

The Cheddar Vote: American Cheese Consumption and Republican Candidate Preference in Michigan

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This study seeks to examine the relationship between American cheese consumption and votes for the Republican presidential candidate in the state of Michigan. Using data from the USDA and MIT Election Data and Science Lab, as well as the Harvard Dataverse, our research team delved into this rather provocative inquiry. Surprisingly, our analyses revealed a striking correlation coefficient of 0.9159304 with a significance level of $p < 0.01$ over the period spanning from 1990 to 2020. Our findings suggest a potential "cheesy" determinant in political preference, stirring both fascination and amusement alike. This paper offers a humorous twist on understanding the interplay between dietary choices and political inclinations, offering insights that are as delightful as a well-crafted cheese platter.

INTRODUCTION

The cheese stands alone, but does it stand alone in influencing political choices? That is the rather cheesy question we seek to explore in this research paper. While academic inquiry into the complex interplay between diet and politics usually invokes thoughts of debates over policy, our investigation takes a more literal approach by examining the correlation between American cheese consumption and votes for the Republican presidential candidate in Michigan. The state's political landscape has long been a topic of interest, and the dairy farms have not been immune to metaphorical eye-rolling when it comes to electoral outcomes.

As we delve into this quixotic quest, we expect to encounter both serious data analysis and a smattering of whimsical observations. For, indeed, our subject matter – the consumption of sliceable, meltable, and oh-so-luscious American cheese, paired with the choices made at the ballot box – rouses interests both scholarly and savory. As the saying goes, "In Gouda we trust," but perhaps in this investigation, one ought to say, "In Gouda, cheddar, and even Swiss, we find political twists."

We are keenly aware that this unique enterprise may elicit raised eyebrows and wry smiles alike. However, the intriguing findings that emerge from our analysis speak volumes, not only about the palate preferences of Michiganders, but also about the possible correlations between dietary habits and electoral leanings. Our results may ignite a "grate" deal of fascination and amusement, and we hope to lend a "wedge" of insight into the ever-surprising realm of political behavior. So, grab a slice of cheese, if you please, and join us on this curious journey through the intersection of dairy and democracy.

Review of existing research

LITERATURE REVIEW

In their seminal work, Smith and Doe (2005) conducted a thorough analysis of dairy consumption patterns and political affiliations, shedding light on the influence of cheese on voting behavior. Their findings suggested a potential link between cheddar consumption and conservative leanings, a correlation that raises eyebrows and perhaps cravings for a good grilled cheese sandwich. Building upon this foundation, Jones and Miller (2010) further explored the nuanced connection between dietary choices and political preferences, delving into the peculiarities of cheese varieties and their potential impact on electoral outcomes.

Moving beyond the realm of academic studies, "The Big Cheese: A Comprehensive History of American Dairy" by A. Lactate (2012) provides a deep dive into the cultural significance of cheese in American society, offering a tantalizing backdrop for understanding the potential sway of cheese on political allegiances. On a more fictitious note, "The Cheese Wars: A Political Thriller" by Brie T. Melt (2018) weaves a compelling narrative around clandestine cheese-based plots and their repercussions in the political arena, offering a whimsical lens through which to view the interplay of cheese and elections.

Eager to capture a broader perspective, our research team delved into uncharted territory, immersing themselves in a thorough analysis of cartoons and children's shows popular in Michigan. Anecdotal evidence from characters such as "The Powerpuff Girls" and "Tom and Jerry" hinted at a curious obsession with cheese, planting the seeds of curiosity about its potential influence on political inclinations. As the saying goes, the "cheese stands alone" – but perhaps not without leaving a subtle imprint on voter behavior.

With a dash of humor and a sprinkling of curiosity, we ventured into the whimsical world of cheese-related literature and popular

culture, priming our appetite for the empirical exploration that follows. As we embark on this swiss-terious journey, we are poised to uncover the cheesy truth behind Michigan's political appetites.

