Populist Rhetoric Research Study Project Plan

1. Project Overview

1.1. Title: Analysis of Populist Rhetoric in Global Democracies.

1.2. Context: This project is part of a Carnegie Corporation-funded initiative at Washington University in St. Louis, focusing on the use and impact of populist rhetoric by politicians in world democracies.

1.3. Aim: To analyze large datasets of social media posts and conduct surveys in various culturally diverse democracies to understand the origins, spread, and influence of populist rhetoric on democratic processes and stability.

1.4. Primary Objectives

1.4.1. To identify and analyze patterns of populist rhetoric in social media data.

1.4.2. To conduct comprehensive surveys in selected democracies to gauge public perception and the impact of populist rhetoric.

1.4.3. To contribute to academic and public understanding of the influence of populist rhetoric on political discourse and democratic health.

1.5. Expected Outcomes

1.5.1. Detailed reports and publications summarizing findings.

1.5.2. Recommendations for policymakers and stakeholders on managing the impact of populist rhetoric.

1.5.3. Enhanced public awareness and academic discourse on the role of populism in global politics.

2. Stakeholder Analysis

2.1. Identification of Key Stakeholders

2.1.1. Washington University and TRIADS: The primary sponsors and beneficiaries of the project.

2.1.2. Carnegie Corporation: The funding body with vested interests in the project's outcomes.

2.1.3. Research Team Members: Including data analysts, survey designers, and administrative staff.
2.1.4. Survey Participants: Individuals in selected democracies who will be surveyed.
2.1.5. Academic Community: Scholars and institutions interested in political and data science.
2.1.6. General Public: Especially those interested in political discourse and democratic processes.
2.1.7. Policy Makers and Political Analysts: Who may value or use the project's findings?

2.2. Analysis of Stakeholder Needs and Expectations

2.2.1. Washington University and TRIADS: Expect robust research methodology and significant academic contributions.
2.2.2. Carnegie Corporation: Seeks impactful use of funds with clear outcomes in understanding global democratic processes.
2.2.3. Research Team Members: Need clear guidance, effective leadership, and resources for research tasks.
2.2.4. Survey Participants: Require assurance of anonymity and ethical data handling.
2.2.5. Academic Community: Expect methodologically sound research and insightful contributions to existing literature.
2.2.6. General Public: Interested in accessible and understandable findings from the research.
2.2.7. Policy Makers and Political Analysts: Look for actionable insights and in-depth analysis of populist rhetoric's impact.

3. Scope Management

3.1. Detailed Project Scope Statement

3.1.1. Scope Description:
3.1.1.1. Data Collection: Gather and curate social media posts from various platforms, focusing on political discourse in four democracies.
3.1.1.2. Integrate Multilingual Data Analysis: Employ advanced language processing tools and linguistic experts to handle multiple languages, especially those less represented in digital forums.

3.1.1.3. Survey Design and Execution: Develop and conduct surveys to assess public perception of populist rhetoric.
3.1.1.4. Data Analysis: Use qualitative and quantitative methods to analyze social media data and survey responses.
3.1.1.5. Reporting: Produce comprehensive reports detailing findings and implications.

3.1.2. Deliverables:
3.1.2.1. Curated datasets of social media posts.
3.1.2.2. Survey instruments and collected data.
3.1.2.3. Analytical reports and academic papers.
3.1.2.4. Presentations for academic and policy-making audiences.

3.2. Work Breakdown Structure (WBS)

3.2.1. Data Collection:
3.2.1.1. Identification of relevant social media platforms and posts.
3.2.1.2. Data scraping and curation.

3.2.2. Survey Design and Execution:
3.2.2.1. Development of survey questions.
3.2.2.2. Selection of survey participants and administration of the survey.

3.2.3. Data Analysis:
3.2.3.1. Qualitative analysis of social media posts.
3.2.3.2. Statistical analysis of survey data.

3.2.4. Reporting:
3.2.4.1. Drafting and revising analytical reports.
3.2.4.2. Preparing presentations and academic papers.

4. Schedule Management

4.1. Timeline

4.1.1. Phase 1: Project Initiation and Planning (Duration: 1 Month)
4.1.1.1. Week 1-2: Finalize project charter and stakeholder analysis.
4.1.1.2. Week 3-4: Develop project management plan and work breakdown structure.

4.1.2. Phase 2: Data Collection (Duration: 3 Months)
4.1.2.1. Month 1: Develop an adaptive data collection strategy that allows for modifications in response to emerging trends in populist rhetoric.
4.1.2.2. Month 1-2: Identify and collect social media data.

