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Institution: Birkbeck, University of London, UK
Module/Course: Comparative Government
Level: Undergraduate, First Year – Level 4 (UK)
Credit Units: 30



For Instructors wanting to view the survey:

Link to the Google.doc version of the survey - <https://forms.gle/D2GaUeun68PGF6aj7>

Link to the MS Forms version of the survey - <https://forms.office.com/e/ehGVHqFzFA>

On the use of the political participation survey with students – in my course/module, I have used this survey later in the term/semester, so I have had time to build students’ knowledge about political processes and systems. In particular, the exercise has been used with students to discuss specific themes: mobilisation and communication, within my Comparative Government module. I had students reviewing the results and analysing what we can understand from the responses gathered. I saw the survey as a discussion-starter with evidence to base some of that discussion around. Rather than taking data from research completed by others, having the students participate in the survey and knowing that these results represented our class group, provided to be a way to get students to ‘invest’ their time and effort, as played on their interest and curiosity.

Other colleagues I have shared this resource provided great feedback on how to do more with this resource. They suggested incorporating a few additional questions could be useful, as well as possibly linking such an anonymous survey activity to a class or course on research methods. Students learn to collect data and analyse it through participation in the survey itself. One could also have students co-create the anonymous survey as a class group, or in smaller groupings as part of a class assignment as well.

I see this survey as just one example to engage students in discussion about political participation, party politics, civic education, and citizen motivations in politics. However, I can see it being adapted in terms of the questions used and the choices listed under a question, as well as for the purposes.

For example, a number of questions in my version of the survey are focused on UK political parties, as my students on this module/course are based in the UK. For those based elsewhere, swapping these out for local or national political parties that are relevant is an easy switch.

The survey uses 5-point likert scales. For those less familiar, a Likert scale is a rating scale used to measure attitudes, opinions, perceptions, or behaviors – and are often used in psychology, marketing, and other social sciences research. The link to the Bhandari and Nikolopoulou work (below) includes images of 5-point scales and 7-point scales, which I really useful myself.

Ideas and information about structuring questions for use with a Likert Scale, can be found:

P. Bhandari and K. Nikolopoulou (2020/2023) [What Is a Likert Scale? | Guide & Examples](#). Published on July 3, 2020 by Pritha Bhandari and Kassiani Nikolopoulou. Revised on June 22, 2023.