Exploring the Relationship between Policing Policy Preferences and Generational Voter Turnout in the 2020 Election

A study conducted for the Berkeley Institute for Young Americans

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Executive Summary

This study investigates the effect of generational cohort status and support for policing policy preferences on voter turnout during the 2020 election year. Amid heightened visibility of police violence following high-profile incidents and substantial public mobilizations, there is a marked generational divergence in political engagement, particularly influenced by attitudes toward policing policies.

Despite the relevance of these issues, there is a significant gap in understanding how specific policing policy preferences shape voter turnout across generations. This hampers the ability of elected officials, government workers, and policymakers to engage effectively different generational cohorts in the electoral process based on their unique experiences and perspectives on law enforcement. This study aims to address this deficiency by exploring how generational differences in police preferences influence voting behavior.

Findings from this paper suggest that policing policies resonate somewhat differently across generations, with the overall impact on voter turnout limited, indicating the possible need for broader electoral strategies that transcend generational divides. The consistent although moderate effect sizes observed for increased Millennial turnout for liberal policing preferences across almost all tested policing policies suggests that generational-specific approaches to voter mobilization based on these issues may yield improvements in turnout. This takeaway is further substantiated by observable although less consistent responsiveness by older generations, specifically the Silent generation, which experience an opposite effect of decreased voter turnout when individuals hold more liberal policy preferences.

The paper is structured as follows: after the executive summary, the introduction sets the stage by outlining the social and political backdrop of the 2020 election. It is followed by a detailed program overview from the Berkeley Institute for Young Americans, which contextualizes the research within broader institutional efforts. Next,

a comprehensive literature review frames the current understanding and gaps in research. This is followed by a detailed methodology section describing the data sources and analytical techniques employed. Results from the study are discussed next, assessing the impact of different policing policies on voter turnout by generation. The report concludes with recommendations for future research and policy, urging a deeper examination into the specific and potentially unique effects of policing policies on voter turnout.

Introduction

The social unrest of the 2020 election year was a historic flashpoint in the visibility of police violence. Successive nationally publicized police killings of Black citizens—from the murder of Breona Taylor to the murder of George Floyd—culminated in America's largest protest mobilization led by the Movement for Black Lives (M4BL). Both George Floyd's killing and M4BL protests ultimately resulted in an increase in voter registration and turnout (Holbein & Hassell 2023; Morris & Shoub 2024). In 2020, grassroots organizations also galvanized efforts to "Defund the Police" by engaging in police budgetary policy (Morris & Shoub 2024). Evidence suggests these events may have particularly captured the political energy of younger generations who are more likely to hold more liberal attitudes and preferences on policing (Goldstein 2021).

Yet one must also consider how generational cohort status may influence the impact of policing policy preferences on voter turnout. Due to issue voting, where voters are mobilized to vote as a result of unique policy preferences, understanding the mobilizing effect regarding specific policing preferences is crucial. Unfortunately, too little is known about how policy preferences on policing influence voter turnout across different generations. As a result, elected officials, government workers, and policy makers are insufficiently prepared to engage various generational cohorts in the electoral process based on their differential experiences and preferences with law enforcement.

Assessing the divergence in democratic behavior based on policing policy preferences across cohorts is vital for several key improvements to civic engagement and election turnout. First, voters tend to possess specific policy preferences conditional on generational identity and experiences (Goldstein 2021). If elected officials have knowledge of the generational attitudes toward policing held by their constituents, elected officials can increase political responsiveness to prioritize the policy issues important to traditionally excluded constituents. Secondly, voter turnout rates remain highly unequal across generational lines (Anzia & Hawkins 2020; Munger 2022, 2023; Trachtman et al. 2023). If specific policy preferences and attitudes are predictive of generational voter turnout then it stands to reason that increased responsiveness to issues such as policing may mobilize generationally marginalized voters to the poll.

Literature Review

Mobilization effects of policy preferences, or issue voting, are deeply interrelated with how individuals perceive potential advantages and costs of a policy (Biggers 2011; Flavin & Griffin 2009; Hortala-Vallve & Esteve-Volart 2011). The creation of policies often identifies who and how much benefits and burdens are to be redistributed whether it be for social security (which most directly benefits older adults) or education support (which most directly benefits younger voters) (Flavin & Griffin 2009; Hortala-Vallve & Esteve-Volart 2011). This creation of winners and losers through policy generation has a signaling effect about who is relevant in political systems. Thus, those who perceive the highest potential benefit see themselves as a main constituency of interests and therefore incentivized to participate in elections (Flavin & Griffin 2009).

Conversely, policies can produce a demobilizing effect for communities when perceived burdens of a policy may be incurred. Yet this pattern is not always straightforward. For example, policies in the early 2000s around the invasion of Iraq motivated both those who received the greatest benefit and those who sought to lose the most from this

policy suggesting that the threat of incurred burdens may also motivate voter turnout (Flavin & Griffin 2009). Furthermore, policies related to social issues also tend to be uniquely motivating (Biggers 2011). Policies that pertain to key social issues tap into an individual's sense of right and wrong as well as social cleavages that relate to specific identities particularly for marginalized groups (Biggers 2011). As a result, literature may suggest that policies on policing may uniquely motivate turnout if the benefits and costs of these policies are segmented by generations or if these policies tap into senses of right or wrong that are fractured on generational lines.

Previous research has not investigated the influence of policing policy preferences on voter turnout along generational lines but related literature is informative. Voter turnout is remarkably responsive to a host of criminal justice practices including personal and familial experiences with incarceration (Walker 2020; White 2019), contact through predatory policing encounters (Laniyonu 2019) fines (Ben-Menachem & Morris 2023), proximity to neighborhood police killings (Markarian 2023; Morris & Shoub 2024), as well as high profile police killings (Holbein & Hassell 2023). However, policing preferences have not yet been tested.

