



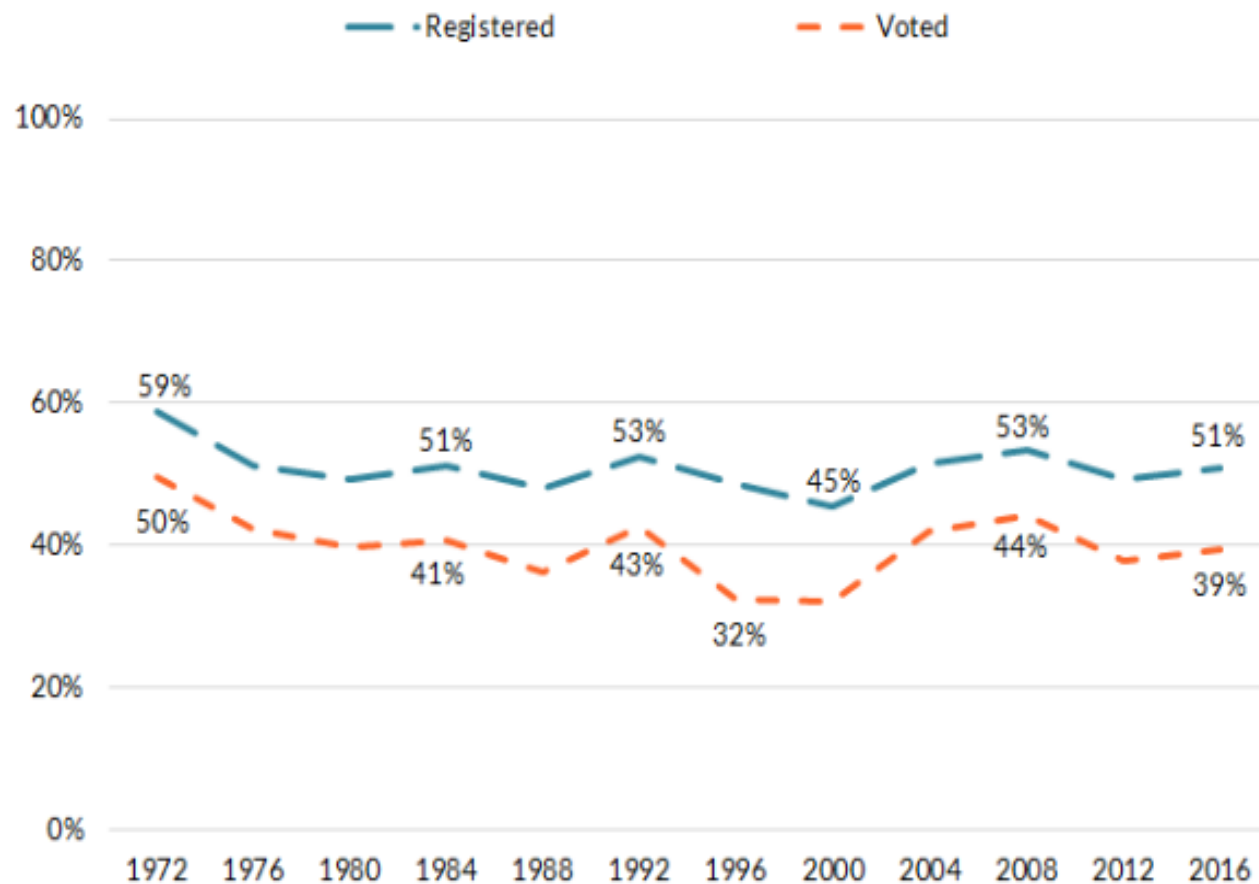
Voting Habits of College Age Students

JONATHAN ACEVEDO

Introduction

- ▶ There has been low youth voters in past elections
- ▶ Attempting to understand youth voting habits enables us to remedy the issue
- ▶ The greatest jump in youth voter turnout was in 2008
 - ▶ But has since declined

Percentage of Young Adults (Ages 18-24) Who Reported Registering to Vote and Voting in Presidential Elections: 1972-2016



Source: U.S. Census Bureau. (2018). Historical reported voting rates [Table A-1]. Retrieved from <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/voting-and-registration/voting-historical-time-series.html>.

