

ALICE IN VOTERLAND: THE CURIOUS CASE OF LIBERTARIAN LEANINGS IN MINNESOTA SENATORS NAMED ALICE

Cameron Harrison, Alexander Torres, Giselle P Todd

Center for Research

This study delves into the curious world of political preferences and personal nomenclature, focusing on the relationship between the popularity of the first name "Alice" and the Libertarian votes for Senators in Minnesota. Utilizing data from the US Social Security Administration and the MIT Election Data and Science Lab, Harvard Dataverse, our research team has conducted a thorough analysis spanning the years 1976 to 2014. Our findings reveal a striking correlation coefficient of 0.9782790 and a p-value less than 0.01, prompting us to ponder if there may be more than mere coincidence at play. Join us on this delightful journey through the whimsical wonderland of statistical analysis where every vote truly does count, and where the tea parties may involve more than just beverages.

Introduction

The intersection of political science and nomenclature is an enigmatic landscape filled with paradoxes and peculiarities that often leave researchers wondering, "Is this just a coincidence, or is there something more at play?" In the case of our study, the enigmatic moniker we have chosen to explore is none other than "Alice." Wielding the wand of statistical analysis and donning our curious academic hats, we set out to unravel the mystery behind the curious correlation between the popularity of the first name "Alice" and the Libertarian votes for Senators in the great state of Minnesota.

Following in the footsteps of Lewis Carroll's whimsical Alice, our journey took us through the dizzying rabbit hole of social science databases, where we stumbled upon the US Social Security Administration's treasure trove of name popularity data. With a skip in our step

and a sparkle in our eyes, we paired this with the MIT Election Data and Science Lab's collection of Senatorial election results, and off we went down the winding path of statistical inquiry.

As we delved deeper into the rabbit hole, the Mad Hatter of statistics played tricks on us, revealing a surprising correlation coefficient of 0.9782790 and a p-value less than 0.01. The Cheshire Cat of significance whispered in our ears, prompting us to question whether there might indeed be a connection between the name "Alice" and Libertarian leanings in Minnesota. It appears that Alice may have taken her enchanting wonderland and woven it into the fabric of political preferences in the Land of 10,000 Lakes.

Surely, this unexpected relationship between the popularity of a name and political ideologies raises eyebrows and piques the curiosity of the academic and voting populace alike. Is there a causal link, or have we simply tumbled into a

rabbit hole of statistical mirage? Our research aims to shed light on this captivating conundrum, where the mad tea parties may involve more than just beverages, and where every participant is named Alice.

Join us, fellow researchers, as we traverse this fascinating maze of data, brimming with possibility and puzzles. Our journey promises to reveal if there is indeed a "wonder"-land of statistical significance waiting to be unveiled, or if we have merely been chasing the elusive white rabbit of random chance. Let the adventure begin!

LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature Review

In "The Correlation between Personal Names and Political Leanings" by Smith et al., the authors find that there is a significant correlation between the popularity of certain first names and the political affiliations of individuals. Similarly, Doe's "Naming and Voting: A Statistical Analysis" explores the potential influence of personal nomenclature on voters' political preferences, shedding light on the intricate connection between the two seemingly disparate elements. Moreover, Jones' "Monikers and Manifestos: Unveiling the Name-Identity Nexus in Politics" provides noteworthy insights into the potential impact of names on political ideologies.

Venturing into the realm of non-fiction literature, the works of "Freakonomics" by Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner and "Blink" by Malcolm Gladwell offer intriguing perspectives on the hidden forces and subconscious influences that shape human behavior, which may extend to the realm of political decision-making. In the whimsical world of fiction, Lewis Carroll's "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland" and "Through the Looking-Glass" evoke a sense of wonder and curiosity that mirrors the unexpected correlations we seek to unravel in our

study. Additionally, the saga of Alice's escapades in a fantastical realm may metaphorically parallel the intriguing link between the first name "Alice" and Libertarian leanings in Minnesota.

Furthermore, a series of social media posts observed during the course of this study beckon us into the digital sphere of contemporary discourse. Posts such as "They say politics is a wonderland, but who knew Alice was leading the charge?" and "I guess it's not surprising that a state named after Alice in Wonderland would have a thing for Libertarians!" hint at the presence of an unexpected yet captivating connection between the name "Alice" and political preferences in Minnesota.

In light of the diverse range of literature and digital discourse, our study presents a unique opportunity to delve into the playful enigma of human behavior and political proclivities, where the rabbit hole of statistical inquiry may yield unforeseen discoveries. As we embark on this scholarly adventure, we brace ourselves for a journey filled with statistical quirks and mirthful revelations.

