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ENFRANCHISEMENT, POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND POLITICAL COMPETITION: EVIDENCE FROM COLONIAL AND INDEPENDENT INDIA

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Enfranchisement, Political Participation and Political Competition: Evidence from Colonial and Independent India[*]

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February 2023

Abstract

We examine how political participation and political competition are shaped by two class-based extensions of the franchise in 20th-century India. Creating a new dataset of district level political outcomes between 1921 and 1957, we find that both the partial franchise extension of 1935 and the universal suffrage reform of 1950 led to limited increases in citizen participation as voters or candidates, and neither reform had a significant effect on measures of political competition. Despite the limited effects on political outcomes, districts with greater enfranchisement increases experienced higher education provision by provincial governments.

JEL Codes: D72, N45, P16

Keywords: democratization, colonial rule, India, franchise extension, political participation, political competition

1. Introduction

The consequences of political enfranchisement have long been of interest to philosophers and political scientists (Tocqueville, 1835). While cross-country studies have shown that democratization has important economic consequences (Papaioannou and Siourounis, 2008; Acemoglu et al., 2019), franchise and the right to vote are a necessary but not sufficient condition for countries to be democratic. However, little is known about the linkages between different facets of democracy. Indeed, one-third of all countries in the world have been classified as autocracies despite having universal adult suffrage, due to, among other factors, a lack of political competition (Luhrmann et al., 2017). In this paper, we study how enfranchisement reforms in India changed different facets of democracy including citizen participation and political competition, as well as public good provision.

We analyze two major enfranchisement reforms in 20th century India, a setting that enables us to examine enfranchisement in a relatively poor country. The first is the 1935 Government of India Act, which took place under colonial rule and which significantly lowered the property thresholds for voter eligibility and thereby extended the right to vote to approximately 12% of all citizens, with considerable variation across geographic areas. The second is the implementation of universal adult suffrage by the post-independence 1950 constitution of India, which raised the population share of enfranchised people to 48%. We are thus able to examine the consequences of enfranchisement in both a colonial and a post-colonial context within the same country, and answer a range of questions. Does enfranchisement lead to increased citizen participation in the political sphere? How does enfranchisement affect political competition and does it result in a change in the identities of persons and parties that get elected? Does class-based suffrage extension result in better government effort to benefit the newly enfranchised classes, who are poorer and less educated?

Building a novel dataset on electoral results from 1921 to 1957, we track stable geographical units over time (administrative districts) to see how political participation and political competition in those units are affected by these enfranchisement reforms. We relate changes in these outcomes to the district-specific increases in enfranchisement engendered by these reforms, using first difference and difference in

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differences specifications. This methodology allows to separate the effect of enfranchisement change (which varied geographically) from changes in the institutional setting (which changed uniformly throughout India).

We find that the 1935 and 1950 reforms had similar effects. Both led to an increase in the share of voters in the total population. This increase in the proportion of voters is smaller than the increase in enfranchisement itself: a 10-percentage point increase in enfranchisement increases the voter share of the population by only 4.1 percentage points after the 1935 reform, and by 3 percentage points after the 1950 reform. This means that voter turnout, measured as the share of registered voters who exercised their franchise, shows a significant decline in places that experienced a larger increase in enfranchisement. In a similar vein, while the number of candidates increased after each of these reforms, we find that this increase is less than proportional to the enfranchisement increase, so that the number of candidates as a share of all registered voters shows a decline in places where enfranchisement increased by a larger amount. Therefore, a substantial fraction of the population did not exert its political rights after enfranchisement had been enlarged, both in colonial and in independent India.

We use our data to construct several measures of political competition: the number of candidates per seat, the fraction of incumbents who win re-election, the fraction of uncontested races and the Congress Party's winner share. None of these measures show any statistically significant increases with enfranchisement increases, both for the 1935 reform or for the 1950 reform; if anything, we find that the 1950 reform increases the fraction of incumbents who get re-elected. In sum, our results indicate that, in both democratic and non-democratic contexts, political enfranchisement leads to similar effects: a less than proportional increase in political participation of the population.

In terms of policy, we find that both the 1935 and the 1950 result in increased policy attention to primary education but not to other levels of education. We face significant data constraints in examining these policy consequences e.g. we are able to only measure education spending in the colonial period (but not actual access to schools), while the post-colonial period has data on the number of schools but not the level of spending; both of these are only available for a subset of provinces rather than nationwide.

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Nevertheless, we find a positive and significant association between greater enfranchisement and more primary school spending and/or access. Given that the enfranchised population is on average much poorer and less literate, we posit that investment in primary schooling (as opposed to higher levels of education) is aligned with the interests of the newly enfranchised population.

Our study contributes to three distinct literatures in political economy. An extensive literature has studied both individual and institutional determinants of voter turnout, as well as the effects of many contemporary policy interventions.[1] Previous papers on the effects of historical enfranchisement reforms have focused on countries like the U.K. (Berlinski and Dewan, 2011 and 2014), the U.S. (Corvalan et al., 2017) or Italy (Larcinese, 2017). All of these were considerably richer than India at the time when suffrage extensions were enacted: India's GDP per capita in 1950 equaled only 40% of UK's GDP per capita in 1867, 53% of Italy's in 1912 and 50% of the USA in 1850 (Maddison Project, see Bolt et al., 2018). We contribute to this historical literature by focusing on a much poorer setting, and also by contrasting the effects of enfranchisement between a colonial and a post-colonial setting. Our results are consistent with prior literature in finding a decline in turnout following enfranchisement, though our effect sizes are larger. For instance, Berlinski and Dewan (2011) analyze the impact of the U.K.'s Second Reform Act of 1967 and find that a 1% increase in the electorate would result in a 0.07% decline in voter turnout, while Larcinese (2017)'s analysis of Italy's 1912 enfranchisement reform found that a 1% increase in the share of newly enfranchised voters decreased turnout by 0.24%. In contrast, we estimate that a 1% increase in the share of enfranchised voters decreased voter turnout by 0.73% after the 1935 reform and by 0.51% after the 1950 reform.

Second, we contribute to the literature that examines the determinants of political competition and vote choices; most prior studies focus on consolidated democracies with strong party systems.[2] We expand this literature by studying an emerging democracy with nascent parties, and using individual-level

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[1] This literature on voter turnout is too large to summarize here. See, among others, recent work on both developing and developed countries (Green and Gerber, 2015; Cheema et al., 2022; Cantoni and Pons, 2022), as well as the literature review in Stockemer (2017).

[2] See Cyr and Work (2020) for a brief review of the role played by electoral institutions and societal preferences.

competition measures in addition to party-level ones. Prior studies on enfranchisement have found differing

effects on political competition. Berlinski and Dewan (2011) find that franchise extension led to significant

increases in the candidate-seat ratio, and a significant decline in the fraction of uncontested seats and the

share of incumbents standing for re-election. However, Larcinese (2017) finds no increase in the

Herfindahl-Hirshman index of vote shares.[3] Our results are similar to the latter paper in finding no

significant increases in several different measures of political competition (candidate-seat ratio, fraction of

incumbents winning re-election, share of uncontested seats) following the enfranchisement reforms. Our

finding of no significant relationship between enfranchisement reforms and the Congress party's seat share

mirrors these prior papers: while Berlinski and Dewan (2011) document increased candidacy by Liberal

party candidates and Larcinese (2017) finds more left-wing votes after enfranchisement, neither finds an

increase in the actual seats won by these opposition parties.

Third, we add to the literature on enfranchisement and redistributive politics. Many prior papers

have examined the consequences of enfranchisement on aggregate government spending, finding widely

varying results.[4] A few studies have examined human development outcomes, finding that greater

enfranchisement led to better adult heights (Batinti et al., 2019) and reduced child mortality (Miller, 2008).

A key question is whether enfranchisement alone leads to policy changes, as would be predicted by a

"median voter" model (Downs, 1957), or whether such policy changes would occur only if enfranchisement

led to greater political competition or a change in the identity of elected officials, as would be predicted by

"citizen-candidate" models (Osborne and Slivinski, 1996; Besley and Coate, 1997). We contribute to this

literature by examining both political and development outcomes, which few prior studies do. Corvalan et

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[3] In terms of candidate profiles, Berlinski et al. (2014) show that aristocrats were equally likely to be elected after the enfranchisement reform; Larcinese (2017) and Corvalan et al. (2017) similarly find that the probability of electing aristocrats or wealthy citizens does not change with enfranchisement. Our data are not detailed enough to permit analysis of candidate backgrounds.

[4] Studies that find no effect of enfranchisement on total government spending include Peltzman (1980) who analyses the U.K., Canada and the U.S., Corvalan et al. (2017) on the U.S., and Profeta et al. (2013)'s study of developing countries. Several other studies find that enfranchisement leads to more government spending, including Husted and Kenny (1997) on the U.S., Aidt et al. (2006) and Aidt and Jensen (2009) on Western Europe. Aidt et al. (2010) find a U-shaped relationship between franchise extension and public spending in England and Wales. There is also a large literature on the relationship between political competition and policy choices that does not consider enfranchisement (see Winer and Ferris (2022) for a review of the literature and Datta (2019) for an analysis of Indian states).

al. (2017) find that government spending changes only when candidate eligibility rules changed in the U.S. and fewer elites were elected to the Senate; Naidu (2012) finds that Black disenfranchisement increased the vote share of the Democratic party and reduced resources to Black schools; Fujiwara (2015) finds that de facto enfranchisement in Brazil increases public health spending and the seat share of left-wing parties. In contrast, our results show that policy outcomes change towards the interests of the newly enfranchised, despite no significant effects on political competition or the identity of persons or parties elected to power.

Our paper also speaks to the literature that examines India's specific democratic trajectory. Several authors have highlighted continuity, arguing that a reason for independent India's democratic resilience is progressive enfranchisement during the late colonial period (Weiner, 1989; Jaffrelot, 1998; Varshney, 1998).[5] Others, such as Shani (2017), posit a fundamental rupture at independence, arguing that it was the move to universal adult franchise with the enactment of the constitution in 1950 which rooted democracy in India. Other aspects of the political context also changed over time. In particular, the power granted to elected representatives was carefully limited throughout the colonial period, and participation in elections and in government was often questioned by the independence movement. Our finding of similar results across the reforms of 1935 and 1950, on both political and policy outcomes, strongly suggests a role for continuity rather than any specific rupture at independence.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows: Section 2 describes the process of enfranchisement in colonial and post-colonial India, Section 3 describes our data sources and Section 4 outlines our empirical strategy. Sections 5, 6 and 7 document the results of our empirical analysis and Section 8 concludes.

2. Franchise Extensions in 20th Century India

2.1. The Government of India Act of 1919

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[5] Weiner (1989) points out that "an impressive number of erstwhile British colonies… have maintained British style democratic institutions for all or most of their post-independence history… not a single former Dutch, Belgian or French colony currently has democratic institutions." Varshney (1998) makes the subtle argument that "It was not the British legacy per se, but rather the strategic interactions that took place between the British authorities and national-movement leaders that laid the foundations of democracy."

The British empire in India lasted almost 200 years, beginning with the annexation of Bengal by the East India Company in 1757. Following the massive uprising of Indian soldiers against their British officers (the "Sepoy Mutiny" of 1857), the British crown took over the administration of the colony in 1858, and very gradual reforms were undertaken to include more representation of Indians in policymaking (see Appendices B.1 and B.2 for details of these early developments). Direct elections to provincial councils were first provided by the Government of India Act of 1919, also called the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms. This Act also demarcated specific policy areas (such as education and health) to be under the control of these elected provincial councils, while other areas such as land revenue, finance and law and order remained under the control of the Governors.

Suffrage under the 1919 Act was limited to men above a certain level of income or property.[6] Our data indicate that only 2.5% of the population were eligible to vote in the first direct elections of 1921 (Table 1, panel A). All citizens who were eligible to vote were also eligible to contest the election as candidates. An earlier 1909 policy of separate electorates and separate representation on the basis of religion was retained. This policy meant that there were separate Muslim (and Sikh) electoral constituencies, and these religious groups could only become candidates and vote in these reserved constituencies. Appendix B.3 provides further details on the 1919 reform.

Our analysis will focus on the eight major provinces of British India where provincial councils were set up by the reforms of 1919: Assam, Bengal, Bihar & Orissa, Bombay, Central Provinces & Berar, Madras, Punjab and the United Provinces. Provincial council elections were held in 1920, 1923, 1926 and 1930. However, several of these were affected by political parties' boycotts. The Indian National Congress declined to participate in the 1920 elections, since Mohandas Gandhi had launched a non-cooperation movement in August of that year. In 1923, after a fierce internal dispute over whether to boycott or not, many Congressmen participated under the banner of the Swaraj Party, with the aim of undermining the

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[6] The 1919 Act did not grant voting rights to women. Provinces were allowed to amend this provision, and by 1930, all provinces extended the franchise to women under the same income or property requirements as men. Since few women had income or property in their name, the ratio of women to men in the electorate was 1:20.

working of the ministries from within. The Swarajists did win a considerable number of seats on the provincial councils, and continued to participate in the 1926 elections despite experiencing some internal splits. In 1930, Gandhi launched a second Civil Disobedience movement six months before the elections were conducted, and Congress again boycotted these elections, leading to low voter turnout and a high fraction of uncontested seats.[7] In light of this, most of our analysis of the 1935 enfranchisement reform will compare the 1926 election to that of 1937, omitting the 1930 election. We show that results are similar when comparing the 1937 election to 1930.

2.2. The Government of India Act of 1935: Partial Franchise Extension

Through the 1920s, many political parties and prominent Indian individuals provided their own reports and views about constitutional changes, and two Round Table Conferences were held by the Viceroy to consult with Indian representatives. After much negotiation, the principle of federation was agreed upon, as well as continued separate communal representation for Muslims and Sikhs. Representation for lower caste Hindus was to be ensured by setting aside seats for them, but without any provision for separate electorates. All of these provisions were finally codified in the Government of India Act of 1935.

The Act of 1935 conferred full policy autonomy on provincial councils, in contrast to prior reforms that had reserved some subjects to the sole control of the Governor. The Governor was now obliged to act on the advice of the ministers, except in matters of "grave menace to peace or tranquillity" or "safeguarding the interests of minorities." The provincial legislative councils were expanded (and renamed Legislative Assemblies) and the bigger provinces were provided bicameral legislatures.

