

Voting Behaviour in India-An analysis

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Abstract

Voting behaviour, also known as electoral behaviour, involves understanding the factors and reasons which influence voting patterns. To interpret voting behaviour both political science and psychology expertise were necessary and therefore the field of political psychology emerged including electoral psychology. This article will shed light on the meaning and the determinant factors of voting behaviour. The Secondary data which has been collected from books, journals and periodicals is used to analyse the various factors in this study.

Key words: Voting behaviour, *Voting, Determinants, Election, Constituency, Respondents*
Introduction,

The concept of Voting Behaviour is defined as “The study of voting behaviour invariably focuses on the determinants of why people tend to vote in public elections as they do and how they arrive at the decisions they make” Voting behaviour is not confined to the examination of voting statistics, records and computation of electoral shifts and swings. It also involves an analysis of individual psychological processes (perception, emotion, and motivation) and their relation to political action as well as of institutional patterns, such as the communication process and their impact on election. The recorded history of voting goes back to the Greek city-states of classical antiquity. The study of voting behaviour is significant for the following reasons:

- It helps in comprehending the process of political socialisation
- It helps in examining the internalisation of democracy as a value among the elites as well as masses.
- It emphasises the real impact of the revolutionary ballot box
- It enables to throw light as to how far the electoral politics continue or break with the past
- It helps to measure whether it is modern or primordial in the context of political development

Objectives of the Study

- To understand the meaning of voting behaviour.
- To analysis the determinants of voting behaviour in India.

Methodology

This paper is descriptive and analytical in nature. The data used in it have collected from secondary sources. Necessary secondary data is collected from journals, Reference Books.

Voting Behaviour In India: Determinants

The behaviour of voter is influenced by several factors such as religion, caste, community, language, money, policy or ideology, purpose of the polls, extent of franchise, political wave etc. The political parties and groups make use of these variables for the sake of winning the battle of the ballot box. Despite making their professions for enlightened secularism. Politicians can be found making appeals to the religious and communal sentiments of the people. They can also be found involved in exploiting the factors of language or money to achieve the purpose of emerging successful in the war of votes. Appeals are issued and canvassing campaigns conducted in the name of a particular policy or ideology for the same purpose. In India following main political and socio-economic factors which act as determinates of voting behaviours in our Democratic system:

- **Education:**

It is often seen that the educated people take more interest in casting their vote as compared to the illiterates. Because they know the importance of their right to vote and consider the use of this right a national duty. They know that they can elect the government of their choice by executing their right to vote. If we analyse the behaviour of the western democratic nations, their democratic culture is higher than the Afro-Asian and Latin American States. The reason is only because they are more literates than these third world nations.

- **Caste:**

Caste plays the crucial role in the voting behaviour in India. India is multi cultured and multy Caste and religious Nation. It has deep roots in society and constitutes an important basis for social relations at all levels. Despite the adoption of various provisions that prohibit action and discrimination on the basis, the caste continues to be a determining factor in political behaviour. Analysts of India's politics commonly assume that Indians vote their caste while casting their vote. While that remains largely true, the 2014 general election reflected the growing importance of some class elements within caste, which is partly due to the socio-economic differentiation of caste groups. However, caste continues to play a significant role at the jati level, a more relevant unit of analysis than the large categories of upper castes, Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and Scheduled Castes. But some socio-economic differentiation is also taking place within jatis, and this process, along with other subdivisions, affects the voting pattern at that level too.

- **Charisma:**

Charisma is another important factors of determinants of voting behaviour in India. The slogan of "Garibi Hatao" performed miracles in the 1971 elections, the personality of Mrs Gandhi after India's miraculous victory in the Bangladesh war

had the same wonderful impact on the mind of the electorate in the State Assembly elections of 1972. The image of Jayaprakash Narayan had the same effect in the elections of 1977. The personality of Modi BJP won the election of 2014. In the US also the Presidents like John F Kennedy, Abraham Lincoln, George Washington and others had huge charisma and they contributed more for the development of the US.

- **Religion**

Religion also plays an important role in Indian politics. Many political parties have been formed on the basis of religion in India. At the time of elections different political parties seek votes in the name of religion. In popular election analyses, Muslims are often treated as a homogeneous voting bloc. Yet, as Hilal Ahmed's points out, Muslims hardly make up a monolithic community that mechanically acts in a coordinated fashion; just like Hindus, Muslims are divided on class, sect, caste, and regional lines—complicating claims that they behave like a uniform vote bank.

- **Money Factor**

There is a huge disparity in economic resources among the people in India. The rich has always huge hope in winning in elections as they have the money and wealth. In Asian and African nations only money power can always play an important role in the elections. It is believed that money does not vote but people do. However, studies have revealed the direct and indirect influence of money on electoral politics. The primary way through which money directly influences politics is through its impact on electoral outcomes. One way in which money influences electoral outcomes is through vote buying. Another way in which money influences electoral outcomes is through incurring electoral expenditure for political campaigns. Campaigns have a measurable influence on voting behavior because of the impact of television advertisements, campaign events, and personal canvassing.

Conclusion:

Modern Democrticle Governments are based on free and fair elections which have been conducted periodically. In these elections the participation of voters is highly inevitable. Due to the various factors there are some difficulties and unethical practises which have been taken place in the behaviour of the voters while they are costing their votes. In India the factors like education, caste, religion, money impacted on behaviour of voters. Sometimes these factors adversely impacted on the elections. But the education, the integrity of the nation, loyalty and soon these factors may positively be impacted on the behaviour of the voters.

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