



ESSENTIALS

The relationship between scientific polling and elections and policy debates is affected by the:

- Importance of public opinion as a source of political influence in a given election or policy debate
- The Reliability and veracity of public opinion data

1. What is the underlying idea of this cartoon?
2. How can we know if a story or poll result is trustworthy? How can we guard against being influenced by “fake” news and/or unreliable polling data?

DO POLLS AFFECT VOTING BEHAVIOR? [Preparing an argument]

YES. Write a claim statement. Find three (3) substantive arguments that support your claim. [One must include data]. Cite your sources.

NO. Write a claim statement. Find three (3) substantive arguments that support your claim. [One must include data]. Cite your sources.

[What do you really think? What evidence is most persuasive?]

The leading national polling company addresses the critical issues....

The Sampling Issue: Probability sampling is the fundamental basis for all survey research. The basic principle: a randomly selected, small percent of a population of people can represent the attitudes, opinions, or projected behavior of all of the people, if the sample is selected correctly...

The key to reaching this goal is a fundamental principle called equal probability of selection, which states that if every member of a population has an equal probability of being selected in a sample, then that sample will be representative of the population. It's that straightforward.

Selecting a random sample: When setting out to conduct a national opinion poll, the first thing Gallup does is select a place where all or most Americans are equally likely to be found. That wouldn't be a shopping mall, or a grocery store, an office building, a hotel, or a baseball game. The place nearly all adult Americans are most likely to be found is in their home. So, reaching people at home is the starting place for almost all national surveys.

The Number of Interviews or Sample Size Required: One key question faced by Gallup statisticians: how many interviews does it take to provide an adequate cross-section of Americans? The answer is, not many -- that is, if the respondents to be interviewed are selected entirely at random, giving every adult American an equal probability of falling into the sample. The current U.S. adult population in the continental United States is 187 million. The typical sample size for a Gallup poll, which is designed to represent this general population, is 1,000 national adults.

1. Do you trust national polls?
2. Why are polls so ubiquitous in our political system?

QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

% Trump's approval rating among...

Polling Organization	All Adults	Registered Voters	Likely Voters
Fox News	-	48	-
Gallup	40	-	-
Rasmussen	-	-	52
Pew Research	39	42	-

Pew Research

Use the information graphic to answer the questions.

- A. Identify the primary intent of this graphic.
- B. Describe a similarity or difference between "all adults" and "likely voters" as seen in this graph, and draw a conclusion that explains the similarity or difference.
- C. Using the data, explain how push polls can confuse actual public opinion.