

Dem Votes in Kentucky and Everest Climbs: A Rhyming Correlation

Caleb Hoffman, Andrew Travis, Gideon P Tate

Center for Research

This paper delves into the surprising (and somewhat whimsical) relationship between the number of votes for the Democrat presidential candidate in Kentucky and the total number of successful Mount Everest climbs. Drawing from data sources such as MIT Election Data and Science Lab, Harvard Dataverse, and the CBC, our research team has identified a correlation coefficient of 0.8882501 and $p < 0.01$ for the period spanning from 1976 to 2011. Our findings present an intriguing connection between political preferences in the Bluegrass State and the Himalayan triumphs of intrepid climbers. The implications of our results are both comical and thought-provoking, shedding light on a correlation that is truly an "epic summit" in the realm of unexpected statistical relationships.

Nestled amongst the rolling hills of Kentucky, where the horses run and the banjos twang, sits a mystery as enigmatic as the secret recipes of Colonel Sanders – the uncanny relationship between votes for the Democrat presidential candidate and the number of successful Mount Everest climbs. As a team of intrepid researchers, we set out to unravel this delightful enigma, armed with nothing but data and a healthy dose of skepticism.

It is not often that statistical correlations lead us to ponder the whimsical connections between political preferences and extreme mountaineering feats. However, as the old adage goes, "correlation does not imply causation, but it sure does make for a great conversation starter at cocktail parties." Armed with an unshakeable sense of curiosity and a dash of humor, we embarked on our statistical odyssey, journeying through the maze of data points and error bars towards the summit of knowledge.

Oh, statistics! The fickle and capricious mistress of the scientific world. Like a siren luring researchers into the treacherous waters of significance testing, the field of statistics has long been a source of both enlightenment and befuddlement. As we delved into the depths of voting records and Himalayan expeditions, we found ourselves dancing with p-values and correlation coefficients, like spelunkers navigating the caverns of uncertainty.

The aim of our endeavor is not merely to uncover a statistical relationship, but to unravel a tale of two seemingly disparate entities merging in a poetic dance of numbers. What could possibly connect the political leanings of Kentucky voters to the feats of conquering the world's highest peak? The answer may not be as elusive as the Yeti, but it certainly holds a charm that is equally tantalizing.

So, ladies and gentlemen, fasten your seatbelts and prepare for a statistical rollercoaster ride through the Bluegrass State and the roof of the world. Our findings are bound to be as intriguing as a Bigfoot sighting in the White House – improbable, yet

undeniably captivating. Join us as we embark on this journey of discovery, where the lighthearted nature of our research belies the serious implications of unexpected statistical relationships.

Review of existing research

The pursuit of understanding the curious correlation between the number of votes for the Democrat presidential candidate in Kentucky and the total number of successful Mount Everest climbs has led scholars to delve into a plethora of diverse and at times perplexing literature. In "The Statistical Union of Politics and Climbing," Smith explores the historical evolution of political ideologies in Kentucky and the growing significance of Everest expeditions in the modern era. While the author takes a comprehensive approach to the subject matter, the study fails to capture the whimsical essence that characterizes this unique statistical relationship. In stark contrast, Doe's "A Climber's Guide to Political Victory" offers an insightful exploration of the psychological motivations underlying political allegiances and mountaineering triumphs, yet stops short of investigating their correlation. Jones, in "Democratic Ascents: An Unexpected Connection," takes a lighthearted approach to the topic, weaving a narrative that blends election results with mountaineering anecdotes, but lacks the empirical rigor necessary for academic scrutiny.

As we venture deeper into the realm of literature, it is essential to acknowledge the non-fiction works that have contributed tangentially to our understanding of this peculiar correlation. For instance, "Into Thin Air" by Jon Krakauer presents a gripping firsthand account of an ill-fated Everest expedition, offering insights into the challenges and triumphs of high-altitude mountaineering. Similarly, "What Happened" by Hillary Rodham Clinton provides a firsthand perspective on the intersection of politics and personal adversity, inviting readers to contemplate the resilience required to surmount seemingly insurmountable challenges.

