

POLITICAL COMMUNICATION IN THE
1991 GENERAL ELECTION IN INDIA
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO
ANDHRA PRADESH

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Submitted for the degree of Ph.D.

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19947

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ABSTRACT

In most competitive democracies, the allegedly US inspired changing campaign practices of the 1980s and 1990s have been subjected to intense scrutiny. India, as the largest democracy has also seen the use of modern techniques of political marketing alongside conventional forms of electioneering. These 'Western' techniques were first adopted in 1984 by Congress-(Indira) under Rajiv Gandhi. By 1991, these techniques were common place with almost all the political parties hiring the services of professional advertising agencies during elections. Campaigns began to be adapted from western models, melding the 'American' techniques with rallies, public meetings and door-to-door campaigns. Audio and video cassettes have been adapted to the Indian context, most notably the video-on-wheels.

This research on Political Communications in the general elections and its effectiveness is one of the first of its kind on India, the literature having concentrated on voting behaviour in relation to socio-economic characteristics. The importance of communication during elections has been inadequately researched because of the diversity of the country. Through a content analysis of the coverage of election information in the media and case studies of party campaigns, the study evaluates the campaign practices in the mass media and conventional interpersonal forms. It highlights the electronic and outdoor forms like posters, wall writings, symbol displays and cutouts that were important during the 1991 elections. The thesis then examines the impact of these campaigns through a panel survey on a sample of 1155 electors from the three constituencies of Hyderabad, Secunderabad and Nagarkurnool in Andhra Pradesh. The voting patterns have been evaluated in relation to access to and the impact of different forms of political communications.

Research revealed that Indian political communication campaigns were well organised and professional advertising agencies were hired to promote the parties. Campaigns have been systematically planned through the development of creative and media strategies.

Apart from the mass media channels, interpersonal forms continued to be important to reach the diverse electorate. There was a high level of exposure to newspapers, radio and television which were sought as important sources for election related information. Interpersonal forms were found to be persuasive. Education, urbanization, gender, caste and religion are important factors influencing the voters' perceptions and receptivity to electoral communications.

But, while increased level of information does heighten the level of political awareness, it does not determine the final outcome. An important aspect was that families largely tended to vote as single units with men generally deciding who to vote for. Women showed relatively little interest in politics (though comprising an important 45% of voters) and their under representation in the study necessitated the need for weighting.

The assassination of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in the middle of the elections adds an important dimension to the research, from those who voted in a normal election and those in the 'sympathy wave'. This study, though conducted under unusual circumstances does provide a much needed insight into the political changes in the country and the increasing use of US inspired media driven campaign practices of political marketing combining comfortably with conventional practices of political marketing in India. A final yet important aspect of this research is the exploration of the problems of survey research in a country of cultural plurality such as India.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ABC	Audit Bureau of Circulation
AIR	All India Radio
AIADMK	All India Anna Dravidra Munetra Karzhagam
AP	Andhra Pradesh
AGP	Assom Gana Parishad
BMAC	Babri Masjid Action Committee
BJP	Bharatiya Janata Party
BC	Backward Classes
BSP	Bahujan Samaj Party
BJS	Bharatiya Jana Sangh
CEC	Chief Election Commissioner
CEO	Chief Electoral Officer
Cong. I	Congress (Indira)
CPI	Communist Party of India
CPM	Communist Party of India (Marxist.)
DGP	Director General of Police
DMK	Dravida Munetra Kazahagam
DAVP	Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity
DBS	Direct Broadcasting Satellite
EC	Election Commission
FC	Forward Caste
IB	Intelligence Bureau
I & B	Information and Broadcasting
IMRB	Indian Market Research Bureau
INFA	Indian News and Feature Alliance
INS	Indian Newspaper Society
INSAT	Indian National Satellite
ICC	Internal Interpersonal Channels
INC	Indian National Congress
JD/NF	Janata Dal/National Front
JD	Janata Dal
JP	Janaty Party
LS	Lok Sabha
LD	Lok Dal
MCR	Mandal Commission Report
MARG	Marketing and Advertisng Research Group
MCH	Municipal Corporation of Hyderabad
MGR	M.G. Ramachandran
MICs	Mass Interpersonal Channels
MIM	Majlis-Ittehadul-Muslimeen
MLA	Member of Legislative Assembly
MP	Member of Parliament
NF	National Front
NRS	National Readership Survey
NEM	New Electronic Media
NIC	National Informatics Centre
NTR	Nandamuri Tarakarama Rao
OBC	Other Backward Classes
ORG	Operations Reserch Group
PIB	Press Information Bureau
PEB	Party Election Broadcasts
PM(s)	Public Meetings
RS	Rajya Sabha
RSS	Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh

SC	Scheduled Caste
SJP	Samajwadi Janata Party
ST	Scheduled Tribe
TDP	Telugu Desam Party
TN	Tamil Nadu
TINA	There Is No Alternative
UP	Uttar Pradesh
VCP	Video Cassette Players
VCR	Video Cassette Recorders
VHP	Vishwa Hindu Parishad
VOWS	Video-on-Wheels
Symbols	
Rs.	Indian Rupees
£	British Pound

INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of political marketing is inextricably linked with the United States of America (USA). Campaigning styles, techniques and strategies, conceived in America are now evident in many competitive democracies. Campaign practices are changing and have become the subject of intense scrutiny. This process of professionalization of campaigns is popularly seen as 'Americanization'¹. India as the largest competitive democracy in the world has witnessed parallel but mutated changes since the 1980s. What is new is not only the introduction of modern methods into campaigning, but the increased sophistication, adaptation and integration of traditional forms into the modern techniques (Sarwate, 1990). The present thesis attempts to examine the political changes and the use of mass media during the 1991 elections in India. The objectives are to compare the content, strategy and the new techniques adopted in planning of campaigns by the parties and to evaluate their impact on a sample of the electorate.

India, unlike other third world democracies has withstood the onslaught of several political crises including two major political assassinations, but has kept its democratic control and has yet to see a military coup. In a country where over 500 million people vote, with just over 50% literacy and low communication facilities, the effort and amount spent in conducting the elections is enormous (Kumar, 1991)

¹ The concept has been variously described by scholars studying the election campaign systems in various countries. (Elebash, 1984; Schou, 1992; Scammel and Karan, 1992) American campaigns have been researched, analyzed and innovative techniques have been adopted in most countries. Latest literature from around the world reflects on the process of political communication leading to a kind of global culture with the modernization of political campaigns.

Indian elections are grand festive occasions. The entire country is decked with flags, banners, posters, wall writings, symbol displays, and recorded political songs and speeches of candidates blare out from loudspeakers hung from electric poles and treetops. The country is in election fever. Until the early 1980s, election campaigns were dominated by country wide tours of party leaders who generally addressed large audiences, held rallies and processions while party activists persuaded voters through door-to-door meetings.

Print media such as newspapers generally covered election news and reported the campaign meetings of leaders, but posters, handbills and leaflets popularized campaign themes. Walls became battle grounds for wars of slogans, satire and abuse. These modes and others such as street theatre and corner meetings continue to be important, but, since the 1980s campaigns have included the extensive use of mass media using the evolving mass technologies.

The modernization of election campaigns in India could be attributed to the Cong.I² leader Rajiv Gandhi and his youthful team, who extensively used the media, introduced mass media campaigns through political advertising in print and electronic media thereby ushering a new era of political communication in India. His methods, sometimes accepted, sometimes sneered at, are now a norm in political campaigning. The process of modernization is seen not only in the adoption of modern western techniques, but also in the development of indigenous systems of political communication alongside the conventional forms to suit the diverse character of Indian democracy.

² The Indian National Congress (INC) is one of the oldest national parties. Since Independence the party has undergone several splits and only one Congress(I) enjoys national following. (I) being referred to as 'Indira'. We refer to this faction of the Congress party as Cong.I.

The changes were also in the professionalization of campaigns³ (and thereby commercialization of parties and candidates). The 1991 election, on which this study is focused, was claimed in the newspapers as one of the biggest media events. Following the 1984 and 1989 election campaigns mainly dominated by Cong.I, electioneering took a new turn. Planned political campaigns became common place and almost all political parties were using professional advertising agencies with well defined strategies to woo, if not necessarily to win the votes.

[Like the US presidential campaigns, Indian campaigns adopted the personality oriented mode of campaigning with campaigns revolving around leaders of the competitive parties. Press advertisements, and the audio visual media extensively projected the party leaders.] ,

Almost all parties used the negative attack strategies as described by Garromone (1984) and Carter and Copeland (1984).

[However, in India the experience of Americanization of elections campaigns, especially the negative style attack campaigns used by Cong.I in 1989 had proved ineffective and invited criticism from the members of the party itself.] In 1991, educated by the lesson of 1989, the Cong.I campaign was positively oriented to reflect secularism and stability. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) with its religious orientation, used different techniques to influence different strata of voters. While religion was used to arouse the rural and the economically backward sections, an advertising campaign during elections in leading newspapers directed at the urban literate voters attacked Cong.I. The Samajwadi Janata Party (SJP), Janata Dal/National Front (JD/NF)

³ While media managers are being sent to America from other countries for observing campaign strategies and acquiring new techniques of campaign strategies (Scammel, 1991), we are not sure if such has been with India. However, in India since the 1984 elections, campaigns are being managed by professional marketing and advertising agencies and political accounts are being much sought after by agency professionals.

and regional parties used the vernacular press and other electronic and interpersonal forms to present their policies.

The scientific use of opinion polls, introduced in the 1984 elections have now become an essential tool for predicting election trends and poll outcomes in India. Several research organizations including the Indian Market Research Bureau (IMRB), Marketing and Advertising Research Group (MARG) and Operations Research Group (ORG) have been actively involved in conducting nation-wide pre-poll surveys and exit polls. Despite initial interest, most political parties and candidates, especially the JD/NF members expressed scepticism about their significance and ridiculed them as being as biased and unreliable as astrology.

The distinct Indian developments in campaigning have been in the system of 'narrowcasting'. Paley and Moffett (1984) have described narrowcasting as the process of targeting specific messages to specific audiences through the use of mass communication technology. Given the effectiveness and impact of audio-visual media in a largely illiterate electorate, political parties have developed audio cassettes and video films. As the broadcast media of All India Radio and Doordarshan under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (I & B), Government of India does not allow any real political debate, these films are generally shown through mobile vans with sophisticated audio visual equipment popularly called video-on-wheels.(VOWs). VOWs are claimed to be the most effective political communication hard sell that has been undertaken in India. 'Entertainment Culture' stepped into the Indian election campaigns⁴.

The changes in political and cultural systems, as well as growth of media systems between 1989 and 1991 affected political

⁴ Interviews with Party spokespersons and Dr.J.K.Jain of Jain Studios, New Delhi. Moreover, the excessive use of films in Andhra Pradesh (AP) by Nandamuri Tarakarama Rao (NTR) can be mentioned here. The strategy of the party was to entertain first and then inform.

communications. The political climate was riven with cultural and religious influences, presenting a 'cultural political system'⁵.

During the first three decades of Independence, the Congress propounding a secular ideology, had enjoyed support at the national and state levels, with other parties being bracketed as communal or communist. During the period 1985-1991 the general support for Cong.I had gradually eroded. In 1977, and again in 1989, the opposition parties combined to defeat the Cong.I. In 1991 there were no alliances between the various political parties, except between the JD and Communist parties and each sought to exploit its own appeal, especially the BJP and JD/NF gained popularity, the former by arousing the sectarian spirit of the Hindu masses and the latter, to bring about caste based social justice, giving rise to a multi-party system in the country, yet with Cong.I domination.

The ^{questions of} 'Mandir' and 'Mandal' symbolising issues of religion and caste came to the forefront during the 1991 elections. To an extent the media, especially television helped in mobilising these issues. Influential Indian mythologicals, 'Ramayana' and 'Mahabharata' were serialised on television (TV), rekindling the Hindu religious spirit. The BJP, which was rejected for years as a communal party, was quick to take advantage of the religious awareness among the people. Their leader, L.K.Advani went on an all India tour to arouse the Hindus with the promise of building the temple at Ayodhya, claimed to be the birth place of Lord Rama, the site of the now demolished mosque. On the other hand, the JD/NF, a combination of national and regional parties, stirred the caste divisions to implement the Mandal Commission Report (MCR) on the reservation of jobs for the Backward Classes (BC) to bring about social justice. This had led to a country-

⁵We refer to the cultural upheavals such as those of caste and religion besides ethnic and separatist movements which played an important role in the electoral contests. Election campaigns were dominated by references to cultural and mythological aspects besides matters of state like the economy, law and order, unemployment, rising prices and poverty.

wide agitation among the upper caste students, especially in north India who felt further deprived of the already scarce jobs.

In the past decade, India has witnessed a phenomenal growth of its mass media. There was an increase in the number and reach of newspapers. Newspapers are important sources of information and during elections extensive coverage is given to election news. Since 1980, advertising campaigns by political parties were introduced to persuade the electorate.

Radio and TV under the Ministry of I & B, reaching 97% and 84% of the population respectively, were geared to create greater awareness of the political process and to increase political participation. Political advertising is not allowed, but parties recognised as national or state by the Election Commission (EC) of India are given a limited time for 15 minutes to present their strategies and appeal to the people (Chapter II). However, planned political marketing and advertising strategies have increased the amounts spent on campaigns, with a record estimated Rs.10,000 million (£200 million) spent on the 1991 elections, as much as the annual plan outlay of a big Indian state. Between 1957 and 1991, the cost of conducting the elections went up 25 times with Rs.1,540 million (£30.8 million) being spent by the government in 1991 (Kumar, 1991). It would be interesting to note the expenditure patterns in the next elections scheduled in 1996, as the Election Commission is planning to redefine the rules and regulations regarding the amount of money to be spent by the parties.

In future, the manner in which mass media are used and campaigns conducted, will be an indication of political socialization and participation of the electorate in the political process, which again presents a formidable task in such a diverse country as India. India is most noticed by its 'Unity in Diversity'. Its cultural diversity stems from the ethnic origins, religions and languages which play a significant role in the social and political system of the country. There is a vast urban and rural

divide with 70% of the population living in rural areas. There are eight major religions of which Hinduism is the dominant one with 82.6% of the population, Muslims account for 11.4%, Christians for 2.4%, Sikhs comprise 2%, Buddhists 0.7%, Jains 0.5% and others 0.4%. Just over half, 52.21%⁶ the population is literate, with 15 officially recognised languages and over 200 dialects. The heterogeneity of the country makes each one of its twenty five states a country in itself with its own peculiar customs, language, traditions and culture. Given the diverse characteristics of Indian states, it was not possible to tackle the whole country and hence research was concentrated on the state of Andhra Pradesh (AP) which presents a vibrant political system.

AP is the fifth largest state in India and can be divided into three levels of competitive politics: the national politics of Cong.I, the regional politics of Telugu Desam Party (TDP) led by popular cinema actor Nandamuri Tarakarama Rao (NTR), and third an independent local party, the Majlis-Ittehadul-Muslimeen (MIM), practising communal politics in the capital city of Hyderabad.

The objectives of the thesis are two fold: first to examine the marketing strategies of the political parties and second, to evaluate the political perceptions and impact of campaigns on voting behaviour on a sample of the electorate drawn from three constituencies, Secunderabad an urban, Hyderabad an urban-rural and Nagarkurnool a rural constituency.

Electoral Commission

Though efforts were made by the ^h(EC) and political parties to increase participation and minimize poll violence, the overall voter turnout was only 51.13%, 12 percentage points less than in 1984 elections and three percentage points less than 1989. Indians witnessed one of the bloodiest elections, with the

⁶The overall literacy rate is 52.21% (Excluding Jammu and Kashmir) with 64.13% for males and 39.29% for women. Source: India Reference Annual 1994.

assassination of Cong.I leader Rajiv Gandhi and more than 350 persons including candidates killed in poll violence.

Indian election studies have concentrated on the electoral process and voting behaviour in the context of socio-economic factors. Few studies have actually focused on the use of media as sources of information and its impact on political information and behaviour (Varma and Narain, 1973; Kar & Chaudary, 1996). Limited importance is given to what the candidates actually say during campaign periods and how information flows from various media towards the ultimate voting behaviour. This vacuum can be partly attributed to the fact that given the Indian diversity, there was no uniform medium of communication, and access to print media was a limiting factor with low literacy and multiplicity of languages. ^{In India} Radio and television, the media of the masses do not allow any real political debate or political campaigning (Chapter II). Second, the use of media and organized/planned political communication strategies are a fairly recent phenomenon in Indian elections. However, despite the limitations, political marketing has become an essential force in Indian elections, where mass media along with conventional and other indigenously developed electronic forms have been used to reach the diverse Indian electorate.

This research links communications and political conflict to the socio-economic profile of voters in AP. Mass mobilization programmes and tactics were extensively used by politicians for influencing the voters. The assassination of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi midway through the poll contributes additional insights into the political communications process and the ultimate voting behaviour.

Case studies provide a structured analysis of the campaigns of five political parties and the voter education campaign by the Central government. The information was collected through primary and secondary sources, especially by a series of interviews with spokespersons of political parties at the national, regional and

local levels, government officials, advertising professionals and producers of audio visual-media. Further information was collected from the party literature, newspaper reports and news broadcasts on radio and TV and reviewing of political videos and video magazines.

A two phase panel survey was used to evaluate the effectiveness of campaigns from a sample of 1155 voters selected randomly from particular wards in the three parliamentary constituencies. Data ~~was~~^{were} collected in the run up to the elections, and again after the results were declared. In the heat of the Indian summer, 19 interviewers along with the researcher were involved in the collection of information through a structured questionnaire. There was a high non-response rate from women and so the sample was weighted to get a balanced view of male and female respondents. It required a lot of perseverance to convince respondents that the data was for academic work and not to make them targets of some unknown threats. There was a major difficulty in locating the respondents even once, leave alone twice, with the disorganised system of house numbers.

Following this introduction, the thesis is divided into ten chapters. The first chapter provides a theoretical framework reviewing the development of political communication effects research in the major democracies and gives a perspective on India. The second chapter focuses on the recent political changes in India and AP especially between 1989-1991. We give a general analysis of the issues and trends observed in the run up to the 1991 elections, the role of caste and religion in the political system, criminalization of politics and poll violence including the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi. This is followed by a discussion of the Indian media systems and their use during the 1991 elections. The coverage of election news and advertisements in the press and the election related programmes on radio and TV, nationally and in AP.

The third chapter is devoted to the studies of the election campaigns of political parties and the Voter Education Campaign by the government. The parties include Cong.I, BJP, TDP, JD/NF and MIM. The fourth chapter is the first that discusses the survey results. We present the socio-economic and political profile of the respondents in the three constituencies and establish the extent and frequency of exposure to media. We then examine the political interest and attitudes towards the government to establish the level of interest in politics and thereby the readiness for election campaigns.

The fifth chapter analyses the exposure and impact of election related information given in the mass media; newspapers, radio and TV on the respondents. The sixth chapter examines the exposure and impact of the alternate electronic media used in elections, especially the development of audio cassettes, video tapes and films.

In the seventh chapter, we discuss the outdoor displays such as posters, handbills and cutouts which are important reminder media. The eighth chapter examines the interpersonal forms of election campaigns: first it evaluates the public meetings, walkabouts, and door knocking. Second, the internal influences of family, friends and local leaders are evaluated to compare the importance of mass and interpersonal sources in voting behaviour.

In the ninth chapter, the voting and non-voting behaviour of the respondents and the impact of the election campaigns are determined. The final chapter summarises the inferences drawn from the above chapters, comparing the campaign trends of the political parties with the exposure and use of mass and interpersonal forms and suggests the integrated forms of political marketing strategies and future research on political communication programmes in India.

CHAPTER I

THEORETICAL APPROACH, COMPARATIVE LITERATURE AND RESEARCH DESIGN

SECTION I

Political communication exists in all democratic and non democratic systems (Nimmo and Sanders, 1981). Considerable literature has evolved in this area in the western democracies, but in India, with its diversity and complex media systems, it becomes difficult to compare electoral communication systems in totality. However some reflections on the modernization of Indian election campaigns are possible. In this chapter we examine the literature on the political and media systems that has led to the development, use and effects of political communication systems in the world and in India. In the second part, we provide a methodological framework for study.

THEORETICAL APPROACH

During the period between the two world wars, the mass media were perceived as direct, powerful and uniform on atomised individuals, and thus, could be successfully deployed to manipulate people's opinions, attitudes and behaviours in a relatively short period of time.

The 'Bullet Theory, the 'Hypodermic Needle theory', the 'Stimulus Response Model', the 'Mathematical theory of communication' and 'SMCR Model' were some of the terms used to reinforce the omnipotent source and the passive receiver stereotype (McQuail and Windhal, 1983). Katz (1963) notes that the model in the minds for early researchers seems to have consisted of i) the all powerful media was able to impress ideas on defenceless minds, and ii) the atomised mass audience were connected to the mass media but not to each other.

The years succeeding the world war II were witness to the emergence of and consolidation of communication research as a distinct domain of investigation. The first unity that was evident among scholars most involved with the coalescence of communication research during the later part of the 1940s was the analysis of public opinion, propaganda, and the uses and effects of communication.

Those who brought forth communication science, inherited traditions of thought emphasising the centrality of communications in political life and the importance of science to social understanding and informed political action in democratic life. An intersection of viewpoints of some of the best minds in sociology, psychology and political science raised important new questions: ~~What~~ what specific effects do mass media have on individuals and the general community? What is the process by which these effects occur? (Severin & Tankard, 1979).

Pioneering research (Lazarsfeld, Berelson & Gaudet, 1944; Hoveland, Lumsdaine & Sheffield, 1949; Hoveland, Janis & Kelly, 1953; Klapper, 1960) led to reconceptualisation of the process of mass media effects from powerful dominance to minimal impact.

In 'The People's Choice' (1944), popularly called the voter study, Lazarsfeld, Berelson and Gaudet's study was oriented to measuring the impact of mass media in influencing peoples political decisions against the backdrop of the 1940 US presidential elections. The study unearthed the fact that individuals were more influenced in their political decisions by members of their primary and peer groups than the combined mass media. The mass media appeared to have little impact in influencing peoples political decisions. Even exposure to mass media was quite poor.

While debunking the theories/models of powerful media effects, the study discovered that there was one segment which was more exposed to the mass media than other individuals in the

community. Researchers concluded that these influential or opinion leaders then influenced others in the community.

Thus, the effects of mass media were seen as being indirect. Two significant theoretical streams namely the Two-Step Flow (Katz and Lazarsfeld, 1955; Katz, 1957) and the Diffusion (Lerner, 1958; Lionberger, 1960; Rogers, 1962; Frey, 1973; etc.) strengthened the notions of indirect effects of mass media. Work of Hoveland and his colleagues (Hoveland and Kelly, 1953) found that people defended themselves against persuasive messages in three ways: selective exposure, selective perception, and selective retention. Klapper (1960) concluded that persuasion in mass communication functions far more frequently as an agent of reinforcement than as an agent of change.

However Ball-Rokeach and Defleur (1976) argued that at a time when public confidence in many social and political institutions had steeply declined, both parties and voters become more dependent on media resources, the former as a means of access to the electoral audience as their own channels started to wither and lose credibility, the latter for impressions of what was at stake, as previous suppliers of guidance had lost their authority.

Renewed interest in mass media effects has been hailed as the return to the concept of the powerful mass media (Neumann, 1974). Works in this genre have begun to reflect the power of mass media, especially television in affecting attitudes, thinking and behaviour of voters (Lang and Lang, 1966; Narain, 1973; Blumler and Mcleod, 1974; Jack and Kline, 1974; Kraus and Davis, 1976; Goldenberg and Trau^{et}g^{ir}ow, 1980; Joslyn, 1981; Kaid, 1981; etc).

In recent years, TV has formed a common source of election information and has led to a reduction in selectivity in voters exposure to party propaganda (Mendelson & O' Keefe, 1976; Sears & Chaffee, 1979; Patterson, 1980; Kaid & Davidson, 1986). It has been argued that people could sensibly debate their collective

actions only if they shared a common fund of knowledge or information (Pye, 1969).

Blumler and his associates (Blumler & McQuail, 1968; Blumler & Katz, 1974) applied the cognitive effects oriented Uses and Gratifications approach to the study of political behaviour, the emphasis here is on media content and how members of the audience process media materials in accordance with gratification of their needs.

McCoombs and Shaw (1977) applied the Agenda Setting approach which assigns the mass media the role of making people aware of important issues of the day by constructing agendas for society. Though the media may not always be successful in telling people what to think about.

The use of media convergence and co-orientations models have also been used. These models emphasise information exchange among individuals so as to move towards common ground and shared meaning (McLeod & Chaffee, 1973).

Butler & Stokes (1974) in their study stated that the concept: voters voted as they always had, had decreased with the identification with a political party. Second, they found that floating voters could not be ruled out of political communication network as they are quite adequately informed and as politically interested as the party loyalists.

There is a greater use of media information by those making voting decisions during the campaign than those with stable preferences throughout the campaign (Varma & Narain, 1975; Patterson, 1980). Therefore, there is an element of impact of mass media use in changes in political behaviour.

The role of political advertising has increased, with attention being paid to advertisements in the print media and television (Roper, 1977; Weaver, Willhot & Reid, 1979). Guggenheim (1986)

estimated that 70% of what people know about party programmes came from party advertisements.

The earliest studies on political advertising and voter behaviour were conducted by Berelson, Lazarsfeld & McPhee (1954) and Campbell, Converse, Miller & Stokes (1960) to which most modern studies trace their origin. In 'The Unseeing Eye', Patterson & McLure (1976) remarked that overall political advertisements provided voters with four times more information about campaign issues than did news.

Kern (1989) observed that political advertising, like its commercial counterpart, now appeals to the individual in his/her own right, not just as a member of an economic and social class, a political party or other. Hard hitting 30 to 60 seconds television spots incorporating negative attack strategies support political debates, election meetings of candidates and leaders. An important aspect of the 1980s was the development of negative advertising (Sabato, 1980; Ernhalt, 1985; Hickey, 1986; Johnson, Carter & Copeland, 1987; Guskind & Hagestorm, 1988; Kern, 1990). Carter & Copeland (1989) observed that negative advertising has come of age and any political campaign must be prepared to use and counter it. While Stewart (1975) called these Mudslinging advertisements. Nugent (1987) argued that negative political advertising actually opens up campaign debates.

Garromone's (1984) survey of voter attitudes to negative advertising is revealing. Three fourths of the respondents expressed disapproval of negative political advertising. Voters in the survey reported that negative political advertising had a strong influence in their evaluation of the sponsor.

Despite being offensive, negative themes imported from the US, have now become dominant in political advertising in other countries during elections. In India too, during the 1989

elections, negative themes were particularly used in the Cong.I campaign. The party lost and the campaign became a target of criticism from within and outside the party. In 1991, the BJP used attack strategies, while the Cong.I, having learnt its lessons in 1989, had a more positive thematic approach.

Paley & Moffett (1984) saw the New Electronic Media (NEM) as changing the face of political marketing. Video cassettes and cable television were extensively used for election campaigning. However, TV continues to be the most powerful medium making election campaigning all over the world look more and more like that in the US (Sabato, 1980; Strand, Dozier, Hofsetter & Ledingham, 1983).

In India, with the state owned Doordarshan being virtually inaccessible to political parties, video films have emerged as an alternative. These films screened using mobile vans called ^(Video on wheels) VOWS. VOWS reach voters in the remotest areas and are being claimed by parties to have the highest impact.

The 1980s also saw a switch from issue related to personality related advertising. Joslyn (1980) enumerated a repertoire of traits such as compassion, sympathy, integrity, strength, knowledge, etc., of candidates used by advertising agencies to persuade the electorate that the candidate is right for the job. McGinnis (1969) observed that in television advertising it is the leaders' personality which influences voters. Thus, style becomes substance. Kaid & Davidson (1987) explained that video styles in political advertising is a combination of ^{several} ~~three~~ factors: verbal content, nonverbal content, film production techniques, and the methods of self portrayal. In India too scripts and songs for films were done for leaders like Rajiv Gandhi, V.P.Singh, Chandrashekhar and NTR, among others.

Political advertising has drawn themes from culture and a body of research literature has also focused on culture (Kern, 1989). Leymore (1975) has examined mythology as a means of political

marketing which has been widely used in campaigns to project the Indian cultural and religious traditions.

Political advertising also utilizes other appeals that may be purely entertainment oriented. Humour, linguistic, aural and visual devices are believed to have symbolic or religious connotation (Kaid, Nimmo & Sanders, 1989). The information and entertainment format was used to project ideology, leaders and parties. Political songs in India were drawn from popular culture and leaders were projected as gods. Video films used the information and entertainment format that included history, mythology and humour.

Mass media, NEM have and continue to be used in contemporary democratic societies in electoral campaigns. However, in the Indian context the impact of interpersonal channels, about which not much information is available in western studies, but referred to in Indian electoral studies, will be examined in this study.

Therefore, we conclude that the effects of political communication had become an important means of communicating with the audiences to form a common fund of knowledge for voters' selection and approval. The use of planned political communication strategies, within the framework of the changing media and political environment has given rise to a need for in-depth research on the effectiveness of political communication in democracies.

SECTION II

THE METHODS OF ENQUIRY

Three methodological approaches were used in evaluating the election campaigns and their impact: Content Analysis, Case study and a Panel Survey.

1. THE CONTENT ANALYSIS

Content analysis is the research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communications (Berelson, 1952). Walizer and Weiner (1978) have defined it as any systematic procedure which is devised to examine the content of recorded information. Krippendorf (1980) defined Content Analysis as a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from data to their context. The subjects of content analysis are ordered under major headings which progressively refer to the characteristics of communication content, the causes of content, and the consequences of content. We use this technique in this study to classify the content of the election related programmes on radio and TV and quantify the time spent on each of these programmes.

2. THE CASE STUDIES

A Case is a written description of an organization covering a certain period of time. It contains information about the organization's history, its internal operations and its environment. This method was used to evaluate and give a structured analysis of the techniques used by parties in the election campaigns. The method of studying the campaigns was similar to the advertising process for any commercial or social campaigns and was based on the steps involved in the process of campaign planning; 1. Analysis of the market, 2. Objectives of the campaign, 3. Approximate budget if available, 4. Creative strategy, 5. Media strategy 6. Interpersonal Channels and 7. Any pre or post-campaign research to test the campaign. The parties studied were: Cong.I, BJP, TDP, JD/NF and MIM.

The Analysis of the market involved the initial research that was conducted by the agencies or the party to get the electorate's opinions on the party policies and personalities of leaders. Secondly the Objectives of the campaign that were set for targeting the communication strategies to the diverse electors. The third step focused on the Budget, the most difficult aspect of Indian elections. Though it is widely known that rivers of

money flow into Indian elections, one could not estimate how much money is spent on electioneering as well as the sources of income. None of the party spokespersons, advertising agency professionals or producers of audio visual media were prepared to disclose this. Some clearly stated that given the vastness of the country it was difficult to estimate and allocate. Therefore a detailed breakdown of expenditure could not be estimated for any political party. Here we have used the data from the ORG, which conducted a content analysis of advertising space used by various political parties all over the country to get a fair idea of the money spent by political parties in newspapers and magazines. Spokespersons of various political parties estimated that press advertisements represent less than half (approximately 30-40%) and an unestimated amount was spent on electronic forms; the production, translations, duplication and screening of video films and audio cassettes. Added to these were the all India election tours of party leaders, organization of public rallies, processions and the production and distribution of handbills and leaflets.

Fourth, we examined the Creative strategies developed for communicating party messages; the themes, issues and appeals in targeting various segments of the electorate. In each of the campaigns, we focus on themes used in press advertisements. In the audio and video cassettes, we review the content and format of the messages for an understanding of how these media have come to be regarded as extremely successful in Indian electioneering.

Fifth, the Media strategies included the selection, frequency and scheduling patterns of advertisements in print media, screening of videos and films and coordinating other promotional activities. Sixth The interpersonal forms and other strategies of campaigning such as public meetings, tours and walkabouts, door-to-door campaigns, mobilization of social and religious groups and rallies are also discussed.

Last, we investigated if any Pre-testing and post-testing was conducted to gauge the effectiveness of the campaigns. Given the limitations of time, no large scale research for pre-testing of campaigns was undertaken. Last we sought to explore the effectiveness of these campaigns on audiences in terms of exposure, use and help in their electoral behaviour through a panel survey.

3. THE PANEL SURVEY

Surveys are being used in most areas of political communication studies as is confirmed by the frequent reporting of survey results in popular media, particularly during election periods when the public continually hears or reads about popularity polls to ascertain candidate's positions with the electorate (Wimmer, Dominic et. al, 1984). In survey research, one collects data from all or part of a population to assess the relative incidence, distribution and interrelationships of naturally occurring phenomena (Kidder & Judd, 1986). The vast technological inputs in political campaign communications have increased the importance of surveys, both in the run-up to and the post-election phases as well as a mode of continuous monitoring of electoral involvement and attitude towards parties and candidates. A number of researchers (Katz, 1962; Sears & Chaffee, 1979) have variously documented the importance of survey research as a methodological strategy for testing the effects of political communication.

In the present study we have used 'descriptive' and 'analytical' survey techniques. This involved the need to describe the socio-economic status of the respondents and analyze their political behaviour through the use of independent, dependent and intervening variables. This was done through a structured interview schedule which involved the interviewers visiting the respondents' homes.

THE FIRST AND SECOND PHASES OF THE SURVEYS

The survey was conducted in two phases, first in the run-up to the elections, between 30 April and 7 May, 1991 and second in the post-election period, between 22 June and 4 July 1991, a week after the results were declared. In the first phase, 46 questions were set, all but one was close ended. The average time for each interview lasted between 35-50 minutes. In the second phase, 35 questions were framed, all but one was close ended. Respondents were free to give their own answers as the option of 'any other' with a blank space was given to include an answer not mentioned in the questionnaire and specify their answers with relevance to the question. Before the first phase of the survey a pilot study was conducted to test the questionnaire on a randomly selected sample of voters.

