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Statewide Survey on Job Approval of President Donald Trump

**Dr. Edward Chervenak
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The University of New Orleans Survey Research Center conducted an interactive voice response (IVR) telephone survey on March 21st, 2017 to find out how Louisiana voters rate President Donald Trump's job performance. Survey respondents were randomly selected from the Louisiana Secretary of State's voter file of those individuals who signed in for the November 8, 2016 election. The sample of 740 respondents yields a margin of error of 3.6% with 95% confidence.

About IVR Surveys

IVR surveys, also known as "robo-polls" employ an automated, recorded voice to call respondents who are asked to answer questions by punching telephone keys. Advantages of IVR surveys include their low cost, the almost immediate collection of data, and the simple and convenient processing of data. They also reduce interviewer bias to zero by eliminating the live human interviewer. Every survey respondent hears the same question read the same way.

When conducting IVR surveys, pollsters must not rely on all details of a call list. They cannot assume that the details of the person in the file will match the individual who picks up the call. Demographic categories of race, age, gender, and political party identification must be self-reported by the respondent to ensure a valid and accurate analysis.

Post-Weighting

Ideally, the sample of respondents should reflect the population of interest. Unfortunately, this is usually not the case. One of the problems with telephone surveys is non-response since some people may screen their calls or hang-up when called. This may cause some groups to be over- or under-represented.

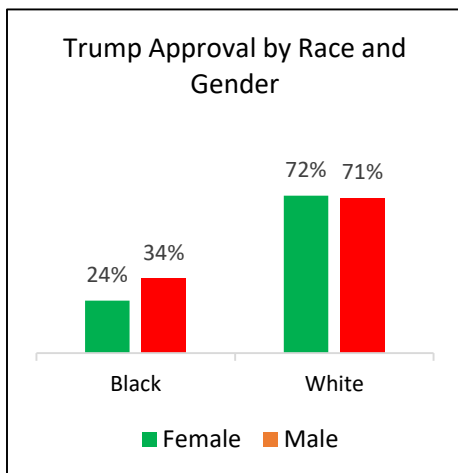
Because IVR surveying is prohibited by FCC rules from calling cell phone numbers, only VOIP and home phone numbers can be called. The growing trend of minority and younger households without land lines can result in a coverage error. Residents who are cell phone only who would be eligible to participate are excluded from IVR polls, unless they answer the survey from a home telephone in another home. As such, no reliable conclusions can be drawn from the observed survey data unless the sample has been post-weighted to correct for the lack of representativeness. It is imperative that survey analysts accurately post weight the cases to reflect the demographics of the population of interest. In this instance this sample was post-weighted to reflect gender, age, race, and congressional district parameters of the population of Louisianans who voted in the November 8, 2016 US presidential election.

Analysis

Trump Job Approval								
	Total	Men	Women	Black	White	Other	Under 50	Over 49
Approve	58%	65%	52%	27%	71%	55%	56%	60%
Disapprove	37%	30%	44%	70%	22%	42%	40%	35%
Don't Know	5%	5%	4%	3%	6%	3%	4%	5%
(N)	740	337	403	217	490	33	371	369

The president enjoys a high job approval rating in the state's overall voting population. His 58 percent job approval rating equals the 58 percent of the vote he received in Louisiana in last November's election. There appears to be a gender gap in the president's approval rating as two-thirds of men, compared to half of women, give Trump positive marks for his job performance.

The poll also indicates there is a wide divide between whites and black in how the president is evaluated. In fact, perceptions of the president's job performance are mirror images as 71 percent of whites rate him positively while 70 percent of blacks rate him negatively. A majority of non-black minorities also say they approve of the Trump's job performance.



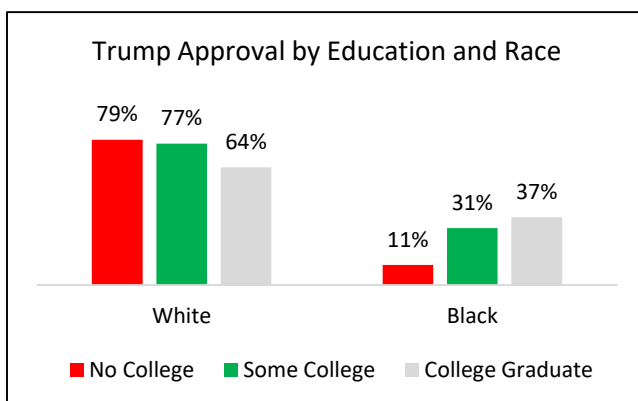
When we intersect gender and race with Trump's approval levels we find that the gender gap disappears for white voters but that there is a 10 point gender gap among African-American voters. While African-American men overall disapprove of Trump, they are more approving of him than are African-American females. The overall gender gap found in the table above is primarily due to the fact that African-American females disapprove of Trump by a 3 to 1 margin.

The survey did not find any significant age-based differences in attitudes toward the president. The younger age group was a bit less approving and slightly more disapproving than the older age group.

