page3_Last.Click; page3_Page.Submit; page3_Click.Count

A set of timer variables output from the Qualtrics system. Page 3 includes the questions *Vignette1_disrepect, Vignette1_prejudice, Vignette1_GRID, Concern, and Gov_action*.

page4_First.Click; page4_Last.Click; page4_Page.Submit; page4_Click.Count

A set of timer variables output from the Qualtrics system. Page 4 includes the *Vignette2_disrepect, Vignette2_prejudice, Vignette2_GRID,*

page5_First.Click; page5_Last.Click; page5_Page.Submit; page5_Click.Count

A set of timer variables output from the Qualtrics system. Page 5 includes the question *Conjoint_1_disrepect*.

page6_First.Click; page6_Last.Click; page6_Page.Submit; page6_Click.Count

A set of timer variables output from the Qualtrics system. Page 6 includes the question *Conjoint_2_disrepect*.

page7_First.Click; page7_Last.Click; page7_Page.Submit; page7_Click.Count

A set of timer variables output from the Qualtrics system. Page 7 includes the question *Conjoint_3_disrepect* and *Conjoint_open*.

page8_First.Click; page8_Last.Click; page8_Page.Submit; page8_Click.Count

A set of timer variables output from the Qualtrics system. Page 8 includes the questions *SocialMedia_use*, *SocialMedia_use_10_TEXT*, *SoMe_use_pol*, *Non_SoMe_use_pol*, *SoMe_disrespect*, *Non_SoMe_disrepect*, and *SoMe_behavior*.

page9_First.Click; page9_Last.Click; page9_Page.Submit; page9_Click.Count

A set of timer variables output from the Qualtrics system. Page 9 includes the questions *Gender*, *Age*, *Education*, *Ideology*, and *Party*.

Embedded Data Variables

V.1.1.1, V.1.1.2, V.1.1.3, …, V.2.1.4, V.2.1.5, V.2.1.6

Variables randomized in the survey used for Vignette 1 and Vignette 2.

F.1.1.1, F.1.1.2, F.1.1.3, …, F.3.2.4, F.3.2.5, F.3.2.6

Variables randomized in the survey used for Conjoint 1, Conjoint 2, and Conjoint 3.

Sample Representativeness

The tables below describe the representativeness of the sample, compared to the population. We also provide probability weight to increase sample representativeness.

Table 2: County Officials

Area Characteristics	Sample Median	Population Median
Proportion Urban	0.54	0.40
Proportion College-educated	0.24	0.19
Population Size	59,600	25,800
Democratic Vote Share 2020	0.41	0.30

Table 3: Municipality Officials

Area Characteristics	Sample Median	Population Median
Proportion Urban	0.99	0.97
Proportion College-educated	0.32	0.21
Population Size	6,700	4,000
Democratic Vote Share 2020	0.47	0.39

Table 4: Township Officials

Area Characteristics	Sample Median	Population Median
Proportion Urban	0.12	0.01
Proportion College-educated	0.32	0.22
Population Size	4,200	2,600
Democratic Vote Share 2020	0.5	0.39

Table 5: Gender Composition

Gender	Sample Distribution	Population Distribution
Man	0.65	0.73
Woman	0.35	0.26

Note: Gender for the population is created by coding the first names of policymakers and comparing them to historical records in the Social Security names database. This is done using the *gender* package in R. Names are coded as belonging to a man or woman if the name can be assigned with 95% confidence, and 90% of policymakers have their gender coded.