Connecting Candidates to Citizens

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The project on which this presentation is based was completed in collaboration with Ramsey County as part of the 2018–2019 Resilient Communities Project (RCP) partnership. RCP is a program at the University of Minnesota's Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) that connects University faculty and students with Minnesota communities to address strategic projects that advance local resilience and sustainability.

The contents of this report represent the views of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect those of RCP, CURA, the Regents of the University of Minnesota, or Ramsey County.

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Challenges

- ➢ Many potential voters feel disconnected from representatives
  - ○ Especially high among Asian and African American
- ➢ Garnering enthusiasm among voters who are indifferent to their options is hard
- ➢ Spreading out campaign visits and holding panels may help voters feel like they matter

Findings: Survey

- ➢ Higher correlation in African and Asian-Americans when asked whether lack of contact with campaigns caused people not to vote
- ➢ Contact by campaigns was higher in minorities
- ➢ Enthusiasm for and interaction with candidates less important for voting than issues, information, and civic duty.
- ➢ Candidate enthusiasm and contact by campaigns linked as primary reasons for voting

Findings: Relevant Quotes from Exit Polls

➢ Exit poll answers:

- ○ "Unable to determine best candidate, or polls showed my favorite candidate was picked to win."

- ○ "Lack of proposed significance"

- ○ "Not knowing what incumbent means [and] was confused"

Voting Demographics in Minnesota

White voters have higher turnout in Minnesota

Among citizens eligible to vote, non-Hispanic whites showed up to the polls in higher percentages than other races or ethnicities.

71%
66%
52%
37%

100%

75%

50%

25%

0%

Voter turnout

White   Black   Asian   Hispanic
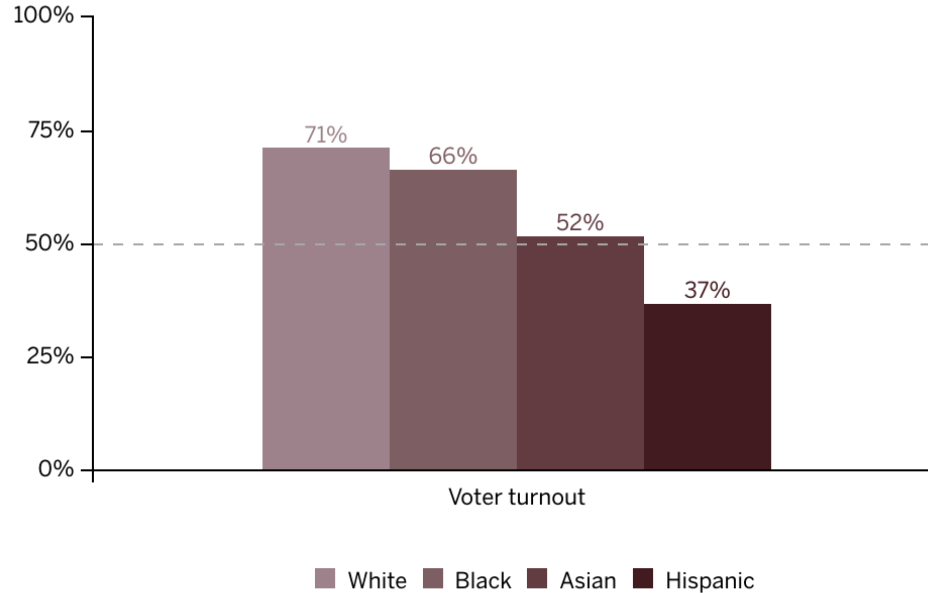
Findings: Field Notes

- ➢ Conducted over two days on campus
- ➢ Numerous subjects stated that they felt underrepresented in government
  - ○ Based on this, there has been a negative view towards politicians
- ➢ Respondents also felt uninformed about candidates and their stancess
  - ○ Necessitates review of how candidate info is placed for viewing to public
- ➢ Majority wrote Twitter as being their main source of information

Suggestions

➢ Spread campaign visits out more evenly to reach more voters

➢ Listening panels, public question and answer sessions, etc. in order to boost enthusiasm in Asian and African American demographic groups .

➢ Increasing outreach efforts in areas with a higher concentration of Asian and African Americans

