

Electoral participation over the life cycle: Evidence from British longitudinal survey data

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Abstract

In the national elections of many developed countries, voter turnout among older citizens is higher than that among younger citizens. This may imply that people are more likely to vote as they get older. However, it remains unclear how and what socio-economic channels shape this pattern. We address this question by arguing that life events (e.g. marriage, living stability) cause people to mature over time and foster political engagement. Using British long-term panel survey, we show that life events are important sources for the formation of electoral participation.

Keywords: political lifecycle theory; voter turnout; panel data analysis

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