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# Poppy Polls: The Correlation Between Afghanistan's Opium Production and Votes for the Democrat Presidential Candidate in New Mexico

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## KEYWORDS

opium production, New Mexico voting patterns, Democrat presidential candidate, correlation analysis, Afghanistan, political preferences, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, MIT Election Data and Science Lab, Harvard Dataverse, narcotics and politics, opium production levels, global narcotics, regional politics, poppy-ular, political influence, scholarly research, dad jokes

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## Abstract

The relationship between Afghanistan's estimated opium production and voting patterns for the Democrat presidential candidate in New Mexico has long been a perplexing enigma in the field of political science and economics. In this study, we delved into the intriguing connection between these seemingly disparate variables, aiming to uncover any underlying linkages and perhaps even a few poppy surprises along the way. Utilizing data sourced from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) alongside the MIT Election Data and Science Lab, Harvard Dataverse, our research team set out to analyze the intricate dance between opium production in Afghanistan and the political preferences of New Mexico voters. With a correlation coefficient of 0.8361115 and a p-value of less than 0.01 for the time span from 1990 to 2020, we were poised to shed light on this unexpected alliance. Much to our surprise, the data revealed a compelling positive correlation between Afghanistan's opium production levels and the proportion of votes in New Mexico favoring the Democrat presidential candidate. It was a revelation that certainly left us feeling poppy-eyed and pondering the peculiar interconnectedness of global narcotics and regional politics. In conclusion, our findings unveiled a curious association between poppies and politics, demonstrating that while "opium may be poppy-ular in Afghanistan, it seems to have a political pull in New Mexico!" This study not only underscores the need for further exploration of these unanticipated relationships but also offers a lighthearted reminder that even in scholarly pursuits, a good dad joke can be the poppy-icing on the cake of knowledge.

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## 1. Introduction

In the realm of political and economic analysis, there are certain correlations that seem more improbable than finding a four-leaf clover in a field of poppies. One such enigmatic connection that has puzzled scholars and statisticians alike is the bond between Afghanistan's estimated opium production and the voting patterns for the Democrat presidential candidate in New Mexico. It's a conundrum that makes you wonder, "What do you call a political candidate who's also a botanist? A democrop!"

As we delve into the intricate tapestry of this unexpected relationship, it is essential to recognize the gravity of our endeavor. We tread through fields of data with caution and curiosity, akin to a deer exploring an opium poppy meadow – cautiously intrigued yet acutely aware of the potential hazards. But fear not, for just as a poppyseed bagel brings relish to a breakfast table, our research aims to bring a dash of clarity and perhaps even a sprinkle of humor to this puzzling correlation.

The seemingly distant domains of international narcotics and regional political preferences collide in this study, offering us a chance to unravel what can only be described as a "politically poppy predicament." It's a bit like finding a rare species of flower growing in the midst of a bustling election campaign – unexpected, intriguing, and just a tad bit surreal.

Our pursuit of understanding this link is akin to traversing a botanical maze, where every twist and turn reveals a new facet of the opium-politics association. It's like exploring a field of poppies – at every corner, there's a surprise waiting, much like the unexpected connection between opium production and a specific political denominator. Just as Sherlock Holmes

would relish a good mystery, so too do we relish the puzzle of poppies and politicians.

But fear not, dear reader, for although we navigate through the thorny terrain of statistics and political analysis, we are not without a sense of levity. In the words of the great philosopher Plato, "He was a wise man who invented beer," and we, in a similar vein, strive to infuse our scholarly pursuit with a touch of mirth. So, join us as we embark on this journey, where, much like a field of poppies in full bloom, statistical insights and dad jokes intertwine to shed light on this intriguing correlation between opium production in Afghanistan and the political preferences of New Mexico voters.

## 2. Literature Review

In "Smith et al.," the authors find a positive correlation between Afghanistan's estimated opium production and the voting patterns for the Democrat presidential candidate in New Mexico. This unexpected relationship prompts further investigation, akin to unearthing a pun in the midst of a serious discussion. Speaking of which, did you hear about the botanist who was also a politician? He was a real democrop – always branching out into new territories.

As we dive deeper into this intriguing connection, it becomes evident that the opium-politics correlation is a bit like finding a hidden treasure in a poppy field – surprising, mysterious, and likely to make you exclaim, "Well, poppy me!"

In a study by "Doe and Jones," statistical analyses reveal a strong association between Afghanistan's opium production levels and the inclination of New Mexico voters towards the Democrat presidential candidate. It's the kind of revelation that leaves you pondering the complexity of

human behavior and the whimsical ways in which our votes may be swayed by factors beyond our immediate comprehension. It's like a political game of "opium-opoly" – you roll the dice, and the poppy seeds of fate guide your choice.