The franchise was considerably expanded in several ways. First, in most provinces, the property thresholds were lowered considerably (see Appendix Table A1 for details of suffrage requirements in the 1919 and 1935 Acts). For instance, the minimum thresholds for voter eligibility in Bengal under the 1919 Act included at least Rs 1-8-0 in municipal taxes[8] and fees, Rs 1 in public works cess, Rs 2 in chaukidari

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[7] Elections were held in Punjab and Bengal provinces in 1929, while other provinces held elections in autumn of 1930 after the publication of the Indian Statutory Commission report in summer of 1930. The civil disobedience movement began in March 1930.

[8] Monetary amounts expressed as rupees, annas and paisa. There were 16 annas to a rupee and 4 paisa to an anna.

tax or occupying a house valued at Rs 150. These thresholds were reduced considerably in the 1935 Act to 8 annas, 8 annas, 6 annas and Rs 42 respectively. Given that there was little net inflation over this period, this amounted to reductions of more than 50% in the asset thresholds required for voter eligibility. Second, suffrage was also extended in some provinces to educated persons or literate women. Third, women who were wives or widows of qualified male voters (with higher property thresholds than required for male voting) were also allowed to vote, effectively granting voting rights to more women than before.[9] The 1935 reform therefore changed drastically the electorate towards a much poorer and somewhat more feminine one; we expect that these societal groups are less likely to be educated or literate.

As a result of all these changes, the nationwide fraction of enfranchised electors increased to 11.7% in the provincial elections of 1937, though the figures varied considerably across provinces and across districts within the same province (see the map in Figure 1). Such variation is driven both by differences in the voting requirements across provinces, and by differences in the distribution of assets, incomes and education levels across districts.

2.3 Post-1935 Political Developments

There was widespread participation by voters and political parties in the provincial elections of 1936-37. The Indian National Congress formed governments in eight out of 11 provinces. However, all the Congress ministries resigned in October 1939, in protest against Viceroy Linlithgow's announcement of India's entry into World War II without any consultation from Indian representatives. This extremely short tenure of the representatives elected after franchise extension makes it difficult for us to examine the policy consequences of the 1935 reform. However, there is evidence that the short-lived Congress ministries formed after the 1936-37 elections made concerted efforts in implementing their policy agendas. Education stood out as one of the main areas where the efforts of the ministries were concentrated. In Bombay, the government passed a bill that made provisions for the "better management and control of primary schools," instituted a board of education to deal with the problem of adult illiteracy in the province and provided

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[9] The share of women in the electorate was expected to increase from 5% of the electorate to 20% (Eddy and Lawton, 1938).

special educational grants to disadvantaged groups. In Bihar, a mass literacy movement was initiated that "made good progress with the help of about 14,000 volunteers drawn from the intelligentsia of the province." The government in United Provinces financed the construction of "a network of 960 adult schools, 760 circulating libraries and 3000 reading rooms". The Orissa government provided funds for a literacy campaign and library movement across all villages, and also abolished fees in public primary schools (Indian National Congress, 1939). We will therefore conduct an analysis of education spending as a key outcome.

The demands for Indian independence continued, with the Congress launching the "Quit India" movement in 1942; many Congress leaders were jailed for their participation in this event. After the end of World War II, it was clear to many that India would not remain a British colony for much longer. Elections to provincial and central legislatures were held in December 1945-January 1946, with all major parties participating.

2.4. Party Politics in the Colonial Period

Prior to the 1935 Reform Act, electoral candidates were predominantly social and economic elites who used their personal influence to obtain votes for themselves as opposed to subscribing to a political party's platform (Jaffrelot, 1998). Political parties were not well organized and the largest one, the Indian National Congress, had boycotted some elections in the 1920s. Narrative accounts emphasize that candidates nominated themselves and personally ran their campaigns rather than relying on (barely existing) party machinery. The main issues emphasized were " …of personality, community and local influence [rather] than of party or programme" (Indian Statutory Commission, 1930, pp 199). Other accounts concur that voting was on the basis of individual personality and status rather than policy issues.[10]

The relative weakness of political parties means that we need to think of political competition as being among individuals rather than across parties. We therefore use the number of candidates contesting

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[10] "No political issues were at stake in these elections and personal considerations counted a great deal." (Jha, 1976). "Manifestoes in these elections of the 1920s were as important for the names of the supporters [of candidates]…as they were for the actual ideas, if any, expressed about political and economic matters." (Reeves et al., 1975, pp ixiv)

as well as whether the incumbent manages to retain his seat as measures of political competition in this period.

By the 1937 elections, political parties, especially the Congress, were much better organized for political activity. The parties set up provincial committees and provincial parliamentary boards to recruit candidates, helped candidates with filing nominations, provided (some) campaign funding and coordinated campaign messages. The issues emphasized were national in nature rather than focused on local interests, including the question of independence from colonial rule; the rising support for the Muslim League also brought religious divisions to the forefront. However, the role of parties was not fully institutionalized. For instance, nomination forms in the United Provinces did not ask the candidate to specify his party affiliation (Reeves et al., 1975; pp li). Some reports also suggest voter disaffection with parties and individuals who had been part of previous colonial administrations (Times of India, 1937). By 1945, the Muslim League had emerged as a dominant political force in Muslim-majority areas. The issue of Pakistan and the partition of the subcontinent took centre stage during the 1945 election campaigns, with the Congress strongly opposing partition and the Muslim League championing the cause of a separate Pakistan (Azad, 1988; Zaidi, 1970).

It is important to note that even though parties became important vehicles of political mobilization in the post-1935 era, this did not mean that political competition between different individual candidates went away. For instance, individuals could choose whether to become candidates of the dominant Congress party, or those representing other sectional or regional interests such as the Unionist and National Agriculturist Parties (who represented landowners in Punjab and UP respectively) or Dr Ambedkar's Independent Labour Party in Bombay (which championed the cause of lower castes). Inter-candidate political competition persisted within the Congress party, as the party changed its criteria for choosing candidates over time (Chiriyankandath, 1992, p. 55-56). Our main measure of political competition—change in the fraction of incumbents who get re-elected—is well placed to track both these types of inter-candidate electoral competition both before and after the 1935 Reform Act. We also compute the fraction

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of winners from the Congress party as a partial measure of cross-party competition. This is possible only for years 1937 and later.

2.5. The Indian Constitution of 1950: Universal Adult Suffrage

In 1947, India ceased to be a British colony and was partitioned into the two new nations of India and Pakistan. Partition resulted in one of the largest, most rapid and most violent migrations in human history (Khwaja, Mian and Bharadwaj, 2008). The first provincial elections in independent India were held in 1951, following the adoption of a new constitution in 1950.[11] This constitution established India as a secular democratic republic, and universal suffrage for all citizens aged 21 or older was secured under Article 326. Consequently, the ratio of registered voters to total population increased dramatically to 48.2% in the provincial elections of 1951 and 1952 (Table 1, panel A). Reserved seats were retained for members of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes,[12] but there were no more reservations for women under the new constitution.[13] There were also no provisions for separate electorates on any basis. In 1989, the minimum age to vote was reduced to 18 years by the 61st Amendment to the Indian constitution.

Emerging from colonial rule, the Congress Party transformed itself from a broad-based nationalist movement into the dominant political party of the nation, winning a national legislative majority in the 1951 elections and also becoming the largest party in every state legislature. In most states, Congress remained "the largest party—in terms of both votes and seats—for the first 30 post-independence years" (Ziegfeld and Tudor, 2017).[14] Given this dominance in the pre- and post-Independence period beginning with the 1937 elections, we track two measures of party-level political competition in the post-1950 period, namely the share of winners from Congress and the number of parties that nominate candidates for each

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[11] Direct elections were held to provincial assemblies in the early 1950s in Pakistan, but the country was affected by several interventions by the military in the political process, culminating in a military coup in 1958. Owing to these political uncertainties, our analysis excludes electoral data from Pakistan after 1947.

[12] The Scheduled Castes are communities that have historically been at the bottom of the Hindu caste hierarchy. Scheduled Tribes include communities traditionally outside the Hindu caste system. These communities were provided with a variety of affirmative action policies in the 1950 constitution.

[13] A constitutional amendment in 1993 introduced reservations for women in district and village level councils.

[14] Several factors contributed to Congress's dominance of politics during this period, including its role in the anticolonial nationalist movement, ideological centrist positioning as the party of national consensus, incorporation of broad swathes of society into its ranks, recruitment of local notables, and strategic use of patronage (see, among others, Bayly (1975), Chandra (2004), Kothari (1976), Tudor (2013), Sisson (1972) and Weiner (1967)).

seat. We continue to track the fraction of incumbents who get re-elected as a measure of inter-candidate political competition, and we also track the fraction of incumbents who run for re-election.

3. Data and Construction of Key Variables

3.1. Data Sources

We collected and digitized archival data on enfranchisement and election outcomes from the "Returns Showing the Results of Elections in India" published after each election during the colonial era. (India Office, 1921, 1924, 1927, 1931 and 1937; Government of India, 1948). These reports cover the elections to provincial assemblies in the colonial period, namely those of 1920, 1923, 1926, 1930, 1937 and 1945. Data for the post-colonial state assembly elections of 1951, 1955 and 1957 were obtained from the official election reports of the Election Commission of India for elections in the 1950s.[15]

The election reports are somewhat inconsistent in the variables they report. All of them report the number of registered voters, the number of votes cast and the number of candidates in each constituency. Colonial era reports often do not report names of non-winning candidates or party affiliations, and data on winner names is also incomplete. We used several supplementary sources of information to create a full panel of election winners' names over time, including the "Who's Who" publication from Times of India yearbook, and regional specific accounts (see Appendix C.1 for a detailed list of sources). Vote shares and vote margins are consistently available only in the post-colonial data. Only 10-12% of candidate names from the colonial period mention education or occupation and the fraction varies considerably across provinces and years. The extent of missing data on this precludes systematic analysis on the characteristics of candidates. Even such partial data is not available in the post-colonial election reports.

3.2. Data Aggregation to District Level

To track political outcomes over time, we face the issue of constructing geographically stable units over time. Electoral constituency boundaries changed over time, and both the enfranchisement reforms we

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[15] We thank Francesca Jensenius for sharing these digitized data with us.

examine greatly expanded the number of elected representatives. As a consequence, we created district-level aggregate variables, since these administrative district boundaries remained relatively stable over time. In the few cases in which new districts were created, we aggregate them back to their previous boundaries. We consistently perform our analysis at the level of the 1921 district boundaries. Details of this aggregation procedure are provided in Appendix C.2.

3.3. Measures of Enfranchisement

Our main explanatory variable is the enfranchisement rate, which is defined as the number of registered electors in the district divided by its total population. Data on the number of registered voters is available even if the election is uncontested, since these figures are compiled prior to the election taking place. The district level number of registered voters is obtained by aggregating constituency-level figures, using the procedures described in Appendix C.2. For district-level population data, we use the censuses of 1921, 1931 and 1951 (the 1941 census quality and coverage were compromised by the constraints of wartime), assigning the previous census-year population to each election year. Using this measure, we find that only 3% of a district population was eligible to vote in 1926, and this fraction increased to 11.7% in the 1937 election (Table 1, panel A). The introduction of universal adult franchise in 1950 also had a huge impact, raising the average fraction of enfranchised population in a district to 48% in the 1951 elections.

We construct enfranchisement measures using two alternative population estimates. The first is an interpolated population figure in the denominator of the enfranchisement measure. For districts that experienced abnormal increases or decreases in population due to the 1947 partition, such extrapolated population figures for 1957 can be erroneous. The second is an age-adjusted population figure. While the best measure would be to use the population aged 21 or older, we face several data constraints in doing so.[16] Despite the measurement constraints, we find that both of these alternative measures show similar four-fold increases in enfranchisement rates after both the 1935 and 1950 reforms (Table 1, panel A).

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[16] For the censuses of 1921 and 1931, we have population aged 20 and older rather than 21. The 1951 census only has district-level population above the age of 24. It also has the single-age-specific population distribution for 10% of the population, which we can extrapolate to create the population above age 21. Enfranchisement measures using these slightly different age-specific variables for 1951 have a correlation of 0.99; our analysis uses the latter measure. We

A potential source of mismeasurement in our data arises from the possibility that not all eligible voters may be actually registered to vote. An electoral roll was prepared for every constituency on which the names of all persons appearing to be entitled to be registered as electors was to be entered. Once prepared, the roll was to be published in the constituency together with a notice specifying the mode and time period within which any claims by individuals who felt that they should be included in the roll (or any persons feeling they should be excluded from the roll) were to be submitted to the revising authorities. The responsibilities for the preparation of the roll, the timing of its publication, the procedure for addressing claims regarding the electoral roll and the constitution of the revising authorities were all left to district administration officials. These officials were officially required to be non-partisan, being mostly career bureaucrats from the Indian Civil Service (ICS) and related provincial civil services. ICS officers were also rotated across districts quite frequently (Potter, 1996); we expect this to limit both the district officials' ability and their incentives to skew electoral rolls in favor of specific candidates in a given area. Such mismeasurement can lead to bias in our estimates if district level registration rates are correlated with other unobservable district-specific trends that also drive the outcome. This could be the case, for instance, if districts that experienced lower (or more) political competition for any reason also promoted greater rates of registration and therefore record higher enfranchisement figures. We therefore control explicitly for such pre-reform trends as a robustness check in our estimation.

3.4. Measures of Political Participation

We track citizen political participation as voters and as candidates. Our main measure of voter participation is simply the number of citizens who voted divided by the total population. Note that if none of the newly enfranchised voters exercise their right to vote, this measure would not change with enfranchisement. On the other hand, if all of them chose to vote, then this measure would increase exactly as much as the enfranchisement measure. We face some measurement challenges in computing this variable: we do not

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should note that age data is likely to be very poorly recorded amongst a largely illiterate population without good birth records, and in fact, these estimated populations above age 21 or 24 turn out to be *lower* than the total number of registered voters for many districts in 1951.

observe the population of each constituency (but that of the more aggregated district) and we do not know the number of voters in a constituency when the election is unopposed in that constituency. As a consequence, we cannot distinguish if an increase in the ratio of voters to population is due to a decrease in the number of uncontested seats in that district or to a genuine increase in the number of voters, holding the number of uncontested seats constant. We address this concern by tracking two supplementary measures, namely the fraction of uncontested seats in the constituency and the voter turnout, defined as the ratio of total votes cast in a specific election to the total number of registered voters (this explicitly excludes the uncontested seats).

