

UnderStandingAmericaStudy

STANDARD VARIABLES



USC Dornsife Center for Economic and Social Research

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1 DEFAULT SURVEY VARIABLES

Each Understanding America Study data contains a series of standard variables, consisting of individual, household and sample identifiers, language indicator, time stamps and a rating by the respondent of how much he or she liked the survey:

- **uasid**: the identifier of the respondent. This identifier is assigned to a respondent at recruitment and stays with the respondent throughout each and every survey he/she participates in. When analyzing data from multiple surveys, the 'uasid' can be used to merge data sets.
- **uashhid**: the household identifier of the respondent. Every member is assigned a household identifier, stored in the variable 'uashhid'. For the primary respondent this identifier equals his or her 'uasid'. All other eligible members of the primary respondent's household (everyone who is 18 or older in the household) who become UAS respondents receive the 'uasid' of the primary respondent as their household identifier. The identifier 'uashhid' remains constant over time for all respondents. Thus it is always possible to find the original UAS household of an UAS panel member (even after they, for example, have moved out to form another household).
- **survhhid**: uniquely identifies the household a UAS panel member belongs to in a given survey. For instance, if the primary respondent and his/her spouse are both UAS members at the time of a given survey, they both receive the same 'survhhid' identifier for that survey. If they subsequently split, they receive two different 'survhhid' in subsequent surveys. They, however, always share the same 'uashhid'. The identifier 'survhhid' is set to missing (.n) if no other household members are UAS panel members at the time of the survey. Since individuals can answer the same survey at different points in time (which can be relatively far apart if the survey is kept in the field for a prolonged time), it may be possible that, within the same data set, household members have different 'survhhid' reflecting different household compositions at the time they answered the survey. For instance, suppose that the primary respondent and his/her spouse are both UAS members. If the primary respondent answers the survey when he/she is living with the spouse, but the spouse answers the survey when the couple has split, they receive different 'survhhid'. Hence, the variable 'survhhid' identifies household membership of UAS panel members, at the time the respondent answers the survey. Note: in the My Household survey 'survhhid'

is set to unknown (.u) for respondents who last participated in the My Household survey prior to January 21, 2015.

- **uasmembers:** is the number of other household members who are also UAS panel members at the time of the survey. Since individuals can answer the same survey at different points in time (which can be relatively far apart as the survey is kept in the field for a prolonged time), it may be possible that, within the same data set, the primary respondent of a household has a value of '0', whereas the second UAS household respondent has a value of '1'. Therefore 'uasmembers' should be interpreted as the number of household and UAS panel members at the time the respondent answers the survey. Note: in the My Household survey 'uasmembers' is set to unknown (.u) for respondents who last participated in the My Household survey prior to January 21, 2015.

- **sampletype:** indicates the sampling frame from which the household of the respondent was recruited. All UAS recruitment is done through address based sampling (ABS) in which samples are acquired based on postal records. Currently, the variable 'sampletype' takes on three values reflecting three distinct recruitment categories (in future data sets the number of categories may increase due to the incorporation of new recruitment categories):
 1. Nationally Representative Sample
 2. Native Americans: recruited through ABS, where the probability of drawing a zip-code is a function of the percentage of Native Americans in the zip-code. Primary respondents in these zip-codes who are not Native Americans are not invited to join the UAS.
 3. LA County: recruited through ABS drawing from zip-codes in Los Angeles County.

More information about the recruitment procedures of the UAS can be found in the sample recruitment report.

- **batch:** indicates the batch from which the respondent was recruited. There are currently the following values this variable takes (in future data sets the number of categories may increase due to the usage of new recruitment samples):
 1. ASDE 2014/01 Nat.Rep.

2. ASDE 2014/01 Native Am.
 3. ASDE 2014/11 Native Am.
 4. LA County 2015/05 List Sample
 5. MSG 2015/07 Nat.Rep. Batch 1
 6. MSG 2016/01 Nat.Rep. Batch 2
 7. MSG 2016/01 Nat.Rep. Batch 3
 8. MSG 2016/01 Nat.Rep. Batch 4
 9. MSG 2016/02 Nat.Rep. Batch 5
 10. MSG 2016/03 Nat.Rep. Batch 6
 11. MSG 2016/04 Nat.Rep. Batch 7
 12. MSG 2016/05 Nat.Rep. Batch 8
 13. MSG 2016/08 LA County Batch 2
 14. MSG 2017/03 LA County Batch 3
- primary_respondent: indicates if the respondent was the first person within the household (i.e. to become a member or whether s/he was added as a subsequent member. A household in this regard is broadly defined as anyone living together with the primary respondent. That is, a household comprises individuals who live together, e.g. as part of a family relationship (like a spouse/child/parent) or in context of some other relationship (like a roommate or tenant).
 - hardware: indicates whether the respondent ever received hardware or not. Note: this variable should not be used to determine whether a respondent received hardware at a given point in time and/or whether s/he used the hardware to participate in a survey. Rather, it indicates whether hardware was ever provided. This variable takes a value of 0 for None and a value of 1 for Tablet (includes Internet).