Research has surfaced clear generational effects for support of policing (Goldstein 2021). While large differences in policy support across racial groups on policing are frequently highlighted, the gap between generations is much wider (Goldstein 2021). Generational effects may be the result of varied significant shared life experiences with policing institutions, which in turn partially influences subsequent voter turnout. Older Americans' experiences of high crime rates in the past likely shaped their favorable views on increased policing and thereby motivated turnout. In contrast, younger Americans, having grown up during the era of aggressive "broken windows" policing and recurring cases of high profile police killings, are more likely to oppose such measures (Goldstein 2021). Consequently, older generations, in particular Boomers, behave electorally as a pro-police constituency (Goldstein 2021). Combined, literatures on issue voting and generational policing preferences suggest that policies on

policing may uniquely motivate turnout if the benefits and costs of these policies are distributed unevenly by generation or if these policies tap into senses of right or wrong that are fractured on generational lines.

The 2020 presidential election falls directly at the intersection of voter turnout and policing policy. Voter behavior associated with direct response to George Floyd's killing and subsequent historic BLM protests has been somewhat unclear. For example, there is evidence that suggests that voter political behavior was boosted due high profile cases of police violence in 2020 and related protests (Holbein & Hassell 2023). At other times, research suggests that turnout effects as a result of BLM protests critical of policing in 2020 may have been more moderate and concentrated by partisanship (Teeselink & Melios 2021). Additionally the violent treatment of BLM protesters explicitly supported by former President Trump raised the visibility of this issue to potential voters. Relatedly, while BLM protests in 2020 that were critical of police may have led to decreased support for funding for local police originating in democratic and Black communities, other estimates suggest a backlash against protestors from GOP constituents that actually increased funding for police overall (Ebbinghaus et al. 2024; Sances 2023). The overwhelming salience of policing during the 2020 election year requires a review of pathways by which policing and policing policy preferences may have influenced voter turnout.

Methodology

Research Question

Regrettably, our understanding of how policing policy preferences affect voter turnout among different generational cohorts remains limited. This gap in knowledge leaves elected officials, government workers, and policymakers inadequately equipped to effectively engage with various age groups during elections, considering their distinct experiences and perspectives on law enforcement. This deficiency underscores the need to explore the research question:

How do attitudes and policing policy preferences influence the probability of voter turnout along generational lines?

Data

This project will leverage the Common Content of the Cooperative (Congressional) Election Study 2020 (CES), a nationally representative election survey conducted by YouGov in collaboration with Harvard University (Schaffner et al. 2020). The CES employs a robust and comprehensive survey approach to examine American perspectives on Congressional representation, voting behaviors, and the effects of political geography and social context. The 2020 CES's large sample size of 62,000 responses enables detailed analysis across diverse legislative constituencies, capturing state-level variations in voter preferences with high precision (Schaffner et al. 2020). Each year, the CES brings together multiple research teams that contribute to both unique and shared content in the survey, ensuring a rich compilation of data relevant to scholars studying Congress, elections, and voter demographics (Schaffner et al. 2020). The CES implements a rigorous methodological approach and voter validation process in conjunction with voter records, a task handled by the partner firm Catalyst. This firm's involvement ensures the CES data's accuracy and representativeness, enhancing its utility for analyzing American electoral behavior.

The CES use YouGov's matched random sample methodology, refined by Catalyst's voter validation process, to ensure the dataset accurately reflects the demographic and political composition of the U.S. electorate (Schaffner et al. 2020). This process involves matching a randomly drawn target sample from the general population to respondents in an opt-in panel using comprehensive consumer and voter databases, which helps in approximating a true random sample. Such methodological rigor is crucial for investigating electoral trends and behaviors, providing a reliable foundation for academic research into the dynamics of U.S. elections and contributing significantly to the understanding of political shifts and voter behavior patterns.

The CES is particularly adept at exploring the impact of policing policy preferences on voting behavior due to its comprehensive approach to data collection. By capturing a wide array of demographic micro-data alongside detailed questions on policy preferences, the CES allows researchers to dissect the nuanced ways in which different generational cohorts interact with these policies. This capability is vital for policymakers and officials who need to understand not just the prevailing attitudes toward policing across age groups, but also how these attitudes might motivate or deter voter turnout. Such insights enable more targeted and effective policy responses that can address generational disparities in civic engagement and potentially close gaps in voter turnout. By focusing on specific issues that resonate differently across age groups, elected officials can tailor their strategies to enhance political participation and responsiveness, fostering a healthier democratic process.

Methods

For this analysis, I use a regression framework to explore the marginal difference in voter turnout (in percentage point terms) for CES respondents who participated in the 2020 election. Specifically, I will examine **the interaction effect of responses of support for a specific policing policy and a categorical variable for generational cohort to predict the marginal difference in voter turnout, adjusted for a range of demographic and economic factors.**

We focus on understanding the effect of respondents' answers to 7 key questions on policing policies and generation may affect their likelihood to vote in the 2020 election. As such, I test **7 different models with each model corresponding to a specific question about policing policy preferences (1 if support and 0 for oppose) interacted with generation**. Thus each model's **main predictor variable** of interest is an interactive variable composed of a dummy variable for support of specific policing policy and a variable for generation cohort. Policing policies used in these models fall into three policy types; budgetary, coercion, and accountability mechanisms. The specific questions being tested are:

