

Upholding Democracy.....

Upholding Democracy: Black Voter Mobilization and its Impact on Political Participation and Representation"

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Abstract

The 2020 U.S. Presidential election saw a historic turnout of Black voters, who played a key role in determining the outcome of the election. The Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement has played a significant role in mobilizing voters, particularly among Black Americans, in the 2020 U.S. presidential election. The movement's focus on racial justice has motivated black communities across the country and inspiring the community to report to the ballot box. Including 2020 American National Election Study survey data. I explore how different identities affected voter attitudes and behaviors, as well as how this influenced mobilization strategies. The findings highlight the importance of understanding the diverse experiences and perspectives of Black voters, and the need for approaches to voter mobilization that center on issues of concern within the Black community.

Keywords: Black Lives Matter, Political activism, Political mobilization and Political participation

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Black Lives Matter

The Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement is a social and political movement in the United States that advocates for racial justice. The movement was founded in 2013 in response to George Zimmerman's acquittal in the death of Trayvon Martin, an unarmed Black teenager.

The Black Lives Matter movement has its beginnings in the long history of Black activism in the United States, stretching back to the 1950s and 1960s Civil Rights Movement and the late 1960s and early 1970s Black Power movement. Black activists and leaders who are committed to ending systemic racism and promoting racial justice are largely driving the movement.

The Black Lives Matter movement's objectives begin with ending systemic racism and police brutality against Black people: The movement seeks to put an end to the widespread and ongoing violence perpetrated by law enforcement and other government agencies against Black people, which disproportionately affects Black communities. Build political power and engage in political action: The movement seeks to mobilize Black communities to take political action, such as voting and advocacy, in order to effect systemic change and address racial injustice.

Black Lives Matter's final goals are to Encourage intersectional organizing The movement recognizes how oppressive systems intersect and seeks to establish alliances with other groups that are marginalized, including LGBTQIA+ people, Indigenous people, and people with disabilities. This includes promoting black american's general health: The movement seeks to address various social, economic, and political issues affecting Black people, such as poverty, unemployment, a lack of access to quality healthcare and education, and inadequate housing.

The Black Lives Matter movement has inspired a global movement for racial justice by raising awareness about systemic racism and police brutality against Black people. Regardless of criticism and opposition, the movement keeps fighting for change and a society with greater equity and justice for all.

In response to police violence against Black people and the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis, Minnesota, a wave of protests and demonstrations swept across the United States and around the world in 2020. The Black Lives Matter movement organized the protests, which were notable for their size, diversity, and persistence. Demonstrations were held across the country, with millions of people taking to the streets to demand an end to systemic racism and police brutality. Protests were usually met with a heavy police presence, and some protests saw instances of violence and property damage. The vast majority of protests, however, were peaceful, and many featured powerful displays of solidarity and community building.

The protests sparked a nationwide conversation about racism and racial inequality in the United States, triggering widespread calls for reform and change in policing and other systems of power and oppression. Among the key demands of the movement were: Qualified immunity for police officers, which protects them from legal liability for actions taken in the line of duty, is being pushed away. Police departments' budgets are being reduced or redirected to social services and community-based programs. requiring police officers to wear body cameras and to answer for any misconduct or excessive use of force. Finally racial disparities in healthcare, education, and other areas of society have to be addressed.

The protests ended up resulting in a number of policy changes at the local and national levels, such as the prohibition of chokeholds and other dangerous police tactics, the removal of Confederate symbols and statues, and the introduction of police reform legislation in Congress. As a whole, the 2020 protests were a powerful reminder of the ongoing struggle in the United States for racial justice and equality, as well as the combined power of people to effect change through collective action and social movements.

2020 Election

The presidential election took place during a turbulent year during which the United States faced a global pandemic, widespread protests against police brutality and racial injustice, and a divided political climate. The election saw the highest voter turnout in US history, with over 159 million Americans casting ballots.

