

Tentative Question

Do social cleavages affect voting behaviour in Canada? Do they play a critical role in elections, with specific regard to the voter choice?

Tentative Answer

Yes, social cleavages do affect voting behaviour in Canada. Regional, ethnical, religious, and class differences serve as the basis for variations in party support. These cleavages do play a critical role in elections, as they are often the decisive factor in elections that determines which political party becomes the ruling party in Canada.

Key Terms

Voting behaviour: “form of political behaviour that focuses on the determinants of why people vote as they do and how they arrive at the decisions they make”¹

Party identification: “whether voters have a feeling of closeness or psychological attachment to a particular political party”²

Class-consciousness: “an awareness of the social class to which one belongs”³

Paper Outline

Introduction

- Describe and explain what social cleavages are and provide examples that are present in Canada
- Explain the process of voting decision
- Briefly discuss the major political parties in Canada

¹ “Voting behaviour,” *A Dictionary of Sociology*, accessed October 20, 2016, <http://www.encyclopedia.com/social-sciences/dictionaries-thesauruses-pictures-and-press-releases/voting-behaviour>.

² Rand Dyck and Christopher Cochrane, *Canadian Politics* (Toronto: Nelson Education, 2014), 359.

³ *Ibid.*, 672.

Voting patterns

- Regional cleavage – Describe and explain how differences in voters' behaviour are attributed to the geographical division of provinces (West vs. Ontario vs. Quebec vs. Maritimes)
- Ethnical cleavage – Identify and explain how different ethnical groups associate themselves with political parties in Canada
- Religious cleavage – Describe and explain the role of religion in politics and how it ties into party identification
- Class cleavage – Identify the different social classes in Canada and explain how voting behaviour is attributed to disparities in economic status

Conclusion

Sources

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