Budgetary

- *Should we increase the number of police on the street by 10 percent, less public services?*
- *Should we decrease the number of police on the street by 10 percent, less public services?*

Coercion

- *Should we end the Federal program that provides provisions of military weapons to local police?*
- *Should we ban the use of chokeholds by police?*

Accountability Mechanisms

- *Do you support or oppose allowing individuals or their families to sue a police officer for damages if the officer is found to have "recklessly disregarded" the individual's rights.*
- *Do you support or oppose creating a national registry of police who have been investigated for or disciplined for misconduct?*
- *Do you support or oppose requiring police officers to wear body cameras that record all of their activities while on duty?*
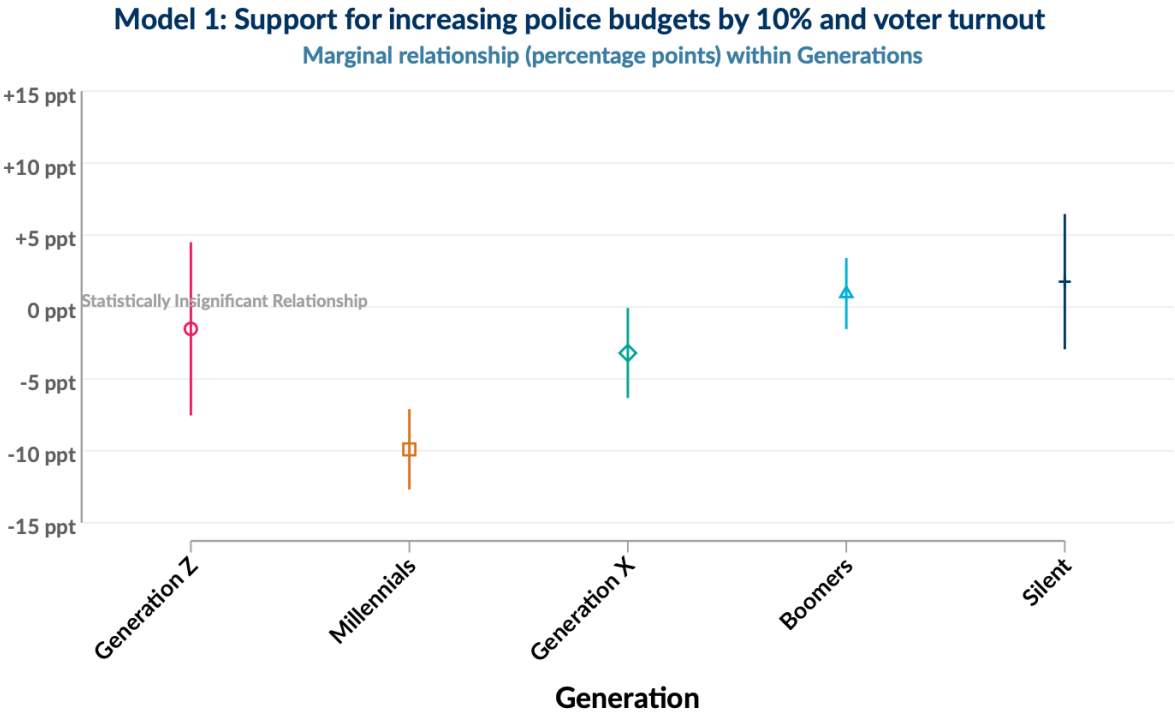
The variable for generation is represented by a categorical variable for five generation groups Gen Z, Millennial, Gen X, Baby Boomers and Silent. To generate this variable I use the reported birth year of respondents to match time widows corresponding to generational groups. This project uses the specific year windows that define generational identities based on definitions used by Pew Research Center in accordance with previous generational policy research (Munger 2024). **In these models, corresponding generations who oppose each specific policy are the reference group for each generation estimate thereby highlighting the relationships within different generations.**

The dependent variable in this model is the binary indicator of validated voting participation. Additionally the models tested incorporate several key covariates. The covariates include:

- **College attainment** (College Degree and Less than a College Degree)

- **Race** (separate indicators for Asian, Black, Hispanic, white, and other)

- **Male/Female**

- **Partisan Affiliation** (Democrat or Republican)

- **Marital Status** (married or in a domestic/civil partnership)

- **Urbanicity** (separate indicators for City, Suburb, Town, Rural Area and Other)

- **Income** (separate indicators for family income groups $20k-$39,999; $40k-$59,999; $60k-$79,999; $80k-$99,999; $100k-$119,999; $120k-$149,999; and $150k+, with incomes less than $20k as the baseline group)

- **Age**

Of all covariates, the variable for age is the most important control. By controlling for age, I can better ensure that the observed differences are due to generation rather than any confounding effects of age. Afterwards I analyze the marginal effects in our model and apply Stata's "Margins" command to compute and compare the marginal effects of policing policy preferences on voter turnout across different generational groups, quantifying these effects in terms of percentage points along with their respective margins of error. In addition, I weight all estimates using the "commonweight" variable provided by the CES.

Results

Model 1: Support for increasing police budgets by 10% and voter turnout
Marginal relationship (percentage points) within Generations

Source: Authors' analysis of the Cooperative Congressional Election Study, 2020: Common Content.
Sample: All citizens 18 years or older.