Suggestions - Visuals

3. African American and Asian American respondents were more likely than whites to cite "Enthusiasm for Candidates" as an important reason for their decision to vote.
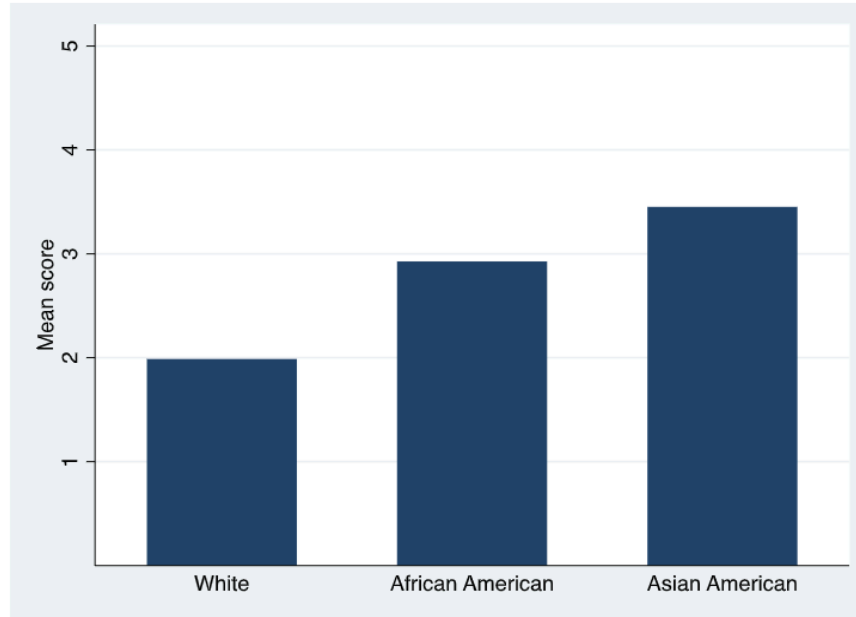
Mean importance scores for both African American respondents (N = 32) and Asian American respondents (N=31) compared to mean scores for white respondents (N=73) on the importance of candidate enthusiasm.
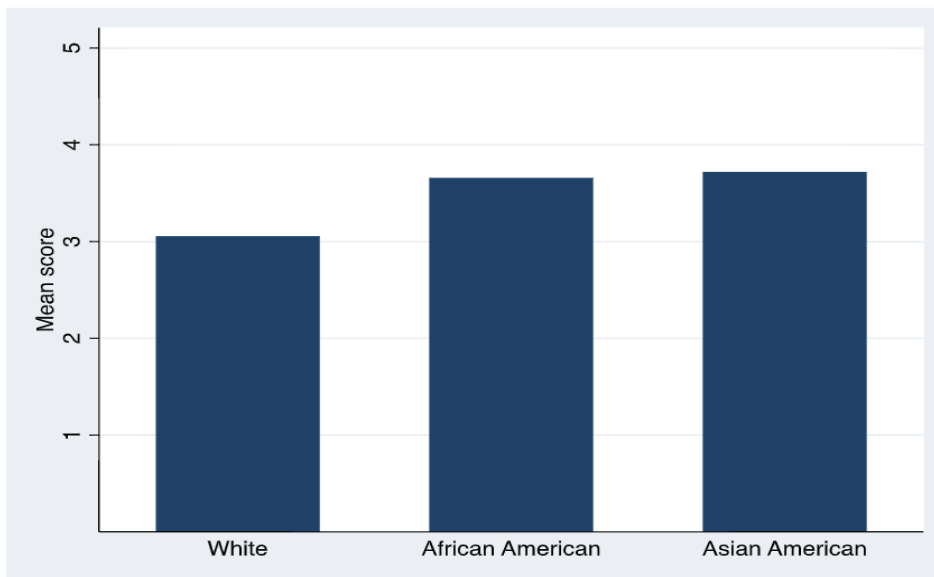
* Pr(|T| > |t|) = 0.0095 (African American respondents vs. white respondents); Pr(|T| > |t|) = 0.0094 (Asian American respondents vs. white respondents)

4. African American and Asian American respondents were more likely than whites to cite "Contact by campaigns or candidates" as an important reason for their decision to vote.
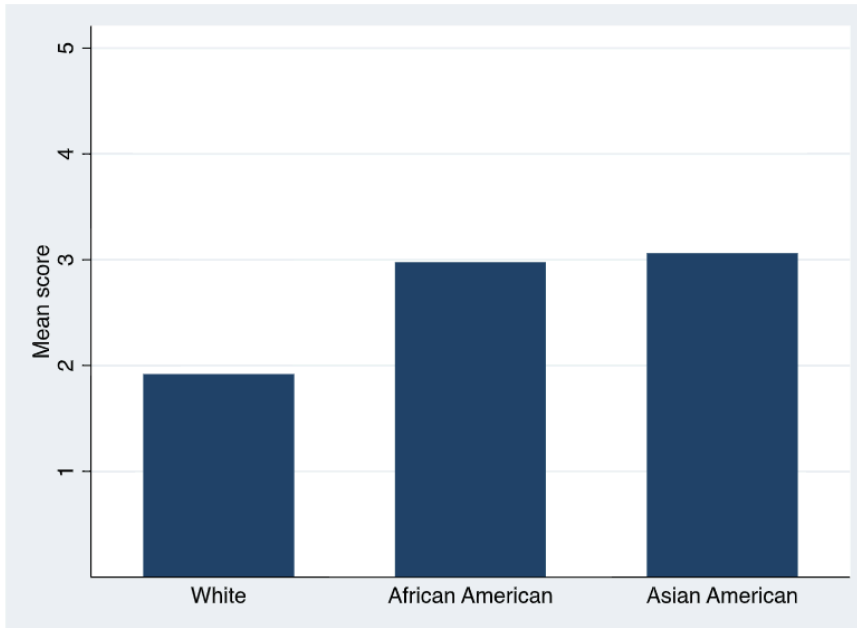
Mean importance scores for both African American respondents (N = 32) and Asian American respondents (N=31) compared to mean scores for white respondents (N=73) on the importance of contact by campaigns or candidates.

* Pr(|T| > |t|) = 0.0005 (African American respondents vs. white respondents); Pr(|T| > |t|) = 0.0000 (Asian American respondents vs. white respondents)

2. African American and Asian American respondents were more likely than white respondents to cite "Contact by campaigns" as an important source of information about candidates and issues.

Mean scores for both African American respondents (N = 41) and Asian American respondents (N=32) compared to mean scores for white respondents (N=73) on the importance of contact by campaigns or candidates in obtaining information about issues and candidates.

* Pr(|T| > |t|) = 0.0005 (African American respondents vs. white respondents); Pr(|T| > |t|) = 0.0000 (Asian American respondents vs. white respondents)