- language: the language in which the survey was conducted. This variable takes a value of 1 for English and a value of 2 for Spanish.
- start_date (start_year, start_month, start_day, start_hour, start_min, start_sec): indicates the time at which the respondent started the survey.
- end_date (end_year, end_month, end_day, end_hour, end_min, end_sec): indicates the time at which the respondent completed the survey. These variables are set to (.c) if the respondent did not complete the survey.
- cs_001: indicates how interesting the respondent found the survey.

2 BACKGROUND DEMOGRAPHICS

Every UAS survey data set includes demographic variables, which provide background information about the respondent and his/her household. Demographic information such as age, ethnicity, education, marital status, work status, state of residence, family structure is elicited every quarter through the “My Household” survey. The demographic variables provided with each survey are taken from the most recent ‘MyHousehold’ survey answered by the respondent. If at the time of a survey, the information in “My Household” is more than three months old, a respondent is required to check and update his or her information before being able to take the survey.

The following variables are available in each survey data set:

- gender: the gender of the respondent.
- dateofbirth_year: the year of birth of the respondent.
- age: the age of the respondent at the start of the survey.
- agerange: if the respondent’s age cannot be calculate due to missing information, ‘agerange’ indicates the approximate age. Should a value for both the ‘age’ and ‘agerange’ be present, then ‘age’ takes precedence over ‘agerange’.
- citizenus: indicates whether the respondent is a U.S. citizen.
- bornus: indicates whether the respondent was born in the U.S.
- stateborn: indicates the state in which the respondent was born. This is set to missing (.a) if the respondent was not born in the U.S.
- countryborn: indicates the country in which the respondent was born. This is set to missing (.a) if the respondent was born in the U.S.
- countryborn_other: indicates the country of birth if that country is not on the drop down list of countries shown to the respondent’.
- Immigrant_status: indicates whether the respondent is an immigrant. It takes one of the following values: 0 Non-immigrant, 1 First generation immigrant (immigrant who migrated to the U.S), 2 Second generation immigrant (U.S.-born children of at least one foreign-born

parent), 3 Third generation immigrant (U.S.-born children of at least one U.S.-born parent, where at least one grandparent is foreign-born), or 4 Unknown immigrant status.

- statereside: the state in which the respondent is living.
- maritalstatus: the marital status of the respondent.
- livewithpartner: indicates whether the respondent lives with a partner. This is set to missing (.a) if the respondent is married (marital status is 1 or 2).
- education: the highest level of education attained by the respondent.
- hisplativo: indicates whether the respondent identifies him or herself as being Hispanic or Latino.
- hisplatinogroup: indicates which Hispanic or Latino group a respondent identifies him or herself with. This is set to missing (.a) if the respondent does not identify him or herself as being Hispanic or Latino.
- white: indicates whether the respondent identifies him or herself as white (Caucasian). Is set to missing (".e") if no answer for race was given by the respondent.
- black: indicates whether the respondent identifies him or herself as black (African-American). Is set to missing (".e") if no answer for race was given by the respondent.
- nativeamer: indicates whether the respondent identifies him or herself as Native American (American Indian or Alaska Native). Is set to missing (".e") if no answer for race was given by the respondent.
- asian: indicates whether the respondent identifies him or herself as Asian (Asian-American). Is set to missing (".e") if no answer for race was given by the respondent.
- pacific: indicates whether the respondent identifies him or herself as Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander. Is set to missing (".e") if no answer for race was given by the respondent.
- race: indicates the race of the respondent as singular (e.g., '1 White' or '2 Black') or as mixed (in case the respondent identifies with two or more races). The value '6 Mixed' that the respondent answered 'Yes' to at least two of the single race categories. This variable is

generated based on the values of the different race variables (white, black, nativeamer, asian, pacific).