We see that the population share of voters did increase after each reform, rising to 5.5% in 1937 from 0.5% in 1930, and from 4.5% to 22.2% between 1945 and 1951 (Table 1, panel B). Some of this increase could potentially be driven by the steep decline in the share of uncontested elections in both 1937 and 1951 (Table 1, panel C). For 1930, voter share of the population could be further affected by the calls for widespread boycott. Tracking voter turnout, as a share of registered voters, we see that this rises from 51% in 1926 to 57% in 1937 (with a big drop in 1930). In contrast, voter turnout declined slightly from 49% in 1945 to 46% in 1951, the first election after the institution of universal adult suffrage in 1950.

We measure the candidate participation of citizens as the number of candidates per 1000 registered voters in the district. Since the eligibility criteria were the same for voting and for candidacy, this measures what fraction of the potential candidate pool actually become candidates. As with voters, the newly eligible candidate pool may not translate into actual candidacy if there are significant informational, financial or societal barriers to becoming candidates. We also track a supplementary measure, namely the candidate-population ratio.

Both measures of candidate participation declined considerably between 1926 and 1930, reflecting the impact of the Congress-led boycott (Table 1, panels B and C). In contrast, after the franchise extension of 1935, the candidate share of the population almost tripled between 1930 and 1937 reflecting the expansion of the potential candidate pool, but the share of registered voters who became candidates actually fell from 0.27 per 1000 registered voters in 1926 to 0.14 in 1937. This suggests that the expansion of the

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candidate pool did not translate to a proportionate expansion in the number of actual candidates. In a similar manner, the number of candidates per 100,000 population increased more than three-fold after the franchise extension of 1950, but the share of registered voters that become candidates fell from 0.091 per 1000 voters in 1945 to 0.077 in 1951.

3.5. Measures of Political Competition

We compute three main measures of political competition: the number of candidates per seat in the district (which reflects the extent of opposition faced by those standing for election), the incumbent re-election rate and the fraction of seats won by Congress (as a measure of party competition). Data limitations prevent us from computing other measures of political competition such as the effective number of parties or the winning margin. The incumbent re-election rate is computed as the fraction of incumbent politicians who get re-elected in the next election. So "fraction of incumbents re-elected 1923" refers to the fraction of incumbent politicians (i.e. those who got elected to the provincial legislature from that district in 1921) that win re-election in 1923. Tracking specific politicians across election years is conducted via fuzzy matching combined with manual checking (see Appendix C.3 for details). For the elections of 1937 and later, which provide data on all candidates' names (not just the winners), we can compute a supplementary measure of incumbency advantage as the percentage of incumbents who run for re-election. We are also able to track the fraction of uncontested elections over time.

We see that the average candidate-seat ratio increased after both the franchise extensions, from 2.27 in 1926 to 2.60 in 1937 (as expected, the boycott in 1930 resulted in an unusually low candidate-seat ratio of 1.83), and from 2.22 in 1945 to 4.51 in 1951 (Table 1, panel B). The fraction of incumbents who got re-elected fell from 35% in 1926 to 13% in 1937 (note that the boycott in 1930 leads to a large increase in incumbency advantage), and from 25% in 1945 to 16% in 1951.[17] Some of the decline can be attributed to incumbents not running for re-election: only 22% of previous winners run for re-election in 1951 (after franchise extension), compared to 31% in 1945 (panel C). The share of uncontested elections also decreased

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[17] When we track incumbent performance directly from 1926 to 1937, we find that 15% of 1926 incumbents are re-elected in 1937, very similar to the earlier figure of 13% of 1930 incumbents who get re-elected in 1937.

drastically after each reform, from 15% in 1926 to 6% in 1937, and from 26% in 1945 to 0.2% in 1951 (panel C). Turning to party-level competition, we find that the fraction of Congress winners increased from 64% in 1945 to 74% in 1951, consistent with the narrative of Congress establishing a nationwide dominance after Indian independence. This dominance is also reflected in the fact that the number of parties that nominate candidates for a given seat barely increased after enfranchisement, and that the Congress winners' share increased despite a decline in the Congress candidates' share.

4. Empirical Strategy

We examine whether districts with larger enfranchisement increases experience larger changes in measures of political participation and competition compared to districts with smaller increases in enfranchisement. Our main regression is a first-difference specification:

$$\Delta Y_d = \alpha + \gamma \, \Delta Enfranchisement_d + X_d{}'\delta + e_d \qquad (1)$$

where ΔY_d is the measured change in political participation or competition in district d, $\Delta Enfranchisement_d$ is a measure of the change in enfranchisement in district d, and X_d is a vector of district level covariates such as total population, population growth between censuses, urbanization rates, gender ratios, literacy rates, and religious mix; e_d is an error term. Due to concerns about electoral boycotts, we will compute changes between 1937 and 1926 in order to measure the impact of the 1935 reform, and show the change between 1930 and 1937 as a robustness check. For the 1950 reform, we compute the change between 1945 and 1951, and we also include the fraction of refugees in the population as an additional control in order to account for the direct effects of partition and displacement on political outcomes.

This first-difference specification is equivalent to a difference-in-difference strategy using data from two periods, where we compare changes over time and across districts that experienced greater or lesser increases in enfranchisement. Since we are comparing each district to itself before and after enfranchisement, we are in effect controlling for any time-invariant characteristics of districts such as geography, prior history, length of colonial rule, land tenure systems or other institutional characteristics.

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Any changes induced by the reforms that are common to all districts, such as national changes in political environment or increases in the total number of representatives, are captured by the constant term α.

Our regression specification would yield biased estimates if *changes* in enfranchisement rates happen to be correlated with other time-varying characteristics of the district (such as increases in income or education) that also affect changes in political participation or competition. We examine and control for this possibility in several ways. First, we include several district level observable characteristics X_d in our regression. Controlling for these characteristics in a first-difference specification means that we are controlling for differential trends based on these characteristics. However, there could still be trends in unobservable characteristics that are correlated with trends in our outcome variables. We therefore conduct a robustness test including the pre-reform change as an additional control variable. We also run a difference-in-difference specification using the full time series as follows:

$$Y_{dt} = \lambda_d + \Sigma\,\beta_t + \gamma*Post_t*\Delta Enfranchisement_d + X_{dt}'\delta + u_{dt.} \qquad (2)$$

where Y_{dt} is the outcome for district d in year t, λ_d is a dummy (fixed effect) for district d, β_t is a dummy for election year t, $Post_t$ is an indicator for post-reform years and $\Delta Enfranchisement_d$ is as defined earlier. For the 1935 reform, election years 1937 and 1945 would take on values of one for the *Post* dummy, while election years 1921-1930 would have a zero value. For the 1950 reform, election years 1951 and 1957 would have *Post = 1*, while years 1937 and 1945 would have *Post = 0*. The advantage of this specification is that we can include district-specific time trends in the set of control variables X_{dt}, so that we are controlling for any linearly evolving district unobservables. The disadvantage is that this specification assumes a one-time permanent effect of the reform for all "post" years. To adjust for outcomes being correlated over time within the same district, we cluster our standard errors at the district level.

Finally, we also use the full time series in our data and show an "event study" specification:

$$Y_{dt} = \lambda_d + \Sigma\,\beta_t + \Sigma\,\gamma_t*\Delta Enfranchisement_d + X_{dt}'\delta + u_{dt} \qquad (3)$$

where λ_d and β_t are as in (2) above, and γ_t is the election-year-specific impact of the change in enfranchisement. For the 1935 reforms, the election years included are 1921, 1923, 1926, 1930, 1937 and

1945. 1921 will be the omitted category so that the γ_t coefficients represent the impact of 1935-reform enfranchisement on the outcome in year t. This specification allows us to test whether the coefficients are significant prior to the reform date, which would indicate a potential problem with pre-trends. It also enables us to examine whether the effects persist after the first post-reform election. However, this specification is more demanding than (2) in terms of degrees of freedom in statistical analysis, since more coefficients need to be estimated using the same amount of data. The corresponding specification for the 1950 reform would include elections years 1937, 1945, 1951 and 1957. The omitted category in that regression would be the year 1937.

5.   Impact of the Partial Franchise Extension of 1935 on Political Participation and Competition

5.1. Main Results

We find that increasing enfranchisement does not lead to equally large increases in citizen participation as voters or candidates. Table 2 shows the results of running specification (1) for the 1935 reforms, comparing the 1937 elections to that of 1926 (as the 1930 election was affected by boycotts). Our preferred specification is in column (3), where we include the district demographic controls mentioned earlier and exclude four districts that are outliers in terms of the enfranchisement variable.[18] We find that increasing the population share of enfranchised citizens by 10 percentage points increases the voter share of the population by 4.1 percentage points. If we make the (somewhat extreme) assumption that all of the previously enfranchised voters continue to vote, this would mean that only 41% (i.e. less than half) of the newly enfranchised voters are exercising their right to vote. Similarly, a 10 percentage point increase in enfranchisement results in a statistically significant decline of 0.14 candidates per 1000 registered voters (Table 2, panel B, column 3). Note that such reduced citizen participation is not an obvious consequence

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[18] These are statistical outliers i.e. very far from the main body of our data. Almora and Ramnad districts show declines in enfranchisement between 1926 and 1937, which is very unlikely since all provinces reduced property thresholds for voting. Bombay and Ahmedabad, on the other hand, show increases in enfranchisement that are much greater than the average in the sample. The corresponding outlier districts for the 1950 reform are Dinajpur and Narsinghpur, which show very minimal enfranchisement increases between 1945 and 1951.

of poorer voters becoming enfranchised, since poor citizens' voter turnout is higher in many post-independence Indian elections (Kumar, 2009). Therefore, the less than proportional increase in turnout may be caused either by the newly enfranchised population voting less, or by the previously enfranchised population voting less following franchise extension. Unfortunately, our data does not enable us to distinguish between these two mechanisms.

We verify that these patterns are not driven by pre-existing trends in these political outcome variables that just happen to coincide with high versus low enfranchisement (Table 2, panels A and B, columns 4 and 5). We show that the estimated coefficients remain similar in size and statistical significance when we directly control for pre-reform changes in the outcomes (i.e. the change between 1923 and 1926), as well as when we use a difference-in-difference specification with district-specific linear time trends as in specification (3).

We examine the medium-term effects of the 1935 reforms by examining the changes between 1937 and 1945. In particular, if we think that the relatively muted effects on citizen participation result from a lack of familiarity with the electoral system, we would expect the participation outcomes to show increases over time as citizens acquire political knowledge and experience. We find, however, that this is not the case: places with greater increases in enfranchisement due to the 1935 reform actually exhibit a statistically smaller growth in the voter share of population between 1937 and 1945. While these places do show a larger increase in the candidates per 1000 voters, the coefficient is roughly one-third as large as the original negative coefficient suggesting that the subsequent increase in candidacy is not enough to offset the original decline (Table 2, panels A and B, column 6).

A similar pattern can be observed in the graphical representation of the election-year-specific impact of enfranchisement, obtained from running specification (3). Figure 2A shows that the voter share of the population did not increase prior to the reform, and increases sharply thereafter. Figure 2B shows a slight decreasing trend for candidates per 1000 voters prior to 1935, but a much bigger decline in the 1937 elections with some recovery in the 1945 election. Note that the points on this graph represent how much outcomes change with respect to 1921 as the omitted year, so that the main effects in Table 2 (column 3)

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would be equivalent to taking the difference between the point estimate for 1937 and the point estimate for 1926 on this graph. Similarly, the medium-term effect would be the difference between the point estimate for 1945 and that for 1937.

Turning to measures of political competition, we find that enfranchisement does not have any statistically significant impact. A 10 percentage point increase in enfranchisement results in 0.21 additional candidates per seat and a 1.5 percentage point decline in the fraction of incumbents getting re-elected (Table 2, panels C and D, column 3). Not surprisingly, these remain statistically insignificant when controlling for the pre-reform change in outcomes or controlling for district-specific trends (columns 4 and 5). Interestingly, we see *decreases* in political competition when we consider the medium-term effects: places that experienced greater increases in enfranchisement show a bigger decline in the candidate-seat ratio between 1937 and 1945, and a larger increase in the fraction of incumbents getting re-elected (column 6). The event-study graph in Figure 2D shows that this is mainly because the point estimate for 1937 is negative (in line with our main estimate of Table 2, column 3) and there is an increase in incumbency advantage in 1945, bringing it back to 1923 levels.

5.2. Robustness Checks

We conduct several robustness checks for our results, shown in Appendix Table A3. First, we show that our results remain similar in size and significance when we use the interpolated census population to calculate enfranchisement rates rather than the previous census population (column 1). Our results also remain statistically significant when we use the age-specific population as the denominator to calculate enfranchisement rates (column 2). Not surprisingly, these estimates are smaller in magnitude than our baseline results in Table 2, simply because the enfranchisement measures are systematically larger when using age-specific population as the denominator rather than total population. In fact, with this measure of enfranchisement, we also see a marginally significant increase in the number of candidates per seat. Similarly, our results remain similar in size and significance when controlling for the change in the number of seats in each district (column 3), when we examine changes between 1930 and 1937 instead of the

changes between 1926 and 1937 (column 4), and when we drop districts that later became part of Pakistan (column 5).

A related concern in our statistical analysis may be the presence of district-specific unobserved characteristics that drive both changes in enfranchisement as well as changes in political participation and competition, despite the fact that we have controlled for several demographic characteristics of the district. One way to control for such omitted variables problems is to use an instrumental variable, namely something that changes district level enfranchisement but is uncorrelated with district-specific characteristics. In our setting, one key source of variation in enfranchisement rates across districts is the wealth threshold and other rules for enfranchisement chosen by the provincial government, which were usually uniform over the whole province with only a few exceptions (see Appendix Table A1). While this may not be fully uncorrelated with district characteristics, it does provide a somewhat exogenous reason for enfranchisement rates to vary across districts. Accordingly, we reran our empirical specification using province dummies as instruments for district-level enfranchisement changes.[19] Again, we find the same results as before: a less-than-proportional increase in the voter share of the population, a significant decline in the number of candidates as a share of registered voters and no significant effect on candidate-seat ratios or the fraction of incumbents getting re-elected (Appendix Table A3, column 6).