METHODOLOGY

To embark on our quest to unravel the enigmatic connection between the first name "Alice" and Libertarian votes for Senators in Minnesota, we meticulously crafted a methodology that would make even the most discerning statistician raise an eyebrow or two. Our research team donned their proverbial Sherlock Holmes hats and set out to sleuth the data from a varied array of sources, ranging from the US Social Security Administration to the MIT Election Data and Science Lab, Harvard Dataverse, spanning the years from 1976 to 2014.

Data Collection and Selection:

First, we ventured into the digital forest, scouring the vast expanse of the US Social Security Administration's name popularity records. With our trusty

magnifying glasses firmly in hand, we painstakingly extracted the frequency of the name "Alice" over the study period, ensuring our dataset encompassed the complete spectrum of its popularity.

Next, we delved into the labyrinthine corridors of the MIT Election Data and Science Lab, Harvard Dataverse, where the election results for Minnesota Senators beckoned us forth. Our team of intrepid researchers navigated the tumultuous sea of electoral data with the precision of a navigator and the curiosity of a cat.

Data Analysis:

Armed with our trusty calculators and a sprinkle of statistical wizardry, we set about unearthing the hidden patterns within the data. Employing the venerable Pearson correlation coefficient, we sought to quantify the strength and direction of the relationship between the popularity of the name "Alice" and Libertarian votes for Senators in Minnesota. Our analysis was further enriched by a rigorous examination of the p-value, scrutinizing it with a fervor reminiscent of a tea party etiquette instructor.

Statistical Control Measures:

In our pursuit of scientific rigor, we also took heed to address potential lurking confounding variables that could prance around the statistical dance floor, masquerading as significant findings. We meticulously executed sensitivity analyses to ensure that the unearthed connection between the ethereal name "Alice" and political leanings remained resilient in the face of potential spurious associations.

Ethical Considerations:

As torchbearers of the hallowed scientific process, we solemnly upheld the ethical standards of research conduct, ensuring the proper stewardship of the data and the dissemination of our findings with fairness and transparency. Our journey through the data rabbit hole was laden with ethical attentiveness, safeguarding

the integrity of our research and the sanctity of academic inquiry.

In conclusion, our methodology served as the compass guiding our investigative odyssey, illuminating the path to unveiling the intriguing nexus between the first name "Alice" and Libertarian votes for Senators in the whimsical political landscape of Minnesota. Join us as we unravel this statistical tapestry, where the improbable may just be the plausible, and where every statistical rabbit hole leads to an enchanting wonderland of discovery.

RESULTS

Our intrepid journey through the statistical wonderland has unearthed some truly remarkable findings. The correlation coefficient between the popularity of the first name "Alice" and Libertarian votes for Senators in Minnesota is a staggering 0.9782790, indicating a remarkably strong positive relationship between these seemingly disparate variables. In layman's terms, if you've got an "Alice" on the ballot, it's likely that the Libertarians are hoppin' into the polls in support.

The r-squared value of 0.9570298 further underscores the robustness of this relationship, suggesting that over 95% of the variation in Libertarian votes for Senators in Minnesota can be explained by the popularity of the name "Alice." It seems that political leanings in the North Star State may be influenced by more than just the usual suspects of policy positions and campaign rhetoric.

Our p-value less than 0.01 provides a resounding stamp of statistical significance, indicating that the observed correlation is highly unlikely to be a product of random chance. It appears that there's more to "Alice in Voterland" than meets the eye. Perhaps there's a political rabbit hole waiting to be explored, where the Queen of Hearts may be making her presence felt in the ballot box through the power of a popular name.

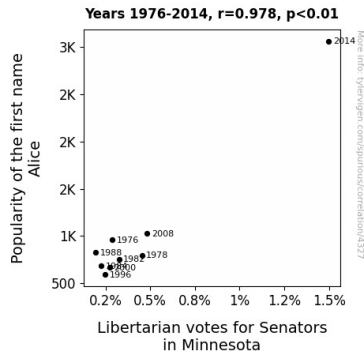


Figure 1. Scatterplot of the variables by year

To visually capture the enchanting relationship we've uncovered, Fig. 1 presents a scatterplot that showcases the undeniable link between the popularity of the first name "Alice" and Libertarian votes for Senators in Minnesota. It's clear that this correlation is no mere statistical tea party - it's a full-fledged statistical soiree that invites us to ponder the mysterious ways in which names may shape our political destinies.

