



The CivicPanel Project
School of Public Affairs and Administration
Rutgers University
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Survey Report # 20

Information Source Experiment (Middletown)

March 2011

About the Survey

This Survey Report discusses findings of a CivicPanel online survey about how citizens judge local government performance. Respondents were asked to look at a graph showing the percent of streets rated as “acceptably clean” from an annual report of a hypothetical city named Middletown. Following the viewing of this graph, respondents were asked to rate the degree to which they believed the information was true or not. Four different versions of the source or sponsor of the report were randomly allocated to respondents: the mayor, the sanitation department, a nonprofit institute, and no mention of a source or sponsor. In all cases, however, the data in the graph was the same. Thus, the aim was to see if respondents would judge the truthfulness of the street cleanliness data differently, depending on the source or sponsor of the report.

The survey was conducted in March 2011, and included online responses from 1,910 panelists. *This report presents the summary results only*, not the experimental results (which will be published later in an academic journal). However, preliminary analysis (not shown below) indicates that the respondents doubted the truthfulness of the information if it came from the sanitation department or the mayor, and in turn believed the information more if it came from the nonprofit institute or from a report with no source or sponsor mentioned.

About the Panel

CivicPanel is an online panel of volunteers who sign up over the Internet to participate in the project’s surveys. Panelists are recruited from online ads, web directories, and announcements sent by email to members of various nonprofit organizations that have partnered with CivicPanel (formerly eTownPanel) over the years.

It is important to point out that the panel is not a random sample, and thus the results are not scientifically projectable to the larger population.

For more information visit www.civicpanel.org or email civicpan@rutgers.edu

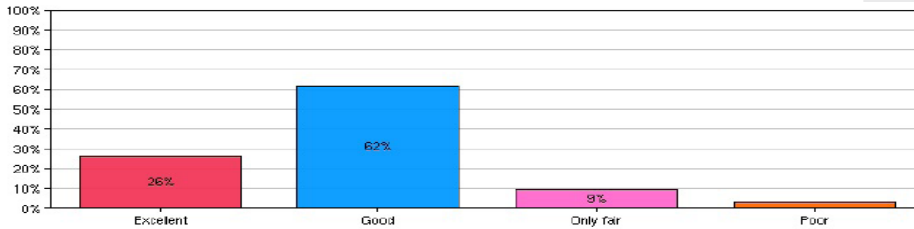
Summary Report

Survey: Middletown survey

Overall, how would you rate your city or town as a place to live?

Value	Count	Percent %
Excellent	497	26.1%
Good	1174	61.6%
Only fair	177	9.3%
Poor	57	3%

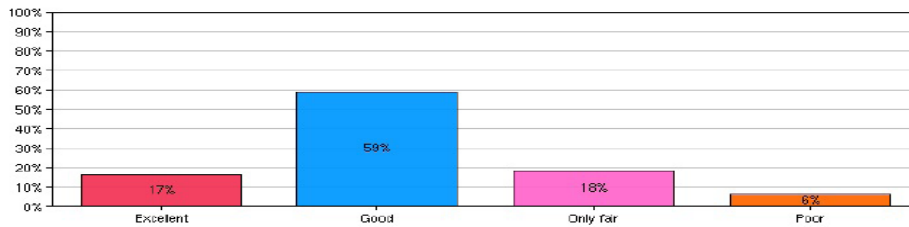
Statistics	
Total Responses	1,905
Sum	3,604.0
Average	1.9
StdDev	0.68
Max	4.0



How would you rate the cleanliness of streets in your city or town?

Value	Count	Percent %
Excellent	312	16.5%
Good	1122	59.2%
Only fair	346	18.3%
Poor	115	6.1%

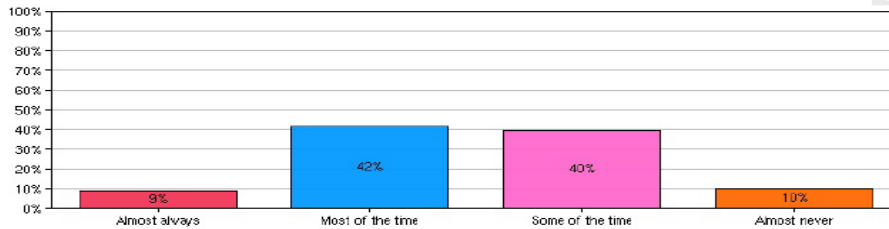
Statistics	
Total Responses	1,895
Sum	4,054.0
Average	2.1
StdDev	0.76
Max	4.0



How much do you think you can trust your local government to do what is right?

