Uncertainty Advantage in House Reelections

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Abstract

This is my abstract

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In 2018, 91 percent of House of Representative incumbents were reelected. Even when factoring in retirements or Members choosing not to seek reelection, the rate is roughly 78 percent (Skelley 2018). Interestingly, the House had an approval rating of 20 percent four days before the election 2018 (Gallup 2019). This conundrum spawned frequent research in an effort to answer the question: Why do House of Representative Members (MCs henceforth) get reelected when the approval rating of the House of Representatives is so low?

This paper proposes a new theory in "uncertainty advantage" that provides incumbents with an anxiety-induced advantage over a challenger during Presidential election years. Drawing on Psychology and Political Science research, I will attempt to answer the long-debated question as well as bridge the gap between the behaviors MCs do to get reelected, and the electorate actually voting for them in the election. A few assumptions are necessary to specify before further explanation of the new theory.

The first assumption is that MCs want to be reelected and do specific behaviors that are hypothesized in *The Electoral Connection* (Mayhew 1972). These behaviors are done in a purposeful effort on behalf of MCs in the pursuit of reelection.

Second, voters must care about the outcome of the election. The premise of this piece relies on the notion that politics and outcomes of elections have an effect on voters, and that they believe that the election is meaningful.

(Auter 2016)