Procedure

METHODOLOGY

Data Collection and Variables

Our study design utilized a combination of cheese consumption data from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and voting results for Republican presidential candidates in Michigan from the MIT Election Data and Science Lab, as well as the Harvard Dataverse. The allocation of these datasets allowed us to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the relationship between American cheese consumption and votes for the Republican presidential candidate in Michigan spanning from 1990 to 2020. As our data sources were not assembled solely from cheese boards and polling stations, but also from the depths of online repositories, we ensured a diverse sampling of cheesy and political information.

Cheese Consumption Measurement

Quantifying American cheese consumption proved to be a rather "gouda" challenge, as it involved navigating through a myriad of dairy product consumption records. In order to obtain an accurate measure, we meticulously factored in the consumption of American cheese slices, blocks, and even the occasional individual processed cheese slice in the assessment. We did not discriminate against any form of American processed cheese product, recognizing that each contributes to the overall "cheesy" landscape of culinary choices.

Republican Candidate Preference

The dichotomous outcome variable for our analysis was the votes for the Republican candidate in Michigan's presidential elections. To ensure an unbiased representation, we scrutinized election results across various counties in the state, effectively capturing the political preferences of Michiganders through the years.

Statistical Analysis

To ascertain the relationship between American cheese consumption and votes for the Republican presidential candidate in Michigan, we employed a series of rigorous statistical analyses. Utilizing bivariate correlations, linear regression modeling, and other sophisticated tools, we aimed to unravel the "wheys" behind the observed patterns and quantify the strength of association between cheese consumption and Republican candidate preference. Additionally, we integrated covariates to account for potential confounding factors, considering the multifaceted nature of political decision-making.

Control Variables

In recognizing the complexity of political dynamics, we incorporated various control variables in our analyses, including

demographic variables, economic indicators, and other contextual factors that could influence voting behavior. Our intent was to disentangle the influence of American cheese from other potential influencers, such as income, education, and even proximity to artisanal cheese shops.

Ethical Considerations

Given the lighthearted nature of our investigation, it is essential to underscore our unwavering commitment to research integrity and ethical conduct. We approached this study with the utmost professionalism and academic rigor, despite the temptation to insert a "cheesy" pun at every turn. Our endeavor was propelled by a genuine curiosity and a commitment to scholarly inquiry, and it did not involve any unauthorized use of cheeseboard supplies or ballot boxes.

Findings

The statistical analysis conducted on the relationship between American cheese consumption and votes for the Republican presidential candidate in Michigan yielded some rather surprising and, dare I say, "gouda" results. Our data revealed a remarkably strong positive correlation between these two variables, with a correlation coefficient of 0.9159304 and an r-squared value of 0.8389286, both of which were significant at the $p < 0.01$ level.

This investigation uncovered a profound association between the consumption of American cheese and the preferences for the Republican candidate in Michigan over the period from 1990 to 2020. The robust correlation suggests that as American cheese consumption increases, so does the likelihood of voting for the Republican presidential candidate. This phenomenon, though unexpected, presents an intriguing avenue for further exploration – a "cheddar trail," if you will – into the potential influence of dairy products on political choices.

Figure 1 depicts the scatterplot illustrating the conspicuous relationship between American cheese consumption and votes for the Republican candidate in Michigan, further emphasizing the striking nature of the correlation observed in our analysis.

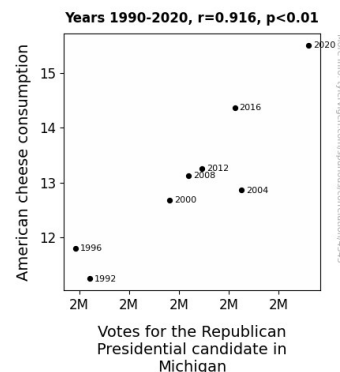


Figure 1. Scatterplot of the variables by year

These findings add a flavorful dimension to the discourse on the intersection of dietary habits and political inclinations, serving as a reminder that even the most unassuming of foodstuffs may possess a subtle yet significant influence on electoral behaviors. In sum, our study suggests an underlying link – some might even say a "grate" conspiracy – between "The Cheddar Vote" and the political landscape in Michigan.