5.3. Supplementary Outcomes

Our main conclusions regarding the effect of enfranchisement on political participation and competition do not change when we examine alternative measures. We see that a 10 percentage point increase in enfranchisement results in a statistically significant 7.32 percentage point decline in voter turnout, measured as the share of registered voters who turn out to vote (Appendix Table A4, panel A, column 3). This is consistent with the result that enfranchisement results in a less-than-proportional increase in the voter share

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[19] We find a strong and significant "first stage" for this regression: the F-statistic for the province dummies as predictors of enfranchisement change is 13.58, even after controlling for district demographics and pre-reform changes in political outcomes. We recognize that this instrumental variables strategy is potentially subject to a failure of the "exclusion restriction," namely that province characteristics may affect political outcomes through channels other than enfranchisement policies. Hence, this is shown only as a robustness check and not as our main specification.

of the population. We also see a significant increase in the candidate share of the total population, but the magnitude of this is fairly small: a 10 percentage point increase in enfranchisement (i.e. in the potential candidate pool) results in 0.33 more candidates per 100,000 population (Panel B, column 3). As before, the results are robust to controlling for the pre-reform change in outcomes as well as to the inclusion of district-specific time trends (Panels A and B, columns 4 and 5), and show no significant increase in the medium term either (column 6). Our supplementary measure of political competition—the fraction of uncontested seats—shows no signification relationship with our measure of enfranchisement (Appendix Table A4, panel C). This is consistent with the results on political competition in Table 2.

6. The Impact of 1950 Universal Suffrage Reform on Political Participation and Competition

6.1. Main Results

We examine the impact on political participation and competition of the adoption of the 1950 constitution that granted suffrage to all adult citizens of India. This was a very large expansion of the franchise, increasing the fraction of enfranchised population in a district by 36.3 percentage points on average, compared to the last pre-independence election of 1945 (Table 1, Panel A). In theory, the impact of such a large extension can be quite different from the earlier expansion of 8.8 percentage points, both because of the different characteristics of those enfranchised by each reform and because of the different political contexts in which these franchise extensions took place. Our main regression specification is still based on equation (1), but with changes now being measured between the elections of 1945 and 1951.

The impact of the 1950 reform on political outcomes is strikingly similar to that of the 1935 reform. On citizen participation, we find that the extension of the franchise to all adults results in a statistically significant but less-than-proportional increase in voting and a statistically significant decrease in candidates per 1000 voters. A 10 percentage point increase in enfranchisement due to the 1950 reform results in only a 3 percentage point increase in the voter share of the population, according to our preferred estimates (Table 3, panel A, column 3). A similar calculation suggests that a 10 percentage point increase in enfranchisement results in 0.011 fewer candidates per 1000 registered voters (Panel B, column 3).

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These estimates remain similar in size and significance when we control for the pre-reform change in outcomes (i.e. the change from 1937 to 1945), showing that the relationship with enfranchisement cannot be attributed to differential pre-existing trends (Panels A and B, column 4). The estimates also remain similar in size when controlling for district-specific time trends, though the estimate for the candidate-voter ratio loses statistical significance, when we control for district-specific time trends using the difference-in-difference specification (Panels A and B, column 5). The medium-term effects, namely the change from 1951 to 1957, are not larger than the immediate effects, showing that citizen participation does not pick up over time in heavily enfranchised districts; in fact, the trends in voter participation are somewhat worsened (Table 3, panels A and B, column 6). The event-study graphs in Figure 3A and 3B confirm that our estimates are not confounded by any pre-existing significant differences in outcomes between areas with higher and lower enfranchisement.

Similar to the effects of the 1935 reform, we find that increased enfranchisement does not result in a proportional increase in political competition. A 10 percentage point increase in enfranchisement increases the candidate-seat ratio by a statistically insignificant 0.17, increases the fraction of incumbents getting re-elected by 6 percentage points (statistically significant at the 10% level) and reduces the fraction of Congress winners by an insignificant 1.5 percentage points (Table 3, panels C-E, column 3). There are also no significant effects of enfranchisement on measures of political competition in the medium term (column 6). Our event study graphs in Figures 3C-3E are consistent with this lack of any effect of the enfranchisement reform on political competition.

6.2. Robustness Tests and Supplementary Outcomes

We conduct a number of robustness checks for the relationships documented in Table 3: using alternative measures of enfranchisement (using interpolated census population or estimated age-specific population as the denominator rather than the previous census population), controlling for the increase in the number of seats and dropping the provinces of Punjab and Bengal to avoid any confounding effects of partition-related

deaths or displacement.[20] The results are shown in Appendix Table A5. We find that our results are mostly robust to these changes in our specifications, with the exception of the change in the candidate-seat ratio which becomes positive and statistically significant when controlling for the change in the number of seats or when we drop Punjab and Bengal.

In Appendix Table A6, we show results for supplementary political outcomes. The results for voter turnout show that areas with higher enfranchisement increases show a bigger decline in voter turnout, which is measured as the fraction of registered voters who actually voted (our preferred estimates are in panel A, column 3). This is completely consistent with our less-than-proportional increase documented earlier for the voter share of the population. Our supplementary variable of candidate participation, namely the number of candidates per 100,000 population shows a significant increase of about 0.75 for every 10 percentage point increase in enfranchisement (Appendix Table A6, panel B, column 3). We should note that this amounts to only 68% of the mean value in 1945, while enfranchisement increased four-fold between 1945 and 1951; it is thus consistent with our finding in Table 3 that candidates as a share of registered voters declined significantly.

Turning to supplementary measures of political competition, we find that enfranchisement led to decreases in some of these measures. Specifically, while we see no impact of enfranchisement on the fraction of uncontested seats (similar to the 1935 reforms), places with bigger increases in enfranchisement have a significant increase in the fraction of incumbents who run for re-election and a significant decline in the average number of parties contesting each seat. A 10 percentage point increase in enfranchisement results in a 9.2 percentage point increase in the fraction of incumbents that run for re-election (Appendix Table A6, panel D, column 3), which is 29% of the 1945 mean value. Table 3 showed that the fraction of incumbents winning increased by 5.92 percentage points for the same 10 percentage point increase in enfranchisement, indicating that about 64% of these re-running incumbents managed to retain their seats.

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[20] Unlike the case of the 1935 reforms, individual states had no discretion in framing enfranchisement rules since all places were required to have universal adult franchise. The conceptual basis for conducting an instrumental variables estimation based on province fixed effects is therefore much weaker, and the variation it would rely on is much smaller, since it would depend only on initial enfranchisement levels.

Similarly, a 10 percentage point increase in enfranchisement decreases the number of parties per seat by 0.17 (panel E, column 3), which is 23% of the 1945 mean value. Overall, we find no evidence that enfranchisement increases political competition, and some evidence that it may increase incumbency advantage both at the individual and the party level.

7. Policy Effects of Enfranchisement

7.1. Education Spending after the 1935 Reform

Delineating the policy effects of the 1935 enfranchisement reform is hampered due to historical events and data limitations. The Congress-led ministries that were elected in 1937 resigned in 1939, in protest against Viceroy Linlithgow's unilateral announcement of India's entry into World War II, and policy decisions after 1939 may also be confounded by the effects of wartime constraints. This gives us a relatively short time frame to assess the impact of the 1939 reform. While we were able to obtain data on education spending, data on other related variables, such as the availability of public schools, is only available from the post-independence period. Education is a particularly interesting outcome, given that spending on primary vs secondary or middle schooling will benefit different strata of the population. Primary education will disproportionally benefit the poorer strata of the population, from which the newly enfranchised population is drawn, whereas middle and secondary education will benefit the relatively richer, already enfranchised population.

We conducted a first-difference analysis using data on per capita education spending at the district level, which we were able to obtain from the annual issues of the "Report on the Working of District Boards." We were able to access these reports for the provinces of Assam, Bihar, Central Provinces and United Provinces for the years 1931-1940, though there are some missing years for each provincial series. Using the period 1931-1934 as "pre-enfranchisement" and 1937-1940 as "post-enfranchisement" years, we calculate the difference in the per capita spending on education and regress it on district level enfranchisement increases, as in equation (1). We find that districts that experienced larger increases in enfranchisement also experienced larger increases in per capita spending, though the effects are somewhat

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imprecisely estimated given the limited nature of the data. In particular, we find that districts with a 10 percentage point increase in enfranchisement had 0.01 rupees per capita higher education spending, which is 5 percent of the pre-1935 mean.[21] This estimate is computed after controlling for demographics and removing outliers, and is statistically significant at the 10% level of significance (Table 4, panel A, column 3). Most of this increase is attributable to the increase in primary school spending rather than middle school spending: while these coefficients are not statistically significant, we see that the primary school spending coefficient is almost the same size as the overall coefficient while the coefficient on middle school spending is much smaller and negatively signed (Table 4, panels B and C, column 3). While these results are not fully conclusive, they are consistent with the narrative evidence of elected provincial councils prioritizing education as a policy area (see Section 2.3). Our quantitative analysis then suggests that such prioritization of education was more likely to happen in areas that saw greater enfranchisement increases, and in primary schooling, an area likely to benefit the newly enfranchised population more.

7.2. Access to Schools After the 1950 Reform

District-level expenditure data is not available for the post-independence period. To track the progress of education provision, we therefore track the number of villages that had at least one school, obtaining data from the 1951 and 1961 district census handbooks. We are able to obtain these data for the provinces of Bengal, Bombay, Madras, Punjab and the United Provinces.

As above, we regress the change in the fraction of villages with primary schools (between 1951 and 1961) on the change in enfranchisement induced by the 1950 reform. We find a positive and statistically significant relationship between these two variables in our preferred specification that includes controls for district demographics and excludes certain outliers (Table 5, column 3). Our results thus suggest that increasing enfranchisement does result in better education provision, even though the reform does not increase measures of political competition.

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[21] Chaudhary (2010) estimates that a 10% increase in 1911 per capita education spending results in a 2.6 percentage point increase in literacy rates for individuals aged 5-10 years. Based on this, our estimates would mean that a 10 percentage point in enfranchisement could result in a 1.3 percentage point increase in literacy rates. This is quite large, since 1931 literacy in the 5-10 age group was only 5.9% for males and 2.0% for females.

Does increased enfranchisement lead to increased provision of all public goods and services, regardless of differences in voter preferences? We do not have data on other public goods for the 1951 census, and we also do not have district level expenditures in the post-independence period. We therefore focus on crude death rates as another measure of human development. During the 1950s, infectious diseases were a major contributor to overall deaths, and improved public health provision could have made a large difference here. We posit that public health provision is unlikely to be differential across less and more enfranchised districts, since rich and poor alike benefit from programs such as malaria eradication or vaccination campaigns, and because private provision of such programs is much less feasible than private provision of education. In line with this thinking, we find that while there was an overall reduction in crude death rates between 1951 and 1961, this decline is not differential across districts with greater or lesser enfranchisement increases (Appendix Table A7, panel A, column 3). A similar insignificant effect is obtained for deaths due to infectious diseases (panel B).[22]

7. Conclusions

We study two major extensions of the right to vote in twentieth-century India. Our study differs from prior ones in examining suffrage extensions in both a colonial and a post-colonial setting. Our study is also situated in a much poorer country, compared to previous studies on the U.K. or the U.S.

We create a unique database of provincial election results in India between 1921 and 1957, and document three important findings. First, extending the franchise results in a less-than-proportional increase in citizen participation as voters or candidates. Franchise extension also has no significant effects on measures of electoral competition such as the fraction of incumbents who win re-election, the number of candidates or parties contesting a given seat, the share of uncontested electoral races and the Congress party's share of winners. Second, despite the small increase in citizen participation and the lack of political

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[22] For completeness, we also analyzed crude birth rates; population control was an important policy objective during this period. Similar to crude death rates, we find no differential changes in birth rate trends across districts with larger or smaller increases in enfranchisement (Appendix Table A7, panel C).

competition, districts that had larger increases in enfranchisement also experience greater education provision by provincial governments, which is likely to benefit the newly enfranchised voters more. Third, the results are similar for both the 1935 and the 1950 reforms, suggesting that suffrage extensions can act to improve government accountability across a range of political contexts. Examining such effects across a wider range of policy outcomes, and in other colonial contexts, would be a great avenue to establish the generalizability of our results.

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Table 1: Summary Statistics of Key Variables

	1921	1923	1926	1930	1937	1945	1951	1957
# districts	202	202	202	202	202	202	167	167
# seats per district	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	6.5	6.5	12.9	13.3
Panel A: Measures of enfranchisement								
% enfranchised (previous census pop in denominator)	0.025	0.027	0.030	0.029	0.117	0.119	0.482	0.535
% enfranchised (interpolated pop in denominator)	0.025	0.027	0.028	0.029	0.105	0.126	0.482	0.500
% enfranchised (age-specific pop in denominator)	0.047	0.051	0.056	0.059	0.241	0.322	1.063	1.178
Panel B: Main outcomes (political participation and competition)								
Voters as a share of total population	0.005	0.009	0.012	0.005	0.055	0.045	0.222	0.247
Candidates per 1000 registered voters	0.361	0.333	0.270	0.191	0.144	0.091	0.077	0.049
Candidate-seat ratio	2.81	2.46	2.27	1.83	2.60	2.22	4.51	3.11
Fraction of incumbents who get re-elected		0.234	0.347	0.352	0.129	0.248	0.162	0.314
Alternative measure of above (comparing 1937 to 1926)					0.153			
Fraction of winners from Congress					0.512	0.643	0.741	0.656
Panel C: Supplementary outcomes (political participation and competition)								
Voter turnout, as a share of registered voters	0.277	0.431	0.512	0.332	0.569	0.492	0.463	0.491
Candidates per 100,000 population	0.726	0.658	0.585	0.459	1.384	1.098	3.701	2.440
Fraction of uncontested seats	0.249	0.144	0.149	0.459	0.058	0.258	0.002	0.008
Fraction of incumbents who ran for re-election					0.256	0.310	0.219	0.445
Alternative measure of above (comparing 1937 to 1926)					0.234			
Number of parties (with candidates) per seat						0.729	0.737	0.495

Notes: Data for 1951 and 1957 exclude districts that became part of Pakistan after 1947. Voter turnout is undefined for uncontested constituencies. "Age-specific population" refers to population aged 20 and above for years prior to 1947, and to population aged 21 and above for 1951 and 1957 obtained by extrapolation from a 10% single-age sample.

