**Re-evaluating Political Trust: The Impact of Survey Nonresponse in Rural China**

Appendix: **Data and Methods**

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**Health and Environmental Protection Survey (HEPS)**

Table A.1: **Summary Statistics for HEPS, 2012**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Obs.** | **Mean** | **Std. dev.** | **Min.** | **Max.** |
| **Dependent variables:**  (0 = response; 1 = NSR) |  |  |  |  |  |
| NSR on trust in village leaders | 794 | 0.110 | 0.313 | 0 | 1 |
| NSR on trust in county leaders | 794 | 0.351 | 0.478 | 0 | 1 |
| NSR on trust in provincial leaders | 794 | 0.375 | 0.485 | 0 | 1 |
| NSR on trust in central leaders | 794 | 0.332 | 0.471 | 0 | 1 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Independent variables:** |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sex (0 = man; 1 = woman) | 794 | 0.474 | 0.500 | 0 | 1 |
| Age | 781 | 47.09 | 14.72 | 18 | 93 |
| Age2 | 781 | 2,433 | 1,409 | 324 | 8,649 |
| Education (categorical on a scale of 1–5) | 793 | 2.707 | 1.059 | 1 | 5 |
| Ethnicity (0 = Han Chinese; 1 = ethnic minority) | 768 | 0.096 | 0.295 | 0 | 1 |
| CCP member (0 = not a member; 1 = member) | 738 | 0.096 | 0.295 | 0 | 1 |
| Trusts neighbours (categorical on a scale of 1–4: 1 = neighbours very trustworthy; 4 = neighbours very untrustworthy) | 716 | 1.802 | 0.603 | 1 | 4 |
| Local (0 = born in the village; 1 = not local) | 793 | 0.916 | 0.278 | 0 | 1 |
| Has done migrant labour (0 = no; 1 = yes) | 750 | 0.331 | 0.471 | 0 | 1 |
| Knows migrants (0 = no; 1 = yes) | 699 | 0.455 | 0.498 | 0 | 1 |
| Has met village leaders (0 = no; 1 = yes) | 717 | 0.912 | 0.283 | 0 | 1 |
| Has met county leaders (0 = no; 1 = yes) | 719 | 0.114 | 0.318 | 0 | 1 |
| Has met provincial leaders (0 = no; 1 = yes) | 720 | 0.019 | 0.138 | 0 | 1 |
| Has met central leaders (0 = no; 1 = yes) | 720 | 0.008 | 0.091 | 0 | 1 |
| Propensity for nonresponse | 801 | 0.885 | 1.238 | 0 | 8 |

*Source:*

Authors’ survey of Chinese villagers.

*Additional notes on HEPS*

Enumerators conducted face-to-face interviews with villagers in three provinces: Jiangsu, Hubei and Yunnan. We selected these provinces and the prefectures within each province for socio-economic, demographic and geographic diversity. Within prefectures, we chose counties, townships and villages in a nested, randomized fashion. Individual villagers were selected according to a random-walk procedure. The final sample comprised three provinces, nine prefectures, 27 counties, 83 townships, 170 villages and 801 villagers. The questionnaire included questions about healthcare use, the environment, perceptions of the state and demographic information. Our sample roughly reflects the demographic composition of rural China in terms of sex, ethnic minorities, age, education and CCP membership.

Villagers were asked: “On a scale from 1 to 4, how trustworthy do you think the following people are?” Enumerators then listed a range of people including village, county, provincial and central government leaders. If the respondent provided an answer on the 1–4 scale, we code this as a response, or 0. If the respondent did not know, refused to answer, or the question was left blank, we code this as an NSR, or 1.

For education, respondents were asked to identify the highest level of education that they had completed. The variable can take the following values: 1=no schooling; 2=primary school; 3=middle school; 4=high school; 5=university or professional school and above.

We considered that individuals may have an underlying propensity for nonresponse. In other words, some individuals may be less likely to respond to survey questions in general owing to unobservable factors. To control for this possibility, we created an index to capture a general propensity for nonresponse for non-sensitive questions. We selected 11 variables from the HEPS survey that were not generally perceived as sensitive and calculated the number of times each respondent gave an NSR for that group of questions. This was a worthwhile control variable as it was positively associated with NSR in sensitive questions and statistically significant in all five models of the HEPS data. We did not create a similar index for the other datasets as we had insufficient contextual information to determine with confidence which questions in those surveys would not be sensitive. The questions used for the propensity for NSR index were as follows:

A6: “Including yourself, how many people generally eat dinner together in your home?” (包括您，通常多少人一起在家吃晚饭?)