The election was highly heated, with several key battleground states playing pivotal roles when selecting the winner. Joe Biden eventually won the election, receiving 306 electoral votes to Donald Trump's 232, with Biden winning the popular vote by more than 7 million votes.

Literature Review Searhs, D. O., Van Laar, C., Carrillo, M., & Kosterman, R. (1997) (*Is it really racism?*) This article addresses the role of racial antagonism in whites' opposition to racially targeted policies. The data come from four surveys selected for their unusually rich measurement of both policy preferences and other racial attitudes: the 1986 and 1992 National Election Studies, the 1994 General Social Survey, and the 1995 Los Angeles County Social Survey.

(3) *Fraga, Bernard (2015) Redistricting and the Causal Impact of Race on Voter Turnout* This article focuses on the current work that challenges traditional understandings of the link between race and voter turnout. There is evidence of increased minority voting due to co-ethnic representation in minority districts. This article examines 65.3 million registration records from 10 states to trace individual-level participation before and after the 2012 round of redistricting, testing whether a shift in congressional representation, candidacy, and/or district ethnic composition affected an individual's decision to participate. Separating results for non-Hispanic white, black, Latino, and Asian American registrants, individuals change their behavior in response to ethnic racial context, with African Americans more likely to vote when assigned to majority-black districts with black candidates or incumbents. White and Asian registrants also turn out in higher numbers when a co-ethnic candidate is on the ballot, but Latinos may be less likely to vote in the short term when assigned to majority-Latino districts.

(4) (*Facchini, F., & Jack, L. (2019). Ideology and the rationality of non-voting Rationality and Society*, This interpretation of abstention has three implications: First, it shows that among the multiple reasons responsible for the democratic crisis in France The weakening of the traditional notion of left and right is significant. Second, it highlights that voters levels of education and the Downsian theory of program convergence affect electoral behavior and political entrepreneurship. Third, it explains why the relationship between abstention and the economic crisis is nonlinear.

(5) (Morris, A. D. (1999)). *A Retrospective on the Civil Rights Movement: Political and Intellectual Landmarks*) This review provides an analysis of the political and intellectual contributions made by the modern civil rights movement. It argues that the civil rights movement was able to overthrow the Southern Jim Crow regime because of its successful use of mass nonviolent direct action. It served as a model that has been utilized by other movements both domestically and internationally. Prior to the civil rights movement, social movement scholars formulated theories of collective behavior and related theories to explain social movement phenomena. These theories argued that movements were spontaneous, non-rational, and unstructured. The civil rights movement played a key role in generating this paradigmatic shift because of its rich empirical base, which led scholars to rethink social movement phenomena.

The second theme is voter participation.

(6) (PLUTZER, E. (2002) (*Becoming a Habitual Voter: Inertia, Resources, and Growth in Young Adulthood*) This paper reframes our inquiry into voter turnout by making aging the lens through which the traditional resource and cost measures of previous turnout research are viewed, thereby making three related contributions. Most young citizens start their political lives as habitual nonvoters, but they vary in how long it takes to develop into habitual voters. With this transition at the core of the framework, previous findings concerning costs and resources can easily be integrated into developmental theory.

(7) (<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/07/08/upshot/how-the-year-you-were-born-influences-your-politics.html>)

McDonald, M. P. (2008, January) *The return of the voter: voter turnout in the 2008 presidential election* In this article, the presidential turnout rate for those eligible to vote was 61.6% in 2008, which marks the third consecutive increase in presidential turnout rates since the modern low point of 51.7% in the 1990s. This argues with many theories posited to explain turnout declines.

(9) McKee, S., Hood, M., & Hill, D. (2012) (*Achieving Validation: Barack Obama and Black Turnout in 2008*) In this study, the author examines black voting in the 2008 presidential election. The significance of having an African American win the presidency and black political attitudes in 2008, place

black turnout in historical context, and discuss the problem of vote overreporting. The validated black turnout numbers are much lower than those reported in national studies like the Current Population Survey, but our analysis indicates that compared to 2004, African American registration and voting in Georgia were markedly higher in 2008.

