

RESEARCH ARTICLE



Can electoral management bodies expand the pool of registered voters? Examining the effects of face-to-face, remote, traditional, and social media outreach

Thessalia Merivaki ^a and Mara Suttman-Lea ^b

^aDepartment of Political Science and Public Administration, Mississippi State University, Mississippi State, MS, USA; ^bDepartment of Government and International Relations, Connecticut College, New London, CT, USA

ABSTRACT

Electoral management bodies have a responsibility to ensure voters have equitable access to the election process, starting with providing information to successfully navigate it. In this article, we assess the educative effects of different modes of election official voter education on completing the voter registration process. We use surveys of voter education activities submitted by the state of Florida's 67 County local election officials (LEOs) in the United States to evaluate their impact on new voter registrations between 2014 and 2018. We also use a dataset of Florida election officials' monthly Facebook activity during the 2020 election to examine the relationship between content-specific social media posts and new voter registrations, and usage of Florida's online voter registration (OVR) portal. We find that traditional media, specifically newspaper ads, and face-to-face outreach – visits to local communities, and training for third-party voter registration drives – increase new registrations. We also find that sharing Facebook posts about voter registration specifically during the 2020 election cycle increased new registrations and usage of Florida's OVR system. Our findings have important implications about the breadth of tools electoral management bodies across the world have to inform voters, and how they can use them to facilitate voter access.

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A key responsibility of electoral management bodies (EMBs) is ensuring that all voters have equitable access to elections. Voter access varies across democracies due to differences in how EMBs are structured and countries' institutional frameworks. A common obligation across democracies, however, is voter education – efforts by election officials to inform voters about how to vote and how elections are run. Voter education provides voters with “the necessary information not only to exercise their right to vote, but also to understand and have confidence in the electoral process” (Carter Center 2014, 96). These sentiments reflect international commitments to safeguarding the right to vote, ensuring voters have sufficient resources to be informed about registration, when

and where to vote, and casting a valid ballot. If implemented consistently and impartially, voter education can minimize inequities in voter participation among traditionally under-represented voters (United Nations 2021; Ballington et al. 2015).

In the United States, a decentralized system of elections places significant burdens on voters, posing challenges to implementing voter education and meeting international standards. In the context of a global pandemic that necessitated changes in the conduct of elections to ensure healthy and safe voting, the 2020 U.S. Presidential election underscored the need for outreach from trusted sources so voters were equipped with correct information. Local election officials (LEOs) – the nearly 8000 officials in charge of administering elections in the United States – are an integral source of information for voters as they navigate voting requirements where they reside (Adona et al. 2019; Kimball and Kropf 2006). However, unlike many other established democracies, they are not part of a centralized EMB with authority over the conduct of elections. Rather, LEOs in the U.S. enjoy significant discretion in how they engage in voter education (Suttmann-Lea and Merivaki 2021), and the resources they dedicate to these efforts (Burden et al. 2012). This means voter access to information from official sources about elections varies significantly from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. (Suttmann-Lea 2021; Garnett 2020).

Recently, LEOs in the U.S. have shared an increasing interest in voter-centric approaches to election administration, highlighting the importance of accessible voting and information about elections (Adona et al. 2019). LEOs have a variety of education tools across a range of modes, including face-to-face outreach, mailings, traditional media, and more recently, online outreach through social media. Nevertheless, there has been little empirical research that adjudicates the impact of these different options for voter education on voter behaviour.

In this article, we evaluate the effects of voter education by LEOs in the state of Florida¹ on successfully completing the voter registration process, a requirement for voting in all U.S. states except North Dakota. We examine LEOs' efforts over four election cycles (2014–2020), assessing their impact on new voter registrations between 2014 and 2020, and use of online voter registration (OVR) during the 2020 election cycle. We theorize that the provision of information from LEOs has educative effects that help voters overcome the bureaucratic complexities of voting (Mann and Bryant 2020), raising awareness about various requirements and educating voters on how to access and successfully complete processes like voter registration.

We assess the educative effects LEO outreach on voter registration with two datasets that capture *reported* and *observed* voter education efforts. For reported efforts, we utilize Florida's Voter Education and Outreach Survey between 2014 and 2018, a statutorily mandated survey administered to all 67 counties in the state every federal election year. We build on this analysis with a monthly-level dataset that captures observed efforts – online LEO posts Facebook about voter registration during the 2020 election cycle – to investigate the effects of content-specific social media efforts on successfully registering to vote and using Florida's OVR system. The analysis of observed efforts allows us to examine the relationship between the content of communications directly related to our outcomes of interest – voter registration and use of OVR system. Moreover, given the challenges for in-person education and outreach tools due to the

COVID-19 pandemic (CEIR 2020), the 2020 analysis offers important insights about reaching voters in a low-cost manner and protect public health.

We find that advertisements in newspapers – traditional media outreach – increase the overall pool of new registrants. For face-to-face outreach, targeted visits to communities, like senior and disabled communities and Hispanic communities, and voter registration training of third-party organizations yield more successful registrations. Furthermore, our assessment of the 2020 election shows that jurisdictions where LEOs shared more posts on Facebook about voter registration saw a greater increase in successfully completed new registrations and use of the state’s OVR system.

This article is the first to assess ongoing voter education efforts that election officials engage in, departing from existing literature that assesses how experimental educative interventions affect voter participation (Mann and Bryant 2020; Bennion and Nickerson 2016; Herrnson et al. 2015). As such, our work adds external validity to findings drawn from experimental research. We also find there are effective strategies election officials can use within different modes of outreach to inform new voters, and that their efforts can also direct voters to utilize reforms like OVR. These strategies are applicable to other electoral and institutional contexts outside of the United States, not only to make voters aware about the requirement of voter registration (James 2014; Rosenberg and Chen 2009; IDEA 2002), but also about other requirements and voting options, and the importance of voting itself (United Nations 2021, 69). Finally, this article presents an assessment of possible practices for strengthening democracy and electoral integrity through voter education and outreach, which are of growing significance for the international community of election scholars and practitioners alike (Norris 2017). Our findings suggest voter education is not merely an important component of election performance, but an effort that pays real dividends for election officials and voters alike by clarifying the procedures of democratic engagement.

Existing research: registration barriers and voter education

In countries where voter registration is required, electoral management bodies (EMBs) navigate diverse institutional frameworks and finite resources for ensuring that registration is offered in an accessible and equitable manner (Vickery and Szilagyi 2019). From a comparative perspective, passive and voluntary registration structures, as in the United States, increase the burden on voters and have a depressing impact on voter participation (Powell 1986). Registering eligible citizens to vote, however, can be challenging for any EMB regardless of a country’s legal framework even if the burden of registration is placed largely on EMBs (IDEA 2002). One persistent challenge is the ability of EMBs to educate voters about voter registration and utilize various approaches to add underrepresented voters to the lists of registered voters (Evrensel 2010).

In the United States, local election officials (LEOs) are the closest equivalent to an EMB, as they are most directly connected to the conduct of elections in a highly decentralized system of election administration. In an era of declining confidence in election administration in the United States, they also tend to be more trusted by voters than other government officials (Adona and Gronke 2018). Their role makes them a key mediator between prospective voters and the laws that govern voting. The 2020 election showcased how even frequent voters have incomplete knowledge about election

processes in their state (U.S. Vote Foundation 2021), and that the increasing spread of election misinformation can make it difficult for voters to distinguish between what is factual and what is not (Rhodes 2021). Election officials are therefore encouraged, if not expected, to “establish trusted channels of communication with voters” and ensure that voters have a “start-to-finish story for each voter’s ballot (EIP 2021, ix)”.

The scholarship on U.S. voter participation consistently confirms that the requirement to register before an election poses a significant burden on voters (Ansolabehere and Konisky 2006; Cancela and Geys 2016; Powell 1986). Voters need to navigate many steps to cast a ballot, yet voter registration in most U.S. states is one of the more costly and complex barriers (Bennion and Nickerson 2021; Mann and Bryant 2020; Bennion and Nickerson 2011). Successfully completing the registration process is necessary for an individual’s ability to vote (Merivaki and Smith 2020) and can also impact participation in future elections (Shino and Smith 2018). Indeed, compared to other systems where the burden of registration actively lies on the shoulders of EMBs, registration systems like those in the United States bear a significant brunt of the blame for lower turnout. For example, research comparing the United States’ system of registration to that of the United Kingdom suggests that lowering the registration barrier mitigates the effects of socioeconomic disparities in political participation; where there are lower registration barriers, citizens of different educational attainment vote at comparable rates (Milligan, Moretti, and Oreopoulos 2004).

Reminding voters that registration is required to vote may not be sufficient to minimize participation barriers (Mann and Bryant 2020). For some voters, the bureaucratic burden of successfully completing the registration process prevents them from voting (Merivaki 2021; Hanmer 2009). The absence of modernized voter registration options, such as online voter registration (OVR), may exacerbate these problems for both voters and election officials. The risk of human error is higher when completing a voter registration form on paper as well as manually transferring voter information from paper to an electronic database (Vickery and Szilagyi 2019). Registration problems, however, can be resolved by diligent election officials who actively work to correct errors on voter registration applications, demonstrating how instrumental LEOs can be for helping voters successfully complete complex voting processes like voter registration (Gershtenson et al. 2013). As the U.S. is not likely to adopt a less onerous system of registration anytime soon, LEOs play a significant role in limiting the burdens faced by voters in learning how and when to register to vote.