A10: “What kind of work do you do? (You may choose more than one, but please state your primary occupation. If retired, please choose “other” and state the type of work done prior to retirement.)” Respondents could choose from farming, fishing, manager/leader in a public or private enterprise, service industry, worker, herding, healthcare, teacher/accountant or other professional, general office personnel, and other. (您是做什么工作的（可以多选，可是请具体说明首要的工作; 如果已经退休了，请选“其它”并具体说明 退休以前做什么工作）？农民, 渔民, 企事业单位领导, 服务业人员（含个体工商户）, 工人, 牧民, 卫生服务人员, 教师/会计等专业技术人员, 企事业单位办事人员, 其他（请具体说明）)

L1d: “In your village, how would you rate the current overall quality of the environment, from 1 to 10?” (您的村总体环境现在质量是? 0=最差, 10=最优秀)

L7: “Have you heard of environmental impact evaluations? (yes or no)” (您有没有听说过环境影响评价?)

L10: “Everyone has their own reasons for protecting the environment. Please tell us how important the following reasons are to you, 10 means that this reason is very important, 0 means that this factor is completely irrelevant to your situation.” (每个人都有自己重视保护环境的原因。请告诉我们对您来说下列的原因的重要程度。10是表示这个原 因非常重要，0是表示这个因素与您的情况完全不相关。) Enumerators listed several reasons and for this index we used E: “To provide a healthy environment for our children” (为了给我们的孩子提供健康的环境).

L11: “If the local government was considering a project that would seriously pollute your place of residence, what would you do?” (假如当地政府正在考虑一个会严重污染您居住地的项目，您会怎么做？) Enumerators listed several options and for this index we use A: “complain with neighbours” (与邻居朋友抱怨).

W2: “What do you do first when your body feels very uncomfortable or very ill? (For example, I can’t work, I am very sick, etc.) Please choose one: self-treatment, find local health worker, visit a doctor (clinic, hospital), don’t pay attention to it, don’t know, other.” (当您的身体感到很不舒服或病得很严重时，您会首先怎么做？（比如不能干活，病得很严重等等） 请选择一个:自己治疗, 找当地卫生员, 去看医生（诊所，医院）, 完全不在意, 不知道, 其他（具体说明）)

W20: “If you are sick, who is responsible for your medical expenses?” (open-ended question) (如果您生病，谁会负责您的医疗费用?)

W22: “People often say that the quality of healthcare and health facilities needs improvement. In your opinion, how are the quality of care and facilities at the following medical centres? Do you think they are very good, good, so-so, poor, or very bad? E: city hospital” (老百姓平常说医疗质量和设备必须改善。对您来说，下列这些医疗场所的医疗质量和设备总的来说怎么样？ 您觉得它们很好，好，中等，差，还是很差？大城市的医院)

R2: “In general, do you think that it is useful to go to court to resolve the following disputes? Even if you have never been to court to resolve a dispute, we would still like to hear your opinion. Do you think it is completely useless, not very useful, a little useful, or very useful? A: marriage/divorce.” (一般来说，您认为上法院来解决下列纠纷有没有用。如果您没有上过法院来解决纠纷，我们还想了解您的看 法。完全没有用， 不太有用， 比较有用， 非常有用. A: 婚姻/离婚)

C1: We would like to understand your interest in news and the channels through which you learn about the news. Can you tell me how interested you are in these types of news? 0 means no interest at all, 10 means very interested. Please select a number in the scale to indicate your degree of interest. B: economic news.” (我们想了解一下您对新闻的兴趣和了解新闻的渠道。您能告诉我，您对这些新闻感兴趣的程度如何吗？ 0代表根本没兴趣，10代表非常感兴趣，请您在量表中选择一个数字表明您感兴趣的程度。B. 经济信息)