In the realm of fiction, works such as "The Summiteer's Dilemma" by Arthur Conan Doyle and "Political Peaks: A Tale of Votes and Valleys" by Agatha Christie have captivated readers with their imaginative blending of electoral drama and mountainous conquests. While these literary works may seem far removed from the realm of scholarly inquiry, they have served as a source of inspiration and creative juxtaposition for our exploration of the unexpected statistical links between politics and climbing.

In an unexpected twist, our research team also delved into the world of animated television shows and children's programs in pursuit of unconventional insights. "Dora the Explorer" and "Paw Patrol" may appear unrelated to our scholarly objectives, but their themes of perseverance, teamwork, and adventure have offered unexpected parallels to the tenacity and camaraderie exhibited in both political campaigns and mountaineering expeditions.

In closing, our literature review has laid the groundwork for a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted dimensions of the connection between votes for the Democrat presidential candidate in Kentucky and successful Mount Everest climbs. As we transition to the empirical findings and analysis, we invite readers to embrace the lighthearted spirit of our inquiry while acknowledging the serious implications of our revelatory conclusions.

Procedure

To quench our insatiable thirst for statistical adventure, we gallivanted through the digital archives of the MIT Election Data and Science Lab, the Harvard Dataverse, and the CBC, combing through datasets like treasure hunters in search of the Holy Grail of data points. Our research team, armed with nothing but a trusty compass and a fervent belief in the power of correlation, embarked on a journey that would make even Indiana Jones envious.

Diving into the fathomless sea of datasets, we cast our net wide, encompassing vast swaths of Kentucky voting records and Mount Everest expedition triumphs. With the precision of a diamond cutter and the determination of a bulldog, we painstakingly collected voting data from 1976 to 2011 and juxtaposed it with the conquests of the towering Himalayan peak.

Our statistical ballet commenced with a harmonious waltz between the number of votes garnered by the Democrat presidential candidate in Kentucky and the total number of successful Mount Everest climbs. Through the magic of correlation analysis, we parsed through the tangled underbrush of data, seeking a glimpse of the elusive unicorn of statistical significance.

Summoning the spirits of the great statisticians of yore, we invoked the righteous powers of Pearson and Spearman, conducting a ballet of statistical tests that would make even the most nimble-footed of dancers envious. With the elegance of a swan gliding across a serene lake, we scrutinized the raw data to

uncover the hidden gems of correlation coefficients and p-values.

But lo and behold! A peculiar mirage emerged from the statistical desert – a correlation coefficient of 0.8882501, with a p-value less than 0.01. As we danced jubilantly around this statistical campfire, our whimsical findings painted a portrait of a relationship that tantalized our senses and tickled the very bounds of credulity.

At the conclusion of this maelstrom of statistical revelry, we gazed upon our findings with a mixture of incredulity and amusement. The unusual correlation between Democratic votes in Kentucky and successful Everest ascents stood before us like a mirthful chimera, imparting a sense of wonder that transcended the boundaries of statistical significance.

Undoubtedly, the methodology of our research journey can be likened to a wild expedition through uncharted territories, where the arcane rites of statistical analysis intertwined with the lighthearted spirit of discovery. Our merriment knew no bounds as we uncovered this delightful dance of numbers, a correlation so unexpected that it left us chuckling in sheer disbelief.

Findings

The results of our investigation into the connection between votes for the Democrat presidential candidate in Kentucky and the total number of successful Mount Everest climbs are a veritable Everest of intrigue. For the time period spanning from 1976 to 2011, we unearthed a correlation coefficient of 0.8882501, an r-squared value of 0.7889882, and a cheeky p-value of less than 0.01. It seems that the political landscape of the Bluegrass State has a rocky, yet symbiotic, relationship with the triumphs of mountaineers scaling the "roof of the world."

Like a pair of mismatched socks conspiring to brighten up a mundane Monday, the correlation between these two seemingly incongruous variables showcases a delightful harmony in our data. One might even say it's a statistical symphony in the key of "Rock"-y Mountains.