Modes of voter education and outreach by EMBs: expectations

The United Nations’ Handbook on International Human Rights Standards on Elections argues that voter education “is essential to ensure the effective exercise of the right to vote by an informed community,” (United Nations 2021, 69). The implementation of voter education is distinct from policies that reduce institutional barriers to voting, and thus make the process of casting a ballot easier (Garnett 2019; Hanmer 2009; Blais 2006). Rather, it facilitates access to voting by providing prospective voters with accurate information about voting, as well as information about changes in election procedures that voters may want to take advantage of or be required to complete. As a result, voter education can act as a cost-reducing mediator between the laws that govern voting and

prospective voters, minimizing the steps they need to take in order to learn what is needed to vote (Mann and Bryant 2020).

Research on the distribution of information to voters often feature partnerships between researchers and election officials or third-party organizations to examine whether interventions such as mailers and e-mails informing about different aspects of the election process affect voter participation (Mann and Bryant 2020; Herrnson et al. 2015; Citrin, Green, and Morris 2015). However, present research does not examine voter education by LEOs as a part of their regular responsibilities, nor does it address how these practices vary even within the same state, where expectations of uniform implementation may be higher. As such, our work adds external validity to evidence observed in experimental research and bolsters our understanding of how voter education activities impact voter behaviour across different jurisdictions and electoral contexts within the same state.

In their piece exploring the effects of low-cost postcards on registration and turnout, Mann and Bryant (2020, 3) suggest a central mechanism underlying their experimental treatments is sharing “information about how to register to vote.” They note that unlike voter mobilization experiments that seek to increase intrinsic or extrinsic motivation to participate, they are interested in understanding how informational interventions can lower the costs of participation. We theorize that when voters are exposed to information about elections by trusted sources, such as their LEOs, they learn not only about requirements for voting but also how to navigate them successfully. Information distribution can also be instrumental when there are new laws that voters may take advantage of that offer options for how they participate (Herrnson et al. 2015).

While being informed about how to vote can have a mobilizing effect (United Nations 2021), the *information* mechanism underlying our expectations is distinct from voter mobilization research that examines the role of inducing different motivations for engaging in elections (Gerber, Green, and Larimer 2008). Rather, we suggest that the provision and availability of information from election officials about how to vote simplifies complex processes for voters, minimizing the steps needed to participate and helping voters avoid frustration and possible drop off (Bennion and Nickerson 2021; Shino and Smith 2018; Bennion and Nickerson 2011).² Having the information to successfully complete the voter registration process means voters are less likely to experience trouble when voting, and therefore will not be disenfranchized (Merivaki and Smith 2020).

We consider four modes of voter education that can inform voters about the voting process: face-to-face outreach, including training for third-party voter registration groups; remote outreach like mailings sent to directly to constituents, traditional media outreach through advertising, and online outreach through social media. The core mechanism underlying these modes of outreach is that they provide voters with information that lowers the bureaucratic hurdles of participation (Mann and Bryant 2020; Citrin, Green, and Morris 2015; Mann and Mayhew 2015). Our general expectation is that there will be a positive relationship between the voter education tools used within each mode of outreach and successfully registering to vote.

Prior research suggests that face-to-face interventions can have a positive effect on voter registration, particularly when targeting under-represented voters. Voter education efforts, for instance, can be especially effective in securing successful registrations when

there is face-to-face interaction in a classroom (Bennion and Nickerson 2016). Furthermore, when LEOs actively work on correcting errors on registration applications submitted by college students, they ensure the process is successfully completed (Gershtenson et al. 2013). These findings suggest LEOs can be effective in teaching voters how to register to vote (Bennion and Nickerson 2016) and avoid having to take additional steps to contact voters whose applications are incomplete (Merivaki 2021).

There is also field experimental evidence that door-to-door voter registration drives can have positive effects on registration (Braconnier, Dormagen, and Pons 2017; Nickerson 2015). However, third-party voter registration organizations conducting voter registration drives may lack the capacity and expertise to effectively assist voters in completing the registration process and are often accused of submitting voter registration applications with incomplete information (Merivaki 2021). This risk highlights the importance of training of these groups by LEOs to ensure they are helping voters submit complete applications and increase the effectiveness of these groups' efforts on the ground.

H1: Counties who engage in face-to-face outreach activities and/or train third-parties to conduct face-to-face registration drives will have higher rates of new voter registrations compared to counties who do not.

LEOs can also send direct mailings to voters to inform them about the voting process, such as upcoming voter registration deadlines, changes in polling locations, or changes in election policies. Previous research examining the effects of outreach from election officials using tools like direct mailings show they can have a positive effect on voter behaviour; information sent to voters about new voting procedures, for example, have been found to increase turnout (Citrin, Green, and Morris 2015; Mann and Mayhew 2015). Mann and Bryant (2020) find causal evidence to support the claim that these interventions lower the informational barriers to voting specifically, showing that low-cost mailers from election officials providing eligible but unregistered voters with information about how to register improve registration and voter turnout rates. In short, there is evidence that remote interventions can be effective when it comes to voter behaviour, especially because interventions through print media may provide the information needed to successfully complete the steps in the voting process, including voter registration.

H2: Counties who use remote outreach such as mailings or other print media for voter education and outreach will have higher rates of new voter registrations compared to counties who do not.

Previous work shows that the placement of advertisements in newspapers and on the radio can have a positive impact on voter behaviour in the United States (Panagopoulos and Green 2011; Panagopoulos and Bowers 2006) as well as in other countries, such as Ghana, Liberia, Mozambique and Senegal (Evrensel 2010). Panagopoulos and Green (2011) find that nonpartisan communication advertising campaigns informing voters about who is running on the ballot can increase the motivation to turn out to vote. In several African countries, radio and print media were broadly circulated by EMBs in different languages to facilitate access to information about voter registration in language minority communities (Evrensel 2010). This research suggests such interventions may be

especially effective in reaching underrepresented voters, who are not traditionally targeted by political campaigns.

While there is less tangible evidence for us to draw from to develop our expectations for outreach through traditional advertising, we are still confident in our assumption that LEOs engaging in traditional media outreach can increase the rates of successful new registrations relative those who do not use this type of outreach by putting information out in communities about how to vote. That said, we expect the substantive effects to be smaller relative to efforts that involve more direct contact with voters like face-to-face and remote outreach.

H3: Counties who use traditional media outreach (TV, radio ads, and newspaper ads) will have higher rates of new voter registrations compared to counties who do not, but these effects may be substantively smaller than for face-to-face modes of outreach.

Finally, we consider voter education and outreach that happens in online spaces. E-mails can be useful in reaching young voters and remind them to register to vote, although a procrastination effect may take place when registration does not happen at the same time as the reminder to register, leaving many new registrations submitted too late or never completed (Merivaki 2021; Bennion and Nickerson 2011). This research highlights the challenges of voter registration outreach in states where the process is paper-based and requires voters to take multiple steps to complete their registration. The availability of online voter registration (OVR), however, may help mitigate these procrastination effects for new registrants. When individuals are e-mailed reminders about registering to vote that include links to an OVR portal and can immediately register once they receive the reminder, there is a positive effect on registration and turnout compared to reminders that provide recipients with a link to download a registration form they then have to submit to their local election office separately (Bennion and Nickerson 2021).

We suggest similar dynamics are at play when LEOs use social media for voter education. As we detail in our analysis below, many LEOs use their official social media platforms to post information about how to register as a new voter and update one's registration information, often directing voters to the state's OVR portal. Like an e-mail, users are exposed to the reminder to register to vote and are directed to do so online in a single step. Accessibility of information online is one of the most low-cost ways voters can get information about what is needed to vote; the more accessible jurisdictions are through online platforms like social media accounts and websites, the easier it is for voters to take advantage of resources like online voter registration.

H4: Counties who use online outreach (social media) will have higher rates of new voter registrations compared to those who do not.

International election standards contend information about elections should be “proactively put in the public domain,” (Carter Center 2014, 88), which now includes online platforms such as websites (Garnett 2020) and social media. Research on social media usage by LEOs shows that the frequency and content of voter education messages vary dramatically across and within states, with evidence that active social media presence yields positive outcomes, such as higher rates of mail voting and lower instances of rejected mail ballots (Suttman-Lea 2021; Suttman-Lea and Merivaki 2021). We

expect that sharing content-specific information through online resources, which are one of the most dominant sources of information for many voters (Adona and Gronke 2018), allows us to more precisely examine the relationship between the voter education content shared by LEOs and voter registration while providing more tangible evidence of the information mechanism underlying our expectations.

H5a: Counties with higher volume of social media posts about voter registration will have higher rates of new voter registrations, compared to counties with lower volume of social media posts.

Alongside assessing overall rates of successful registrations, we are also interested in whether outreach by LEOs can encourage voters to utilize specific voting reforms, such as OVR. We explore this in the context of Florida's OVR system, which was implemented in 2017. In 2020, the availability of OVR may have been an important resource for prospective voters, since COVID-19 made it challenging for election officials to engage in face-to-face voter education. Through the OVR portal, eligible Floridians can submit a new voter registration application and update their registration information. This means OVR is not used exclusively by new prospective voters, which is why we use the term transactions, rather than registration, as it captures both new registrations and voter information updates. Since its adoption in 2016 and implementation in 2017, Floridians have been using OVR at higher rates, particularly closer to voter registration deadlines, a result of increased mobilization activity by political campaigns and third-party voter registration groups (Merivaki 2021).

H5b: Counties with a higher volume of social media posts about voter registration will have higher rates of online voter registration transactions, compared to counties with lower volume of social media posts.

Research design, data, and variables of interest

To assess the educative effects of LEO voter outreach on successfully completing the voter registration process and use of Florida's OVR portal we conduct two separate analyses utilizing annual and monthly-level voter registration statistics from Florida's Division of Elections spanning four federal elections (2014–2020). We test our hypotheses in two steps to account for *reported* and *observed* measures of voter education. First, we use a dataset capturing annual measures of LEOs voter education activities during 2014, 2016, and 2018 using Florida's County Voter Education Surveys. Second, we utilize a dynamic dataset of monthly Facebook activity by LEOs in Florida during the 2020 election cycle to evaluate how content-specific social media outreach impacts new and existing registrants. The availability of OVR in Florida provides the institutional framework to evaluate these dynamics, particularly in 2020, when face-to-face interaction between voters and election officials was limited due to COVID-19 (CEIR 2020).

