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Redrawing the Lines: Did Political Incumbents Influence Electoral Redistricting in the World's Largest Democracy?

by [Lakshmi Iyer](#) and Maya Reddy

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Abstract

In 2008, the boundaries of national and state electoral constituencies in India were redrawn for the first time in three decades. We use detailed demographic and electoral data to construct measures of the extent of redistricting in a given constituency. We find the redistricting process to be politically neutral for the most part, though a few politicians who were advisory members for the redistricting process were able to avoid unfavorable redistricting outcomes for their specific constituencies. Incumbents whose constituencies became reserved for members of specific communities are significantly less likely to run for re-election following redistricting.

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