In Model 1 of our analysis, the interaction terms assessing the impact of a 10% increase in police funding across different generational cohorts indicate minimal and mostly statistically insignificant effects on voting. For Millennials, the interaction effect is negative, showing a 9.9 percentage point decrease (std. err. = 1.43, p < 0.001) in likelihood to vote, relative to Millennials who opposed the policy. Comparatively the effect Generation X is slightly smaller with a 3.2 percentage point decrease (std. err. = 1.60, p = 0.045) likelihood to vote and barely crosses the threshold for statistical significance. The remainder of estimates are statistically insignificant and thus not discernible from 0. For Generation Z, there is a 1.5 percentage point decrease. For Boomers and the Silent Generation, the effects are again not significant, with a 0.9 percentage point increase and a 1.8 percentage point increase, respectively. Although generational effects are not consistent across groups, we observe an important

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difference that holds for younger Americans, such as Millennials, albeit not predictive for Gen Z voters.
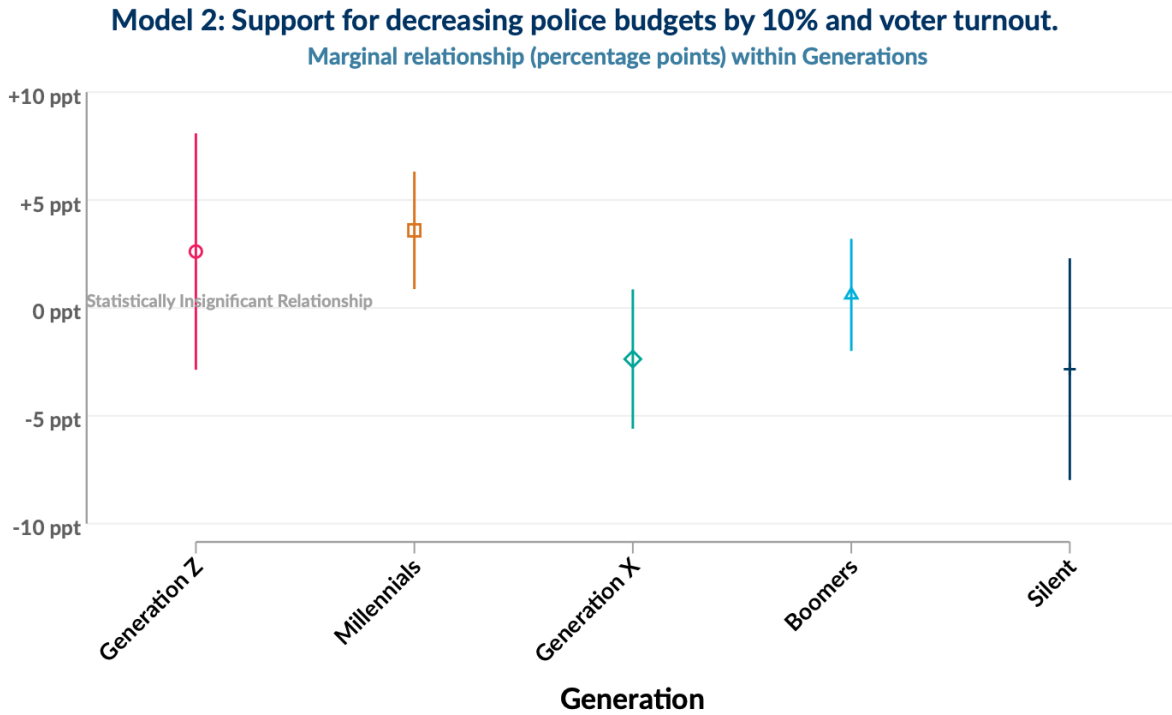
Model 2: Support for decreasing police budgets by 10% and voter turnout.
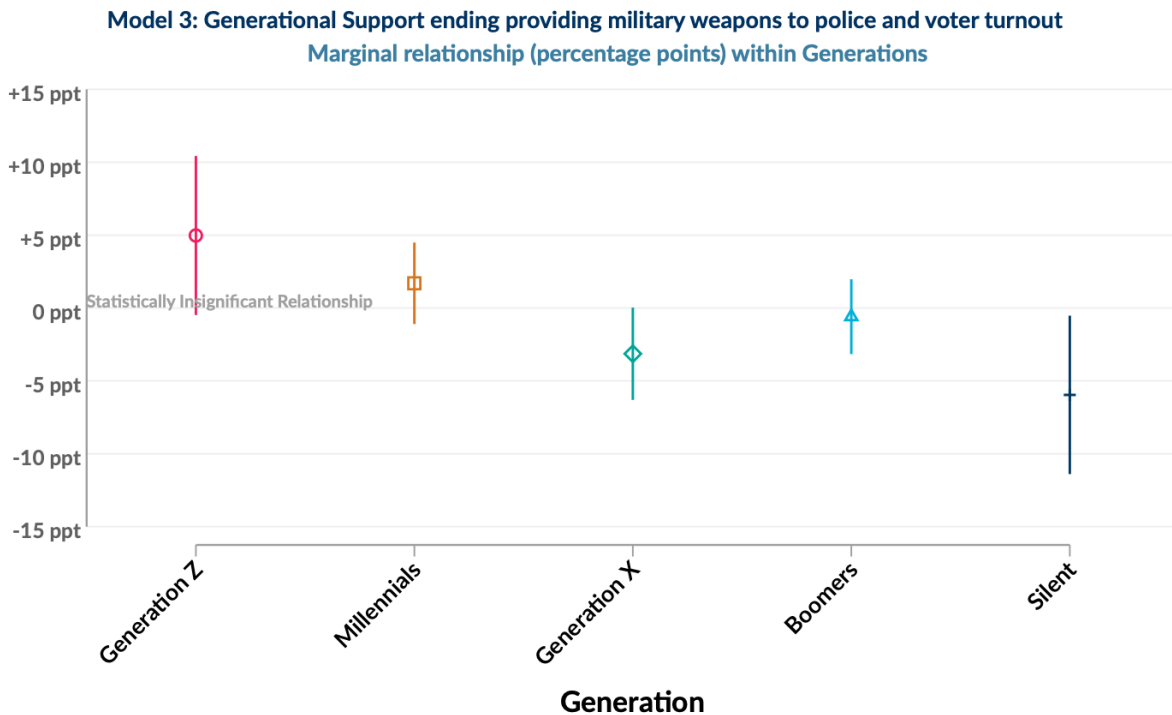Marginal relationship (percentage points) within Generations

Source: Authors' analysis of the Cooperative Congressional Election Study, 2020: Common Content.
Sample: All citizens 18 years or older.

