

BOOK REVIEWS

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234 pp. Tables, Illustrations, Appendix, Bibliography, Index. \$16.00

This book is a fine scholarly analysis of the determinants of political participation in the pre-1975 era of Indian politics. Using the Indian Institute of Public Opinion surveys (eight polls extending from 1961 to 1970, which are at the Roper Public Opinion Research Center), Goel examines a set of interrelated questions about political activity: "What kind of people are likely to participate in politics in India? How does political participation vary over major socio-economic and psychological groups? What kind of factors influence such political behavior as voting, discussing politics, attending political rallies, and contacting public officials?" (p. vii)

A paragon of clear organization, the book is comprised of four sections: The first is a discussion of data sources, and the variables to be analyzed. The second and third present the findings—analyzing, respectively, the effects of socioeconomic and attitudinal factors on political participation. These two sections consider the impact of a range of variables (urban-rural and male-female differences, income, religion and caste, party preferences, political efficacy, etc.) on various forms of political participation. The analysis is presented as percentage breakdowns without measures of statistical association. The fourth section offers a concise summary of the study's major findings, some general observations on modernization and participation, a brief speculative comment on the "future of democracy," and a note on possibilities for future research.

One of the book's primary objectives is to discover whether generalizations derived from research on political participation in Western countries hold true in India. Citing the low rates of voting turnout among the educated in India, Goel suggests that in India, unlike the West, political participation is not uni-dimensional. Voting is a quite different act from, for example, initiating political discussions. "In general, unlike the case in Western democracies, voter turnout in India shows a persistent curvilinear relationship with modernism variables" (p. 196). Although, for instance, education is positively correlated with such political activities as discussing politics or trying to influence governmental decisions, education shows a curvilinear relationship with voting turnout. In the same vein, Goel argues that the presumption that ur-

ban society is more participant than rural society (a presumption he acknowledges is contradicted by several Western studies) proves not to be applicable to the Indian case. As the IIPO polls from the late 1960s indicate, there is little difference between rural and urban political participation.

Such findings are not unique to Goel's study, and it is greatly to his credit that he carefully records the similar as well as distinctive findings of other studies of political participation. One of the book's greatest strengths, in fact, is its comparative references (to the Mathews and Prothro observation about the discontinuity between voting and other political acts among blacks in the American South; to the Nie, Inkeles, Cameron, et al. data on the effects of urbanism; etc.).

This very workmanlike study can be criticized not for what it does, but for where it leaves off. The low rate of voting among the educated; the high rates of voting among the uneducated, many of whom feel politically ineffective; and indeed the recent Emergency—all bring into question the *meaning* of past political participation in India. What importance did the act of voting, for instance, have for the individual and for the political system? Was voting (seen as) a means to convey signals upward? Or was it an instrument wielded from the top down to exhort allegiance to elites? Was it successful in either of these purposes? Goel's study answers some key questions about the determinants of political participation, but leaves to future research an analysis of its importance.

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Electoral Participation in a South Indian Context. BY DAVID J. ELKINS. Durham, N.C.: Carolina Academic Press, 1975. 251 pp. Appendixes, Bibliography, Index. \$8.00

All too often the analysis of political behavior, particularly voting behavior and public opinion based upon survey data, has been conducted in an historical and cultural vacuum. The assumption underlying this book is that "if one is to investigate the roots of political behavior fully, taking account of both context and individual attributes, then survey research must be joined

with aggregate data, historical material, and ethnographic description" (p. 147). Elkins makes a good case for the holistic approach, although the focus of his concern is almost totally with the rate of electoral participation, rather than with its direction or content. It is a heavily methodological study, infused with forays into the techniques of correlation and regression analysis. He examines the patterns of participation to reveal six distinct regions within the South—Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and the Andhra areas of Rayalseema, Telengana, and the Northern Circars—and concludes that the macro-characteristics of the regional context are at least as significant as the distribution of individuals with "appropriate" characteristics in accounting for variation in political participation.

In his analysis, the social organization of the regional context is critical, and Elkins identifies as the social units most relevant to political participation the vertical linkages of "small, cohesive, hierarchic 'work teams,' whose leaders mobilize dependents." While recognizing that party organization and leadership have an independent importance, Elkins is most concerned with the role of social structure, particularly the degree of dominance and the internal structure of dominant castes within a particular region. He argues that "since the cohesion of the work teams increases with the degree of dominance of a particular caste in an area, these two factors appear to be the primary structural features accounting for party competition and political participation in any given area" (p. 51). In this regard, he finds distinct differences between the six regions of South India, and within each region, differences between districts. But the region, or even the district (which is his data base), is a large and heterogeneous aggregate; in terms of caste, dominance is usually not a district-wide phenomenon. Perhaps Elkins's model might be enhanced by focusing—to the extent possible, given data limitations—on the constituency itself.

The two measures Elkins uses for political participation are (1) the number of candidates per constituency for state assemblies, and (2) the proportion of valid votes cast in assembly contests. He makes effective use of the voting data; but, by his own admission, the candidacy measure results in a confusing set of patterns. He devotes considerable attention to explaining variations in the number of candidates, but he never

adequately explains why or how this is a measure of political participation. A number of interesting propositions are put forward relating the number of candidates to structural features of the regional context; but in any constituency, the number of candidates will be relatively small, and Elkins makes no distinction between token and meaningful candidacies. It is not the number of candidates that determines degree of competition; rather it is meaningful candidacies. Perhaps if a threshold of minimal support had been used as a criterion for inclusion, Elkins's analysis in this regard would have revealed more coherent and consistent patterns.

For all its limitations, this is an enormously useful book, provocative and instructive. It deserves the close attention of anyone interested in the study of voting behavior in India—or anywhere else.

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Essays on South India. EDITED BY BURTON STEIN. Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, Asian Studies at Hawaii 15, 1975. viii, 212 pp. Index. \$8.50 (paper)

This volume is a collection of seven essays that were given at a conference of South India scholars held at the University of Wisconsin in April 1970. As the editor tells us in his preface, the purpose of the essays is to survey the scholarship on South India in the fields of archeology, Tamil literature, history, geography, anthropology, and sociolinguistics, and to point to those areas where future research is necessary.

The first three essays provide an invaluable source of material for scholars interested in tracing the roots of civilization in South India. Clarence Maloney's essay "Archeology in South India: Accomplishments and Prospects" is filled with insights into the development of the South from the Early Stone Age through the Sangam period. He argues that Iron Age culture was spread throughout the South by a militaristic people who were technologically superior to the indigenous inhabitants, and who were responsible for the linguistic dispersal of Telegu and Tamil over large areas of the South as late as 500 B.C. (p. 11). He goes on to analyze archeological and literary evidence for the Sangam period as a basis for understanding rice agriculture, urbanization, trade, the social structure of