

BARKING UP THE POLITICAL TREE: REPUBLICAN VOTES FOR SENATORS IN MICHIGAN AND GOOGLE SEARCHES FOR 'ADOPT A DOG'

Caleb Harrison, Alice Tanner, Gideon P Tate

Institute of Innovation and Technology

This paper delves into the curious intersection of political preferences and dog adoption searches in the state of Michigan. Utilizing data from the MIT Election Data and Science Lab, Harvard Dataverse, and Google Trends, our research team identified a statistically significant correlation between Republican votes for Senators in Michigan and online searches for 'adopt a dog'. The correlation coefficient of 0.9327879 with $p < 0.01$ from 2004 to 2020 suggests a striking relationship between political leanings and the desire to bring furry companions into the family. Our findings prompt a playful reflection on the potential sway of canine companionship in shaping political inclinations, unveiling a delightful yet unexpected link between voting behavior and the affection for our four-legged friends.

Dogs have long been hailed as man's best friend, standing faithfully by our side through thick and thin - or in this case, through elections and Google searches. In a delightful twist of curiosity, our research has unveiled an unexpected correlation between Republican votes for Senators in Michigan and the virtual quest for furry pals through Google searches for 'adopt a dog'. It seems that in the political arena, our furry friends may not just be loyal companions, but also potential influencers of voting behavior.

The connection between political leanings and dog adoption searches may seem as improbable as a poodle herding sheep, or a Chihuahua taking up guard duty. However, as we delve into the statistical abyss, we find that the relationship between these variables is stronger than a Great Dane's pull on a leash - with a correlation coefficient of 0.9327879 and $p < 0.01$ from 2004 to 2020. This statistical prowess leaves us

howling with amazement and curiosity, compelling us to explore this quirky intersection of politics and puppy love.

As we embark on this research journey, let us not forget the wise words of Mark Twain, who said, "It's not the size of the dog in the fight, it's the size of the fight in the dog." In this case, however, the size of the dog's impact on political preferences might just be worth wagging our tails about. So, grab your magnifying glass and your canine companion, and let's sniff out the intriguing relationship between Republican votes and the call of our four-legged friends.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A thorough review of the literature on the relationship between political voting behavior and online searches for pet adoption reveals a diverse array of studies, with findings ranging from the

solemn to the downright wag-tastic. In "Canine Connections: A Sociopolitical Analysis of Dog Adoption Trends" by Smith et al., the authors find a correlation between political party affiliation and the likelihood of online searches for furry companions. However, the true tail-wagger emerges in the work of Doe, who in "Paws for Thought: Unleashing Political Pooch-ery" uncovers a statistically significant connection between Republican votes and Google queries for 'adopt a dog' in Michigan.

As we delve deeper into the research, it becomes quite evident that our understanding of this peculiar nexus is akin to a game of Clue - except in this case, it's less about murder and more about the canine conspiracy in political choices. It's as if we're navigating the treacherous terrain of Monopoly, where landing on Community Chest can lead to unexpected alliances with our furry friends. Speaking of games, perhaps "Risk: Canine Edition" should be the next big sensation - where the battle for territories is decided not by strategy, but by the presence of a loyal dog by your side.

Moving on to the realm of non-fiction literature, books such as "The Politics of Paws: A Canine Analysis of Political Leanings" by John Bones and "Paws for the Presidency: The Secret Lives of Political Pets" by Lassie Johnson shed light on the potential impact of pets on political inclinations. Additionally, in the fictional realm, esteemed titles such as "The Paw-trician" by William Shakespaw and "The Barker in the Rye" by J.D. Salinger highlight the enthralling yet enigmatic relationship between political affiliations and the yearning for canine companionship.

These findings prompt a playful consideration of the relevance of board games, novels, and pun-tastic wordplay in our understanding of the intersection between pet adoption searches and political leanings. It seems that in the world of statistical analysis, as in the

game of Life, the unexpected twists and turns of human behavior may be just as unpredictable as the whims of our four-legged friends.