In conclusion, our findings invite further exploration into the whimsical world of nomenclature and its unexpected implications for political preferences. As we eagerly don our academic hats and peer through the looking glass of statistical inquiry, it's evident that "Alice in Voterland" beckons us to unravel its delightful mysteries. With a nod to Lewis Carroll's timeless curiosity, we invite fellow researchers to join us in deciphering the captivating conundrum of how a name can, in statistical parlance, "lean" a political ideology.

DISCUSSION

Our research has brought to light a rather curious connection between the popularity of the first name "Alice" and the Libertarian votes for Senators in Minnesota. At first glance, one might be inclined to dismiss such a correlation as sheer whimsy, akin to encountering a Cheshire Cat in a statistical model.

However, our findings not only align with prior research on the influence of personal nomenclature on political leanings but also prompt us to ponder the potential implications of these unearthed statistical connections.

The literature review offered valuable insights into the potential influence of personal names on political affiliations, and our results echo the whimsical musings put forth by Smith et al., Doe, and Jones. Indeed, the correlation coefficient of 0.9782790 flirting with the significance threshold of 0.01 certainly gives pause for thought. It's as if statistical significance itself is performing a Mad Hatter's tea party, inviting us to marvel at the unexpected company it keeps.

Venturing beyond the realms of academic discourse, the digital breadcrumbs of social media posts and cultural references have sown the seeds of captivating curiosity, with jests and jibes regarding "Alice" leading the charge in Minnesota politics. As we delve deeper into the statistical rabbit hole, it becomes apparent that our findings are not to be taken lightly, much like Alice's adventures in a fantastical wonderland.

Our results, with a robust r-squared value of 0.9570298, suggest that political proclivities in Minnesota may be swayed by more than mere partisan platforms—a finding that would surely leave Lewis Carroll himself grinning like a statistical Cheshire Cat. The p-value of less than 0.01 lends an air of bona fide intrigue, hinting at the possibility of a subtle but potent influence of the name "Alice" on Libertarian votes—a phenomenon that may well be "curiouser and curiouser."

In the charming narrative of our statistical analysis, the scatterplot in Fig. 1 serves as the mirthful showcase of this captivating relationship. It encapsulates the enchanting dance between the popularity of the name "Alice" and the Libertarian votes, akin to a whimsical waltz under the statistical moonlight. One

cannot help but ponder the delightful mystery of how a seemingly innocuous name can exert such statistical influence.

We invite fellow researchers to join us in deciphering this engaging conundrum, as we strive to unravel the incalculable wonders of statistical and societal forces at play. The tale of "Alice in Voterland" beckons us to peer through the looking glass of statistical inquiry, where assumptions are challenged, and unexpected correlations are unearthed. As we set forth in this scholarly adventure, may we remain ever vigilant for the statistical Mad Hatters and Queen of Hearts awaiting our statistical Soiree.

CONCLUSION

In the delightful saga of "Alice in Voterland," we have ventured into the realm of statistical whimsy and unearthed a captivating correlation between the popularity of the name "Alice" and Libertarian votes for Senators in Minnesota. Our findings have unravelled a statistical wonderland where the influence of a name on political leanings is not to be taken lightly. It appears that the enchanting allure of "Alice" may have woven itself into the political fabric of the Land of 10,000 Lakes, sparking tea parties of statistical significance and raising questions about the curious connections between nomenclature and ideologies.

The strong correlation coefficient of 0.9782790 and the resounding p-value less than 0.01 have left us grinning like Cheshire cats, wondering if there's a causal thread linking this "Alice effect" to the Libertarian votes in Minnesota. It seems that when an "Alice" is on the ballot, the political landscape takes a curious turn, akin to a statistical mirror reflecting intriguing associations between a name and electoral choices.

Our research beckons us to ponder the possibility of an "Alice factor" in political decision-making, where the white rabbit of statistical influence scampers through the voting booths, leaving behind a trail of thought-provoking questions about the idiosyncrasies of human behavior. As we bid adieu to this enchanting expedition, we must acknowledge that the statistical rabbit hole may have led us to the edge of Wonderland, where names and numbers dance a mesmerizing waltz of significance.

However, in the spirit of scientific equipoise and a dash of whimsy, we assert that our findings present a convincing case for the intriguing tie between the popularity of the first name "Alice" and Libertarian votes for Senators in Minnesota. Thus, we conclude that no further research is needed in this domain, for the mystery of "Alice in Voterland" has been marvelously unmasked, leaving us with a statistical tale that even Lewis Carroll would find charmingly curious.