
PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION OPTIONS

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Abstract: *POLLS CAN PROVIDE AN ANTICIPATION OF ELECTION RESULTS, PROVIDING POLITICAL PARTIES AND CANDIDATES USEFUL INFORMATION FOR THEIR CAMPAIGN STRATEGIES. THESE RESULTS MAY INFLUENCE DECISIONS REGARDING THE ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES AND THE FOCUS ON CERTAIN ASPECTS OF THE POLICY PLATFORM.*

SURVEY RESULTS CAN INFLUENCE PUBLIC OPINION BY CREATING OR REINFORCING PERCEPTIONS OF WINNERS OR LOSERS. THEY CAN AFFECT THE DECISION OF VOTERS, CAUSING THEM TO CHANGE OR CONSOLIDATE THEIR CHOICES DEPENDING ON THE RESULTS PRESENTED.

THE SURVEY PRESENTED IN THIS ARTICLE PROVIDES INFORMATION ON THE POPULARITY OF THE CANDIDATES, THE PREFERENCES OF THE ELECTORATE, AND CHANGES IN OPINION THROUGHOUT THE CAMPAIGN.

THIS DESCRIBED SURVEY IS MAINLY INTENDED TO ESTIMATE WHAT THE POPULATION'S PREFERENCES ARE REGARDING THE PROFILE OF THE FUTURE PRESIDENT, WHAT ARE THE QUALITIES NECESSARY FOR THIS AND WHAT ARE THE OPTIONS REGARDING THE TYPE OF PRESIDENT (INDEPENDENT OR REPRESENTATIVE OF A PARTY OR PARTY GROUPS).

Keywords: PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS, CANDIDATES, POLL, OPINION, CHANCES, DECISION.

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1. Introduction

Considering the low percentages (below 50%) since the last elections, a mobilization of the population is needed to go out to vote.

Mobilizing and stimulating the population to vote in the 2024 presidential elections in Romania can be approached through various strategies and tactics. Some ideas in this regard could be:

Awareness campaigns: Running a strong awareness campaign about the importance of voting and the impact it has on the future of the country. Diverse means of communication can be used, including mass media, social media, posters and local events to reach a wide audience. (Dumitru, 2022)



Election education: Hold an election education session to improve understanding of the election process, including the voting procedure, the importance of each vote, and the president's role in governance.

Incentives and rewards: Consider introducing incentives or rewards for those who vote. This may include special facilities to facilitate voting, financial incentives in the form of tax breaks or other benefits. (Carville, Begala, 2014)

Partnerships with non-governmental organizations: Collaboration with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other civic organizations to develop community initiatives and mobilization programs. These organizations often have experience in civic engagement and mobilization.

Development of online platforms: Using technology to facilitate the registration and voting process, including through online platforms. Ensure that there is clear and easily accessible information on polling places, the schedule and the procedure.

Debate and open dialogue: Organizing debates and open dialogue events between candidates and voters to promote a better understanding of political platforms and the concerns of the population.

Youth mobilization: Young people represent an important part of the electorate and can be mobilized through online platforms, as well as through awareness campaigns specifically addressed to this segment.

Personalized strategies: Using personalized strategies to target different demographic groups with messages and appeals that specifically resonate with them. A personalized approach can be more effective in attracting and engaging voters.

The combination of these strategies can help increase voter turnout and civic engagement in the 2024 presidential election.

The mobilization of the diaspora for the presidential elections in Romania in 2024 may involve various strategies and actions to stimulate the participation and voting of Romanian voters abroad.

By implementing effective strategies and actions, an active participation of the diaspora in the 2024 presidential elections can be encouraged and solid links can be created between the Romanian community abroad and the democratic process in the country.

2. Ethical electoral campaign in the election of the president of Romania in 2024

A "fair play" electoral campaign for the election of the President of Romania in 2024 should be based on the principles of transparency, integrity and respect for the voters. The most important aspects that should characterize such a campaign are:

Truth and transparency:

Accurate information: Candidates should provide accurate and verifiable information about their plans, achievements and commitments. (Cicero, 2008)

Financial transparency: Campaign financing should be transparent, with full disclosure of donations and expenses. This can prevent undue influence from financial interests.