Our first dependent variable is the proportion of new voter registrations relative to a county's Citizen Voting-Age Population (CVAP) during an election year (2014, 2016, 2018, and 2020).³ In our analysis of 2020 monthly voter registration data, we also evaluate the relationship between LEO social media outreach and OVR transactions. Using the OVR portal, eligible Floridians can submit a new voter registration application and/or update their voter information. In effect, the vast majority of OVR submissions in

2020 were updates to a voter's information rather than new registrations.⁴ Our second dependent variable is the proportion of OVR transactions relative to a county's CVAP during an election cycle.⁵

As Table 1 shows, new voter registrations make up a small fraction of the state's CVAP. Compared to all voter registration activity, however, new voter registrations are overall high, and peaked in 2016, consistent with voter registration patterns in presidential elections (Merivaki 2021). In 2020, the drop in new valid registrations followed an overall decrease in voter registration activity, meaning there were significantly fewer registration applications in 2020 compared to previous elections. Despite the boost in registration in 2018, as compared to the 2014 midterm election, the loss in new registrations from 2018 to 2020 is unprecedented, validating concerns about the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic (CEIR 2020). All 67 counties in Florida experienced losses between 2018 and 2020, including those that had significant gains between 2016 and 2018. (Figure A1 in Appendix).

Since the implementation of OVR in Florida in 2017, OVR usage relative to other available methods of registration picked up (17% of all voter registration activity), and in 2020 it was higher than 2018 (39% of all voter registration activity), with some counties reporting that more than half of all voter registration submissions came from OVR. This suggests a shift in voter registration dynamics in the state, with OVR being the more viable option during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns of 2020. That said, there is still variation across counties in OVR usage, with certain counties reporting much lower rates of OVR transactions in 2020. The overall pattern, however, is that in most counties, Floridians relied on OVR for either registering as new voters or updating their voter registration information (Figure A2 in Appendix).

Annual-level analysis: the Florida voter education surveys, 2014–2018

Florida's state voter education programme mandates that all 67 County LEOs complete a Voter Education Survey after every federal election since 2012.⁶ The survey was part of Florida's Help America Vote Act (HAVA) implementation plan, designed in response to the federal law's requirement that all U.S. states include plans for voter education to receive funds to modernize election processes and invest in voter education (Merivaki and Suttman-Lea 2021; MacManus 2005).⁷ These data were obtained through public record requests for surveys completed in 2012, 2014, 2016, and 2018.⁸ The survey is organized in nine (9) thematic topics, and each topic includes a series of activities (categories) that LEOs report on in a given year. To construct our voter education measures, we

Table 1. Rates of new voter registrations and OVR transactions in Florida, 2014–2020.

Year	New Valid Registrations		OVR Transactions	
2014	533,082	4% of CVAP (88% of all applications)		–
2016	974,606	7% of CVAP (91% of all applications)		–
2018	750,353	5.1% of CVAP (88.9% of all applications)	142,918	1% of CVAP (17% of all applications)
2020	608,790	4.5% of CVAP (51.5% of all applications)	458,197	3.4% of CVAP (39% of all applications)

utilized the topics titled “Voter Registration Education & Training and Voting Systems Demonstrations,” and “Advertisements and Publications.”

For face-to-face voter registration outreach, we utilize the “Voter Registration Education & Training and Voting Systems Demonstrations” topic of the survey because all the activities require that LEOs interact directly with voters and community partners.⁹ This topic includes ten (10) activities, from visits to local high schools, colleges, libraries and different communities to third-party voter registration organization (3PVRO) trainings (Table 2). There is variation across the counties in which registration activities LEOs consistently engage every election year. For example, all but a few counties reported visiting local high schools for voter registration, conducting community events and encouraging registration at local elections offices. Most of the variation is found in outreach to colleges, churches, libraries, racial and ethnic minority communities and immigration centres. A sizeable number of counties did not report training or conducting outreach to 3PVROs, a surprising pattern given that training is required for these groups when they register with the state to conduct voter registration drives (Merivaki and Shino 2021).

For traditional media and print media, and voter education activity on social media, we utilize the “Advertisements and Publications” topic of the Voter Education Survey, which includes seven (7) activities, such as advertising on public transportation ads, billboards, banners and posters, as well as the advertisement or publication of precinct maps.¹⁰ As Table 3 shows, print media – mailers, brochures, etc. and newspaper and magazine ads – seem to be the most common type of outreach, with only one county – Alachua- reporting not utilizing newspaper ads in 2014. Fewer than half of the County LEOs reported running TV, radio and movie theatre ads, and only a handful reported running ads in buses or taxi-cabs. The descriptive findings suggest that most counties allocate financial resources for voter education to print media.

Social media opens possibilities for cost-effective outreach which can be shared online and increase the reach of an LEO’s efforts. Between 2014 and 2018, more than half of Florida’s LEOs reported using social media for voter education. Among the qualitative responses to the “Social Media Ads” activity in the survey, LEOs noted they operated primarily a Facebook account to share information about elections. Some counties reported paying for ad content on Facebook across all election years, without having an official county LEO account (Table A1 in Appendix). A small number of LEOs who operate

Table 2. Variation across FL’s 67 counties on face-to-face voter registration outreach.

Number of Counties Reporting “Yes” to Activity	2014	2016	2018
Community Colleges & Universities	47 (30%)	49 (73.1%)	50 (74.6%)
High Schools	66 (98.5%)	65 (97.1%)	65 (97.1%)
Churches	44 (65.7%)	50 (74.6%)	39 (58.2%)
Community Events (County Fairs, Festivals)	60 (90%)	61 (91%)	62 (92.5%)
Libraries	44 (65.7%)	42 (62.69%)	46 (48.7%)
Immigration Centres	33 (49.3%)	28 (41.8%)	25 (37.2%)
LEO Office	59 (88.1%)	57 (85.1%)	58 (86.6%)
Voter Registration Drives (3PVROs)	41 (61.2%)	44 (65.7%)	44 (65.7%)
Minority Communities	48 (71.6%)	54 (80.6%)	51 (76.1%)
Senior & Disabled Communities	53 (79.1%)	54 (80.6%)	55 (82.1%)

Note: Survey Topic: Voter Registration and Training and Voting Systems Demonstrations. Survey Question: “Did your County participate in Voter Education Activities for the given Topic and Category?”

Table 3. Variation across FL's 67 counties on advertisements and publications.

Number of Counties Reporting "Yes" to Activity	2014	2016	2018
Television, Radio and Movie Theatre Ads	30 (44.8%)	26 (38.8%)	27 (40.4%)
Newspaper and Magazine Ads	56 (83.6%)	62 (92.5%)	58 (86.6%)
Public Transportation Ads (Buses, Taxi-cabs etc.)	6 (9%)	7 (10.5%)	5 (7.5%)
Social Media Ads (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)	31 (46.3%)	46 (68.7%)	49 (73.1%)
Billboards, Banners and Posters	38 (56.7%)	33 (49.3%)	28 (41.8%)
Mailers, Brochures, Pamphlets, Newsletters, Utility Bills	60 (90%)	43 (64.2%)	48 (71.6%)
Precinct Maps	57 (85.1%)	42 (62.7%)	30 (53.7%)

Note: Survey Topic: Advertisements and Publications. Question: "Did your County participate in Voter Education Activities for the given Topic and Category?"

an official LEO Facebook account reported paying for an ad on Facebook. These data suggest that the use of social media varies notably across the Florida counties, and that the "Social Media Ads" measure may not be effectively capture LEO voter education efforts on social media, which we address by incorporating an additional binary measure for social media outreach of whether or not an LEO had an active Facebook account during a given election year.

Monthly-level analysis: the 2020 election cycle (January–December)

For our monthly-level analysis, we use a dynamic dataset of local election officials' social media usage on Facebook (Suttman-Lea 2021) to leverage content-specific voter outreach and its impact on new and existing voter registrants. With these data we test our social media voter education hypotheses, moving beyond a binary measure of social media activity. The dataset captures snapshots from LEOs' official social media accounts between January 1, 2020 and January 20, 2021. These data were collected using the platform Crowdtangle, which allows researchers to download large amounts of data from Facebook content shared on public pages. During this period, LEOs in Florida shared posts about several election topics, such as voter registration, voting by mail or early in-person, as well as non-election related topics, such as staff appreciation.¹¹ For our measure of *observed* voter education outreach on social media, we utilize the volume of Facebook posts where Florida LEOs explicitly discussed voter registration, informing voters about when and how to register to vote, and directing them to Florida's OVR portal.

As Figure 1 shows, there is significant variation in Facebook post-sharing across Florida's 51 counties who operated an official Facebook account in 2020. Comparing the volume of all posts (dashed line) to posts about voter registration (solid line) uncovers substantively important patterns insofar as which content LEOs prioritized and when during the election cycle. For instance, posts about registration increased around critical election dates, such as the primary election voter registration deadline in February and the General Election deadline in October.