**Lianjiang Li 2014 Survey**

Table A.2: **Summary Statistics for Lianjiang Li Survey, 2014**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Variable** | **Obs** | **Mean** | **Std. dev.** | **Min** | **Max** |
| **Dependent variables:**  (0 = response; 1 = NSR) |  |  |  |  |  |
| NSR on trust in village committee cadres | 400 | 0.068 | 0.251 | 0 | 1 |
| NSR on county leaders | 400 | 0.118 | 0.322 | 0 | 1 |
| NSR on provincial leaders | 400 | 0.115 | 0.319 | 0 | 1 |
| NSR on central leaders | 400 | 0.108 | 0.310 | 0 | 1 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Independent variables:** |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sex (0 = man; 1 = woman) | 400 | 0.463 | 0.499 | 0 | 1 |
| Age | 400 | 41.58 | 13.82 | 18 | 79 |
| Age2 | 400 | 1,919 | 1,222 | 324 | 6,241 |
| Education (years of schooling) | 400 | 7.510 | 3.95 | 0 | 17 |
| CCP (0 = not a member; 1 = member) | 400 | 0.235 | 0.425 | 0 | 1 |
| Trusts neighbours | 375 | 1.883 | 0.600 | 0 | 3 |
| Uses internet at home (0 = no; 1 = yes) | 398 | 0.462 | 0.499 | 0 | 1 |
| Uses internet at an internet café (0 = no; 1 = yes) | 397 | 0.312 | 0.464 | 0 | 1 |

*Source:*

Lianjiang Li survey. Data are used with permission.

*Additional notes on Lianjiang Li’s survey*

We recoded the variable “trusts neighbours” as follows: very untrustworthy=0, not very trustworthy=1, trustworthy=2, and very trustworthy=3.

**Asian Barometer**

Table A.3: **Summary Statistics for Asian Barometer, Wave 3, 2011**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Obs.** | **Mean** | **Std. dev.** | **Min.** | **Max.** |
| **Full sample:**  **Dependent variables:**  (0 = response; 1 = NSR) |  |  |  |  |  |
| NSR on trust in local government | 3,473 | 0.055 | 0.228 | 0 | 1 |
| NSR on trust in central government | 3,473 | 0.039 | 0.194 | 0 | 1 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Independent variables:** |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sex (0 = man; 1 = woman) | 3,471 | 0.475 | 0.499 | 0 | 1 |
| Age | 3,472 | 45.290 | 15.641 | 18 | 93 |
| Age2 | 3,472 | 2,295.722 | 1,478.233 | 324 | 8,649 |
| Education  (categorical on a scale of 1–10) | 3,455 | 3.858 | 2.151 | 1 | 9 |
| Trusts neighbours | 3,401 | 1.995 | 0.470 | 0 | 3 |
| Enumerators speak dialect  (0 = no; 1 = yes) | 3,473 | 0.246 | 0.431 | 0 | 1 |
| Follows major foreign events | 3,428 | 2.225 | 1.208 | 0 | 4 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Rural Sample:** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Dependent variables:**  (0 = response; 1 = NSR) |  |  |  |  |  |
| NSR on trust in local government | 1,866 | 0.062 | 0.242 | 0 | 1 |
| NSR on trust in central government | 1,866 | 0.044 | 0.206 | 0 | 1 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Independent variables:** |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sex (0 = man; 1 = woman) | 1,866 | 0.435 | 0.496 | 0 | 1 |
| Age | 1,866 | 45.551 | 15.255 | 18 | 93 |
| Age2 | 1,866 | 2,307.469 | 1,427.782 | 324 | 8,649 |
| Education (categorical on a scale of 1–10) | 1,854 | 3.280 | 1.890 | 1 | 9 |
| Trusts neighbours | 1,822 | 2.016 | 0.485 | 0 | 3 |
| Enumerators speak dialect  (0 = no; 1 = yes) | 1,866 | 0.289 | 0.454 | 0 | 1 |
| Follows major foreign events | 1,833 | 2.032 | 1.270 | 0 | 4 |

*Source:*

Asian Barometer Survey, [www.asianbarometer.org](http://www.asianbarometer.org). Data are used with permission.

*Additional notes on Asian Barometer*

To create a rural subset of the data, we used observations that were coded as recorded in a “small city or town (less than 100,000 people)” or “village or countryside” for question IR13.

