

The Donations of Harvard-Employed Individuals to 2020 Presidential Campaigns

Abstract: Elizabeth Warren receives the most financial support among Harvard-employed individuals by all measures. Individuals with ties to Harvard such as Seth Moulton have disproportionate success in this demographic. Employees of the Business School donate the most political dollars of the graduate schools. Being an educator employed at Harvard as opposed to a different profession predicts larger donations, as does donating to a more conservative candidate. Finally, larger campaigns generally receive small donations but have a greater number of donors within this demographic.

Question, Data, Future Research:

This project investigates how individuals employed by Harvard University donate political dollars to 2020 presidential campaigns. It looks at how factors like employer, occupation, candidate ideology, and general campaign size impacts donation size and recipient within this demographic.

Specific donation data along with general campaign data (overall size, party affiliation) was retrieved from Federal Election Committee's website. Ideology scores were retrieved from Kevin Reuning, an author on DataForProgress.org.

The following four sections present the results and discussion of the different analyses run on the data.

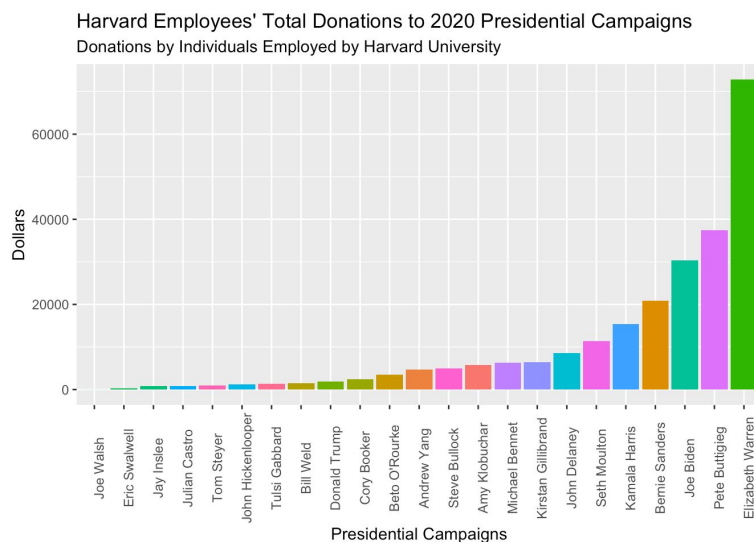
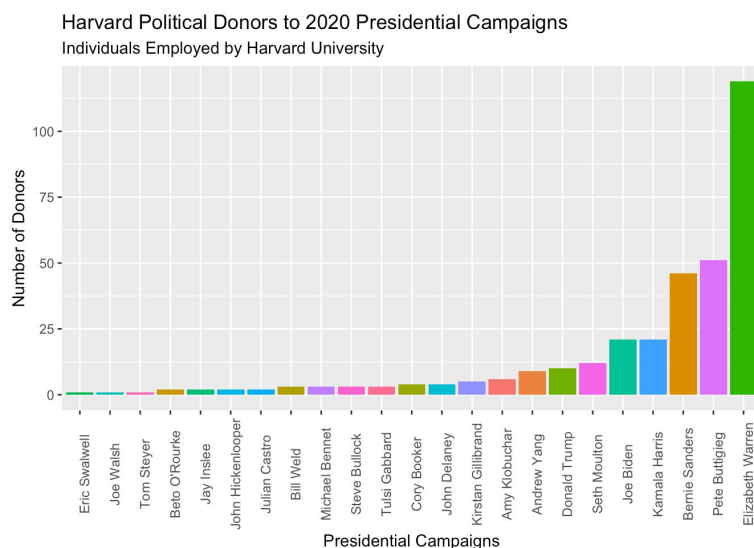
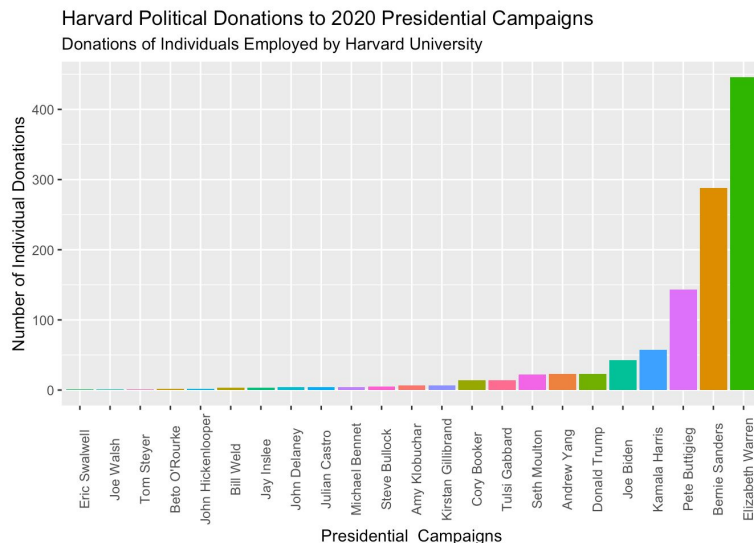
This study should be replicated in a year as the 2020 election comes to a close and there are more donations to analyze. Future studies should also incorporate a discussion of PAC money.