In Model 2 of our analysis, where we interact the generation variable with support for decreasing police funding, the results show consistent but mostly statistically insignificant trends. For Generation Z, there is a 2.6 percentage point increase in likelihood to vote for supporters of decreasing police budgets relative to cohort mates who did not but is not discernibly different from 0. Then for Generation X, there is a 2.4 percentage point decrease, meanwhile Boomers, a 0.6 percentage point increase, and for the Silent Generation, a 2.8 percentage point decrease, none of which are statistically significant. However, the interaction terms for Millennials indicate a 3.6 percentage point increase (std. err. = 1.39, p = 0.010) in likelihood to vote relative to Millennials who opposed decreasing police budgets. These findings suggest that, similar to the analysis of support for increasing police funding, preferences for policing budgets generally do not significantly influence most generation's decision to vote, with the

exception of Millennials, who are slightly more likely to vote when supporting liberal policing policy preferences.
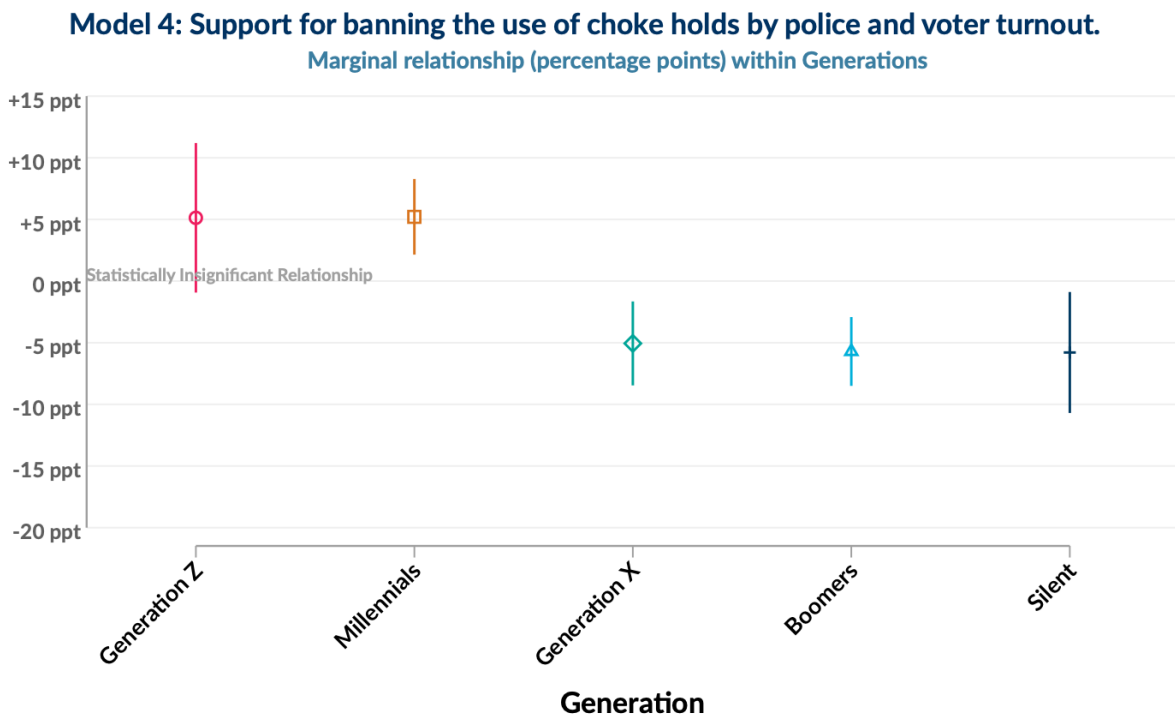
Still, while budgetary concerns and preferences on policing have been more salient in recent years, policies concerning coercion have effectively charged outcomes. Therefore, these policy preferences may precipitate clear and unique responses. How do specific preferences around police coercion relate to voting behavior?

Model 3: Generational Support ending providing military weapons to police and voter turnout
Marginal relationship (percentage points) within Generations

Source: Authors' analysis of the Cooperative Congressional Election Study, 2020: Common Content.
Sample: All citizens 18 years or older.

For policing policy preferences related to tactics of use of force, Model 3 tests how preferences on militarized weapons, in conjunction with generational identity, relate to voting. Specifically, we focus on responses of support to the policy proposal to "End the Department of Defense program that sends surplus military weapons and equipment to police departments." As with our previous estimates, we observe effects for a single statistically significant generation with a moderate effect size. The supporters of the policy within Silent Generation are associated with a decrease of 6

percentage points in likelihood to vote relative to Silent generation cohort members who oppose ending provident police military weapons (std. err. = 2.77, p = 0.032). For Generation X, the policy preference is associated with a decrease of 3.1 percentage points in likelihood to vote relative to Gen X opposers of the policy, yet the estimate is just short of statistical significance. Similarly, the support for ending the provision of military weapons to police is not strongly predictive of voter turnout within the remainder of generations.

