

Topic 1: Voter Turnout

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Key takeaways:

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1.1 Empirical Studies

1.1.1 Get-out-the-vote campaigns

Gerber and Green (2000)

Main hypothesis Personal canvassing mobilizes voters more effectively, decline in voter turn-out is related to decline in personal means of campaign.

Literature Some related works are

- collective action and prosocial behavior (blood donations, recycling, good deeds): Christensen et al. (1998), Wang and Katzev (1990), Spaccarelli et al. (1989), Reams and Ray (1993)
- voter turn-out and contact with political organizations/candidates:
 - Kramer (1970), Rosenstone and Hansen (1993). *Endogeneity issue*: political contact is not exogenous: it could be that those most likely to vote are also most likely to receive contact.
 - Adams and Smith (1980), Miller et al. (1981). *Small sample*: results are not statistically reliable

Empirical details This paper designed an experiment as in table 1.1, and

- $N = 29380$ (within 22077 households): randomize at HH level, analyze at individual level, NO clustering
- the baseline control group (no mail, no phone call, no in-person contact) is large ($N = 10800$), due to budget limit

Table 1.1: Experiment Design of Gerber and Green (2000)

		No. direct mailings sent				Total
		0	1	2	3	
No phone call	without in-person	10800	2406	2588	2375	18169
	with in-person	2686	519	625	627	4457
Phone call	without in-person	958	1451	1486	1522	5417
	with in-person	217	385	352	383	1337
Total		14661	4761	5051	4907	29380

results personal canvassing is very effective, while telephone and mail canvassing is limited.

Gerber, Green, and Larimer (2008)

Washington (2006)

1.2 Related Theories

References

- Alan S Gerber and Donald P Green. The effects of canvassing, telephone calls, and direct mail on voter turnout: A field experiment. *American political science review*, 94(3):653–663, 2000.
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- Ebonya Washington. How black candidates affect voter turnout. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 121(3): 973–998, 2006.