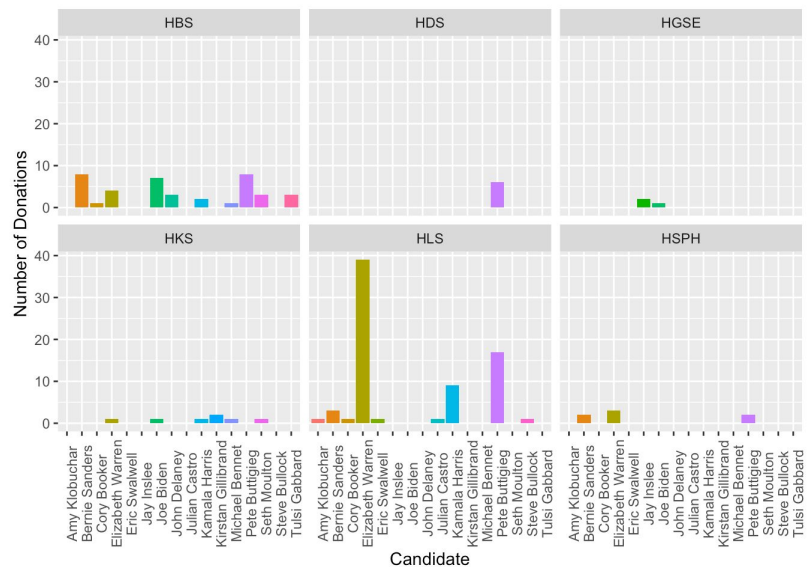
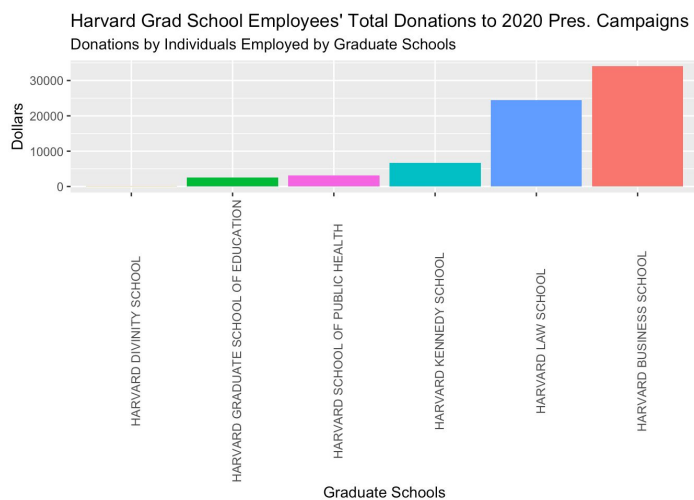
Donation Analysis

All three of the primary measures of determining who has the most support from Harvard-employed donors show Elizabeth Warren in the lead.