Research on voter registration success finds that surges in voter registration activity take place when deadlines are close, and shows these surges are associated with higher than usual registration rejection rates (Merivaki 2019). The use of social media to inform voters about how to register to vote may have a positive impact on new registrants, minimizing the risk of submitting a voter registration that has errors, and thus

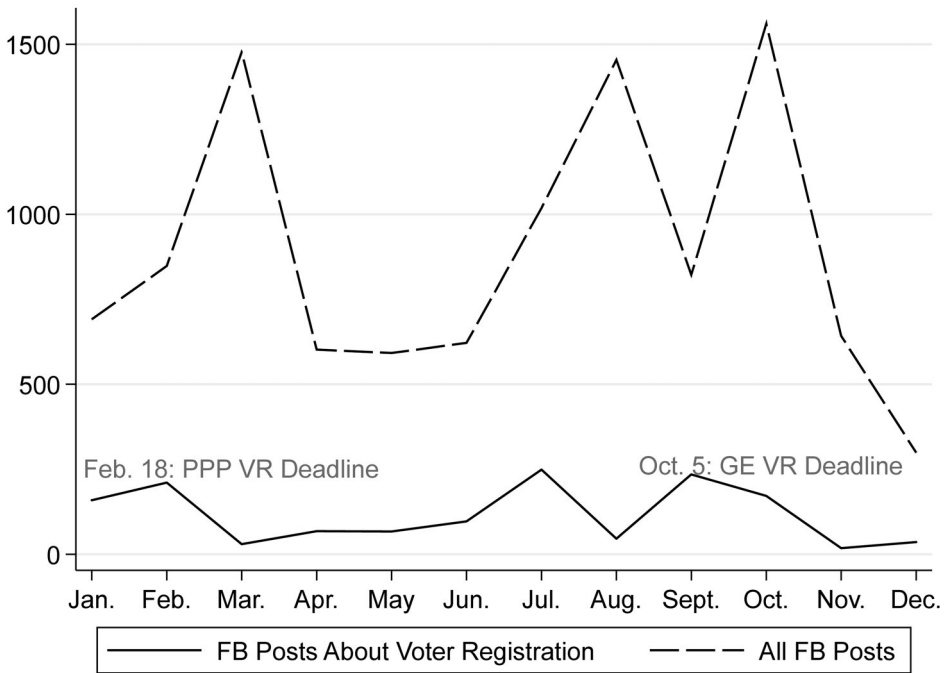


Figure 1. Facebook activity among Florida's LEOs, 2020 (January-December).

being less likely to be rejected. Indeed, the correlation between monthly voter registration Facebook posts as a percentage of all monthly posts suggest that LEO social media outreach is a driver of new registrations transactions ($r = .45$) and OVR transactions ($r = .53$).

Variables of interest

In our annual-level analysis, our key independent variables measure different modes of LEO voter education and outreach: face-to-face, remote, traditional and social media (Tables 2 and 3). We also construct additive indexes to test whether Florida LEOs' engagement in more voter outreach activities may have an overall positive impact on voter registration success. The "voter registration and training" index ranges from 0–10, and the "advertisement and publications" index ranges from 0–7, with the highest scores denoting that LEOs reported engaging in all activities within a given topic. We also include a dummy variable for whether the county LEO operates an official Facebook account as a supplement to the social media outreach reported by LEOs. For our monthly-level analysis where we focus on the content of an LEO's social media engagement, we include a measure for the volume of Facebook posts about voter registration per month, and the monthly rates of OVR transactions from all voter registration transactions in each county.¹²

We control for the partisanship of the LEO with a simple binary measure of whether the LEO is a Republican or not.¹³ We include proxies for electoral and campaign dynamics with a dummy variable for whether a county went Democratic or Republican

in the race for the highest office on the ballot during a given election year (presidential and governor), and election year dummies. Given that racial and ethnic minority communities are less likely to have access to high quality election administration (Pettigrew 2017; Barreto, Cohen-Marks, and Woods 2009) – which may extend to voter education – we also control for county demographics by including the rates of Black and Hispanic Population and county population size.¹⁴ We also include age county demographics, as well as a measure for the proportion of a county’s new movers, who would more likely benefit from voter education as they register to vote in their new residence.¹⁵

Analysis and findings: 2014–2018 annual-level data

We run beta and fractional logistic regressions with robust standard errors, which implement maximum likelihood and quasi-likelihood estimators, and report predictive margins with confidence intervals.¹⁶ Starting with the annual time-series analysis from 2014–2018, we run a full model where each activity – as outlined in Tables 2 and 3 – is broken down in dummy variables. We also run three (3) restricted models using the “voter registration and training” index and the “Advertisement and Publications” index, which we present in the Appendix (See Tables A2–A4 in Appendix).

Our findings uncover interesting dynamics in terms of the effects of voter education by LEOs in Florida that offer some support for our hypotheses, but also clarify that specific face-to-face efforts are effective in driving new registrations, rather than overall face-to-face efforts.¹⁷ For face-to-face modes of outreach (**H1**) we find that visits to communities of interest, particularly senior and disabled communities and minority communities, as well as training and/or outreach to third-party voter registration groups (3PVROs) yielded statistically significant and positive results (Figure 2). Conducting outreach in these communities increased the conditional mean of the proportion of new registrations by about .6%, all else equal. Interestingly, we find that visits to local libraries were negatively associated with new registrations. This suggests that some face-to-face outreach efforts may be more effective than others, although we cannot speak to the reasons for these differences with our data.

Our finding about the positive impact of registration drives (3PVROs) training on new registrations is substantively significant, as it showcases the educative effects of voter outreach to groups who assist eligible voters to register to vote. It also confirms that registration drives play an important role in reaching prospective voters and assisting them with registration (Merivaki and Shino 2021). We note that the effect of 3PVRO training is not a measure of direct LEO outreach efforts to voters, but rather the effect of teaching organizations, who themselves interact directly with voters, how to help minimize mistakes that might lead to the rejection of registrations. A persistent challenge faced by LEOs is navigating registrations that come through new third parties that end to feature more application errors, and trainings mitigate these errors (Merivaki 2021).

For our remote outreach hypothesis (**H2**), we find little evidence that print materials sent directly to voters such as mailers, brochures, and utility bill inserts were significantly effective, which seems to contradict existing research (Mann and Bryant 2020). For our traditional media outreach hypothesis, we find some support that certain types of media outreach positively affect new voter registrations (Figure 3). In line with **H3**, newspaper ads increased the conditional mean of the probability of new voter registrations by about

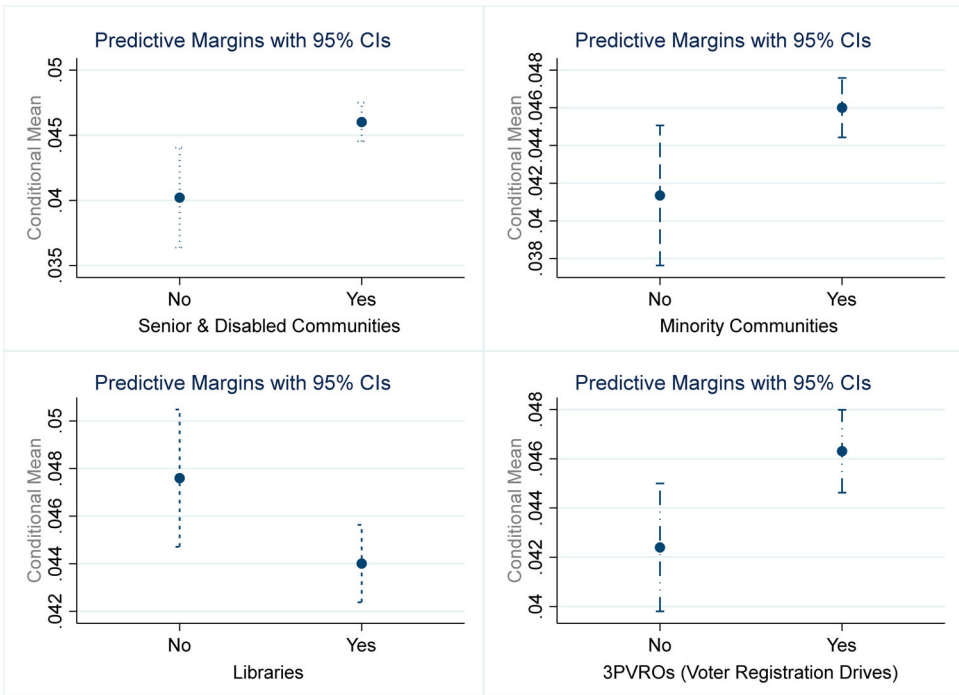


Figure 2. Predictive margins for the proportion of new voter registrations/CVAP, face-to-face voter registration outreach, 2014–2018.

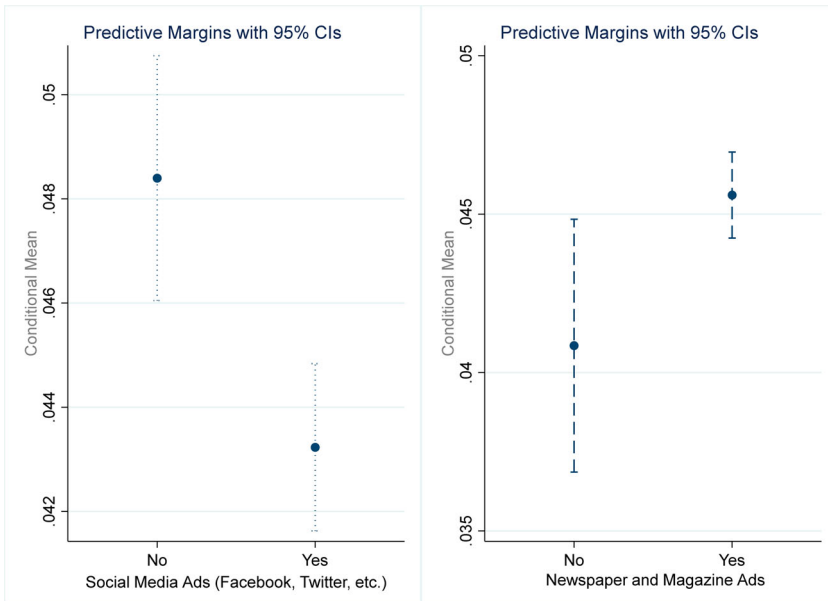


Figure 3. Predictive margins for the proportion of new voter registrations/CVAP, traditional and print media outreach, and social media outreach, 2014–2018.