Table 2: Impact of 1935 Reforms on Political Participation and Competition

	1926 to 1937	Controls 1926 to 1937	Remove Outliers 1926 to 1937	Control for pre-reform change in outcome 1926 to 1937	Control for district-specific trends DID estimate	Medium term effect 1937 to 1945
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Panel A: Change in voter share of total population						
Change in % enfranchised	0.245***	0.294***	0.411***	0.416***	0.359***	-0.137**
	(0.058)	(0.059)	(0.034)	(0.033)	(0.069)	(0.063)
Observations	202	202	198	198	1188	198
R-squared	0.245	0.354	0.479	0.518	0.887	0.373
Panel B: Change in candidates per 1000 registered voters						
Change in % enfranchised	-0.858**	-1.391***	-1.423***	-1.401***	-1.876***	0.494***
	(0.343)	(0.441)	(0.522)	(0.515)	(0.491)	(0.145)
Observations	202	202	198	198	1188	198
R-squared	0.027	0.093	0.106	0.113	0.781	0.314
Panel C: Change in candidate-seat ratio						
Change in % enfranchised	-1.242	0.692	2.086	1.825	-0.370	-2.686*
	(1.434)	(1.395)	(1.744)	(1.473)	(2.846)	(1.595)
Observations	202	202	198	198	1188	198
R-squared	0.004	0.111	0.101	0.317	0.505	0.316
Panel D: Change in fraction of incumbents who get re-elected						
Change in % enfranchised	0.105	-0.378	-0.152	-0.285	-1.130	1.545**
	(0.672)	(0.878)	(1.103)	(0.895)	(1.458)	(0.745)
Observations	202	202	198	198	990	198
R-squared	0.000	0.040	0.041	0.330	0.468	0.148
Controls	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Remove outliers	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y

Notes: Robust standard errors in parentheses. ***indicates statistical significance at 1%, **at 5%, *at 10%. Controls include district population, literacy, urbanization, gender ratio, fraction of Hindus and Christians, and fraction of population employed in agriculture in 1921, and population growth rates between 1921 and 1931. Difference-in-difference estimates based on specification (2) in the paper.

Table 3: Impact of 1950 Reforms on Political Participation and Competition

	1945 to 1951	Controls 1945 to 1951	Remove Outliers 1945 to 1951	Control for pre-reform change in outcome 1945 to 1951	Control for district-specific trends DID estimate	Medium term effect 1951 to 1957
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Panel A: Change in voter share of total population						
Change in % enfranchised	0.269***	0.312***	0.296***	0.298***	0.268***	-0.107***
	(0.044)	(0.034)	(0.049)	(0.051)	(0.073)	(0.037)
Observations	167	167	165	165	660	165
R-squared	0.188	0.333	0.276	0.294	0.973	0.321
Panel B: Change in candidates per 1000 registered voters						
Change in % enfranchised	-0.102***	-0.091***	-0.112***	-0.097**	-0.101	-0.020
	(0.038)	(0.032)	(0.041)	(0.046)	(0.086)	(0.026)
Observations	167	167	165	165	660	165
R-squared	0.037	0.203	0.206	0.229	0.905	0.384
Panel C: Change in candidate-seat ratio						
Change in % enfranchised	1.213	2.436**	1.725	1.574	0.195	-0.760
	(1.465)	(1.182)	(1.440)	(1.343)	(3.293)	(1.299)
Observations	167	167	165	165	660	165
R-squared	0.006	0.204	0.198	0.322	0.787	0.312
Panel D: Change in fraction of incumbents who get re-elected						
Change in % enfranchised	0.733***	0.806***	0.592*	0.308	0.911	-0.404
	(0.280)	(0.297)	(0.317)	(0.297)	(0.627)	(0.354)
Observations	167	167	165	165	660	165
R-squared	0.055	0.163	0.158	0.352	0.622	0.080
Panel E: Change in fraction of Congress winners						
Change in % enfranchised	-0.242	-0.195	-0.146	-0.139	-0.131	-0.013
	(0.365)	(0.304)	(0.393)	(0.395)	(0.576)	(0.314)
Observations	167	167	165	165	660	165
R-squared	0.004	0.280	0.262	0.277	0.691	0.206
Controls	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Remove outliers	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y

Notes: Robust standard errors in parentheses. ***indicates statistical significance at 1%, **at 5%, *at 10%. Controls include district population, literacy, urbanization, gender ratio, fraction of Hindus and Christians, and fraction of population employed in agriculture in 1931, population growth rates between 1931 and 1951 and the fraction of refugees in 1951. Difference-in-difference estimates based on specification (2) in the paper.

Table 4: Impact of 1935 Reforms on Education Spending

Dep var: Change in per capita spending between pre-1937 (1931-1934) and post-1937 (1937-1940)

	Mean of spending variable over 1931-1934 (rupees)		Controls	Remove outliers
		(1)	(2)	(3)
Panel A: Change in Total Education Spending per Capita				
Change in % enfranchised	0.198	0.059	0.116*	0.100*
		(0.074)	(0.058)	(0.056)
Observations		93	93	92
R-squared		0.007	0.085	0.082
Panel B: Change in Primary School Spending per Capita				
Change in % enfranchised	0.136	0.026	0.103*	0.095
		(0.054)	(0.062)	(0.075)
Observations		93	93	92
R-squared		0.005	0.183	0.178
Panel C: Change in Middle School Spending per Capita				
Change in % enfranchised	0.038	-0.075**	-0.054	-0.048
		(0.035)	(0.043)	(0.051)
Observations		93	93	92
R-squared		0.060	0.106	0.100
Controls		N	Y	Y
Remove outliers		N	N	Y

Notes: Robust standard errors in parentheses. ***indicates statistical significance at 1%, **at 5%, *at 10%. Controls include district population, literacy, urbanization, gender ratio, fraction of Hindus and Christians, and fraction of population employed in agriculture in 1921, and population growth rates between 1921 and 1931.

Table 5: Impact of 1951 Reforms on Access to Primary Schools

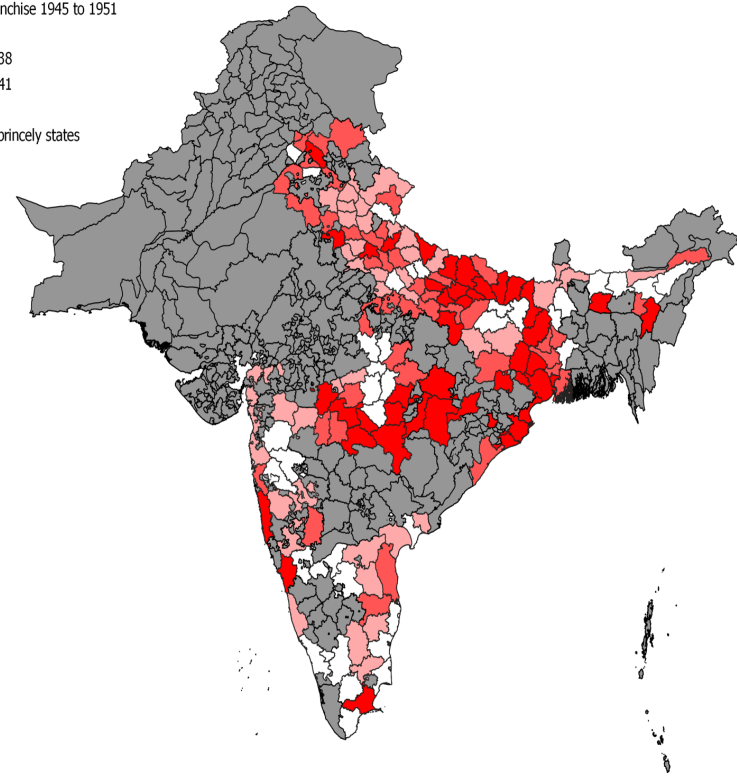|	Mean of primary school access in 1951		Controls	Remove outliers
		(1)	(2)	(3)
Dep var: Change in fraction of villages with access to primary schools between 1951 and 1961				
Change in % enfranchised	0.417	0.716	0.809*	0.720**
		(0.487)	(0.409)	(0.349)
Observations		107	107	102
R-squared		0.027	0.448	0.129
Controls		N	Y	Y
Remove outliers		N	N	Y

Notes: Robust standard errors in parentheses. ***indicates statistical significance at 1%, **at 5%, *at 10%. Controls include district population, literacy, urbanization, gender ratio, fraction of Hindus and Christians, and fraction of population employed in agriculture in 1931, population growth rates between 1931 and 1951 and the fraction of refugees in 1951.

Figure 1: Changes in Enfranchisement Caused by the 1935 and 1950 Reforms

Change in Franchise 1926 to 1937
- ☐ < 0.065
- ☐ 0.065 - 0.084
- ☐ 0.084 - 0.104
- ☐ > 0.104
- ☐ no data/princely states
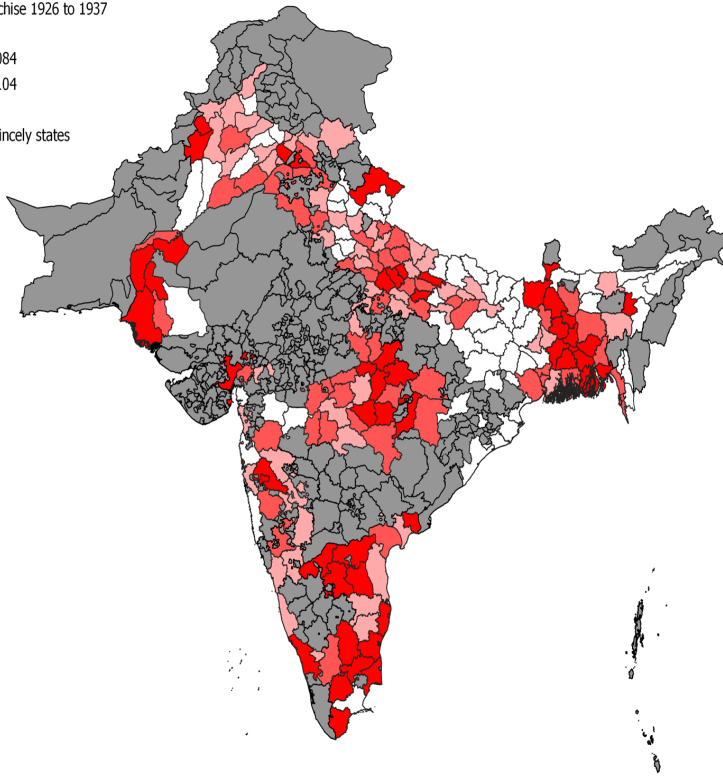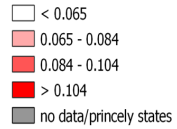
Change in Franchise 1945 to 1951
- ☐ < 0.34
- ☐ 0.34 - 0.38
- ☐ 0.38 - 0.41
- ☐ > 0.41
- ☐ no data/princely states
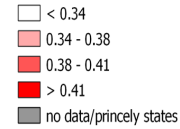
Notes: Enfranchisement is measured as the number of registered voters divided by the population of the district. Maps show the change in this measure due to the reforms of 1935 and 1950.

Figure 2: Event Study Estimates of 1935 Reform Impact
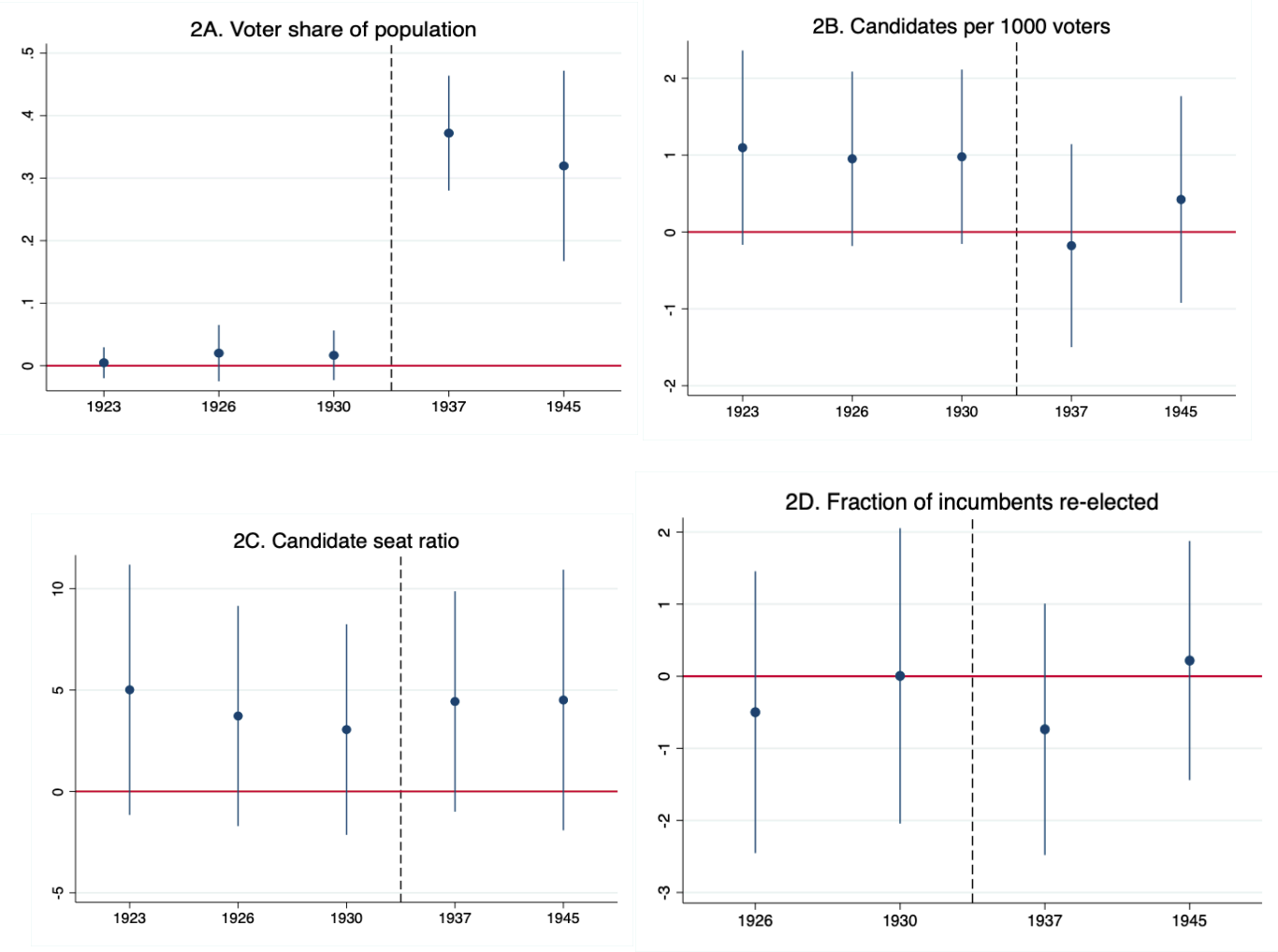
Notes: Points denote estimates obtained from the event-study specification in equation (3) in the paper. Vertical lines denote the 95% confidence intervals, based on standard errors clustered at the district level.

