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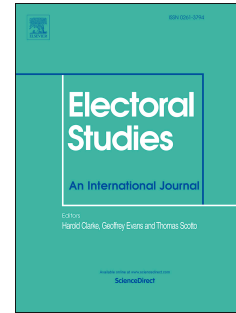
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Reconsidering the Partner Effect on Voting

Moa Frödin Gruneau *

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Abstract

A large literature finds a positive relationship between marriage and turnout. However, previous research has ignored the characteristics of the partner. This paper contributes by studying how a partner's education level is associated with individual turnout. The data cover the US for a time period of more than 40 years, as well as 24 European countries over a time period of 12 years. Including the partner's education level in a model of who votes shows that the partner effect on voting may have been misinterpreted in the previous literature. The relationship between having a partner and turnout is not as general as it is often assumed. Instead of a small positive effect for a large proportion of the population (married people), there is a substantively larger association between turnout and a small proportion of the population, namely, the less-educated individuals who have a highly educated partner.

Keywords: Turnout, Partner, Marriage market, Mating, Education

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