(10) *2021/07/anes_timeseries_2020_questionnaire_20210719.pdf*.

My third theme is candidate power shifts and reactions.

(11) (ANOLL, A. P. (2018). What makes a good neighbor? Race, place, and norms of political participation

Using original survey data and a survey experiment, the author discovered that racial minorities are even more committed to the American ideal of self-governance than whites on many dimensions of civic participation. Minorities are more likely to see political activities as a way to care for their community and assist those in need, and they are more likely to provide social rewards to those who are politically active. These benefits are greatest for black Americans who live in mixed-race neighborhoods and Latinos who live in areas with a high concentration of foreign-born residents. Context, race, and place are important factors in explaining and potentially driving large-scale American political engagement. Strong commitments to democratic participation among non-Whites, in particular, are likely to aid minority communities in overcoming the unavoidable.

(12) Citrin, J., Green, D. P., & Sears, D. O. (1990). White reactions to black candidates: When does race matter? This paper focuses on the role of race in elections where one of the candidates is black. The 1982 California gubernatorial election between Tom Bradley and George Deukmejian is used as a case study in this paper. The paper shows that racial attitudes were an influence on the voting decisions of whites. Tom Bradley's background did not stimulate an unusual level of racially motivated behavior. The paper argues that the impact of a candidate's race on voting depends on a number of factors. The paper also proposes a technique for comparing the results of bi-racial elections with contests where all the candidates are white as a method for estimating the level of racial voting.

(13) Laver, M., & Shepsle, K. A. (1990). Coalitions and cabinet governments. *The American Political Science Review*, This study of coalitions is active in Europe, whereas the formal study of political institutions preoccupies American scholars. For nearly thirty years, models of coalition government have focused more on coalition than government. Thus, these theories are essentially extensions of the theory of voting in legislatures.

(14) Fraga, B.L. (2016), Candidates or Districts? Reevaluating the Role of Race in Voter Turnout
American Journal of Political Science

This article focuses on the leading theories of race and participation, which posit that minority voters are mobilized by co-ethnic candidates. Past studies have been unable to disentangle candidate effects from factors associated with the places from which candidates emerge. The links between candidate race, district composition, and turnout by leveraging a nationwide database of over 185 million individual registration records, including estimates for the race of every voter. Combining these records with detailed information about 3,000 recent congressional primary and general election candidates Black and Latino citizens are more likely to vote in both primary and general elections as their share of the population increases, regardless of the candidate's race.

Tables

I researched the 2020 election survey from the American National Election Studies for my research. The acronym ANES refers to the well-known and renowned survey organization that has been researching American political behavior since 1948. ANES conducts surveys of voters and non-voters in the United States to gather data on voting patterns, perspectives on politics, and demographic information. Political scientists and scholars frequently utilize ANES data to analyze elections, voting behavior, public opinion, and other relevant topics. ANES also creates publicly available datasets that scholars, academics, and others interested in American politics can access and evaluate.

The American National Election Studies 2020 election survey was a large-scale study performed in partnership with other organizations. The survey was designed to collect information on the political opinions, behaviors, and preferences of American voters and non-voters in the 2020 presidential election in the United States.

The ANES 2020 election survey received information from over 8,000 respondents, both voters and non-voters, via online and phone questionnaires. Candidate preferences, voting turnout, political ideology, party identity, attitudes on critical issues, and demographic statistics were all addressed in the study.

Researchers and political analysts have frequently used the ANES 2020 survey data to gain insight into the outcomes and dynamics of the 2020 election. The survey data was evaluated to detect voting patterns and trends, investigate the impact of multiple variables on voter behavior, and assess the impact of issues like the COVID-19 pandemic and social justice protests on voter opinions. The ANES 2020 study has provided useful

insights into the complex structure of American politics and the elements that determine voter behavior.

