

Voting Behaviour In Haryana Lok Sabha Election 2009: An Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Voting is the main form of political participation in liberal democratic societies and the study of voting behaviour is a highly specialized sub-field within political science. The analysis of voting patterns invariably focuses on the determinants of why people vote as they do and how they arrive at the decisions they make. Sociologists tend to look to the socio-economic determinants of support for political parties, observing the correlations between class, ethnicity, sex, and age and vote; political scientists have concentrated on the influence of political factors such as issues, political programmes, electoral campaigns, and the popularity of party leaders on voting behaviour. However, both disciplines share much the same terrain, and increasingly have tended to overlap in their analytical approaches.

Key Words:-*Voters, Political, Behaviour, Election and Democracy.*

Voters have a special significance in electing their representatives. There are more than 70 crore voters in India's democratic structure. They have a right to cast their votes in election. About voters and their voting, Rojanthal says, "When India votes, the whole world votes." There are more voters in India than voters in America, England, France, Japan, Brazil, Canada, Germany, Denmark, Sweden and Bangladesh. Moreover voters belong to different castes, communities and creeds in India. This diversity has great impact on the political system, political culture and political developments in the vast democracy of India. The election process exhibits voting behaviour of Indian's voters.

Voting Behaviour is a subject of study of the 20th Century. France is the first country to study voting behaviour. It was in 1913. It was followed by U.S.A. during the Two World Wars. England also studied voting behaviour after the World War. Voting Behaviour in India began to be studied after the Second General Election in 1957. Many interesting facts came to light. But the most prominent fact, which is still continued in every election, is that the Indian voter is caught in the traditional approach of casteism and creed. During the last two or three decades, the study of election and election behaviour has attracted a good deal of scholars attention and the field has gradually acquired a special importance within the discipline of political Science.

The voter has two options before him.

1. Whether he has to cast his vote or not.
2. The candidate and the party to vote.

Decision of voters is supreme in democracy. The meaning of right to vote is just clear in Democracy. Decision of people in voting room is truth. Some important factors which influence this decision are social, economic, political and religious and caste. Voting behaviour differs from constituency to constituency. The personality of the candidate, his position in the political party and his political ideology also effect the voting behaviour of the voter.

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A number of different approaches to the explanation of voting behaviour can be distinguished in literature. Structural (or sociological) approaches concentrate on the relationship between individual and social structure, place the vote in a social context, and examine the effects on voting of such variables as social class, language, nationalism, religion, and rural-urban contrasts. Ecological (or aggregate statistical) approaches relate voting patterns to the characteristic features of a geographical area (ward, constituency, state). Social psychological approaches relate voting decisions to the voter's psychological predispositions or attitudes, for example his or her party identification, attitudes to candidates, and such like. Finally, rational-choice approaches attempt to explain voting behaviour as the outcome of a series of instrumental cost-benefit calculations by the individual, assessing the relative desirability of specific electoral outcomes in terms of the issues addressed and policies espoused by the different parties or candidates. Each of these broad approaches tends to be associated with different research techniques and each makes different assumptions about what motivates political behaviour.

VOTING BEHAVIOUR IN HARYANA LOK SABHA ELECTION: AN ANALYSIS

There are many factors which decide voting behaviour, by which the voter is influenced and uses his right to vote. These factors are not similar in all situations and places. Voting behaviour is also different in different places. The study of voting behaviour is a difficult study. Because the voters are influenced by many other positive and negative reasons. Voters at the time of voting are attracted by many factors like personality of candidate, his party position and his thoughts. It is difficult task to divide these factors in various parts. But it can be divided into three categories.

1. Condition Factor.
2. Political Factor.
3. Social – economic Factor.

1. Condition Factor: Condition affects the voting behavior in election. Conditions also influenced the voters in Haryana lok Sabha Election 2009. The high temperature can be seen in Haryana electoral. If one party got all seats in one election, we see that the same party lost all the seats in the next election. But the Congress party got nine out of ten seats in this election. Delimitation was the condition factor in this election. The Congress party lost one seat in Hissar due to Bhajan Lal's image in Hissar and non Jat votes were divided between the Indian National Loak Dal and Congress.