Model 4: Support for banning the use of choke holds by police and voter turnout.
Marginal relationship (percentage points) within Generations

Source: Authors' analysis of the Cooperative Congressional Election Study, 2020: Common Content.
Sample: All citizens 18 years or older.

For the fourth model in our analysis, the interaction terms examining the impact of support for banning chokeholds by police officers reveal variations in the decrease of voting mobilization among different generational cohorts. Specifically, for Millennials, the interaction effect indicates an increase in likelihood to vote by approximately 5.2 percentage points (std. err. = 1.56, p = 0.001), suggesting a significant impact on their likelihood to vote. Support for bans on chokeholds has a positive relationship with voter turnout for Gen Z, but this estimate is not statistically different from 0. In contrast,

Boomers and the Silent generation exhibit more substantial negative effects. Boomers display a decrease in their likelihood to vote by approximately 5.7 percentage points (std. err. = 1.42, p < 0.001) relative to Boomers who opposed banning chokeholds. The Silent Generation shows a similar negative effect, with a reduction in voter likelihood to vote by approximately 5.8 percentage points (std. err. = 2.50, p = 0.021). Generation X shows a reduction in likelihood to vote by approximately 5.1 percentage points (std. err. = 1.74, p = 0.004). These results suggest that while some younger generations, Gen Z, voting behavior is unresponsive to coercive policing policy preferences, older generations (Generation X, Boomers, and the Silent Generation) may be deterred from voting when holding liberal policy preferences on police coercion. According to both models testing the interaction between policy preferences on coercive police tactics, the Silent Generation is consistently less likely to vote when they hold liberal policing policy preferences.

It appears policy preferences relating to coercion practices of police are somewhat associated with responsiveness in voting behavior. But do we observe an effect on preferences for accountability policies? Often, policies regarding police accountability are proposed to curb instances of police violence as well general abuses of power. Thus we may identify a similar trend relating to policies for accountability mechanisms for police.


Model 5: Support for allowing individuals or their families to sue a police officer.
Marginal relationship (percentage points) within Generations
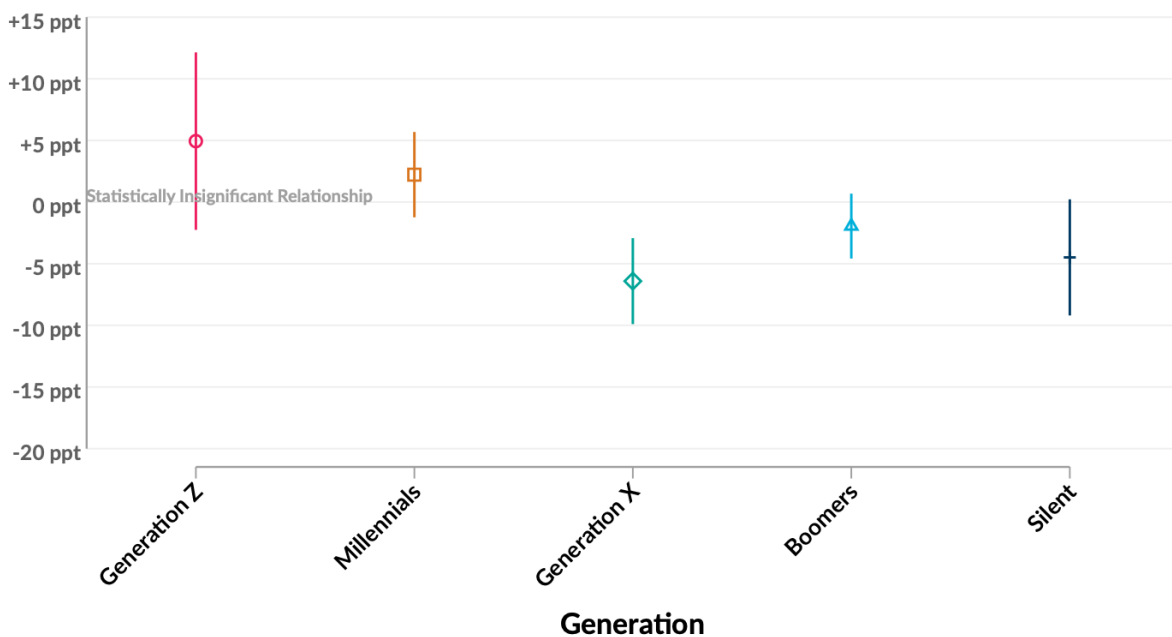
In Model 5, we test support for policies that would allow individuals or their families to sue a police officer for damages if the officer is found to have "recklessly disregarded" the individual's rights. The interaction of support for the policy and Generation X shows a statistically significant decrease in likelihood to vote by 6.4 percentage points (std. err. = 1.78, p < 0.001) relative those of the same generation who opposed. Interaction terms for younger generations show a positive albeit statistically insignificant relationship with voter turnout where Millennials show a 2.2 percentage point increase in likelihood to vote, and for Generation Z, an increase of 4.9 percentage points. Comparatively, Boomers show a decrease in voting likelihood by 1.9 percentage points, and the Silent Generation by 4.5 percentage points, but again, these estimates are not statistically significant, making them less dependable. Although this policy preference does not produce estimates discernibly different for most generations, the direction of the relationships seem to be consistent with other statistically significant effects where liberal policing preferences mobilize youth turnout while having the opposite effect for older generations.