PILOT STUDY

The announcement of a premature general election gave us a short lead to organise our work and conduct a pilot study to find out if the questions were understood and if one could get correct and reliable information. Hence, 30 copies of the first questionnaire were photocopied and 30 respondents drawn from various segments including students, government employees, housewives, doctors, a state minister and teachers were randomly selected by the researcher and a post-graduate student. This initial informal testing proved valuable as the respondents made suggestions on changing the wording of some questions. It was also possible to include more questions to recheck certain data where there was a possibility of ambiguous answers or a chance of giving wrong answers.

THE INTERVIEWERS

To reach the sample 19 interviewers were selected, seven each in Nagarkurnool and Hyderabad and five in Secunderabad. One person was made the leader of the group in each constituency to monitor and coordinate the work. The post-graduate students of Osmania University, Hyderabad assisted in Hyderabad and Secunderabad. The other interviewers were from various backgrounds and comprised of housewives, research students and local teachers in

Nagarkurnool. Teachers of the local schools were specially chosen as they are generally respected in the rural environment. Moreover, they had been collecting data for the 1991 census just two months prior to the present study. They were familiar with people and would be able to interpret questions with ease.

The interviewers were given detailed instructions and were advised not to persist with certain questions like those related to income, caste or voting intention. The questionnaire was formulated in English, but was translated into Telugu, the local language for respondents in rural areas. The interviewers in the urban and semi-urban areas were able to translate the questions into Urdu or Telugu. Most questionnaires were administered by the interviewers, but if the respondent wished, he or she was given a questionnaire to fill out and return.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

The scope of the study is limited to the responses of voters in the three constituencies of AP. We cannot generalize the data as being necessarily similar for the entire state or country. Several problems arose during the course of the study which we think are important to highlight. In the first phase itself we found that many members selected from the voters' list were unavailable at the given address. Second, since the house numbering in the localities is poor and complicated, it was difficult for interviewers to locate some of the households. Many of the respondents even after being located with some difficulty, thought they were being targeted for some reason and refused to answer.

The problems with women respondents was greater, even when approached by women interviewers. Many were mistaken as sales persons and were refused entry. Some women who agreed to answer the schedule lost interest half way through and called in their menfolk to answer on their behalf. In Hyderabad and Nagarkurnool constituencies, it was most difficult to persuade women

respondents. This non-response was very discouraging and consequently we had a large proportion of men in our sample.

The assassination of Rajiv Gandhi, while offering an important dimension to the study created problems in the collection of data in the second phase. Again, there was a problem of relocating our respondents, we found that in some cases, though the address of the respondent was the same, the name of the household member who answered the questions in the first phase was different.

There was also a problem with interviewers especially in Nagarkurnool, most of whom being teachers returned to school after the summer break and the initial enthusiasm had given way to indifference. However, we persuaded them with more financial assistance to continue and finish the work which was extended by two more weeks. Overall we got a fairly good response and despite the problems the report gives much insight into the campaign communication systems and electoral behaviour.

INDIA - THE UNIVERSE OF STUDY

India is the largest democracy in the world, with an electorate of 521 million in the 1991 elections¹ out of a population of 846.3 million. The country is divided into 25 states, each with its own peculiar language, customs and traditions. The Indian Parliament is based on the Westminster model, comprising of two houses, The Upper House called Rajya Sabha (RS) and House of the People called Lok Sabha (LS). The RS consists of 245 members of which 233 members are elected by the representatives of the LS and State Legislatures and 12 are nominated by the President of

¹ In the 1989 election the electoral size had increased to 498 million from nearly 174 million in the first elections in 1952. India has had a system of universal adult suffrage ever since it became a republic in 1950, After the passing of the 62nd amendment of the constitution in 1988 the voting age was lowered from 21 to 18 years adding another 10-11 percent voters to the electoral registers in the 1989 elections. Indian citizens 18 years and over are eligible to vote in the Lok Sabha (Parliamentary) and the Vidhan Sabha (State Legislative Assembly) elections.

India in recognition of services in fields of literature, science, arts and social services. The LS consists of 545 members of which 543 are directly elected by the people from individual constituencies all over the country and two are nominated by the president. Elections are held every five years unless unusual circumstances lead to mid-term elections. The country is divided into 3941 assembly constituencies which are grouped together to form 543 LS constituencies. Normally seven assembly constituencies form one LS constituency, though this figure can vary from state to state. The LS seats are generally allotted to the states in proportion to their population.

ANDHRA PRADESH - THE AREA OF STUDY

The present section gives a brief background to AP where this study was conducted, followed by an overview of the 1991 elections and profiles of the three constituencies. AP is the fifth largest Indian state both by territory and population and the largest state in south India, the size and population of which may be roughly equivalent to that of Italy. Table I.1 gives some of the major characteristics of AP in its Indian context. The state covers 276,754 Sq.Km, accounting for 8.4% of India's territory with a population of 66.3 million² with an urban population of 17.8 million (26.79%)³. AP has one of the lowest literacy rate at 45.11%, compared to an all India average of 52.11%. The literacy of women is much lower at 33.71% compared to men at 56.24%. The state is largely agricultural with 74% of

² The urban population of the state at 17.8 million (26.79%) increased by three percent since 1981 (23.32%) and is a little higher than the all India percentage of 25.70%. Every fourth person in the state is living in an urban area. The population of urban areas is increasing, partly due to growth in population and also due to migration from rural areas in search of employment. (Source A.P. Census 1991 and A.P. Year Book 1993.)

³ Urban areas are recognised if, there are: a) minimum expected population of 50,000, b) there is minimum expected population density of 400 persons per Sq.Km and c) at least 75% of the male working population is engaged in non agricultural pursuits.

the state's population living in villages and 70% of the workforce being dependent on agriculture and allied activities. Caste divisions in AP play a significant role in the political system. The most significant castes are the Brahmins, Vaishyas, Reddys, Kammas, Rajus (Kshatriyas), Kapus, Velamas and the Harijans. Politically the Reddys, Kammas, Kapus and Velamas are the 'Dominant castes' (Srinivas, 1982)⁴. It was estimated that the Reddy community constitutes 12% and Kammas comprise 8% of the total population (Hanumantha Rao, 1983). Among the lower castes, the percentage of Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) in the 1991 census was 15.9% and 6.31% respectively and constitute 16.73% of the total Indian population. Religious following includes: 88% Hindus, 8.5% Muslims and 2.7% Christians and 0.8% others. Muslims dominate the urban agglomeration of Hyderabad. Their political behaviour is discussed in Chapter III.

⁴ Srinivas (1982) in Social Change in Modern India, describes them as numerically strongest in the village and economically and politically influential. The Reddys dominate the Telangana and Rayalaseema districts while the Kammas are powerful in the coastal districts with the Kshatriyas and Kapus concentrated in the Godavari and northern districts of Vishakapatnam and Vizianagaram.

TABLE I.1 SOCIO ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF ANDHRA PRADESH AND ALL INDIA

Characteristics	Andhra Pradesh	All India
Population (Millions)	66.3	843.9
Males (Millions)	33.6	437.6
Females (Millions)	32.7	406.3
Total Voters	42,747,862	501,019.356*
Percentage of votes polled in 1991	56.35	51.13
Sex ratio (No.of females for 1000 males)	972	929
Percentage Literacy (Total)	45.11	52.11
Percentage Literacy (Males)	56.24	63.86
Percentage literacy (Females)	33.71	39.71
Percentage of Urban population	26.79	25.70
Percentage of working population (total)	45.3	37.60
% of working Males	55.4	51.50
% of working Females	34.8	27.1
Density per sq.km	241	267

*Excluding Punjab where elections were postponed

Source: Andhra Pradesh Year Book,1993 & The Tenth Round, PTI 1992.

THE STATE AND ADMINISTRATION

AP comprises two political entities, Andhra, which was part of the erstwhile composite state of Madras in British India, and Telangana, a part of the Nizam's dominions in the former princely state of Hyderabad. The Telugu speakers of Andhra are the second largest linguistic group in the country with a highly developed ancient civilization and culture. Over the course of time, their demand for a separate state emerged as an integral part of the national movement. The fast unto death by Potti Sriramulu

resulted in the first linguistic state of Andhra on 1 October, 1953. Subsequently on 1 November, 1956 with the reorganization of states, the Telugu speaking areas of the old Hyderabad state were merged with Andhra to form Andhra Pradesh with Hyderabad as the capital. Economically and in some respects politico-administratively, the state has three natural regions of Telangana⁵, Rayalaseema⁶ and Coastal Andhra or Circars⁷ spread over 23 districts (Aleem & Aleem, 1988).

The state administration is run by the Council of Ministers with the Chief Minister as its chairperson and Governor as the head of state. The choice of the chief minister has been a complex problem in the state, even between the Congress factions; area, caste and group rivalries have played a decisive role in the choice. Caste factors have been important in the selection of candidates and the chief ministers (Ambedkar, 1992). Political trends in AP can be better appreciated in the context of the persistent endeavour of the aspiring landed power-groups formed round the dominant sub castes (Jatis) in the three regions which struggle within the framework of democracy and representative institutions to acquire political authority (Khan, 1969). The Council of Ministers in AP reflect the geopolitical character of the state. It is constituted taking into account its Andhra and Telangana regions along with the seniority and service of members of the majority party. The dominant castes among the Reddys and

⁵The Telangana region comprises of 10 districts and extends over an area of 114.9 thousand sq.Kms. It accounts for 41.7% of the total area of the state. The districts included are Hyderabad, Warangal, Sangareddy, Nalgonda Rangareddy, Khammam, Nizamabad, Medak, Mehboobnagar and Adilabad.

⁶ The Rayalaseema region consists of four districts; Kurnool, Cuddapah, Ananathapur and Chittoor and accounts for 24.46% of the total area of the state and 17.97% of the population of the state.

⁷The Coastal Andhra region comprises of nine districts and accounts for 34.34% of the area covering the entire coastline of 970 kms. The major districts of the region are Srikakulum, Vizianagaram, Vishakapatnam, East Godavari, West Godavari, Krishna, Guntur, Prakasam and Nellore.

Kammas receive adequate, sometimes significant, representation. One or two Muslims are also included, though they may not be assigned important portfolios. Representation of BCs is also assuming importance with reservations in some assembly and parliamentary constituencies.

THE PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION

The electoral politics of AP represents a unique three-fold system; the National politics of Cong.I, BJP and Communist parties, the regional politics of TDP and local politics in Hyderabad represented by MIM, an independent party dominated by the Muslim population of Hyderabad. AP is represented in the LS through 42 constituencies of which 34 are in the general category, six are reserved for SCs and two for STs. Three constituencies: Hyderabad, Secunderabad and Nagarkurnool were selected for the present study. Nagarkurnool is a reserved constituency for a SC candidate while the other two are in the general category. The main parties in the state are Cong.I and TDP. The other parties are: Communist Party of India (CPI), Communist Party of India (Marxists) CPI(M) and BJP with other parties including MIM in Hyderabad.

AP has been a Cong.I dominated state both at the parliamentary and assembly levels except for one term during 1983-89 when the TDP led by NTR held power for six years. Since the first general elections in 1951-1952 until 1982, Cong.I has enjoyed majority support in the LS elections with 40-57% share of the AP vote. In 1989 the Cong.I regained control over the state administration and in 1991 gained a majority in the LS polls.

Until 1982, in the State Legislative Assembly, Cong.I domination continued despite frequent changes of chief ministers and constant dissidence within the party. No Cong.I chief minister was in office for a full period of five years⁸. However, NTR the

⁸ Since 1956, the state has had 14 Chief ministers, Two were chosen as Chief Ministers three times and two were elected twice. No Chief minister was in office for a full period of five

TDP chief, after one political upheaval⁹, completed his term. The frequent changes of chief ministers when Indira Gandhi was Prime minister at the high command of Cong.I led to a significant phase in the state's politics. NTR, the matinee hero of the Telugu silver screen who acted in social, historical and mythological roles for over three decades started the TDP in 1982. An extremely popular and well loved film personality, NTR toured the state arousing a sectarian spirit among the Telugus for restoring their honour and for regional representation¹⁰. The Telugu newspaper 'Eenadu', started at about the same time by media baron Ch. Ramoji Rao, contributed to NTR's popularity. The paper used various marketing strategies including the distribution of free copies to increase its readership and thereby gather support for TDP across caste and class groups and also amongst women¹¹.

AP politics had been dominated by Reddys, but the Kammas, as the economically dominant caste group, intent on securing power were also motivated by TDP. There was a general feeling among the Kammas that though they constituted 8% of the population they were never able to occupy pivotal positions in the ministry. This support steered the party to an overwhelming win in the 1983 assembly elections which won 201 out of 293 seats with a 45.9%

years. Most of them were out within months, few of them served between 2-3 years and only one could serve for four years.

⁹ N.Bhaskar Rao, NTRs deputy and Finance Minister with some TDP members and with the support of Cong.I and Governor D. Ram Lal tried to topple NTR's democratically elected government in his absence while he was abroad for medical treatment. NTR subsequently proved his majority and restored his position as the Chief Minister.

¹⁰ Lal (1990) opines that Cong.I was riddled with the twin vices of factionalism and nepotism leading to frequent shuffling of chief ministers.

¹¹ NTR had a vast following of women through the mythological roles that he played in films. In rural areas women worshipped him and many performed religious ceremonies in front of him on his election tours. (Source: Election video film of TDP 1991).

of vote share reducing the Cong.I strength from 248 to a mere 60 and 33.6% vote share. NTR was elected as the chief minister.

In the 1984 LS elections the support for NTR continued. Despite the assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, AP bucked the national trend and voted against Cong.I reducing its majority from 41 to 6 out of 42 seats with 41.8% vote share. TDP not only won 30 seats with 44.8%, but also emerged as the largest opposition group in the LS.

Five years later, in 1989 there was a shift in support towards the Cong.I. in the Assembly and LS elections. NTR was thrown out of power. He himself lost his Kalwakurty seat but won from Hindupur. Cong.I formed the state government headed by Chenna Reddy, a veteran politician who became chief minister for the third time. The toppling game continued and within two years, Chenna Reddy was replaced by Vijaya Bhasker Reddy after the government failed to control the communal riots in the state. Since then, three chief ministers have been replaced and one may see more replacements before the state polls in 1994. In the 1989 LS elections, Cong.I regained 39 of the 42 seats with a margin of 50.9% votes, reducing TDP strength from 30 to just two with 34.4% vote share. Two years later, in the run up to the 1991 elections, the state was riven with communal riots, with acute law and order problems and with frequent changes of chief ministers. The competing party, the TDP was again in electoral contest, with BJP also attempting to make inroads into the state.

During the 1991 election, polling was held in two phases - 20 May and 15 June 1991. In the first phase, 17 constituencies went to the polls on 20 May while the remaining 25, originally scheduled for 26 May were postponed to 15 June 1991, after the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi. About 609 candidates (583 men and 26 women) contested in AP for 42 seats. Cong.I fielded 42 candidates, TDP contested 35 and BJP 41 seats. Secunderabad, the urban constituency of AP had 38 candidates, the highest number. Four belonged to recognised parties, namely Cong.I, JD, BJP and

TDP and 34 independents. The overall turnout in AP was 61.42%, 10 percentage points more than the national average. There was not much difference in the turnout in the first and second phases of the election.

The elections were marked by violence and a re-poll was ordered following snatching of ballot papers and boxes. The assassination of Rajiv Gandhi after the first phase of elections gave rise to violent political riots in the state. It was alleged that Cong.I supporters were involved in damaging properties and campaign material of TDP, BJP and other political parties. A six day hunger strike by NTR to protest against the alleged Cong.I atrocities and a video film did not check the sympathy wave for Cong.I following the assassination (See Chapter III).

ANALYSIS OF ELECTION RESULTS IN AP

The results in AP showed obvious shifts in the voting trends in the two phases. While TDP dominated the pre-assassination results, the sympathy factor helped the Cong.I in the second phase. TDP and its allies gained 15 (TDP-13, CPI-1 CPM-1), of 17 seats (In 1989 Cong.I had won 15 of these 17 contested seats, one each by the TDP and MIM). Here it would not be wrong to presume that TDP could have gained a few more seats, if it were not for the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi.

TABLE I.2 THE TOTAL NUMBER OF SEATS CONTESTED, WON AND PERCENTAGE OF VOTES POLLED IN 1991

Political Party	No. of seats contested	No of seats won	Percentage of votes polled
Cong.1	42	25*	45.56
TDP	35	13	32.26
BJP	41	1	9.63
CPM	2	1	2.43
CPI	2	1	1.87
MIM (Registered party)	1	1	1.79
JD	2	0	0.55
Other Registered Parties	18	0	0.20
Congress (O)	1	0	0.90
JP/JD(S)/Lok Dal /others	33	0	0.34
Bahujan Samajwadi Party	29	0	0.38
Independents	403	0	4.10
Total	609	42	100

Source: Report on the Tenth General elections to the House of People 1991. Election Commission of India, New Delhi.

In the total analysis as shown in the table I.2, Cong.I won 25 seats with 45.5% vote share, while TDP gained 13 seats with 32.2% vote share. BJP won only the Secunderabad constituency, but made inroads in the state politics with 9.64% vote share and gave a

tough contest to the MIM chief Sultan Salauddin Owaisi in Hyderabad. The CPI, CPM and MIM gained one seat each. In the following section we briefly analyze the three constituencies under study.

PROFILES OF CONSTITUENCIES UNDER STUDY

Three constituencies were selected to investigate a differential response, if any, from different segments of electors exposed to mass and traditional forms of campaigning. Hence an urban constituency, Secunderabad, an urban-rural constituency of Hyderabad and a rural constituency reserved for an SC candidate, Nagarkurnool were selected. Each constituency had its own distinctive political contest: in Hyderabad, we observed communal politics of BJP and MIM; in Secunderabad the effect of the extensive BJP campaign on an urban electorate dislodged the Cong.I; and in Nagarkurnool, how the sympathy wave contributed to Cong.I victory. Table I.3 compares some of the characteristics of the constituencies.

TABLE I.3 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE THREE CONSTITUENCIES

	Secunderabad	Hyderabad	Nagarkurnool
Total Electorate	1,183,787	1,296,145	1,001,633
Electorate Composition	Urban	Urban-Rural	Rural/ Reserved for SC candidate
% Voter Turnout	45.08	77.12	59.96
Number of Candidates	38	26	10
Party won	BJP	MIM	Cong.I
% of votes polled by winning party	48.19	46.18	44.74
% margin of victory with the nearest party	16.1 over Cong.I	4.01 over BJP	8.68 over TDP
Date of Election	20 May, 1991	20 May 1991	15 June, 1991

Source: Report on the Tenth General Election to the House of People in India 1991. Election Commission of India, New Delhi.

HYDERABAD

Hyderabad is the capital of AP and the fifth largest city in the country. The Hyderabad constituency comprises of four urban and three rural assembly constituencies of which Charminar, Chandrayangutta, Yakutpura and Karwan are urban and Tandur, Vikharabad and Chevalla are rural. It covers an area of 217 sq.km. with a population of 3,091,718. It accounts for nearly one fourth of the urban population of the state with the highest literacy rate at 56.75% compared to Nagarkurnool at 33.77%. The constituency has been dominated by the communal factions of MIM led by Sultan Salauddin Owaisi. The city experienced intense communal riots in the run up to the 1991 elections.

During the elections there was intensive campaigning by the BJP and MIM, both activating their communal groups. BJP was extensively supported by the business community (Marwaris) to

dislodge the MIM. Of the 26 candidates in the elections, the contest was effectively between the communally oriented groups, the BJP and MIM.

The election, held in the first phase on 20 May 1991, was marked by violence, rigging and snatching of ballot boxes. The turnout has always been a high in most elections but in 1991, there was a record turnout of 77.12% voters. Re-poll was ordered in 65 polling booths as some booths recorded an improbable 90% voting. The results declared after re-polls, favoured the MIM. Owaisi won the seat for the third time with a margin of 4.01% votes, obtaining 46.18% vote share with BJP at 42.17%.

SECUNDERABAD

Secunderabad is the only completely urban constituency in AP with an electorate of 1,183,787. However, the voter turnout at 45.08% was the lowest in the three of the constituencies. The urban assembly constituencies include Vijaynagar colony, Musheerabad, Maharajgunj, Sanathnagar, Khairtabad, Himayatnagar and Asifnagar. Secunderabad was mostly represented by Cong.I except in 1971 when it was represented by the Telangana Praja Samithi. Since 1979, five LS elections were held in this constituency including two by-elections.

In 1991 there were 38 candidates, the highest in AP, of which 35 were independents or belonged to minor parties and the other three were from the Cong.I, BJP and TDP. The effective contest was between the sitting MP, T.Mannema of the Cong.I, K.Pratap Reddy from TDP and Bandaru Dattatreya of BJP. Secunderabad had never before the 1991 election witnessed any communal politics as evidenced in the 1991 elections. The BJPs campaign won them a seat to help them make inroads into the state politics. T.Mannema contesting for the third time, lost to the twice defeated BJP candidate, Bandaru Dattatreya by a margin of 85,063 with a 48.19% vote share. JD, represented by Pratap Reddy, supported by TDP and Left parties gained 17.74% vote share.

NAGARKURNOOL

Nagarkurnool is a rural constituency and also a reserved one for a SC candidate. It is part of the Kurnool district with a population of 2,967,837 and a literacy level at 33.77%, which is one of the lowest in AP. With an electorate of 1,001,633, the constituency was represented by Cong.I in nine of the ten Lok Sabha elections except in 1984 when a TDP candidate won. Nagarkurnool comprises of seven assembly segments: Achampet, Nagarkurnool, Kalwakurty, Shadnagar, Jadcherla, Kollapur and Pargi. The closely contested election was between Mallu Ravi of Cong.I, Mahendranath of TDP and K.Laxman of BJP. Elections to this constituency were held on 15 June after the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi. The voter turn out was only 59.96%, compared to 70.5% in 1989. Cong.I candidate Mallu Ravi, won with 44.74% vote share followed by TDP with 36.06% and BJP with 13.34% vote share. Cong.I and TDP share decreased since 1989 from 53.9% and 43.4%. The BJP which contested for the first time gained.

THE SAMPLE FOR THE STUDY

The sample was selected from the three constituencies. Each parliamentary constituency comprised of seven assembly constituencies which were again divided into wards. Each ward was further divided into localities. About 8-10 localities covered a polling-booth area. In each polling-booth the number of voters ranged from 1000-1500. The voter list of one polling booth was randomly taken from each assembly constituency.

A random sample of about 50 voters from each assembly constituency was selected. The voters were marked and care was taken to have an equal number of men and women in the sample. As 50 voters were chosen from each of the seven assembly constituencies, a total of 350 voters was the sample per

parliamentary constituency, making a total sample of 1050 voters to be interviewed. The names and addresses of the voters were transcribed and interviewers were asked to approach the listed members of households. However, if the listed members were not available or did not want to answer the questions, the next adjacent household was to be taken. Anticipating the problems that may arise due to non-responses or any other incidental occurrences, extra questionnaires were distributed whereby each parliamentary constituency had 400 questionnaires.

Though care was taken to include an equal number of men and women in the sample, the response from women was 28% compared to 72% men. In order to get a fair representation of the women from the three constituencies the sample was weighted against the total number of voters in each constituency. The actual voter turnout in the constituencies was taken from the Report on the Tenth General Election to the House of People for the 1991 General Elections by the EC.

In Secunderabad the number of women had to be weighted against the men while in Hyderabad and Nagarkurnool it was the opposite. This was mainly because in Secunderabad a higher percentage of women responded to the questionnaire.

TABLE I.4 SECUNDERABAD

Secunderabad Constituency	Men	Women	Total
Total voters from the constituency	333,917	199,749	533,666
% of total voters	62.6	37.4	100
Sample of the present study	199	135	334
% From sample of present study	59.6	40.4	100
Weighted sample by 1.136 (multiplier)	226	135	361
% from weighted sample	62.6	37.4	100

TABLE I.5 HYDERABAD

Hyderabad Constituency	Men	Women	Total
Total voters from the constituency	539,960	459,642	999,602
% of total voters	54	46	100
Sample of the present study	267	70	337
% of sample from the study	79.2	20.8	100
Weighted sample by 3.257 (multiplier)	267	228	495
% from weighted sample	54	46	100

TABLE I.6 NAGARKURNOOL

Nagarkurnool Constituency	Men	Women	Total
Total voters	314,478	286,130	600,608
% from total voters	52.4	47.6	100
Total from the sample	156	45	201
% from sample	77.6	22.4	100
Weighted sample by 3.178 (multiplier)	156	143	299
% of weighted sample	52.3	47.7	100

TABLE I.7 THE PRESENT SAMPLE (WEIGHTED)

Constituencies	Men	Women	Total
Secunderabad	226	135	361
Hyderabad	267	228	495
Nagarkurnool	156	143	299
Total	649 (56.2%)	506 (43.8%)	1155

Therefore, in order to get a balanced representation of males and females in the weighted sample we had a total number of 649 or 56.2% men and 506 or 43.8% women. This was essential as the low percentage of women's responses would give an obvious edge to male respondents in the analysis.

CHAPTER II

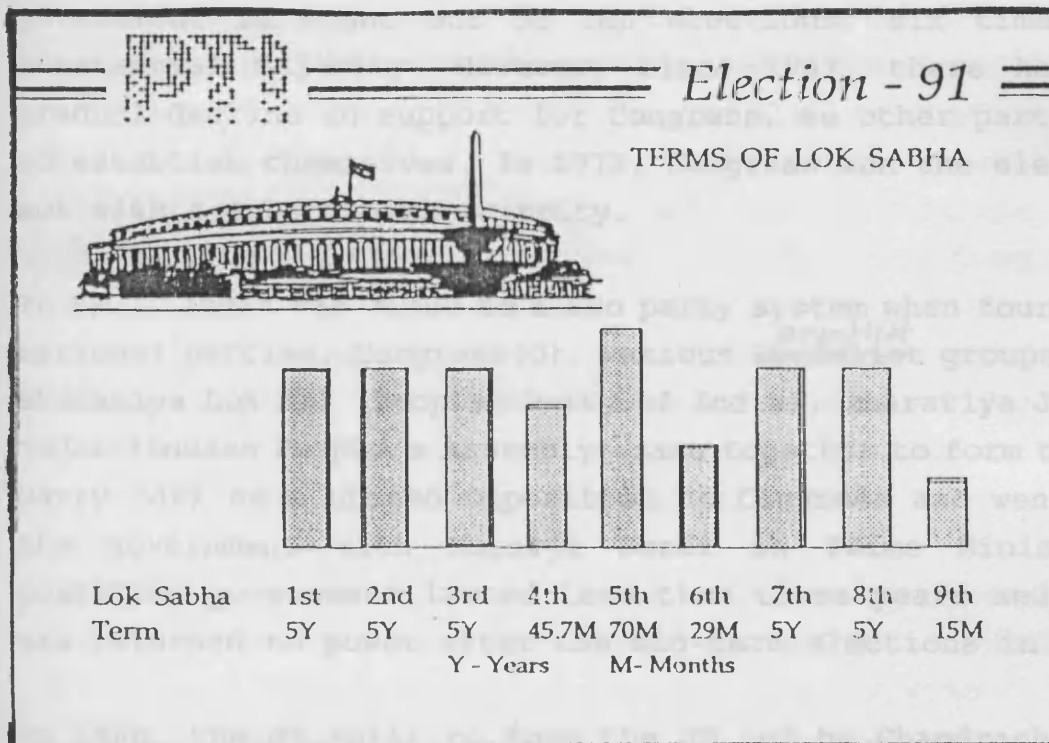
INDIAN ELECTORAL SYSTEM, POLITICAL COMMUNICATION, MASS MEDIA
AND THE 1991 GENERAL ELECTIONS IN PERSPECTIVE

SECTION I

INDIAN ELECTORAL SYSTEM

In India elections to the LS are normally held every five years unless the Parliament is dissolved under unusual conditions then mid-term elections are held. Since independence in 1947, ten general elections have been held, the last one was in 1991 (Fig-1) when mid-term elections were held.

FIGURE. II.1 TERMS OF THE LOK SABHA



Source: Arun Kumar, The Tenth Round: The Story of Indian Elections (1991), PTI.

In the Westminster system, a government must command a parliamentary majority. Most Indian elections since 1952 had produced a definite result and a clear majority for a single party. In the first three general elections held in 1952, 1957 and 1962, Congress won massive majorities in the LS as well as in most state Legislative Assemblies, except in Kerala in 1957 when the CPI came to power in the assembly elections.

Until March 1977, India had been labelled a 'one party dominant political system'. The electorate expressed its faith in a leadership that could rise above party, sectarian and personal interests and was capable of laying the foundations of economic prosperity (Gupta, 1985). Though the Congress has never won more than 48.1% (1984) of total votes polled, yet it has formed the government in eight out of ten elections, six times with a substantial majority. However, since 1967, there has been a gradual decline in support for Congress, as other parties tried to establish themselves. In 1971, Congress won the election but not with a substantial majority.

In 1977, India was close to a two party system when four distinct national parties, Congress(O), various ~~specialist~~^{populist} groups like the Bharatiya Lok Dal (Peoples Party of India), Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS) (Indian People's Assembly) came together to form the Janata Party (JP) as a united opposition to Congress and went to form the government with Morarji Desai as Prime Minister. The coalition government lasted less than three years and Congress was returned to power after the mid-term elections in 1980.

In 1980, the JP split to form the JD led by Chandrashekhar and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) under the leadership of Atal Bihari Vajpayee. In 1984, Indira Gandhi was assassinated and in the general elections that year, the component parties contested the elections separately as the Indian National Congress (Socialist), BJP, Lok Dal and Janata Party along with Cong.I and

Communist Parties. Cong.I won the elections, with a majority of 415 seats and formed the government with Rajiv Gandhi as the Prime Minister.

In AP, the 1984 elections saw the rise of TDP on the national scene as the single largest party in the opposition with 30 seats. But in the 1989 and 1991 general elections, no single party has gained an absolute majority. In 1989, the non-Congress parties united again, this time under the leadership of V.P.Singh, a former Finance Minister in Rajiv Gandhi's cabinet and defeated Cong.I. The National Front Government was formed with support 'from the outside' by the BJP, Communist and other parties to form a 204 member National Front Parliamentary Party (NFPP). However due to internal conflicts V.P.Singh's government was out of office in eleven months and five days.

The leadership was taken up by Chandrashekhar who formed the government with only 54 MPs, mostly defectors from JD, to form the Samajwadi Janata Party (SJP). He also functioned with the 'outside support' of Cong.I led by Rajiv Gandhi. However a flimsy reason regarding surveillance by two constables at the residence of Rajiv Gandhi led to withdrawal in support by Cong.I. Rather than face defeat in parliament, Chandrashekhar announced his resignation requesting a dissolution. The second minority government lasted only four months. Parliament was dissolved and mid-term elections were called by the President through a notification by the EC on 12 April, 1991.

After the fifteen month rule of the minority governments and the prospect of another hung Parliament sparked off a debate whether India should change over to a new electoral system ¹

¹ Some of the systems debated were the 'Proportional representation methods as in some European countries and 'List system' in Germany, the 'Two Ballot system' in France and the 'Alternative vote' system in Australia. However India continued with the 'first-past-the-post system in its electoral battles with a growing number of parties and candidates along with an increase in the electorate.

The 1991 elections saw the emergence of a multi-party system. For the first time the TINA factor (There Is No Alternative (to Cong.I) had disappeared. There were four major parties, led by four prime ministerial candidates, three of whom had already served as Prime Ministers - Cong.I led by Rajiv Gandhi and later after his assassination by P.V.Narasimha Rao, SJP led by Chandrashekhar, JD/NF led by V.P.Singh and BJP led by L.K.Advani.

THE POLITICAL PARTIES

THE CONGRESS-I

The Indian National Congress(INC) is the oldest national party founded in 1885 by A.O Hume. On several occasions the party split and each part claimed to be the true successor, but only one Congress(I) under the leadership of Indira Gandhi has retained national following. The Congress Party has won eight of the ten parliamentary elections held since 1952. In 1984, Cong.I's leadership was taken over by Rajiv Gandhi after the assassination of Indira Gandhi. Since his assassination during the 1991 election, the party has been led by the present Prime Minister, P.V.Narasimha Rao.

BHARATIYA JANATA PARTY (BJP)

The Bharatiya Jana Sangh

BJP formed in 1980 traces its origins to *S.P. Mukherjee in association with* (BJS) founded in 1951 by M.S.Golwalkar. It was one of the Hindu nationalist parties. The support for the party was largely in the Hindi speaking states of northern and central India. The party is supported by Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) (World Hindu Organization). Prominent leaders of the party are Dr.Murli Manohar Joshi, L.K.Advani, A.B.Vajpayee and Vijay Raje Scindia. During the 1991 elections the party emerged as the largest opposition party winning 119 seats.

JANATA PARTY /JANATA DAL

The JD originated from Swatantra Party formed in 1961. Just before the 1977 elections, four national parties, the INC(O), Bharatiya Lok Dal, BJS and Socialist Party merged together to

form the Janata Party which won the election but governed for less than three years. The party split in 1979 into two groups: JP led by Chandrashekhar and Janata Party(S) (S stood for Secular) led by Charan Singh and Raj Narain (Later, it was known as Lok Dal).

In 1980, the Janata Party underwent a further split into the Janata Party led by Chandrashekhar and the BJP led by A.B. Vajpayee. In 1980 the Janata Party was part of the Janata Dal while BJS renamed as BJP emerged as an independent party.

JANATA DAL / NATIONAL FRONT (JD/NF)

JD was started in 1988 by V.P.Singh by merging of three parties- JP, Jan Morcha and Lok Dal. The NF was formed in alliance with Congress(S), regional parties like the TDP, Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) and Dravida Munetra Kazahagam (DMK) which formed the short lived government in 1989. The party split in 1990 into JD led by V.P.Singh and SJP led by Chandrashekhar. In 1991, JD/NF attempted to regain power with support from the regional parties. The party gained only 54 seats compared with the 143 they won in 1989. The prominent leaders in the ^{NF} party include; NTR, S.R.Bomma and Jaipal Reddy.