Indian National Lok Dal and BJP could not win any seat in this election. Two condition factors were responsible for that. First was the bad governance of the Om Parkash Chautala from 2000 to 2005 that affected the performance of the INLD-BJP alliance. Second the alliance was imposed by the central leadership of the BJP, the INLD could transfer its votes to BJP, the BJP could not transfer its votes to the INLD. INLD and BJP announced that they will give electricity 24 hours to the farmers. They will increase the pension of aged person from Rs 500 to 700. But voters were influenced towards Congress Party.

Some achievements of government also played the role of condition factor in this election. Haryana is the first State in north India to set up a women's university. Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda said that we are implementing a Rs. 2,300 crore 'Mahatma Gandhi Gramin Basti Yojana' for the poor. The scheme of waiving arrears off electricity bills of farmers amounting to Rs. 1,600 crore was highly appreciated. To find out voting behaviour of voters, direct contact was established and question was asked.

Q-1. Did you like the regime of Congress Party in the last five years?

Table-7.1

	Yes	No	Don't know	Total
Total	1100	640	260	2000
%	55%	32%	13%	100

Source: During the course of interview.

Above table clears that on the basis of sample in Haryana Lok Sabha Election 2009, 55% voters said 'yes' while 32% voters said 'no'. But 13% voters said don't know.

2. Political Factor: Political factor is also an important factor which influences voting behaviour. The political factor can be divided into three parts.

- a. Party Convergent
- b. Candidate Convergent.
- c. Issue Convergent.

a. Party Convergent: Political Parties have an important place in democracy. In every election, voters elect their representatives. Voters are affected by party's feeling. During the election campaign, political parties present their manifestos and policies. On the basis of these programmes, voters cast their votes. In this election Congress Party won nine out of ten seats.

In 2004 Congress won ten out of ten. Before that no ruling party had been able to achieve this feat in the state ever. The election saw a complete rout of the INLD- BJP alliance. It has happened for the first time that the alliance between these two parties has drawn a blank.

Q-2. Did you belong to any political party?

Table-7.2

	Yes	No	Total
Total	1160	840	2000
%	58%	42%	100

Source: During the course of interview.

Above table clears that on the basis of sample, 58% voters belonged to political parties while 42% voters didn't belong to political parties.

b. Candidate Convergent: The candidate convergent is an effective factor to influence voting behaviour of voters. Personality of leaders plays an important role to influence politics of any state. After the inception of Haryana, Ch. Devi Lal, Bhajan Lal, Bansilal and Bhagwat Dayal Sharma have been the magic star in politics of Haryana. Candidate influences the voters by his personal virtues like honesty, his kind nature, his services and his party feelings. In this election Congress Party won nine out of ten seats. Bhajan Lal the candidate of Haryana Janhit Congress won from Hissar constituency due to his image. We can see the example of candidate convergent in by- election in Hissar. Bhajan Lal died in June, 2011. In by- election his son Kuldeep Bishnoi of the Haryana Janhit Congress won the by- election in Hissar by 23,617 votes. We can see another example of candidate convergent in Rohtak constituency. Deepender Hooda was the Congress candidate. He defeated INLD candidate Nafe Singh Rathe by 445736 votes. This was the record margin victory in Haryana. Political analysts said that in Rohtak constituency, along with other issues one of the big issue was of Deepender Hooda's personality also.

In his study of voting behaviour V.M. Sirsikar has found that political situation remains under control of those people who are rich, and have social standing and also such other factors. Candidates attract the voters by their personal qualities. Voters also see the personality of a candidate. Will this candidate give his contribution in development of constituency or not? What is the main issue raised by candidate? In this way candidate convergent becomes main factor at the time of election. This election shows the effect of development and good governance in last five years in Haryana.

There is important and effective role of personality to effect Indian politics at National and state level. But every candidate always tries to expose his qualities at the time of election to the voters influence. In this way candidate convergent becomes main factor at the time of election. V.M. Sirsikar says that works done by the contesting candidate in his constituency also influence the voters.

Question was asked in Haryana Lok Sabha Election 2009 from voters to find out candidate convergent of whom detail is given:

Q-3. On which basis did you cast your vote?

