



PRESIDENTIAL APPROVAL RATING



Presidential Approval Rating Center

Background

Public opinion plays a crucial role in shaping public policy in a democracy. Elected leaders are accountable to the electorate, and therefore, they often take public opinion into account while making policy decisions. Public opinion can influence policymakers to prioritize certain issues or take specific actions. However, public opinion is not static and can change rapidly. It is influenced by a variety of factors, including media coverage, events, and personal experiences. As a result, the ability to predict the impact of public opinion can be challenging.

Despite this, understanding public opinion and its potential impact is essential for policymakers, as it can impact their popularity and re-election prospects. Therefore, social scientists and policymakers alike pay close attention to public opinion, both to understand its current state and to predict its potential future impact.

There are various factors that can influence a president's popularity, and it can vary from one presidency to another. Some of the common factors that may impact a president's approval rating include but not limited to the following:

Performance: One of the most significant factors that influence a president's popularity is their performance in office. If a president is perceived to be doing a good job, their approval rating is likely to be high. Conversely, if they are perceived to be performing poorly, their approval rating may be low.

Economic conditions: The state of the economy can also have a significant impact on a president's approval rating. If the economy is doing well, the president is likely to receive credit, and their approval rating may be high. However, if the economy is struggling, the president may receive blame, and their approval rating may be low.

Political climate: The political climate can also impact a president's popularity. If the country is politically divided, it may be challenging for a president to maintain high approval ratings. Conversely, if there is a sense of unity and bipartisan support, a president may be more popular.

Leadership style: A president's leadership style can also influence their popularity. If they are perceived as strong and decisive, they may be more popular. Conversely, if they are seen as indecisive or weak, their approval rating may suffer.

Personal characteristics: Finally, a president's personal characteristics, such as their personality, charisma, and communication skills, can impact their popularity. A president who is well-liked and relatable may be more popular than one who is not.

In addition, external events can have a significant impact on a president's popularity. For example, a successful policy initiative or a major disaster response can boost a president's popularity, while a scandal or a controversial decision can lead to a decline.

With cognisance to the above discussion, a country like the United States of America pay critical attention to polls on presidential approval ratings. Over the years, results from presidential approval rating polls has had major influence on the passage of legislation and general elections. However, the story is different in the developing world. In most countries including Ghana, there is no such scientific research, which communicates to an incumbent president how satisfied the electorates are with his government. In most cases, incumbent only get to know this during general elections; by way of the electorates voting against them or extending their mandate to govern. Nevertheless, elections are rather straightforward. They don't explain why electorates

choose a certain candidate or whether the public in general agrees with all of the candidate's policy proposals. Even in elections with high turnout, a third or more of the electorate frequently chooses not to cast a ballot. How their points of view are taken into consideration is a crucial concern that arises thereof.

It is against this background that the Centre for Democracy and Socio-economic Development (CDS) Africa is undertaking a presidential approval rating poll in Ghana. The core objective of this research is to obtain scientific evidence of overall satisfaction of Ghanaians with the President Akufo-Addo led Government. CDS Africa is an independent research group that recognize democracy as a key driver of both economic development and growth.

Objectives of the Poll

The objective(s) for conducting the approval rating poll are as follows:

Determine how likely people would have voted for President Akufo-Addo assuming he was running in the 2024 presidential election.

Determine how satisfied Ghanaians are with the way the President is handling the economy.

Determine the satisfaction of Ghanaians with the way the President is handling national debt,

Vis-à-vis, the DDEP.

Methodology

A successful public opinion poll should give everyone in the population an equal voice on current issues, regardless of their status, age, education, gender, or level of political expertise or experience. We employ the "random sampling" technique to accomplish this. To put it mildly, random sampling is important because it ensures that no one voice is louder than another. Based on a random sample of persons who are at least 18 years old, this poll will be conducted. Every member of the population has an equal probability of being chosen at random. The sample size of this study is drawn from the 2021 Regional Population and Housing Census of Ghana using the approach of Kothari (2004). Based on the regional population dynamics of the census, our sample population will be 14,866,107. The sample formula is specified in equation (1) with a 95% confidence interval and a 5% significance level.

$$\eta = \frac{N}{1 + N(\alpha)^2}$$

where η =sample size, N =the sample frame/population and α =margin of error (0.05%).

$$\eta = \frac{14,866,107}{1 + 14,866,107(0.05)^2}$$

$$\eta=400$$

There will be 400 respondents in the sample. Interviews will be conducted with all adults, regardless of voter registration status. In addition to allowing for complete coverage of the target population, this technique also guarantees that the population is appropriately reflected in our findings.

Scope

Due to financial constraints, the study will be limited to five (5) out of the sixteen (16) regions in Ghana. These are the Ashanti, Volta, Western, Northern and Greater Accra regions in Ghana. Traditionally, the Ashanti and Volta regions are known to be the stronghold of the NPP and the NDC respectively. More so, we include Greater Accra and Western regions in the scope because they are known to be swing regions – those regions with most people identified as floating voters or not being loyal to any political party in terms of voting in Ghana. The Northern region presents an interesting case as voting dynamics keep changing over the years. Available data shows that even though the NDC has always won presidential elections in the region since 1996, however, there has been a decreasing trend in their total votes since 2016. While the NDC has had 56.1% and 52.93% in the 2016 and 2020 general elections, the NPP on the other hand has had 41.3% and 46.08% respectively in the 2016 and 2020 general elections. We therefore believe that any scientific findings coming from these 5 regions presents a fair and general representation of how the Ghanaian people feel about the performance of the sitting President. The sample size of 400 is thus derived from the population of the five regions selected in the study. The questionnaire will be administered randomly to collect data.

The questionnaire

The questions to be asked form the nucleus of an effective poll. According to the literature, polling questions can either intentionally or unintentionally influence respondents' responses by the way they are worded. When people are asked if they agree or disagree with a statement, for instance, there is typically greater agreement than when the statement is presented alongside a different point of view. To overcome this challenge, the study will make use of the multiple choice closed ended questions.

Data Collection Approach

Firstly, the study will use Random-digit Dialing to collect data based on the determined sample. Using a random selection of phone numbers, the random-digit dialing (RDD) method of probability sampling generates a sample of households, families, or individuals.

When using RDD, the sampling unit is moved from a person to a phone number, for which sampling frames are available. People can then be indirectly sampled using their phone numbers, allowing for reliable population inferences. The RDD survey has evolved over time to include the following three components: (1) selecting telephone numbers at random from a list of all (or most) assigned telephone numbers; (2) dialing the selected numbers from central call centers; and (3) delivering the survey questionnaire to respondents via a computer-assisted telephone interviewing system.

An effective yet time-consuming method of gathering data is through interviews. An interviewer must meet with each person separately, sometimes for an hour or more, in order to get the opinions of 20 people. Meeting with a number of people in focus groups might be an appealing alternative. These group discussions are a relatively effective and low-cost method for quickly gathering a diverse range of opinions. Therefore, in addition to the RDD, one Focus Group Discussion (FGD) will be organized in each of the five regions. A focus group is a group interview with a small group of people who share certain characteristics. Unlike surveys, focus groups can help map out the issues that are important to voters and gauge their reaction to specific policies. Each group will constitute between 8 to 20 members. Focus groups and polling/surveys will both yield insights that the other technique by itself could not.