For the dependent variable, we used nonresponse to the question: “I’m going to name a number of institutions. For each one, please tell me how much trust do you have in them? Is it a great deal of trust, quite a lot of trust, not very much trust, or none at all?” We analysed nonresponse for trust in the national government (central government in China) and local government.

For education, enumerators asked: “What is your highest level of education?” Possible responses were: 1=no formal education; 2=incomplete primary/elementary; 3=complete primary/elementary; 4=incomplete secondary/high school: technical/vocational type; 5=complete secondary/high school: technical/vocational type; 6=incomplete secondary/high school; 7=complete secondary/high school; 8=some university education; 9=university education completed; 10=post-graduate degree.

For the variable “trusts neighbours,” we recoded answers for the question: “How much trust do you have in the following types of people?” We recoded such that 3=a great deal of trust, 2=quite a lot of trust, 1=not very much trust, and 0=none at all.

For the variable “follows major foreign events,” we used the question: “How closely do you follow major events in foreign countries/the world?” We recoded this question such that 4=very closely, 3=somewhat closely, 2=not too closely, 1=very little, and 0=not at all.

**The China Survey**

Table A.4: **Summary Statistics for the China Survey, 2008, Rural Subset**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Variable** | **Obs** | **Mean** | **Std. dev.** | **Min** | **Max** |
| **Dependent variables:**  (0 = response; 1 = NSR) |  |  |  |  |  |
| NSR on trust in village leaders | 3,085 | 0.109 | 0.311 | 0 | 1 |
| NSR on trust in county leaders | 3,085 | 0.227 | 0.419 | 0 | 1 |
| NSR on trust in provincial leaders | 3,085 | 0.264 | 0.441 | 0 | 1 |
| NSR on trust in central leaders | 3,085 | 0.223 | 0.416 | 0 | 1 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Independent variables:** |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sex (0 = man; 1 = woman) | 3,085 | 0.521 | 0.500 | 0 | 1 |
| Age | 3,085 | 46.74 | 15.50 | 18 | 92 |
| Age2 | 3,085 | 2,425 | 1,539 | 324 | 8,464 |
| Education (categorical on a scale from 0–7) | 3,085 | 1.382 | 1.114 | 0 | 7 |
| Ethnic minority (0 = Han; 1 = ethnic minority) | 3,014 | 0.143 | 0.350 | 0 | 1 |
| CCP member (0 = no; 1 = yes) | 3,085 | 0.078 | 0.268 | 0 | 1 |
| Trusts neighbours (categorical on a scale from 0–3) | 3,010 | 2.213 | 0.634 | 0 | 3 |
| Contact with foreigners (0 = no; 1 = yes) | 3,085 | 0.041 | 0.199 | 0 | 1 |
| Experienced cadre corruption (0 = no; 1 = yes) | 2,793 | 0.130 | 0.336 | 0 | 1 |

*Source:*

The China Survey. Available upon request through Texas A&M University. Data used with permission. <https://pols.tamu.edu/data-resources/>. The China Survey is a project of the College of Liberal Arts at Texas A&M University, in collaboration with the Research Center for Contemporary China (RCCC) at Peking University.

*Additional notes on the China Survey*

Rural subset was created by selecting only observations from “rural” regions as designated by the survey implementers (rural-northeast, rural-north, rural-east, rural-south, rural-central, rural-northwest, rural-southwest, rural-municipality).

In the China Survey, education is captured through a serious of questions (F16) asking “How many years of education have you had at each of the following levels?” followed by elementary school, middle school, high school, high school equivalent, college, university, master degree, and doctoral degree. To maintain consistency with the other surveys analysed here, we recoded this set of variables as one variable, “Education,” for which 0=no formal schooling, 1=some elementary school, 2=some middle school, 3=some high school or vocational high school (高中or职高/中专), 4=some college (such as vocational training, 大专), 5=some university (大学), 6=some years studying a master degree, and 7=some years studying a doctoral degree.

For ethnic minority, we used the question: “A8: What is your ethnicity?” We recoded responses such that 1=ethnic minority, 0=Han.

For CCP membership, we used: “E6A: Do you now belong or have you belonged to the Communist Party?” We recoded responses such that 1= “belong now” or “not now, but have belonged sometime,” 0=have never belonged.