Value	Count	Percent %
Almost always	173	9.1%
Most of the time	789	41.5%
Some of the time	751	39.5%
Almost never	190	10%

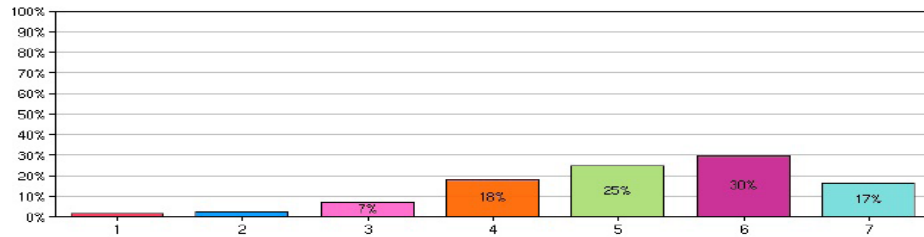
Statistics	
Total Responses	1,903
Sum	4,764.0
Average	2.5
StdDev	0.79
Max	4.0



Nearly all of the city's streets are acceptably clean

Value	Count	Percent %
1	27	1.4%
2	54	2.8%
3	134	7.1%
4	340	17.9%
5	466	24.6%
6	561	29.6%
7	313	16.5%

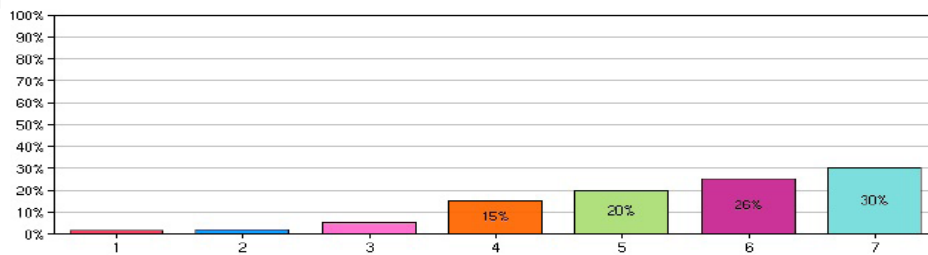
Statistics	
Total Responses	1,895
Sum	9,784.0
Average	5.2
StdDev	1.37
Max	7.0



Street cleanliness in the city has improved

Value	Count	Percent %
1	26	1.4%
2	44	2.3%
3	102	5.4%
4	287	15.1%
5	381	20.1%
6	485	25.5%
7	574	30.2%

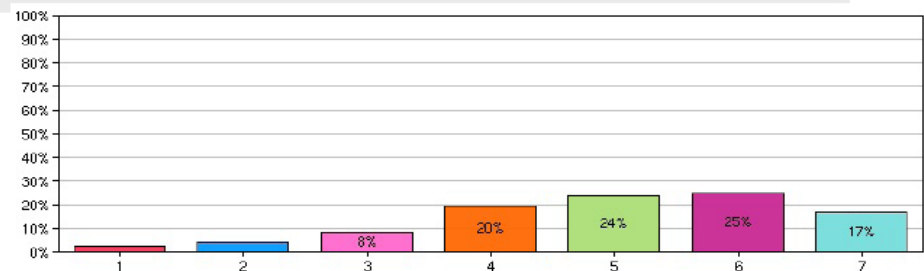
Statistics	
Total Responses	1,899
Sum	10,401.0
Average	5.5
StdDev	1.42
Max	7.0



City government should get credit for doing a better job

Value	Count	Percent %
1	54	2.8%
2	78	4.1%
3	157	8.3%
4	373	19.7%
5	451	23.8%
6	469	24.7%
7	314	16.6%