THE COMMUNIST PARTIES

The Communist Party of India (CPI) and Communist Party of India (Marxists) (CPM) are recognised as national parties. Communist strength has been largely confined to West Bengal, the small neighbouring states of Tripura and Manipur and to the southern state of Kerala with pockets of strength in Assam, Andhra Pradesh and Bihar. These parties have been in alliance with the NF since 1980. Some of the prominent leaders of the ^{two} party ^{ics} are; Jyoti Basu (CPM) Harkishan Singh Surjeet, E.M.S Namboodripad (CPM) and Indrajit Gupta (CPI).

SAMAJWADI JANATA PARTY (SJP)

SJP was formed in 1990 under the leadership of Devi Lal and Chandrashekhar after the split in the JD. It was the youngest

national party to form a minority government with 54 MPs that lasted for four months in 1990. During the elections the party based its strategy on its performance in four months compared to the 40 years of Cong.I. The party was nearly routed gaining only five seats.

TELUGU DESAM PARTY (TDP)

TDP was started by film hero turned politician, NTR as a regional party from AP in 1982. The party won the assembly elections in the state and was in power from 1983 - 1989. The party was ~~in~~ ^{part} ~~an~~ ^{of} alliance with the NF with NTR as the chairman. In 1989, the party lost power in the state elections and their number slid from 30 to two in the LS elections. In the 1991 LS elections the party improved its position to 13 seats.

POLITICAL COMMUNICATION IN INDIA : AN OVERVIEW

In this section, we first look at political communication in elections since 1952. We review some of the relevant literature on the impact of election campaigns on voting behaviour. Most studies have concentrated on the process of elections and socio-economic factors affecting voter behaviour, some of these references have been quoted with the findings of the present study.

In India, it was mainly Cong.I that has contributed to the development of new techniques of election campaigning. The changes in the political systems have also prompted the increased need for campaign communications. Innovations in campaigns were more pronounced during the mid-term elections, when there was a greater need for rebuilding the images of parties and leaders.

Early Indian political communication in the 1950s was characterised by public meetings processions, pamphlets and wall writings. Electoral contests were dominated by large number of grassroots party workers deployed to mobilize voters in house-to-house campaigns. During the first three general elections following independence, in 1952, 1957 and 1962, Congress dominated at the centre and in the states.

From the fourth general elections in 1967, there was a gradual decline in support for the Cong.I. Pattabhiram (1967) evaluating the third general election concluded a gradual decline in the Congress power. More importantly, his analysis suggests a consistent rise in political awareness, sense of political efficacy, sophistication about politics and involvement in politics among voters from 1967-71.

The split in the party in 1969 was followed by the first mid-term elections in 1971. The election also prompted the need for greater support for Indira Gandhi as the popular leader of

Congress. In 1971 Indira Gandhi launched the campaign with the slogan 'Garibi Hatao' (Eradicate Poverty). The campaign theme, largely communicated through her speeches and posters, led to a Cong.I victory with 352 of the 500 seats with 43.7% share of vote.

The 1977 general elections, following the 'Emergency' period (1975-76)² saw the debacle of the Congress. The united opposition parties that formed the Janata Party, built their campaign strategies around the alleged excesses of the Emergency. 'Restore Democracy' was the election theme of the victorious Janata Party. The Congress strength decreased from 352 to 154 with 34.3% vote share.

After 28 months, India was again at the polls with the disintegration of the Janata government. The Congress(R) was renamed as the Congress(Indira) - (Cong.I) with the symbol of the 'Hand'. An intensive campaign was launched to rebuild the image of Indira Gandhi and Cong.I. Political advertising was attempted during the elections through a Delhi based agency called Graphisads. The campaign was built around the theme 'Elect a government that works'. The campaign, mostly through newspaper advertisements was noticeable for the 'Onion advertisements'³ - which exemplified the issue of price rise and attracted much attention when Congress and Opposition parties were struck with retaliation and counter retaliation. However, Indira Gandhi, despite the newspaper advertisements and posters, largely depended on her elections tours and campaign meetings all over

² During 1975-76, Mrs Gandhi had declared a state of Emergency in the country. Leaders of the other parties were jailed and restrictions were imposed on the press.

³ The advertisement made a comparison with the rise in the price of onions from Rs.1.50 (£0.03) during Indira Gandhi's rule to Rs.5.00 (£0.10) during the 28 months of Janata rule. The Janata counter attacked the Congress through an ad with the headline 'Priceless lies' of the Congress arguing that the price of onions was Rs.4.50 (£0.09) during Indira Gandhi's time and the slogan was counter attacked with 'Elect a government that works for the people'.

the country. In 1980, Congress regained power with 353 seats and 42.7% vote share.

A change in style of political campaigning was seen since 1984 when Rajiv Gandhi took over the leadership of the party after the assassination of his mother Indira Gandhi. It altered not only the political system but also the entire process of electoral campaigning. The nation had been thrown into a turmoil in the aftermath of the assassination of Indira Gandhi and there was widespread violence with the Sikh community being the main target of violence⁴.

During the 1984 elections, Arun Nanda of Rediffusion Advertising agency and a friend of Rajiv Gandhi was entrusted with the Cong.I campaign. The western educated young leader was convinced that a systematic professional approach to political advertising could pay dividends. For the first time, an organised political campaign was conceived in India during the 1984 general elections. Intense background information was gathered on a highly complex Indian electorate.

Under the circumstances, a multi-media campaign was built around the theme 'National unity'. Cong.I tried to project itself as the party of national unity and integrity, the only one that could unite India, end violence and terrorism and offer hope. The advertising exploited the grief at the death of Indira Gandhi in a none too subtle way. Press advertisements called for unity and support, posters showed the bullet-ridden, blood splattered body of Indira Gandhi. Her recorded speeches at public meetings, especially the last one in Orissa were heard all over the country through audio cassettes.

This campaign also introduced the use of films, later on through the use of video, political films developed into a major communications tool. The film on Indira Gandhi, 'Maa' (Mother),

⁴For Details see Pradyum Gupte, (1989)The Challenge of Change 1989 pp 57-85

caused a tremendous emotional response; after sobbing over her death the audiences were invited to brighten up at the prospect of her son continuing her dynasty through the film 'Amethi Ka Suraj' (The sun of Amethi) - the constituency inherited by Rajiv Gandhi). Cong.I swept the election on the emotional tide, gaining 415 of the 543 or 76% seats and a vote share of 48.1% in the Lok Sabha, the highest since the first elections. Rajiv Gandhi became the youngest ever Prime Minister of India.

Five years later, in the run up to the next general elections in 1989, Cong.I was facing several political crises. Terrorism was still growing unchecked, despite a Cong.I pledge five years earlier to remove it, but more important were the corruption charges against members of the Cong.I government in connection with the infamous Bofors Gun Deal. According to press reports the prime minister himself was involved⁵.

In the follow up to the 1989 elections, the opposition parties united as the NF for the second time under Rajiv's former finance minister, V.P.Singh to challenge the Cong.I. Cong.I's electoral success in 1984 prompted rival parties to follow its lead in the use of political advertising. The Cong.I campaign was again drawn up in 1989 by Arun Nanda's Rediffusion Agency with the theme of 'My Heart beats for India'. Cong.I adopted an attack strategy warning of the perils of coalition government: lawlessness, communalism, disorder and disunity. The 1989 election saw the introduction of American-style negative advertising. Full and half-page newspaper advertisements were splashed all over the national and regional newspapers. The images of the press advertisements were intended to frighten: fighting cocks, broken dolls, grinning crocodiles and barbed wire fences - seeking to ridicule the notion that the opposition were capable of uniting.

⁵ The national newspaper The Hindu (Madras) gave extensive coverage through well investigated reports on the alleged involvement of Cong.I in the Bofors Gun Deal.

The reaction, however, was a backlash against the party⁶. The Cong.I campaign backfired because at the same time that scorn was being poured on the idea of opposition unity, the opposition did unite. On another occasion an advertisement with the slogan: 'I won't let anyone turn the streets into streets of fire' coincided with the outbreak of communal violence in northern India.

While the Cong.I attacked the opposition unity, the opposition raised the issue of corruption against the Cong.I with Rajiv Gandhi being the prime target. Through posters, public meetings and media support, V.P.Singh and other opposition leaders accused the Cong.I of innumerable charges of corruption and also the misuse of electronic media. Unlike the Cong.I press campaign, lack of funds prevented the use of newspapers by other parties, but the NF got vast publicity through a parody of Cong.I advertisements in a popular newspaper Indian Express published from 16 centres all over India.

When the election was held, Congress crashed from its landslide of 76% seats to 40%, and although it was still the single largest party it could no longer form the government. In view of other difficulties and accusations of corruption, the Cong.I campaign's contribution to the debacle may have been slight, however it took a large slice of the blame. A finger was pointed at the small coterie of Westernized politicians and professional advertisers, removed from the grass roots reality, with no understanding of the 'hearts' and 'minds' of the people⁷.

By 1991, planned political campaigning was commonplace; all the parties used professional advertising agencies and commentators feared the election campaign would be the most socially divisive in Indian history. Four main parties were now involved: The Cong.I, BJP, JD/NF, and SJP and each party had drawn upon support

⁶India Today 15 Nov 1989. There were protests from the Cong.I MLAs for the campaign to be withdrawn, but since the prime minister was involved, it continued.

⁷ India Today March 1990.

of advertising agencies for building on strategies and use of communication techniques. An indepth analysis is discussed in Chapter III. We review a body of Indian literature which has focused on political communication and voting behaviour to provide a framework and perspective for our study.

POLITICAL COMMUNICATION AND INDIAN ELECTION STUDIES

Indian literature on election campaigns has been limited, though research on elections began in 1952⁸. In India, the Indian Institute of Public Opinion (IIPO), has pioneered election studies, but in recent years, IMRB, ORG, MARG and other agencies have regularly monitored opinion polls to predict election results.

In
W Most studies on Indian elections before 1975, the political system is characterised by the dominance of a single party (Cong.I) and must therefore be examined in the light of developments since the mid-seventies. Others cover a significant part of research in the field of voting behaviour in the assembly and parliamentary constituencies. These studies have considered the support to a particular party as a 'dependent phenomenon' and have tried to explain this with a number of socio- economic variables such as the primordial influences including family and kinship, caste and community and the standard factors of age, sex, education, class, income and rural-urban composition of the population.

The multifarious factors that have influenced the Indian electorate were party affiliation, personal image of leaders and

⁸ Election studies were sponsored by the Research Programmes Committee of the Planning Commission and a large number of studies are being carried out by the university departments of Political Science and Research Centres in India. The Centre for Study of Developing Societies has contributed largely to the study of electoral behaviour in the country and their nationwide sample surveys have generated a great deal of data to provide a profile of the Indian voter in terms of party identification, political knowledge, electoral involvement, sense of political efficacy and voting decision.

candidates and electoral issues. The main reasons for party preference have been identified in broad categories such as past record and future expectations, group representations, ideology and programmes, role in the freedom struggle, the ruling party, family traditions, and caste/community (Quarashi, 1989). Party affiliation was seen to be taking priority over the individual candidate, particularly in the case of national elections.

Eldersveld & Ahmed (1978), concluded that on most measures of political development such as knowledge about politics, level of political interest, psychological involvement with the outcome of the political actions, extent of political activity, belief in a party system and elections, strength of identification with parties, sense of political efficacy, the Indian system was a clearly developed polity.

Weiner, Osgood & Others (1975), in their study of electoral politics in the Indian states examined major cleavages in the Indian politics based on class, caste, tribe, religion and language, region and factional alignments. Some pilot studies have examined party and electoral systems, ideological cleavages, national and ethnic cleavages, religion and caste cum factional rivalries. These studies have focused on the various concepts of support for individual parties in the elections and how voters supported major parties.

Intensive studies have argued that the influence of social, ethnic and religious groups on the voting pattern ~~was~~ ^{has been} overestimated (Hurst, 1970). However, as a result of changes in the political system and the decline of one party system, political parties resorted to the division of society by reviving the vote banks through the arousal of primordial factors like caste and religion during 1989-91.

Seth (1975), suggested that the Indian voter manifests a relatively higher degree of party identification and evinces an appreciable amount of understanding of the general framework of

the democratic polity and some degree of cognitive awareness of the immediate political surroundings. Weiner and Osgood (1975) studies have also described the way in which national electoral trends intersect with regional variations and the way in which specific categories of local constituencies are influenced by the state in which they are located⁹. This was evident in states like AP, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu (TN) and Kerala. We have obtained similar findings in our study .

In a study on voting behaviour in the third general elections in two constituencies in Rajasthan, Varma and Bhambri (1967) assessing the campaign techniques and propaganda themes, revealed that there was a greater politico-electoral consciousness among rural than urban voters. They reported a 100% intention to vote by both the urban and the rural voters. In rural areas, party propaganda constituted the main source of political information for 92% of the voters, while newspapers were used by only a few. Religious meetings were sources of political information for a small 4% voters, caste meetings were a source for 30%, discussions among friends was a source for 47% and discussion within the family was a source for 15% of the voters. But in urban areas, newspapers were most sought after. In both areas, discussion with friends was more important than with the family. Sex did not alter substantially the sources of political information, but in general women voters depended more on propaganda sources and discussions with the family.

Varma and Bhambri's concerns relate closely to this study. Mass media were preferred by rural and urban voters. As against 15% in Varma's study who depended on discussions with the family, we found that nearly half our respondents depended on family as a source of political information. Varma's study gave an impression that caste meetings were important in voter behaviour. In

⁹ Weiner and Osgood's (1975) early studies focused primarily on princely and tribal constituencies which were presumed to have distinctive political characteristics in the regions in which tribes were located - their demographic distribution, levels of modernization and their relationship with state authority.

contrast, many of our respondents did not agree that they were influenced either by caste or religious groups, though most campaigns were built around caste and religion.

Paul (1980) and Paul and Ahuja's (1991) analysis of the 1980, 1989 and 1991 election campaigns were based on the public meetings of leaders from all over the country. Second, in analyzing the results of the 1980 elections they confirmed the electorate's preference to a one party stable government rather than a coalition government accused of non-performance. We find similar responses in our study where a majority of the voters preferred a one party government over a coalition.

Pathak (1977), analyzing the electoral behaviour during the fourth general election in 1967, concluded that a high degree of exposure to campaigns, rising level of information and the belief in the efficacy of the electoral process are some of the main features of electoral behaviour in Gujarat.

Varma & Narain (1973), studying the 1967 general election in Rajasthan found that there was an increase in the readership of newspapers and consequent greater reliance on them as a medium of information. Further, the study found that most voters decide their party preferences during the period of elections to which mass media of communication have their small bit to contribute. Among the mass media of communication, it was the newspapers and among the interpersonal media of communication, friends and relations' had an edge over the other media of communication'.

Gupta (1985), in a study of Electoral Politics in India, analyzing the 1984 general elections came to a conclusion that the performance of the political parties whether in office or not in office greatly influenced the voting behaviour of the electorate. While he claimed that the 1984 result indicated a weakening of caste and communal factors in the Indian political system because of years of urbanization and modernization, especially in the LS elections, but they had not been totally

eliminated at the local and regional level. However, the same cannot be said of the consequent 1989 and more importantly the 1991 elections

Prasad (1979), concluded that in Bihar, political maturity was a result of greater awareness, involvement and judgement of the political process. His findings showed that a more modern (urban) environment, better education, higher income, significant caste and more frequent habit of political conversation led to greater participation. In our study we saw some similar trends. Only half the respondents were interested in politics and it was not a major topic of discussion, rating fourth after day-to-day matters of work, social problems and local gossip. However the influence of the interpersonal factors was still high in voting decisions.

Kaur (1989), in a study on 'Effects of Mass and Interpersonal Communication on New Voters in Hyderabad' found that newspapers were the main source of information on which 77% of the respondents depended. Men showed more political awareness compared to women and more than half the respondents were likely to vote for Cong.I.

Kar and Chaudary (1992), in a study on the electoral behaviour of industrial workers drawn from three factories in Haryana in the 1977 assembly elections concluded that industrial workers were substantially aware about political events. Political awareness was a factor for both, the amount and quality of participation in politics. Affiliation with reference groups had an impact on political behaviour. In analyzing campaign exposure, they found that 82.5% of the workers reported exposure to door-to-door canvassing, 60.9% received campaign material, 62.9% read newspapers concerning elections, and 88% listened to radio broadcasts for election news, 42.1% attended public meetings and 25% joined processions organised by the political parties or candidates. In an interesting conclusion, their data revealed that a high level of campaign exposure was associated with a higher level of political awareness, but no such positive

relationship was found between campaign exposure and voter turnout. Though the voting trends were higher in this targeted group, we found in our study that of the 70% who were approached by door-to-door campaigning, a third had a positive change in their voting behaviour.

SUMMARY

Literature on political behaviour has revealed a high level of political consciousness and independence in voters who have exhibited considerable discretion in their voting behaviour. Further, national electoral trends intersect with regional variations and elections to local constituencies are influenced by the state in which they are located.

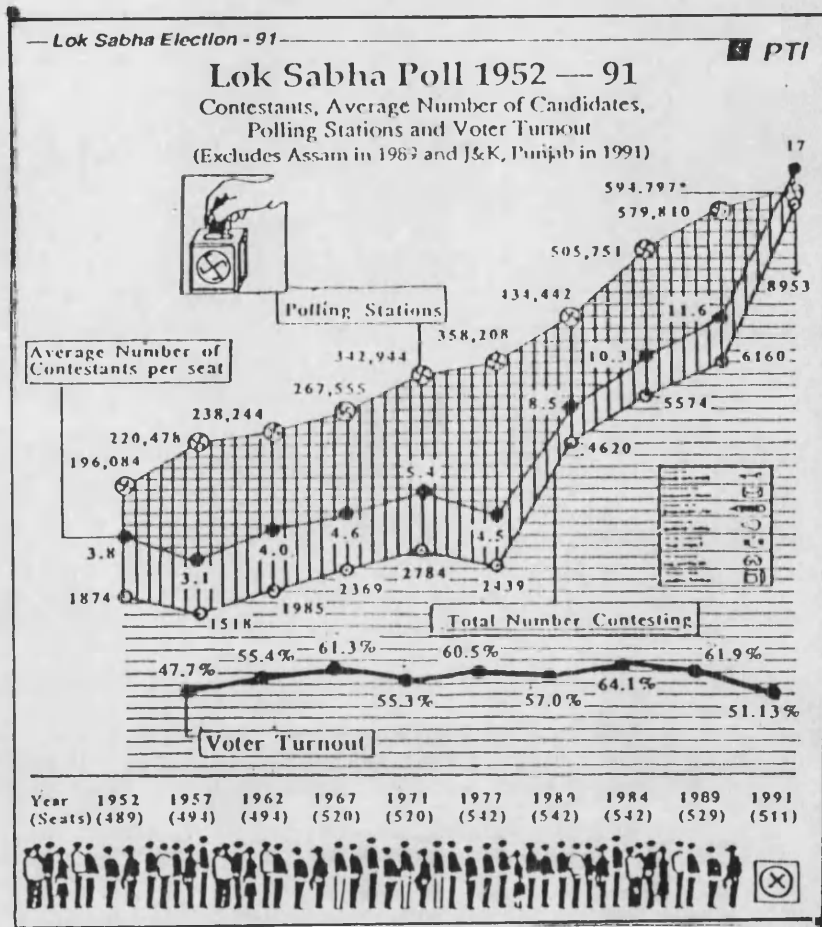
It has also been established that mass media formed important sources of political information, especially for urban educated voters while the rural voters depended more on interpersonal channels. Newspapers were an important source of information and there was an high degree of exposure to campaigns.

It was observed that the overall voter turnout in the elections was between 50-60%. Since 1989 and 1991, efforts were made to increase the awareness of voters on the political process and increase political participation.

THE TENTH GENERAL ELECTIONS 1991

The tenth Lok Sabha election was marked by many new developments and disasters, resulting for the second time in history, ⁱⁿ a hung parliament. Reports in the press described it as the most expensive, longest ever, socially and communally divisive, most violent and unpredictable. Academics, sociologists, communication scholars and politicians interpreted it as the most memorable election. The election introduced extensive use of opinion polls, computers, electronic media and well researched campaigns.

FIGURE. II.2 THE LOK SABHA POLL, 1952-1991



Source: Arun Kumar: The Tenth Round: The Story of Indian Elections PTI 1991.

The 1991 elections for 531 constituencies¹⁰ were held in May-June. The elections were scheduled in two phases. The first phase was on May 20 in 205 constituencies spread over eight states and four Union territories. The second phase was on June 12 and 15, after the May 23 and 26 polls were postponed due to the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi on May 21. Elections to the remaining 16 seats were held in a by-election in November 1991,

¹⁰Poll in six constituencies in Jammu and Kashmir had been postponed and six seats had been countermanded due to the death of candidates.

when the Prime Minister, P.V. Narasimha Rao was elected from Nandyal constituency in AP.

POLITICAL PARTIES AND CANDIDATES

During 1991, the number of political parties increased to 162, an increase of 46 since 1989, nine national¹¹, 35 State and 118 others. A record 8,953 candidates contested 531 seats that went to the polls (See Fig-2)¹². Several known criminals, mafia dons and dacoits along with film and television stars, religious leaders, former princes, sportsmen and prostitutes had won tickets from major political parties. A record 5,646 independents contested of which only one could make it to the LS.

VOTER TURNOUT

Though the number of candidates and registered parties recorded a quantum increase, the voter turnout continued to average between 50-60% varying from as low as 54.7% in 1952 to a high at 61.3% in 1967 and a record level of 64.1% in 1984. In 1991 despite the use of extensive persuasive techniques by political parties and government, the voter turnout was only 51.13%.

(Fig- 2).

Cong.I with its allies again emerged as the single largest party with 227 members, 12 short of an absolute majority in a parliament. BJP through an extensive campaign won 119 seats and emerged as the largest opposition group. NF/JD were down to 56 from 143 in 1989 and SJP was reduced from 54 to only five. The

¹¹To gain national status, a party must poll 4% votes in four states in the preceding LS election and a state party must do so in the state.

¹² There was a five fold increase in the number of candidates from a low of 3.1 per seat in 1957 to nearly 17 per seat in 1991. A noted increase of 44% over the last 1989 elections. The steady rise in the national average in the candidates per constituency, is due to the rise in the number of independent candidates. There were over 5600 independent candidates in 1991, nearly 2000 over that of 1984 elections.

assassination of Rajiv Gandhi had swung the pendulum in favour of Cong.I¹³ as turnouts went up by six to seven percent in states, where the polling was held after the assassination, to achieve an overall success of 47.19%. There was not much change in AP.

POLL VIOLENCE

Elections were marked by poll violence and rigging. The assassination of Rajiv Gandhi in the middle of the campaign on 21 May, 1991 at a campaign meeting at Sriperumbudur in TN left a trail of violence especially in AP. During the elections, five LS candidates, 21 assembly candidates and 350 other persons were killed in election related violence.

OPINION POLLS IN INDIAN ELECTIONS

Psephology, started later in India than in most developing countries, has become firmly established in the system with parties and candidates evaluating their support from the surveys. National, regional, local and exit polls formed a scientific means of predicting elections results. Opinion polls prior to the election had envisaged a marginal win for Cong.I with 310 seats, 83 seats for BJP and a little over 30 seats for JD¹⁴. The support for BJP had doubled its share of the popular vote in the country and trebled in Uttar Pradesh. The India Today-MARG opinion poll, conducted between 7-10 May, 1991 forecast a hung Parliament with Cong.I winning 233 seats and BJP with 150 seats and about 78-130 seats to the NF and Left Front parties¹⁵. While in Britain the election campaigns report daily polls and trends, India has yet to take off on that scale given a

¹³ Arun Kumar (1991) states that poll figures indicated a 6.63% swing away from the Cong.I at the beginning of the elections but the pendulum swung in its favour after Rajiv Gandhi's assassination.

¹⁴ MRAS Burke Opinion Polls & The Hindu, Sunday 19 May, 1991.

¹⁵ India Today-MARG Opinion Poll as reported in Statesman, New Delhi 18 May, 1991

heterogenous population and the physical difficulty of reaching them. However, most leading newspapers and magazines had conducted opinion polls and also some conducted weekly polls¹⁶, thereby providing enormous information for predicting the election trends.

ELECTIONS ON NETWORK

The First Indian election on a network - was how the National Informatics Centre (NIC) described its massive arrangement for the 1991 LS elections. It was for the first time anywhere in the world a network of such large magnitude was attempted¹⁷. Through a satellite over the Indian Ocean, a giant earth station was installed in New Delhi and 450 computer terminals were connected to every district headquarters through NIC's network. A software package called 'Elecon', for computerised election analysis was connected to the Chief Election Commissioner's office enabling immediate communication through electronic mail, analysis of the elections results, data bases and the monitoring of alleged booth capturing and rigging¹⁸.

ISSUES IN THE ELECTIONS

In any country economic performance reflects the political stability which is manifested in the defeat of the government. The 1992 British elections was an exception when the Conservatives won an election despite deep recession. However,

¹⁶ The Week, Kottayam during April-May 1991 held weekly polls and regularly updated the data.

¹⁷ The Hindustan Times, New Delhi, 6 May, 1991.

¹⁸ The system could mark out those booths that had polled more than 90% votes, and if a particular party secured 90% votes, it meant that it had cornered the booth that it had captured. This system also had the facility of printing the votes polled, percentage of polling, total voters and party positions, as well as cumulative totals depicting the party lead which was coordinated for analyzing the results on radio and TV.

in a developing economy like India, economic disparities, inflation and escalating prices are a common feature which none of the governments had managed to set right. For the 36.9% of the people living below the poverty line, economic issues were of little consequence. Taxes matter little to the average voter under the poverty line. However, the issues of rising prices has always been part of Indian election campaigns. The famous electoral slogan of 'Garibi Hatao' (Eradicate Poverty) by Indira Gandhi had a great impact on the voters which led to her victory in the 1980 elections. Unlike the West, where economic issues become selling points of a campaign, in India, political campaigns are configured on the basis of religion, caste and other social problems, rather than the economy.

CASTE AND RELIGION IN THE 1991 ELECTIONS

A CULTURAL POLITICAL SYSTEM ?

Caste¹⁹ and religion which, ^{were} described as 'Mandal-Mandir' by politicians during the 1991 elections played an important role in parliamentary politics. Electoral and communication strategies were built around concepts of caste and religion.

Traditionally India's cultural system had offered a fair degree of independence to its polity. There was relative disassociation between polity and culture and this difference enabled Indians to pursue political modernization without fundamentally tampering

^a
¹⁹ Singh & Vajpeyi.D. (1981) A caste is ^ahereditary, endogamous group whose members claim to have a common origin and share certain common myths. The rules governing marriage, purity and pollution, eating and social interaction are governed and regulated by caste norms. Every Hindu is born in a caste and cannot move from one to another. Caste is hierarchically ranked in the order of the roles and functions performed by the persons. Brahmins (priests, scholars), Kshatriyas (rulers, warriors), Vaishyas (businessmen), and Shudras (menial workers). The strength of the caste system is illustrated by the fact that all religions which have taken roots on Indian soil have gradually taken on certain attributes of that system. Even Islam has not escaped segregation and Indian Muslims are also divided, but these divisions are peculiar to Islam.

with their culture (Nuna, 1989). However, these deep rooted cultural differences in the system have led to upsurges in various divisive forms - separatist movements, caste rivalries, religious movements and communal riots which have threatened Indian democracy and integrity (Weiner, 1967). Most scholars have attributed this to the political parties who play the game of divide and rule. During elections caste groups function as 'political vote banks' to capture power by fair or unfair means. Myrdal (1964) believes that for this reason alone the local political bosses have a vested interest in preserving the social and economic status quo and exploiting it as a matrix for political action.

CASTE AND THE 1991 GENERAL ELECTIONS

India's traditional Hindu social system is woven around caste structures and caste identities. The caste system makes Hinduism a complete social and economic organization (Ansari, 1960). The SCs and STs were the most underprivileged sections and efforts were made to uplift them through a policy of reservation of seats in the educational and employment sectors. Parliamentary and assembly seats are also reserved for representation in the national and state governments. Although a large number of socio-economic variables were associated with voting behaviour, caste and religious affinities have received larger attention. Scholars have derived conflicting conclusions, but there was a general agreement that caste is a dominant variable affecting voting preferences (Weiner & Osgood, 1975; Brass, 1985).

In 1990, caste became an overtly important issue in the political system when V.P. Singh opened the issue to pass legislation for implementation of the Mandal Commission Report (MCR). The main proposition of MCR was the extension of reservation in government jobs for SCs and STs as well as Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and Communities. The MCR evoked passionate and extreme reactions with country-wide agitations, especially in northern India by upper caste students, who felt that they were being deprived of the already scarce job opportunities. There were also cases of self

immolation: more than 159 people attempted suicide and 63 died²⁰. The report was widely challenged in the courts by people from all over the country. A five judge bench of the Supreme Court headed by Chief Justice Ranganath Mishra was constituted to hear the arguments of these petitioners and the legality of the report. It was reported ~~that~~^{to be} one of the causes that led to the downfall of the V.P.Singh government. During 1991 elections, JD/NF made social equality their main election issue to gather support among the backward and minority communities.

P.V.Narasimha Rao, after becoming the Prime Minister, dealt a severe blow to the JD when he announced his governments's policy on reservations, accepting the recommendations of the MCR with a modification, by adding the economic criteria with a view to foil the challenge of anti-Mandal forces²¹.

RELIGION AND THE 1991 INDIAN ELECTIONS

Religion emerged as an important political issue that not only formed a means of mass mobilization to gain electoral support, but was extensively referred to in the election campaigns. BJP was successful in mobilising the Hindus through the all India 'Rath Yathra' (pilgrimage) and the promise of constructing the temple at 'Ram Janmabhoomi claimed to be the birth place of Hindu deity Lord Rama, the site of the now demolished Babri Masjid, This provided a new identity to the emerging political personality of the party (See study of BJP election campaign in Chapter III).

The arousal of religious emotions was quite upbeat with the popular Hindu epics Ramayana and Mahabharata serialised on TV. It has been widely reported that the use of religious symbols also had a tremendous effect on the female electorate to the

²⁰ India Today., 31 Oct 1990.

²¹ 'On a Trail of Challenges', Financial Express, Bombay, 29 December, 1991.

benefit of the BJP. BJP was the only party propagating the views of 'Shri Ram' whom Hindus worship and hold in high esteem.²²

Religious references were widely incorporated in party advertisements, films, video and audio cassettes. The views and opinions of religious leaders from important Hindu and Muslim shrines were published in magazines²³. Huge cutouts of leaders, especially NTR dressed in the form of Indian deities were displayed. Religious leaders campaigned for political parties. Film and TV stars who played mythological characters campaigned, contested and also won elections. The religious support helped BJP to become the second largest party with 119 seats. Therefore, caste and religious factors became important issues in the election.

SECTION II

MASS MEDIA IN INDIA AND THE 1991 GENERAL ELECTIONS

In the past decade very few countries have undergone the kind of communication transformation that India has²⁴. Mass Media in India are said to have contributed to bridging social diversities by devising and using technology, expanding broadcasting (on radio and television) and by narrowcasting with videos and cable technology. Despite the low level of literacy, over 35,000 newspapers are published all over the country. Radio and television reach 95.7% and 84% of the population respectively. In addition, interpersonal and group systems, folk media and

²²The Hindustan Times, New Delhi, 18 May, 1991.

²³₁ ²³ The Week, Kotayyam, 21 April, 1991

²⁴ In the 1980s there has been a massive expansion of television network. During 1987 one TV transmitter was installed every tenth day. From 183 TV transmitters in 1985 there are 540 transmitters covering 84% of the population. Within the last four years electronic companies through Cable TV and Direct Broadcasting Satellite (DBS) have invaded the Indian market providing round the clock news and entertainment. MTV, CNN, BBC, CFI, TV-5, ATN, ZEE TV and STAR-TV are now household names in the urban segments of India, and are poised to enter the semi urban and rural areas.

traditional forms of communication operate alongside modern media²⁵.

The present section focuses on the growth of media in India and describes how communication technologies are gradually changing the country in several areas of development and at the same time effectively contributing to the electoral process. Indian election campaigns are a fascinating theatre featuring an immense variety of communication forms. Campaigns are influenced by plural aspects of the country, reflected in multiplicity of languages, illiteracy and economic activities.

The Indian press while privately owned, is not free of political pressures applied by government²⁶, and social pressures from people of diverse religious and ethnic backgrounds. The major problems that affect the print media relate to literacy, poverty and the linguistic diversity of its audience. Political news dominates the front pages of national, regional and local dailies.

Newspapers were extensively used by most national and regional parties for the political advertisements. We find that newspapers are sought after as the most important source of election information by the urban and rural electorate (See Chapter V).

Radio and television function under the Ministry of I & B with the objectives of information, education and entertainment. Radio broadcasting in India was started in 1927 by the British with two privately owned transmitters at Bombay and Calcutta, after which

²⁵ The 'Song and Drama Division' and the 'Directorate of Field Publicity' under the Ministry of I & B uses folk and group communication media to project the policies and programmes of the government, social and developmental issues. India Year Book, 1994.

²⁶ Though the Press enjoys a fair degree of freedom, one cannot completely call it totally free. When we say the pressure from the government, we mean that press cannot be very critical of the government as it controls newsprint supply.

the British government took over in 1930 and started operating under the name of Indian Broadcasting Service. This was changed to All India Radio (AIR) in 1936 and came to be known as 'Akashvani' in 1957.

