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Going back to the well: A panel study into the election boost of political support among electoral winners and losers

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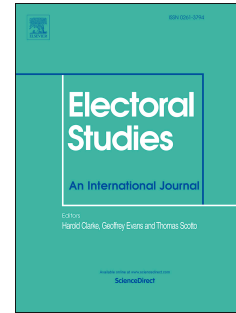
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Title

Going back to the well: A panel study into the election boost of political support among electoral winners and losers

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Abstract

This article employs growth curve models on a four wave panel data to analyze the effects of elections on political support. Our analyses confirm that elections temporarily boost political support on aggregate, and induce a gap in political support between voters of parties that saw electoral gains (i.e., electoral winners) and those that did not (i.e., electoral losers). We specify their timing: Both effects are strongest shortly after the elections took place, but become more apparent in the week(s) before. Finally, we connect the research lines into the election boost and the winner/loser gap. Marginal effects show that although the election boost is significantly stronger among electoral winners, there is no drop in political support among electoral losers and non-voters. These marginal effects are conditional on vote certainty: the positive effect of voting for a winning party is stronger for citizens who voted for that party with more confidence.

Highlights

- Elections boost political support, particularly among electoral winners
- Election outcomes create a winner/loser gap, independent of access to government power
- The electoral effects on political support become visible before election day
- The electoral winner/loser gap is stronger among confident voters
- The electoral winner/loser gap is not affected by stable or volatile party preferences

Keywords

Political support
Elections
Voting behavior
Winner/loser gap
Growth curve model
Panel data

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