Table-7.3

	Total	%
Good Personality	1440	72%
Development Work	260	13%
Party Position	200	10%
Any Other	100	05%

Source: During the course of interview.

Above table clear that on the basis of sample in Haryana Lok Sabha Election 72% voters cast their vote on the basis of good personality. 13% voters cast their vote on the basis of development work while 10% voters cast their vote on the basis of party position. But 5% voters cast their vote on the basis of any other reason. So we can say that candidate convergent also influenced the voting behaviour of the voters.

c. Issue Convergent: Issue convergent also influences the voting behaviour. Every party presents its election manifesto before the election. These issues play an important role in the election. If we study Haryana Lok Sabha Election 2009, then we find that Congress Party raised many issues before the election. Unemployment, stability of Haryana government and development of Haryana became main issues of Congress Party. Congress Party said that reservation will be given for youths below 35 years in Panchayat Councils and amendment in the land acquisition rules in the interest of farmers. But INLD and BJP opposed it and gave attractive slogan which is:

**Congress tere raj main, Pani gaya Punjab main.
Congress ka dekho khel, Lut gaya pani ud gaya tel.**

The opposition parties, mainly the INLD-BJP alliance and the newly floated Haryana Janhit Congress of former Chief Minister Bhajan Lal and his son Kuldeep Bishnoi, were telling the voters that the UPA Government had failed on all fronts and its policies had plunged the nation into an economic crisis and the people were reeling under price hike. Coming to the State level, these parties were harping on the 'power crisis' shortage of water, unrest among section of Government employees who felt discriminated after the implementation of Sixth Pay Commission report and failure of the Congress to give adequate representation to Scheduled Castes and Punjabis.

INLD and BJP announced that they will give electricity 24 hours to the farmers. They will increase the pension of aged person from Rs. 500 to 700. But voters were influenced towards Congress party. That's why Congress got clear majority in Haryana. So it is clear that issues have important place in elections by which voting behavior is greatly influenced. To know the opinions of voters about issue convergent the interview was made by contact of voters of which details are given:

Q-4. Which party's manifesto did you like the most?

Table-7.4

	Congress	INLD-BJP	HJC	BSP	Total
Total	1160	520	180	140	2000
%	58%	26%	9%	7%	100

Source: During the course of interview.

Above table clear that on the basis of sample in Haryana Lok Sabha Election 2009, 58% voters liked the Congress Party's manifesto while 26% voters liked INLD-BJP manifesto, 9% voters liked HJC party and 7% voters liked BSP manifesto.

Above table clears that on the basis of sample 54% voters cast their vote on the basis of issues effect while 26% voters cast their vote on the basis of area. 12% voters cast their vote on the basis of ideology while 8% voters cast their vote on the basis of any other reason.

3. Socio Economic Factor: Socio-Economic factor has influenced the politics of Haryana after its inception. Through the development of agriculture, industries and infrastructure which have changed the life style of its

citizens. The main occupation of its people is agriculture. Dairy farming is the main part of its rural economy. The various numbers of analysts agree with the thought of Swedish sociologist, "Socio-economic factor influence the voting behaviour."

a. Caste: Caste plays an important role in Politics of Haryana. This can easily be understood by analyzing the result of the Lok Sabha Election in Haryana 2009. Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda favored the Jat Community by waiving off the arrears of the electricity bills of Rs 1600 crores. Jat support went to favour of the Congress after the public rally of Mayawati at Karnal on March 2, 2009. Every party gives their tickets on the basis of caste. The Congress nominated four Jats, Two Harijans, One Bania, One Brahmin, One Ahir and One Gujjar in the Haryana Lok Sabha Election 2009. There was not a single candidate from Punjabi Community. The voters of Haryana exemplified the rejection of the felling of casteism and voted for the good governance of Chief Minister Bhupener Singh Hooda's Government.

O.P. Goyal pointed out, "The relevance of caste as a voting department keeps on decreasing as we move upwards higher levels of politics and vice-versa. To know the influence of casteism the interview was made by contact of voters of which details are given below:

Q-5. Did you believe in casteism?

Table-7.5

	Yes	No	Total
Total	960	1040	2000
%	48%	52%	100

Source: During the course of interview.

