



Voter's Choice Act:

VCA-LA Voting Experience & Voter
Mobilization and Outreach Strategies

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Presented by

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RESEARCH GOALS

Goal and Content:

- Conduct two focus groups in an area with a high share of Latino voters
- Learn about their experiences with the Mock Elections
- Focus on the new VCA-LA voting experience
- Explore issues that could inform voter mobilization and outreach strategies for the VCA elections



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

NALEO Educational Fund Conducted:

TWO FOCUS GROUPS

- Participants were recruited with the following traits:

Group 1: **Hispanic registered voters** who live in an **area with a high share of Latino voters**, as many as possible that **heard about or attended the Mock Elections**, voters who **vote by mail and at the polls**, session conducted in Spanish

Group 2: **Hispanic registered voters** who live in an **area with a high share of Latino voters**, as many as possible that **heard about or attended the Mock Elections**, voters who **vote by mail and at the polls**, session conducted in English

- 20 participants in two sessions:
 - English session and a Spanish session
 - Four were 18 – 39 in the Spanish session and six in the English session
 - Six were 40+ in the Spanish Session and four in the English Session
 - Live in different communities in Los Angeles County including:
 - Montebello (1)
 - South Gate (5)
 - South Central (3)
 - Huntington Park (2)
 - 10 Male and 10 Female evenly divided in each session



KEY FINDINGS – NEWS & INFORMATION

- Facebook as a source for news and information, Spanish and English television and more generally the internet
- On Facebook, participants visit traditional local and national news feeds, including KTLA 5, ABC and Telemundo
- Participants use their phone, mobile news apps and listen to the news on the radio
- Participants in both sessions were mixed about their trust or distrust of news and information sources
- Discussed the contradictory information they receive depending which source they see

"What you have to do is just compare and then you find out the truth from one particular news. Because sometimes they exaggerate it when they tell you. You see the news and you see something else and then you check your phone and you see something else."



KEY FINDINGS – CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Participants were involved in organizations and activities, primarily through their churches and the schools their children attend

"I am in a group in a church. I am there a lot. We do activities with kids and we go around the neighborhood and clean. It's to keep them involved."

"I do PTA's for my son's school so I volunteer a lot there."

Majority of participants in both sessions were not part of an online group(s) but some participants passively followed radio personalities to learn about events in their area and joined groups on Facebook that discuss topics that they cared about



KEY FINDINGS – VOTER REGISTRATION

The majority of participants were registered at the DMV or after their Naturalization ceremony

“I registered to vote when I became a citizen. I think everyone was registered that day.”



KEY FINDINGS – VOTING

- Participants stated they usually vote in a presidential election but don't vote in local or mid-term elections
- Reasons participants did not vote in previous election:
 - Poll hours not being convenient
 - Not feeling prepared
 - Not knowing enough about the candidates or elections
 - Being afraid of making a mistake

"Some of them I didn't do my homework. If you didn't do your homework why take the test. Cause, I was afraid, I don't know, I didn't want to go guess it. So I just didn't do it."

"When I got home from work it was closed. That is what I was saying, only when you have time when you have a chance. They close it [polls] earlier and you don't have time to make it."



KEY FINDINGS – VOTING CONTINUED

- Convenience was the main reason why some participants registered to vote by mail
- Participants registered to vote at a polling location did not trust their vote would count if they voted by mail
- Participants in both sessions thought all of the following features were important to have at their polling site:
 - Close to where you live
 - Good parking
 - Accessible to people with disabilities
 - Courteous and helpful poll workers
 - Can provide language assistance
 - Voting equipment that it is easy to use



KEY FINDINGS – MOCK ELECTIONS

- Only 5 participants heard about the Mock Elections and none attended
- Participants voiced a lack of clarity and confusion on the purpose of the Mock Election
- Those that heard about the Mock Election, heard it from:
 - Family members
 - News
 - School they attend or their children's school
- Participants heard that the experience was pleasant and the vote system was easy to use



KEY FINDINGS – VOTE CENTERS

- Participant concerns about Vote Centers:
 - Distance they would have to travel to a Vote Center
 - However, having extra days to vote and the ability to vote at any vote center could outweigh their concerns
 - Potential long lines and comparing it to having to wait at the DMV
 - Technology not working or potentially being hacked
- Participants registered to vote by mail did not see the benefit of voting at a Vote Center
 - Would consider dropping it off at one of the Vote Center locations
- Participants mentioned parking and adequate and courteous assistance as most important features to have in a Vote Center



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Outreach Considerations:
 - Use local television (KTLA 5, NBC 4), radio (KNX 1070) and national television (CNN, Telemundo, Univision)
 - Identify trusted messengers (family members, respected reporters, etc.) to help mitigate potential mistrust of the message
- Continued investment in voter registration drives at naturalization ceremonies
- Mobilization efforts that help mitigate information barriers that exist among Latino voters
 - Provide general information prior to a more traditional Get Out the Vote effort could help minimize some of the anxieties Latino voters face about voting
- Efforts to minimize misinformation about voting by mail might provide a viable option for Latino voters that currently distrust and find voting by mail unsafe but voting at the polls inconvenient
- Courteous and helpful poll workers, good parking, and Vote Centers located near their commute or near their work or home were the most important features
- Additional information about the Vote Center model and the new vote system being used, will be critical to the success of the implementation of the Voter's Choice Act



Thank you.

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