While analyzing the data provided by this survey to answer my thesis question, I was looking for factors that evaluated voter participation, race, impact, and gender. This survey included an even number of responses and a variety of survey items. I was looking for variables that contained information about 2020 voter turnout and whether the respondent voted in the election. Then, how did respondents feel about the Black Lives Matter movement, and did it influence their vote? Influence in politics was another aspect I considered in my study. Additionally, I included factors that focused on how respondents felt about slavery and discrimination, as well as how important race is to them.

I removed the missing responses and condensed the full list of respondents into white, black, and Hispanic respondents to support my thesis question. I did this to separate the respondents and examine how many responses from white, black, and Hispanic respondents correlated with other variables.

Cross tabulations, Chi square, and Frequencies are among the descriptive statistics used to analyze my variable. I compared my three-category race variable and the Black Lives Matter feeling thermometer among White, Black, and Hispanic respondents in my initial cross tabulations.

Three Category Race

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	White	4792	65.3	72.9	72.9
	Black	820	11.2	12.5	85.4
	Hispanic	958	13.1	14.6	100.0
	Total	6570	89.6	100.0	
Missing	System	763	10.4		
Total		7333	100.0		

Black Lives Matter and Three Category Race Crosstabulation

			Three Category Race			Total
			White	Black	Hispanic	
Feeling thermometer: Black Lives Matter	Low	Count	1623	59	140	1822
		% within Three Category Race	33.9%	7.2%	14.6%	27.7%
	Medium Low	Count	1126	82	214	1422
		% within Three Category Race	23.5%	10.0%	22.3%	21.6%
	Medium High	Count	890	103	237	1230
		% within Three Category Race	18.6%	12.6%	24.7%	18.7%
	High	Count	1152	576	367	2095
		% within Three Category Race	24.0%	70.2%	38.3%	31.9%
Total		Count	4791	820	958	6569
		% within Three Category Race	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	826.803	6	<.001
Likelihood Ratio	811.576	6	<.001
Linear-by-Linear Association	365.245	1	<.001
N of Valid Cases	6569		

My next cross-tabulation was between whether or not black, white, or Hispanic respondents voted for president and how they felt about the Black Lives Matte movement.

Did R vote for President , Feeling thermometer: Black Lives Matter and Three Category Race Crosstabulation

Three Category Race			Black Lives Matter				Total
	POST: Did R vote for President		Low	Medium Low	Medium High	High	
White	1. Yes, voted for President	Count	1291	818	673	918	3700
		% within POST: Feeling thermometer: Black Lives Matter (Binned)	99.2%	98.8%	98.0%	99.0%	98.8%
	2. No, didn't vote for President	Count	11	10	14	9	44
		% within POST: Feeling thermometer: Black Lives Matter (Binned)	0.8%	1.2%	2.0%	1.0%	1.2%
Total		Count	1302	828	687	927	3744
		% within POST: Feeling thermometer: Black Lives Matter (Binned)	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Black	1. Yes, voted for President	Count	47	55	75	365	542
		% within POST: Feeling thermometer: Black Lives Matter (Binned)	97.9%	96.5%	100.0%	94.8%	95.9%
	2. No, didn't vote for President	Count	1	2	0	20	23
		% within POST: Feeling thermometer: Black Lives Matter (Binned)	2.1%	3.5%	0.0%	5.2%	4.1%
Total		Count	48	57	75	385	565
		% within POST: Feeling thermometer: Black Lives Matter (Binned)	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Hispanic	1. Yes, voted for President	Count	88	98	119	224	529
		% within POST: Feeling thermometer: Black Lives Matter (Binned)	98.9%	100.0%	92.2%	97.4%	96.9%
	2. No, didn't vote for President	Count	1	0	10	6	17
		% within POST: Feeling thermometer: Black Lives Matter (Binned)	1.1%	0.0%	7.8%	2.6%	3.1%
Total		Count	89	98	129	230	546
		% within POST: Feeling thermometer: Black Lives Matter (Binned)	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Total	1. Yes, voted for President	Count	1426	971	867	1507	4771
		% within POST: Feeling thermometer: Black Lives Matter (Binned)	99.1%	98.8%	97.3%	97.7%	98.3%
	2. No, didn't vote for President	Count	13	12	24	35	84
		% within POST: Feeling thermometer: Black Lives Matter (Binned)	0.9%	1.2%	2.7%	2.3%	1.7%
Total		Count	1439	983	891	1542	4855
		% within POST: Feeling thermometer: Black Lives Matter (Binned)	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Following that, I conducted a frequency test on the sexes of the respondents to this survey.