TV started in India in 1959, on an experimental basis as part of AIR and within three decades, it has emerged as a large network reaching 84% of the population. Indian TV sought to link the social and traditional forms of communication and to provide a framework for development programmes with the goal of providing a 'people-oriented, problem-oriented and development-oriented TV in India' (Hanson & Narula, 1990).

In 1976, TV was delinked from AIR as an independent organization and was named Doordarshan (Distance viewing). TV ownership was low as even the monochrome sets are not ~~an~~ easily affordable by many Indians. To enhance the viewership for development oriented and educational programmes, community television sets were provided by the government in the rural and semi-urban areas. Further, to cater to the requirements of the rural people and those in remote areas, Doordarshan started 'area specific programmes' from six states through the facility of Indian National Satellite (INSAT). With the availability of satellite transmission, regional language telecasts were started in several states. The second channel was introduced in Delhi in September 1984, and was soon followed by Bombay, Calcutta and Madras, marking a three tier service of national, regional and local services.

A number of writers, including Chatterji (1987), Kumar (1981) and Acharya (1991) have provided a comprehensive, at times critical introduction to the history, politics and status of broadcasting in India. We restrict ourselves to the use of electronic media as sources of political communication through news and current affairs programmes and Political Election Broadcasts (PEB) during the elections.

Both radio and television being state monopolies, broadcasting has been a highly centrally controlled operation under the Ministry of I & B. Broadcasting in India has often been accused of serving as a propaganda machine for the government and is considered a constant factor in the Indian political scene. Despite the rhetoric of autonomy (Kapoor, 1992) every single party (Cong.I and coalitions) that has controlled the Centre has succumbed to the temptation of using radio and television for their own political ends. This has been particularly manifest during the rule of Cong.I led governments (Thomas, 1993).

However, AIR and Doordarshan transcending the literacy barrier are used by the government for creating greater political awareness and to bring about social change. Since independence the use of radio for political broadcasts was often debated, but successive Congress governments had repeatedly declined to use electronic media for election purposes²⁷.

In 1977, the year when the Janata Government came to power, a proposal put forward by the I & B Minister L.K.Advani on the need for election broadcasts on radio for each nationally recognised party was accepted. The Prime Minister Morarji Desai, at the centre and the chief ministers at the state level were given free time to broadcast their achievements and to discuss important issues. Leaders of opposition parties also got a chance to state their case. Each statement was recorded separately and secretly so that no party could have a chance to know what the others were saying and thus be able to rebut it²⁸.

Party Election Broadcasts (PEBs) were started in the 1977 assembly elections and since 1980 in the LS elections. The national and state parties recognised by the EC are given fifteen

²⁷ In the 1950s the government had offered time on radio for the political parties to read their manifestos but this was rejected by the opposition parties as being worse than useless.

²⁸ Political Time Broadcasting: 'Sad shift in Official Policies' The Times of India, Bombay 24 Nov 1989

minutes of free time to broadcast their political strategy and appeal to the electorate twice on radio and once on TV. The dates for the order of the PEBs are assigned by drawing of lots. It is mandatory for all the parties to present their election speeches to AIR and Doordarshan well in advance to the Ministry of I & B. These broadcasts, unlike the PEBs and PPBs in Britain are regulated by a code of conduct formulated by the EC and they are subject to censorship (see Appendix - B).

Another development in the 1977 assembly elections was the use of electronic media to 'educate' the voters on the electoral process. These 'Voter Education Programmes' were devised by the government with the objective of increasing awareness among the electorate about the political process, both for greater political participation and to ensure free and fair elections. According to Assistant, Director, AIR, New Delhi, Bimla Bhalla, efforts were made during 1991 to have as many programmes and discussions with the people involved in the election process to enhance awareness and increase political participation²⁹. Voters were warned against aspects of rigging and booth capturing, violence and arson during elections. We have documented and reviewed some of the programmes in the pre-election and those presented along with the election results.

Political advertising on TV is prohibited, though most parties as well as some senior civil servants would welcome political advertising as a healthy development, I & B ministry officials have dismissed the idea of introducing political advertising on the electronic media³⁰. Therefore radio and TV are restrictively used for the PEBs and the special election broadcasts.

²⁹ Interview with the author with Mrs Bimla Bhalla, Assistant Director, AIR, New Delhi. 21 June, 1991

³⁰ Interview with Mahesh Prasad, Secretary, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India on 16 April, 1991

In India, despite the development of the national campaign, the traditional constituency level campaigning continues to be effective through the interpersonal channels. Public meetings, rallies and walkabouts along with street corner meetings, street plays and bandwagon techniques are effective in reaching large segmented groups. We find evidence from our study, that though mass media have contributed largely to the information and knowledge of the political process, the interpersonal channels continue to be the motivating factors (See Chapter VIII). The constituency campaigning is now supported and supplemented with the modern electronic forms by audio cassettes and video-on-wheels.

Videos are a distinctively Indian development lending an 'entertainment culture' to political communication. They are particularly valuable given the physical difficulties of communication and also as narrowcasting media, they are better targeted and have a greater impact. The audio cassettes add to the election festivities (and noise pollution) and are used extensively for campaigning at the local levels (see Chapter VI).

We next discuss the development and use of mass media and interpersonal channels by the government and political parties during the 1991 elections. In the following chapters we evaluate their impact as important sources of information and influence in voting behaviour.

THE ROLE OF PRESS AND THE 1991 ELECTIONS

India's newspaper industry is one of the largest in the world catering to heterogenous groups in diverse Indian languages. Newspapers are published in over 93 languages and dialects from the states and union territories and the steady growth in their number is an indication of the impact of the written word³¹. At the end of 1993 there were a total of 35,595 newspapers, including 3805 dailies and magazines registered with the

³¹ India Reference Annual 1994, Ministry of I & B, Government of India.

Registrar of Newspapers in India. The Indian Press includes 42 centenarians with the Gujarati daily 'Bombay Samachar' (Bombay News) being the oldest surviving newspaper.

The readership of newspapers is just over 21 per thousand. Vernacular newspapers all over the country trickle down to the villages aided by the system of 'community reading'³². The Hindi newspapers enjoy high circulation and readership in the northern states, while in the southern states the regional papers have extensive readership. The largest number are published in Hindi (8924), followed by English (4627), Bengali (1885), Urdu (1795), Marathi (1337) and Telugu in AP ranks tenth (699)³³.

A majority of newspapers are under individual ownership (61% in 1984). The Press Council safeguards freedom of the press, controls ethics of publications and aids improve the quality of newspapers and news agencies. The magazine boom in India in the past decade has contributed to wider readership of magazines catering to specific groups of people.

The role of the press in politics has become a focus of intense debate in the post-independence period and especially since the days of the Emergency³⁴. The press has played an active role in political developments through investigative reporting and in-depth coverage of news and events.

During 1989 in the run up to the ninth LS elections, newspapers were in the forefront revealing corruption charges against the Cong.I. The Bofors Gun Deal unearthed by The Hindu from Madras

³² Through the system of community reading, one literate villager reads the newspaper to several others in the morning or evening at the local tea shop or the community areas like schools, temples or Panchayat offices.

³³ India Reference Annual 1993. Ministry of I & B, Government of India, 1994.

³⁴ During 1975-77 Indira Gandhi had declared a state of 'Emergency' in the country, when the opposition leaders were jailed and restrictions were imposed on the press.

and subsequently covered by other newspapers and magazines contributed to the debacle of Cong.I under Rajiv Gandhi.

During elections, political news dominates the front pages in most Indian national, regional and local newspapers. Press plays a major role in the dissemination of political information through analysis, opinion polls³⁵ commentaries, profiles of candidates, editorials and, of late political advertising.

POLITICAL ADVERTISING IN NEWSPAPERS

Since the 1980s, political advertising in the newspapers has become an important part of campaign strategies. Party advertisements were splashed all over the national, regional and local newspapers and periodicals in the country. Cong.I extensively used the newspapers during the 1984 and 1989 elections, and in 1991 all major political parties were advertising in national and regional newspapers and magazines. These advertisements were notable for their size and the number of insertions in newspapers and periodicals. Apart from Cong.I and BJP which used the national and regional press, financial constraints restricted some parties like the JD and SJP. The regional parties, TDP, All India Anna Dravida Munetra Kazagham (AIADMK) and Shiv Sena in Bombay have used the regional newspapers with higher reach in their targeted areas. Some political parties stated their strategies through their own newspapers and magazines.

There has been a steady rise in the amount of money spent on advertising. During 1991, the total amount spent on press advertising was estimated at ₹1,867,191 of which Cong.I alone spent nearly 60% of the total money (See Chapter V on the breakdown of money spent by parties on advertising in 1991).

³⁵ The National and regional daily newspapers such as Times of India (Bombay), The Hindu (Madras), The Hindustan Times (N.Delhi), Deccan Chronicle (Hyderabad) conducted opinion polls either through their own research departments or hired the services of established research organisations for conducting surveys to monitor the electoral trends.

Since the amount of money spent during the campaign was large in the Indian context, we have examined the exposure and impact of these advertisements on voters in the constituencies.

THE TELUGU PRESS AND POLITICS IN ANDHRA PRADESH

The Telugu press has come to play a major role in the political system of AP. The success of NTR, the film star turned politician, was to some extent attributed to the media baron Ch.Ramoji Rao, publisher and editor of an influential Telugu newspaper, Eenadu (Today). The paper supported the TDP in 'protecting the honour of the Telugus' as well as arousing the dominant upper caste Telugus (Kammas) to greater political participation. Strategic marketing efforts, with free copies distributed in remote villages in the state contributed to the high readership of the newspaper in general, and in converting the Cong.I support groups towards the regional party (TDP) in particular.

As seen in Table II. 1, Eenadu has the highest circulation of 311,346³⁶ three times more than the other Telugu newspapers. It is followed by Andhra Jyothi. Andhra Prabha published by the Indian Express Group of Newspapers and Udayam (Morning) are popular with a readership of less than a 100,000. Andhra Bhoomi published by the Deccan Chronicle group is a pro-Cong.I paper while Andhra Prabha of the Express group supports the opposition. Readership of English newspapers is restricted to the larger cities and towns including Hyderabad and its twin city, Secunderabad. Deccan Chronicle, The Hindu and Indian Express are the popular dailies. Lastly the Urdu Press with two major dailies; Siasat and Rahnuma-E-Deccan is restricted to the city of Hyderabad which has a large concentration of Muslim population.

During the 1991 election, the coverage given to national and state election trends was extensive in all Telugu and English

³⁶Indian News and Feature Alliance Year Book. (INFA) 1993

newspapers. These were supported by daily editorials and well researched articles through opinion polls. All the newspapers profiled political developments in AP in the 42 LS constituencies on a regular basis and their candidates in the fray. Political advertisements of the national and regional parties were seen in the newspapers.

We have evaluated the readership of newspapers in general and during the elections in particular. Information regarding the interest in political news, and newspapers as a source of information and exposure to the political advertisements in newspapers was evaluated to find out the extent of their influence on voting behaviour (See Chapter V).

TABLE II.1 THE CIRCULATION OF DAILY NEWSPAPERS IN
ANDHRA PRADESH

Newspaper	Language	All India	Cir.in State	Hyderabad/ Secunderabad
Deccan Chronicle, Secunderabad	English	68,587	68,362	62,469
The Hindu, Madras & 7 other centres ³⁷	English	452,918	89,745	29,052
Indian Express, Bombay & 16 Centres ³⁸	English	284,449	52,557	18,535
Eenadu, Hyderabad & 5 Centres ³⁹	Telugu	311,346	304,564	63,239
Andhra Jyothi, Hyderabad.	Telugu	151,765	147,857	21,222
Andhra Bhoomi Secunderabad	Telugu	5,531	5,512	2,352
Andhra Prabha Hyderabad	Telugu	64,357	60,261	3,106
Udayam, Hyderabad	Telugu	Not Available		
Siasat, Hyderabad	Urdu	39,949	37,479	31,538

Source: INFA YEAR BOOK 1993

³⁷ Hyderabad, Coimbatore, Gurgaon, Visakhapatnam, Madurai, Bangalore and Thiruvanthapuram.

³⁸ Hyderabad, Chandigarh, Baroda, Coimbatore, Kochi, Pune, Bangalore, Baroda, Ahmedabad, Madras, New Delhi, Madurai, Kozikode, Nagpur, Vizianagaram and Vijayawada.

³⁹ Visakhapatnam, Vijayawada, Anantapur, Karimnagar and Rajahmundry.

TABLE II.2 CIRCULATION OF TELUGU WEEKLIES OF ANDHRA PRADESH

Weeklies	All India cir	Circulation in State	Circulation in Hyderabad /Secunderabad
Swati Sapara Vara Patrika Hyderabad	102,560	94,045	14,828
Andhra Bhoomi Sachitra Vara Patrika, Secunderabad	88,529	82,655	18,780
Andhra Jyothi Sachitra Vara Patrika, Vijayawada	72,401	64,721	11,541
Jyothi Chitra, Vijaywada	50,111	44,554	6,871
Sitara, Hyderabad	41,504	36,291	6,812

Source:INFA Year Book, 1993

THE PERIODICAL PRESS

The 1980s magazine boom has catered to every group of readers from children to adults. Readership increased with literacy. Alongside, the Sunday newspapers, with the introduction of colour supplements and extensive coverage of news and features compete with periodicals. Notwithstanding such trends, the regional periodical press still continues to be popular with over 22,000 magazines of different periodicities published from all over the country⁴⁰.

During the 1991 elections, most magazines including the women's and children's magazines released election supplements. Some news magazines conducted opinion polls to gauge election trends

⁴⁰ INFA Year Book 1993 and India Year Book. 1993

and gave in-depth reviews on elections⁴¹. The business magazines gave their opinions on economic issues, women's magazines covered issues related to women and women candidates.

Party advertisements were published in select English and regional language publications. Cong.I used the services of Megacorp advertising agency for their campaign in periodicals. Their strategy was to take 1 to 4 insertions in each magazine. On the other hand, although the BJP advertised in several newspapers, India Today was the only periodical used. The strategy was to take double-spread or centre-spread advertisements to reach the educated urban electorate by attacking the Cong.I and projecting itself as a secular, rather than a communal party.

SJP concentrated on the regional press and the Sunday supplements but found it expensive to use the periodicals. TDP used some of the Telugu magazines. Since extensive information was disseminated through news and political advertising by the parties, we investigated their effectiveness and if respondents saw the advertisements and how far, if at all, they helped in their voting decisions (See Chapter V).

THE BROADCAST MEDIA

ALL INDIA RADIO (AIR)

AIR covers 85% of the area and 95.7% of the population. Though radio listening has decreased in urban India with the advent of television, radio reigns supreme in rural India. Recent studies by ORG-NRS⁴², highlighted the emerging rural markets in which

⁴¹ See for example India Today (New Delhi), The Week (Kottayam), Sunday (Calcutta), Frontline (Madras), The issues between March- June 1991 covered election trends through opinion polls at all India and state levels.

⁴² ORG and NRS surveys indicate the readership and listenership patterns of all the newspapers, radio and TV and have identified radio as an important medium for rural broadcasting and advertising.

radio is a more sought after medium despite the expanding television network⁴³.

NEWS AND CURRENT AFFAIRS PROGRAMMES ON AIR

AIR catering to the diverse Indian audiences, is rated as the biggest news organisation of its kind in the world⁴⁴ with 273 news bulletins for over 37 hours duration per day in its Home, Regional and External services. The news broadcasts include 78 bulletins in the Home services from New Delhi with an average duration of 11 hours. In the Regional Services 127 bulletins are broadcast daily in 72 languages and dialects for a duration of 17 hours. The current affairs programmes include news reviews, commentaries, interviews, newsreels and eye witness accounts. During the parliamentary sessions, daily commentaries and weekly reviews in Hindi and English cover proceedings of both houses. Similarly, at the state level, reviews of state legislatures are broadcast from the state capitals in regional languages.

During the 1991 election, radio broadcasts covered election related programmes through a network of 11 programme originating centres. Radio and TV were extensively involved since the day elections were announced until the declaration of results. The pre-election programmes broadcast on radio and television, with the schedules and participants of programmes and the post election coverage are further discussed.

⁴³ INFA Year Book, 1993

⁴⁴ India: A Reference Annual 1994. Ministry of I & B, Government of India

THE USE OF RADIO DURING 1991 ELECTIONS

THE PRE-ELECTION PROGRAMMES

The pre-election programmes informed voters on various issues as part of the voter education campaign. Through a series of programmes the electorate was systematically informed on developments in the election process. This was included in the regular news and current affairs programmes along with announcements and special election programmes.

In the first stage, the voters were informed on the need to check their name in the voting list and the action to be taken in case of omissions. The next round of information was on the polling dates, the traffic regulations and the security arrangements made for the conduct of polls. These were in the form of announcements in Hindi and Telugu in AP. Further, the subjects covered in programmes titled 'Talking About Elections' included understanding the importance of elections and the need to vote freely. This was done through discussions, dialogues, analysis and interviews with members of the election machinery - Chief Electoral Officers (CEOs), Police Chiefs in each state and also with the CEC at the national level. Voters were warned against malpractices and to refrain from accepting any incentives like transport, money or gifts in return for voting for a particular party.

Discussions were held with leading political commentators, analysts, political scientists and journalists. 'Question and answer sessions' on the election process in the form of a quiz were broadcast for the youth and first time voters. These programmes were independently scheduled or were part of the regular programme channels. In AP, these programmes were incorporated in the youth, women's, industrial workers and farmers programmes.

PARTY ELECTION BROADCASTS (PEBs)

The PEBs as discussed earlier are a permanent feature since the 1977 elections. All recognised parties were allowed to broadcast twice on radio and once on television for 15 minutes at a time. The persons nominated for the broadcasts were chosen by the national or the state parties. The schedule of the political broadcasts was given wide publicity through press notes in all national and state newspapers and also through regular announcements on radio. We have added, to the schedule of PEBs on AIR, the names of the leaders or representative who recorded the election messages. These broadcasts were heard on Hyderabad 'A' channel and were relayed simultaneously by other stations (See Appendix C).

The nationally recognised parties had four broadcasts on radio, two at the national level and two at the state level, thereby allowing the voters four opportunities to listen to the political broadcasts. There was only one broadcast on television by the national parties.

POST-ELECTION BROADCASTS

In the post election phase, during the announcement of the results, there were hourly news bulletins and one minute flashes in English and Hindi to announce the party positions. AIR had 175 news bulletins in Hindi and English round-the-clock and also featured special programmes analyzing results as well as highlighting the different aspects of the emerging political scene. 16 commentaries discussed the general poll trends of which eight were from Delhi and eight from other parts of the country. These included panel discussions with academicians, journalists, political scientists and commentators.

Another important feature was the 'Radio Conference' in which panellists from New Delhi's national studio discussed poll trends live with others from 13 AIR stations in state capitals. We investigated the exposure of voters to radio as a source of election information, opinion on the coverage given to election

news and the impact it had in increasing awareness and influencing on voting behaviour (See Chapter V). The use of television during elections follows next.

THE USE OF TELEVISION DURING THE 1991 ELECTIONS

In most western democracies much campaign time, energy and money is spent on 'Getting on TV' and campaigns are stage-managed for television. In India though TV is emerging as a powerful medium, but, being government controlled, it offers little to the electorate in terms of debates between the contesting parties or interrogation by the media personnel with politicians, but is geared to increase the voters awareness on the political process. The pre-poll programmes apart from the PEBs comprised of discussions, messages, skits, animation films, musical programmes and short, two-minute captioned announcements.

A content analysis of election programmes in the run-up to the elections gives an insight into the various national and regional programmes telecast which showed the government's effort in the conduct of elections. A programme schedule of national and regional programmes with the dates, content, duration and time of presentation including the regional election programmes on Hyderabad Doordarshan are discussed. The national and regional programmes are marked next to the title of the programmes. Most of the national telecasts were in Hindi or English while the regional ones were in Telugu with some in Urdu (See Appendix D).

After the first phase of polls until 20 May, and the rescheduling of election dates, more election programmes were telecast between 3 to 10 June 1991 before the second phase of elections. The post election programmes scheduled from 14-17 June discussed the trends in results at the national and regional level and continued till all the results were declared. We have classified the programmes and discussed some of the categories and the detailed list is in Appendix-D.

THE PRE-POLL PROGRAMMES ON TELEVISION

ELECTION GUIDELINES

In the first phase of the elections, election guidelines were announced for candidates to file in their nominations. These were followed by the current affairs programmes detailing the rules for candidates, the availability of application forms and the last date for the submission of applications.

DISCUSSIONS

The discussion programmes were for a duration between 10-45 minutes, at least twice a week between 7-19 May 1991. Overall, there were a total of 14 discussion programmes. The discussants included members from the election commission, police and other government officials involved in the electoral process as well as academics, poll analysts and journalists. The subjects taken up included various issues for the 1991 elections such as electoral process the rights of the voters, the issues before the people and the functioning of the administration during elections. The voters were briefed about the police arrangements to reduce crime and electoral offenses, especially in the communally sensitive areas.

A special programme by women on 'Women Voters and Our Responsibilities' was intended to clear some doubts on elections and women were urged to vote. The discussion on 'Violent Attitudes in Elections' covered the increased violence during polls - the topics included rigging, booth capturing and the killing of candidates during elections.

MESSAGES AND INTERVIEWS

The election messages were in the form of appeals by the CEO at the State level and interviews CEC at the national level. They sought to persuade people to exercise their vote freely. The CEC

regularly briefed the press on the day to day developments in various states. 'Journalists in Conversation with T.N.Seshan, CEC focused on the problems before the electorate and measures taken in the conduct of poll.

Interviews were held with the Chief Secretary and the Director General of Police (DGP) at the state level to discuss the security arrangements for the safety of voters against violence and malpractice during the poll. Before the second round of polls, in a fifteen minutes message, the President appealed to the people to discharge their responsibilities as citizens and to cooperate with authorities in peacefully conducting the elections.

ELECTION SLOGANS

Election slogans were short messages on the 'Dos' and 'Dont's' of elections. These included information on the importance of the vote and the need for everyone over the age of 18 to exercise their franchise. These messages were generally between one to five minutes and formed part of regular programmes or were inserted as fillers in between programmes for women, farmers and youth.

SKITS AND PLAYS

An interesting mode of election communication was through short skits, plays and animation films in English, Urdu and Telugu. Eight such plays were shown during the election period and ranged from 12 to 50 minutes. The Telugu satire 'Bommala Atta' (Dolls Play) focused on the politicians and the voting attitudes of the electorate. A second play 'Elections Have Come' previewed the election scene and the expectations of the people. Two other plays 'Many dreams in Election' and 'Talk on Votes and Elections' incorporated messages on the meaning of elections and urged the people to vote freely, fearlessly and honestly.

QUIZ PROGRAMMES

The quiz programmes on TV like 'Prashn Manch' (Question Time) and another 'Election 1991: Vote?' raised several questions for 40 minutes per programme, the questions related to the political process and the past and present elections. There were only two such programmes during the election period.

PARTY ELECTION BROADCASTS

The nationally recognised parties were allowed to have one fifteen minute PEB at the national level from Delhi and a regional broadcast from Hyderabad but the same was not allowed for the regional parties at the state level.

THE ELECTION ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

In the post-election phase, the results were telecast with an analysis of voting trends, through interviews and panel discussions with politicians, journalists, academics and others. The trends were discussed at the national level in Hindi and English and in Telugu at the regional level.

Election results were announced through twenty special poll news bulletins and 15 election analysis programmes in a 46 hour (June 16-18) non-stop telecast, until all the results were declared. The special coverage started from 12.45 pm. on 16 June, 1991 and continued till 10.30 pm on 18 June. The round-the-clock news bulletins in Hindi and English along with Election Analysis programmes comprised of interviews and panel discussions. These were interspersed with special entertainment programmes like the Hindi feature films, film songs, circus, comedy shows and popular serials. The entire analysis and coverage was coordinated in English and Hindi by the top Indian psephologists Prannoy Roy (English) and Vinod Dua (Hindi).

SUMMARY

Indian mass media were geared to the conduct of elections. Extensive coverage was given to create greater awareness of the political process and increase voter participation. Despite the low level of literacy, newspapers are sought as major sources of information. Vernacular newspapers, especially the Telugu newspapers reach even the remote villages. During elections extensive coverage was given to political news. Newspapers gave in depth coverage to the campaigns and the electoral trends in states, regions and constituencies. Most national and regional newspapers carried party advertisements giving a wider coverage to specific party programmes.

The electronic media, radio and TV, overcoming the literacy barrier, broadcast several election programmes from the announcement of elections to the declaration of results. Specific programmes were directed to increase voter participation of women and youth. Efforts were made to reach audiences in the national and regional languages.

However, though these media have the reach and impact, there is no real political debate as the politicians are neither interviewed nor interrogated by political correspondents on issues and often, the discussions between the journalists and some civil servants, remain purely academic exercises. Despite the extensive coverage on the election in the electronic media, the government did not commission any evaluation study on the impact of these programmes. In our study, we have investigated the exposure and impact of these programmes and whether they helped in creating greater awareness and assisting the voter.

CHAPTER III

CASE STUDIES OF SELECTED ELECTION CAMPAIGNS

In this chapter we examine selected party campaigns in the 1991 general elections. We first study the background of the party, its ideology and organization. Second we give a structured analysis of the election strategies that were undertaken through the use of professional advertising agencies, discussing the modern and conventional techniques. The parties include: Cong.I, BJP, JD/NF, TDP and MIM. Last we evaluate the voter education campaign by the government.

SECTION I

STUDY OF THE CONGRESS.I ELECTION CAMPAIGN

Among the numerous parties that have populated India's landscape the longest lived and most dominant has been the Congress. Congress provided the core of India's dominant one party system during the late colonial and early post independence period.

The 1991 election was a major challenge for Cong.I and to the credibility of Rajiv Gandhi as its leader. The increasingly popular BJP was trying to establish itself as a nation-wide alternative to the Cong.I and challenging its secularism. After its humiliating defeat in the 1989 election, Cong.I policies were carefully and systematically planned and campaigns scrutinized. There was intensive introspection into the party organization and selection of candidates. A campaign committee comprising of nine members was formed to organize election strategies and select advertising agencies. Redifusion advertising agency which had handled the 1984 and 1989 campaigns was not one of the four chosen. The successful advertising agencies were: Clarion Advertising Services which worked on the newspaper campaign;

Megacorp Advertising handled the magazine campaign; Graphisads was involved in printing of posters and Basic Four worked on other campaign material.

The video and audio cassettes were made by private agencies and distributed throughout the country. Several mass and interpersonal channels of campaigning included newspapers, magazines, video films, audio cassettes, direct mail, posters, cardboard cutouts, public meetings and door-to-door campaigns.

Rajiv Gandhi oversaw each stage of planning the election strategy and also changed his personal style of campaigning. He had learnt from his mistakes and was claimed to be better equipped this time to achieve the desired results. The 'Sunday' magazine called him 'The New Rajiv'¹. Rajiv was reported as no longer relying on the 'coterie' of advisors, but used his own instincts and judgement to promote himself and the party to restore popular confidence. He toured the country meeting people, shunning securitymen, and unlike the last two attempts on his life, he could not escape the bomb explosion that killed him on 21 May, 1991.

Opinion polls conducted by the party and various publications gave Cong.I an edge over other parties especially after the failure of the coalition governments. Working with some degree of confidence based on the opinion polls, Cong.I was more optimistic about the elections².

¹Sunday, Calcutta (5 May 1991) reviewed the change in the style and functioning of Rajiv Gandhi in past and before the 1991 elections. In aspects of arrogance, accessibility, corruption, cynicism and shrewdness, it concluded that there was a remarkable change. Rajiv was seen as being more accessible to people without the circle of security men. He was travelling in open jeeps and mingling freely with crowds. There was greater interaction between him and the journalists, party workers and leaders.

² The Intelligence Bureau (IB), gave Congress 240-260 seats. The Week-MODE survey published in The Week, Kottayam, Kerala. 21 April and 28 April 1991, in their weekly ratings of political parties predicted 279 seats for Cong.I and updated it to 317 in the following week. India Today- MARG survey conducted by Prannoy Roy and showed Cong.I ahead of other parties. Most surveys also

PRE ELECTORAL STRATEGIES OF CONG.I

Efforts were made by the party to bring about greater awareness amongst the contestants, party leaders, activists, opinion and community leaders about the party's election policies and programmes. Cong.I brought out an election booklet - 'Issues Before the Nation' to serve as a comprehensive guide to candidates and activists in preparing speeches and conducting the campaigns. Printed as a pocket sized edition, the booklet highlighted issues such as stability, economy, communalism, social justice, law and order and Cong.I's 52 point programme of action if voted to power. This was the first time an attempt like this was made for internal communication.

Cong.I also brought out a 4-page brochure called 'Zero Hour' which reflected upon various issues of the election describing the party views on a series of contemporary issues such as Terrorism, Criminalization of Politics, 'Election 1991- A non agenda for Nation Building' and 'Communalism - A new Vote Bank'. Over 70,000 printed mail shots were distributed all over the country. The mailing lists were drawn up from various sources like the members of political and social groups, civil servants, professionals, telephone books, businessmen and research organizations.

Before printing the manifesto, Rajiv Gandhi saw three drafts before giving the final approval. He believed that the manifesto should be a clear and precise document summing up the programmes of action. To increase the readership, manifestos were mailed to a select group of individuals to read and reflect on issues.

revealed Rajiv Gandhi would be the best suited prime minister-The Week, showed Rajiv Gandhi leading with 58%. The Times of India and The Deccan Chronicle, Hyderabad, also revealed similar results.

Some of the astrologers, a few using computers, predicted Cong.I to be in a much better position to gain majority as the single largest party as reported by Mukund Padmanaban in his article, The Pollster and the 1991 Analysis. (Sunday, 5-11 May, 1991).

PRE CAMPAIGN RESEARCH

Intensive research was conducted prior to the election campaign. The party commissioned MARG under Prannoy Roy to examine the party's position, voting trends and issues in the election. Its advertising agency, Clarion Advertising, conducted extensive research on election issues through in-depth interviews with different strata of society and voter expectations from the political system³. Information from party leaders and workers at regional and local levels provided a general feedback.

A data bank was established on each issue of needs and expectations for the economy, communal harmony, party position, social justice, religion and caste. Research concluded that people were disillusioned and had lost trust in governments made up of alliances and coalitions. Irrespective of the strata of society, people were virtually living in a state of 'fear', especially in parts troubled by communal riots. People wanted a strong government that could provide stability, a future and security to the country. Based on these issues the Cong.I strategy was evolved to establish the need for stability of governance in the country. The election issues also included were the reintroduction of 'Panchayati Raj' (local self government) and 'Nagarpalika bills' for decentralization of power, control of

³ Though there was no structured questionnaire based survey but extensive information was gathered through

a) In-depth interviews: With people from different strata of society including bureaucrats, professionals, unemployed youth, housewives, semiskilled workers, youth, businessmen and farmers. The interviews included getting information on aspects of the political systems, the major issues and how they were effecting them.

b) Small group discussions: These were conducted on leaders from social organizations and important decision makers. It enabled the agency to get the opinions and expectations on the political system and the expectations from the government organisations.

c) Desk Research: Research carried to review the past campaigns of the Cong.I the other parties in terms of the creative strategies and their effectiveness in creating the necessary impact. Opinion polls in the press were also being carefully monitored.

Interview with Probir Purokayastha, Vice President, Clarion Advertising Services, New Delhi on 11 June, 1991

prices and the creation of 10 million new jobs. As a secular party, the emphasis was placed on a negotiated settlement of the Ayodhya issue and legislation for setting up a backward classes development commission.

VOTE CONGRESS-I FOR STABILITY

The main theme of the campaign was to popularize the concept of stability. The objective was to project Cong.I as the only stable party that had established governments which completed their five year term. Stability was defined as the 'platform for bringing about change, growth and development, justice for the poor and opportunity for the deprived'⁴. Further, stability could bring about peaceful non-violent transformation and thereby, the respect of the world.

Stability was projected through ten important election issues to meet the need of different strata of the population: These included:

1. Law and order, 2. Communal harmony, 3. Housing for the poor, 4. Autonomy for the Panchayati Raj, 5. Unemployment, 6. The need for a government that works, 7. Price rise, 8. Industrial Growth, 9. Agricultural prosperity and 10. Social justice.

Through these issues emphasis was to be placed on the need to vote for Cong.I on three main grounds:

1. A government with the experience, capacity and capability to govern.
2. The non-performance of the alliance and coalition governments.
3. The party that can form a government on its own.

Ten different target groups representing these issues were selected. The aim was to keep the campaign simple and establish credibility by using real life situations and real life people

⁴ Source: The Congress.I Election Manifesto 1991, and information from the interviews with advertising agency professionals of Clarion and Megacorp.

with the name, age and status of the person, unlike the highly illustrative campaign of 1989.⁵

The press campaign, worked on the theme of stability. Different creative approaches were conceptualized for the newspaper and the magazine campaigns. In the newspaper campaign, the testimonial approach (Devlin, 1984) was used in which a cross section of people who represented the target segments testified their need to vote for Cong.I. In the magazine campaign, issues were indirectly focused through a 'Question and Answer' technique. The concept was to use children, a theme commonly used in political advertising to provoke an emotional response from voters⁶. In recent years, children have been used for most commercial advertising to sell a wide variety of products and services and are described as the new emerging consumers and influencing agents in the family decision making process.

The same popular strategy for promoting the political party was adopted by Cong.I. The 'Child series' emphasised the issues through simple questions put forth by young children, with headlines also written in a child's hand writing. The visuals provided the environmental setting linked to the issues in question and answers projected the 'stability factor' with the Cong.I's solution to the problems. Another set of advertisements were developed in Hindi which were based on humorous idiomatic phrases and released in ^{the} states of UP, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh.

⁵ According to Ved Paul, Chief Executive of Graphisads, 'At a time when the electorate is feeling quite disillusioned with all political parties, we have aimed to involve practically all levels of the society'. Interview on 13 June 1991.