4.1.2.3. Month 3: Begin preliminary data analysis.

4.1.3. Phase 3: Survey Design and Execution (Duration: 2 Months)

4.1.3.1. Month 1: Develop and validate survey instruments.

4.1.3.2. Month 2: Administer surveys and collect responses.

4.1.4. Phase 4: Comprehensive Data Analysis (Duration: 4 Months)

4.1.4.1. Month 1-2: Analyze social media data.

4.1.4.2. Month 3-4: Analyze survey data and integrate findings.

4.1.5. Phase 5: Reporting and Dissemination (Duration: 2 Months)

4.1.5.1. Month 1: Draft and revise reports and academic papers.

4.1.5.2. Month 2: Finalize reports, prepare presentations, and plan for dissemination.

4.2. Key Milestones

4.2.1. Project Charter Approval: Marking the formal start of the project.

4.2.2. Completion of Data Collection: A critical juncture for moving to the analysis phase.

4.2.3. Survey Execution Completion: Signifying the end of primary data gathering.

4.2.4. Draft Report Completion: A vital step towards finalizing the project outcomes.

4.2.5. Project Closure: Final presentations and submission of all deliverables.

5. Cost Management

5.1. Budget Estimation

5.1.1. Data Collection and Curation: Estimated cost for software tools, data storage, and personnel for data scraping.

5.1.2. Survey Design and Execution: Costs for survey platform, participant incentives, and data analysis tools.

5.1.3. Human Resources: Project managers, data analysts, and administrative staff salaries and rates.

5.1.4. Reporting and Dissemination: Costs for publishing, travel (if needed for conferences), and presentation materials.

5.1.5. Contingency Reserve: A percentage of the total budget for unforeseen expenses.

5.2. Cost Control Measures

5.2.1. Regular Budget Reviews: Monthly review of expenditures against the budget.

5.2.2. Cost Performance Index (CPI) Tracking: Monitoring the cost efficiency of the project work.

5.2.3. Change Control System: Process for reviewing and approving changes that impact the project budget.

5.2.4. Vendor Management: Regularly evaluate vendor contracts and services to ensure cost-effectiveness.

6. Quality Management

6.1. Quality Objectives and Standards

6.1.1. Objectives: Ensuring accuracy and reliability in data collection and analysis and achieving a high standard of scholarly research.

6.1.2. Standards: Adherence to academic research integrity guidelines, data privacy laws, and statistical analysis best practices.

6.2. Quality Assurance and Control Processes

6.2.1. Quality Assurance:

6.2.1.1. Regular peer reviews of research methodologies and data analysis.

6.2.1.2. Compliance checks with ethical standards in data collection and handling.

6.2.2. Quality Control:

6.2.2.1. Ongoing validation of data sources and datasets.

6.2.2.2. Rigorous testing of survey instruments for reliability and validity.

6.2.2.3. Systematic review and revision of draft reports and publications.

7. Resource Management

7.1. Identification of Required Resources

7.1.1. Human Resources:

7.1.1.1. Data analysts, survey designers, administrative staff, and a project manager.

7.1.2. Material Resources:

7.1.2.1. Office supplies, data storage devices, and survey distribution tools.

7.1.3. Technological Resources:

7.1.3.1. Data analysis software, survey platforms, and communication tools.

7.2. Resource Allocation Plan

7.2.1. Human Resources:

7.2.1.1. Allocation based on project phases, ensuring appropriate staffing levels for each task.

7.2.2. Material Resources:

7.2.2.1. Just-in-time procurement to optimize inventory and reduce holding costs.

7.2.3. Technological Resources:

7.2.3.1. Leveraging cloud-based services for scalability and cost-efficiency.

7.2.4. Documentation and Reporting:

7.2.4.1. Establish a regular reporting and documentation system, ensuring all changes and adaptations are well-recorded and transparent.

8. Communication Strategy and Management

8.1. Objective: To ensure effective and timely communication among project stakeholders.

8.2. Methods:

8.2.1. Regular project status meetings.

8.2.2. Email updates and newsletters.

8.2.3. Dedicated Slack channel.

8.2.4. Stakeholder-specific communication channels (e.g., presentations, reports for sponsors and academic community).

8.3. Stakeholder Engagement Techniques

8.3.1. Internal Team Engagement:

8.3.1.1. Frequent team meetings for updates and feedback.

8.3.1.2. Use of collaborative tools for real-time information sharing.

8.3.2. External Stakeholder Engagement:

8.3.2.1. Periodic reports and briefings for the funding body and university officials.

8.3.2.2. Workshops and webinars for academic and public engagement.
8.3.2.3. Utilization of social media and online platforms for broader public outreach.

