

Obama Voters and the Election of 2016

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Abstract

One of the biggest issues analyzed after the U.S. Election of 2016 was how Donald Trump was elected. Several scholars have argued why many voters cast their vote for Trump, however there has not been much analysis on a small sect of voters who voted for Obama in 2012 and voted for Trump in 2016. My research analyzed Obama voters in the Election of 2016 and specifically focuses in on the different concerns between those who voted for Clinton and those who voted for Trump. Utilizing data from the American National Election Survey, I focused on the responses of Obama-Trump voters compared to Obama-Clinton voters on various policy issues such as: income inequality, race, immigration, and terrorism. Furthermore, I controlled the samples of Obama voters for race, sex, and education to see if there are other variables affecting voters' choices. This analysis can help bring more understanding and clarity to how Donald Trump won the presidency and the issues and concerns that policymakers should consider.

Research Design

The data for this analysis was gathered from the American National Election Survey for 2016. Respondents were asked who they voted for in 2012, 2016, and several other questions that corresponded to their political views and educational/economic situations. The population is all the respondents who voted for Obama in 2012. The sample includes 1728 people from the ANES who responded yes to voting for Obama in 2012. The dependent variable is voters who voted for Trump. The independent variables include views on immigration, terrorism, Black Lives Matter, and the economy. The control variables used include race, sex, education level, party, and estimated family income.

Table 2: Logistic Regression Stats

Dependent Variable: Voted for Trump
Hosmer and Lemeshow Test: .199
Chi Square: 92.537
Degrees of Freedom: 9
-2 Log Likelihood: 52.522
Nagelkerke R Square: .726
Percentage Correct: 95.6%

Research Question and Hypothesis

My research question is: **What best explains the reason why 12.5% of Obama voters voted for Trump in 2016?** My hypothesis is, **in a comparison of Obama voters, views on immigration and terrorism best explain the variance between those who voted for Clinton and those who voted for Trump.**

Analysis

Feelings towards Black Lives Matter was the strongest predictor of Obama-Trump voters with an odds ratio of 13.929. Additionally, being Republican, having negative views on the economy, and decreasing immigration levels were all indicators of voting for Trump. On the contrary, fearing terrorism, education level, sex, income, and race were not significant in voters' choices. **Ultimately, Table 1 and 2 show that voters with lower feelings towards BLM were fourteen times more likely to vote for Trump.**

Table 1: Logistic Regression Variables

Variables	B	Sig.	Exp(B)
BLM Feeling Thermo	2.634	0.000	13.929
Economic Concerns	1.651	0.001	5.211
Opposes Immigration	1.434	0.021	4.195
Fears of Terrorism	0.716	0.382	2.046
Education Level	-0.07	0.873	0.932
Estimated Family Inc.	0.081	0.788	1.085
Sex (Male)	-0.372	0.632	0.69
Race (White)	0.729	0.475	2.073
Party (Republican)	2.012	0.005	7.481
Constant	-11.722	0.000	0.000