American Perceptions of Iran

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Introduction to Research

Hypotheses:

H 1: The medium through which a person gets political information influences whether they think Iran is developing a nukes.

H 2: The more frequently a person consumes media, the more likely they are to think Iran is developing nuclear weapons.

H 3: Some mediums are more influential in shaping perceptions of U.S. foreign policy toward Iran.

Is Iran developing nuclear weapons?

Yes  No

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Information</th>
<th>Every Day</th>
<th>3 times a week or more</th>
<th>Almost every week</th>
<th>1-3 times a month</th>
<th>Less than once a month</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political Blogs</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
<td>62.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet News</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
<td>14.4%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magazines</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
<td>25.3%</td>
<td>38.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Print</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
<td>14.4%</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Media</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
<td>53.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comparison of Different Mediums Influences on Iran

Table Interpretation

- The table measures the correlation and regression between different news mediums and whether Americans believe Iran is developing nuclear weapons.
- Only internet news, print newspapers, social media and television had statistically significant relationships with whether Americans believe Iran was developing nuclear weapons.
- The relationships between internet blogs, magazines and radio with whether Americans believe Iran is pursuing nuclear weapons were not statistically significant.
- Of those, television by far had the strongest correlation with whether Americans believe Iran is developing nuclear weapons.

Findings and Conclusions

H 1: Medium influences on U.S. opinion of Iran

While the nukes of Americans who believed Iran was developing nuclear weapons were not identical across all mediums, the figures were still very close. Consequently, the percentages were nearly identical as well. Thus, I conclude that regardless of the medium, the breakdown of those who think Iran is developing nuclear weapons and those who think Iran isn’t was within a percentage point or two of a 90 percent/10 percent split.

H 2: Frequency of media consumption and Iran

For all mediums, there was a clear relationship between how often the media was consumed and opinion of Iran. For political blogs, magazines and to a lesser extent social media, the media was consumed, the less likely the person was to believe Iran was developing nuclear weapons. For Internet news, print, radio and TV, it was the inverse.

H 3: How effectively did different media influence American opinion of Iran’s nuclear program?

There was a statistically significant relationship between medium and American influence of Iran only for Internet news, print newspapers, social media and television. Of those, television by far was the most influential of American opinion, followed by print. The influence of social media and Internet news trailed much farther behind. Of the statistically significant media mediums, only social media had a negative correlation, which meant it was the only medium that caused people to believe Iran was developing nuclear weapons the less they consumed political information through social media.

References