Model 6: Support for creating a national registry of police misconduct and voter turnout.
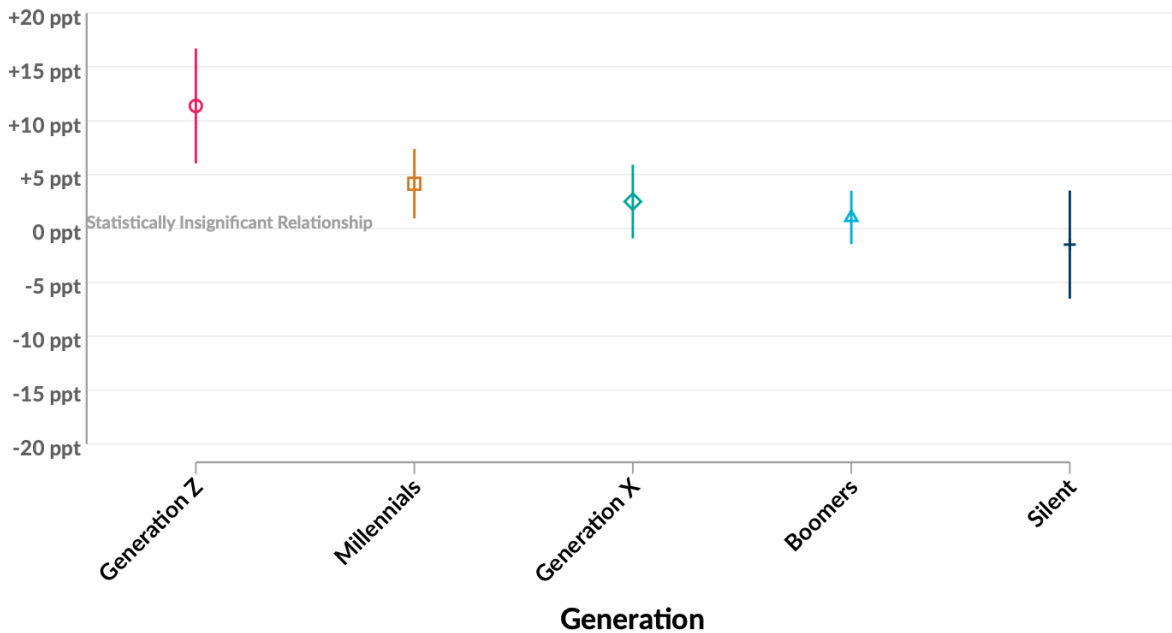Marginal relationship (percentage points) within Generations
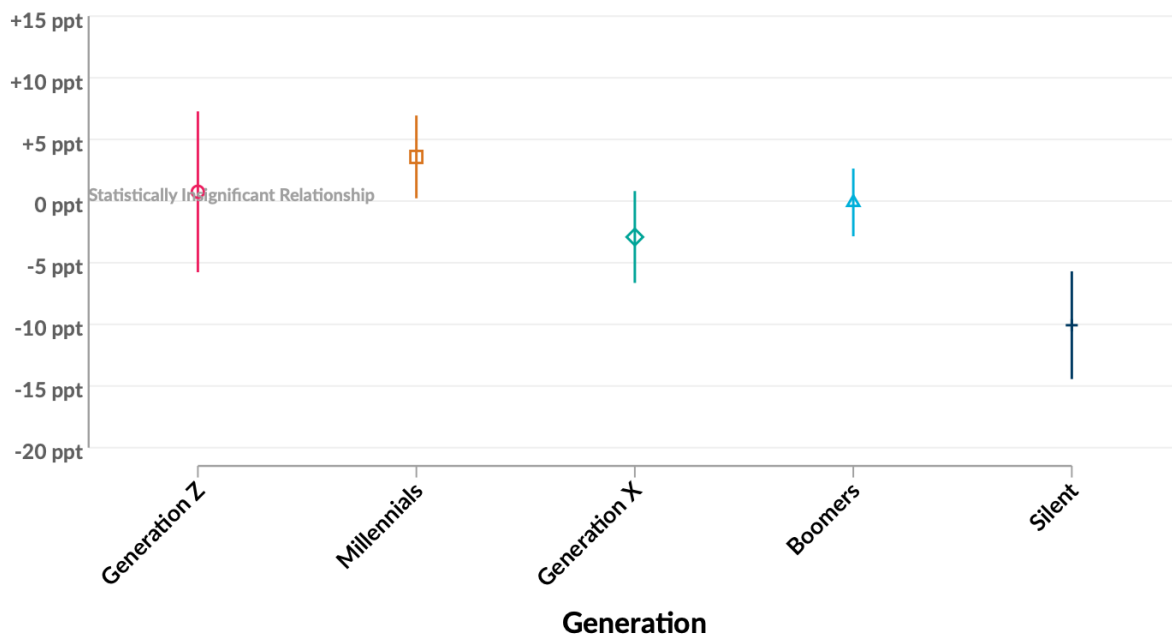
Source: Authors' analysis of the Cooperative Congressional Election Study, 2020: Common Content.
Sample: All citizens 18 years or older.

In Model 6, when analyzing the support for creating a national registry of police officers who have been investigated for or disciplined for misconduct, the effects are mostly non-significant. Nonetheless the estimates further highlight a consistent bifurcation between younger and older generations. For Gen Z, support for the policy shows a positive but statistically insignificant relationship with voter turnout, increasing by a negligible 0.7 percentage points. Boomers show a decrease of 1.1 percentage points, and Gen X supporters of the policy show a decrease in voting likelihood by approximately 2.9 percentage points but these estimates are also not distinguishable from zero. Still, Millennials who support the policy show a statistically significant increase in likelihood to vote relative to Millennials who oppose the policy by approximately 3.5 percentage points (std. err. = 1.9, p = 0.000). Alternatively, the Silent Generation supporters have a decrease in likelihood to vote compared to generation cohort members who oppose the policy by approximately 10.1 percentage points (std. err. = 4.52, p = 0.000).