- working: indicates whether the respondent is working for pay. Is set to missing (".e") if no answer for laborstatus was given by the respondent.
- sick_leave: indicates whether the respondent is not working because sick or on leave. Is set to missing (".e") if no answer for laborstatus was given by the respondent.
- unemp_layoff: indicates whether the respondent is unemployed or on lay off. Is set to missing (".e") if no answer for laborstatus was given by the respondent.
- unemp_look: indicates whether the respondent is unemployed and looking for a job. Is set to missing (".e") if no answer for laborstatus was given by the respondent.
- retired: indicates whether the respondent is retired. Is set to missing (".e") if no answer for laborstatus was given by the respondent.
- disabled: indicates whether the respondent has a disability. Is set to missing (".e") if no answer for laborstatus was given by the respondent.
- lf_other: specifies other labor force status. Is set to missing (".e") if no answer for laborstatus was given by the respondent.
- laborstatus: indicates the labor force status of the respondent as singular (e.g., '1 Working for pay' or '2 On sick or other leave') or as mixed (in case the respondent selects two or more labor statuses). The value '8 Mixed' indicates that the respondent answered 'Yes' to at least two of the single labor force status variables. This variable is generated based on the values of the different labor status variables (working, sick_leave, unempl_layoff, unempl_look, retired, disabled, lf_other).
- employmenttype: indicates the employment type of the respondent (employed by the government, by a private company, a nonprofit organization, or self-employed). This is set to missing (.a) if the respondent is not currently working or currently on sick or other leave.
- workfullpart: indicates whether the respondent works full or part-time. This is set to missing (.a) if the respondent is not currently working or currently on sick or other leave.

- hourswork: indicates the number of hours the respondent works per week. This is set to missing (.a) if the respondent is not currently working or currently on sick or other leave.
- hhincome: is the total combined income of all members of the respondent's household (living in their household) during the past 12 months.
- anyhhmember: indicates whether there were any members in the respondent's household at the time he/she answered the survey as reported by the respondent.
- hhmembernumber: indicates the number of household members in the respondent's household at the time of the survey as reported by the respondent. It may be that 'anyhhmember' is 'Yes', but 'hhmembernumber' is missing if the respondent did not provide the number of household members at the time of the survey.
- hhmemberin_#: indicates whether a household member is currently in the household as reported by the respondent. Household members are never removed from the stored household roster and their information is always included in survey data sets. The order of the roster is the same order in which household members were specified by the respondent in the 'MyHousehold' survey. The order is identified by the suffix _# (e.g., _1 indicates the first household member, _2 the second household member, etc.).

As an example, if the first household member is in the household at the time of the survey, 'hhmemberin_1' is set to '1 HH Member 1 is in the HH'; if he/she has moved out, 'hhmemberin_1' is set to '0 HH member 1 is no longer in the HH'. Since information of other household members (stored in the variables listed below) is always included in survey data sets, information about 'hhmemberin_1' is available whether this person is still in the household or has moved out.

- hhmembergen_#: indicates the gender of another household member as reported by the respondent.
- hhmemberage_#: indicates the age of another household member. The age is derived from the month and year of birth of the household member as reported by the respondent.
- hhmemberrel_#: indicates the relationship of the respondent to the other household member as reported by the respondent.

- hhmemberuasid_#: is the 'uasid' of the other household member if this person is also a UAS panel member. It is set to missing (.) if this person is not a UAS panel member at the time of the survey. Since this identifier is directly reported by the respondent (chosen from a preloaded list), it may differ from the actual (correct) 'uasid' of the UAS member it refers to because of reporting error. Also, this variable should not be used to identify UAS members in a given household at the time of the survey. This is because the variables 'hhmemberuasid_#' are taken from the most recent 'My Household' and changes in household composition involving UAS members may have occurred between the time of the respondent answered 'My Household' and the time the respondent answers the survey. To follow UAS members of a given household, it is advised to use the identifiers 'uashhid' and 'survhhid'. Note: if the respondent does not for example have a fourth household member, hhmemberuasid_4 takes the value of (.m).
- hhmemberdateofbirth_month_#: the month of birth of another household member as reported by the respondent.
- hhmemberdateofbirth_year_#: the year of birth of another household member as reported by the respondent.
- lastmyhh_date: the date on which the demographics variables were collected through the 'My Household' survey.

3 ADDITIONAL MY HOUSEHOLD INFORMATION

The My Household data set provides all the variables listed above (with the exception of CS_001). In addition, it comes with the following indicator variables:

- `numeroftimes`: indicates the number of times the respondent has filled out the My Household survey (which is administered quarterly).