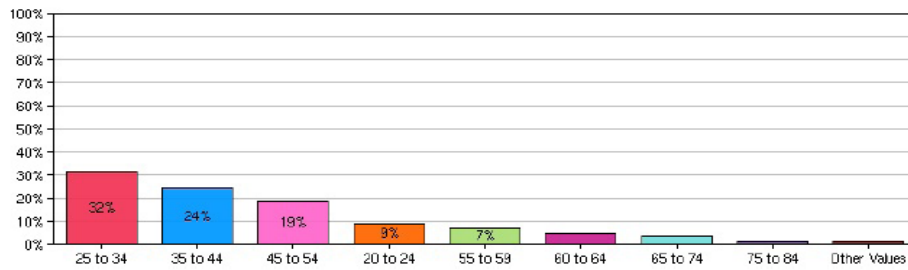
Statistics	
Total Responses	1,896
Sum	9,440.0
Average	5.0
StdDev	1.50
Max	7.0



What is your age?

Value	Count	Percent %
Under 20	14	0.7%
20 to 24	169	8.9%
25 to 34	601	31.5%
35 to 44	462	24.2%
45 to 54	355	18.6%
55 to 59	130	6.8%
60 to 64	88	4.6%
65 to 74	68	3.6%
75 to 84	15	0.8%
85 years and over	4	0.2%

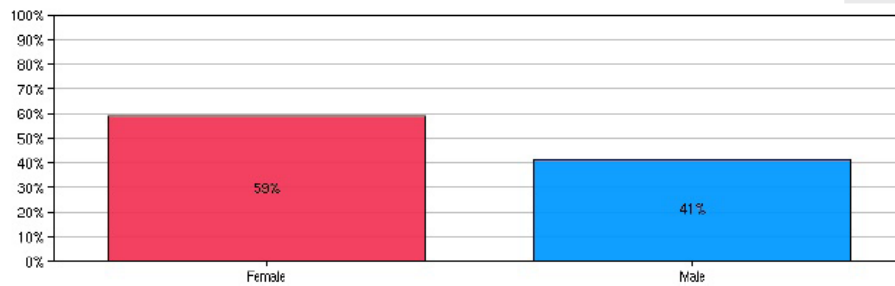
Statistics	
Total Responses	1,906
Sum	7,893.0
Average	4.1
StdDev	1.56
Max	10.0



Are you ...

Value	Count	Percent %
Female	1100	58.7%
Male	773	41.3%

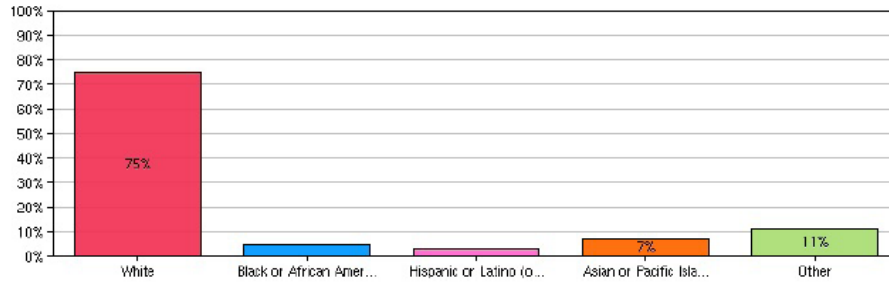
Statistics	
Total Responses	1,873
Sum	2,646.0
Average	1.4
StdDev	0.49
Max	2.0



Do you consider yourself to be primarily ...

Value	Count	Percent %
White	1411	74.6%
Black or African American	89	4.7%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	55	2.9%
Asian or Pacific Islander	132	7%
Other	205	10.8%

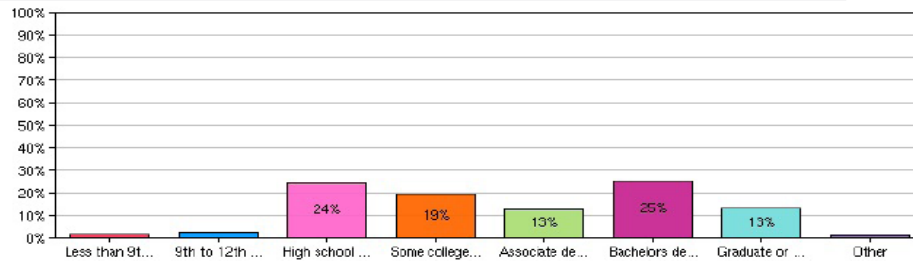
Statistics	
Total Responses	1,892
Sum	3,307.0
Average	1.7
StdDev	1.40
Max	5.0



What is the last grade or class that you completed in school?