.4%, all else equal. None of the other activities, however, such as TV and radio ads yielded statistically significant effects. These findings have important implications about low-cost voter outreach, considering that placing ads on TV and/or radio, or printing and mailing brochures may be cost-prohibitive for jurisdictions with limited resources (Hill 2012).

Our analysis offers some unexpected findings for the impact of LEO social media activity (*H4*) The reported measure of operating a Facebook account and/or running social media ads is negatively associated with new voter registrations, all else equal. This negative relationship merits further exploration due to the potential measurement error in the reporting of this variable through the survey. Florida's Voter Education Survey asks LEOs whether they engage in "social media ads," which many LEOs have interpreted as operating a Facebook account, while others reported paying for ads on social media (Table A1 in Appendix). There are likely differences between posting on Facebook from an official LEO account and sharing paid content, which this measure does not distinguish.¹⁸ Our own measure of whether an LEO had an active Facebook account is positive, but not significant. We suspect *how* an LEO uses social media, rather than of their simple presence is a better measure for understanding this mode's effects on new registrations, which we explore in our monthly-level analysis.

We also find evidence that the electoral context and socio-demographics are related to new registrations when controlling for voter education outreach. Counties that went Democratic in the race for the highest office on the ballot in a given election year increased the conditional mean of the proportion of new registrations by about 1%. The conditional mean of the proportion of new registrations also increased by about .5%, for every 1% increase in new movers. The partisanship of the LEO (Republican) and new voter registrations was positive and statistically significant, which suggests that there are differences in how local election administrators view their role in election administration based on their partisan affiliation (Kropf, Vercellotti, and Kimball 2013). We take this finding with a grain of salt, because it is possible that LEOs with no party affiliation (NPA) behave differently than Democrats and Republicans.

Our findings are substantively important because they show voter education outreach can yield positive outcomes, particularly in jurisdictions with population with lower likelihood of being registered to vote, such as racial and ethnic minorities, and new movers. In counties where the proportion of new movers is high, both print media and training for registration drives yielded positive and statistically significant findings for new voter registrations (Figure A3 in Appendix). There is also a positive impact of training for registration drives in counties with high rates of Hispanic constituents, although this impact was lower in counties with high rates of Black constituents (Figure A4 in Appendix).

Analysis and findings: 2020 election monthly-level data

While our analysis of the relationship between voter education activities reported by LEOs and new registrations offers important insight into the tools LEOs might use to expand the pool of registered voters, these data do not include measures of observed voter education efforts. With this in mind, we turn to how LEOs used social media to promote voter registration during the 2020 general election cycle to develop a more

precise analysis of how information distribution through voter education efforts may affect voter registration.

In 2020, new voter registrations and OVR transactions gradually increased starting in June and peaked between September and November, strongly reflecting interest in the election and voter enthusiasm that surges as Election Day approaches (Figure A5 in Appendix). Facebook posts promoting voter registration increased around the same timeframe (Figure 1). The relationship between voter registration outreach on social media and OVR is more nuanced, because OVR can be used by both new registrants, as well as existing voters who update their voter record prior to Election Day. We theorize that the voter registration outreach on social media can be educative for new registrants and existing registrants, both of whom can use the OVR portal to complete transactions.

To flesh out these nuances we test the impact of social media usage on both new voter registrations (*H5a*) and OVR transactions (*H5b*). In Figure 4, we plot the predictive margins for the proportion of new voter registrations in September of 2020, when voter registration activity increased as the General Election deadline approached (October 5, 2020), controlling for OVR usage. Although the impact is small (.1% for each additional 4 posts about voter registration), this is the first evidence of which we are aware showing that LEO use of social media for voter education can shape aggregate voting behaviour. We also find that OVR usage was a stronger predictor for new registrations in September, all else equal (2% for a 1% increase in OVR transactions). This finding suggests that the availability of the Online Voter Registration portal increased access to voter registration for prospective voters, and also ensured that they successfully complete the process, further validating the educative effects of social media outreach.¹⁹

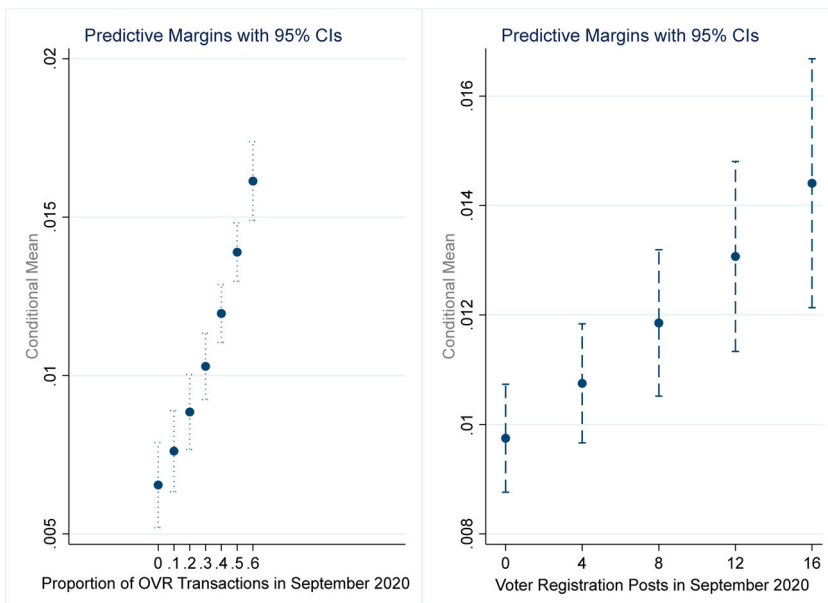


Figure 4. Predictive margins for proportion of new voter registrations/CVAP September of 2020.

Using the proportion of OVR transactions as our dependent variable, we find that social media outreach also yields a strong positive relationship (*H5b*). The increase in voter registration posts on Facebook in September significantly increased the conditional mean of the proportion of OVR transactions, compared to all other methods of voter registration, all else equal (Figure 5). This suggests that LEO outreach on social media can draw prospective voters to the OVR portal where they can successfully complete the process without errors. Our findings also provide support for the benefits of voter education through social media for existing voters, who may need to change their information before turning out to vote. For both types of registrants, the implications of not completing these processes are significant, as they are more likely to vote provisionally and having their vote invalidated (Merivaki and Smith 2020), or risking having their mail ballot rejected if their voter registration information does not match the information provided in their mail ballot (Shino, Suttman-Lea, and Smith 2021; Shino et al. 2020).

Regarding the impact of electoral and socio-demographic factors on new voter registrations and OVR transactions, we find that in counties with high rates of Hispanic populations, the conditional mean of the proportion of new registrations and OVR transactions increases, all else equal. For Black populations, the 2020 data show a negative relationship for new voter registrations, validating our annual-level findings, but yielding null effects for OVR usage. These differences may reflect variation in voter outreach strategies both from election officials, and political campaigns and third-party groups. The relationship between new movers and the proportion of new registrations was also positive and significant, which provides further evidence that voter education can significantly benefit new and existing voters.²⁰ We find that the partisanship of the LEO did not affect new registrations or OVR usage, when controlling for social media outreach, electoral and socio-demographic factors. This null finding may underscore the challenges

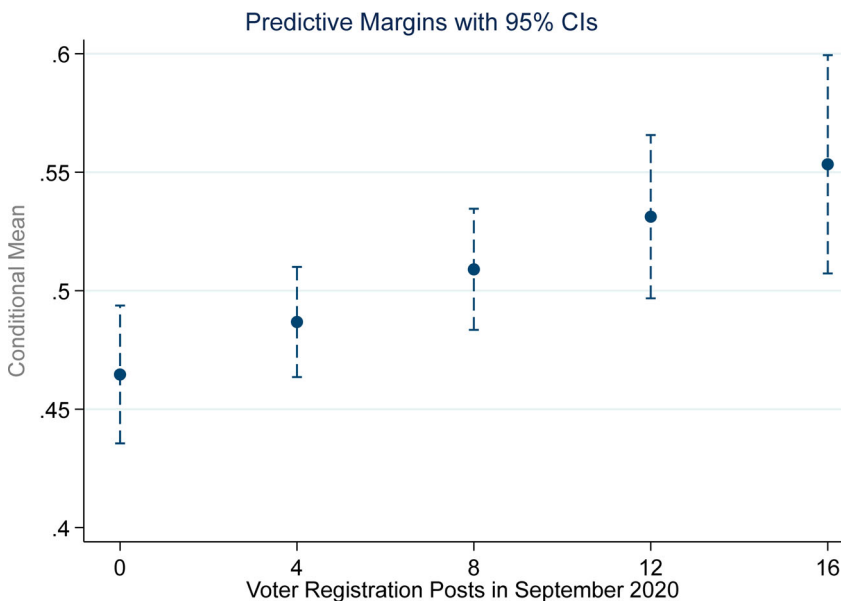


Figure 5. Predictive margins for proportion of OVR transactions/ CVAP September of 2020.

LEOs faced in preparing for elections during a pandemic, but they may also reinforce existing findings that regardless of party, local election officials view voter education as a key responsibility (Adona and Gronke 2018). Finally, we find that the campaign environment had limited impact on voter registration, with the only positive and statistical relationship between a county voting for a Democrat in 2018 (gubernatorial election) and using OVR.