Open and respectful debates:

Participation in debates: Candidates should be willing to participate in public debates where they can express their views and be evaluated by voters.

Issue-focused debates: Discussions should focus on major issues and proposed solutions, avoiding personal attacks and inflammatory rhetoric.

Civic engagement and open participation:

Interaction with citizens: Candidates should encourage direct interaction with citizens through public meetings, community forums, and civic engagement activities.

Openness to questions: Candidates should answer voters' questions and be available for interviews and discussions.

Avoiding manipulation and misinformation:

Countering disinformation: Candidates should commit to countering misinformation and promoting a public discussion based on facts and arguments.

Condemning unfair practices: Candidates should condemn unfair practices, including cyber attacks, social media manipulation and other forms of misinformation.

Compliance with laws and regulations:

Adherence to electoral rules: Candidates should abide by the established electoral rules and norms, avoiding any form of fraud or unethical behavior.

Respect for institutions: Candidates should respect the independence of democratic institutions, such as the Electoral Commission and the media, and avoid any attempt to undermine them.

Inclusivity and diversity:

Fair representation: Candidates should promote an inclusive campaign and reflect the diversity of the population. It should avoid any discourse that perpetuates discrimination or pushes for polarization.

Developing a positive agenda:

Focus on solutions: Candidates should focus on presenting solutions to major problems and provide a positive vision for the country's future.

3. Sociological methods used for presidential elections

There are several sociological methods by which one can find out the state of candidacy in the presidential elections. These methods often involve the use of polls and sociological research to assess public support, perceptions of candidates, and factors that may influence voting. Here are some common methods:

The sociological methods of finding out the candidacy for the presidential elections

Sociological methods for finding out about presidential candidates involve specific research and analysis conducted by sociologists and social science experts. These methods are designed to obtain relevant information about potential candidates, their popularity, as well as to understand voter attitudes and preferences. Here are some common methods:

Opinion polls:

Telephone: Telephone surveys are among the most used methods. Sociologists interview potential voters via phone calls to get feedback on candidates.

Online: Online polls are becoming increasingly popular, with voters completing surveys on the Internet. They can provide a diverse sample and quick access to information.

Personal interviews: Door to Door: Sociologists can conduct personal interviews by visiting voters at home. This method allows deepening the dialogue and obtaining detailed information.

Focus groups: Debates and discussions: In focus groups, voters can discuss the candidates, giving sociologists a more detailed insight into their attitudes and opinions.

Content analytics:

Media and social media: Sociologists can analyze media and social media content to gauge how candidates are perceived. This analysis may include the tone and sentiment of messages.

Documentary reviews: Examining publicly available documents and information can provide a clearer picture of candidacies. This may include speeches, interviews, press articles, etc.

Statistical analyses: The use of statistical techniques can help identify trends and relationships between candidate-related variables and electoral preferences.

Public opinion polls: Sociological research organizations conduct polls to gauge the voting intentions of the public. These polls can provide information about each candidate's popularity, voter preferences, and changes in opinion over the course of the campaign. It is important to remember that



polls are only an estimate of public opinion at the time they are taken and that actual election results may vary. Careful analysis of methodology and context is crucial to properly interpret survey results.

Televised debates and public events: Participating in debates and organizing public events are ways in which candidates present their visions and proposals. Public reaction and how candidates handle these interactions can provide clues about their support.

Media analysis: Monitoring media coverage of candidates can provide information on how much they are discussed and how they are portrayed in the media. The tone and content of news can influence public opinion.

Market research and demographic analysis: Sociological research can involve analyzing the demographics of each candidate's supporters, identifying voter groups, and understanding how factors such as age, gender, education, or geographic location may influence voting choices.

Social media analytics: Using Social Media Data to Assess Candidate Popularity and Online Engagement. Reactions and comments on platforms such as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram can provide an indication of how candidates are perceived.

Focus groups: Holding focus groups to discuss candidates and key campaign issues. These sessions provide the opportunity to gain deeper insights into public opinion.