Value	Count	Percent %
Less than 9th grade	26	1.4%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	47	2.5%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	463	24.4%
Some college, no degree	369	19.4%
Associate degree	242	12.8%
Bachelors degree	481	25.3%
Graduate or professional degree	248	13.1%
Other	22	1.2%

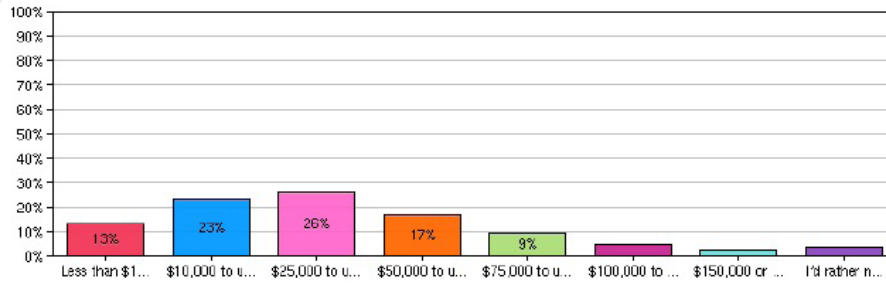
Statistics	
Total Responses	1,898
Sum	8,993.0
Average	4.7
StdDev	1.56
Max	8.0



Last year, what was your total household income from all sources, before taxes?

Value	Count	Percent %
Less than \$10,000	250	13.2%
\$10,000 to under \$25,000	437	23%
\$25,000 to under \$50,000	499	26.3%
\$50,000 to under \$75,000	318	16.8%
\$75,000 to under \$100,000	178	9.4%
\$100,000 to under \$150,000	91	4.8%
\$150,000 or more	51	2.7%
I'd rather not say	74	3.9%

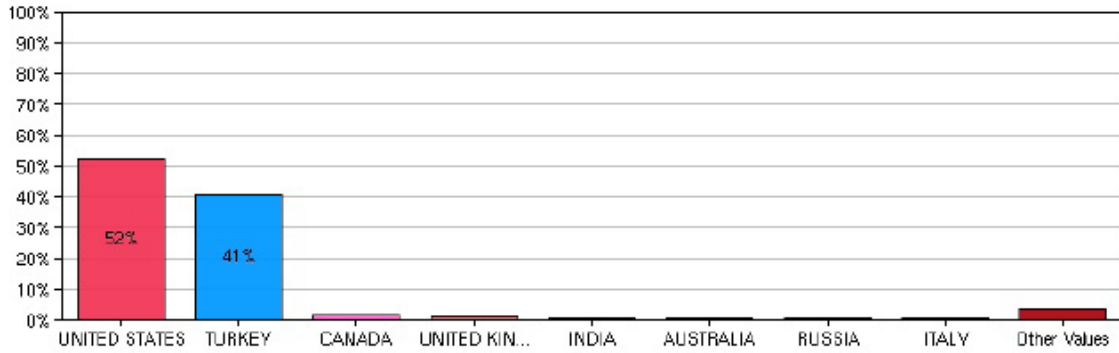
Statistics	
Total Responses	1,898
Sum	6,278.0
Average	3.3
StdDev	1.74
Max	8.0



What country do you live in?