Figure 3: Event Study Estimates of 1950 Reform Impact
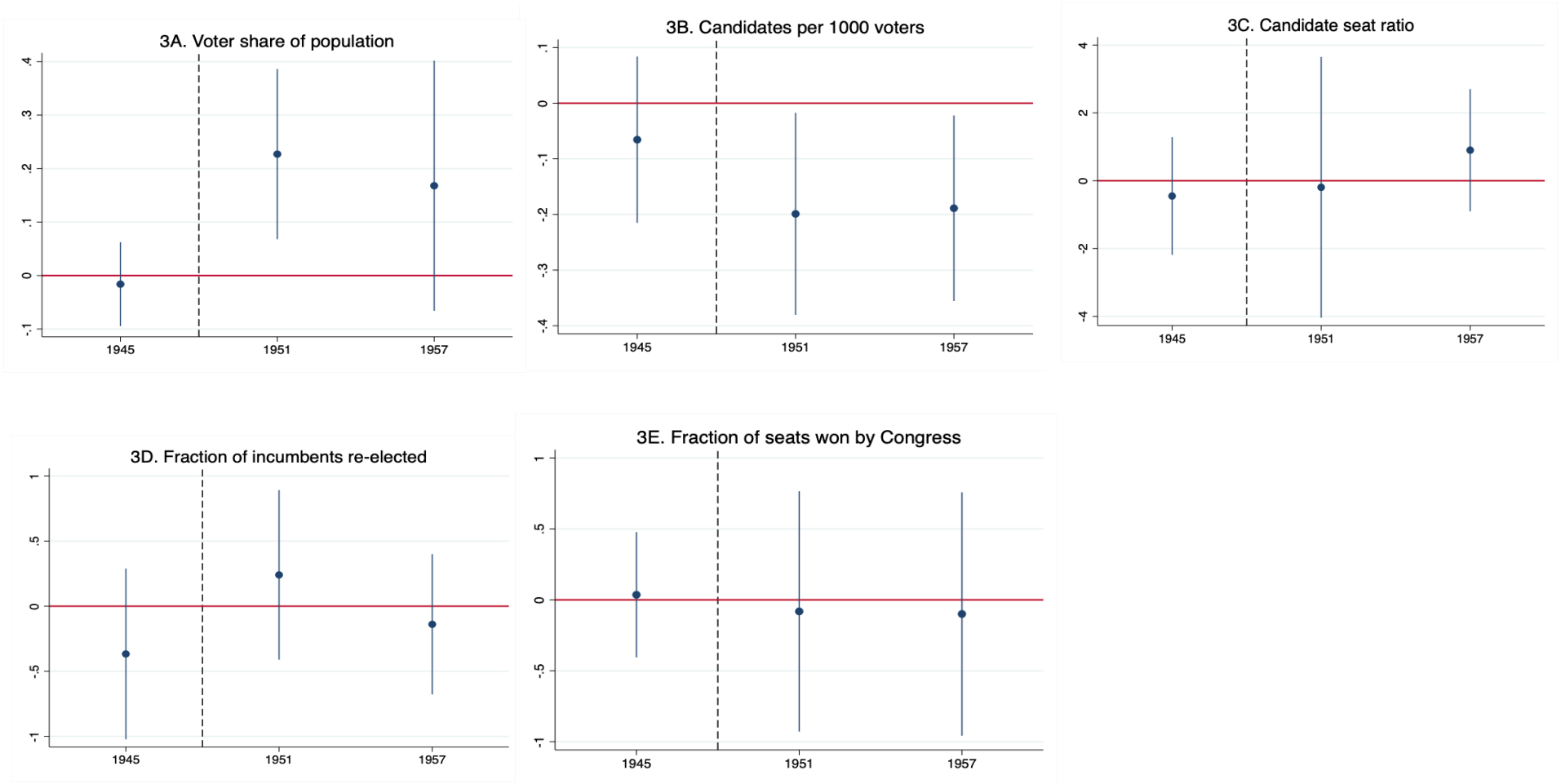
Notes: Points denote estimates obtained from the event-study specification in equation (3) in the paper. Vertical lines denote the 95% confidence intervals, based on standard errors clustered at the district level.

Enfranchisement, Political Participation and Political Competition: Evidence from Colonial and Independent India

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Appendix A: Figures and Tables

Table A1: Suffrage Requirements in the 1919 and 1935 Acts, by Province

Province	Eligibility Rules to Vote (non-Special Interest Constituencies)	
	1919 Act	1935 Act
Bengal	Paid municipal taxes and fees of at least Rs 1-8-0 (Rs 3 in Howrah and Cossipore-Chitpur); paid road and public works cess of at least Rs 1; paid chaukidari tax of at least Rs 2; occupied a house with assessed value of at least Rs 150 in Calcutta; paid any income tax; retired or pensioned officer of armed forces.	Assessed any income tax, municipal tax in Calcutta, municipal tax of at least 8 annas, public works cess of at least 8 annas, chaukidari tax of at least 6 annas, or union rate of at least 6 annas; occupied a house of annual value at least Rs 42; passed matriculation exam of any university; retired, pensioned or discharged officers or soldiers; widows and mothers of officers and soldiers; literate women; wives of qualified voters (who are subject to much stricter property limits than above). No men allowed to vote in the Muhammadan women's constituency.
Madras	Madras City: paid any tax in previous year or occupied a house of at least Rs 60 annual value; Other areas: paid any income tax or at least Rs 3 of other taxes or owned or leased land with annual rent value of at least Rs 10; retired or pensioned officer of armed forces.	Assessed any income tax, profession tax, property tax, house tax (or tenants of such property) or motor vehicles tax; registered landholder or occupancy ryot; leased immovable property worth at least Rs 100 in annual rent (Rs 50 in rural areas); literate persons; retired, pensioned or discharged officers or soldiers; widows and mothres of officers and soldiers; wives of qualified voters (subject to stricter property limits than above).
Bombay (included Sind in 1919)	Occupied a house with annual rental value of at least Rs 36 (Rs 120 in Bombay and Karachi cities; Rs 24 in Panch Mahals or Ratnagiri districts); paid any income tax; retired or pensioned officer of armed forces; monthly wages of at least Rs 40 for Bombay city textile workers; owned or leased land paying at least Rs 32 in land revenue (Rs 16 in Panch Mahals, Ratnagiri and Upper Sind Frontier).	Owners and tenants on land assessed at least Rs 8 in land revenue; owners or tenants of houses with annual rental value of at least Rs 18 (Rs 60 in Bombay city) or capital value of Rs 750; those who have passed the matriculation of the University of Bombay; retired, pensioned or discharged officers or soldiers.
United Provinces	Occupied a house with annual rental value of at least Rs 36, or paid municipal tax on income of at least Rs 200; paid any income tax; retired or pensioned officer of armed forces; owned land paying at least Rs 25 in land revenue; tenants paying at least Rs 25 in rent for permanent tenure holder or fixed rate tenants, and Rs 50 for others.	Assessed any income tax; municipal tax on income of at least Rs 150; owner or tenant of a house with rental value at least Rs 24; owns land with land revenue of at least Rs 5 (or under-proprietor in Oudh of same); tenant of land with rent at least Rs 10; special provisions for Kumaon; passed the upper primary examination; retired, pensioned or discharged officer or soldier; widows and mothers of officers and soldiers; literate women; wives of qualified voters (with much stricter property limits than above).

Province	1919 Act	1935 Act
Punjab	Owned or occupied property of at least Rs 96 in annual rental value (or total value Rs 4000); paid municipal tax of at least Rs 50; paid any income tax; retired or pensioned officer of armed forces; owned or leased land paying at least Rs 25 in land revenue; was an assignee of land revenue of at least Rs 50.	Assessed any income tax; direct municipal tax of at least Rs 50; profession tax or district board tax of at least Rs 2; owner or occupancy tenant with land revenue assessed at least Rs 5; assignee of land revenue of at least Rs 10; tenant of at least 6 acres of irrigated land or 12 acres of unirrigated land; owned non-land immovable property worth at least Rs 2000 (Rs 50 for SC); tenant of immovable property with annual rental value at least Rs 60 (Rs 36 for SC); zaildars, inamdars, sufedposh or lambardar; attained the primary educational standard; retired, pensioned or discharged officers and soldiers; widows and mothers of officers and soldiers; wives of qualified men (with much higher property limits than above); literate women and SCs.
Bihar (included Orissa in 1919)	Paid municipal tax of at least Rs 3; paid any income tax; retired or pensioned officer of armed forces; holds estate paying at least Rs 12 in local cess; holds a tenure assessed at least Rs 100 for local cess; holds land as raiyat paying at least Rs 48 in land revenue (Rs 16 in Orissa and Chota Nagpur divisions, Rs 64 in Patna division and Munghyr district, Rs 24 in Santhal Parganas); paid Bengal Local Self-Government Act tax of at least Rs 1-8-0.	Assessed any income tax; municipal tax of at least Rs 1-8-0; chaukidari tax of at least 9 annas; occupies land or buildings with annual rent at least Rs 24 (Jamshedpur); holds land with rent of at least Rs 6 or cess of at least 3 annas (non-Jamshedpur); passed matriculation exam of any university; retired, pensioned or discharged officers and soldiers; widows and mothers of officers and soldiers; wives of qualified men (with much higher property limits than above); literate women. No men can vote in the Muhammadan women's constituency.
Central Provinces and Berar	Owner or tenant of a house of annual rental value at least Rs 36; paid municipal tax on income of at least Rs 200; paid any income tax; retired or pensioned officer of armed forces; lambardar of a mahal; owns estate of land revenue at least Rs 100; holds a tenure assessed at least Rs 50 in annual revenue (Rs 40 in Bhandara, Balaghat, Nimar, Chhindwara and Seoni districts; Rs 30 in Raipur, Bilaspur, Drug, Chanda and Betul districts).	Assessed any income tax; haisiyat tax of at least Rs 75; holds estate of land revenue at least Rs 2; owner or tenant of a building with annual rental value of at least Rs 6; watandar patel/patwari; registered deshmukh/deshpandia/lambardar; passed middle school examination; retired, pensioned or discharged officers and soldiers (also including Nizam's soldiers); widows and mothers of offiers and soldiers; literate or primary educated women; wives of qualified men (with higher property limits than above). SCs qualified if he is a kotwar, jaglia or village mahar holding office.

Province	1919 Act	1935 Act
Assam	Paid municipal tax of at least Rs 3 (Rs 2 for Nowgong, Rs 1-8-0 for Sylhet, Rs 1 for rural constituencies); paid any income tax; retired or pensioned officer of armed forces; assessed tax of at least Rs 1 under Bengal Municipal Act 1876; owned land assessed at land revenue of at least Rs 1.	Assessed any income tax; municipal tax of at least Rs 2 (Rs 1-8-0 in Sylhet, Rs 1 in small towns); chaukidari tax of at least 8 annas in Sylhet, Cachar and Goalpara districts; owns land with land revenue at least Rs 7-8-0; pays local rates of at least 8 annas; rented land of at lesat Rs 7-8-0 in Lakhimpur, Sibsagar, Darrang, Nowgong, Kamrup and Garo HIlls districts; passed middle school examination; retired, pensioned or discharged officers and soldiers; widows and mothers of offiers and soldiers; literate women; wives of qualified men (with higher property limits than above). No man can vote in constituencies reserved for women.
NWFP	No legislative assembly.	Assessed any income tax; municipal tax of at least Rs 50; district board tax of at least Rs 2; owned immoveable property of at least Rs 600; tenant of immovable property with annual rental value of at least Rs 48; owner or tenant of at least 6 acres irrigated land or 12 acres unirrigated land or land assessed to land revenue of at least Rs 5; assignee of land revenue of at least Rs 10; zaildars, inamdars or lambardar; passed middle school examination; retired, pensioned or discharged officers and soldiers; widows and mothers of offiers and soldiers; literate women; wives of qualified men (with higher property limits than above).
Orissa	No separate legislative assembly; see Bihar above.	Assessed any income tax; municipal tax of at least Rs 1-8-0; chaukidari tax of at least 9 annas (Cuttack, Puri, Balasore districts and Angul subdivision); pays rent or land revenue of at least Rs 2 (Rs 1 in Sambalpur); passed matriculation exam of any university; retired, pensioned or discharged officers and soldiers; widows and mothers of officers and soldiers; wives of qualified men (with much higher property limits than above); literate women.
Sind	No separate legislative assembly; see Bombay above.	Owners, permanent tenants and alienees on land assessed at least Rs 8 in land revenue; Hari cultivators on land assessed at least Rs 16 in land revenue; owners or tenants of houses with annual rental value of at least Rs 18 (Rs 30 in Karachi city) or capital value of Rs 750; those who have passed the matriculation of the University of Bombay; retired, pensioned or discharged officers or soldiers; widows and mothers of officers and soldiers; literate women; wives of qualified voters (who are subject to much stricter property limits than above).

Sources for the 1919 Act: H.N. Mitra (ed.). 1921. *The Govt of India Act 1919: Rules Thereunder and Govt. Reports 1920.* Calcutta: Annual Register Office.

Sources for the 1935 Act: *Government of India Act, 1935*. The Government of British India.

Table A2: Summary Statistics for Control Variables

	1921	1931	1951
Number of districts	201	201	167
Total population (millions)	1.13	1.24	1.59
Population growth rate (annual, since last census)	0.010	0.014	0.015
Fraction literate	0.044	0.044	0.166
Fraction female	0.480	0.480	0.482
Fraction urban	0.108	0.121	0.158
Fraction Hindu	0.698	0.701	0.847
Fraction Muslim	0.237	0.246	0.105
Fraction Sikh	0.013	0.015	0.024
Fraction Christian	0.011	0.012	0.014
Fraction in agriculture	0.700	0.276	0.701
Fraction in industry	0.112	0.045	0.102
Fraction in commerce	0.065	0.027	0.058
Fraction refugees			0.027

Figures for 1951 exclude districts that became part of Pakistan in 1947.

Figures for fraction of population engaged in agriculture, industry and commerce are defined differently in the census of 1931 and hence are not comparable to the censuses of 1921 and 1951.