⁶ We find such evidence from political campaigns in US and Britain. For example, in the 1992 British general elections, in the Labour party's campaign telecast on the 'Jennifer's ear' the party used a young child to reflect on the poor state of the National Health Service. LH

THE STRATEGY AFTER THE ASSASSINATION OF RAJIV GANDHI

After the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi, the strategy was changed to use the tragedy to arouse sympathy to vote for Cong.I, so realizing the dream of Rajiv Gandhi. The assassination of Rajiv had left a trail of chaos in the country and despair in the Cong.I. Following which, there was a leadership crisis when Rajiv's wife Sonia Gandhi was nominated who refused to take up the position. After days of negotiations, P.V.Narasimha Rao was elected as the new leader. The polls were postponed by three weeks and electioneering began after a ten day period of national mourning.

Cong.I relaunched the campaign for the remaining elections with the themes of 'Stability with Secularism' and 'Vote Cong.I to realize the dream of Rajiv Gandhi through press advertisements, posters and a video film. The funeral, telecast all over the country had already evoked a sympathy wave that helped the Cong.I to increase its number of seats especially in the southern states, but it could not get an overall majority. We discuss below the advertising campaigns before and after the assassination and the final results.

The Newspaper Advertising Campaign

For the newspaper campaign, ten issue advertisements were developed with an opening and a closing advertisement. These advertisements were translated into various Indian languages as regional and local newspapers were used to reach the electorate. The first advertisement in the newspapers set the election theme, 'We Want Stability First', was the headline, as quoted by Rajiv Gandhi. The copy summarily brought forth the consequences of unstable governments that led to communal disharmony, rising prices, terrorism, separatist movements and violence in the country. Cong.I with its experience and policies could bring about Stability and tackle the issues. The second to the eleventh advertisements emphasised the issues.

The first of the issue advertisements through the headline-'**I want Stability. I want my children safe**' drew attention to the law and order situation. It was represented by a young housewife for whom stability could provide safety and security for her young children.

The second advertisement - '**I want Stability. I want my family's life and property to be secure**', is declared by a Muslim tailor recalling the grievous tragedies in the 15 months of misrule by inexperienced leaders, arguing that only a stable government could bring about communal harmony and thereby safety and security.

The third advertisement was directed towards the Cong.I policy of providing housing schemes like the '**Indira Awas Yojana**' (Indira Housing Scheme) for rural and poorer sections. '**I want Stability. I want a house for my family**' is stated by an agricultural farmer who trusts Cong.I to realize the dream of many agricultural workers to own a house.

The fourth advertisement - '**I want Stability. I want Panchayat. I want Autonomy**'. stated by a sixty year old Sarpanch (village leader) focused on the re-introduction of Panchayati Raj (Local Self Government) and the Nagarpalika amendment bills which were not passed by the Rajya Sabha⁷. These schemes were envisaged when Cong.I was in power for decentralizing power and strengthening democracy at the grassroots. This advertisement was extensively published in the regional and the local papers to reach the rural areas.

The fifth advertisement related to unemployment and was targeted at the younger generation and the educated unemployed. '**I want**

⁷ The Cong.I during 1988 had initiated the bills to provide constitutional status for the Panchayati Raj institutions in the rural areas and Nagarpalikas in the urban areas of the country. It was an endeavour to strengthen democracy at the grassroots level. The Bill after being passed in the LS was rejected by the combined opposition in the RS.

Stability. I want Work. I want a future.' expressed by a young graduate emphasised the implementation of two employment schemes- 'Jawahar Rozgar Yojana' (Jawahar Employment scheme) and 'Nehru Rozgar Yojana' (Nehru Employment Scheme) which would generate up to 10 million new jobs every year.

The sixth advertisement focused on the failure of two successive coalition governments and Cong.I as the only national party that was representative of the entire country. **'I want Stability. I want a government that works.** The man explains the poor existence of the nation in which governments fell like houses of cards. He hopes to vote Cong.I as it was the only party that could govern and had a national presence.

The seventh advertisement focused on inflation. Price rise has almost always been an issue in Indian elections. **'I want Stability. My family budget cannot afford this price rise'**. A middle class housewife so laments on spiralling prices, especially in the past 15 months and her difficulty in coping with basic necessities to feed and clothe her family.

The eighth advertisement raised questions of failing economy and the need for rapid industrial growth. **'I want Stability. I want my business to grow'** is stated by a small businessman whose business had suffered in the last few months due to the floundering economy as a result of government neglect.

The ninth advertisement on agricultural prosperity was linked to the scarcity and rising prices of fuel, especially after the Gulf war. **'I want diesel for my pump, and a fair price for my crops'**. This advertisement brought forth the plight of farmers who were affected by the shortage of fuel for the working of their agricultural pumps and tractors. He hopes that it could be rectified by a stable government for agricultural prosperity.

The tenth advertisement brought into focus the need for equality irrespective of caste, class or economic status. **'I want**

Stability. I want my son to go to college'. This is stated by an office peon representing the aspirations of the people who are denied the opportunities to progress on grounds of caste, class and poverty. The peon craves for social justice and foresees the dream of sending his son to college, only if there was a stable government like Cong.I.

The concluding advertisement of the first phase summarised the entire theme of the campaign on **Stability First. For building a Great India and a Great Future'**. Reviewing the concept of stability as against issues, the last advertisement visually focused on the Cong.I symbol of 'hand' superimposed against the masses similar to the first which had a photograph of Rajiv Gandhi. It recaps the 15 months rule of the non-congress parties leading the country to near disaster. Factors of casteism, communalism, rising prices and inflation had left the country weak and unstable. Therefore there was a need to first establish a stable government which could carry on the work and rebuild the damage caused by the coalition governments.

The final Cong.I pledge centred on its historical past during the freedom struggle and its present mission to rebuild the country, fight against divisive forces like casteism, communalism, check rising prices, work against unemployment and poverty to lead India towards growth and progress.

THE CAMPAIGN AFTER THE ASSASSINATION OF RAJIV GANDHI

The post assassination campaign comprised of press advertisements, a video film and posters that focused on the life of Rajiv Gandhi and his contribution to the country. Three press advertisements built around on theme of realizing the dream of Rajiv Gandhi. While the visuals differed, the advertisements had the same headline and copy.

The first advertisement emphasised the sacrifice of Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi, both assassinated within a short span of seven

years. The second visual showed Rajiv Gandhi mingling with the crowds during his election rallies as the man of the masses in a photograph taken just before his death. The third visual was the cortege of Rajiv Gandhi being taken for cremation. The picture brings out the sad memories of the assassination and the scenes thereafter. The funeral seen by the nation on TV and read about in newspapers and periodicals all over the country evoked memories of the tragedy and the silent mourning of the family. The electorate was urged to vote for Cong.I to fulfil the dream of Rajiv Gandhi through the slogan - **Vote to fulfil Rajiv's dream- Vote Congress (I)**, which replaced the earlier one of **Vote Stability - Vote Congress (I)**.

THE MAGAZINE ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN

The campaign was directed to the urban and semi urban voters. Efforts were made to build the 'Stability factor' around four major issues of the ten that were used in the newspaper campaign: 1. Unemployment, 2. Law and order, 3. Communal harmony, 4. Concept of General Elections held every five years.

The first advertisement tackled the issue of unemployment through the headline - **Chacha (Uncle), have you found a job ?** An important election promise, the Cong.I stated that they would create new employment schemes to provide 100 million jobs before the year 2000.

The second advertisement was linked to the issue of Law and Order in the country. **Amma (Mother), Why can't I go to school today ?** The advertisement emphasised the need for stability to ensure safety bereft of riots and violence, more worrying especially for the children going to school.

The third advertisement dealt with the Mandir-Masjid issue. **'Amma What is the difference between Mandir and Masjid?** The question gave emphasis to the secular nature of the Cong.I which professed the need for equality of religions, unlike the other parties. The child's expression was aimed to help people stop and

rethink more deeply about the underlying factors that lead to communal riots in the country.

The fourth advertisement emphasised the sanctity of popular mandate and preserving the tradition of holding general elections being held every five years. The headline **Bapu (Father), but you said that elections are held every five year ?**, an expression by a 9-10 year old boy exemplified the need to vote Cong.I as the only party that had completed five years term every time it was voted to power in contrast to non-Cong.I governments, that did not last more than three years, leading to the mid-term elections.

THE MEDIA STRATEGY

Media strategy was worked out to reach the various target groups and was scheduled between 8-26 May 1991. According to ORG, Cong.I spent Rs. 55 million (₹ 1,102,607) on press advertisements, five times more than the BJP. Emphasis was given to the vernacular and local media. The criteria for selection of newspapers were: 1. The newspaper should possibly originate from the constituency or from a nearby area, 2. The newspaper should have a certain minimum circulation, depending on the place of origin and other factors, 3. It should be a daily, 4. The strength or weakness of the party in that particular constituency, 5. Whether the newspaper was pro or anti Cong.I.

400 publications were selected from the official publications lists of the Audit Bureau of Circulation (ABC) and the Indian Newspapers Society (INS). A number of non registered publications which reached large segments of target groups were also selected. 15% were English dailies and 85% were in regional languages. The advertisements were translated into 17 languages and were generally half page in size. On an average, there was one advertisement every alternate day in major cities and towns. Only 40 publications carried all twelve advertisements. In other publications there were six advertisements i.e. the opening and

the closing advertisements and four issue advertisements relating to law and order, economy, the government that works and communal harmony. Some of the advertisements relating to agricultural and rural sectors were scheduled in the small town publications.

Magazines were selected based on similar criteria as of newspapers. The periodicals comprised of weeklies, fortnightlies and monthlies. Due to the limited time available, the strategy was to use all four advertisements in each issue of the magazine selected. Therefore four full page advertisements were interspersed in each issue.

THE ELECTRONIC MEDIA

Cong.I brought out two comprehensive video films, one before and another after the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi. These films were made in Hindi and translated into various regional languages. The objectives of the video films were:

1. To inform people about the importance of elections.
2. To project policies and programmes of the party in terms of issues.
3. To portray the leadership qualities of Rajiv Gandhi.
4. To popularize their symbol of 'Hand'.
5. To give a historical perspective on the experience and capability of Cong.I through its philosophy and achievements in the past.
6. To make people realize the results of 15 months of 'Misrule' by non-Cong.I parties and renew their trust in Cong.I⁸.

In the video films, importance was given to project Rajiv Gandhi as the only leader with the capacity to lead the country. Rajiv Gandhi was seen moving in the villages and public meetings with his wife, talking to people, listening to their grievances, cuddling young children, sharing meals and visiting places of worship. The views of a cross section of people and a few leaders

⁸ Interview with Anand Sharma, Cong.I Spokesperson MP. 13 June, 1991.

endorsing his leadership qualities were added to reinforce his qualities inherited from his grandfather, Jawaharlal Nehru and mother Indira Gandhi.

The issues and programmes were presented in a TV news format by a popular TV newsreader to attract the viewers attention and add credibility. People were told about the forthcoming elections, their rights and duties to make a choice from the stated facts. Similar to the press campaign, various sections of the people were taken to express their views. The policies of Cong.I were put across by important leaders- P.V.Narasimha Rao on the Panchayati Raj and the Nagarpalika bills, Vasant Sathe and Farooq Abdullah on communal harmony and religious tolerance, Margaret Alva on the issue of Ayodhya temple and Anand Sharma on the provision of jobs for the unemployed.

Traditional entertainment forms such as 'nautanki' (a form of folk theatre), mime and folk songs were incorporated in the video films to urge voters to support Cong.I. The themes were built around stories with songs, dialogues and dances. After the complete information and entertainment package on the history, policies, programmes, image building of the party and leaders, the concluding parts attacked leaders of combined opposition parties.

Senior leaders like V.P.Singh, Chandrashekhar, Devi Lal and NTR were compared to hungry wolves. The song exemplified how their lust for power had divided and destroyed the nation leaving the people in distress and poverty. On the issue of rising prices, a comparison was made between the poor hungry people and the leaders enjoying sumptuous meals. The film concludes with a brief review of the party and its leader, urging people to join hands with Cong.I to strengthen the party in providing a stable government.

Along with video films, audio cassettes added the festive dimension to the election messages. The Cong.I cassettes included

speeches of the leaders, bhajans (religious songs), ghazals (lyrical) and political songs. Songs were composed and sung by famous singers like Mahendra Kapoor and Parvati Khan. Set to tunes of popular Hindi films, these songs were highly popular. The political songs sung by pop singer Parvati Khan, were used to reach youth. Set to Western and Indian tunes, the cassette comprised of several songs to project the symbol of the hand, provide a stable government, jobs for unemployed and communal harmony. The songs sought to persuade people to support Rajiv Gandhi and through his leadership hope for love, togetherness, peace and stability.

One of the songs encouraged women to go and vote for the Cong.I. In a narrative style, it brought out the problems of women enmeshed in household chores who did not have time or knew the importance of their vote. In a story format, the woman tells how she went to vote for the 'hand' to make the Cong.I win after dealing with family members and household chores.

Video and audio cassettes formed an integral part of the election campaign. Videos were either screened through the VOWs or through television and Video Cassette Recorders (VCRs) that were available with the local leaders or hired for the purpose. These films were shown at least once in a particular area or a village and sometimes four to five times depending on the population or weakness of the party in a particular constituency. To inform and collect people at such shows, party workers announced through loud speakers from three-wheeler rickshaws and auto rickshaws or went from house-to-house to summon people. Video films also formed a part of the public meetings and election rallies and were shown either before or after the speeches.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Until his assassination, Rajiv Gandhi was the main national campaigner for the Cong.I. He toured the country holding six to seven meetings a day sometimes covering two to three states at a time. Rajiv Gandhi was flying his own aircraft and moving

around from place to place until May 21 when he was assassinated at one of his election meetings at Sriperumbudur in Tamil Nadu. After his assassination, Narasimha Rao and three senior leaders-N.D Tiwari, Arjun Singh and Sharad Pawar campaigned in the remaining 300 constituencies before the polls on June 12 and 15.

DOOR-TO-DOOR-CAMPAIGNS

Cong.I as a national party was well organised with an experienced network of workers who regularly monitored the campaign through door-to-door calls and small group discussions. Walkabouts were organized in almost all towns and villages for the candidates and leaders to meet the electorate.

POSTERS AND OTHER OUTDOOR MEDIA

The party brought out several posters before and after the assassination. The posters emphasised the policies of the party, portrayed Rajiv Gandhi as the leader and displayed the party symbol. In the constituencies, the name of the candidate and his photograph was included in the posters. Posters were printed in English, Hindi and local languages. Apart from posters, huge cutouts of Rajiv Gandhi were displayed at strategic locations in most towns and cities. The general message was 'Vote stability-Vote Congress 'I' and the symbol of 'hand' was prominently displayed.

Caps, key chains, stickers, badges, bindis and shawls were distributed for boosting party morale and were sources of incentives for some people to vote for the party. Sonia Gandhi and her daughter Priyanka Gandhi, while campaigning for Rajiv Gandhi in his constituency distributed bindis and sweets to women for supporting the Cong.I. The stickers, badges and key chains either displayed the symbol of the 'hand' or had a picture of Rajiv Gandhi.

WALL WRITING

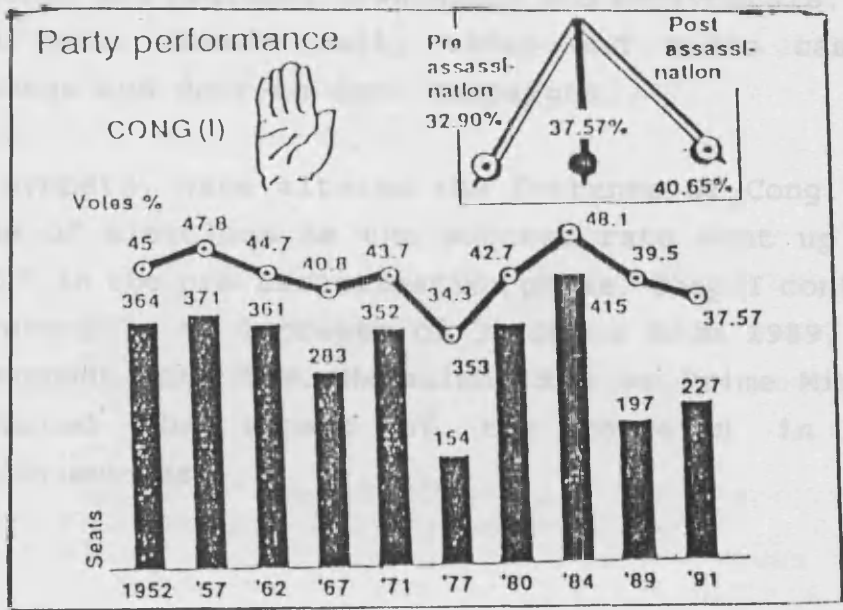
Major sites on walls were 'reserved' in advance by Cong.I even before the names of candidates were announced. Slogans and

symbols were painted all over the walls in cities, towns and villages. Slogan wars on walls were common during elections.

ELECTION ANALYSIS

Cong.I won 227 seats, the highest number in the LS, but 12 short of an overall majority to form government. Its vote share dropped to 37.57%, its second lowest since 1952 (See Fig-III-1). The assassination of Rajiv Gandhi helped Cong.I to return to power. While the Cong.I vote in the first phase of polls was 32.9%, it had gained only 50 of the 196 seats contested with a success rate of 25.51%. In the second phase it increased to 40.65%. A 7.75% swing in the post assassination phase helped Cong.I to win 177 seats with a success rate of 62.11%. In AP, with the sympathy wave, Cong.I emerged winner with 24 of 42 seats and a vote share of 45.85%. It gained 20 of the 23 seats from the second phase of the elections.

FIGURE III.1 CONG.I: THE PARTY PERFORMANCE (1952-1991)



Source: Arun Kumar(1991), The Tenth Round-The Story of Indian Elections, PTI.

SUMMARY

During the 1991 elections, Rajiv Gandhi systematically organized the campaign strategy. Extensive research conducted prior to the polls gave Cong.I an edge over other parties, after the failure of the minority governments. The campaign was built around the theme of 'Stability' which could be obtained only through an experienced party like Cong.I. Four advertising agencies were involved in the planning and execution of the campaign.

A multi media campaign using the mass and conventional forms was planned to reach the maximum number of voters. Cong.I spent the maximum money for their all India campaign. Rajiv Gandhi toured the country addressing many constituencies, until his assassination at one such meeting on 21 May, 1991.

The party altered the campaign to capitalize on the sympathy factor emphasising the need to vote Cong.I to realize Rajiv Gandhi's dream. The campaign throughout, made extensive use of national and regional newspapers and periodicals. The other forms used were; direct mail, video and audio cassettes, public meetings and door-to-door campaigns.

The sympathy wave altered the fortunes of Cong.I in the second phase of elections as the success rate went up to 62.11% from 25.51% in the pre-assassination phase. Cong.I contested 481 seats and won 227, an increase of 30 seats from 1989, and formed the government with P.V. Narasimha Rao as Prime Minister. We have evaluated the impact of the campaign in three of our constituencies.

SECTION II

STUDY OF THE BJP ELECTION CAMPAIGN

BHARATIYA JANATA PARTY (BJP)

INTRODUCTION

The (BJP) campaign was striking compared to Cong.I. By a combination of ideology, religion and high drama, mingling conventional and modern techniques, the BJP attempted to catch the Hindu imagination with a militant mix of religion and politics.

During the 1991 elections, BJP made every effort to assume a national status. The party aimed to dislodge Cong.I and to occupy the seat of power in Delhi. Drifting out from the alliances and coalitions and with a firm base in the popularity acquired through the 'Hindutva'⁹ Campaign', the religio-political combine attempted to establish a unique nationwide political identity. Efforts were made to increase the party network from northern states to the entire country. L.K.Advani, the BJP leader campaigned with a firm determination to induce the Hindu mind towards building the temple at Ayodhya. Religion came to play a significant role in the identity perception of an overwhelming majority of the citizens¹⁰.

It was reported that the BJP campaign along with its support groups, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) (World Hindu Organization), the Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh (RSS) (National Volunteer Organization) and the Bajrang Dal, surpassed all other

⁹ 'Hindutva' was described as 'Rashtriyatya' (Nationalism). It was the RSS that had influenced and inspired the ideology of 'Nationalism' in the Jana Sangh. 'Hindutva' was described as the ideology of the upper caste middle class Indians who had uprooted themselves from their traditions seduced by the promises offered by modernization of India. However Basu et al (1993), use this term not in the sense of Hinduism, but to indicate the contemporary communal organizations and movements that used this banner to mobilize the Hindus. Chaturvedi & Chaturvedi (1991) have described it as aggressive force of Hinduism.

¹⁰ Hari Jaisingh, Indian Express 8 May, 1991.

parties in terms of intensity, reach and range. Never before had any party campaigned so competitively on a national scale and so close on the heels of the Cong.I¹¹.

BJP emerged as the second largest party gaining 119 seats, 22% of the 521 LS seats contested from 449 constituencies. The party's rise to national politics as an alternative to Cong.I was a major development in India's history of competitive politics¹².

A BACKGROUND

The BJS, later transformed into the BJP was founded in 1951 with the aim of rebuilding India on the basis of 'Bharatiya Samskriti and Maryada' (Indian Culture and Rectitude). The most powerful influence in BJS, at both the ideological and organizational level was the RSS, founded by Dr.Hedgewar in 1925 (Puri, 1980).

The electoral contest between the BJS and Congress began since the first elections in 1952. As election succeeded election, Congress party retained its grip of power¹³. The party's strength continued to be concentrated in the Hindi speaking states especially Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, union territory of Delhi (now a state) and the Hindu majority cities of Punjab

¹¹ Report of the ORG on a study conducted on 890 selected voters from 20 constituencies and reported in the press. Deccan Chronicle Hyderabad, 13 June, 1991.

¹² 'As far as Indian polity is concerned, the most significant development arising from the 1991 polls was not the return of Cong.I to power at the Centre, but the emergence of BJP as the main alternative to the Cong.I in many parts of the country' wrote S.Viswam in Deccan Chronicle, Hyderabad, 11 June, 1991.

¹³ Butler, Lahiri & Roy detail the political performance of BJS from the first Delhi Municipal Committee elections when Jana Sangh had won seven (14%) seats as against 42 (84%) of the Congress. But the interesting aspect was that the Jana Sangh had 25% of the total votes polled as against the 33% of the Congress. In the years to come though the Jana Sangh was the lone challenger to the Congress, and however powerful the challenge was, Congress had always stood to gain.

and areasⁱⁿ which the RSS has already established a firm base of support in the 1940s. In the mid - seventies it merged with the Janata Party in 1977, which later split in 1979. Following the collapse of Janata rule in 1979, the BJS leaders regrouped to form the BJP under the leadership of A.B.Vajpayee.

The Hindu Nationalist parties which were attempting to win power constitutionally failed to become a major force in politics in post-independent India. What made BJS different and more dangerous was that it brought into the political arena its burning vision of an India which, having returned to its roots, would be transformed into an organic Hindu nation. (Graham, 1990). Many Hindus, and particularly those in the northern states, saw themselves as a political community, but they believed that Congress Party rather than any of the Hindu nationalist parties could appeal to a great majority of Hindus, irrespective of their caste, sect or region. In 1980, BJP was represented by 17 members in the LS and in 1984 it was reduced to two when Cong.I swept the polls in a historic win for Rajiv Gandhi.

The period between 1984-1989 witnessed an uninterrupted growth of BJP. Support for Cong.I was gradually depleting with charges of corruption, mismanagement, communal crisis, violence and failing economy, while the BJP was gaining momentum. Another important development and an indirect means of support for the BJP was the growing religious awareness among the people through the Indian mythological epic 'Ramayana' serialised on TV. The BJP was quick to gauge the religious awakening of the people and it claimed that it was the only party to champion cause for Hindu unification and for building the Ram temple at Ayodhya¹⁴. Several mass movements were organised to build national support for the party.

¹⁴The Times of India, 'On the Campaign Trail. 13 November, 1989.

The proximate political reasons which have caused the underlying tensions to emerge and led to the rise of Hindu nationalism are: an ideological and organizational decay of the Congress party, the rise of separatist nationalism in Punjab and Kashmir, political attempts at a large scale mobilization of lower Hindu castes and awkward turns in Muslim politics in the 1980s' Varshney (1992).

MASS MOVEMENTS AND THE 1991 ELECTION CAMPAIGN STRATEGY

BJP started their campaign after withdrawing support to the V.P.Singh government in 1990. BJP leaders had set new milestones for themselves in establishing a separate identity. The campaign had already begun, through the mass movements associated with the 'Hindutva' campaign.

The 1991 election strategy was aimed to project their ideology and policies, attack Cong.I and persuade people to vote BJP to bring in 'Ram Rajya. The manifesto exemplified the main issues which were broadly classified as; a) clean political system b) economic growth and social justice, c) a vibrant social order, and d) world fraternity¹⁵. The BJP stressed itself as a well organized party with ideological superiority ¹⁶.

The party called on members of society with particular emphasis on the educated - the professionals, government civil servants and particularly the youth to join and support the party. Many

¹⁵ The BJP Election Manifesto, 1991.

¹⁶ Apter in The Politics of Modernization (1965) explains that 'Government is seen as a main source of development. As theoretically explained, the democratic political system is sustained not so much by the ideological structure of parties competing for power, but by commitment of parties to the values, rules and the norms that the system envisages. Contextually, ideology assumes a crucial role in building up the polity and society and most of them are linked to socio-economic development. The change is oriented towards achievement of development. Hence it is here that the ideology of socialism acquires a meaningful reality.

of them including army generals, civil servants and industrialists joined the party¹⁷.

THE 'HINDUTVA' CAMPAIGN

Even before the elections were announced, BJP set about the task of establishing its ideological superiority on the 'Hindutva' platform. 'Hindutva' was interpreted as nationalism against the narrower sectarian concept of 'Hinduism'. Nationalism was to be projected as an alternative to the separatist messages of casteism and 'Pseudo secularism'¹⁸. As a cadre based party it too had an enthusiastic band of party workers to reach people at the grassroots level. The party adopted the techniques of mass mobilization through several formal and informal channels. Some of these, as discussed below were highly successful in harnessing the Hindu sentiment, not possible without communalizing the Indian society.

THE MASS MOVEMENTS

Several traditional/non western communication approaches were deployed by the BJP to develop a Hindu unity and a political identity. The techniques of mass movements in the wake of the 'Mandir Nirman' (construction of the Rama Temple) especially in northern states were unprecedented in Indian history. In a study conducted on the techniques of mass mobilization in the city of Agra, it was concluded that these well organized methods were able to provoke the Hindus, and had converted some of the staunch Cong.I families (Chaturvedi & Chaturvedi, 1991). We discuss some of these movements.

1. Rath Yatra of L.K.Advani- The famous 'Rath Yatra' (Pilgrimage on a chariot (van) in October 1990 was the starting point of a long and sustained campaign. L.K.Advani covered 11,000 kms from

¹⁷ The Newstime Hyderabad, 24 May, 1991.

¹⁸ Pseudo secularism, as was coined by the BJP for Cong.I whose policies which they claimed contradicted the nature of secularism.

Somnath in Gujarat to New Delhi, arousing Hindu sentiments for preserving their cultural heritage and identity. By undertaking a campaign when the religious fervour was heightened (by the popular TV serial 'Ramayana', he created an unprecedented Hindu consolidation. Though the successful Yatra had ended with the arrest of L.K.Advani, he had gained tremendous popularity. 'Ayodhya Senapati' (Ayodhya's soldier), 'Rashtra purush' (Man of the nation) and 'Ram Bhakt' (Rama's devotee) were the encomiums earned.

2. The Ramshilanyas Poojan - (The sacred bricks collected for the construction of the Ram temple at Ayodhya). The 'Ramshilanyas Poojan' was organized by VHP and RSS. The objective was to collect bricks from individuals and collective donors from all over India towards the construction of the Ram temple. A sandalwood model of the proposed temple was put on display in Delhi. Photographs appeared in newspapers, posters, diaries and cards were made to impress upon the brick donors the magnitude of the task. Hindus were motivated to join the processions that were being organised in different parts of the country.

On 9 November, 1989 at the stroke of nine in the morning, amidst blowing of conch shells, chants of 'Jai Shri Ram' and 'Jai Ram' reaching the crescendo, Swami Paramahansa Ramananandacharya dug out a few inches of soil near the planned site for the temple. Mahant Awaidyanath declared that it was not only the foundation for Ramjanmabhoomi temple, but a step for Hindu Rashtra to be established in the near future.

3. The Ghanta Gharial movement - Ghanta is referred to the 'Bell' and 'Gharial' is a metal disc which is beaten with a sandalwood stick. Both these form an integral part of the Hindu pooja (Ritual prayers). The mode of operation was that, a particular date and time was announced in the newspapers and Hindu families would climb on their terraces and ring the bells and beat the metal discs as a show of solidarity.

4. **The Mashaal Movement**- Similar to the Ghanta-Gharial movement, people were asked to hold the 'Mashaals' (Lighted Torches) atop their houses on a particular day and time. It was found that though these movements had appeared to be spontaneous for many, it was actually through a very organized system. The concepts trickled down from the 'Pracharaks' (heads of groups) to the 'Vibhag Pracharaks' (area heads), to Karyawahis (workers) who in their Shakas (areas) had helped popularize the concepts. From the Shakas the ideas percolated into the 'Mohollas' (localities) and the masses.

5. **The Sadhu Sammelan** - A Sadhu Sammelan (Meeting of Hindu Ascetics) was organised in New Delhi on 2-4 April, 1991 to discuss the 'Ram Janmabhoomi' (the birth place of Rama) issue and the strategies the religious communities would undertake to support the BJP. It was attended by over 1,000 Sadhus (Holy men) and Sadhavis (Holy Women) from all over India. These holy men and women had also extensively campaigned for the BJP. According to K.R. Malkani, Vice President of the BJP, 'A sadhu is the best political worker'. He travels long miles, meets scores of people and can subsist on almost no food or clothing. Above all, he will not emerge as a rival politician. Unfortunately this was only partially true. In the 1991 election, a number of Sadhus and sadhavis contested the elections. At the conclusion of the two day meeting the sadhus intensely appealed to Hindus on the need to vote for the BJP on the following criteria.

- a. Every Hindu should rise to liberate and reconstruct the three temples allegedly flattened by Muslim invaders in Ayodhya, Mathura and Varnasi.
- b. Every Hindu should use his vote to destroy the oppressors of Hindus, the Chief Minister of UP, Mulayam Singh Yadav and the gang of three, V.P.Singh, Rajiv Gandhi and Chandrashekhar who caved in to Muslim pressure and stalled the reclamation of the Ayodhya temple.
- c. The only way to herald 'Ram Rajya' was to vote for the BJP.

6. **The VHP Rally in New Delhi-** The VHP rally in New Delhi on 4 April 1991 was a massive demonstration to revive the Ram Janmabhoomi issue to complement the poll strategies. Religious and political heads included the Shankaracharyas (Heads of Religious Groups) and the Chief Ministers of Madhya Pradesh, Haryana and Rajasthan. Over 300,000 people including 10,000 religious heads attended of which 8,000 had toured the length and breadth of the country to mobilize BJP support¹⁹. It was claimed as the biggest upsurge in post Independent India²⁰. The rally was named as the **Saffron Revolution** by India Today. VHP workers had urged the people through posters and word of mouth to come and witness the rally.

Another successful public relations exercise was the distribution of food packets. Empty packets were distributed to households all over Delhi and the people were urged to fill the packets with food for the 'Ram Bhakts' (Devotees of Ram). About two million food packets were distributed to people gathered at the rally.

7. **The Jan Jagran-Campaign** - The all India 'Jan Jagran' (Awakening of the masses) campaign was launched by four BJP leaders simultaneously from the north, south, east and west of India. It started on 24 March 1991 and culminated in Delhi on April 1991. Advani began the campaign from West Bengal's Bijoygarh Maidan, the same spot from where the late founder president of the BJS, Dr.S.P.Mukerjee, had started the first Lok Sabha election campaign. Murli Manohar Joshi, started off from Kanya Kumari in the south, Sikander Bhakt from Dwaraka (Gujarat) in the west, and Suraj Bhan from Jammu and Kashmir in the north.

¹⁹ 'The Show of Strength', The Week, Kottayam, 14 April, 1991 and 'Flexing its Muscles', India Today, 30 April, 1991.

²⁰ 'The Saffron Revolution' India Today, 30 April, 1991. Saffron is the colour for the Hindus. Religious heads, holy men and women often wear saffron robes.

These mass mobilization programmes had a tremendous impact on the Hindus. The Ram Janmabhoomi issue had become a political and cultural issue. The campaigns had succeeded in uniting, even if for a short while, a deeply fragmented Hindu society. The need for Hindu unity was made even stronger by comparison with other religions. It was reported that - 'If in the name of religion the Muslims can unite, the Sikhs can unite then why not the Hindus'²¹. Significant support was gained from the women whose voting patterns had changed from earlier elections. Despite diversities in the name of Hinduism, Hindu unity and Nationalism, the 'Ram' banner had managed to unite the women in its name. The female members of the electorate were visibly affected by the Ram to the advantage of BJP. It was reported from UP and Bihar that women had decided to vote for the 'Ram Party' in the wake of the religious mobilisation. Women were exerting a separate electoral identity and judgement, different from their husbands' and families who had earlier not only influenced their electoral judgement but dictated it. 'Jahan pati wahan' (Where the husband says, only there) was replaced by 'Jahan Ram wahan' (Where there is Ram, only there)²².

During the 1991 elections, The BJP made an outright attempt to ride on Hindu militancy sweeping the country and the religious fervour that was built over the Ram janmabhoomi issue. The election was to be a referendum on the objectives of secularism.

THE 1991 ELECTION CAMPAIGN

The 1991 campaign was aimed at giving a national character to the party and hence position itself as a party addressing itself to national rather than communal issues. The party used the services of R.K.Swamy/BBDO Advertising Pvt.Ltd. for its press campaign, the video cassettes were made by Jain Studios and other agencies were involved in the printing of campaign material.