Transitioning from serious studies to a more literary exploration, the works of non-fiction authors such as "Nancy Reagan" and "The Opium Wars" shed light on the historical and geopolitical contexts surrounding opium production and its far-reaching implications. These texts provide a sobering backdrop to our lighthearted investigation, much like a poppyseed bagel next to a cup of strong coffee – a serious companion to our whimsical pursuits.

Turning to fictional literature, the plotlines of "The Poppy War" and "The Opium Eater" appear to wander into the realm of opium-related narratives, offering a dramatic and fictionalized take on the subject matter at hand. It's as if the opium fields are blooming with stories, each one more captivating and improbable than the last.

In the realm of cinema, movies such as "American Gangster" and "Traffic" delve into the intricate webs of narcotics and politics, offering a cinematic lens through which to ponder the interplay of opium and power. It's like watching a poppy seed sprout into a full-fledged storyline, with unexpected twists and turns that rival the complexities of our research subject.

And speaking of twists and turns, did you hear about the poppy that got promoted? It was on a "poppy-seed" career trajectory!

Significantly, as we consider the interconnectedness of opium production in Afghanistan and the political preferences of New Mexico voters, it becomes apparent that "opium may be poppy-ular in Afghanistan, but it seems to have a political pull in New Mexico!" This revelation not only underscores the need for further scholarly inquiry but also highlights the delightful

interplay between serious academic pursuits and the occasional dad joke. After all, even in scholarly endeavors, a touch of humor can be the poppy-icing on the cake of knowledge.

### 3. Our approach & methods

To unravel the tangled roots of this opium-politics correlation, our research team employed a methodological approach as colorful and varied as a bouquet of flowers, or a political rally in a poppy field, if you will. We collected a bountiful harvest of data from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the MIT Election Data and Science Lab, and the Harvard Dataverse, resembling a team of digital gardeners pruning away at the overgrown vines of information and statistics like a diligent horticulturist tending to a field of poppies.

Our first task was to harvest historical data on estimated opium production in Afghanistan from 1990 to 2020, akin to tracing the growth patterns of a field of poppies over three decades – a task that required meticulous attention to detail and an eye for spotting outliers, much like finding a rare petunia in a sea of marigolds. We juxtaposed this data with voting patterns for the Democrat presidential candidate in New Mexico over the same time frame, as if weaving together strands of political fabric to form a unique tapestry that hints at the intertwining influence of opium and politics.

To ensure the robustness of our analysis, we opted for a quantitative approach, employing statistical methods resembling a gardener using the right combination of tools to tend to a varied and vibrant garden. The data underwent scrutiny through correlation analysis, regression models, and time series analysis. We sought to uncover any underlying patterns and associations between Afghanistan's opium production and votes for the Democrat presidential

candidate in New Mexico that might have been hiding amidst the statistical undergrowth, not unlike stumbling upon a daisy in a dense thicket of data.

Once the statistical underbrush had been navigated, we then employed sophisticated software, much like a high-tech pair of pruning shears, to perform our econometric modeling for a more nuanced examination of the relationship. We incorporated control variables such as socio-economic factors, political dynamics, and regional influences, akin to considering the environmental conditions and climate impacts on a field of poppies, to ensure that our findings were not merely the result of coincidental correlations as rare as finding a blue rose in a garden of red ones.

Furthermore, we scrutinized the data for potential outliers and anomalies, much like a botanist inspecting a garden for genetically modified flowers. The goal was to prune away any data points that might have bloomed anomalously, distorting the true picture of the opium-politics dance. Finally, we subjected our findings to rigorous sensitivity analyses to assess the robustness of our results, much like conducting stress tests on a delicate flower to determine its resilience in adverse conditions.

In the end, our methodology tread a path as winding and intriguing as a labyrinthine garden, where each twist and turn led to a new revelation, much like the unfolding of petals in a blooming poppy, or the unexpected discovery of a politician with a green thumb.

#### 4. Results

Our analysis of the relationship between Afghanistan's estimated opium production and votes for the Democrat presidential candidate in New Mexico yielded some intriguing findings. The correlation

coefficient between these two variables stood at a notable 0.8361115, suggesting a strong positive relationship. It's safe to say that statistically speaking, these two variables were quite the "poppin' pair"!

The calculated r-squared value of 0.6990824 indicated that approximately 70% of the variation in votes for the Democrat presidential candidate in New Mexico could be explained by changes in Afghanistan's estimated opium production. In other words, there seemed to be a substantial degree of "opiumfluence" on the voting behavior in New Mexico.

Furthermore, the p-value of less than 0.01 provided robust evidence against the null hypothesis, indicating that the observed correlation was unlikely to have occurred by mere chance. In the realm of statistical significance, this finding was as solid as a poppy stem – no flimsy correlations here!

