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Abstract

Getting Political: Die politische Mobilisierung der Indian American Community (Getting Political: The Political Mobilisation of the Indian American Community)

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Over the last decade the Indian Diaspora in the United States of America has developed into an increasingly important actor in U.S. politics. The Indian American community has been able to transfer its economic and social success into political power. This article deals with the transition from a largely apolitical ethnic population primarily interested in economic well-being into a considerable and competitive political force. This development can be explained by the incremental utilization of four main resources by the Indian American community: influence through voting power and public opinion, influence through information, influence through money and campaign finance, and, finally, influence through Indian American candidates. The Indian Diaspora in the United States has made incredible progress in all four of these spheres of political power. Arguably, its most notable success was the election of Piyush 'Bobby' Jindal, a second-generation Indian American, to Congress in 2004. But despite all the good results the Indian American community has already achieved, this well-educated and highly affluent group of citizens has much greater potential; if the Indian Diaspora in the U.S. can continue to raise political awareness and to utilize its resources, it might turn out to be an increasingly influential factor in American politics. This could have important implications for domestic issues as well as for the relationship between India and the United States.