These methods are often used in combination to gain a comprehensive understanding of electoral support for presidential candidates. It is important to approach this research with rigorous methodologies to ensure the accuracy and relevance of the results.

Collaboration and unity: Candidates should promote messages that unite the population, avoiding divisions that can weaken social cohesion.

Therefore, a "fair play" electoral campaign must aim to provide voters with access to correct information and create an environment conducive to constructive debate and civic engagement.

4. The opinion poll during the presidential elections

An opinion poll has several roles in presidential elections, such as:

Measuring candidate popularity: Polls provide a picture of each candidate's popularity among the population. They can provide insight into the degree of acceptance and support each candidate has in different demographic and regional groups.

Adjusting campaign strategies: Polls provide candidates and political parties with critical data to adjust campaign strategies. If a candidate notices a decline in popularity in a particular region or among a certain category of voters, they might decide to change their message or focus more on issues relevant to those groups.

Monitoring trends and changes: Periodic surveys can help monitor trends and changes in public opinion throughout the campaign. This gives candidates the opportunity to respond dynamically to political and social developments as they occur.

However, it is important to consider that opinion polls have limitations and that the results may vary depending on the method of data collection, sampling and the time period of the survey. They should therefore be interpreted with caution and in the context of other available information to provide a more comprehensive insight into the mood of the electorate.

5. Analysis of the results of the survey for the presidential elections

Analyzing the poll results for the presidential election involved several steps to interpret the data and provide a comprehensive understanding of public opinion. Steps in analyzing the results of the electoral survey:

Sample definition: The group of people interviewed in the survey was 364, of which 350 answered all the questions. Only people who declared that they are over 16 years old and have

Romanian citizenship were selected. For a summary analysis of the trend in presidential elections, the sample is demographically and geographically representative. Period of online exposure of the questionnaire: 8-22.11.2023.

Calculating margin of error: The accepted margin of error based on sample size and confidence level for this survey is +/- 5%.

It is important to remember that polls are only an estimate of public opinion at the time they are taken and that actual election results may vary. Careful analysis of methodology and context is crucial to properly interpret survey results.

From the analysis of the survey results, the following conclusions can be drawn:

a. The people who answered the questionnaires on the internet or smartphones are very interested in participating in the vote:

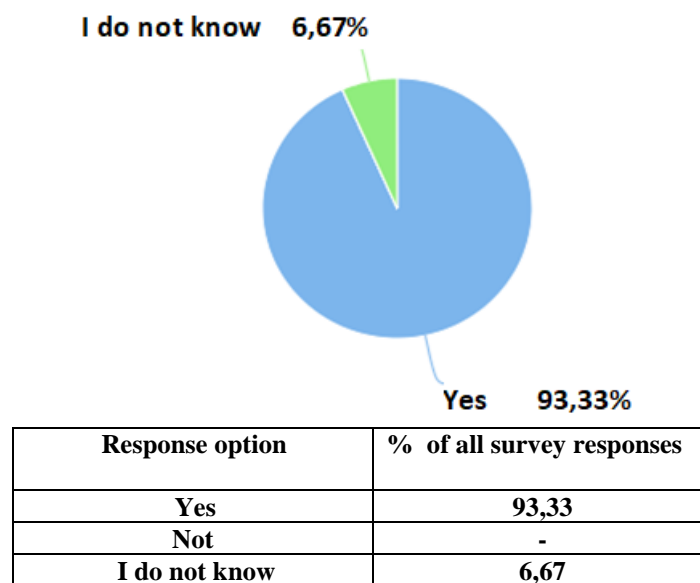


Fig. no. 1, Respondents' intention to vote

So, 93.33% of the respondents expressed their desire to vote in the upcoming presidential elections.

There are several possible explanations for the observation that the population responding to internet or smartphone surveys appears to be overwhelmingly very interested in voting:

Accessibility of technology: Those with access to the Internet and smartphones may be more open to participating in online surveys. They may generally be more connected and tech-savvy people, and this openness may also extend to civic participation, including voting.

The young generation: Young people are often more familiar and comfortable with digital technology. If an online survey particularly attracts young people who have an increased interest in expressing their opinions, the results may reflect greater enthusiasm for voting among this age group.

