

# The Effects of Voting Materials in Spanish on the Participation of Latino Voters in the Ventura County



# Interest

- Family members use voting materials
- Articles



# Voting Materials Background

- 1965 Voting Rights Act
- 1975 “Language Minority Provision”
- Includes assistance in foreign language for voters
- Spanish language assistance 425 jurisdictions, 4 states



# Current Research

- The Political Science Quarterly Rodolfo O. Garza, Alan Yang direct impact between the jurisdictions covered by the VRA and the participation of Latino voters
- MALDEF, NALEO, NHLA increased potential influence in elections
- Very general
- Less research on how voting materials help specifically



# Question

How do voting materials in Spanish affect the participation of Latino voters in the Ventura County?



# Project Goals

- Determine how many people in the Ventura County use voting materials
- How they benefit
- If there is a pattern among people who benefit the most



# Ventura County

- County in Southern California
- Population of 854,223
- 42.9% Latino
- Most common non-English language Spanish
- 28.1% native Spanish speakers
- Provides “Spanish language assistance”
- All materials provided are translated to Spanish



# Survey Methods

- Survey distributed online
- 100 participants
- All adults in the Ventura County
- Distributed through administration of all CVUSD schools





# Survey Contents

## Identifying Questions

- Age
- County
- Language ability
- Registered to vote

## Questions on voting materials

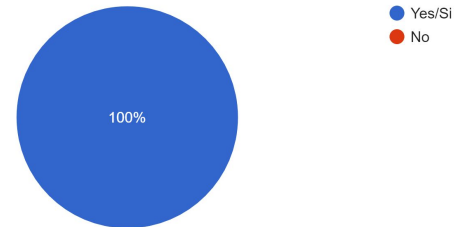
- Are they useful?
- Would you be able to vote without them?

# Survey Results

- Age 18-79
- 100 Ventura County
- 89.9% Latino
- 80.8% registered to vote
- 22.1% Spanish ballot

Do you live in the Ventura County? ¿Vives en el condado de Ventura?

97 responses

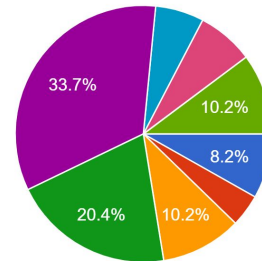


# Survey Results

- 33.7% English and Spanish the same
- 20.4% Spanish better than English
- 10.2% speak both but more comfortable with English

Which of the following best describes you? ¿Cuál de las siguientes te describe mejor?

98 responses

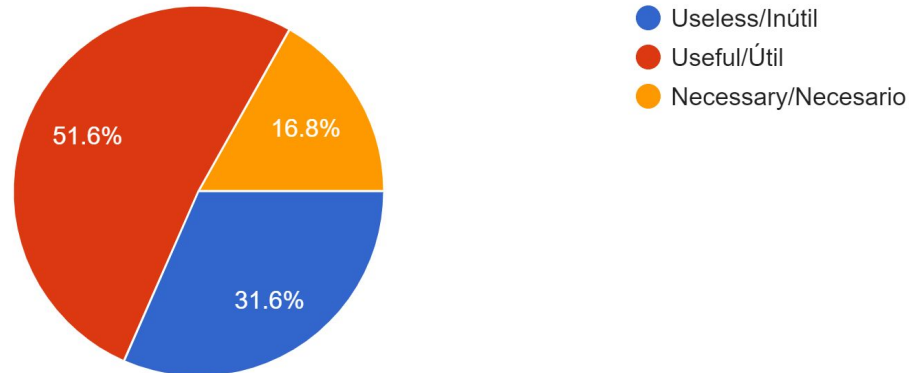


- I speak no Spanish/No hablo español
- I only speak Spanish/Solo hablo español
- I speak English better than Spanish/Hablo inglés mejor que español
- I speak Spanish better than English...
- I speak English and Spanish the sa...
- I speak both Spanish and English b...
- Hablo español y inglés pero estoy...
- I speak Spanish and English but I a...

# Survey Results

Do you feel that voting materials in Spanish such as ballots and official voter information guides would be \_\_\_\_...rían \_\_\_\_\_ para usted cuando vote?

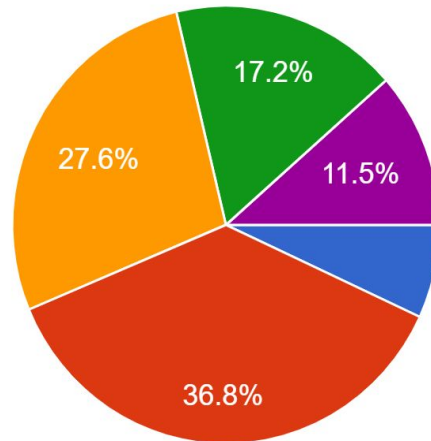
95 responses



# Survey Results

If you use voting materials in Spanish would you say they are....

87 responses

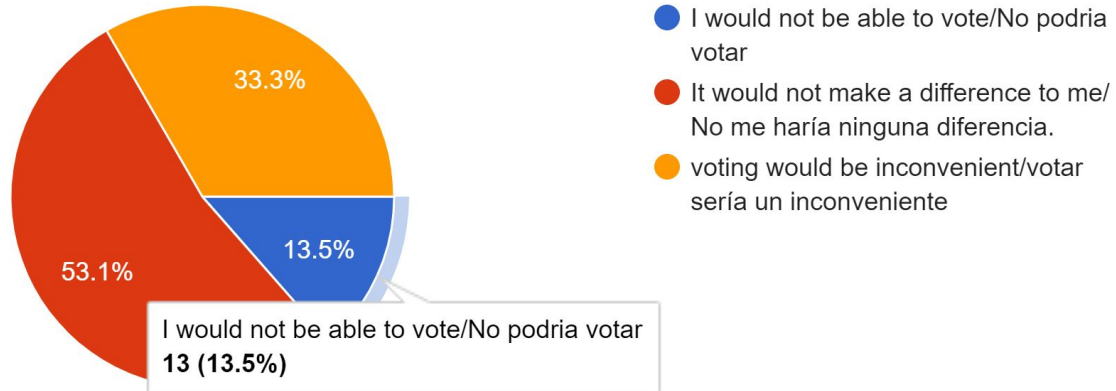


- useless/Inútil
- I do not use them or have not voted/ No los uso o no he votado
- Somewhat helpful/Algo útil
- extremely helpful/extramadamente útil
- necessary for me when voting/ necesario para mí al votar

# Survey Results

If the Ventura County did not have voting materials in Spanish....Si el Condado de Ventura no tuviera materiales para votar en español ...

96 responses





# Interview Methods

- 4 interviews
- Records Technician at the Ventura County Clerk's office elections division
- 3 interviews with people who benefit from voting materials in different ways



## Interview Results

- Records technician “ It allows Spanish speaking voters to understand who and what they’re voting on. ”
- All three who used voting materials agreed that they were helpful and without them voting would be difficult
- The person who said it would not make a difference said she would not be able to vote for anything other than President





# Limitations

- Wide variety of respondents
- Small pool of interviews




# Conclusion

- Increase the participation by making voting easier
- Varies based on language ability



## Further Research

- Multiple surveys for the language groups
- Study in jurisdictions without voting materials



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