The first graph displays the number of individual donations, the second graph displays the number of unique donors, and the third graph visualizes the total sum.

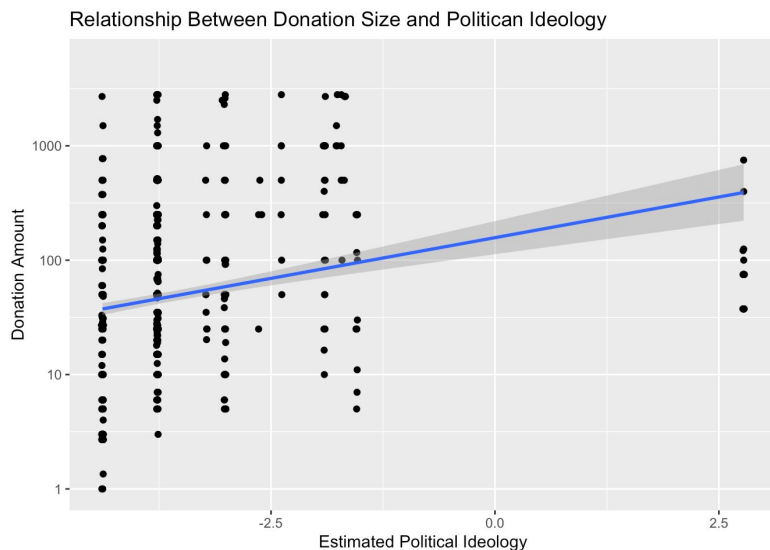
Despite not being a frontrunner nationwide, Seth Moulton, Harvard graduate, hovers around sixth place in each of these graphics. This along with Elizabeth Warren and Pete Buttigieg leading the pack suggests that individuals from the Harvard community are more likely than the average donor to give to candidates with a connection to Harvard.





Graduate School Analysis

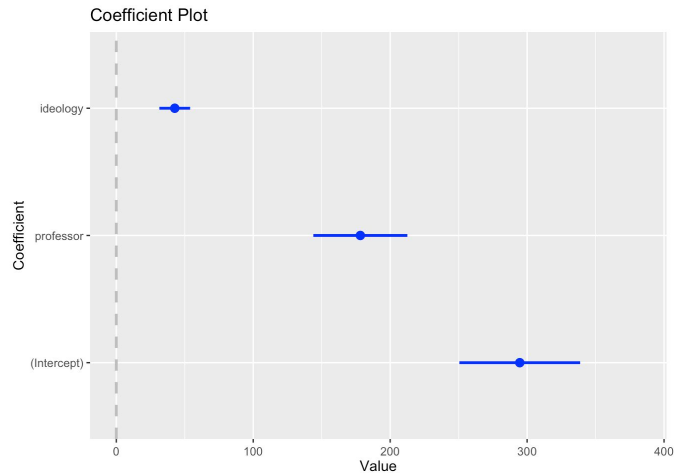
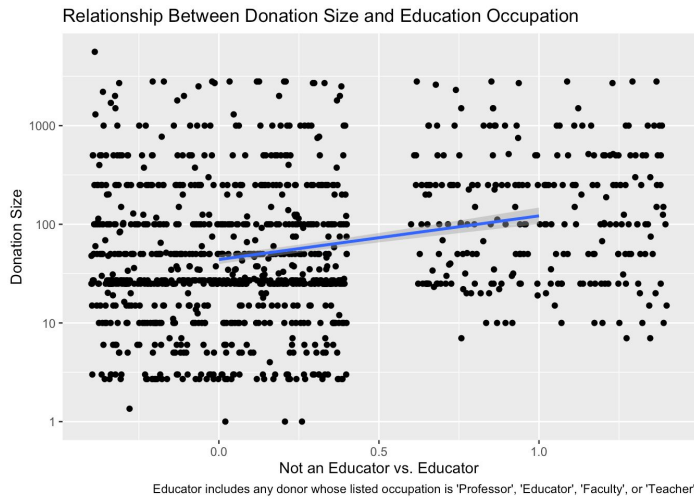
When looking at the aggregate dollars the donors from each school raised, the Business School leads, followed by the Law School and the Kennedy School. The faceted bar charts visualize which candidates their support is concentrated in.