Specialized interest groups: Certain online surveys may be directed to specialized interest groups or online communities. These groups may already be involved and interested in specific issues, including the electoral process.

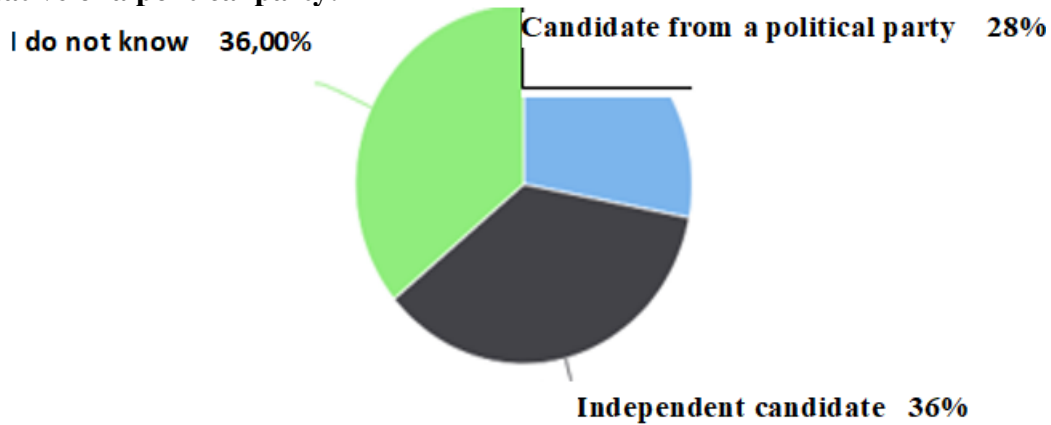
Self-selection of participants: People who are already interested in participating in voting may be more likely to self-select into responding to online surveys. This phenomenon can create a bias in the results because it does not always represent the entire population.

Digital demographics: Certain demographics, such as those with higher education or higher incomes, may be more present in the digital space. These groups may also show an increased interest in civic involvement, including in the electoral process.

Online targeted advertising: Online surveys may use targeted advertising to reach specific groups of people, such as those who show an interest in politics or social issues. These groups might naturally show a greater interest in voting.

It is important to consider these issues when interpreting the results of online surveys and to make efforts to ensure appropriate representativeness of the population.

b. The result of respondents' voting intention for an independent candidate or a representative of a political party:



a.

| Response option | % From all opinion poll responses |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Candidate from a political party | 28 % |
| Independent candidate | 36 % |
| I do not know | 36 % |

Fig. no. 2. Voting intention

A higher share of respondents declaring an intention to vote for an independent candidate in polls can be explained by several factors. It is important to analyze these factors in order to understand the context and correctly interpret the survey results. Possible explanations are:

Dissatisfaction with traditional parties: If there is a general sense of dissatisfaction with traditional political parties, or if voters perceive that they do not adequately represent them, more people may be willing to support independent candidates.

Charismatic or issue-focused candidates: Independent candidates may have characteristics or approaches that appeal to a larger segment of voters. They may be perceived as more charismatic or as focusing on specific issues that resonate with the electorate.

Desire for change: Voters may feel the need for change and see independent candidates as an alternative to the status quo. If there is a general sense of frustration with the existing political system, this can encourage support for independent candidates.

Perceived lack of political affiliation: Independent candidates are often seen as lacking political affiliation and may benefit from this perception, particularly in a context where party affiliation is viewed negatively.

The need to offer a realistic alternative: If voters perceive that independent candidates have a real chance of winning the election, they may be more willing to support them. This can be influenced by political events or the campaigning and media exposure of independent candidates. (Hersh, 2015)



Results of preliminary polls: The polls themselves can influence voter behavior. If previous polls have indicated significant support for an independent candidate, this may encourage other voters to consider him a viable option.

It is important to consider these possible explanations in the specific context of an election and to pay attention to how surveys are conducted and interpreted. The increased share of supporters of an independent candidate in the polls may indicate a change in the political landscape, or it may simply reflect a specific period of discomfort with the existing options.