²¹ 'Rama Rides Again', The Week, Kottayam, 14 May, 1991.

²² The Hindustan Times, New Delhi, 21 May, 1991

The objectives of the campaign were to exemplify the concepts of RAM, ROTI and INSAAF (discussed later), which the party was determined to implement in the country. Through the goals, they had set for themselves, the party tried to bring about 'Ram Rajya', defined as an ideal rule where there was freedom from fear, hunger and injustice'²³. It was also echoed to Mahatma Gandhi's dream of bringing about Ram Rajya after the expulsion of the British. It was argued that Gandhi's concept of Ram Rajya was not based on religion, but a state in which the people lived a life of self-reliance, truth and justice.

The Slogan created by the BJP was,

Lets go for Ram Rajya

Lets go with the BJP

Apart from the main objective to destabilize the Cong.I in its attempt for acquiring national status, the other issues included; scrapping Article 370 of the constitution which accords Jammu and Kashmir a different status compared to other states in the country, to focus on the separatist movements in Assam, Punjab, and Kashmir and reiterate their policy on Ayodhya. The Ayodhya issue was regarded as a symbol of their struggle to restore the rich cultural heritage of India.

RAM- The concept of 'Ram' was now being defined as 'Freedom from fear' and a symbol of integration without the barriers of caste, class or religion. It was projected as a means of liberating the country from the acute law and order situation, terrorism and communal riots. Ram was being projected as 'Maryada Purshotamm' (Ideal man) who had believed in one man, one wife, one culture.

ROTI- (Bread) Roti was being defined as 'Freedom from want'. This related to the economic aspect. Political instability had resulted in economic instability witnessed in rising prices, inflation and increasing unemployment.

INSAAF- (Justice) Insaaf was defined as 'Freedom from discrimination, despair and frustration, to focus BJP as a secular party.

²³ 'The Week', Kottayam, Kerala 14 April, 1991.

Further the campaign was aimed to build up the leadership qualities and dedicated team of workers and leaders like Atal Behari Vajpayee, L.K.Advani, Dr.Murli Manohar Joshi and Vijaya Raje Scindia and to motivate people to give BJP a chance to rule. It was argued that just as other parties were voted to power and had failed, the BJP too should be given a chance to rule. After the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi, BJP claimed that it was the only national party that could provide stability.

VHP supported the cause of Hindu unity and the construction of the temple at Ayodhya. Their advertisements also aimed at arousing the Hindus to unite and vote for the BJP. Apart from the national campaign, different strategies were adopted in states to give importance to the local issues of those areas²⁴.

After the assassination, the fear of the nation wide 'sympathy wave' that would swing the voters to Cong.I as in 1984 after the assassination led most parties to review their electoral strategies. The BJP, after a two day national meeting of leaders in Delhi, called for a rejection of the cult of bullets and Advani urged the party workers to go with a 'killer instinct', contending that political circumstances favoured the BJP²⁵.

The campaign was relaunched through press advertisements, posters and a video film as well as election meetings to counteract the expected sympathy wave. In AP, the campaign stressed the 'Congress Goondaism' (Cong.I vandalism) in conjunction with the other political parties whose properties and election material were destroyed.

²⁴ In New Delhi, stress was laid on problems like the ration card system, electricity, water, transport, security and law and order. In Punjab (Where the elections was postponed on grounds of acute law and order situations), emphasis was placed on bringing back peace and normalcy and arrest those involved in the riots, and in Assam the problems of infiltration and of the universities were taken up with measures identified for the same.

²⁵ The Hindu, Madras, 26 May, 1991.

THE PRESS CAMPAIGN

The press campaign was directed at the literate and influential masses.

A seven advertisement press campaign was planned:

1. The first three advertisements focused on main election themes of RAM, ROTI AND INSAAF.
2. The next three advertisements attacked Cong.I and other parties on charges of instability, corruption and the alleged unhealthy alliances and coalitions.
3. The final advertisement reinforced the party's ideals, its policies and promises to bring in 'Ram Rajya'.

THE PRESS ADVERTISEMENTS

The opening advertisement 'Enough is Enough' reviewed the level of tolerance caused by malfunctioning of successive governments for over forty years, and the need to bring about change through the headline, Enough is Enough, 'You have tried the rest and paid the price'

An unusually long educative copy reflected upon specific issues to project BJP in comparison with Cong.I and NF. While the Cong.I was charged with policy irregularities, dynastic rule, corruption and rise in separatist movements in some states, the NF was said to have left the country in peril. The BJP should now be given a chance to rule.

The second advertisement 'Freedom from fear' focused on one of the major themes of the campaign through the headline. 'Freedom is indivisible, if we want to enjoy it, we must extend it to every one whether they are rich or poor whether they agree with us or not, no matter what their religion or belief'- L.K.Advani. The advertisement exemplified such policies and characteristics of BJP as integrity, mature leadership and dedicated cadres to provide stability in the country.

The third advertisement focused on the concept of 'Freedom from want' through the headline, 'The true quality of a nation's

freedom is the quality of life of its people' - Dr.Murli Manohar Joshi (BJP president).

This quote focused on the need to uplift the economic conditions of the people, at least to meet the basic necessities of food, clothing and shelter. BJP stressed its strategies to bring in a new economic and political culture to create a democratic economy.

The following three advertisements attacked the Cong.I.

'Unstable policies, unstable parties , unstable governments...

Can we tolerate this growing threat to national stability ?

'Instability, Thy name is Congress'.

The fourth advertisement as in the above headline exemplified the inconsistencies of Cong.I rule which was characterised more by instability than stability. Among instances cited were, the frequent changing of chief ministers in states of AP and Karnataka and also the withdrawal of support to the Chandrashekhara ministry on flimsy grounds. It urged people to give BJP a chance to bring about a stable polity, a stable government and a stable nation.

The fifth advertisement focused on the charges of corruption against the Cong.I.

Bofors, HDW, Dynasty and Nepotism

'Can we allow the dishonest leaders to loot us any longer ?

'Betrayal thy name is Congress'

The advertisement accused Cong.I of corruption and dynastic rule, during which the power and prestige of the great institutions like parliament, the army and judiciary were repeatedly eroded and the press was threatened.

The sixth advertisement focused on the coalitions of parties.

Cong (I) +Muslim league+AIADMK+Janata Dal (G) +Kerala Congress+RPI.....

Janata Dal+TDP+DMK+AGP+CPI+CPI (M) +Shahabuddin.....

Can we trust Opportunistic coalitions any longer?

Opportunism thy name is Congress

The advertisement referred to the failure of coalitions and alliances of the Cong.I and JD to remain in power. Though BJP was part of such alliances and coalitions in the past, it now projected itself as a party without alliances or coalitions to provide a one party stable government.

The last advertisement appealed to the people to vote for BJP to bring in Ram Rajya in anticipation of a good life which had always eluded them by the repeated failures of earlier governments through the headline.

Ram Rajya is your birthright

Ram Rajya is within reach.

THE MEDIA STRATEGY

Though the party contested 459 seats all over the country, the campaign was concentrated in northern and western India, especially in the states of UP, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan and Gujarat. Advertising in the southern states of AP, Karnataka, Kerala and TN was comparatively less. At the regional level, advertisements were released by the state and local units focusing on local issues and candidates.

The media strategy was planned to reach the electorate through the English and vernacular newspapers. The advertisements were scheduled from 2-18 May 1991 in the first phase of the polling. After the assassination, four advertisements were released from the 8-12 June 1991. About thirty to forty national and regional dailies were selected. An 'alternate schedule' ensured that an advertisement appeared every other day in the newspapers during the campaign. The last advertisement was released extensively all over the country in all the selected publications. 'India Today' was the only magazine used by the BJP. Their strategy was to take double and centre spreads in each of the issues during the campaign period.

HOARDINGS AND POSTERS

Hoardings, posters, leaflets and stickers were extensively used by BJP. The hoardings, in first person, urged the people to make a determined decision to vote and vote for the BJP for the restoration of the cultural identity. For Example:

- a. 'I won't let them destroy my culture,
I will vote. I'll vote BJP'
- b. I'm a Nationalist. I will vote BJP'
- c. 'This time the BJP'

POSTERS

Four different types of posters were designed at the national level, but many states printed their own posters. Posters compared BJP with the other political parties especially the Cong.I on the basis of pseudo secularism, stability and the need to liberate the country from the Cong.I culture. Some of the poster captions were,

- a.Liberate India from the clutches of the Congress Culture- of nepotism, corruption, dynastic rule and defections
- b. Let the elections be a choice between Nationalism and Pseudo secularism.

The comparative copy divided into equal parts enumerated the six main issues of BJPs electoral strategy as opposed to that of the Congress²⁶.

- c.'Stability is not one family rule'²⁷

²⁶ The issues were 1. Repealing of Article 370, 2. Change in the reservation policy to remove the concept of reservation based on religion, 3.Setting up of a Human Rights Commission instead of the Minorities Commission, 4. The formation of a uniform civil code as against the personal laws, 5. Development of an efficient police force, and 6. The promise to build the temple at Ram Janmabhoomi unlike the pseudo secular campaign of Cong.I to deny the temple at the site.

²⁷ The instability of the Congress was substantiated by six main points.

- 1.Support of the 54 MP government and toppling ministries.
- 2.Frequent change of chief ministers in various states.
- 3.Shuffling portfolios.
- 4.Immature leadership of Rajiv Gandhi.

THE AUDIO CASSETTES

Audio cassettes comprising of songs, bhajans (devotional songs) and speeches of religious and political leaders were extensively used. Political songs highlighted the policies of the party, attacked Cong.I, projected the images of leaders and popularized the symbol. The recorded speeches of religious leaders like Sadhvi Rithambara were most popular.

VIDEO CASSETTES

BJP released three election video cassettes during the first phase of the election campaign and one after the assassination. The video films, in several parts highlighted the policies and programmes, personalities of leaders and popularised the symbol of the 'lotus'. Religious references were extensively used to popularize leaders and the symbol. Advani was projected as the prime ministerial candidate riding atop his famous chariot or van with a Sudarshan Chakra (weapon of Lord Rama) in his hand. He was shown visiting various places of pilgrimage and performing religious ceremonies. The songs accompanying the visuals glorified Advani as a true nationalist, who would unite India and bring peace. People could look forward to a nation where there would be equality without discrimination on basis of caste, religion or class.

While the audio cassettes played throughout the day from the campaign booths and from the houses of party workers, the video cassettes were being extensively shown in every village and town of the country. A fleet of 191 vans from Jain studios in New Delhi (Also see chapter VI) were used to spread the BJP message. Dr.J.K.Jain of Jain Studios who pioneered the video revolution in electioneering in India is a BJP supporter and was responsible for making the BJP video films.

5.Soft policies encouraging separatist movements in Punjab and Kashmir.

6.Taking support from those people who were discarded by other parties.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Unlike Cong.I whose main campaigner was Rajiv Gandhi, BJP had at least four major leaders; L.K. Advani, Dr.Murali Manohar Joshi, Atal Behari Vajpayee and Vijaya Raje Scindia. Apart from leaders, the party also had the support of the religious leaders who held well attended public rallies. It was the first time in any Indian general election campaign that religious heads had openly supported and actively campaigned for BJP during the elections.

A particularly popular campaigner was Sadhavi Rithambara, a fiery orator who travelled all over the country seeking Hindu solidarity and mobilizing them to unite and work towards the construction of the temple at Ayodhya. The party also held election rallies and processions with some TV and film stars. In Gujarat, a young six year old boy, Kranti Hindwani campaigned by reciting couplets from Indian epics and poems of Vajpayee. Deepika, the TV personality playing the role of 'Sita' in the popular TV serial 'Ramayana' actively campaigned in the Baroda constituency and won her election.

CONVENTIONAL FORMS OF MEDIA USED

Several well organised street plays, dramas, music programmes, street corner meetings, walkabouts, dharna sammelans (protest meetings) projected the party policies.

Street Plays - Street plays organized by the local party workers projected the BJP strategies while ridiculing Cong.I and its issues.

Musical Programmes - In some states especially in Gujarat, music programmes were organized by the BJP with singers and music directors from the film world to propagate the policies of BJP.

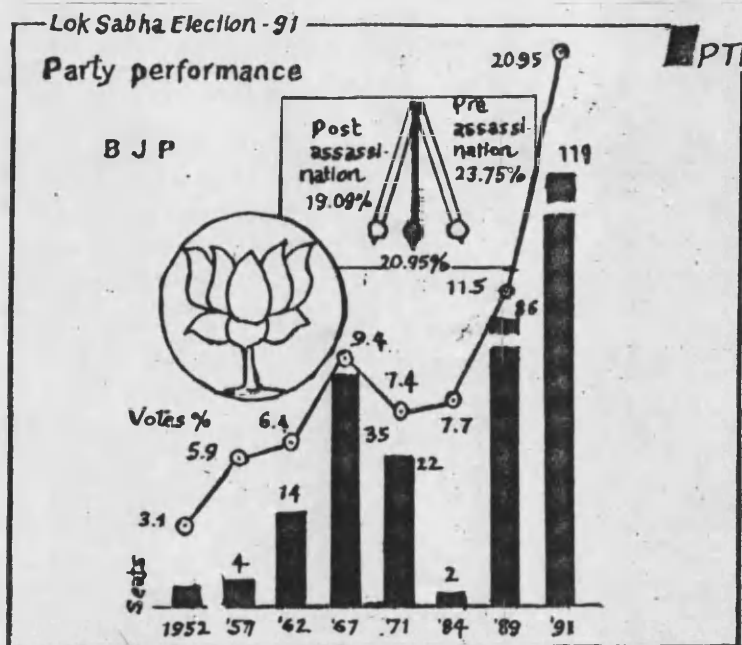
Dharna Sammelans - Dharna Sammelans were organized especially in AP, to protest against Cong.I workers who had allegedly gone on a rampage destroying BJP properties and election material and also physically assaulting party workers.

Other Promotional strategies - Stickers, caps, badges, photographs of Lord Rama, key chains, T-shirts and flags were distributed to remind the people to vote for the BJP.

POLL ANALYSIS

BJP was the biggest gainer with 119 seats in the elections and a vote share of 20.95%, 9.4 percentage points more than the 1989 elections and 33 more seats (Fig III.2). BJP not only emerged as the second largest party after Cong.I but also gained a majority in assembly elections in UP, the largest and politically pivotal Indian state. Though the main gains came from the northern states, it made inroads into the southern states. In AP, though the party contested 41 seats, it won only one, but its vote share increased from 1.97% to 9.64%. In Karnataka its vote share increased from 2.55% to 28.07% and in West Bengal it increased from 1.67% to 11.67%.

FIGURE. III.2 BJP: PARTY PERFORMANCE (1952-1991)



Source: Kumar, The Tenth Round: (1991) The Story of Indian Elections, PTI.

SUMMARY

1991 and AFTER

The BJP during the 1991 elections had made every effort to assume national status. Drifting away from alliances and coalitions, it aimed to establish its own political identity and emerge as a national alternative to the Cong.I. It had gained vast support through the religio - political movements. The party contested 459 of the 521 seats that went to the polls.

The campaign was well organised with the support of VHP and RSS. The 'Hindutva' campaign with several mass mobilization techniques helped the party to gain large support. Later in the run up to the elections, it claimed to be secular rather than communal. The advertising campaign through national and regional newspapers attacked Cong.I. and projected the party ideology, organization and its policies.

The 'Hindutva' campaign consolidated a large following among the rural and conservative segments besides women. It also converted some hitherto staunch Cong.I supporters. Second, the organizational and ideological superiority of BJP had brought in support from the more secular, educated and influential strata such as the bureaucrats, army generals and industrialists.

In 1991, the party not only doubled its vote share from 11.49% in 1989 to 20.95%, but also made inroads in to the southern states. Though it did not win many seats, it increased its vote share. The popularity of BJP was claimed as the 'Saffron ^{urge} ~~seize~~' (Kumar, 1991). Within two years, this success took a plunge after the demolition of the Babri-Masjid in Ayodhya on 6 December, 1992. This demolition led to communal riots all over India, and also in parts of England and Canada, during which temples and mosques were destroyed. BJP and VHP leaders including Advani were arrested. The Cong.I government in New Delhi immediately dissolved the governments in four BJP governed states, UP, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh (HP). A year later in the assembly elections held in these states, BJP

lost the majority in Madhya Pradesh, HP, UP and Rajasthan despite an aggressive campaign referring to the demolition as the 'largest national movement' in history. Columnist Inderjit Badhwar called it a 'Saffron Setback',²⁸. Not only ~~were~~^{was} the electorate moved away from extremism but the performance of Cong.I government had strengthened its political base at the centre. Therefore with the new developments, the electoral fortunes of BJP resting on narrow ideological concepts of 'Hindutva' could rise only if there was again a breakdown in the face of a government's poor performance and rampant corruption.

²⁸ He believes that certain common factors could be responsible for this change. In the rural areas particularly, there was a noticeable swing away from extremism on account of three elements: a late dawning but increasing common sense perception that Ram should not be exploited for political purposes, a gradual fear that the violence that rocked Bombay was counterproductive to economic betterment and jobs; and fear that communal rioting ultimately strengthens what the villages despise most: the local police force. India Today, 15 December, 1993.

SECTION III

STUDY OF THE JANATA DAL /NATIONAL FRONT ELECTION CAMPAIGN

THE NATIONAL FRONT - A MAJOR POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

The NF was formed when V.P.Singh, a senior leader and upright Finance Minister in the Rajiv Gandhi cabinet, resigned from the cabinet and started a crusade against Rajiv Gandhi and Cong.I. In the run up to the 1989 elections, V.P.Singh united the opposition parties in a systematic manner²⁹. It was for the second time that the opposition parties united against Cong.I.

The election scene in 1989 was more favourable to the combined opposition than to Cong.I, as corruption charges in the 'Bofors Gun Deal' had acquired widespread publicity through leading newspapers and periodicals³⁰. Compared to a large scale multimedia advertising campaign by Cong.I, financial constraints restricted the JD/NF campaign. It concentrated on an intensive poster campaign along with mass rallies, public meetings and election tours of the party leaders. Election publicity and campaign slogans attacked Cong.I and Rajiv Gandhi. Though the opposition parties had no newspaper campaign, they gained

²⁹ At first, the Janata Party, Lok Dal(A), Lok Dal(B) and others joined to form the Lok Dal. It was obviously felt that the Congress foothold could be removed only if the Non-Congress (generally referred to as 'Opposition parties' as the Congress has been the ruling party winning eight of the ten LS elections) came together. The next step was the formation of the National Front against the Congress. Parties like the CPI, CPI(M), Congress(S), regional parties like the Telugu Desam, DMK, AGP and other small parties agreed to come together on a common platform to defeat the Congress. Finally, the NF came to an agreement with the BJP on sharing of seats. The aim was to ensure that every constituency had only one opposition candidate facing the Congress. This adjustment of seats was total in some states like Rajasthan and Gujarat, partial in states of Madhya Pradesh and Orissa but in Maharashtra and UP there was virtually no adjustment.

³⁰ The Hindu, Madras. A popular daily published investigative reports on the Bofors Gun Deals which became the main election issue in 1989.

publicity, through a parody on the Cong.I campaign by Indian Express³¹. It led to a historic win in the 1989 LS elections. Singh was sworn in as the Prime Minister on 2 December, 1989 leading the JD with 143 parliamentary seats. People supported him in the hope of change and reform.

However, within eleven months the country suffered several political and cultural uprisings. The MCR on job reservation for the BCs led to widespread student agitation. In the northern states including New Delhi, students took extreme steps of self immolation and suicide. About 159 attempted suicide and 63 died in protest against the implementation of the report³².

Eventually, with the BJP withdrawing support, the government was forced to resign. The party split when the Deputy Prime Minister, Devi Lal and the leader of the Lok Dal,

Chandrasekhar gathered enough support to cross the anti-defection³³ barrier and formed the Janata Dal (Socialist). Later it was named Samajwadi Janata Party (SJP). V.P.Singh stepped down as the Prime Minister on 9 November, 1990. At a critical stage, Chandrasekhar, leader of the newly formed JD(S) was sworn in as the Prime Minister, with the outside support of the Cong.I.

The failure of the combined opposition government for the second time, left the voters betrayed by the system and again the Cong.I had scored a margin and let people believe that, coalition governments made up of parties with diverse ideologies and

³¹ Indian Express is one of the largest circulated newspapers of the country with 16 editions. During the election, it published rejoinders to the Cong.I advertisements.

³² Pyres of Protest, India Today 31 October, 1990.

³³ The Anti Defection Bill was passed in 1987 to prevent elected representatives from frequently changing parties. By this enactment, only if one third or more representatives of a party walk out can they form another party.

programmes were unable to cooperate and work towards common economic and social reforms.

In 1991, the NF tried to resurrect its position, this time with a strategy directed at a coalition of the poor, the backward and the minorities. The process undoubtedly consolidated Muslims and BCs, but the party lost support from the middle classes³⁴. The party could win only 53 seats, a poor third after Cong.I and BJP. We evaluate the electoral strategies of JD/NF and the changes that had taken place in the different segments of the electorate, especially among the Muslims, BCs and middle class voters.

THE 1991 ELECTIONS : A MOVE TOWARDS SOCIAL EQUITY

In 1991, JD's policy was to eradicate social injustices and economic disparities in the system of governance. The aim was to fight against the caste system, the root cause of divisiveness and instability in the country. V.P.Singh saw this as an excellent opportunity to mobilize the traditional vote banks with the message of social justice. JD traced its ideology to Mahatma Gandhi's campaign against untouchability. According to a senior party leader Jaipal Reddy, 'When Mahatma Gandhi tried to improve the lot of the untouchables, some orthodox elements objected that

³⁴ In strict sociological terms, it is difficult to define the Indian middle class. Unlike in the West, where the hierarchical status in the society is determined by wealth and income, in India the lower income but upper caste origins qualify for the place in the middle class. Also the neo-rich among the middle class in the rural and semi-urban areas qualify the status of the middle class. Then there is a very large segment drawn from the scheduled and other backward castes who have entered the white collared market. In the Indian context they too describe themselves as middle class because they are not engaged in manual labour. According to a study conducted by the Bombay Chambers of Commerce, some 125 to 150 million of the country's population represents one of the largest middle class consumer market. This means that there are over 25 million middle class families and 50 million voters. There has been a 90% increase in the average urban family incomes in India from 1983-88 and this has been a result of the increase in income per member as the women joining the work force has increased.

it would upset social equilibrium and generate tensions. But what Gandhiji was trying to do was to purge out society of its inherited ills,³⁵ .

Therefore the main objective of the campaign was to create greater awareness to bring about social equity. As expressed by Singh in an interview with The Week magazine, 'It is not Mandal alone, this time the issue is clearly and definitely equity - political equity, social equity, economic equity, decentralization of powers, federal structure, labour participation in the management, fair prices for the farmers and resources to the rural sectors'³⁶ .

The other objectives outlined by the party were to gain broad based support by including women, mobilize Muslims along with the other minorities, attack other parties as communal and opportunistic, popularize special programmes for youth, women, children, minorities and the economically backward sections and implement schemes to improve the lives of farmers, artisans and the landless labour³⁷ .

According to the party manifesto, there was a need for a fresh mandate to complete the tasks that remained unfulfilled as a result of the NF government having had to go out of office while defending and upholding the principles of secularism and social justice.' In 1991, V.P.Singh literally turned into a messiah of the marginalised masses. He went on a Bharat Yatra (all India tour) in an attempt to propagate his plans for the implementation of the MCR.

With the commitment to the BCs, the party formulated a system of reservation in the selection of candidates as a conscious

³⁵ Interview with Jaipal Reddy, Spokesperson, Janata Dal, New Delhi on 19 April, 1991

³⁶ The Week, Kottayam April 2, 1992.

³⁷ National Front Election Manifesto, 1991.

attempt to bring about basic changes in the social composition in parliament. For the first time in history, about 60% of the party tickets were given to BCs. This reservation was defined in terms of the composition of the population. 60% of the seats were to be reserved for the 85% of the population including the backward and rural classes and 40% seats to the 15% forward caste population. Singh widened his base by inclusion of women in the Mandal bracket and promised 5% reservation for the poor and economically backward among the upper castes.

As the dominant party, JD contested 309 seats, its partners another 220 seats. In 1989, Singh, united the opposition parties together to form the NF. In 1991 again JD forged an alliance with the Left party governments in Kerala and West Bengal and other regional parties to prove their viability and stability of coalition politics.

The pre-election profile for the JD/NF was discouraging. Singh's popularity had declined; the low ratings in opinion polls revealed that the party had lost ground and some polls also suggested that the JD would be routed³⁸. The number of seats forecast by the pollsters for NF-Left ranged from 78-115. Psephologist Dr. Bhalla predicted JD's results to be disastrous and the party not getting more than 30-40 seats³⁹. JD leaders reacted sharply to these results. Jaipal Reddy questioned MARG's motives. He called pollsters as tricksters and drew parallels between psephology and astrology. Poll surveys, he claimed were heavily loaded in favour of the urban upper classes. George Fernandes, another leader, threatened to sue the pollsters and take action against newspapers that published biased versions of election results⁴⁰.

³⁸ MRAS-Burke Survey predicted a complete collapse of JD. Sunday, Calcutta, 11 May, 1991.

³⁹ The Hindu-MARG Opinion poll, The Hindu, Madras, 19 May, 1991.

⁴⁰ Deccan Chronicle Hyderabad, 6 June, 1991.

The Publicity Committee was headed by Rajmohan Gandhi, a noted journalist and grandson of Mahatma Gandhi. In 1989 he contested against Rajiv Gandhi from Amethi. The party did not have a high budget multi-media campaign unlike the Cong.I or the BJP. Party spokesperson Jaipal Reddy dismissed the need for any mass media advertising campaign as the target groups were the rural and semi urban segments, the campaign concentrated on interpersonal forms like rallies, public meetings and door-to-door canvassing. For the urban and literate masses the party brought out brochures on such issues as women, MCR and Ram Janmabhoomi⁴¹.

THE STRATEGY AFTER THE ASSASSINATION

After the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi, the NF-Left alliance tried to present itself as the only party that could provide the needed stability in the country. Jaipal Reddy argued that by destabilising the Chandrashekhar government, Cong.I had deprived itself of the stability plank. With the set objectives, the party leaders were on a campaign trail using various techniques for mobilising support and cultivating vote banks. Public meetings were the most important means of communicating.

PARTY ORGANISATION

Unlike Cong.I and BJP, NF did not have any grassroots organisation, and hence the strategy was to make use of the Left and other regional parties to garner votes. Even after V.P.Singh became the Prime Minister, limited time prevented efforts to build the party's organisational structure. During the elections, the party worked through ad-hoc bodies, with the result that in many constituencies, the party had no district or block level committees.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

The campaign concentrated on public meeting that were held by Singh and other leaders. In 1989, Singh's election meetings had drawn large crowds and support wherever he went. Large numbers

⁴¹ Interview with Jaipal Reddy, Spokesperson, JD. 19 April, 1991.

from the middle and upper classes, elites, women and others gathered to cheer and support him. In the 1991 election, there was a change in the image of the party leader. In 1991 V.P.Singh's popularity had disappeared. He was sometimes greeted with great fervour and sometimes with abuse. In one of his election meetings at Navsarai in Gujarat a prominent portrait of his had a garland of slippers and he was greeted with slogans of 'V.P.Singh wapas jao' (Go back V.P. Singh). In his Fatehpur constituency, the campaign was dull and the people listened to him passively. It was reported that the enthusiastic, shouting and jostling crowds of media persons and workers who ran amuck chasing his motorcade of cars were no more present⁴².

MOBILIZATION OF VOTE BANKS

In 1991, India was divided into heterogenous sections of vote banks such as Hindu (Further classified) ^e votes, Muslim votes, Women votes and Harijan votes. JD's objective of social justice and equity extended to Muslims and Harijan who formed the lower strata of the society to make inroads in the otherwise Cong.I monopoly over the Muslim and Harijan votes. The policy of reservation had helped the party to consolidate, to some extent, the vote banks of the Backward castes, Harijans and Muslims, but lost the support of the middle classes.

THE JANATA DAL AND THE MUSLIM VOTE BANK

Indian Muslims comprise 11.3% of the population and the proportion of Muslim votes is large enough to critically alter the results in slightly less than half the Parliamentary constituencies⁴³. Therefore winning support of 'Muslim Vote Banks' was imperative to ensure substantive wins in the elections. Since Independence, Muslims had supported Cong.I as a secular party and enjoyed the privileges as a minority community. Since 1989, with the proposal for the implementation

⁴² The Hindustan Times, New Delhi. 8 May, 1991

⁴³ The Observer of Business and Politics, Bombay 12 May, 1991.

of the MCR and the BJP instigating the Hindus, communal riots had led to cleavages in the support groups.

During the election, NF sought support of the Muslims. After a series of discussions and negotiations between the JD leaders headed by V.P.Singh, and Muslim participants, the JD leaders agreed to provide several concessions to the Muslims, including enough representation to the minorities especially Muslims in all the advisory boards relating to unemployment and financial institutions, non interference with the Muslim personal law (Shariat), implementation of the Gujral Committee recommendations linking Urdu with job opportunities, establish minority financial corporations and preserve the minority run institutions.

After an appraisal of the list of candidates, the influential Imam, Syed Abdullah Bukhari of Delhi's Jama Masjid issued a five page 'Fatwa' (Appeal/Declaration) to the Muslims to support the JD. Through the Fatwa⁴⁴, the Imam appealed to all the Muslims to vote for the JD candidates in all constituencies and in their absence support the Left or JD's friendly alliance parties. Along with the support of Imam Bukhari, other Muslim organisations like the Islamic Council of India, consisting of religious leaders and ulemas (priests) and the Quami Mushwarat Committee, a largely politically active group also committed their support. There were mixed responses to the 'Fatwa'. Singh was highly criticised for yielding to the demands and meek submission to the Muslim

⁴⁴ In the Fatwa, the Imam criticised the 40 years of Congress rule for not catering to the needs of the minorities and hailed the sincere efforts made by the V.P.Singh government. He further exemplified that the NF government had worked for the betterment of the suffering, including Muslims. It had provided a sense of security to the minorities, showed respect for them by preserving the mosques, increased the compensation to the victims of communal riots, declared the Prophet's birthday as a national holiday and lastly V.P.Singh had sacrificed his government for secular values.

leaders. Hindustan Times, a popular newspaper called it as the 'Crowning Tragedy of V.P.Singh' ⁴⁵.

However, the trend of support was evidently seen in a poll survey conducted a week prior to the elections by ORG for the Indian Express group of newspapers⁴⁶. It revealed that Muslims felt betrayed by Cong.I which had obtained 45% of the Muslim vote in the 1989 general elections and the party had not improved its image amongst them. Though a high rate of unemployment, communalism and high cost of living were rated as the major national problems for Muslim voters, the main election issue, as stated by 59% of the respondents was Mandir - Masjid. 43% voted stability, 36% were for social justice and 23% stated corruption. The strategy of social equity and justice marked a shift in the support by the Harijans and the backward communities for the JD and the alliance parties.

THE HARIJAN VOTE BANK

For the first time in 1991 the Cong.I hold over the Harijan (Earlier referred to as the untouchables ~~Harijans~~ ^{and} ~~from~~ the lowest strata of the Indian caste system, and ~~are~~ now being referred to as Dalits) vote bank was broken. These poor and downtrodden constitute a significant vote bank. Over the years Harijans had supported Congress. In 1977 (the elections after the 'Emergency period of 1975-76), and even in 1989, Harijans voted the Congress. But since then disenchantment had set in and JD emerged as a strong contender with the strategy for the

⁴⁵ Crowning Tragedy of V.P.Singh, The Observer of Business and Politics 3 May, 1991. It noted, 'This pathetic submission to the Imam over the question of his very doubtful support will go down as the crowning tragedy of V.P.Singh's political career. This easy compromise with obscurantism and opportunism from within the Muslim community lays bare the hollowness of his concern for their good.'

⁴⁶ The poll was conducted on 3011 respondents by 12 research executives and 36 interviewers. It analyzed the Voting Perceptions of Muslims in 10 districts of UP, Bihar, Rajasthan, Haryana and New Delhi between 11-15 May, 1991.

upliftment of the BCs, even displacing the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), that had been the main supporter of the Backward and the Harijan communities. Kanshi Ram, leader of the BSP called JD its 'biggest enemy' in trying 'to divide and mislead the poor and the downtrodden through hollow slogans of restructuring society'. At a political rally at the Boat Club in New Delhi, Kanshi Ram reiterated the need for social change and economic emancipation as the only way to improve the backward communities and undertook a 100 day cross-country mass awareness drive on the 'movement for social change and economic emancipation'⁴⁷. However, the JD's message of reservation and social equity was far reaching.

JD leaders were convinced that they had the most powerful message for the country. They brought out statistics to confirm their unbeatable combination by making a pitch for the SCs, BCs, STs, the minorities and the economically weaker sections.

However, during the elections, except in Bihar, the JD/NF were unable to get any significant votes. The numerical strength of these classes was highest in Bihar, comprising of nearly 40% of the population. The popularity of the Chief Minister Laloo Prasad Yadav had overpowered all other groups during the elections, resulting in JD securing the maximum seats in Bihar but was nearly routed in all other states.

THE MIDDLE CLASS VOTE BANK

A reverse trend in the support for JD was seen by the middle classes during the 1991 elections. In 1989, a very large segment of the middle class ~~were~~^{was} convinced that V.P. Singh represented the true and capable non dynastic alternative to Rajiv Gandhi and the Cong.I to integrate diverse opposition forces. But in 1991 they had retracted their support. According to political commentators and opinion polls, a section of the middle-class had moved closer to the BJP, while a smaller segment had come back # to the Cong.I.

⁴⁷The Statesman, Calcutta, 8 May, 1991.