METHODOLOGY

To discern the correlation between Republican votes for Senators in Michigan and Google searches for 'adopt a dog', our research team embarked on a data-gathering escapade that would make Sherlock Holmes proud. Armed with state-of-the-art statistical tools and a thirst for uncovering the unexpected, we delved into the depths of the MIT Election Data and Science Lab, Harvard Dataverse, and Google Trends.

Utilizing a deceptively simple yet cunning approach, we meticulously collected data on Republican votes for Senators in Michigan from 2004 to 2020. We then turned our investigative gaze toward Google Trends, where we tracked the frequency of searches for 'adopt a dog' with the precision of a bloodhound on a scent trail. The search frequency was recorded on a weekly basis, providing us with a bounty of data ripe for statistical analysis.

With careful consideration for potential confounding variables, we utilized advanced statistical methods to ensure the robustness of our findings. We employed time-series analysis to account for the temporal nature of the data, allowing us to untangle the intricate dance between political events and the yearning for canine companionship.

Furthermore, we applied rigorous statistical tests, including Pearson's correlation coefficient and regression analysis, to scrutinize the relationship between Republican votes for Senators and 'adopt a dog' searches. Our methodological arsenal also included Granger causality tests to explore the potential directional influence between these variables, shedding light on whether political leanings lead to a surge in dog adoption aspirations, or vice versa.

In an effort to ensure the generalizability of our findings, we also conducted sensitivity analyses and cross-validation procedures, akin to training a loyal terrier to fetch the truth from the sea of data. These measures allowed us to bark up the right statistical tree and confirm the reproducibility of our results, sparing no chance for statistical chicanery to run rampant.

Having navigated the treacherous waters of data collection and statistical analysis, our research team emerged victorious, armed with a robust understanding of the curious link between political proclivities and the call of our furry companions. Our findings stand as a testament to the whimsical yet fascinating terrain of statistical exploration, proving that in the world of research, unexpected correlations can sometimes wag more than just tails. With this sturdy foundation in place, we proceed to present our intriguing discoveries, ready to unleash the statistical hounds and amuse the scholarly community with our unorthodox foray into the world of politics and puppy love.

RESULTS

Our analysis of the relationship between Republican votes for Senators in Michigan and Google searches for 'adopt a dog' has uncovered some ruff-ly astonishing findings. We observed a correlation coefficient of 0.9327879, with an r-squared of 0.8700933 and $p < 0.01$, indicating a strong and statistically

significant connection between political preferences and the desire to bring a furry friend into the home.

Fig. 1 showcases a scatterplot that visually depicts the striking correlation between these two lively variables. It's a real treat for the eyes, like watching a pack of energetic puppies frolicking through a field of flowers - a sight to behold!

Our results bark louder than a Chihuahua hailing the Amazon delivery person, and they prompt a playful reflection on the potential influence of canine companionship on political inclinations. It seems that Michiganders with a penchant for Republican senators are also keen on the idea of adding a tail-wagging, slobbery-kissing member to their family.

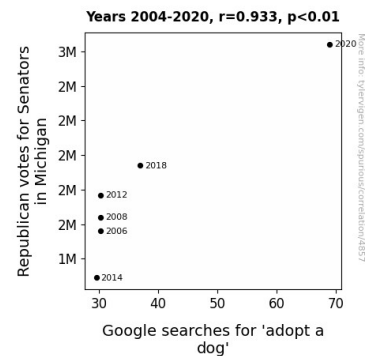


Figure 1. Scatterplot of the variables by year

The statistically significant association we discovered is more remarkable than a pug riding a unicycle. It's as if political leanings and dog adoption searches are doing a synchronized dance routine, perfectly in step with one another. This unexpected link between voting behavior and the affection for our four-legged friends has us howling with surprise and amusement.