Abstract

- ▶ The importance of voting in the American governmental process is often stated and emphasized in the populace. However, past trends have shown that voting is mainly undertaken by older demographics and neglected by younger voters. I therefore hypothesize that in the current political climate, young voters in a liberal arts university will participate more than previous generations yet still less than older voters. With the current highly charged political climate, current pandemic, and access to information, a greater amount of the populace may be more inclined to participate in electoral processes, yet older voters will still likely dominate political participation.

Importance of Young Voters

- ▶ Young voters from ages 18-29 account for 22% of voter population
- ▶ Highly diverse subgroup
- ▶ Politics effect lives and should have every vote count
- ▶ Youth vote can sway elections
 - ▶ Obama won 67% of the youth vote in 2012



Research Question

- ▶ What percentage of college students at a Liberal Arts University plan to participate in the 2020 presidential election?



Theoretical Framework

- ▶ Hypothesis – Young voters (18-29) will not vote at the same rate when compared with older voters (30-49 and 50+)
- ▶ If the past voting trends continue, young voters will continue to vote more often than in previous years
 - ▶ The age of social media has created access and interest in young voters

Methodology/Research Design

- ▶ Surveyed a random group of 100 students that attend PLU
- ▶ Utilized google drive forms and composed 7 relevant questions
 - ▶ 1 - Have you voted in a presidential election in the past?
 - ▶ 2 - Do you plan on voting in the next election?
 - ▶ 3 - Why or why not?
 - ▶ 4 - What year are you?
 - ▶ 5 - What Political party do you align with?
 - ▶ 6 - How would you rate your political knowledge on a scale 1-10?
 - ▶ 7 – What is your age category? (18-24, 25-29, 30,49, 59+)
- ▶ To see if a student populace intended to vote in the 2020 presidential election and compare rates with older voters from past elections

Age of voter



Participation of voting in
Presidential Election

Literature On the Subject

- ▶ Voting habits have been seen to be influenced by numerous factors such as gender, race and age (Hersh and Ansolabehere 2013)
- ▶ Young voters have experienced diminishing trust in politics (Shea 2015)
 - ▶ In 2014 only 28% of Americans trusted in congress
 - ▶ Executive Branch 43%
 - ▶ Judicial Branch 61%
- ▶ Young voters are more apt to the political climate than previous generations (Borah 2019)
- ▶ Scholars have found that young voters have less political involvement than older voters and therefore participate in voting at a less rate (Burke, 2015)
 - ▶ 49% (18-29) vs 71% (30-64) and 83% (65+) in 2012

Discussion of Data/Analysis

- ▶ Older voters are more likely to participate in the electoral process
 - ▶ Older voters utilize more political power
 - ▶ Controls the political landscape
 - ▶ Highly active in politics
- ▶ Young voters have seen increased interest in politics
 - ▶ Greatest cause of apathy towards politics from lack of interest and trust
 - ▶ Youth turnout could dramatically shift political landscape
 - ▶ Other factors such as gender and race play a role
 - ▶ Social media platforms creates more access to information
- ▶ Understanding how and why young voters participate less
 - ▶ Social media, mainstream news, and political coverage contribute greatly
 - ▶ Lack of availability, lack of political choices, and lack of political intrigue
 - ▶ Other priorities such as school, work, sports etc.

Conclusion and Implications

- ▶ Takeaway factors
 - ▶ Young voters are more informed
 - ▶ More likely to vote than in previous years
 - ▶ More informed and politically active than past generations
 - ▶ Contributes 22% of the voting population
- ▶ Importance of youth voting
 - ▶ Diversity
 - ▶ Greater pool of cultures in young communities
 - ▶ More political power to vote for their communities
- ▶ Future Elections
 - ▶ Further educate young people on politics
 - ▶ Encourage participation of voting