Discussion

In this article, we provide evidence of the educative effects of LEO voter outreach on new and existing voters. Our article contributes to the literature on election administration and voter behaviour in three substantive ways. One, we evaluate how voter education efforts increase the rates of new registrations and usage of OVR. We find that face-to-face outreach – visits to different community groups and the training of third-party groups – increased the rates of new registrants between 2014 and 2018. This supports established evidence that face-to-face canvassing drives promoting voter registration can play a significant role in adding registrants to the voter rolls (Nickerson 2015). It also validates the significance of partnership building with groups that directly interact with voters, as they can be held responsible for failure to comply with requirements for submitting registration applications (Herron and Smith 2013). That said, considering that registration drives explicitly aim to reach under-represented voters, especially racial and ethnic minorities, the negative finding in regard to new voter registrations in counties with high rates of Black voters merits further exploration, because it could suggest challenges in canvassing in these communities (Scott, Michelson, and DeMora 2021).

For traditional media outreach, we find that newspaper advertisements can be an effective tool in expanding the electorate when used by LEOs. This finding is consistent with experimental evidence that individuals who read print newspapers are more likely to vote (Gerber, Karlan, and Bergan 2009). It is possible the placement of voter education and outreach advertisements may then be especially effective given this linkage, although our data cannot parse out this mechanism.

The lack of significance of remote outreach to voters through print media such as mailings sent directly to voters is somewhat surprising given there is strong causal evidence that these low cost “nudges” can induce new voter registration (Mann and Bryant 2020). It may be the case that the reported measure in the survey is not precise enough to capture these effects, and given the survey construction we are unable to parse out the effects of more specific direct remote outreach activities. It may also be that the content of remote outreach may be focused on other aspects of the voting process, such as providing voters with sample ballots or a voter guide, rather than on specifics of the registration. As such, we are hesitant to conclude that the actual efforts taken by LEOs to engage in voter education through direct remote outreach contradict previous work and are not effective.

Our second contribution lies in a clearer understanding of how the availability of Online Voter Registration can benefit voters, particularly when in-person options are not available. Even though new registration rates in 2020 were lower compared to 2018 in Florida, OVR transactions accounted for 39% of all voter registration transactions. In the absence of OVR, it is possible new voter registrations and updates to

voters' information would have been further depressed. Furthermore, our analysis demonstrates that promoting voter registration and OVR on social media can benefit prospective and existing voters, who may not have otherwise been exposed to this information during the pandemic. We find that outreach on Facebook by LEOs providing information about voter registration increases OVR usage, and that OVR usage affects new registrations.

Finally, our work offers insight into the work by electoral management bodies in other democracies to reach voters. Election officials in countries like the Bahamas, Belize, Burundi, and Mexico, the United Kingdom, and South Africa, which also place the burden of registration largely on individuals, may look to some of the tools we assess. And even among countries where the burden of registration lies more heavily on the government, voters may still be required to take additional steps to successfully register to vote.²¹ These efforts can be labour intensive, typically involving face-to-face outreach through door-to-door knocking or sending mobile units to rural communities (Evrensel 2010; Rosenberg and Chen 2009). Our findings show a positive impact of these kinds of efforts, but also highlight that there may be additional cost-effective measures election officials can take to increase successful registration rates or direct voters to use specific tools, like online voter registration.

Notes

1. LEOs in Florida are called Supervisors of Election (SoEs). However, for the sake of consistency with other literature, we use the more general term “local election official” (LEO) to refer to Florida’s SoEs.
2. It is important to emphasize we are focused on prior research that identifies the simple distribution of information in and of itself as an important mechanism in helping voters. We recognize this work also adjudicates the effects of different types of messages, or cues by LEOs (Mann, Gronke, and Adona 2020) that inform voters about several aspects about the election process, such as when to register to vote, how to request a mail ballot, or to “set the record straight” when inaccurate information is circulating in online spaces (Carr 2020). Our data do not allow us this precision for our analysis, but they do allow us to assess the relationship between sharing information about specific processes and the successful completion of such processes by voters.
3. Florida Division of Elections, Voter Registration Statistics. <https://www.dos.myflorida.com/elections/datastatistics/voter-registration-statistics/>. U.S. Census, Citizen Voting Age Population by Race and Ethnicity Special Tabulation: <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennialcensus/about/voting-rights/cvap.html>.
4. Quarterly counts of voter registration by source, obtained through public records requests.
5. We replicate our analyses using the total number of voter registration applications submitted during an election cycle as our denominator, and our findings hold.
6. We are grateful to Lori Edwards, Polk County Supervisor of Elections, who informed us about this resource.
7. The Help America Vote Act (HAVA) of 2002 required that states design and implement voter education programs to inform prospective and existing voters about the election process. Responses to the mandate were different across states, with some submitting comprehensive plans for voter education, and others submitting broad commitments without specifying details (Merivaki and Suttman-Lea 2021). Florida is among a few states whose voter education plan, as submitted to the Election Assistance Commission, mentions the administration of a voter education survey. To our knowledge, Florida is the only state that makes these surveys available.

8. All surveys have 100% response rate, meaning that they have been completed by all 67 County LEOs. Due to differences in question wording and the provided format of responses, we do not include 2012 in our analysis.
9. Whereas the state of Florida offers the option for 3PVROs to take an online training (<https://files.floridados.gov/media/704463/3pvro-overview-20210528.pdf>), we still consider this to be a face-to-face activity, because 3PVRO registration drives themselves are face-to-face, and thus directly interact with voters.
10. Precinct maps allow voters to identify their voting location, and all counties report that they have a precinct finder tool on their county elections website. It is not clear whether counties are expected to disseminate precinct maps in print or in other means. Florida County Voter Education Survey, Topic “Websites”, Category “Precinct Finder”.
11. For a detailed overview on the LEO social media data methodology and coding scheme, see Suttmann-Lea and Merivaki (2021).
12. Counties who do not operate a Facebook page are treated as missing data rather than zeroes. We do this to avoid inflating the count of voter registration posts.
13. In a few counties, Supervisors of Elections have run as No-Party Affiliated in partisan elections (Calhoun County) or in non-partisan elections (Columbia County) (see Merivaki 2021). Theoretically, SoEs regardless of partisanship should engage in voter registration education and outreach. For simplicity, we use a binary measure of partisanship where an observation = 1 if the SoE is a Republican, and 0 if they are Democratic or non-partisan.
14. Florida’s County demographic data were obtained from the University of Florida Bureau of Economic and Business Research’s Population studies program: <https://www.bebr.ufl.edu/population>.
15. U.S. Census, County-to-County migration flows 2014–2018: <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/2018/demo/geographic-mobility/county-to-county-migration-2014-2018.html>.
16. Beta regression for dependent variable measured as a proportion. This fits a regression model for the mean of y conditional on x $E(y/x) = ux$. Beta regression implements maximum likelihood estimators.
17. We find that measuring voter education based on the total number of activities LEOs report engaging in yields null results (Appendix Tables A2–A4).
18. It is possible that paying for ad content on Facebook is preferable for some LEOs, because it allows them to outsource this task, but also rely on its more sophisticated information dissemination method. Unfortunately, the survey does not allow us to fully assess whether operating a Facebook account and/or paying for ad content on Facebook yields different outcomes.
19. Our findings hold when we replicate our analyses using the total number of voter registration applications as the denominator, instead of the CVAP.
20. See Figures A6 and A7 in Appendix.
21. For example, in Australia where voting is mandatory, election officials gather information from other government agencies to identify voting eligible individuals who are unregistered, and mail them registration materials that they then must fill out and return. In most Canadian provinces, election officials largely use information collected from other government agencies to add eligible citizens to the rolls, but if more information is required individuals are mailed pre-printed registration forms with postage-paid return envelopes (Rosenberg and Chen 2009).

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Disclosure statement

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Notes on contributors

Thessalia Merivaki is an Assistant Professor in American Politics at the Department of Political Science and Public Administration, Mississippi State University. Her research expertise is on local election administration and voter behavior.

Mara Suttman-Lea is an Assistant Professor in American Politics at the Department of Government and International Relations at Connecticut College. Their research expertise is on local election administration, voting reforms, and American Political Development.

Data availability statement

The datasets and script files for this manuscript will be available in the Harvard Dataverse, and available upon request.

Code availability

Information about software and code availability will be provided with all replication files.

ORCID

Thessalia Merivaki  <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-3468-6293>

Mara Suttman-Lea  <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-0345-4529>

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Appendix

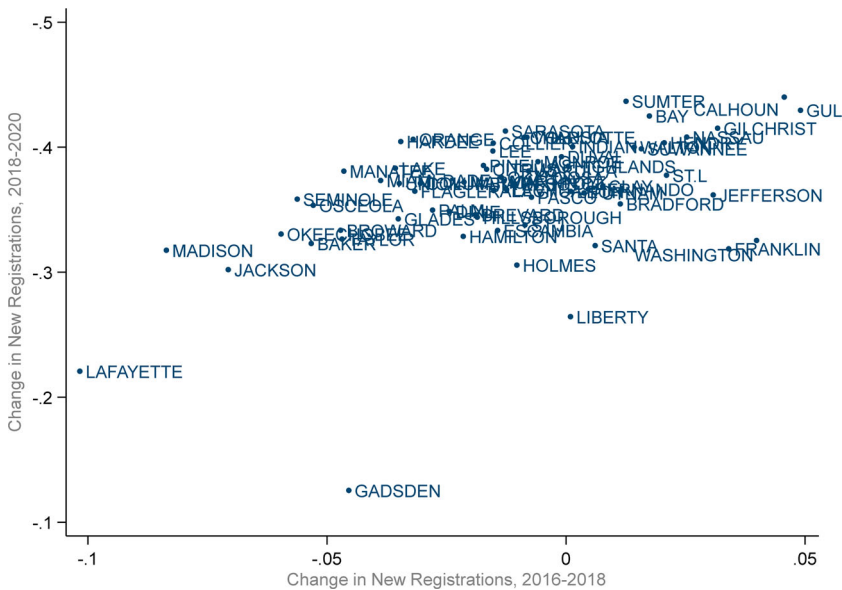


Figure A1. Change in proportion of new voter registrations in Florida, 2016–2020.