On the basis of above table 48% voters said 'yes' while 52% voters said 'no'.

b. On the Basis of Family: Family and blood relation are also important factors in voting behaviour. It can be seen in Panchayat election, Assembly election and Lok Sabha election. In Haryana, mostly people live in rural areas. Some of the family members give their votes according to the elders in family. It means whatever aged people say other follow that advice and cast their votes according to their suggestion. They also cast their votes due to close relation with candidate.

According to Voter

**"Hum to kade te a Congress ne vote dete aaye se,
Aur abki bar bhi hamare kunbe mein sabne hath ka battan dabaya se.**

c. Communalism: Communalism is also another factor in Indian politics in voting behaviour. According to the Constitution, India is a secular state, yet religion plays an important role in politics of India. Communalism is seen as existing primarily between Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians. So it is clear that voters are influenced by the above factors at the time of election.

d. Corruption: Corruption in elections has always been a key issue. Corruption is also closely linked to crime. Not only Congress party but also other parties get economical help from the businessmen as a donation in the election. For this businessmen get much benefit when the political party comes in power. Sickness of corruption and influence of money and muscle power can be seen in our electoral process. Political parties give tempting offers to the poor voters and they sell their votes.

e. Wine and Wealth: Wine and wealth are also more effective factors in elections. Political parties take benefit of illiteracy and poverty and get votes by distributing wine and wealth. In this way corrupted candidates are elected. Illiterate voters do not understand the importance of their votes. Poor voters always worry about their meal of one time. That's way they sell their votes. To know the influence of wine and wealth question was asked from voters.

f. Force and Threats: Force and threats also influence voting behaviour. It is seen that force and threats are used to win the voters. In India, the poor voters are forcefully prevented from casting their votes by the people of upper caste. Political parties use muscle men for this. This is not a good sign for democracy. To know the influence of force and threats, question was asked from the voters of which detail is given.

g. Strong Leadership: We can see the example of strong leadership in Haryana Lok Sabha Election 2009. The Congress fought the election under the leadership of Chief Minister Bhopinder Singh Hooda and got nine out of ten seats. No ruling party had been able to achieve this feat in the state so far. The Congress party has repeated the victory of 2004 Haryana Lok Sabha Election. It was the strong leadership of Hooda that Avtar Singh Bhadana and Seilja were able to win in their controversial constituencies. The party could not defeat them even in the dispute. We can see the example of strong leadership in sonapat constituency. The Congress got this seat after 18 years. Thus we can say that strong leadership influences the voting behaviour. To know the opinions of voters about strong leadership the interview was made by contact of which detail is given:

Q-6. Was there any influence of strong leadership in this election

Table-7.6

	Yes	No	Don't know	Total
Total	1640	200	160	2000
%	82%	10%	8%	100

Source: During the course of interview.

On the above table we can say that 82% voters cast their votes with influence of strong leadership. But 10% voters said 'no' while 8% voters said don't know. In this way we can say that strong leadership influenced the voting behaviour in this election.

Sum-up: The results of Haryana Lok Sabha Election of May 2009 have shown that the Indian National Congress has re-established its image by winning nine out of ten seats. It has repeated the victory of 2004 Haryana Lok Sabha election. One seat was won by HJC (Hissar Seat) in 2009. The Haryana Lok Sabha Election of 2009 has shown that the voters have preferred INC to rule the country. The voting behaviour of the voters has shown stability and belief in one party. Though unpredictable, the Haryana Voters rose above casteism and voted Congress to power. It was the victory of the good governance of state Chief Minister Bhopender Singh Hooda, UPA Chairperson Mrs. Sonia Gandhi and Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh's Sagacious Administration. The election results of Haryana Lok Sabha seats of May 2009 are inspiring and eye-opener. We come to know the economic, social and political background of the voters and also the various influences which reflect their voting behaviour. Diversity is apparent in Indian social set-up. This chapter highlights the voting behaviour of the voters. The voter can make or mar a political party, the party in power, which governs the country. Changing of Governments from time to time is the result of the changing voting behaviour of the voter. The voter has a particular scale of judging the candidate and political party.

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