The middle classes grew after Indira Gandhi returned to power in 1980. She had initiated the process of liberalisation later taken up by Rajiv Gandhi. The Cong.I addressed its manifesto to this class with policies of liberalisation and privatisation. It was assumed that a section this class would prefer 'Stability'. Hence, it was not far off the block when a section of the middle class had come back into the Congress fold to protect its position economically.

A section of the middle class, with roots in the traditional Brahmanical mode of life, had always been conservative in their attitudes. Being anti Cong.I this class was opposed to Mahatma Gandhi, Nehru and later Rajiv Gandhi. With the overall economic expansion and general growth of the middle class, the BJP had been able to root itself more firmly in this section and it was not surprising that the opinion polls of this section were showing a swing in favour of the BJP.

The third category is of the neo-rich OBCs in the rural areas, particularly in the north. While the middle-caste middle class had identified their aspirations with V.P.Singh, it was not clear whether they would vote as one block. Therefore the middle class vote was split in three ways.

Going by the size of the middle classes and its larger influence over the socio political attitudes in the society, it came to play a decisive role in the political system. To win back the middle and the upper classes who were otherwise alienated, Singh included the economic backwardness into the framework of the equity issue. By setting the national agenda on the issue of equality and sheer numbers, they believed that the force of the issue could not be ignored. V.P.Singh referred to the Mandal as a historical process which could not be stopped and the process of integrating and uniting had to continue⁴⁸.

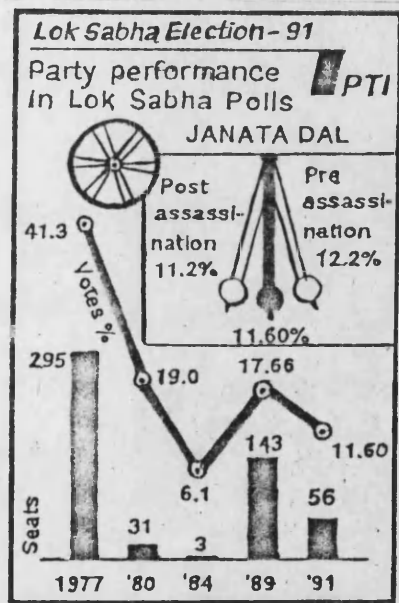
Bpo

⁴⁸ Newstime, Hyderabad, 15 May, 1991.

THE POLL ANALYSIS

The strength of JD slid from 143 in 1989 to 56 in 1991. With its pledge for reservations it polled 23.6 million, or 8.78% of the votes. There was a drop of 6.06 percentage points, (From 17.66% in 1989 to 11.6% in 1991) in the party's popularity which nosedived in 13 states and four union territories, but gained in five states. Two thirds of the seats won were from the states of Bihar (28), UP(22) and Orissa(6). In Bihar, the Chief Minister Laloo Prasad Yadav and V.P.Singh counted 15 more seats with the allies. The fragmentation of the JD in 1991 helped the BJP to occupy the centre stage of opposition politics in 1991⁴⁹.

FIGURE III.3 JD/NF PARTY PERFORMANCE (1977-1991)



Source: Arun Kumar (1991), The tenths Round-The Story of Indian Elections. PTI

⁴⁹ Financial Express, Bombay, 29 December, 1991.

SUMMARY

In the 1989 elections, the NF was the frontrunner to an electoral victory and in 1991 barely eighteen months later it ended up an insignificant third. In ^{the} 1991 elections, V.P.Singh started with confidence with the Mandal issue, undeterred by the fall of ^{the} NF government. The campaigns focused on their commitment to the BCs and minorities to provide the much needed stability for the country. Many factors led to the party failing at the polls.

In 1989, the electorate irrespective of caste, religion or social structure was united in its support for non-Cong.I parties. In 1991, the electorate was categorised into various vote banks from which JD gained from the Muslims and the BCs, but with the middle classes there was a reverse trend. Though the message was powerful, it was not able to regain power.

Unlike the BJP and Cong.I, NF lacked the finances for a large scale campaign to spread their electoral messages. Second, it had also lost the support of the media, an important factor in public opinion.

Reviewing the election losses, JD/NF leaders were subjected to heavy criticism for the inept handling of the Mandal issue during the election. The National Executive of the party reviewed the failure and resolved to intensify their commitment for the cause of social justice. According to Jaipal Reddy, JD was determined to make up for the losses by intensifying its commitment to secularism, social justice and implementation of all the aspects of the MCR⁵⁰.

⁵⁰ Cracks in JD over Mandal, Deccan Chronicle, Hyderabad, 30 June, 1991.

SECTION IV

STUDY OF TELUGU DESAM PARTY ELECTION CAMPAIGN

The TDP for a period between 1983-89 was a major political force in AP under the leadership of film personality turned politician Nandamuri Tarakarama Rao (NTR). During the 1991 elections, TDP emerged as the major support group for the NF, with NTR as the Chairman. At the same time the party tried to regain power in the state on the alleged failure of Cong.I government. In this section we discuss the rise of NTR as *the* a major force in regional politics of AP, and the techniques used by TDP during the election campaign.

NTR AND THE REGIONAL POLITICS OF ANDHRA PRADESH:

As one of the most successful film personalities of Telugu films, NTR's popularity spanned over three decades. He had played a variety of roles; romantic, tragic and mythological, all of which had endeared him to the crowds. As a politician, he started the TDP in 1982, and in the following 1983 assembly elections was sworn in as the Chief Minister of AP. Through a well orchestrated strategy with the support of media baron Ch.Ramoji Rao of the Ushodaya Publications and the arousal of the upper caste Kamma community, he mobilized and motivated people across caste and class barriers on issues of preserving the spirit, self esteem and honour of the Telugus while accusing Cong.I on charges of muscle power, corruption and misrule.

NTR had brought in an awakening among the people. He coined a new slogan 'Samajame devalyam prajawade devudu, (Society is my temple, People my Gods) which became as great a hit as 'Garibi Hatao' of Indira Gandhi⁵¹.

NTR's popularity grew with the masses with the introduction of special schemes for the poor like the Rs.2.00 (₹0.04) per

⁵¹The Hindustan Times, New Delhi 12 May 1991

kilogram of rice, distribution of clothes for the poor and the increase in pension for the aged, which were well publicised and won him votes. During his six year rule, NTR brought in major reforms in the administration at the village and district levels.

As chief minister he promised to serve the state by taking only Re.1.00 (£.02) as a token salary, which far outweighed the huge expenses incurred by the government for building and maintaining his houses within and outside the city. During his tenure as the chief minister, several stories of his working schedules and eccentric ways were common. The populist actions reduced his credibility as the chief minister. In the 1989 elections, TDP was defeated in the state assembly, and in the parliamentary elections, their majority was reduced from 30 to only two. know-ledge

In 1991, the TDP was on a comeback trail. NTR toured the state in his Chaitanya Ratham (election caravan) urging people to support TDP and throw out the Cong.I⁵². A political drama unfolded in AP exemplifying the extent to which leaders and parties go to woo the electorate. After the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi, the state witnessed wide spread violence and destruction of properties of TDP and other parties, allegedly by the Cong.I miscreants. NTR went on an indefinite silent hunger strike to protest against the violence and demanded compensation for the affected victims. It was seen as a gimmick by the Cong.I, to counteract the sympathy that would arise for Cong.I. An editorial stated 'NTR is notorious for indulging in gimmicks and stunts. He wins not by great arguments or principles and ideology, but by his style and histrionics'⁵³.

The 1991 results clearly revealed two diverse trends in the fortunes of TDP and Cong.I. In the elections held before the

⁵² 'NTR Campaign Tour', Financial Express, Bombay, 9 May, 1991

⁵³ Deccan Chronicle, Hyderabad. 26 June, 1991.

assassination of Rajiv Gandhi, TDP and its allies of NF won 13 of the 17 seats. Its allies CPI and CPM gained one seat each achieving a success rate of 71.43%. and in the second phase, they were completely overshadowed by the Cong.I which won 20 of the 24 seats. It was claimed that the sympathy factor did the trick ⁵⁴.

THE PARTY IDEOLOGY, ISSUES AND ORGANISATION

TDP does not have any particular political ideology through which it functions, but the emphasis was mainly placed on the need 'to save the honour, self respect and esteem of the Telugus'. Even after winning the state elections in 1983, the party did not develop any clear cut policies on any issues. Anti-Congressism was the hallmark of NTR's politics⁵⁵. Though NTR brought in several changes in the administration, the changes were not systematic and the erratic schemes were not conducive to build the party on an ideological base.

During elections, the party functioned through a four tier decentralised system : the village committees, Mandals, district committees and the state executive. The network of office bearers at all these levels, elected every two years were intensely involved in the election campaign. Regular feed back was monitored in order to gauge the public reactions towards the party. The party contested 34 of the 42 seats and left the others to its allies, CPI, CPM, and JD. / . c .

THE 1991 CAMPAIGN STRATEGY

As the party was in coalition with NF, the issues were two fold - the national and local. National issues stressed the implementation of the MCR and to oppose the BJP's Mandir-Masjid issue. In AP, TN and other south Indian states the system of reservation for the BCs and Scheduled Castes (SCs) was already existent and nearly 40% of places are reserved in the government

⁵⁴The Hindu, Madras, 17 May, 1991

⁵⁵The Hindustan Times, New Delhi 12 May, 1991.

So That

and educational institutions, the Mandal appeal had little power in AP in contrast to the northern states. Hence, the campaign stressed local issues and attacked Cong.I on issues such as - the poor performance of government, charges of corruption, frequent changing of chief ministers in the state and communal riots that had worsened the law and order situation. The campaign strategy was to highlight the achievements of the TDP and failures of Cong.I with statistics to support.

The TDP's election campaign is discussed in two phases, strategies before and after the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi. The pre assassination campaign was planned to redirect and convince the voters on the capacity and integrity of TDP compared to the Cong.I and to develop a positive image which had been reduced due to party failures.

A multi-media approach through the various mass and interpersonal channels were used with NTR as the star campaigner⁵⁶. Innovative methods were developed by the party to woo the masses. Newspapers, posters, hoardings, and audio cassettes were used along with documentary, commercial and video films for publicising the TDP message. The main streets in AP had huge cut-outs of NTR in the guise of Indian gods and mythological characters he portrayed on the silver screen.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

NTR launched the TDP campaign attacking the Cong.I and the Chandrashekhar government at a public meeting at Annaparthi 25 km from Rajamundhry in East Godavari district. He blamed Cong.I for engineering defections and dethroning minority governments at the centre. NTR called the 1991 elections an acid test between

⁵⁶Interview with N. Chandrababu Naidu, second son-in-law of NTR, Secretary and spokesperson for TDP.

the TDP's 'progressive' policies and the anti-national measures of Cong.I government in the state⁵⁷.

During electioneering, the charisma of 67 year old NTR continued to enamour the masses. It was reported that no single AP leader could match his super star gimmicks and skill in oratory and his direct approach developed a big rapport with the electorate⁵⁸. In his election speeches, NTR ridiculed the stability plank of the Cong.I as the most destabilising factor, resulting in chaos in the state, communal riots and loss of lives. NTR accused the Cong.I for reducing value based politics to money and muscle power which he claimed were the main causes of TDP defeat in 1989⁵⁹.

FILMS AS MEDIUM OF POLITICAL COMMUNICATION

Films were an important form of election communication for the TDP. Feature, documentary and video films were used to reach the urban and rural masses. Banking on his popularity as a film star, feature films were used as election techniques to influence the voters. One such much publicised film was 'Bhrahmarishi Vishwamitra'. The story of the life, teachings and divine power of the great sage who created a 'Trishanku Swargam' (Special Heaven)⁶⁰.

To counter attack NTR, Cong.I made two films 'Kaliyuga Vishwamitra' (Present day Vishwamitra) and 'Gandipeta Rahasyam' (Gandipeta, the area where NTR lived Rahasyam meaning

⁵⁷ The Deccan Chronicle, Hyderabad, 15 May, 1991.

⁵⁸ The Hindustan Times, New Delhi, 17 June, 1991.

⁵⁹ Deccan Chronicle, Hyderabad. 15 June, 1991.

⁶⁰ The film released before the elections was aimed to project the cause of equality, but NTR emphatically stated that it was only a reminder of Indian tradition emphasising the need for a casteless society without any disparities. Interview with NTR by Ashok Das in The Hindustan Times, New Delhi, 12 May, 1991.

the secret/inside story). Both these movies showed the irregularities when NTR was Chief Minister. A popular pro Cong.I actor Krishna appealed to the masses to throw NTR out of power.

DOCUMENTARY FILMS

TDP was the only party that used ten to fifteen minute documentaries exemplifying the qualities of the leader and the achievements made by the party during 1983-89. About 300 prints were shown in selected cinemas along with feature films all over the state.

VIDEO-ON-WHEELS

NTR put a fleet of 23 VOWS called the 'Vishwamitra Prachara Rathams' to spread the TDP message. The exterior of these vans displayed huge hoardings of NTR as Lord Krishna blowing the conch shell and NTRs son Balkrishna, an actor himself as Harishchandra (the embodiment of truth). Cultural troupes accompanied each van, the video and audio equipment showing the clips of the movies and songs, the strategy being, 'first to entertain and then to inform'. The party also released four to five audio cassettes of NTR's speeches and party songs, highlighting the characteristics and achievements of the party.

TDP not only used video films for promoting the image of the party but also used them for exposing the destruction allegedly caused by the Cong.I miscreants after the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi.

POSTERS AND CUT-OUTS

Posters of NTR and the symbol of the 'Bicycle' were widely displayed on walls and kiosks. Apart from the posters, large cardboard cutouts of NTR were found in major cities. TDP was one of the pioneers in the introduction and use of these cutouts which had become controversial in the 1989 elections when the party had put up large cutouts of NTR in the guise of gods.

Earlier NTR's election to the assembly was challenged on the basis of his huge cutouts in the guise of gods. Cong.I complained to the EC against NTR and TDP for violating the code of conduct, by appealing to the religious sentiments, which was an act of corrupt practice under section 123 of the Representation of the People's Act and asked for their removal. However, the Supreme Court verdict held that the use of such cutouts did not amount to a corrupt practice and the petition was dismissed⁶¹. This enabled other political parties and campaign managers to incorporate religious references in their political campaigns especially in the audio-visual media. In 1991 most political parties, especially the BJP used religious references in the election campaign in mobilising the electorate.

DOOR-TO-DOOR CAMPAIGNS

The network of party workers were continuously involved in door-to-door campaigning at the village and district levels. The party workers were directed to persuade voters and maintain a regular feedback. At the end of the first phase of campaigning, the party through its informal feed back systems was confident of gaining 30 to 35 seats⁶². It was felt that the party would regain the support of the masses and NTR hoped to win back the 30 seats as

⁶¹ The verdict stated that 'reference to the Prophet or other religious heads or deities or their qualities and their deeds did not necessarily mean an appeal has been made to the religious sentiments of the electorate. According to the judgement, Section 123 was not intended to prevent appeals on the picturesque or metaphorical language that drew analogies from mythology, religion or folk lore. When most of the voters are illiterate, the candidate or his agent can attract and enthuse the audience or drive home a point only by parables, similes and metaphors drawn particularly from the religious lore which most people understand and appreciate. However a distinction must be made between canvassing on grounds of religion and seeking votes on graphic or picturesque language and with analogies drawn from religious lore'.

⁶² Interview with N.Chandrababu Naidu, Spokesperson for TDP. Also, Financial Express, Bombay, 12 May, 1991.

it had in 1984⁶³. However, the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi changed the fortunes of TDP.

AP AFTER THE ASSASSINATION OF RAJIV GANDHI

The assassination of Rajiv Gandhi led to a spate of violence, arson and destruction of property throughout AP. The Indian army was called in to control the situation. Mobs resorted to arson and looting with curfew being imposed in many towns⁶⁴. It was alleged that Cong.I supporters through a planned strategy attacked specified targets including supporters, properties and campaign material of non Cong.I parties. These included cinema houses (three cinemas of NTR himself were burnt down), business establishments, factories, vehicles, party offices and houses.

The party representatives of CPI, CPM and JD along with TDP submitted a memorandum to the Governor demanding the resignation of the state government for its failure to curb the violence, a judicial enquiry by a Supreme Court judge and compensation for looted property. The memorandum stated that 'Hyderabad and many towns became the targets of violence as the attacks were incited and engineered by Cong.I in collusion with the anti-social elements as none of the Cong.I leaders were either attacked or their properties destroyed. The most condemnable aspect of the devastation was that while attacking minorities and vulnerable sections, the miscreants purposely destroyed flags, flag posts, cutouts, posters and banners displayed by the opposition parties'⁶⁵.

A video film (another political use of video film) showed the extent of destruction of property and attacks on leaders. Doctors, lawyers and many injured women supported their case.

⁶³ The Hindustan Times, New Delhi, 12 May, 1991.

⁶⁴ Reports in Deccan Chronicle, Newstime and The Hindu, 23 May, 1991

⁶⁵ Official Probe into AP violence. The Hindu, Hyderabad, 30 May, 1991.

Jaipal Reddy, spokesperson for the JD, said that 'property worth Rs.300 million (£150,000) was destroyed by the well orchestrated gang that sprang into its well directed operation within three hours of the death of Rajiv Gandhi'⁶⁶. The non-response from the Cong.I government in power led to an indefinite hunger strike by NTR.

NTR ON INDEFINITE HUNGER STRIKE

A political drama unfolded when 67 year old NTR started an indefinite 'Mauna Vratam' (Silent Hunger Strike) from 30 May, 1991. Dressed in his saffron attire and sitting on a deer skin, an earthen pot of water and a desk, NTR communicated with people through written notes. V.P.Singh and other prominent NF leaders visited him to show their solidarity. While Eenadu and Newstime supported NTR, the Cong.I supported newspapers delighted in reporting the incident as a political manoeuvre on how NTR was secretly having coconut water, chicken soup and 'Electral' (an energizer). Cong.I accused NTR of trying to acquire political mileage and to get compensation for his theatres and property⁶⁷.

After six days of hunger strike, the ruling Cong.I government, fearing his failing health ordered him to be moved to the hospital through a court order on a case of 'Attempted suicide'. Police forcibly moved him to the hospital and much against his will, he was injected with glucose⁶⁸. Within hours after he left the hospital he climbed atop his 'Chaitanya Ratham' and resumed electioneering in his fasting attire for the second phase of the election campaign. The saffron clad, bare chested NTR with an overgrown beard addressed impromptu meetings demanding justice from people. A video film exposed the destruction caused by the violence.

⁶⁶ As expressed in the video film made by TDP before the second round of elections.

⁶⁷ The Deccan Chronicle, Hyderabad, 27 May, 1991

⁶⁸ The Deccan Chronicle, Hyderabad 5 June 1991.

VIDEO FILM IN THE SECOND PHASE OF THE ELECTIONS

The video film showed areas of AP where extensive damage was caused to people and property. During the alleged planned attacks, women and children were not spared, as women crying with bandages on their hands and heads accused Cong.I men who pulled them out of their houses, beat them up and snatched their neck chains. Doctors, lawyers, shopkeepers and party workers of BJP, TDP and Communist parties were personally attacked. A CPM leader alleged that the houses of leaders were broken into and household goods such as TVs, VCRs, scooters and cycles were destroyed despite the women's pleas.

The film justified NTR's fast to protest against such atrocities, projecting him as a saviour of the poor and to demand justice. Citing the failure of the Cong.I, the film urged the people to vote for TDP. NTR and the party leaders were confident of winning at least 30 seats, and claimed not to be perturbed by the sympathy wave citing the 1984 LS elections, when the assassination of Indira Gandhi did not effect the TDP gains.

ELECTION RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

In the first phase there was a marked swing towards TDP. Cong.I was routed in the four coastal districts of East and West Godavari, Krishna and Guntur districts, where elections were held on 20 May, 1991. The TDP executive felt that the real verdict of the party was in its favour as it won 12 of the 17 seats (Fig III.3) and its allies CPI and CPM had won one seat each. In the

second phase, TDP could not stand the sympathy wave for the Cong.I and won only one seat in the second phase.

TABLE III.1 PARTY POSITION IN 1989 AND 1991

Political Party	No of seats contested in 1991	Seats won in 1989	%Vote share 1989	Seats won in 1991	% of vote share in 1991	Success Rate in 1991
Cong.I	41	39	51.0	24	45.83	58.45
TDP	34	2	34.45	13	33.22	35.29
BJP	40	-	1.97	1	9.64	8.4
CPI	3	-	1.96	1	2.11	33.33
CPM	2	-	2.40	1	2.57	50.0
MIM	1	-		1	1.76	100.00

Source: PTI - Modi Olivetti Survey, Deccan Chronicle, 21 June, 1991.

As in table III.1, In 1991, TDP contesting 34 of the 41 seats polled 33.22% of the votes. In 1989 the party had won only two seats of the 33 that it contested but polled 34.45% of votes.

FIGURE. III.4 TDP: PARTY PERFORMANCE (1984-1991)



Source: Arun Kumar (1991) The Tenth Round - Story of Indian Elections. PTI.

TDP General Secretary Chandrababu Naidu accused Cong.I of indulging in booth capturing and rigging supervised by the Members of Legislative Assemblies (MLAs) and ministers. He charged Cong.I of colluding with the administration and the police. Repoll was ordered in many polling stations in AP.

SUMMARY

In the 1991 elections the TDP tried to regain its image and power by focusing on the national and regional issues. The campaign stressed the party's achievements and attacked the alleged poor functioning of Cong.I government in the state. The party used films and techniques of mass and traditional forms to influence the electorate. NTR astride his publicity van, braved the heat of summer and toured the state urging the people to support the party. Even after a six day fast, he continued to hold election meetings for the second phase of polls.

The audio-visual media, especially films; feature, documentary and video, were extensively used by the party to entertain first and inform later. The network of campaign workers were monitored to get a regular feedback. The party was confident of reasserting their power in the state. By increasing their strength from two to 13, TDP had regained some of their image and popularity with the people, but could not withstand the sympathy wave for Cong.I. Once again the Andhra electorate had shown solidarity with the Cong.I.

SECTION V

STUDY OF THE MAJLIS - ITTEHADUL MUSLIMEEN (MIM) ELECTION CAMPAIGN

MIM (League for the unity of Muslims) symbolises the traditionalist urban political identity of Muslims in Hyderabad. It is a classic example of exclusive Muslim politics in India confined to the urban pockets of the 400 year old city of Hyderabad (Khan, 1979). Since its formation in 1957, the party has played a significant role in a largely Congress dominated state.

In the present section we give a perspective on MIM and the Muslim politics of Hyderabad, which has continued to nurture insecurities felt by the minorities, especially Muslims for long term political gains. We evaluate the techniques used by the party to mobilize support during elections through an undisputed leadership of the party which has had negligible dissidence.

HYDERABAD- A SOCIOLOGICAL SETTING

Until recently Hyderabad, capital of the former princely state exhibited communal tolerance. However, in the past decade cultural, religious, social and economic factors besides political manoeuvring have led to frequent communal riots, making it one of the most communally sensitive constituencies in the state.

Hyderabad is the largest parliamentary constituency in AP with more than 1.9 million voters, dominated by Muslims. In Hyderabad this majority assumes exceptional significance as the Muslims are highly politicised and thus command a decisive position in terms of electoral fortunes in the parliamentary constituency. Within the ecological framework, the electoral support comes from a critical Muslim electorate concentrated in the old city around Charminar, south of Hyderabad. There is greater congestion, lack of industrial infrastructure, and are less benefitted in terms of civic amenities.

This setting coordinates with religious loyalty as there is little interaction between the communities, and now a communal colour is given to any national or local event. This has led to regular communal riots in the city, and Hyderabad along with other cities with large Muslim populations like Meerut, Aligarh and Lucknow has been constantly ^affected by communal crisis which has reduced its earlier characteristic of communal tolerance. In December 1990, Hyderabad witnessed one of the worst communal riots and during the 1991 elections there was intense communal tension with heavy police patrols in the old city and adjoining areas.

ORIGINS OF THE MIM PARTY

MIM originated as the Majlis-e Ittehadul-e-Baimul Muslimeen that was formed to maintain unity among the different Muslim sects. It was formally organised by religious leaders in the 1930s under the leadership of Nawab Bahadur Yar Jung. Later, it assumed political dimensions, demanding the creation of an independent Hyderabad State to maintain the sovereignty and dignity of the Nizam, advise the government and preserve the political interests of the Muslim community. But these objectives were not realised. With the death of Bahadur Yar Jung in 1944, the leadership was taken up by Kasim Rizvi, a passionate leader who organised the anti Hindu 'Razakars', a paramilitary wing of the Majlis. The excesses of the 'Razakar movement' during which several Hindus were executed, led to 'Police Action' ordered by the Indian Government to control law and order in the state until the Nizam surrendered to the Indian Government on 12 September, 1948. Leaders including Rizvi were arrested and this militant phase led to a near eclipse of the Majlis from the political arena for nine years. Until 1957, Muslims were in disarray, their political behaviour in the 1952 and 1957 elections was anti-Congress, with support for Congress only in the absence of a Muslim candidate.

In 1957, Kasim Rizvi was released and before his departure to Pakistan he nominated Abdul Waheed Owaisi, a prominent local advocate as his successor. A learned man, well versed in Islamic

history, Owaisi rejuvenated the organisation through religious meetings in mosques (Islamic Fairs), urging the constitutional need for Muslims to participate in politics while remaining peaceful and united. Efforts were made to stabilize the economic position and get a fair share of employment. In 1958, the party developed a new constitution, as the 'Majlis-Ittehadul-Muslimeem' (MIM), to improve the conditions of Muslims. It entered into the political framework in order to realize the social, political, religious and economic objectives by establishing itself as a communal political force.

Over the years, the party has shown concern for the need of reservation of seats for the Muslims in public institutions and provide a definite status for the Urdu language. Importance is given for the development of Muslim women whose support for the MIM has been high. Efforts are made to bring the minorities into the mainstream of Indian social system, who, the party claims have long been neglected since Independence.⁶⁹

THE LEADERSHIP

The history of the revived Majlis from 1957 onwards has been dominated by the political life and fortunes of the Owaisi family, who have developed and nurtured the party for over four decades. The leadership of the party has had a considerable effect on the organization, development and sustenance of Muslim politics in Hyderabad along with the favourable sociological setting within which it functions. Moulvi Abdul Waheed Owaisi as the first president made his office the command centre and discouraged defections and rivals. In March 1958 he passed on the Presidentship to his son, Sultan Salahuddin Owaisi who has since been in command of the party.

⁶⁹ Interview with MIM leader Salahuddin Owaisi, Hyderabad, 20 June, 1991.

Owaisi, an overpowering personality, over six feet tall is called as 'Salar' (Leader), and is considered a popular philanthropist⁷⁰. The party under his leadership has undertaken several schemes to help the Muslim communities at the local level. It has prioritized education as a primary need for the development of Muslims and through Trusts run several educational institutions including a medical and engineering college.

There has not been any noteworthy internal crisis or dissidence among members. No new leader has been produced, and Owaisi has emerged as the messiah of the Hyderabad Muslims, whose faith in him and the party has remained undiminished. In the Ayodhya-Babri Masjid controversy Owaisi was appointed as the chairman of the Babri Masjid Action Committee (BMAC) to counter attack the BJP mission of building the temple at Ayodhya. During the election campaign the BJP had taken up this issue to attack the MIM.

Owaisi had never lost an election, from his first electoral victory for the Municipal Corporation of Hyderabad (MCH), in 1960 he has controlled the local politics of Hyderabad. He was the MLA for five consecutive terms before being elected to the LS in 1984. In three successive LS elections he has defeated candidates from the major political parties; Cong.I, TDP and in the 1991 election he defeated the BJP candidate Baddam Bal Reddy by a narrow margin of 4.01% votes.

PARTY IDEOLOGY AND ELECTION STRATEGY

The party has no definite ideology but draws its inspiration from the Quoranic injunctions proclaiming Muslims as pioneers for the establishment of a just and pious society (Khan, 1979). Efforts are directed towards the preservation of Islam under unfavourable conditions in India. The party has constantly related itself towards the development of the minorities for their constitutional rights and the non interference of Congress in their personal laws.

⁷⁰ Interview with Dr.M.A.Ahmed, Director, Darul Muarif, Osmania Unuversity, Trustee, Darulsalam Education Trust.

The party not only appealed to Muslims but also the Harijans, as the party had long served their development in the poorer localities of Hyderabad. The three Mayors, nominated by the MIM after the Municipal elections were Harijans. This has helped in neutralizing the religious sentiments and obtaining the support from the Harijans. Owaisi criticised the Brahmin dominated rule in the country and though he supported V.P.Singh on the MCR on reservation, MIM did not have any alliances nor did it support any other party.

During elections MIM attacked Cong.I, blaming it as a corrupt party, responsible for the unstable economic and social conditions of the country, and was now projecting the need for stability of the country. Campaign issues related to everyday affairs like law and order, rising prices and day to day problems of light, water, electricity and shortage of food⁷¹. Stress was laid on the need to rectify the decreasing minority representation of the Muslims in many organisations and bring about proportional representation in the government and other sectors. As the percentage of Muslim⁷¹ had reduced from 30 at the time of independence to only 1.5. Now there was a growing feeling of insecurity with the rise of BJP and an even greater need for Muslim representation in the government⁷².

ORGANISATION OF THE PARTY DURING ELECTIONS

A unique and important feature of MIM is the organizational network and decentralised functioning with a single leadership of Owaisi at the apex. The network starts at the level of the election booths. The LS constituency is divided into seven assembly segments, each assembly segment comprising of ten or more wards which are subdivided into localities. The polling stations are identified in the localities with 1000-1500 voters. Members are recruited from these localities and elections are conducted to appoint a president, secretary and treasurer. These

⁷¹ Financial Express, Bombay, 9 May, 1991.

⁷² Interview with Owaisi. 20 June, 1991.

units called 'Primaries' are responsible for working with the people in the localities - making voters lists and mobilising support for the party through house-to-house contacts.

The Primaries are again represented in the wards, and similar elections take place for the office bearers. The elected presidents of the wards are represented to the Central Executive which works under the leadership of Owaisi. Several leaders act as functionaries of the party, but none have been recognised in the leadership hierarchy. This enables the party to function in a highly decentralised manner with efficient feedback systems. Organisational functions in the MIM circles assume importance only during elections when the office bearers are called to mobilize the electorate in the absence of sophisticated campaign machinery.

THE 1991 ELECTION CAMPAIGN

The MIM campaign was geared towards the mobilization of support through the system of mass contact - public meetings, rallies and leader walkabouts. As an independent party, it claimed that lack of funds was an inhibiting factor in using any new technologies⁷³.

Efforts were made to arouse the religious sentiments and the privileges of the minority communities of the communally polarised groups of Hindus and Muslims. Attack and counter attack strategies were adopted by BJP and MIM. While the BJP concentrated on the need for building the temple at Ayodhya and the uniform civil code, MIM stressed the local issues, the need for the development of the minorities in the city. The BJP alleged that the minorities were pampered by the government especially in the laws of marriage and children, to which the MIM had retaliated that the laws were common for all except for the personal law that they followed in certain matters only.

⁷³Interview with Owaisi on 20 June, 1991.

The MIM campaign urged Muslims to select its nominee to solve their problems with the community services rendered by the party. Owaisi cautioned the people of a conspiracy to defeat him as he was also the chairman of the BMAC. Through rational and emotional appeals Owaisi was projected as the 'Son of the soil' to restore the composite culture of Hyderabad. Owaisi stressed the need for industrial and economic development at the grassroots, as the country was not geared towards the development of poor and under privileged who continued to live without water, electricity, housing and educational facilities.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

As the main campaigner, Owaisi found public meetings the best means of interacting with people for acquiring support, maintaining rapport and close coordination with people. It was also effective as a large sections of the target groups were illiterate and the Urdu newspapers reached a small percent of the target electorate.

The campaign schedule during the election period, comprised of daily feedback sessions on the trends of support from the representatives of the constituencies held at the party office between 10.00 am and 1.00 pm. Issues depended on the problems, both general and specific that needed to be clarified. Thereafter, in the afternoons and evenings, Owaisi addressed seven to eight public meetings in various areas some along with the MLAs belonging to the party. This routine was followed between 21 April and 17 May, 1991 until three days before the election on 20 May 1991. Along with election meetings, walkabouts were organised in those areas which needed intensive campaigning.

OUTDOOR MEDIA

While Owaisi stressed the need to establish rapport with the people; the newspaper advertisements, campaign material like the posters, pamphlets, audio cassettes and symbol displays were published and prepared by party well wishers and activists who

collected donations and spent money on these promotional activities. MIM symbol of 'scales' was extensively displayed in the old city of Hyderabad and neighbouring areas. The symbols were illuminated or decorated with tinsel. Along with posters and symbol displays, over 20 feet large cutouts of Owaisi were displayed near Charminar and at other strategic locations in the city.

Another way of reaching the masses was the Bandwagon technique of campaigning. Dozens of cars with the party flags and loud speakers crisscrossed every street and locality of the constituency informing the people of the election date and urging them to vote for the party. The cassettes with speeches of the party leaders added to the electioneering in the old city.

DOOR-TO-DOOR CAMPAIGNS

The party depended on the support of a network of workers who campaigned vigorously and urged the people, especially women to show solidarity with the Muslim community as the growing popularity of the BJP was a threat to their community. This system of campaigning was successful. Despite the conservative attitude of a majority of the Muslim women, there was a large voter turnout of 46%.

THE ELECTION ANALYSIS

In the 1991 elections, though there were four major parties: Cong.I, BJP, MIM and TDP, the challenge was between the BJP and the MIM. Both parties played the communal card from which the MIM emerged victorious. In 1991, Hyderabad recorded the largest voter turnout in the country with 77.12%. However the elections in the constituency were marred by alleged impersonation, rigging and violence. Repoll was ordered in many polling stations⁷⁴. The results were withheld as about 200 booths had recorded more than

⁷⁴ Deccan Chronicle, Hyderabad, 22 May, 1991.

