

Author(s): Knack, Stephen

Title: Performance and Recommendations Summary for 1991 NES Pilot Variables #2828-2847

Date: January 24, 1992

Dataset(s): 1991 Pilot Study

Abstract

Knack summarizes the recommendations made in his three Pilot Study reports regarding the format and phrasing of specific 1991 Pilot Study items. Among the social cooperation variables, Knack finds that all but one of the social altruism items -- the census participation question -- load strongly on a single factor and jointly predict validated turnout well. Knack recommends replacing the census item with another altruism item, but argues for keeping the four social altruism items which perform well. In addition, Knack recommends retaining the conditional cooperation items, which also strongly predict voter turnout. Turning to the social connectedness items, Knack finds that the questions relating to contact with neighbors behave as expected in predicting turnout and should be retained. The experimental items which measure social connectedness to friends and relatives, on the other hand, do not perform well and should be rephrased. While the items measuring social sanctions for not voting have disproportional small effects on predicted turnout, the items are still useful and should be retained. Knack's third substantive area of interest was jury duty and voter registration. He finds that items measuring perceptions of jury source practices are useful for predicting registration and should be used in future studies. The item measuring willingness to serve on a jury, however, does not perform well in interaction terms and should be modified. Finally, Knack recommends restoring the measures of Civic Duty dropped after the 1980 NES because such measures would better allow for the examination of the theorized link