Value	Count	Percent %
UNITED STATES	987	52.1%
-----	2	0.1%
AMERICAN SAMOA	2	0.1%
ARGENTINA	2	0.1%
AUSTRALIA	12	0.6%
AUSTRIA	1	0.1%
AZERBAIJAN	1	0.1%
BELGIUM	1	0.1%
BRAZIL	1	0.1%
BULGARIA	1	0.1%
CANADA	32	1.7%
CHILE	1	0.1%
CHINA	1	0.1%
COLOMBIA	1	0.1%
CYPRUS	2	0.1%
ECUADOR	1	0.1%
FINLAND	1	0.1%
FRANCE	1	0.1%
INDIA	13	0.7%
IRAQ	1	0.1%
ITALY	5	0.3%
JAPAN	1	0.1%
KENYA	1	0.1%
LITHUANIA	1	0.1%
MALAYSIA	3	0.2%
NETHERLANDS	1	0.1%
NEW CALEDONIA	2	0.1%
NEW ZEALAND	2	0.1%
NIGERIA	2	0.1%
PHILIPPINES	1	0.1%
PORTUGAL	1	0.1%
RUSSIA	5	0.3%
SINGAPORE	4	0.2%
SLOVENIA	1	0.1%
SOUTH AFRICA	2	0.1%
SPAIN	1	0.1%
SWEDEN	4	0.2%
TURKEY	768	40.5%
UKRAINE	1	0.1%
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES	1	0.1%
UNITED KINGDOM	22	1.2%
VIRGIN ISLANDS (U.S.)	1	0.1%

Statistics	
Total Responses	1,894



What state do you live in? (US residents only)

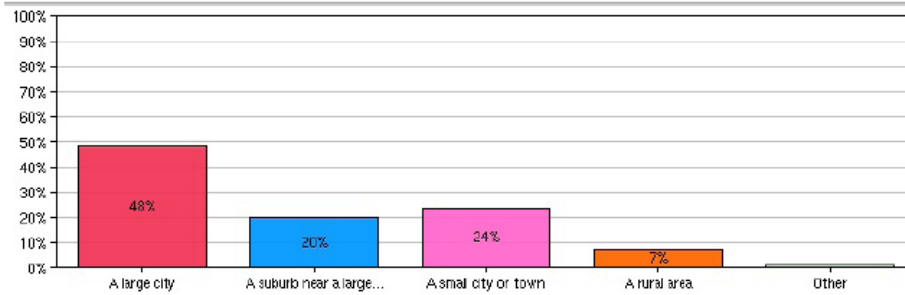
Value	Count	Percent %
Alabama	35	3.1%
Alaska	11	1%
Arizona	18	1.6%
Arkansas	7	0.6%
California	106	9.4%
Colorado	12	1.1%
Connecticut	11	1%
Delaware	1	0.1%
District of Columbia	3	0.3%
Florida	63	5.6%
Georgia	29	2.6%
Hawaii	7	0.6%
Idaho	7	0.6%
Illinois	30	2.6%
Indiana	26	2.3%
Iowa	9	0.8%
Kansas	7	0.6%
Kentucky	15	1.3%
Louisiana	8	0.7%
Maine	6	0.5%
Maryland	11	1%
Massachusetts	14	1.2%
Michigan	25	2.2%
Minnesota	16	1.4%
Mississippi	5	0.4%
Missouri	19	1.7%
Montana	5	0.4%
Nebraska	6	0.5%
Nevada	4	0.4%
New Jersey	24	2.1%
New Mexico	3	0.3%
New York	258	22.8%
North Carolina	27	2.4%
North Dakota	1	0.1%
Ohio	33	2.9%
Oklahoma	7	0.6%
Oregon	18	1.6%
Pennsylvania	46	4.1%
Rhode Island	4	0.4%
South Carolina	15	1.3%
South Dakota	3	0.3%
Tennessee	20	1.8%
Texas	52	4.6%
Utah	7	0.6%
Vermont	3	0.3%
Virginia	16	1.4%
Washington	28	2.5%
West Virginia	15	1.3%
Wisconsin	24	2.1%
Wyoming	13	1.1%

Statistics	
Total Responses	1,133

Would you describe the place where you live as ...

Value	Count	Percent %
A large city	918	48.3%
A suburb near a large city	376	19.8%
A small city or town	452	23.8%
A rural area	139	7.3%
Other	15	0.8%

Statistics	
Total Responses	1,900
Sum	3,657.0
Average	1.9
StdDev	1.04
Max	5.0



In general, would you describe your political views as ...

Value	Count	Percent %
Very liberal	180	9.5%
Liberal	532	28.2%
Moderate	777	41.2%
Conservative	298	15.8%
Very conservative	98	5.2%

Statistics	
Total Responses	1,885
Sum	5,257.0
Average	2.8
StdDev	0.99
Max	5.0