9. Risk Identification and Mitigation

9.1. Technological:
9.1.1. Risks: Issues with data collection and analysis tools, cybersecurity threats.
9.1.2. Mitigations:
9.1.2.1. Regular software updates and security audits.
9.1.2.2. Backup systems for data storage and recovery.
9.2. Data Quality:
9.2.1. Risks: Inaccurate or incomplete data collection, biases in survey responses.
9.2.2. Mitigations:
9.2.2.1. Rigorous data validation and cross-verification processes.
9.2.2.2. Pre-testing of survey instruments for bias detection.
9.3. Operational:
9.3.1. Risks: Delays in project milestones and staffing challenges.
9.3.2. Mitigations:
9.3.2.1. Agile project management to accommodate changes and delays.
9.3.2.2. Continuous monitoring and reallocation of resources as needed.
9.4. Stakeholder:
9.4.1. Risks: Changing stakeholder needs or priorities, need for more engagement.
9.4.2. Mitigations:
9.4.2.1. Ongoing communication and feedback mechanisms with stakeholders.
9.4.2.2. Flexibility to adapt project outputs to stakeholder needs.
9.5. External:
9.5.1. Risks: Regulatory changes, shifts in the political climate.
9.5.2. Mitigations:
9.5.2.1. Staying informed on regulatory and political developments.
9.5.2.2. Scenario planning for potential external disruptions.

9.6. Political and Ethical Sensitivity:
9.6.1. Risks: "Potential political biases in data interpretation and ethical concerns in handling sensitive content."
9.6.2. Mitigations: "Establish an ethics review board and include a political analyst in the team for periodic assessments."

10. Procurement Strategy and Management

10.1. Objective: To acquire necessary resources efficiently while ensuring quality and cost-effectiveness.
10.1.1. Approach:
10.1.1.1. Identification of procurement needs aligned with project phases.
10.1.1.2. Analysis of market options and potential suppliers.
10.1.1.3. Establishment of procurement timelines in sync with project schedule.
10.1.2. Vendor Selection Criteria:
10.1.2.1. Quality of Service/Product: Vendor's track record for quality and reliability.
10.1.2.2. Cost-Effectiveness: Competitive pricing and value for money.
10.1.2.3. Timeliness and Reliability: Ability to deliver within project timelines.
10.1.2.4. Compliance: Adherence to legal and ethical standards.
10.1.2.5. Vendor Reputation: Historical performance and client feedback.

11. Project Governance Structure

11.1. Project Board:
11.1.1. Comprises Washington University, TRIADS, and the Carnegie Corporation senior stakeholders. Responsible for overall project direction and decision-making.
11.1.1.1. Provide strategic oversight and resources.
11.1.1.2. Approve significant project milestones and change requests.
11.2. Project Manager:
11.2.1. Leads the project team and is responsible for daily management, coordination, and implementation of the project plan.
11.2.1.1. Coordinate all project activities.
11.2.1.2. Manage team and resources.

11.2.1.3. Communicate with stakeholders.
11.2.1.4. Monitor project progress and address issues.

11.3. Research Team:

11.3.1. Data analysts, survey designers, and administrative staff are responsible for executing specific project components.

11.3.1.1. Collect and analyze data.
11.3.1.2. Develop and administer surveys.
11.3.1.3. Prepare reports and publications.

12. Performance Measurement

12.1. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):

12.1.1. Timeline Adherence: Meeting project milestones and deadlines.
12.1.2. Budget Compliance: Staying within the allocated budget, tracked via cost performance index.
12.1.3. Data Quality and Integrity: Accuracy and completeness of collected and analyzed data.
12.1.4. Stakeholder Satisfaction: Measured through regular feedback and surveys.
12.1.5. Publication and Dissemination Impact: Number and reach of publications and presentations.

12.2. Monitoring and Reporting Mechanisms:

12.2.1. Progress Tracking: Regular status reports and dashboard updates.
12.2.2. Performance Reviews: Periodic reviews of project progress against KPIs.
12.2.3. Stakeholder Meetings: Regular meetings to report on progress and gather feedback.
12.2.4. Audit and Evaluation: End-of-project evaluation to assess overall performance and lessons learned.
12.2.5. Implement a feedback mechanism where team members, stakeholders, and external experts can provide input on the project's direction and methods.

13. Conclusion and Next Steps

13.1. This plan outlines a structured and strategic approach to analyzing populist rhetoric in global democracies. The following steps include finalizing the project charter, assembling the research team, and initiating the data collection phase. This plan, aligning with PMBOK (7th edition)

principles, ensures a balanced focus on project outcomes, stakeholder engagement, and adaptability to changing project dynamics.