The dissatisfaction of the population can also be reflected by the election of an extremist president

Popular discontent can play a significant role in supporting or electing a president with extreme positions. Here are some reasons why this might happen:

Frustration and Disillusionment: A population dissatisfied and frustrated with existing governance or social conditions may seek radical or extreme alternatives in response to their disillusionment with the status quo.

Seeking simple solutions: When people are dissatisfied, they may be drawn to leaders who promise simple and quick solutions to complex problems. Extremists can deliver a simplistic and appealing message despite the potential consequences. (Frigioiu, 2004)

Manipulating emotions: Extremist leaders can exploit feelings of anger, fear, or anxiety to bolster their support. They can offer an "us vs. them" approach, presenting themselves as the savior solution to society's perceived problems.

Lack of trust in existing institutions: If the population does not trust traditional institutions, such as traditional political parties or the media, this can pave the way for the emergence of extremist leaders who present themselves as an alternative to the current system.

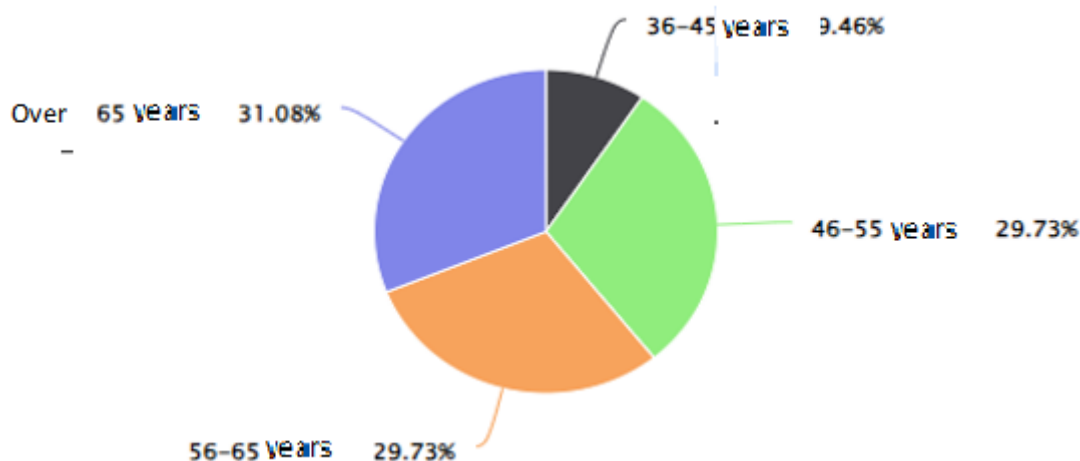
Voting protest: People may see voting for an extremist leader as a way of protesting against the existing system or political elite, perceived as ineffective or uncaring of the real problems of the population.

It is important to note that the election of an extremist president can have significant consequences for society and democracy. While popular discontent may be a factor, voting decisions are also influenced by a variety of other factors, including education, available information, and political mobilization. (Jinaru, Niculescu, 2023)

c. The option to choose a wise candidate and from the third age category

It is possible that people associate advanced age with wisdom and have a preference for older candidates in polls, believing that experience gained over the years brings with it a deeper understanding and wiser approach to issues.

Age category of the preferred candidate:

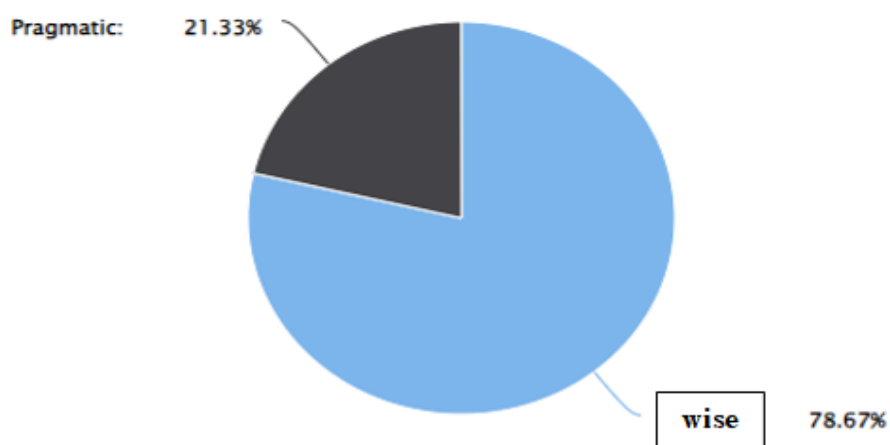


| Response option | % From all opinion poll responses |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------|
| 18-35 years | 0% |
| 36-45 years | 9,33% |
| 46-55 years | 29,33% |
| 56-65 years | 29,33% |
| Over 65 years | 32,04% |

Fig. no. 3. Preferred age range for presidential candidate
Source: online survey

The respondents' preferred age category for the presidential candidate is over 65 with 32.04%.

d. Preference between the pragmatic and the wise candidate



| Response option | % From all opinion poll responses |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------|
| Wise | 78,67 % |
| Pragmatic | 21,33% |

Fig. no. 4. Preference for choosing a wise candidate



The preference for a wise candidate is overwhelming: 78.67% of all responses.

The correlation between age and wisdom can vary significantly depending on the cultural, social and political context specific to each country. (Lexa, 2004)

There are arguments both for and against this correlation:

Arguments in favor of correlation:

Accumulated experience: Older people often have extensive experience in their field and in life in general, which can contribute to a deeper understanding of issues.

Stability and composure: Older age can bring a certain stability and composure in dealing with issues, which can inspire confidence in voters.

Respect for tradition: In some cultures, wisdom is associated with respect for tradition and values, and older candidates may be perceived as custodians of these values.

Arguments against correlation:

Adaptability to change: Sometimes younger candidates are perceived as more adaptable to change and new challenges, while older candidates may be seen as having a more conservative outlook.

Physical and mental condition: Physical and mental health can influence a candidate's ability to perform their duties effectively and this is not necessarily related to age.

Diversity: Voters may want to see a diversity of voices and perspectives represented in politics, including from younger candidates.

In conclusion, there are some associations between age and wisdom in public perception, but this may be subjective and influenced by cultural and individual factors. It is important to assess each candidate based on their individual qualities and abilities, regardless of age.

e. Qualities of a presidential candidate

A presidential candidate should possess a number of qualities to attract and inspire the confidence of voters.

The profile of a candidate for the presidential elections can be analyzed through the prism of his qualities.

The qualities required of a presidential candidate may vary depending on the specific context, the needs of society and the expectations of the electorate.

It is important for a candidate to find a balance between these characteristics in order to be perceived as an effective and capable leader.

The main qualities for a presidential candidate that are preferred by voters are the following: honesty, credibility, patriotism and diplomacy.