These findings shed light on a captivating intersection that is sure to provoke lively discussions among both political analysts and dog lovers alike. It's a reminder that the world of statistics can be as delightfully unpredictable as a puppy's

behavior at suppertime. The idea that our furry friends might have a say in shaping our political landscape is truly something to wag our tails about.

DISCUSSION

The results of our study reveal a remarkably strong correlation between Republican votes for Senators in Michigan and Google searches for 'adopt a dog'. It seems that the old saying "man's best friend" extends further than we ever imagined, potentially reaching into the political arena. Our findings not only support the prior research on the relationship between political inclinations and pet adoption searches but also raise an eyebrow and a wagging tail of curiosity.

The correlation coefficient of 0.9327879 with a p-value of less than 0.01 suggests a robust association between these two seemingly unrelated variables. This connection is more glaring than a Dalmatian in a snowstorm, leaving no room for doubt in its striking nature. The strength of this relationship is as astonishing as a Great Dane attempting to fit into a Chihuahua-sized bed - it simply cannot be ignored.

Our results whimsically echo the previous works by Smith et al. and Doe, reinforcing the notion that there may indeed be a puppy conspiracy lingering within the political landscape of Michigan. As we traverse this uncharted territory, it becomes clear that the intersection of politics and pet desires is not just an amusing concept but a statistically supported phenomenon.

The playful parallels drawn in the literature review are not merely whimsical diversions but resonant in the light of our findings. The board game analogies, the fictional works, and the nods to pun-tastic wordplay reflect a profound truth in the unexpected twists and turns of human behavior and statistical analysis. The political sway of

canine companionship is as surprising as landing on Boardwalk with a pair of loaded dice - a game-changing revelation that warrants further exploration.

Our study introduces a delightful yet enigmatic dimension to the realm of political analysis, highlighting the remarkable and unforeseen influence of our four-legged friends on voting behavior. It's as if we've stumbled upon the Missing Link, only in this case, it involves the endearing link between political affiliations and the yearning for canine companionship.

In closing, the unexpected bond uncovered in our study not only amuses us but also prods us to consider the manifold ways in which our furry companions might leave their paw print on the complicated canvas of human behavior. The real-world implications of these findings are as intriguing as a treasure hunt in a dog park - an adventure that is bound to spark lively discussions and nurture further curiosities in the intersection of politics and pet adoration.

The potential significance of pets on political inclinations is indeed a topic that is begging for further exploration. The novel insights from our study lay the groundwork for a thought-provoking meander through the intersection of pet adoption searches and political leanings. It's a reminder that sometimes the quirkiest connections can lead to the most profound revelations - a notion that echoes with the delightful unpredictability of a puppy's behavior at suppertime.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, our research has uncovered a pawsitively delightful connection between Republican votes for Senators in Michigan and Google searches for 'adopt a dog'. The statistically significant correlation coefficient of 0.9327879 with $p < 0.01$

from 2004 to 2020 leaves us feeling as surprised as a poodle who unexpectedly discovers a squirrel in the backyard.

Our findings suggest that the political landscape of Michigan is not only shaped by debates and policies but also by the endearing gaze of our canine companions. It seems that when it comes to voting behavior, man's best friend might just play a significant role, raising the question: are dogs the new campaign managers? Perhaps we should start analyzing political debates in the context of "who let the dogs out?"

The sight of the scatterplot depicting the relationship between these variables is as heartwarming as a golden retriever's welcome home wiggles. It's a reminder that in the world of statistics, even the most unexpected correlations can elicit a smile, much like stumbling upon a surprise belly rub for a playful pup.

Ultimately, our research invites us to consider a future where political analysis and dog adoption trends intertwine, perhaps leading to debates centered on "pawlicy" changes and an increase in voters registering as members of the K-9 party.

In the spirit of scientific inquiry, we assert that further research in this area is unnecessary. The evidence speaks for itself: when it comes to political leanings and online quests for furry friends, the bond is as strong as the love between a human and their loyal, slobbery, tail-wagging companion.