Variable Analysis

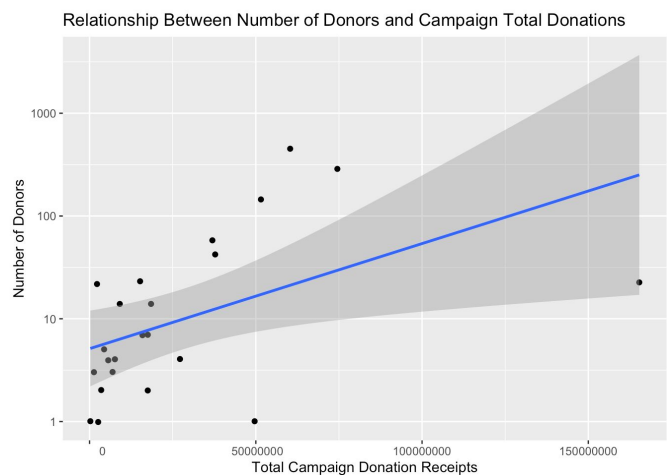
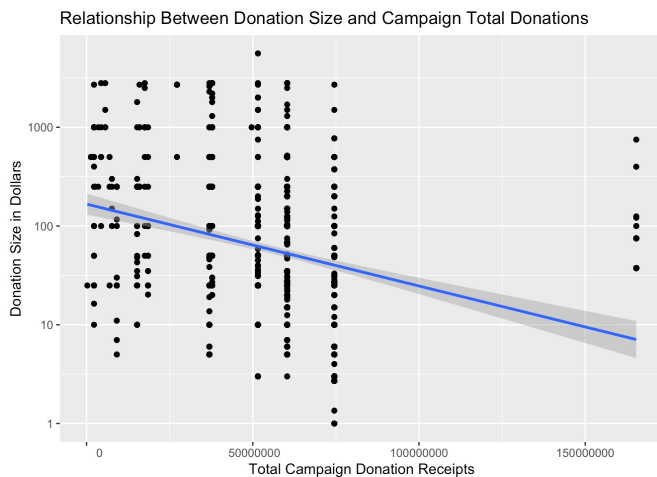
There is a positive correlation between ideology score and donation size. The ideology scores range from -7 to 7, with 7 being more conservative. Therefore, more conservative candidates typically bring in larger donations. Note that the original set of ideology scores lack scores for Buttigieg, Biden, Yang, Steyer, and others, as the study used did not have values for them. I added my own ideology scores for four of the candidates who lacked a score based on their current campaign platforms, relative to the

existing scores. Because they are estimations, this graphic should be taken with a grain of salt. That said, the positive correlation exists both with and without the four estimates.



There is a positive correlation between being an educator (having an occupation listed as 'faculty', 'teacher', 'educator', or 'professor') and the size of the donation.

The coefficient plot demonstrates that, when holding constant the candidate's political ideology, educators are expected to donate almost \$200 more than non-educators in a single donation. When holding constant occupation, there is around a \$50 increase expected with each additional point in the conservative direction of ideology score.



General Population Comparisons

There is a negative correlation between overall campaign size (the sum of the donations a campaign has accrued since inception) and the donation size of Harvard employees. In other words, candidates with smaller campaigns receive larger donations from Harvard-employed individuals. There is a positive correlation between overall campaign size and the number of Harvard-employed donors.

References:

Kevin Reuning (2019). *Perceptions of Candidate Ideology*. DataForProgress.

url: <https://www.dataforprogress.org/blog/2019/7/4/perceptions-of-candidate-ideology>

Individual Contributions Federal Election Committee (2019)

url: https://www.fec.gov/data/receipts/individual-contributions/?recipient_committee_type=P&contributor_employer=harvard&min_date=01%2F01%2F2017