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Democracy at Stake: Which Media Outlets are harming Voter Turnout?

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DEMOCRACY AT STAKE: WHICH MEDIA OUTLETS ARE HARMING VOTER TURNOUT?

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Introduction:

A Review of the Literature

This Study will analyze the rudimentary and underlying reasons as how usage of certain kinds of Media outlets, in specific New Media outlets, are effecting the voter turnout rates in presidential elections.

- Studies point to the significance of citizens relying on Media outlets as their major source of finding political news.
- Recent research suggests higher New Media usage, such as cable, internet, and social media as a source of political news for everyday citizens
- The appearance of television and Internet has considerably weakened the overall political knowledge which has in result reduced education of politics and lowered voter turnout rates correspondingly.
- Media outlets may not be great for encouraging voter turnout rates, but it can be used as a platform for other forms of political participation.

Media outlets effect on Education

- Education is the number one factor in predicting voter turnout rates.
- Research has shown High usage of television and Internet results in an erroneous perception of political knowledge
- Certain Media outlets have an effect on the overall education level
- It is this weak political knowledge which typically results in people not voting

Hypotheses & Methods:

H1: Respondents using Old Media outlets (Radio, and Newspapers) over New Media outlets (Internet and Cable) as sources of political news will be more likely to vote.

H2: Respondents using New Media outlets, specifically Internet and television as sources of political news will be less likely to vote.

H3: Respondents using New Media will have higher corresponding education levels

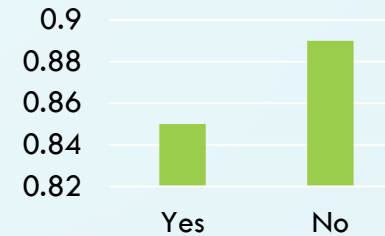
Using the 2012 NES database, I ran linear regressions and mean tests with key variable to aggregate the results.

Results:

Hypothesis 1's Linear Regression Model results confirmed my initial hypothesis. Older Media outlets tend to result in higher correlation to voting.

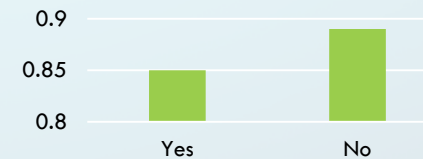
Coefficients ^a					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	1.013	.002	440.889	.000
	POST: How many radio speech/discussn abt Pres campaign	-.001	.001	-.014	.888
	POST: How many campaign programs on TV	-.003	.001	-.047	.2935
	POST: How often internet info about Pres campaign	.001	.001	.014	.855
	POST: How many stories abt Pres campaign in newspaper	-.2553E-5	.001	.000	-.027

Internet Users Voting in Presidential Election



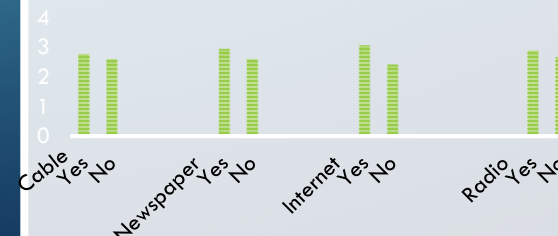
Hypothesis 2's compared mean test showed that there is slight negative correlation with Internet and Cable users, and their voting habits.

Cable Users Voting in Presidential Election



Hypothesis 3's results are inconclusive. If anything, all Media outlets correlated with higher level of educations

EDUCATION LEVELS



Conclusions:

Hypothesis 1:

- Old Media outlets are better at spurring voting turnout
- In specific, Newspapers are the best outlet with the highest significance, followed by closely by Radio
- Internet and Cable News were the worst outlets for encouraging voter turnout rate.

Hypothesis 2:

- New Media outlets did discourage overall voter turnout rates
- Internet User were 4% less likely to vote
- Cable Users were 2% less likely to vote
- Overall, the results confirmed my hypothesis, however the effect on voter turnout using New Media Outlets is very minimal

Hypothesis 3:

- Showed no conclusive data
- I wanted to prove certain usage of Media outlets can be detrimental to education, however the data proved my hypothesis wrong

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