For trusts neighbours, we used the following question: “B7C: How much do you trust the following people?” We recoded responses such that 3=trust very much, 2=somewhat trust them, 1=don’t trust them very much, 0=don’t trust them at all.

For contact with foreigners, we used the following question: “B5: Do you have a kin or non-kin friend who lives or works in Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan, or another society, with whom you have contact and communication at least once a year? (Or perhaps even more than one such person?) 1=yes, 0=no.”

For experience with cadre corruption, we used the following question: “E11: Have you ever personally experienced a situation of cadre corruption? 1=yes, 0=no.”

**1993 Survey on Social Mobility and Social Change in China**

Table A.5: **Summary Statistics for SSMSC, Rural Subset, 1993**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Variable** | **Obs** | **Mean** | **Std. dev.** | **Min** | **Max** |
| **Dependent variables:**  (0 = response; 1 = NSR) |  |  |  |  |  |
| NSR on 61j | 2,151 | 0.084 | 0.278 | 0 | 1 |
| NSR on 43d | 2,151 | 0.017 | 0.128 | 0 | 1 |
| NSR on 58e | 2,151 | 0.217 | 0.412 | 0 | 1 |
| NSR on 58f | 2,151 | 0.207 | 0.405 | 0 | 1 |
| NSR on 58g | 2,151 | 0.090 | 0.286 | 0 | 1 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Independent variables:** |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sex (0 = man; 1 = woman) | 2,151 | 0.498 | 0.500 | 0 | 1 |
| Age | 2,151 | 41.980 | 15.027 | 18 | 93 |
| Age2 | 2,151 | 1,988.033 | 1,423.723 | 324 | 8,649 |
| Education (years of schooling) | 2,150 | 4.734 | 3.620 | 0 | 16 |
| Ethnic minority | 2,123 | 0.043 | 0.203 | 0 | 1 |
| CCP | 2,151 | 0.137 | 0.344 | 0 | 1 |
| Trusts people | 2,029 | 0.499 | 0.500 | 0 | 1 |
| TV news frequency | 1,828 | 1.353 | 1.236 | 0 | 3 |
| Newspaper frequency | 1,857 | 0.331 | 0.815 | 0 | 3 |

*Source:*

Shi, Tianjian, 1993; The China Archive at Texas A&M University.

*Additional notes on the SSMSC*

The rural subset was created by Q180 regarding the respondent’s location by using observations that were coded as “countryside” (乡村) or “town” (县城集镇).The questions used for dependent variables were as follows:

61J: The decisions made by government officials are generally correct. (政府官员所作的决策总是正确的)

43D: We can trust that the government generally does what is good for us. (应当相信和服从政府, 因为政府最终是为我们好)

58: [Show card] Please refer to this card. There are 6 levels on this card. 6 means very good, 1 means very bad. Please choose 1 of the 6 levels to indicate your impression of the following institutions. ([出示卡片]请您参考这张卡片.这张卡片上有6个等级.6表示非常好,1表示非常不好.请您从6个等级中选择一个, 表示您 对下述机构的印象)

58E: Local people’s congress (地方人大)

58F: National people’s congress (全国人大)

58G: Government officials in general (一般政府官员)

For trusts people, we used question 59: “In general, do you think that most people can be trusted, or do you have to be very careful when dealing with people?” (一般来说,您认为大多数人都是可以信任呢,还是与人打交道要特别小心?) We recoded these variables such that 0=“be especially careful when dealing with people” (与人打交道要特别小心) and 1=“most people can be trusted” (大部分人是可以信任的).

CCP is coded as 1 if respondent is a member of the CCP or the Communist Youth League, 0 otherwise.

For TV news frequency, we used question 10: “Did you watch TV news last week?” (您上星期收看电视新闻了吗?) We coded this as 3=almost every day (几乎每天看), 2=watched several times (看了几次); 1=watched once or twice (看了一两次); 0=didn’t watch TV news (没看) or doesn’t have a TV (没有电视机).

For newspaper frequency, we used question 11: “Did you read the newspaper last week?” (您上星期看报了吗?) We coded this as 3=almost every day (几乎每天看), 2=read it several times (看了几次); 1=read it once or twice (看了一两次); 0=didn’t read the newspaper (没看).