Table A3: Impact of 1935 Reforms on Political Participation and Competition: Robustness Checks

	Enfranchisement with interpolated pop as denominator 1926 to 1937	Enfranchisement with age-specific pop as denominator 1926 to 1937	Control for change in #seats 1926 to 1937	Different time period 1930 to 1937	Drop districts that went to Pakistan 1926 to 1937	Province dummies as instrument 1926 to 1937
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Panel A: Change in voter share of total population						
Change in % enfranchised	0.443***	0.144***	0.406***	0.402***	0.395***	0.310***
	(0.040)	(0.018)	(0.034)	(0.039)	(0.036)	(0.051)
Observations	198	197	198	198	163	198
R-squared	0.497	0.378	0.498	0.484	0.503	0.455
Panel B: Change in candidates per 1000 registered voters						
Change in % enfranchised	-1.402**	-0.624**	-1.456***	-1.285***	-1.767***	-3.344***
	(0.572)	(0.240)	(0.518)	(0.326)	(0.599)	(1.200)
Observations	198	197	198	198	163	198
R-squared	0.101	0.113	0.114	0.151	0.119	0.034
Panel C: Change in candidate-seat ratio						
Change in % enfranchised	2.348	1.171*	2.137	2.151	1.219	3.432
	(1.858)	(0.612)	(1.736)	(1.776)	(1.779)	(2.748)
Observations	198	197	198	198	163	198
R-squared	0.102	0.105	0.102	0.119	0.123	0.098
Panel D: Change in fraction of incumbents who get re-elected						
Change in % enfranchised	-0.787	0.234	-0.116	-0.383	-0.162	-2.395
	(1.103)	(0.491)	(1.098)	(0.840)	(1.249)	(2.160)
Observations	198	197	198	198	163	198
R-squared	0.043	0.045	0.043	0.041	0.051	0.017
Controls	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Remove outliers	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Notes: Robust standard errors in parentheses. ***indicates statistical significance at 1%, **at 5%, *at 10%. Controls include district population, literacy, urbanization, gender ratio, fraction of Hindus and Christians, and fraction of population employed in agriculture in 1921, and population growth rates between 1921 and 1931. Age-specific population data is missing for Cachar district.

Table A4: Impact of 1935 Reforms on Supplementary Political Outcomes

	1926 to 1937	Controls 1926 to 1937	Remove Outliers 1926 to 1937	Control for pre-reform change in outcome 1926 to 1937	Control for district-specific trends DID estimate	Period after 1937 to 1945
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Panel A: Change in voter turnout (contested seats only)						
Change in % enfranchised	-0.632**	-0.730**	-0.732**	-0.711**	-1.434*	-0.069
	(0.247)	(0.311)	(0.367)	(0.333)	(0.794)	(0.274)
Observations	199	199	196	196	1148	194
R-squared	0.031	0.074	0.078	0.163	0.682	0.245
Panel B: Change in candidates per 100,000 population						
Change in % enfranchised	1.140	2.428**	3.359**	3.421**	2.433	-0.758
	(1.260)	(1.163)	(1.538)	(1.519)	(2.254)	(0.863)
Observations	202	202	198	198	1188	198
R-squared	0.006	0.277	0.278	0.305	0.870	0.310
Panel C: Change in fraction of uncontested seats						
Change in % enfranchised	1.009*	0.641	-0.069	-0.381	1.862	0.017
	(0.554)	(0.737)	(0.717)	(0.515)	(1.526)	(0.669)
Observations	202	202	198	198	1188	198
R-squared	0.018	0.087	0.071	0.448	0.496	0.196
Controls	N	Y	Y	Y		Y
Remove outliers	N	N	Y	Y		Y

Notes: Robust standard errors in parentheses. ***indicates statistical significance at 1%, **at 5%, *at 10%. Controls include district population, literacy, urbanization, gender ratio, fraction of Hindus and Christians, and fraction of population employed in agriculture in 1921, and population growth rates between 1921 and 1931. Difference-in-difference estimates based on specification (2) in the paper.

Table A5: Impact of 1950 Reforms on Political Participation and Competition: Robustness Checks

	Interpolated pop as denominator 1945 to 1951	Age-specific pop as denominator 1945 to 1951	Control for change in #seats 1945 to 1951	Drop Punjab & Bengal 1945 to 1951
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Panel A: Change in voter share of total population				
Change in % enfranchised	0.300***	0.094***	0.362***	0.325***
	(0.046)	(0.020)	(0.053)	(0.050)
Observations	166	164	166	142
R-squared	0.306	0.274	0.330	0.402
Panel B: Change in candidates per 1000 registered voters				
Change in % enfranchised	-0.104***	-0.036***	-0.160***	-0.125***
	(0.038)	(0.011)	(0.044)	(0.044)
Observations	166	164	166	142
R-squared	0.205	0.196	0.226	0.192
Panel C: Change in candidate-seat ratio				
Change in % enfranchised	1.820	0.042	3.164**	3.030*
	(1.320)	(0.564)	(1.550)	(1.640)
Observations	166	164	166	142
R-squared	0.202	0.244	0.217	0.222
Panel D: Change in fraction of incumbents who get re-elected				
Change in % enfranchised	0.804**	0.183	0.548	0.518
	(0.374)	(0.152)	(0.407)	(0.458)
Observations	166	164	166	142
R-squared	0.158	0.139	0.177	0.178
Panel E: Change in fraction of Congress winners				
Change in % enfranchised	-0.047	0.134	0.404	0.770
	(0.380)	(0.145)	(0.434)	(0.468)
Observations	166	164	166	142
R-squared	0.264	0.273	0.288	0.314
Controls	Y	Y	Y	Y
Remove outliers	Y	Y	Y	Y

Notes: Robust standard errors in parentheses. ***indicates statistical significance at 1%, **at 5%, *at 10%. Controls include district population, literacy, urbanization, gender ratio, fraction of Hindus and Christians, and fraction of population employed in agriculture in 1931, population growth rates between 1931 and 1951, and the fraction of refugees in 1951.

Table A6: Impact of 1950 Reforms on Supplementary Political Outcomes

	1945 to 1951	Controls 1945 to 1951	Remove Outliers 1945 to 1951	Control for pre-reform change in outcome 1945 to 1951	Control for district-specific trends DID estimate	Medium term effects 1951 to 1957
Panel A: Change in voter turnout (contested seats only)						
Change in % enfranchised	-0.458***	-0.428***	-0.506***	-0.466***	-0.604**	0.080
	(0.110)	(0.111)	(0.127)	(0.119)	(0.247)	(0.059)
Observations	163	163	162	162	656	166
R-squared	0.090	0.219	0.227	0.324	0.835	0.239
Panel B: Change in candidates per 100,000 population						
Change in % enfranchised	6.245***	7.475***	7.508***	7.551***	6.671***	-4.194***
	(0.963)	(0.818)	(1.038)	(1.062)	(2.202)	(1.285)
Observations	167	167	166	166	660	166
R-squared	0.198	0.458	0.448	0.460	0.882	0.403
Panel C: Change in fraction of unopposed seats						
Change in % enfranchised	-0.172	-0.105	-0.182	0.186	-0.241	0.035
	(0.300)	(0.299)	(0.357)	(0.116)	(0.850)	(0.024)
Observations	167	167	166	166	660	166
R-squared	0.002	0.109	0.109	0.893	0.581	0.093
Panel D: Change in fraction of incumbents who run for re-election						
Change in % enfranchised	0.816***	0.870***	0.918**	0.731**	1.001*	-0.650*
	(0.273)	(0.291)	(0.375)	(0.336)	(0.602)	(0.354)
Observations	167	167	166	166	660	166
R-squared	0.066	0.140	0.138	0.269	0.680	0.113
Panel E: Change in number of contesting parties per seat						
Change in % enfranchised	-1.283***	-1.384***	-1.677***			0.404
	(0.409)	(0.443)	(0.476)			(0.267)
Observations	167	167	166			166
R-squared	0.064	0.246	0.255			0.213
Controls	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Remove outliers	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y

Notes: Robust standard errors in parentheses. ***indicates statistical significance at 1%, **at 5%, *at 10%. Controls include district population, literacy, urbanization, gender ratio, fraction of Hindus and Christians, and fraction of population employed in agriculture in 1931, population growth rates between 1931 and 1951 and the fraction of refugees in 1951. Difference-in-difference estimates based on specification (2) in the paper.

Table A7: Impact of 1950 Reforms on Demographic Indicators

	Mean of dependent variable	No controls	Controls	Remove outliers
		(1)	(2)	(3)
Panel A: Change in crude death rate, 1951-1961				
Change in % enfranchised	-5.95	-17.788	-15.391*	-10.921
		(11.197)	(8.558)	(11.255)
Observations		148	148	146
R-squared		0.031	0.169	0.140
Panel B: Change in infectious disease death rate, 1951-1961				
Change in % enfranchised	-3.20	-5.351	-2.703	0.433
		(5.051)	(3.744)	(4.526)
Observations		145	145	143
R-squared		0.011	0.157	0.138
Panel C: Change in crude birth rate, 1951-1961				
Change in % enfranchised	-3.99	-29.500**	-20.780	-2.821
		(14.470)	(14.428)	(17.831)
Observations		145	145	143
R-squared		0.041	0.174	0.152
Controls		N	Y	Y
Remove outliers		N	N	Y

Notes: Robust standard error in parantheses. ***indicates statistical significance at 1%, **at 5%, *at 10%. Controls include district population, literacy, urbanization, gender ratio, fraction of Hindus and Christians, and fraction of population employed in agriculture in 1931, population growth rates between 1931 and 1951 and the fraction of refugees in 1951. Crude death (birth) rate is calculated as the number of deaths (births) per 1000 population; infectious disease death rate is the number of deaths from cholera, fever, smallpox, diarrhea and malaria per 1000 population. Sample restricted to districts that had deaths data in both 1951 and 1961. Data obtained from *Vital Statistics of India* for 1961 (Office of the Registrar General) and *District Census Handbooks for Indian States* (Census of India 1961).

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Appendix B: Constitutional Reforms Prior to 1935

B.1. The Act of 1858: From Company to Crown

The British Empire in the Indian subcontinent lasted nearly 200 years. In 1757, following the battle of Plassey, the East India Company established a foothold in Bengal. Over the following five decades, large parts of the areas of present-day India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Burma (Myanmar) were brought under British political control by means of conquest or cession by local rulers due to treaty violations. In 1817–1818, after winning a series of battles in central India, the British emerged as the dominant political power in the subcontinent, with all remaining native states accepting the East India Company as the "paramount power" in India. Further territory was added to British India in the following decades by means of conquest, accusing the native rulers of "misrule" and, controversially, by refusing to recognize adoptions and annexing areas where the native ruler died without a natural heir.[1]

Following the revolt of 1857, when Indian soldiers in the Company's army mutinied against their officers, the administration of India was taken over by the British Crown in 1858. Historians disagree as to whether the mutiny was a planned war of independence against British power or an uncoordinated uprising of soldiers who felt a threat to their religion and traditional practices (Spear, 2002), or simply a mutiny by soldiers who wanted increased pay and greater career opportunities (David, 2002). After some initial reverses, the British rallied and were able to suppress the mutiny by the end of 1858. A decision was made

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[1] See Iyer (2010) for details of these different modes of annexation, and Bowen (2008) and Stern (2012) for detailed analyses of the East India Company's administrative and political arrangements.

to stop further annexation plans, with the queen's proclamation of 1858 stating specifically, "We desire no extension of our present territorial possessions." British India thus comprised 55% of the total area of the Indian subcontinent (excluding Burma and Sind) and about 77% of the total population in 1911.

The Act of 1858 set up a system of government centred in Whitehall, authorizing the Secretary of State in England with overarching powers, including the "superintendence, direction and control of all acts, operations and concerns which relate to the government or revenues of India, and all grants." The "Viceroy and Governor-General" was the Crown's representative in India, reporting to the Secretary of State. The Viceroy was advised by an Executive Council, whose strength was increased from four to five by the Indian Councils Act of 1861, with the possibility of 6-12 additional members for strictly legislative purposes. Provincial Governors had the power of making laws for issues related to the provinces; however, their powers were subordinate to those of the Governor-General. Administration was entrusted to a newly created Indian Civil Service (ICS), in which the entry of Indian officers was (very) gradually permitted over time.

B.2. Precursors to Direct Democracy: Making "Common Cause" with the People of India

Political figures in England soon became concerned with the political and administrative future of India. Prime Minister Gladstone was a strong advocate of having a more inclusive government, stating in 1878: "Let us only make common cause with her people: let them feel that we are there to give more than we receive;…Unless we can produce this conviction in the mind of India, in vain shall we lavish our thoughts and our resources upon a merely material defence…" Concerns about the growth of local political organizations led to the creation of the Indian National Congress by Allan Octavian Hume as a venue for the expression of Indian demands. The first session of the Congress was held in Bombay in 1885, where the main demands were for the enlargement of legislative councils and their powers, simultaneous examinations for the ICS in India and in England, and other administrative reforms.

Following Viceroy Dufferin's minute in November 1888, which stated that the "time has come to give a still wider share in the administration of public affairs to ... Indian gentlemen," the Indian Councils Act of 1892 was passed. This Act increased the strength of legislative councils in the central government

and in the provinces, and introduced some representation of Indian interests by stating that the majority of non-official seats should be filled on the recommendation of such bodies as municipalities, district boards, chambers of commerce and universities. However, the term "election" was sedulously eschewed (Menon, 1957). These councils had the right to ask questions and to discuss, but not vote upon, the budget.

The rise of "extremist" elements within the Congress, notably Tilak's demand for *swaraj* (home rule) and *swadeshi* (boycott of British goods), and the extreme unpopularity of British actions like the partition of Bengal province in 1905, led the colonial government to think about further measures of devolution of power to Indians. Viceroy Minto stated: "The political atmosphere is full of change; questions are before us which we cannot afford to ignore, and which we must attempt to answer; and to me it would appear all-important that the initiative should emanate from us, that the Government of India should not be put in the position of appearing to have its hands forced by agitation in this country or by pressure from Home…" At the same time, the Muslim community began to mobilize politically, with the Aga Khan visiting the Viceroy and the establishment of the All-India Muslim League in 1906. One of the Muslim League's objectives was "to protect and advance the political rights and interests of the Musalmans of India," as part of which many Muslims were in favor of separate electorates and reserved seats for Muslims in councils.

The Indian Councils Act of 1909 (also known as the Minto-Morley reforms) provided for greater inclusion of Indians into government by expanding the size of councils at both the centre and provincial levels, though officials and nominated members continued to be in the majority. The principle of elected members was introduced for the first time, with non-official members of these councils being elected indirectly by groups of local bodies, landholders, trade associations and universities. Muslims were given separate representation in the provinces of Madras, Bombay, Bengal, United Provinces and East Bengal & Assam. The powers of the councils were expanded only slightly: they could now discuss the budget, propose and vote on resolutions (which the Viceroy could overrule), and ask supplementary questions. It was the reforms of 1919 that introduced directly elected representatives for the first time.