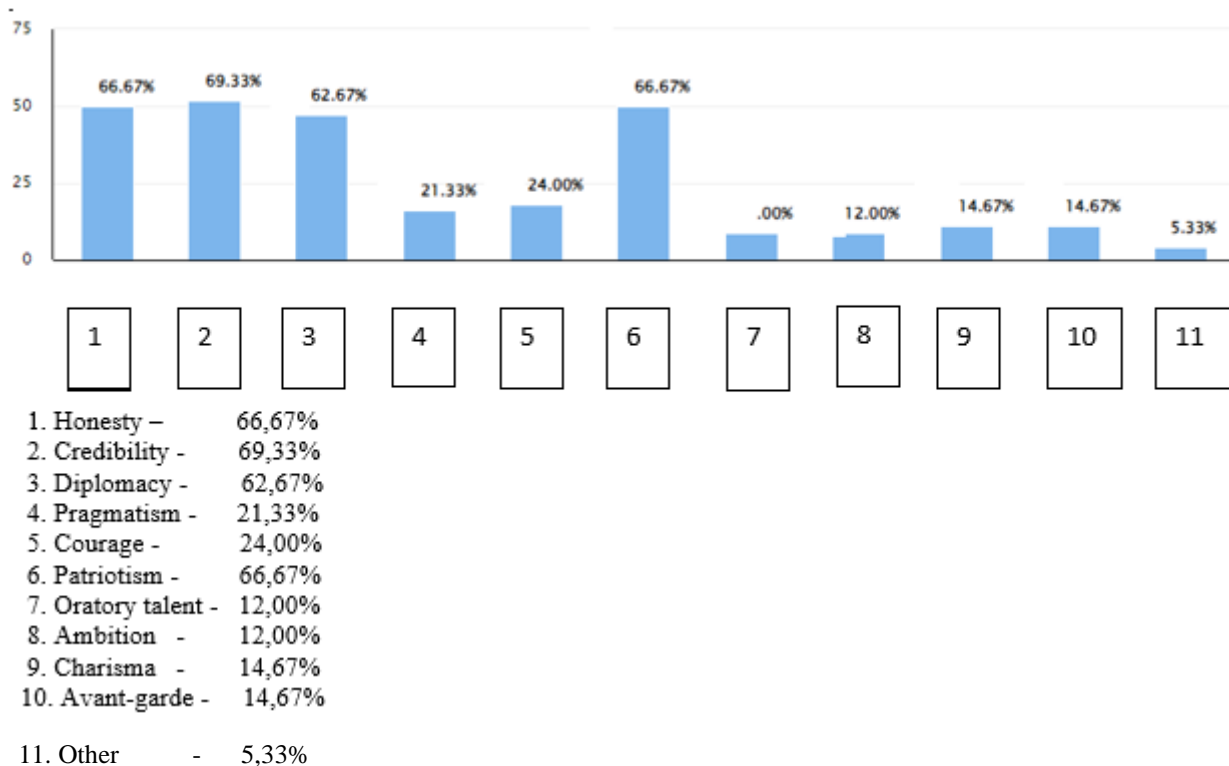


Fig no. 5. Qualities of a presidential candidate

Preferences for these qualities in a presidential candidate reflect voters' concerns and values, and these qualities are often considered essential to inspiring trust and effectively exercising the presidential office. Here is an analysis of possible reasons why these qualities are valued:

Honesty and Credibility: Trust and Transparency: Voters want to trust their leaders. An honest and credible candidate inspires trust and transparency in the relationship with citizens, which is essential for building an effective government and managing the country's problems responsibly.

Patriotism: Commitment to Country: Voters look for leaders who demonstrate a strong commitment to the good of their country. Patriotism is associated with loyalty to the nation and the desire to serve the public interest before personal interests.

Diplomacy: Diplomacy is crucial for managing relations with other countries and international organizations. A diplomatic leader can help build alliances, resolve international conflicts, and maintain a balance in the country's foreign relations. (Marga A., 2023)

These qualities generally reflect voters' expectations of moral integrity, responsibility to country, and leadership skills. A candidate who possesses these qualities is perceived as having the ability to lead the country responsibly and face challenges in an honest and effective manner.

f. The importance of social networks in electoral campaigns

These days, the internet and social media have become extremely important elements in presidential elections and election campaigns in general. These platforms bring about a significant change in how candidates communicate, how they are perceived and how they end up interacting with voters.