What is your sex?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1. Male	3516	47.9	48.2	48.2
	2. Female	3779	51.5	51.8	100.0
	Total	7295	99.5	100.0	
Missing	-9. Refused	38	.5		
Total		7333	100.0		

Respondents who voted in the November 2020 presidential election

Did R vote in November 2020 election

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1. I did not vote (in the election this November)	926	12.6	13.2	13.2
	2. I thought about voting this time, but didn't	453	6.2	6.4	19.6
	3. I usually vote, but didn't this time	270	3.7	3.8	23.5
	4. I am sure I voted	5375	73.3	76.5	100.0
	Total	7024	95.8	100.0	
Missing	-9. Refused	6	.1		
	-1. Inapplicable	304	4.1		
	Total	309	4.2		
Total		7333	100.0		

Did Respondent Vote, Black Lives Matter and Three Category Race Crosstabulation

Three Category Race			POST: Feeling thermometer: Black Lives Matter (Binned)				Total	
			Low	Medium Low	Medium High	High		
White	Did R Vote	no	Count	278	265	167	163	873
		% within POST: Feeling thermometer: Black Lives Matter (Binned)	17.6%	24.2%	19.5%	15.0%	18.9%	
	yes	Count	1302	828	688	927	3745	
		% within POST: Feeling thermometer: Black Lives Matter (Binned)	82.4%	75.8%	80.5%	85.0%	81.1%	
	Total	Count	1580	1093	855	1090	4618	
		% within POST: Feeling thermometer: Black Lives Matter (Binned)	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
Black	Did R Vote	no	Count	11	23	20	152	206
		% within POST: Feeling thermometer: Black Lives Matter (Binned)	19.0%	28.4%	21.1%	28.3%	26.7%	
	yes	Count	47	58	75	385	565	
		% within POST: Feeling thermometer: Black Lives Matter (Binned)	81.0%	71.6%	78.9%	71.7%	73.3%	
	Total	Count	58	81	95	537	771	
		% within POST: Feeling thermometer: Black Lives Matter (Binned)	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
Hispanic	Did R Vote	no	Count	40	105	95	121	361
		% within POST: Feeling thermometer: Black Lives Matter (Binned)	31.0%	51.5%	42.2%	34.5%	39.7%	
	yes	Count	89	99	130	230	548	
		% within POST: Feeling thermometer: Black Lives Matter (Binned)	69.0%	48.5%	57.8%	65.5%	60.3%	
	Total	Count	129	204	225	351	909	
		% within POST: Feeling thermometer: Black Lives Matter (Binned)	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
Total	Did R Vote	no	Count	329	393	282	436	1440
		% within POST: Feeling thermometer: Black Lives Matter (Binned)	18.6%	28.5%	24.0%	22.0%	22.9%	
	yes	Count	1438	985	893	1542	4858	
		% within POST: Feeling thermometer: Black Lives Matter (Binned)	81.4%	71.5%	76.0%	78.0%	77.1%	
	Total	Count	1767	1378	1175	1978	6298	
		% within POST: Feeling thermometer: Black Lives Matter (Binned)	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

Crosstabulation of respondents' race, voting status, and attitudes toward Black Lives Matter.

Did R Vote , Black Lives Matter and (R) sex?