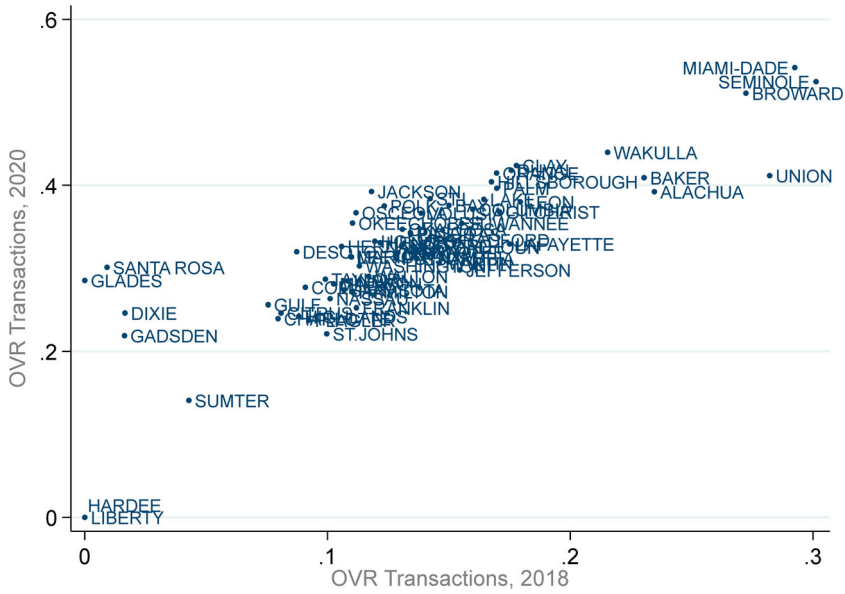


Figure A2. Proportion of OVR transactions in Florida, 2018–2020.

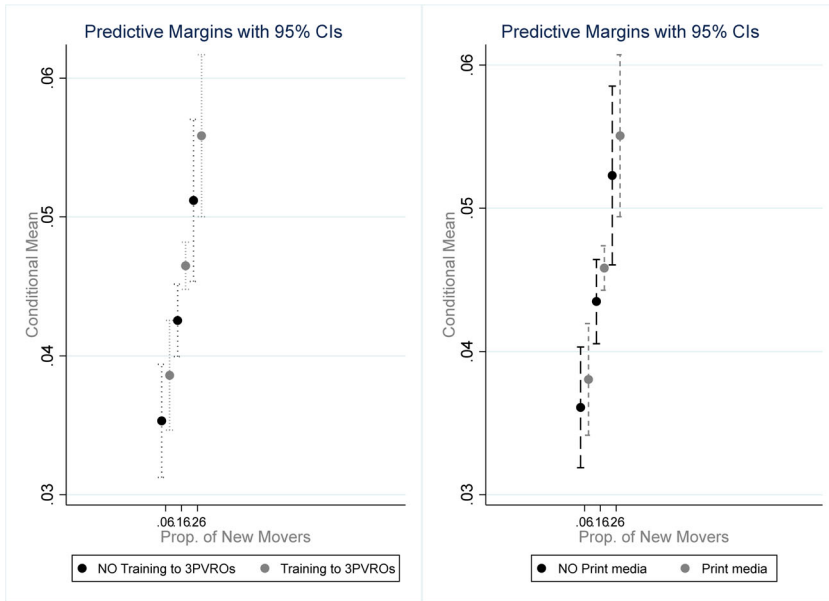


Figure A3. Predictive margins for the proportion of new registration/CVAP, 2014–2018 new movers, print media and training to registration drives (traditional and face-to-face outreach).

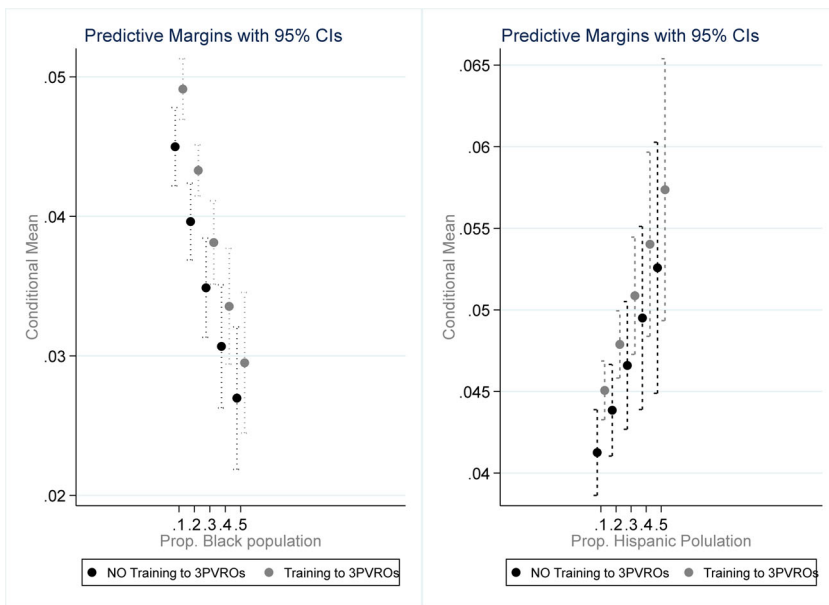


Figure A4. Predictive margins for the proportion of new registration/CVAP, race/ethnic demographics and training to registration drives (face-to-face outreach).

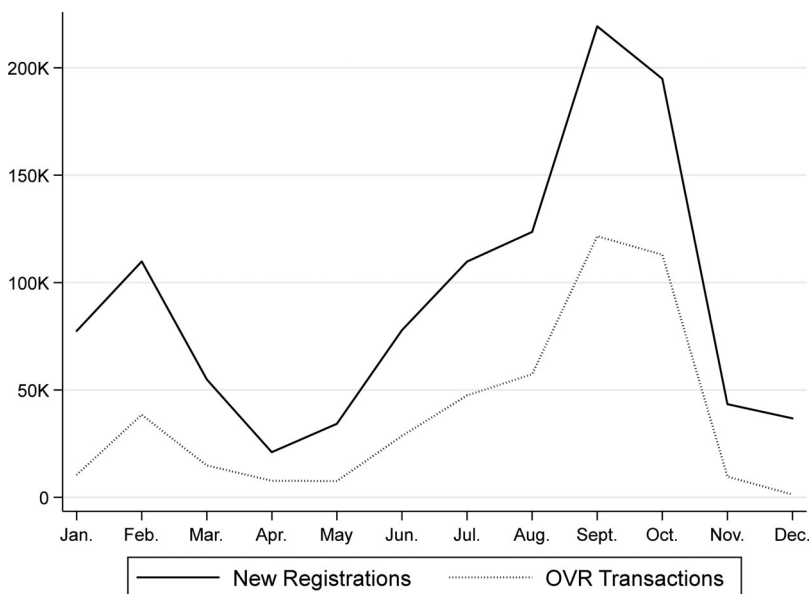


Figure A5. Voter registration activity (new registrations and OVR transactions), 2020 election cycle (January–December).

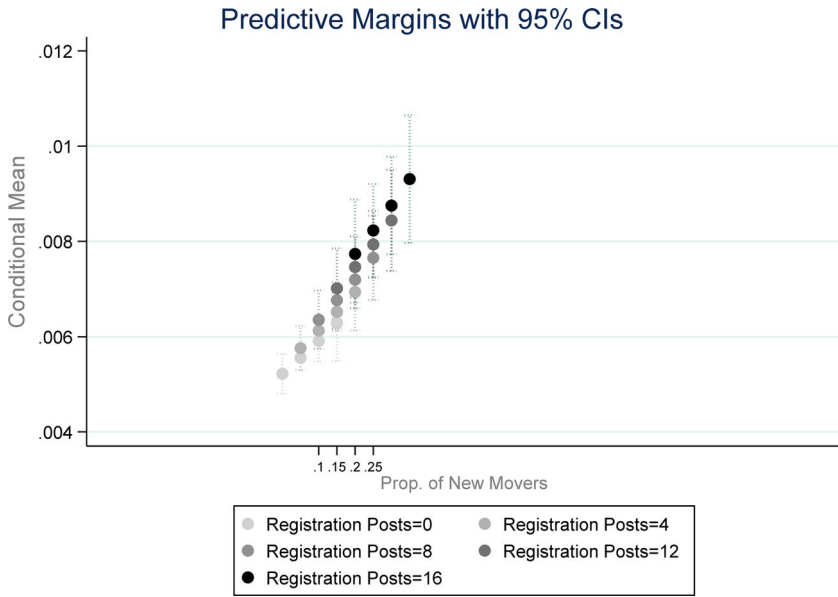


Figure A6. Predictive margins for proportion of new registrations/CVAP in 2020 monthly-level analysis new movers and voter registration Facebook posts.

