**Homework Block 1: Objects, functions, and data types**

* *All materials for the exercises below are available in the homework folder of Block 1.*
* *Please submit an R script file containing the results.*
* *You can #commentout any sentences written answers.*

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*Exercise 1: Animal longevity dataset*

1. The animal longevity dataset contains data on the maximum (known) lifespan of various animals.
   1. How many variables and how many observations are there?
   2. Pick three animals from the dataset and assign the lifespan values to new objects with an appropriate name.
   3. Create three logical tests comparing the longevity between the objects you created in question 1.2.
   4. Create two vectors:
      1. Strings of all the animals you chose in question 1.2.
      2. Their respective lifespans.
   5. Calculate the mean and median of their lifespans.
   6. Retrieve the 2nd value of the vector that contains your animal names.
   7. Using code, find out which animals in your lifespans vector have a maximum longevity of above 27.

*Exercise 2: Self-reported Turnout*

1. Surveys are frequently used to measure political behavior such as voter turnout, but some researchers are concerned about the accuracy of self-reports. They worry about possible social desirability bias where, in postelection surveys, respondents who did not vote in an election lie about not having voted because they may feel that they should have voted. Is such a bias present in the American National Election Studies (ANES)? ANES is a nationwide survey that has been conducted for every election since 1948. ANES is based on face-to-face interviews with a nationally representative sample of adults. The table below displays the names and descriptions of variables in the turnout.csv data file.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Variable | Description |
| Year | Election year |
| ANES | Self-estimated turnout rate |
| VEP | Voting eligible population (in thousands) |
| VAP | Voting age population (in thousands) |
| Total | Total ballots cast for highest office (in thousands) |
| Felons | Total ineligible felons (in thousands) |
| Noncitizens | Total noncitizens (in thousands) |
| Overseas | Total eligible overseas voters (in thousands) |
| Osvoters | Total ballots count overseas voters (in thousands) |

* 1. Load the data into R and check the dimensions of the data. Also, obtain a summary of the data. How many observations are there? What is the range of years covered in this data set?
  2. Calculate the real turnout rate based on the voting age population (VAP). Note that for this data set, we must add the total number of eligible overseas voters since the VAP variable does not include these individuals in the count. Next, calculate the real turnout rate using the voting eligible population (VEP). What difference do you observe?
  3. Compute the differences between the self-estimated turnout rate (ANES) and the real turnout rate you just calculated in 2.2. How big is the difference on average? What is the range of the differences? Conduct the same comparison for the VEP and ANES estimates of voter turnout. Briefly comment on the results.
  4. Compare the VEP turnout rate with the ANES turnout rate separately for presidential elections and midterm elections. Note that the data set excludes the year 2006. Does the bias of the ANES estimates vary across election types?
  5. Divide the data into half by election years such that you subset the data into two periods: older and newer elections. Calculate the difference between the VEP turnout rate and the ANES turnout rate separately for each year within each period. Has the bias of ANES increased over time?