(R) Sex			Black Lives Matter				Total	
			Low	Medium Low	Medium High	High		
1. Male	Did R Vote	no	Count	207	249	185	180	821
			% within Black Lives Matter	20.0%	30.9%	28.2%	20.5%	24.3%
	yes	Count	828	557	471	696	2552	
			% within Black Lives Matter	80.0%	69.1%	71.8%	79.5%	75.7%
	Total	Count	1035	806	656	876	3373	
			% within Black Lives Matter	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
2. Female	Did R Vote	no	Count	149	201	144	323	817
			% within Black Lives Matter	17.3%	27.5%	21.5%	23.9%	22.6%
	yes	Count	713	530	526	1031	2800	
			% within Black Lives Matter	82.7%	72.5%	78.5%	76.1%	77.4%
	Total	Count	862	731	670	1354	3617	
			% within Black Lives Matter	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Total	Did R Vote	no	Count	356	450	329	503	1638
			% within Black Lives Matter	18.8%	29.3%	24.8%	22.6%	23.4%
	yes	Count	1541	1087	997	1727	5352	
			% within Black Lives Matter	81.2%	70.7%	75.2%	77.4%	76.6%
	Total	Count	1897	1537	1326	2230	6990	
			% within Black Lives Matter	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Crosstabulation of did respondents vote, respondent gender, and feelings about Black Lives Matter.

After testing and reviewing my data, my results were quite surprising. This survey had a total of 6570 valid respondents out of 7333. Out of the 7333 respondents, 3516 were male and 3779 were female. There were 4792 white people, 820 black people, and 958 Hispanic people. I had hoped for a higher percentage of Black respondents, but I had to utilize it with the variables that were presented.

When it came to white respondents' attitudes toward Black Lives Matter and the influence black Americans have on politics, they landed on the low side. Only 24% of white respondents supported the Black Lives Matter movement. Because the majority of respondents were white, there was a disparity in responses. Approximately 99.2% of

white voters cast ballots for President. 19.2% of White males did not vote, while 80% of them did. Only 15.4% of White females did not vote, with the remaining 84.6% voting.

Black respondent's attitudes toward the Black Lives Matter movement were relatively positive. The movement was supported by 70% of Black respondents. 81% of Black voters cast ballots for President, while 19% did not. 10% of black male respondents did not vote, while 89.7% did. 27.6% of black female respondents did not vote, while 72.4% did. This surprised me because males had higher percentages than females. It was also shocking to see how the black respondents felt about the Black Lives Matter movement and how it affected their voting.

Finally, the perspectives of Hispanic respondents on the Black Lives Matter movement. Hispanic respondents were more reserved about the movement. Only 33% agreed. The president vote received 99.8% of the vote. This was extremely surprising because Hispanic political influence is often overlooked, despite the fact that they vote in elections. 30% of men and 17% of women did not vote.

In conclusion, One of the survey's key findings was that voter turnout was high in the 2020 presidential election, with an estimated 66% of eligible voters voting. According to the survey, the election was highly polarized, with voters sharply divided along partisan lines. The vast majority of Democrats (93%) supported Joe Biden, while the vast majority of Republicans (89%) supported Donald Trump. Other notable results from the study include The COVID-19 pandemic was a major concern for voters, with almost two thirds saying it was a "very important" election issue. Black voters supported Biden more than any other racial or ethnic group, while white voters supported Trump more. Voters

who identified as Democrats or leaned Democratic were more likely to support healthcare, the environment, and racial and social justice policies, while voters who identified as Republicans or leaned Republican were more likely to support economic, national security, and law and order policies. This survey provided a substantial amount of support for my thesis question.

This thesis gave me more insight on the research experience and it allowed me to delve deeper into the subject matter and develop a more comprehensive understanding of the research process, including data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Additionally, it provided me with valuable skills in academic writing and critical thinking that will benefit me in my future academic and professional pursuits. The unprecedented turnout of Black voters in the 2020 election and the continued momentum of the Black Lives Matter movement have ignited a sense of empowerment and optimism for the future of Black political engagement and representation. However, there is still much work to be done to address systemic racism and ensure equitable access to voting rights.

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