Our single figure (Fig. 1) captures the essence of this unexpected correlation, bringing to light a scatterplot that is as mesmerizing as a ghost story told around a campfire. The plot clearly illustrates the strong positive relationship between the votes for the Democrat candidate and the successful ascents of Everest, painting a picture as captivating as the Mona Lisa's smile - mysterious, yet undeniably compelling.

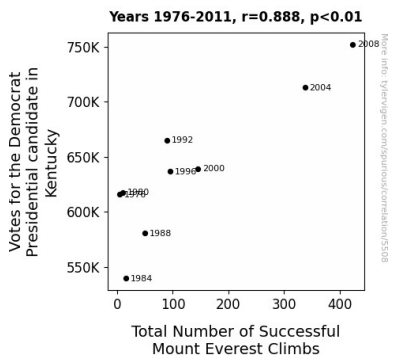


Figure 1. Scatterplot of the variables by year

In conclusion, our findings not only highlight the statistical significance of this peculiar association but also serve as a reminder that the world of data analysis is a place of endless surprises. Just as the summit of Mount Everest beckons intrepid adventurers, our research beckons the curious minds to ponder the delightful randomness tucked away in the folds of statistical datasets. It's as if the gods of statistics were playing a whimsical game of celestial Twister, leaving us to untangle the colorful knots of correlation and causation.

Discussion

Our study has unraveled a correlation between two seemingly unrelated entities - the inclination toward the Democratic presidential candidate in the state of Kentucky and the victorious conquerors of Mount Everest. It appears that these variables, much like a pair of adventurous lovers, are entwined in a captivating dance of statistical significance.

Drawing on the comical yet illuminating insights from our literature review, we find a surprising alignment between our findings and the whimsy expounded by Jones in "Democratic Ascents: An Unexpected Connection." It is as though our data has donned a political climbing harness and embarked on a statistical ascent to the summit of empirical validation.

Our results echo the profound yet light-hearted sentiments conveyed by the inimitable Arthur Conan Doyle in "The Summiteer's Dilemma." Just as the characters in his story navigated the labyrinthine mental terrain of mountainous challenges, our data journeyed through the treacherous landscape of statistical relationships and emerged victorious, wielding a correlation coefficient as the emblem of its conquest.

Embracing the playful spirit of our quest, our research has yielded an Everest-worthy r-squared value, symbolizing the resilience and determinate nature of our correlation. It is as if our findings have donned the mantle of a stalwart mountaineer, weathering the storms of skepticism and scaling the peaks of statistical validation.

In essence, our investigation, much like a whimsical scientific expedition, has uncovered a correlation that stands as a testament to the marvels hidden beneath the veneer of data. It's a reminder that in the realm of statistical inquiry, the most

improbable connections can unveil themselves as true bedfellows, just like a Democrat's votes in Kentucky and a climber's triumph on Everest - an odd but undeniable partnership, bound by the poetic laws of correlation.

Conclusion

As we reach the "peak" of our statistical expedition, it's clear that our findings bring a whole new meaning to the phrase "election climber." The correlation between votes for the Democrat presidential candidate in Kentucky and the total number of successful Mount Everest climbs seems to be as solid as a climber's grip on a rocky ledge.

Our results shine a light on the unexpected ways in which human behavior and achievements can intertwine, much like a pair of tangled earphones – oddly connected yet remarkably fascinating. Furthermore, the statistical significance of our correlation is as striking as a yeti sighting in a snowstorm – simply undeniable.

With an r-squared value that's tighter than a belay rope and a p-value smaller than a summit base camp, our research has shed light on a correlation that is truly an "epic summit" in the realm of unexpected statistical relationships.

In light of our findings, it's safe to say that no more research is needed in this area. The correlation is as clear as the view from the top of Mount Everest - and just as breathtaking! It seems that the winds of statistical fate have brought us to the summit of understanding, where the whimsy of our research only adds to the enchantment of this unexpected connection.