Despite these outcomes, the final model testing support for requiring police officers to wear body cameras on duty provides a distinctive pattern for younger generations as a whole. The analysis shows a substantial effect for Gen Z, where support for body cameras significantly increases the likelihood of voting by 11.8 percentage points (std. err. = 2.72, p < 0.0001). Similarly, Millennial supporters experience a positive effect but with a smaller generation gap. Support for body cameras for Millenials increases the likelihood to vote by 4.2 percentage points (std. err. = 1.64, p = 0.011) relative to those that oppose in the same generation. However, the interaction effects with generational cohorts reveal that for older generations support for body cameras is not predictive of voting. Generation X and Boomers show an increase in likelihood to vote by 2.5 percentage points and 1.0 percentage points respectively, and the Silent Generation shows a decrease in voter turnout by 1.5 percentage points, but these estimates are not distinguishable from zero.

Model 7: Support requiring police to wear body cams and voter turnout
Marginal relationship (percentage points) within Generations

Source: Authors' analysis of the Cooperative Congressional Election Study, 2020: Common Content.
Sample: All citizens 18 years or older.

Analysis

The findings indicate that policing policies resonate differently across generations, with the overall impact on voter turnout being limited. For Millennials, we observed moderate but consistent increases in turnout for those with liberal policing preferences across various policies. This suggests that generational-specific approaches to voter mobilization based on these issues may enhance turnout among younger voters. Conversely, older generations, particularly the Silent Generation and to a lesser degree Generation X, exhibit decreased voter turnout when holding more liberal policy preferences.

Although the present study does not provide direct evidence for why the current cohort of older Americans is much more supportive of additional policing than the current cohort of younger Americans, the following rationales may explain these differences. First, older Americans remember the significant crime wave from the 1960s

to the early 1990s, which likely influences their support for increased policing (Goldstein 2021). The high crime rates during this period, extensively reported in the media, may have led to a lasting perception of the need for more robust law enforcement. In contrast, younger Americans were born either at the tail end of the crime wave or after crime rates had begun to decline, resulting in different formative experiences. Second, younger Americans have experienced the era of "broken windows" policing, which often targeted young people (Goldstein 2021). This personal or peer experience with aggressive policing strategies may lead to motivated support for more policies that restrict perceived disproportionate power of police agencies.

The decrease in voter turnout among older generations when they hold liberal policing preferences may also be explained by their historical context and experiences. Older Americans, who lived through the crime waves of the late 20th century, may associate strong law enforcement with safety and stability. When these individuals support liberal policing policies, which may be perceived as less strict or supportive of law enforcement, it might not provide the same incentive to vote as more punitive policies do. Additionally, older generations who hold liberal views on policing may be less politically active compared to their more conservative peers. This lack of political engagement could stem from a feeling that their views are not adequately represented or prioritized in the political landscape, leading to lower voter turnout. Therefore, understanding these nuances is crucial for developing voter mobilization strategies that resonate with the unique experiences and perspectives of older cohorts.

The striking estimates for Gen Z in the final model relating to support for body cameras are puzzling but may have plausible explanations. First, body camera policies have been one of the most popularly used and discussed interventions into police misconduct in the past decade. In 2013, body cameras were used in about one third of all police agencies (Merola et al. 2016). After the killing of Michael Brown, the market and federal support for body worn cameras received dramatic support. The Obama administration initiated grant programs to furnish qualifying agencies with body

cameras and the primary manufacturer offered to provide body cameras for a year for free (Suss et al. 2018). In the following years, body cameras skyrocketed. By 2020, about four out of five agencies used body worn cameras (Police Executive Research Forum 2023). This transformation in popular support for body cameras coincides with formative teenage years for Gen Z members as well the first elections for which they were eligible. It may be possible that as a result, this intervention has garnered steep popular buy-in for younger generations of voters particularly for Gen Z and to a lesser degree Millennials.

Future Research

The consistent patterns and moderate effect size observed for Millennials justify a deeper investigation into how these policies might impact electoral behavior. Millennials, the most likely to be affected by the era of broken windows policing, tend to hold more critical views on policing (Goldstein 2021; Lee et al. 2022). However, it is crucial to investigate these dynamics through longitudinal studies, which would offer insights into whether the observed effects on Millennial voter turnout are persistent over time or merely artifacts of the specific election cycle. Longitudinal data are particularly beneficial for understanding how generational attitudes toward policing evolve and influence political behavior across different electoral contexts.

Equally as important, future research on the relationship between voter turnout and policing policy preferences could be done more robustly if the unit of analysis were focused on local city effects. By focusing on specific city dynamics, researchers could leverage city elections where police policies become ballot issues to further corroborate if voter preferences on policing indeed spur increased turnout.

Conclusion

Findings in this report indicate that policing policies resonate differently across generations, with the overall impact on voter turnout being limited. The moderate but

consistent effect sizes observed for increased Millennial turnout (and decreased turnout for more conservative preferences) for liberal policing preferences across various policing policies suggest that generational-specific approaches to voter mobilization based on these issues may enhance turnout. This is further supported by the less consistent responsiveness of older generations, particularly the Silent Generation, which experiences a decrease in voter turnout when holding more liberal policy preferences. These insights highlight the importance of tailoring electoral strategies to the specific generational contexts to improve voter engagement effectively.

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