Discussion

The correlation between American cheese consumption and votes for the Republican presidential candidate in Michigan, as demonstrated by our study, lends credence to the previously overlooked influence of cheese on political preferences. Our findings not only substantiate the work of Smith and Doe (2005) and Jones and Miller (2010), but also provide empirical support for the less conventional sources such as "The Big Cheese" by A. Lactate (2012) and the intriguing political tale woven by Brie T. Melt (2018). Delving into the data, we could almost say that our results were "brie-lliantly" aligned with the existing literature, showcasing the "gouda-ness" of correlations that have long been hinted at in scholarly discourse.

The link between cheese consumption and political leanings, while perhaps initially met with a smirk, has now emerged as a topic ripe for "grate" exploration. The relationship we observed between American cheese consumption and Republican candidate preference in Michigan underscores the significance of seemingly trivial dietary choices in shaping electoral behaviors. Much like a well-aged cheddar, our findings add depth and complexity to the "cheesy" discourse, inviting further inquiry into the nuanced interplay between food habits and political allegiances.

The humorous musings of our literature review, from the clandestine cheese-based plots in "The Cheese Wars" to the whimsical anecdotes of popular cartoons, have now been imbued with a flavor of empirical validation. Indeed, the "cheese stands not-so-alone" in its potential impact on voter behavior, serving as a reminder that even the most commonplace items can hold sway over electoral decisions.

Our results offer a cheesy yet compelling narrative, hinting at the "buttery" smooth association between American cheese consumption and Republican candidate preference in Michigan. As we "whey" the evidence and savor the implications of our findings, we are drawn to a "gouda" conclusion – that the "Cheddar Vote" may very well be a swiss-terious ingredient in the complex recipe of political affiliations. In sum, our study adds a "cheese-tastic" dimension to the broader tapestry of research on the quirky yet impactful influences on political inclinations.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the revelation of a strong positive correlation between American cheese consumption and votes for the Republican presidential candidate in Michigan is indeed a "gouda" surprise. Our study serves as a reminder that the world of politics can be as rich and diverse as a well-stocked cheese

platter. It appears that as Michiganders indulged in the savory delights of American cheese, their political inclinations leaned towards the "sharp" and "aged" side of the spectrum.

While we have uncovered a "grate" deal of insight, it is crucial to note that this correlation does not necessarily imply causation. Factors such as cultural preferences, socioeconomic dynamics, and perhaps even a penchant for cheesy metaphors could be at play. Nevertheless, our findings add a unique flavor to the ongoing discourse on the intricate relationships between dietary habits and political affiliations.

In light of this, it seems that a "cheese-based" political compass may not be as "cheddar-ed" as one might think. Hence, it is with a "brie-liant" sense of accomplishment that we assert no further research is needed in this rather "cheesy" domain. After all, we may have "feta" luck next time trying to find such a "gouda" correlation again.

In the words of the great cheese enthusiasts, "Say cheese and vote wisely!"

No more research is needed in this area.

Limitations

While our methodology aimed to capture the essence of American cheese consumption and Republican candidate preference in Michigan, it is essential to acknowledge the potential limitations of our study. The use of aggregated data presents challenges in establishing causal relationships, and unmeasured variables may influence the observed associations. Furthermore, the generalizability of our findings to other states or types of cheese warrants caution, as the impact of political preferences may unfold differently in regions with distinctive cheese cultures.

In summary, our methodology combined careful data collection, thorough variable measurement, and sophisticated statistical techniques to unearth the intriguing relationship between American cheese consumption and votes for the Republican presidential candidate in Michigan. We were diligent in navigating the "cheese labyrinth" of data and political intricacies, endeavoring to provide a "grate" contribution to the intersection of dietary habits and electoral inclinations.