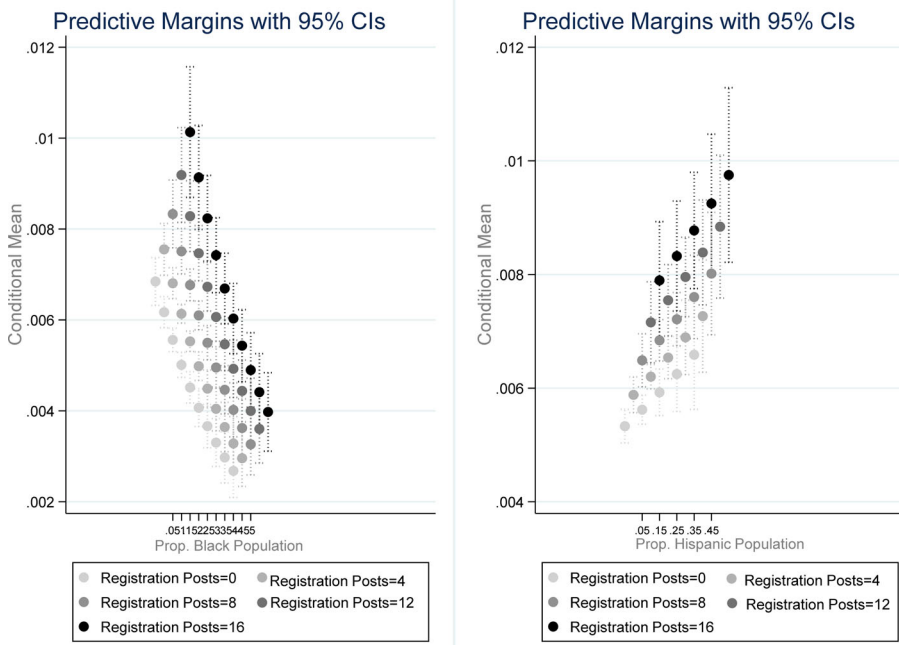


Figure A7. Predictive margins for proportion of new registrations/CVAP in 2020 monthly-level analysis race/ethnic demographics and voter registration Facebook posts.

Table A1. Variation across Florida's 67 counties on social media usage, 2014–2018.

	County Operates an Official LEO Facebook Account					
	2014		2016		2018	
Running Social Media Ads	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Reported "Yes"	15	16	29	17	38	11
Reported "No"	17	19	15	6	13	5

Survey Topic/Category: Advertisements and Publications/Social Media Ads.

Question: "Did your County participate in Voter Education Activities for the given Topic and Category?"

Table A2. New Voter Registrations 2014–2018: Time-Series Restricted Model

	Proportion of New Registrations / CVAP
Voter Registration Outreach Index	
2	0.320 (0.334)
3	0.246 (0.325)
4	0.216 (0.324)
5	0.296 (0.323)
6	0.410 (0.327)
7	0.486 (0.325)
8	0.479 (0.323)
9	0.544 (0.325)*
10	0.489 (0.327)
Publications and Advertisements Index	
1	−0.040 (0.126)
2	−0.008 (0.117)
3	−0.082 (0.119)
4	0.010 (0.112)
5	−0.025 (0.116)
6	0.045 (0.118)
7	−0.010
Additional Controls	
LEO Facebook Account	0.045 (0.42)
LEO Party ID	0.083 (0.044)*
2016	0.529 (0.041)***
2018	0.214 (0.045)***
Vote for Highest Office	0.207 (0.061)***
Population	0.000 (0.000)
% Ages 25–44	−0.599 (1.220)
% Ages 45–64	0.162 (0.981)
% Over 65	0.957 (0.604)
% Black	−1.373 (0.248)***
% Hispanic	0.616 (0.204)***
% New Residents	2.717 (0.543)***
Constant	−4.296 (0.685)***
N	153

* $p < 0.1$; ** < 0.05 , *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A3. New voter registrations 2014–2018: time series restricted model publications and advertisements dummies.

	Proportion New Registrations / CVAP
Voter Registration Outreach Index	
2	0.236 (0.322)
3	0.174 (0.312)
4	0.084 (0.313)
5	0.213 (0.309)
6	0.304 (0.310)
7	0.379 (0.310)
8	0.379 (0.309)
9	0.431 (0.310)
10	0.416 (0.311)
Advertising / Publications	

(Continued)

Table A3. Continued.

	Proportion New Registrations / CVAP
<i>Voter Registration Outreach Index</i>	
Social Media	-0.125 (0.035)***
TV & Radio	0.049 (0.119)
Newspapers	0.099 (0.059)*
Print Media	0.039 (0.116)
Public Transportation	-0.048 (0.059)
Billboards and Posters	-0.025 (0.039)
Precinct Maps	-0.009 (0.038)
<i>Additional Controls</i>	
Facebook Account	0.068 (0.039)*
LEO Party ID	0.116 (0.042)***
2016	0.541 (0.042)***
2018	0.231 (0.046)***
Vote Highest Office	0.212 (0.059)***
Population	0.000 (0.000)
% Ages 25–44	0.083 (1.171)
% Ages 45–64	0.060 (0.936)
% Over 65	1.181 (0.583)
% Black	-1.252 (0.250)***
% Hispanic	0.745 (0.204)***
% New Residents	2.370 (0.544)***
Constant	-4.453 (0.628)
<i>N</i>	153

* $p < 0.1$; ** <0.05 , *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A4. New voter registrations 2014–2018: time series restricted model voter registration outreach dummies.

	Proportion New Registrations / CVAP
<i>Voter Registration Outreach Activities</i>	
Church Outreach	0.003 (0.050)
College Outreach	0.110 (0.056)*
High School Outreach	-0.020 (0.125)
Community Outreach	0.048 (0.070)
Senior & Disabled Community Outreach	0.156 (0.058)***
Minority Community Outreach	0.068 (0.057)
Library Outreach	-0.094 (0.043)**
Immigration Office Outreach	0.037 (0.040)
LEO Office Outreach	0.024 (0.055)
3PVRO Training	0.120 (0.044)***
<i>Advertising / Publications Index</i>	
1	-0.159 (0.125)
2	0.057 (0.116)
3	0.105 (0.116)
4	0.006 (0.110)
5	-0.062 (0.114)
6	0.034 (0.115)
7	-0.018 (0.128)
<i>Additional Controls</i>	
Facebook Account	0.011 (0.041)
LEO Party ID	0.076 (0.042)*
2016	0.516 (0.0398)***
2018	0.218 (0.043)***

(Continued)

Table A4. Continued.

	Proportion New Registrations / CVAP
<i>Voter Registration Outreach Activities</i>	
Vote Highest Office	0.167 (0.059)***
Population	0.000 (0.000)
% Ages 25–44	–0.870 (1.171)
% Ages 45–64	–0.346 (0.907)
% Over 65	0.536 (0.584)
% Black	–1.461 (0.248)***
% Hispanic	0.532 (0.205)***
% New Residents	2.343 (0.519)***
Constant	–3.695 (0.572)***
N	153

* $p < 0.1$; ** <0.05 , *** $p < 0.01$.**Table A5.** Average marginal effects 2014–2018 time series- full model.

	Proportion New Registrations / CVAP
<i>Traditional Media</i>	
TV and Radio Ads	0.001 (0.001)
Newspaper Ads	0.004 (0.002) **
Print Media	–0.002 (0.001)
Public Transportation Ads	–0.000 (0.000)
Billboards and Posters	–0.000 (0.000)
Precinct Maps	0.000 (0.001)
<i>Social Media</i>	
Reported Social Media Activity	–0.003 (0.00) ***
Facebook Page Active	0.002 (0.001)
<i>Face to Face</i>	
Church Outreach	0.000 (0.002)
College Outreach	0.004 (0.005)
High School Outreach	–0.006 (0.024)
Community Outreach	0.000 (0.002)
Senior and Disabled Communities	0.005 (0.002)
Minority Communities	0.004 (0.003)**
Library Outreach	–0.002 (0.001)
Immigration Office Outreach	–0.000 (0.000)
LEO Office Outreach	–0.000 (0.002)
3rd Party VR Training	0.002 (0.001) **
<i>Additional Controls</i>	
SoE Party ID	0.002 (0.000)***
Year 2016	0.009 (0.000)***
Year 2018	0.003 (0.001)***
Vote Highest Office (% Dem)	0.002 (0.001)***
Population	0.000 (0.000)
% Age 25–44	0.000 (0.011)
% Age 45–64	–0.005 (0.010)
% Age 65 and older	0.008 (0.005)
% Black	–0.008 (0.002) ***
% Hispanic	0.004 (0.001)***
% New Residents	0.013 (0.004)***
N	201

* $p < 0.1$; ** <0.05 , *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A6. Average marginal effects 2020 monthly time series- proportion of new registrations/CVAP.

	Proportion New Registrations / CVAP
Registration FB posts / month	0.000 (0.000)***
Proportion OVR Applications	0.003 (0.000) ***
September	0.000 (0.000)***
October	0.000 (0.000)***
LEO Party ID	0.000 (0.000)**
% Age 25–44	–0.001 (0.001)
%Age 45–64	–0.000 (0.002)
% Over 65	0.000 (0.000)
% Black	–0.002 (0.000)***
% Hispanic	0.000 (0.000)**
% New Residents	0.001 (0.000)**
2012 Presidential Vote-% Dem	–0.000 (0.000)
2016 Presidential Vote-%Dem	–0.000 (0.000)
2018 Gubernatorial Vote-% Dem	0.000 (0.000)
N	612

Note: Average marginal effects from Fractional regression with robust standard errors.

* $p < 0.1$; ** <0.05 , *** $p < 0.01$.

Table A7. Average marginal effects 2020 monthly time series proportion of OVR transactions/CVAP.

	Proportion OVR Transactions/CVAP
Registration FB posts / month	0.012 (0.003)***
September	0.022 (0.001)***
October	–0.026 (0.006)
LEO Party ID	0.007 (0.000)***
% Age 25–44	–0.238 (0.084)***
%Age 45–64	0.229 (0.002)***
% Over 65	0.132 (0.039)
% Black	0.008 (0.013)
% Hispanic	0.026 (0.010)**
% New Residents	–0.009 (0.027)
2012 Presidential Vote-% Dem	–0.018 (0.008)**
2016 Presidential Vote-% Dem	–0.005 (0.005)
2018 Gubernatorial Vote-% Dem	0.031 (0.007)***
N	612

Note: Average marginal effects from Fractional regression with robust standard errors.

* $p < 0.1$; ** <0.05 , *** $p < 0.01$.

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