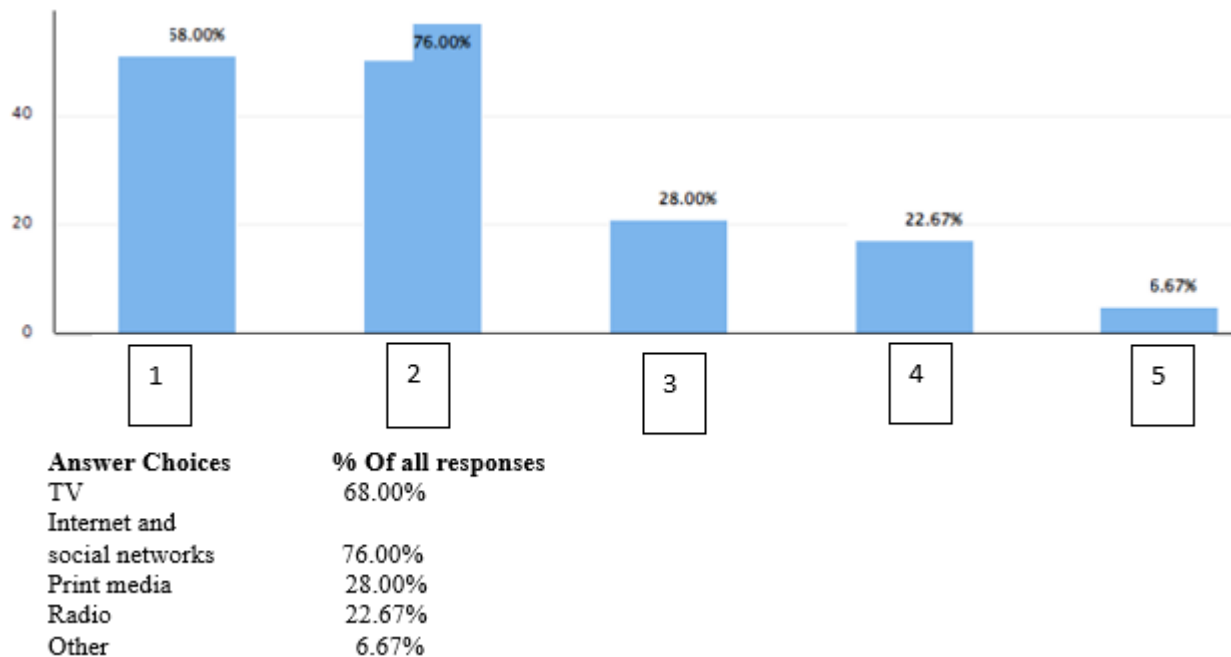


Fig. no. 6 Sources of information about candidates and elections

Ways the Internet and Social Media Impact Presidential Elections:

Direct communication with voters: Candidates can use social media platforms to communicate directly with voters, bypassing traditional intermediaries such as the media. Messages can be delivered quickly and effectively, and candidates can get feedback directly from the audience.

Building public image: Through social media, candidates can build a public image and influence voter perception. They can share information about their personal lives, values and visions, helping to form an emotional connection with voters.

Electoral Mobilization: The Internet and social media are effective tools to mobilize voters. Through online campaigns, events can be organized, voting calls can be sent and volunteering activities can be coordinated.

Targeted advertising: Online campaigns allow candidates to use targeted advertising, targeting specific segments of voters based on demographics and online behavior. This improves the effectiveness of messages and the use of financial resources.

Monitoring public sentiment: By analyzing social media data, campaigns can gain a real-time understanding of public sentiment. This allows them to adapt and react quickly to changes in voter opinion and concerns.

Countering disinformation: The Internet provides platforms to counter disinformation and clarify messages directly. Candidates can respond to incorrect information and communicate directly with voters to provide clarification. (Marga D., 2004)

Public debate and engagement: Social media facilitates public debate and engagement. Voters can discuss, share ideas and participate in discussions on key issues. This contributes to the creation of a more interactive electoral process.

The Internet and social networks have become essential tools in electoral campaigns, playing a significant role in communicating, mobilizing and shaping public opinion.



6. Conclusions

People with access to the Internet and smartphones are receptive to online surveys, indicating an openness to using technology in the process of gathering public opinion.

A significant proportion of respondents (36%) express the intention to vote for an independent candidate. This aspect indicates an increased interest in political alternatives and possibly a desire for change from traditional parties.

The age category that registers the highest preference for the presidential candidate is over 65, with a weight of 30.67%. This may reflect confidence in experience and the wisdom associated with age.

An overwhelming majority of respondents (78.67%) consider wisdom to be an essential quality for a presidential candidate. Voters place significant emphasis on the ability to make informed and balanced decisions. Honesty, credibility, patriotism and diplomacy are the main qualities sought in a candidate. These characteristics suggest that voters value integrity, loyalty to the country, and diplomatic skills in leading the country.

The Internet and social media have become essential tools in election campaigns, signaling significant changes in the way political information is disseminated and how candidates interact with voters.

These conclusions highlight not only electoral preferences, but also the evolution of voter behavior in the digital age, where access to information and online communication play a central role in the electoral process.



2/2023

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