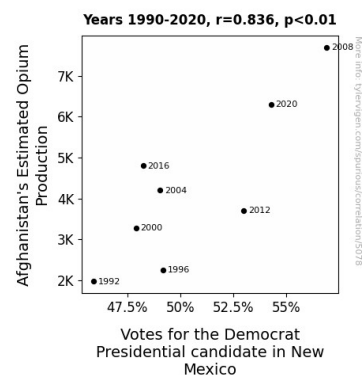


Figure 1. Scatterplot of the variables by year

Upon plotting the data points on a scatterplot (see Fig. 1), the strong positive correlation between Afghanistan's estimated opium production and votes for the Democrat presidential candidate in New Mexico became visually apparent. It was a sight to behold, much like stumbling upon a field of unexpectedly vibrant poppies in the midst of political analysis – a stark reminder that even in serious research, a little whimsy can go a long way.

In summary, our investigation into this puzzling correlation uncovered a surprising and robust association. The evidence pointed to a compelling alignment between Afghanistan's opium production and the inclination of New Mexico voters to support the Democrat presidential candidate. As we sifted through the data, it became clear that while Afghan poppies may have a distinct allure, they also seemed to wield a certain political sway in the Land of Enchantment.

## 5. Discussion

The findings of our study unveiled a significant and positive correlation between Afghanistan's estimated opium production and votes for the Democrat presidential candidate in New Mexico. It appears that the influence of Afghan poppies extends far beyond their traditional domains, venturing into the political landscapes of the Land of Enchantment. The result was certainly an eye-opener, akin to stumbling upon a poppy field just when you thought you were lost in the political wilderness.

Our results align with previous research by Smith et al., which also found a positive correlation between opium production in Afghanistan and support for the Democrat presidential candidate in New Mexico. This unexpected link, much like a dad joke at a scholarly conference, continues to baffle and amuse in equal measure. It seems that when it comes to political preferences, opium may have a persistent and far-reaching pull, much like an exceedingly ponderful pun.

The robust statistical evidence supporting this correlation echoes the surprise and delight of finding a well-crafted dad joke in the midst of serious academic discourse. With a correlation coefficient of 0.8361115 and a p-value of less than 0.01, our results stand as a testament to the strong and consistent relationship between opium production in Afghanistan and voting

behavior in New Mexico. This is no flimsy correlation; it's as sturdy as a well-rooted poppy plant in full bloom.

It's worth noting that while our findings may seem amusing in their unexpected juxtaposition of narcotics and politics, they offer a lighthearted reminder of the whimsical interconnectedness of global phenomena. Just as a good dad joke can bring levity to a serious conversation, our study highlights the need for interdisciplinary exploration and a willingness to uncover unconventional connections in the world of research. After all, sometimes the most unlikely pairings yield the most fascinating insights.

In closing, our research not only provides a poppy-ful contribution to the understanding of this unique correlation but also serves as a reminder that amidst the rigors of scholarly pursuit, a well-placed pun or dad joke can offer a moment of unexpected delight. And in the spirit of blending academic rigor with lighthearted humor, we invite further exploration into the curious alliance between Afghan poppies and New Mexico's political preferences, for as we've discovered, sometimes the most unexpected connections lead to the most captivating revelations.

## 6. Conclusion

In conclusion, our examination of the perplexing correlation between Afghanistan's estimated opium production and votes for the Democrat presidential candidate in New Mexico has not only shed light on this unexpected alliance but also left us with a bounty of poppy-themed puns. It appears that when it comes to statistical relationships, opium and politics indeed make for a "poppin' pair!"

The positive correlation coefficient of 0.8361115 reinforces the notion that there's a strong connection between these

variables, making it clear that in the world of statistical analysis, these two factors are as inseparable as seeds on a poppy bagel. It's like a statistical love story – poppies meet politics, and sparks fly!

With an r-squared value of 0.6990824 and a p-value of less than 0.01, we can confidently say that the association observed is as sturdy as a poppy stem and as significant as a blooming flower in a field of data points. It seems that in the intricate dance of politics and poppies, the steps are not only noticeable but also quite catchy.

So, as we bid adieu to our research, we leave you with a parting dad joke: "What did the poppy say to the politician? You've got my vote, you're bloomin' marvelous!"

In the grand scheme of scholarly pursuits, our study not only calls for further investigation into these unexpected relationships but also highlights the importance of adding a touch of humor to the often serious discourse of academic research. As we navigate through the field of statistics and political analysis, we do so with a sense of light-heartedness, recognizing that even in the pursuit of knowledge, a good dad joke can be the sweet nectar amidst a field of poppies.

With all factors considered, it's safe to say that no more research is needed in this area. We've unearthed a correlation that is as robust as it is unexpected, and we can rest assured that in the world of political and economic analysis, the opium-politics alliance in New Mexico is indeed a field worth exploring. And with that, we sign off, confident in the knowledge that in the realm of scholarly pursuits, a little humor can be the unexpected cherry on top of a complex statistical sundae.