Trump Job Approval							
	Total	Democrat	Republican	Other	College Graduate	Some College	No College
Approve	58%	23%	86%	58%	56%	65%	54%
Disapprove	37%	70%	10%	37%	39%	31%	40%
Don't Know	5%	7%	4%	5%	5%	4%	6%
(N)	740	283	342	114	345	199	196

It's no surprise that there is a deep partisan divide in Louisiana when it comes to the president's job approval ratings. However, the political polarization conveyed in this survey is different than what has been found in national polls. For instance, the Gallup Poll's weekly average for March 20 through March 26 shows that 84 percent of Republicans approve of the president.¹ That figure matches what we found in our survey. But it was a different story for Democrats as the Gallup poll had only 8 percent of Democrats approving of the Republican president, while our survey indicates that nearly one-quarter of Louisiana Democrats gave Trump a positive evaluation. The Gallup Poll also had 33 percent of Independents approving of the president while our survey reveals that 58 percent of Independents and third party adherents approve of Trump. One reason for Trump's strong approval numbers in Louisiana is that the president enjoys more support from Democrats and Independents in the state than he does nationally.

We also asked respondents about their level of education. Surprisingly we found that college graduates and those with no college were relatively equal in their appraisal of the president. Two-thirds of respondents with some college support the president. There has been much discussion about Trump's strongest support



coming from low information non-college educated white voters. We tested that notion by examining Trump's approval while controlling for education and race. We confirmed that Trump's approval level is lowest for those whites who are college graduates and highest among whites who have no college. Interestingly, we

¹ <http://www.gallup.com/poll/203198/presidential-approval-ratings-donald-trump.aspx>

found the opposite relationship for African-Americans. It appears that education has a positive relationship to approval for Trump among blacks. In fact, black college graduates were three times more likely than blacks with no college to rate the president positively.

Trump Job Approval							
	Total	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6
Approve	58%	58%	31%	67%	65%	63%	62%
Disapprove	37%	34%	65%	32%	31%	33%	29%
Don't Know	5%	8%	3%	2%	4%	3%	9%
(N)	740	128	118	129	118	117	130

There is not a great deal of regional variation in the president's approval rating. Congressional District Two is the outlier as voters there disapprove of the president by a two-to-one margin. The district is the most African-American and Democratic in the state and so these results should not be surprising. Outside of District Two, however, Donald Trump enjoys high approval ratings. Four of the six districts give him at least a 62 percent job approval rating while District One falls just under 60 percent.

In conclusion, those who voted in the November election continue to have confidence in the president they supported in that election. President Trump enjoys strong support from whites and Republican voters while he is viewed negatively by African-Americans and Democrats. Moreover, respondents have strong opinions one way or the other on the president's job performance. Only a small percentage of every category surveyed say that they "don't know" when asked about his job performance.

Appendix

Survey Script

1. This is a sixty second confidential university survey of Louisiana voters. Who did you vote for, for president last November? Press 1 for Democrat Hillary Clinton, press 2 for Republican Donald Trump, press 3 for someone else, press 4 if you did not vote.
2. Press 1 if you early voted, press 2 if you voted on election day, press 3 if you did not vote.
3. Do you approve or disapprove of the job performance of President Donald Trump? Press 1 for approve, press 2 for disapprove, press 3 for don't know.
4. If you identify as a Democrat press 1, a Republican press 2, something else press 3.
5. If you are widowed press 1, married press 2, divorced press 3, single press 4.
6. If your household income is less than \$45k, press 1, if your household income is more than \$45k press 2, if you don't know press 3. (Louisiana's median house hold income is \$45k)
7. If you are a graduate of a four-year college press 1, if you have attended college but have not graduated press 2, if you have never attended college press 3.
8. If you are male press 1, if you are female press 2.
9. If you are younger than fifty press 1, if you are older than 49 press 2. (Average age of LA voter is 50)
10. If you are black press 1, if you are white press 2, if you are something else press 3.
Thank you for taking the survey.

Frequency Tables

Gender

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	336	45.4	45.4	45.4
Female	404	54.6	54.6	100.0
Total	740	100.0	100.0	

Age

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Under 50	370	50.0	50.0	50.0
Over 49	370	50.0	50.0	100.0
Total	740	100.0	100.0	

Race

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Black	217	29.3	29.3	29.3
White	490	66.2	66.2	95.5
Other	33	4.5	4.5	100.0
Total	740	100.0	100.0	

Congressional district

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
District 1	128	17.3	17.3	17.3
District 2	118	16.0	16.0	33.3
District 3	129	17.4	17.4	50.7
District 4	118	16.0	16.0	66.7
District 5	117	15.8	15.8	82.5
District 6	129	17.5	17.5	100.0
Total	740	100.0	100.0	

Party Identification

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Democrat	283	38.2	38.2	38.2
Republican	342	46.3	46.3	84.5
Something else	114	15.5	15.5	100.0
Total	740	100.0	100.0	