B.3. The Government of India Act of 1919: "Responsible Government"

World War I and the growth of the nationalist movement convinced the British administration that institutional and political changes should be enacted in India so as to co-opt a larger share of the Indian elite in the hope of "rallying the moderates" (Danzig, 1969; Gallagher and Seal, 1981).[2] Within a month of taking office, the new Secretary of State, Edwin Montagu, made an announcement in the British House of Commons on August 20, 1917, that promised "responsible government" in India for the first time.[3] Following the publication of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report in 1918, this principle was given official form in the Government of India Act of 1919, which marked several clear departures from previous measures.

First, the Act instituted direct elections to provincial councils for the first time, and mandated that at least 70% of members in provincial councils were to be elected members, in contrast to the earlier policy of keeping elected members in a minority. However, suffrage was limited to those above a certain level of income or property. Our data indicate that only 2.5% of the population in a district were registered as electors in the first direct elections of 1921. As the franchise requirements were decided at the province level (see Appendix Table A1 for details of suffrage requirements in the 1919 and 1935 Acts), there was

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[2] Referring to the 1919 Government of India Act, Rothermund (1962) for example writes: "Montagu was painfully aware that the reform scheme […] was […] a […] compromise between Liberalism at home and the bureaucracy in India, between British interests and Indian national aspirations, political thought and administrative practice". Tomlinson (1976) also writes that there were [three actors in the end of the British rule in India] "… imperial planners in London, Government of India in New Delhi and the central leaders of the Indian National Congress." Danzig (1969) writes: "[…] British rule in India could not function without the active collaboration of an elite and at least the passive acquiescence of the mass. It was feared that repression of 'extremists' would alienate the 'moderates' whose support was thus deemed vital. The government in the period 1916–17 therefore decided to 'rally the moderates' by presenting them with an acceptable ideal which would counter the extremist demand for immediate home rule."

[3] The complete paragraph reads: "The policy of His Majesty's Government, with which the Government of India are in complete accord, is that of increasing the association of Indians in every branch of the administration and the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realization of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire." Danzig (1968) shows that the language of this announcement underwent many changes, and that the inclusion of the famous phrase "responsible government" owed much to the influence of Lord Curzon. Curzon's motivation was not to encourage popular mandates but more to displace the "lawyer class" from control of Indian politics and so from any Indian home rule in the future i.e. "self-government" would mean handing over control to Indian politicians while "responsible government" meant giving it to the electorates.

considerable variation across provinces and districts in enfranchisement rates. All citizens who were eligible to vote were also eligible to contest the election as candidates.

Second, there was a clear demarcation of subjects over which provincial councils and ministers could propose legislation and implement policy. Certain areas, such as defence and foreign relations, remained under the purview of the central government. At the provincial level, subjects such as land revenue, finance and law and order were "reserved" for the Governor to make decisions. Others, including education and health, were "transferred" to the purview of elected ministers, responsible in front of their legislature.[4] This system of dual control was known as "dyarchy." Provinces had the option to enact further devolution to local governments over certain functions. While this was enacted by some provinces in the fields of education and health, the Simon Commission of 1929 felt that such devolution of responsibility was counter-productive because "Ministers responsible to the legislature have no effective control of the expenditure of money voted for mass education" (Great Britain and Simon, 1930, volume 1, pp. 51).

Third, to further cement provincial autonomy, revenues from provincial sources (including land revenue) were reserved to the use of the provinces, after they transferred a fixed proportion to the central government.

Fourth, the Act continued the 1909 policy of communal representation and separate electorates to Muslims nationwide, to Sikhs in Punjab, to Europeans, Anglo-Indians and Indian Christians in several provinces, and set aside certain reserved seats for non-Brahmins in Madras and Mahrattas in Bombay. Separate electorates meant that, for example, there were separate Muslim electoral constituencies where only Muslims could vote and only Muslims could stand as candidates. Separate representation was also provided to landholders, universities and commercial and industrial interests; most of these did not allow for directly elected representatives and will be excluded from our analysis of voter and citizen participation. The Governor had the power to nominate members of any groups who might fail to secure adequate

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[4] Appointment of ministers was left to the discretion of the Governor, with the proviso that no person could be a minister for more than six months unless he became a member of the provincial councils by election or nomination.

representation. The income or property thresholds for suffrage (and therefore candidacy) were the same across members of different communities within the same geographical region.

The 1919 Act explicitly restricted suffrage to men. However, provinces could change these arrangements if they so wished. Starting with Madras in 1921, all provinces extended suffrage to women on the same terms as men by the end of the decade (Ali, 1936). Since suffrage was extended to women on the same terms as men, the property restrictions were the same for women as they were for men, meaning that in practice, most women could not be registered electors; the ratio of women to men in the electorate was 1:20.

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Appendix C: Data and variable construction

C.1. Data Sources for Political Outcomes

We used several data sources to create a complete panel of winners' names over time. For the colonial period, our primary data source is several volumes of "Returns Showing the Results of Elections in India" published after each election. For the 1920 and 1923 elections, this source provides the names of electoral winners. For the 1926 and 1929-30 elections, this source does not contain the names of winning candidates. We, therefore, used the "Who's Who" publication from the Times of India yearbook for the years 1925-1926 and 1929-1930 to extract the names of winning candidates in both the Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council elections for these election years.

The 1937 "Return Showing the Results of Elections in India" report also does not contain the names of candidates for the 1937 elections. We used the "Who's Who" publication of 1937-1938 to obtain the names of election winners. We used original archival documents from the India Office Records at the British Library to obtain the names of candidates who contested the 1937 elections but did not win. These files did not contain information on United Provinces and Punjab. For these provinces, we consulted earlier systematic compilations of electoral results (Reeves et al., 1975 for United Provinces and Yadav, 1987 for Punjab), which provided the names of all the candidates from the 1937 elections.

The 1945 "Return Showing the Results of Elections in India" report contains information on the name, party affiliation and votes polled by winning and non-winning candidates in the Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council elections. The official election reports of the Election Commission of India provides the same information for elections in the 1950s..

C.2. Aggregation to the District Level

We should note that constituency-level boundaries differed from district boundaries in several ways. First, some districts contained several electoral constituencies; these are aggregated together by simple addition of the number of candidates, number of seats etc before computing district level ratios. Second, many districts contained separate constituencies for different religions, so that Hindus and Muslims living in the same area were in fact part of different electoral constituencies. Again, we aggregate our variables over these different types of constituencies. Note that such aggregation does not introduce any particular bias in our measures, since eligibility conditions for enfranchisement were the same across all religions. Third, some large constituencies are spread over several districts. For such cases, we "disaggregate" the outcome variables of this constituency over its constituent districts, weighted by how much of the population of that constituency came from each district. Such spanning across several districts mainly occurred for some urban constituencies and for several Muslim constituencies. We illustrate our aggregation procedure in more detail below.

Figures C.2.1 and C.2.2 consider the cases of two districts, A and B, each having a rural and an urban area. For the Hindus, District A is divided into three constituencies: Hindu Rural 1, Hindu Rural 2 and Hindu Urban 1. However, it is only divided in two Muslim constituencies: Muslim Rural 1 and Muslim Urban 1. Similarly, District B is divided along symmetric religious lines, however, note that the urban area in District B is part of the same constituency as the urban area in District A, both for Hindu and Muslims. Note also that while the rural area of District B has two distinct constituencies for Hindus, the rural area of District B is part of the same rural constituency as the rural area of District A for Muslims. Thus, Hindu Urban Constituency 1, Muslim Urban Constituency 1 and Muslim Rural Constituency 1 span the borders of several districts. This is problematic, since we observe our political outcomes only at the constituency level.

To compute electoral outcomes at the district level, we make the assumption that within constituency, the distribution of electoral outcomes mirrors the distribution of the population across space. That is (say), if the Muslims in district A represent 20% of the Muslim population in District A and B, then we will allocate 20% of seats, voters and electors of Muslim Rural Constituency 1 and Muslim Urban Constituency 1 to District A, and 80% to district B. We proceed similarly for Hindu

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Urban Constituency 1. We then sum, at the district level, the total number of seats, voters and electors attributed to each district over religion and urban/rural areas to reach a district specific number of seats, electors and voters. In practice, this means that our final database of number of seats, electors and voters consists of weighted averages and that all values will not be integer values.
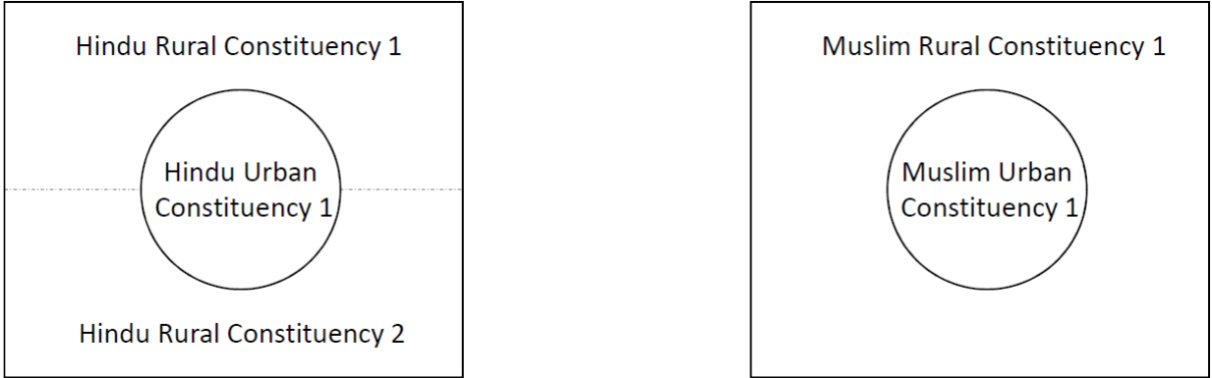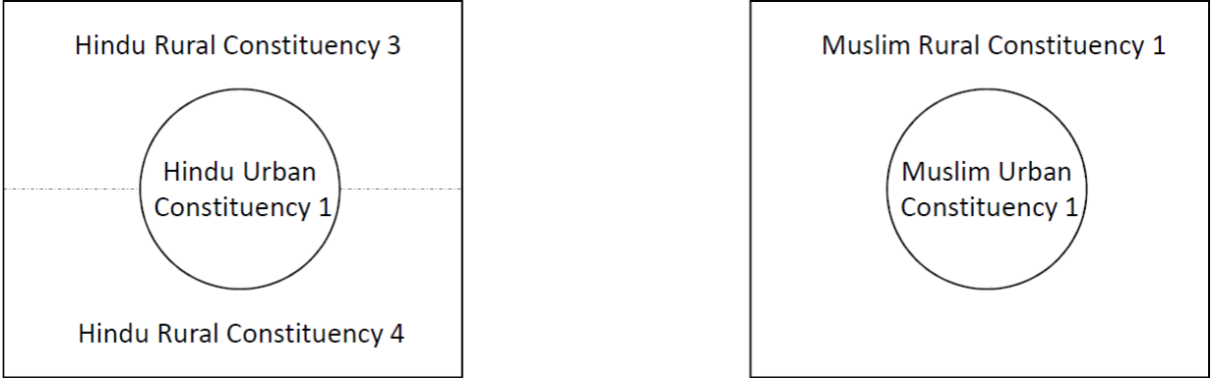
Figure C.2.1: District A

Figure C.2.2: District B

C.3. Tracking Individual Candidates Across Elections

To be able to track individuals across time, an extensive data cleaning effort was conducted since winners' names are often spelled differently in different election years. Such variations can occur because of different English transliterations of the same Indian name (e.g. Chatterjee vs Chattopadhyay); the person's title or honorifics (Khan, Doctor, Rai Bahadur etc) being included with the name in one year and not in another; only initials being provided in one year and full names in another; address or occupation included in the name field in one year and not in another etc. To account for these issues, we

used a combination of fuzzy matching computer algorithms and manual checking to systematically identify all instances of a candidate name in any election year turning up as a candidate name in the same district in any one of the other election years. The fuzzy matching procedure involved standardizing the names in the database (e.g. stripping out honorifics, educational details) and assigning a unique ID number to each person whenever the fuzzy matching indicated that the names were similar enough to be considered the same person. Such comparison was based on the full name of the person, not just on surnames, and many cases of intermediate match probability were checked manually by the authors. The following examples illustrate the procedure we followed:

Example 1 (perfect match after stripping out honorifics, place names and punctuations): "Nawab Syed Nawab Ali Chaudhuri Khan Bahadur, C. I. E." was listed as the winner in the Mymensingh constituency in the 1920 election. In 1923, his name appears twice as "The Hon. Nawab Syed Nawab Ali Chaudhuri Khan Bahadur" in the Mymensingh and Dacca West constituencies. The first step of the procedure involved stripping out the honorifics, place names and punctuations (Nawab—Bahadur—C.I.—The Hon.—',') from all variants of the name. Then, a single standardized version of the name was created as "Syed Ali Chaudhuri Khan." The fuzzy match routine was then run on this standardized version of the name across the election years of 1921 and 1923, with the result coming up with a perfect matching score of 1.

Example 2 (imperfect match after stripping out honorifics, place names and punctuations): "Saiyad Muhammad Raza Shah" was listed as the winner in the Multan West constituency in the 1920 election. In 1923, his name was listed as "Makhdumzada Muhammad Raza Shah, Multan" in the Multan West constituency. In 1926 and 1929, his name appears as "Makhdumzada Muhammad Raza Shah" in the Multan West constituency. The first step of the procedure stripped out all the honorifics, place names and punctuations (Makhdumzada—Multan—'.'). Then, two standardized versions of the name were created as "Saiyad Muhammad Raza Shah" and "Muhammad Raza Shah." The fuzzy match routine was then run on these standardized versions of the name, resulting in matching scores above 0.96. These near perfect were then manually checked to validate that they did indeed correspond to the same individual.

Example 3 (imperfect match based on different transliterations of the surname): "Babu Haripada Chattopadhyay" was listed in the Nadia constituency in 1937. In 1945, his name appeared as "Mr. Haripada Chatterjee" in the Nadia constituency. In 1951, he was listed as "Haripada Chatterjee" in the Karimpur constituency of Nadia district. As before, the first step stripped out all the honorifics, place names and punctuations (Mr.—Babu). Then, two standardized versions of the name were created as "Haripada Chatterjee" and "Haripada Chattopadhyay." The fuzzy match routine was then run on these standardized versions of the name, resulting in matching scores above 0.98. After manual checking, these were coded as corresponding to the same individual.

References

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