90% polling ⁷⁵. BJP alleged that MIM was involved in large scale rigging and impersonation when four polling stations had recorded 100% voting and in 181 booths there was over 90% voting⁷⁶.

However, despite the irregularities and the alleged rigging, the MIM candidate, Owaisi was declared the winner by 45,314 votes after the result was withheld for three days. Though Owaisi retained his parliamentary seat, the party had lost its stronghold in the city with BJP counteracting on religious grounds polarising the electorate who gained large support from the Hindus, especially the Marwaris, the business communities. The communal fires, ignited during the elections between the BJP and the MIM would go a long way in shaping the future political scene in Hyderabad.

SUMMARY

MIM, as an independent party, with religious leanings has dominated the urban politics of the capital city of Hyderabad in AP. The large concentration of the Muslim population from an erstwhile princely state of the Nizam, along with the economic and cultural factors and undisputed leadership contributed to its success as a major political force. It is an example of the three systems of political polarisation that can be observed in the state of AP. It has survived with the regional politics of the TDP and those of Congress.

These issues that the party projected were local, every day problems rather than raise national issues relating to Mandal or

⁷⁵ It was found that in booth No.16 of Yakatpura constituency nearly 102% votes were cast, in Booth No, 145 of Charminar assembly where a total number of voters were 739, votes cast were 745, in Booth No. 68 the number of voters were 760 and the votes polled were 796, Booth No.141 votes polled were 649 as against the 638 voters and in Yakutpura it was observed that a fifth class girl was voting.

⁷⁶ Newstime, Hyderabad, 20 May, 1991 and Deccan Chronicle Hyderabad, 20 May, 1991.

Mandir. The issues nearer home became more relevant to the local communities. The party concentrated on interpersonal and group forms such as public meetings, walkabouts and rallies. The network of party activists working at the primary units mobilized the electorate through door-to-door campaigns. Posters, symbol displays and wall writings added to the festivities of the election scene. Moreover an effective organisation was essential for a small independent party to withstand the onslaught of the high powered campaign of the BJP.

Both the MIM and the BJP were reported to have indulged in widespread rigging which resulted in over 90% voting in many polling booths. Therefore, Hyderabad being a communally sensitive constituency, two communally oriented groups (Allah versus Ram) clashed in a closely contested electoral battle from which MIM emerged victorious, but with a small majority, the stiff opposition by the BJP would be threat to the political fortunes of the party in the next elections.

SECTION VI

THE VOTER EDUCATION CAMPAIGN BY THE GOVERNMENT

Political communication became all pervasive during the 1991 elections, when the government also launched a multi-media campaign to educate voters in the conduct of a 'free and fair poll'. Unlike most democracies, a campaign run by the government for creating political awareness was unique to India. The objectives of the campaign were to create greater awareness about the political process and increase voter participation. Further, emphasis was placed on the need for voters to exercise their franchise as citizens without being induced by any incentives from the political parties⁷⁷.

The main organizations involved in the election process at the national and state level were, the Ministry of I & B, the Press Information Bureaus (PIBs), Information and Public Relations Departments at the national and state levels, the EC and the National Informatics Centre (NIC). All these were interlinked through a network to update on the developments and changes during the period of elections. The major information channels were the government controlled AIR and Doordarshan, films and posters. The EC issued advertisements in several national and regional newspapers, which highlighted several major points like: What is a corrupt practice during elections ? What is an electoral offence ? What is breach of official duty ?

ROLE OF THE CHIEF ELECTION COMMISSIONER (CEC) AND CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICERS (CEO)

Apart from the campaign, the CEC T.N.Seshan was regularly briefing the media on the latest developments on the electoral front in order to keep the public well informed about the changes in the conduct of elections. The role of CEC came under heavy

⁷⁷ Interviews with CEC, T.N. Seshan, Mahesh Prasad, Secretary I & B Govt of India. Bimla Bhalla, Asst. Station Director, AIR, New Delhi. 20 & 21 April, 1991.

criticism by the BJP and the other parties after the postponement of polls in Punjab and also during the second phase of the polling after the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi.

AIR AND DOORDARSHAN

Radio and TV were used extensively to inform and educate the voters. In Chapter II, we have discussed in detail the various election related programmes which included the PEB by the political parties at the national and the state levels and the voter education programmes. These special election broadcasts were divided into various categories which related to the stages of the election process. In the pre-election phase the programmes informed voters of the election dates, the need for registering as voters and the place to register. These were followed by information on the arrangements made on the polling day, the police arrangements for the polling days and measures taken for the safety of the polling booths and voters.

The other election programmes included discussions, interviews, question and answer sessions in the form of quizzes and commentaries. The general discussions held twice a week were between politicians, senior government officials like the Chief Secretary and DGP, journalists, academics and students. Interviews were held with the CEOs of the states and CEC at the national level. The electronic media were geared to the announcement of results through several news bulletins in English, Hindi and the regional languages in each state.

POSTERS

Posters were printed on three main issues; the need to vote as a citizen; second, to refrain from accepting any inducement whether in cash, kind or transport provided by the candidates to vote for particular parties, and third, to vote without fear for the party of their choice.

The first poster with the headline, 'Your vote elects your government, Vote and strengthen your democracy' focused on two main issues: the importance of voting in a democracy and motivated people to actually vote. The average level of voting during the LS and Assembly elections in the past was between 40-50%, and a large section of the urban and rural voters did not vote in the elections.

The second poster with the headline 'Do not accept any inducement, including transport provided by the candidate' warned voters not to accept the incentives provided by the political parties. During the elections, it was a common practice for political parties to take voters, especially those from the rural and semi urban areas in trucks, jeeps and other forms of transport to the polling station to vote for their party. This may be in addition to some kind of incentives in cash or kind (see Chapter VIII on public meetings).

The third poster headlined 'Vote without Fear' stressed the need for electors to vote without being deterred by external forces or threats from political parties. This was mainly to alleviate the fear of the expected violence during elections which had prevented many people from voting. This is not an uncommon practice that restrains many persons from voting. Despite such assurances, during the 1991 elections there were over 350 cases of elections related violence including murders, kidnapping and riots. These posters translated into local languages were displayed at all government offices, Mandals, Panchayat offices, community centres and other important and strategic locations in the cities, towns and villages.

FILMS

Government information departments made three films on elections to create greater awareness among the voters on the election process and clear some of the perceived misunderstandings of the

electorate⁷⁸. The films were based on themes had titles like 'You said it', 'Your choice', 'Duty bound' and 'Self Respect.' These 16 mm films were shown in the state Mandal headquarters, cinemas and in the village panchayats.

Despite the efforts made by political parties and government to increase voter participation the voter turnout in the country was only 51%, the second lowest since the first general election. This low turnout was also attributed to the hot weather conditions. For the first time elections were held in the summer.

SUMMARY

The objective of the government campaign was to educate the voters by providing details of the political process through very basic information from the schedule of the elections, the dates and the need for registration to information on political parties. It also sought to clear certain doubts and reduce the expected fears of violence during elections. Through posters and advertisements, the electors were persuaded to exercise their franchise without being influenced by political parties who gave incentives in cash or kind. Efforts were made to help people in their decision to vote through information on the mass media channels of radio and television, press, posters and films. The impact of these media in terms of recall and usefulness in decision making have been studied in later chapters.

⁷⁸Interview with one of the electoral officers of the government who did not want to be identified.

CHAPTER IV

SOCIO ECONOMIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS, ATTITUDES TO THE POLITICAL PROCESS AND ACCESS TO MEDIA

Demographic conditions play an important role in not only characterizing the social life and behaviour of the individual but also in forming critical variables in communication and voting behaviour studies (Siris~~kar~~kar, 1965; Weiner, 1968; Varma & Narain, 1973; Eldersveld and Ahmed, 1975; Weiner, 1977; Morris Jones 1978, 1987; Kar & Chaudary, 1992; Vakil, 1994).

Research in the field of voting behaviour conducted in the assembly and parliamentary constituencies has considered the support to a particular party with a number of socio-economic factors. These factors have included primordial influences, such as family and kinship, caste and community and the general factors of age, sex, education, class, income and rural-urban composition. In the last 30 years valuable research has been completed by various scholars on Indian voting behaviour.

During the 1991 elections, caste and religion were regarded by commentators as particularly important. Political parties selected candidates with this in view and incorporated caste and religious factors in the election campaigns. In this chapter, we report the political interest and attitudes to the political process with access and exposure to political communications in light of the Socio-Economic-Status (SES) of our respondents.

The chapter is divided into three parts: first, we analyze the SES of the electorate in terms of urbanisation, age, sex, education, occupation, income, household size, caste and religion. Second, we examine the political interest, awareness of current events and electoral process, attitudes to the political parties, leaders and government. Finally, we report the

access and frequency of exposure to the media of communication and a brief review of the channels likely to be sought by the individuals for election information.

SECTION I

SOCIO ECONOMIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

THE SAMPLE ELECTORATE

As seen in Table IV.1, 42.9% of the sample electorate were from Hyderabad, an urban-rural constituency, 31.2% from Secunderabad, an urban constituency and 25.9%, from Nagarkurnool a totally rural constituency. The response rate in Hyderabad was much higher among the urban than the rural segments of the constituency.

TABLE IV.1 CONSTITUENCY WISE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS.

Constituency	Number	Percentage
Secunderabad	361	31.2
Hyderabad	495	42.9
Nagarkurnool	299	25.9
Total	1155	100.0

URBAN - RURAL DISTRIBUTION

Over 70% of Indians live in rural areas. Rural societies unlike urban are characterized by primary group control, personalization of relationships, dominance of traditions and conservatism. There is less occupational diversity and high group cohesiveness. Urban and rural areas also differ in education and media exposure and party communication techniques take account of this in forming their electoral strategies.

TABLE IV.2 URBAN-RURAL DISTRIBUTION BY CONSTITUENCIES

Distrib- -ution	Secunderabad		Hyderabad		Nagarkurnool		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Urban	361	100	463	93.8	-	-	824	71.3
Rural	-	-	32	6.2	299	100	331	28.7
Total	361	100	495	100	299	100	1155	100

Table IV.2 shows 71.3% of respondents were from urban and 28.7% were from rural areas. Nagarkurnool was entirely rural and although Hyderabad had three rural assembly constituencies, the response rate was only 6.2% rendering the sample effectively urban. In Nagarkurnool, the delay in voting after the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi disrupted our schedule as interviewers were unable to complete the work due to their regular commitments. The urban bias in our overall sample could not be rectified as the data was not available from the Election Commission of India (see letter in Appendix - A).

GENDER WISE DISTRIBUTION OF THE RESPONDENTS

TABLE IV.3 GENDER WISE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS

Sex	Actual Sample		Weighted Sample	
	N	%	N	%
Male	622	71.3	649	56.2
Female	250	28.7	506	43.8
Total	872	100	1155	100

Like most Indian studies on voting behaviour, the responses to our study was biased in favour of males. In our original sample, 71.3% were men and 28.7% were women. In order to make the results more representative and avoid the obvious bias in the attitudes and opinions, we weighted according to the official voter turnout

by the constituencies¹. Therefore the final weighted sample comprised of 1155 respondents; 56.2% men and 43.8% women. All subsequent tables are calculated on this weighted sample unless otherwise indicated.

AGE OF THE RESPONDENTS

Age may be important in terms of experience and maturity of judgement. The relationships between age and political behaviour have revealed that one becomes more conservative, politically more active and partisan with increase in age (Narain & Varma, 1978; Butler & Stokes 1969; Ambedkar, 1992).

TABLE IV.4 AGE WISE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS

Age Group	Number	Percentage
18-25	278	24.0
26-35	440	38.2
36-45	225	19.4
46-55	133	11.5
56-65	61	5.3
66+	18	1.6
Total	1155	100.0

As table IV.4 indicates, over 80% of the sample were between 18-45 years, being born in the post-independent India. A quarter were young voters aged 18-25 years, over a third 38.2% were 26-35 years and 19.4% were in the age group of 36-45 years. Only 18% were over 46 years. Though age did not vary with the sources of

¹ Source: The Report of the Tenth General Election to the House of People 1991. (Statistical). Election Commission of India. New Delhi. In the three constituencies, the percentage of men voters was higher than women. In Secunderabad, 62.6% were males and 37.4% females, in Hyderabad 53.9% were male and 46.1% were female and in Nagarkurnool there were 52.2% males and 47.8% females.

election information sought, we found that a higher percentage of those over 55 years of age voted for Cong.I (see Chapter IX) .

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

It has been argued that there is no need for formal education for either contesting the election or for participating as a voter. A voter may be illiterate, but can be made politically aware with campaign and propaganda as well as socialization media (Varma & Narain 1973). However education is one of the key agents of socialization and it promotes political awareness and exposure to the mass media especially the print forms.

TABLE IV.5 EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF RESPONDENTS

Educational level*	Number	%	Cumulative %
Uneducated	101	8.8	8.8
Primary	128	11.0	19.8
Secondary	154	13.3	33.1
Intermediate	242	21.0	54.1
Graduation	364	31.5	85.6
Post Graduation	136	11.7	97.3
Technical	27	2.4	99.9
Others	3	0.3	100
Total	1155	100	

N.B.* Primary-1-5, Secondary-10, Intermediate 11 and 12 or Pre-university. Graduation- Undergraduate degree as B.A., B.Sc or B.Com.

Table IV. 5 shows a high percentage of educated persons compared to the literacy rate in AP at 44%. Nearly 54% were educated till the high school level, 31.5% were graduates and 11.7% were post graduates and less than 10% were uneducated.

TABLE IV.6 EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF RESPONDENTS BY CONSTITUENCIES

Education	Secunderabad		Hyderabad		Nagarkurnool	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Uneducated	15	4.0	30	6.1	56	18.7
Primary	45	12.5	44	8.8	39	13.0
Secondary	56	15.6	45	9.1	53	17.8
Intermediate	59	16.5	112	22.6	71	23.8
Graduate	136	37.6	164	33.2	64	21.3
Post Graduation	42	11.6	84	16.9	10	3.3
Technical	8	2.2	15	3.1	4	1.4
Others	-	-	1	0.2	2	0.7
Total	361	100	495	100	299	100

In Hyderabad and Secunderabad more than half the respondents were graduates or postgraduates compared to a quarter in Nagarkurnool. In Nagarkurnool nearly a fifth (18.7%) were uneducated compared to 4% in Secunderabad and 6.1% in Hyderabad. The highest percent (23.8%) in Nagarkurnool were educated up to the Intermediate level. There was not much difference by gender in the educational backgrounds. Interestingly the percentage of women postgraduates, (13.1%) was higher compared to men (10.5%). However, the overall literacy rate in AP is 44.1% for men and 33.71% for women. It was observed that educated persons were more ready to respond to the survey.

Though Varma & Narain (1973) have argued that literacy may not really be important in determining voting behaviour in developing countries, Prasad and Kini (1978) found that more educated persons are politically better informed and efficacious than people with limited or no education. In a democracy it does not follow that the less educated are less fit to vote, but it may have an indirect effect, in terms of access to some political communications in view of low purchasing power.

In our study, we find it significant to relate literacy to using newspapers as a source of election information (see Chapter V). The rise of literacy has increased the number and readership of newspapers through which information reaches the villages². In this rather urban biased study 85% of respondents either read newspapers or were 'read to'. Educational status was also taken into account for exposure to political campaigns. BJP, for example, had directed their press campaign at the educated intellectual electorate³.

OCCUPATIONAL BACKGROUND

Occupation is an index of an individual's social standing. Some earlier studies on voting behaviour have found a level of high political awareness, intention to vote for a political party, collective and partisan political behaviour in certain occupations (Kar & Chaudary, 1992). Father's occupation was also a factor in voting behaviour (Mehta, 1973). As shown in Table IV.7, 26.1% of the respondents were working in government and 20.4% in the private sector. 18.9% were housewives. 9.9% were unemployed and 9.9% were students. Less than 10% were agricultural workers of which more than half were from Nagarkurnool. Occupation did not make any difference to the overall voting behaviour in the urban or rural respondents.

² For example, in the 1989 elections, corruption was the main issue for the Cong.I defeat. It was reported that the information through newspapers had reached remote villages as reported in the article titled 'Bofors Brightens Political Campaigns', Newstime, Hyderabad. 7 Nov, 1989.

³ Interview with Mr.S.Ravindran, Director, R.K.Swamy/BBDO Advertising Associates Pvt.Ltd.Delhi. The agency handled the BJP campaign.

TABLE IV.7 OCCUPATION OF THE RESPONDENTS

Occupation	Number	Percentage
Unemployed	114	9.9
Student	115	9.9
Government	301	26.1
Private sector	236	20.4
Housewife	218	18.9
Agriculture	105	9.1
Retired	36	3.1
Others	30	2.6
Total	1155	100

INCOME DISTRIBUTION

The income of a person will be an indication of the social and occupational status and influence that the individual or the family as a whole can exert. In our study, income becomes a criterion for the access and to some extent the frequency of exposure to media in the form of subscription to a newspaper and ownership of radio, television and video.

TABLE IV.8 DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Income Group per month	Total	
	N	%
Less than Rs.250 (£5)	77	6.7
Rs.250-500 (£5-10)	94	8.1
Rs.501-1000 (£10-20)	122	10.5
Rs.1001-2000 (£20-40)	279	24.1
Rs.2001-3000 (£40-60)	246	21.3
Rs.3001-4000 (£60-80)	189	16.4
Rs.4001-5000 (£80- 100)	59	5.1
Rs.5001+ (£100+)	48	4.2
No Answer	41	3.6
Total	1155	100

As table IV.8 indicates, about one quarter, 25.3% of the respondents fell in the three poorest sections below the Rs.1000 income bracket. 16.4% earned between Rs.3000 to Rs.4000 (£80) and less than 10% earned Rs.5000 and above. 12.2% of rural respondents were earning below Rs.250 (£5) a month, and 32% earned less than Rs.500 (£10). Low levels of income were found in Nagarkurnool which could be attributed to the income generated from the occupations as well as the dependency on agriculture which is again dependent on the monsoons.

HOUSEHOLD SIZE

Household size is not in itself a determinant of voting behaviour, but the influence of the family was a major source of primary political socialization (Nuna, 1989). In Nagarkurnool we found that families identified themselves as 'Congress', 'BJP' or 'Communists families' as they have supported these parties for generations. Some women pointed to other similar families in the neighbourhood who supported certain parties. This system was more prevalent in rural India with joint family structures.

TABLE IV.9 NUMBER OF ADULTS IN THE HOUSEHOLD

No of Adults in households	Number	Percentage
1	63	5.5
2	490	42.4
3	160	13.8
4	197	17.1
5	114	9.8
6	63	5.4
7	31	2.6
8	17	1.5
No answer	20	1.9
TOTAL	1155	100

TABLE IV.10 NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN HOUSEHOLDS

No of Children in the Household	Number	Percentage
None	222	19.2
One	187	16.2
Two	319	27.6
Three	215	18.6
Four	129	11.2
Five	36	3.1
Six	22	1.9
Seven	7	0.6
Eight or more	5	0.5
No Answer	13	1.1
Total	1155	100

The size of the respondents households generally indicated nuclear families. As shown in table IV.9 and IV.10, nearly half (42.4%), comprised of two adults and 30.9% comprised of 3-4 adults. Less than ten percent (9.5%) of the households comprised of more than five adults, which could be inclusive of families with grown up children or joint families. Similarly, while a fifth, mostly those comprising of young voters (19.2%) did not have any children, a majority of 62.4% had one to three children generally deviating away from the joint family system. 14.3% households comprised 4 - 5 children (11.2% had four and 3.1% had five children) and a small 3% had more than six children which could be indicative of the joint family structures.

However, despite the gradual decline of the joint family system, greater urbanization and increased level of education, families continued to be important sources of information and influenced voting behaviour (see Chapter VIII).

RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND

Religious diversity is characteristic of Indian society. The contemporary political process has set in a new agenda for a major political discourse on the nature and content of secularism. Secularism was one of the major issues on which the 1991 elections were fought. We found that political parties mobilized different sections for their support. Among our constituencies, Hyderabad in particular was communally sensitive and marked by communal riots. The electoral contest in Hyderabad between BJP and MIM was supported by the Hindus and Muslims respectively. We have correlated religion with voting behaviour (see Chapter-IX).

TABLE IV.11 DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY RELIGION

Religion	Number	Percentage
Hinduism	929	80.4
Islam	108	9.3
Sikhism	14	1.2
Christianity	93	8.0
Others	11	1.0
Total	1155	100

Table IV.11 shows an overwhelming 80.4% of Hindus, a near representative^{on} of the country's average percentage, 9.3% were Muslims^(All India 11.4) and 8% were Christian (country's average 2.5%). This was because in Secunderabad constituency a polling booth area which was surveyed had a larger concentration of Christian households. Similarly, in the Hyderabad constituency, there was a larger concentration of Hindus in the areas where our survey was conducted. There are visible pockets of localities with concentration of Hindus and Muslims in Hyderabad and Christian communities in Secunderabad. Hindus were an obvious majority in all the three constituencies, while among the Muslims a majority of 56.4% were from Hyderabad. Hyderabad comprised of 73% Hindus, 12.3% Muslims, 11.9% Christians, 1.1% Sikhs and 1.7% of other

religions. In Nagarkurnool, 85.5% were Hindus, 7.4% Muslims, 2.1% Sikhs and 4.6% Christians and 0.4% others.

Religion was a significant aspect of voter behaviour. A fifth (21%) of the respondents considered consulting religious leaders as important in making their voting decisions (see Chapter VIII). In terms of final voter behaviour, contrary to expectations, 13% of Muslims had voted for BJP and 1.8% Hindus voted for MIM (See Chapter IX).

CASTE

Caste determines the voting pattern and the creation of vote banks. Caste had become an important election issue after the NF government's plan to implement the MCR. We investigated respondents castes, broadly categorised as Forward Castes (FCs), BCs, SCs and STs. We further examined the respondents views on caste as part of the social system and if it was a factor for voting in the parliamentary elections and if it influenced voting behaviour. We presumed that it would be a delicate question to ask the respondents' caste. However it was found that most respondents readily answered.

TABLE IV.12 DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY CASTE

Caste	N	Percentage
Forward Caste	614	53.2
Backward Caste	278	24.1
Scheduled Caste	140	12.1
Scheduled Tribe	21	1.8
No answer	102	8.8
Total	1155	100

As seen in table IV.12, more than half (53.2%) were from FCs. About a quarter 24.1% were the BCs and 12.1% were the SCs Less than two percent (1.8%) belonged to the STs. A fifth of the respondents (21.8%) considered caste as an important factor in their voting decisions (See Chapter IX). An important aspect on

the influence of caste was that 16% of the SCs voted for MIM in Hyderabad. Less than 10% did not reveal their castes.

SUMMARY

There is a definite change in the profile of an average Indian voter. A gender bias is common in most Indian studies with more number of male responses when households are surveyed. Most of the respondents were in the ages between 18-45 being born in post independent India and nearly a fifth of the respondents (in the age group between 46-65 years) were part of at least eight general elections. The educational level of the respondents was generally higher than the average though the least uneducated (4%) were from urban Secunderabad and the highest (18.7%) were from rural Nagarkurnool. A high number of post graduates in our sample indicated an increase in the educational level of the Indian women.

The household size indicates a shift from the joint to the nuclear family structure as observed in urban households compared to the rural households. Nearly half the respondents earned up to Rs 2,000 (₹40) per month, income was a criterion for subscription of a newspaper and ownership of radio, TV or video. majority of over 80% were Hindus and more than half (53.2%) claimed to be from the FCs. In the next part we give the extent of interest in politics, general awareness of current events, attitudes towards government and politicians.

SECTION II

POLITICAL INTEREST, GENERAL AWARENESS AND ATTITUDES TO GOVERNMENT AND POLITICIANS

Through a series of questions we examined the respondents' level of political interest, awareness of current events as well as the attitudes towards leaders and functioning of the government. First, we evaluate the level of interest in politics. Second, we record the general awareness of certain current events. Last, we assess the respondents' opinions on leaders and government.

POLITICAL INTEREST

TABLE IV.13 LEVELS OF INTEREST IN POLITICS

Attitude variable	Number	Percentage
Not at all interested	233	20.2
Somewhat interested	559	48.4
Interested if it concerns me	166	14.4
Very interested	140	12.1
Don't Know	32	2.8
No answer	25	2.1
Total	1155	100

The respondents were asked to indicate their level of interest in politics on the question: How interested are you in politics and the political developments in the country ? Interest in politics was at a medium level with nearly half (48.4%) of the respondents being somewhat interested. 12.1% stated that they were very interested and 14.4% were contingently interested. There were significant differences between men and women.

TABLE IV.14 GENDER WISE INTEREST IN POLITICS

Attitude variable	Men		Women	
	N	%	N	%
Very interested	113	17.5	25	4.9
Not at all interested	97	14.9	137	27.1
Somewhat interested	338	52.1	222	43.9
Interested when it concerns me	89	13.7	78	15.4
Don't Know/No answer	12	1.8	44	8.7
Total	649	100	506	100

The level of interest between men and women varied as seen in table IV.14, three times more men (17.5%) compared to 4.9% women were very interested in politics, with over a quarter (27.1%) of the women not at all interested. More than half (52.1%) men and 43% women were somewhat interested. Next we asked the respondents the frequency with which they discussed politics. A similar question was also asked as part of interpersonal forms of communication and group behaviour - if the respondents discussed politics when they got together with social groups (see chapter VIII).

TABLE IV.15 FREQUENCY WITH WHICH POLITICS WERE DISCUSSED

Attitude variable	Number	Percentage
Daily	109	9.4
Often	261	22.6
Once in while	493	42.7
Never	239	20.7
No answer	53	4.6
Total	1155	100

Politics was not a favourite topic of discussion for more than two thirds of the sample with a majority of 42.7% respondents who

discussed politics occasionally. As seen in table IV.15, about a third (32%) of the respondents discussed politics more frequently (9.4% discussed daily and 22.6% discussed often). About a fifth, 20.7% did not discuss politics. Political discussions were rated fourth after day to day matters, social problems and gossip during group interpersonal meetings (Chapter VIII).

GENERAL AWARENESS OF CURRENT EVENTS

We investigated the respondents' awareness of some current Indian events, many of which were given vast coverage in the media. The six events listed were:

1. Communal riots in Hyderabad in December 1990. Hyderabad along with the other Indian cities like Meerut and Aligarh with large Muslim populations had witnessed one of the worst communal riots since Independence. Consequently, the Cong.I Chief Minister, Dr.M.Chenna Reddy was replaced for failing to curb the riots in the city.
2. The second statement was the change in Chief Minister that followed the communal riots.
3. The third statement related to the sinking of a Buddha statue in the Hussain Sagar lake at Hyderabad. A major publicised and criticised programme of the TDP government was the installation of statues of prominent leaders in the city. This project was to install a 40 feet statue of Buddha in the middle of the lake. However, on its way to the site, the statue slipped from the barge and sank into the lake. The news was widely reported and people had come from all over the state to see it.
4. The fourth statement was on awareness of the problem of naxalites in AP. In certain districts, naxalite groups were active in anti-social activities. They were in the news for kidnapping political leaders and for several crimes.
5. The fifth question related to the issue of Ayodhya Babri Masjid (Temple-Mosque) dispute.
6. The final statement was on the agitation following the MCR on the reservation of jobs.

TABLE IV.16 THE LEVEL OF AWARENESS OF CURRENT EVENTS

Political issues	Know a lot		Know a fair amount		Unheard of		No answer	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Communal riots in AP	458	39.6	564	48.9	49	4.2	84	7.3
Replacement of Dr.Chenna Reddy, CM of AP	468	40.4	564	48.8	73	6.4	50	4.4
Fall of Buddha statue in Hussain Sagar	520	45.1	490	42.4	99	8.5	46	4.0
There is Naxalism in some AP districts	445	38.6	559	48.4	100	8.6	51	4.4
The Babri Masjid - Ayodhya temple issue	592	51.4	504	43.7	31	2.4	28	2.5
Job reservation for the backward classes	481	41.6	464	40.2	123	10.7	87	7.5

*The respondents were asked to mark their level of awareness on these statements as 'unheard of', 'know a fair amount' and 'know a lot'.

As shown in Table IV.16 there was a high level of awareness of current events in all three constituencies as well as between men and women. Nearly 80-90% of respondents either knew a lot or a fair amount about each of the issues. The most well known issue was that of Ayodhya - Babri masjid, where 51.4% knew a lot and 43.7% knew a fair amount. The reservation of jobs for the BCs was known to 80% respondents.

We scored the level of awareness of these current events. A score of 1-3 was given to each answer and the total was calculated as low, medium and high. The score below nine was low, 10-14 was medium and 15-18 was regarded as high. As seen in table IV.17, nearly 90% of the respondents secured medium to high scores and showed a high awareness of current events. Only 10% had low score. We next examined the respondents' attitudes towards leaders and the functioning of government.

TABLE IV.17 THE SCORES ON GENERAL AWARENESS OF CURRENT EVENTS

Score	N	%
below 9	126	10.9
10-14	532	46.1
15-18	497	43.0
Total	1155	100

ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE LEADERS AND THE GOVERNMENT

Press reports indicated the disappointment and loss of trust in the political leaders and the functioning of the government⁴. Earlier election studies have shown that the Indian electorate was well versed with the political manoeuvring of the leaders and have showed their approval or disapproval by the power of the vote (Lal, 1990). Within the political process, we evaluated the respondents' attitudes in terms of their faith and trust in politicians and government which would relate to their interest

⁴ Financial Express, Bombay, 12 May, 1991; The Hindustan Times, New Delhi 12 May, 1991, Observer of Business and Politics, 10 May, 1991; India Today, New Delhi, 15 May, 1991.

in elections. Among our respondents some did not find any of the parties worth voting for. The respondents were given four statements on a scale with levels of agreement or disagreement as shown in table IV.18.

TABLE IV.18 RESPONDENTS ATTITUDE TOWARDS LEADERS AND GOVERNMENT

Attitude variable	Strongly agree		Tend to agree		No opinion		Tend to disagree		Strongly disagree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Leaders are committed to the development of the country	169	14.6	205	17.7	103	8.9	282	24.4	396	34.4
I have confidence and trust in the leaders	97	8.4	220	19.1	106	9.2	344	29.8	388	33.5
Leaders do not know and understand my problem	348	30.1	294	25.5	131	11.3	201	17.4	181	15.7
I am not satisfied with the way the present government works	336	29.1	292	25.3	132	11.5	193	16.6	202	17.5

The respondents' attitudes generally showed a sense of disillusionment with leaders and the working of the government. One third (14.6% strongly agreed and 17.7% tended to agree) had faith in the leaders being committed to the development of the country. More than half (34.4% strongly disagreed and 24% tended to disagree) did not find the leaders committed to the development of the country.

Regarding confidence and trust in leaders, little more than a quarter (8.4% strongly agreed and 19.1% tended to agree) had confidence and trust in the leaders but the remaining two thirds 63.4% (with 33.5% strongly) did not trust or have confidence in the leaders.

In terms of leaders understanding peoples problems, more than half, (30.1% strongly agreed and 25.5% tended to agree) respondents stated that leaders didn't understand their problems. On the other hand a third stated that leaders knew and understood their problems. Again over half 55.4% (29.1% strongly agreed and 25.3% tended to agree) were not at all satisfied with the functioning of the government. A third expressed their faith in the government from which a fifth (17.5%) were satisfied with the government.

Overall, More than two thirds of the respondents did not have a positive attitude towards the leaders and were not satisfied with the functioning of the government while the other one third believed that leaders were committed to the development of the country and were satisfied with the working of the government.

ATTITUDES TO THE POLITICAL PROCESS

With the repeated failure of the coalition governments, opinion polls indicated the likelihood of another hung parliament and lack of interest among the voters in the 1991 elections. We asked the respondents how far they cared about elections results and the kind of government to be formed.

TABLE IV.19 CONSTITUENCY WISE ATTITUDE TO OUTCOME OF THE ELECTIONS:

Attitude variable	Secunderabad		Hyderabad		Nagarkurnool	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Care a lot	100	27.7	108	21.8	71	23.7
Somewhat care	135	37.4	248	50.1	88	29.4
Do not care	96	26.6	85	17.2	96	32.3
Don't know	23	6.4	20	4.0	21	6.9
No answer	7	1.9	34	6.9	23	7.7
Total	361	100	495	100	299	100

TABLE IV.20 GENDER WISE ATTITUDE TO THE OUTCOME OF THE ELECTIONS

Attitude variable	Men		Women		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Care a lot	181	28.0	98	19.3	279	24.2
Somewhat care	273	42.1	197	39.0	470	40.7
Do not care	149	23.0	129	15.4	278	24.0
Don't know	19	2.8	45	8.9	64	5.5
No answer	27	4.1	37	7.4	64	5.5
Total	649	100	506	100	1155	100

As seen in table IV.20, Over two thirds (64.9%) of the respondents cared which party won the elections. Among these 24.2% cared a lot and 40.7% somewhat cared. In Hyderabad, the closely contested election generated tremendous voter interest and could be the reason for 71.9% who cared on the outcome of the election. Interestingly, the highest percentage (32.3%) of rural Nagarkurnool

respondents did not care about the outcome of the elections compared to 17.2% in Hyderabad and a quarter (26.6%) in Secunderabad. Overall 70% men and 58% women cared about the election results.

Therefore, contrary to press reports on the disinterest among voters, we found that though the degree of interest in politics was low and over two thirds of the respondents were not satisfied with the leaders and the government, there was a high level of interest during elections as two thirds (64.9%) of the respondents cared in varying degrees on the outcome of the elections and nearly 77% had also voted (See Chapter VII). A sizeable quarter (24%) of the respondents did not care while the other 11% had no opinion or chose not to answer.

THE NEED FOR A ONE PARTY MAJORITY

As discussed earlier, the repeated failure of the non-congress coalition governments first in 1977 and then in 1989-91 by two minority coalition governments had disillusioned the voters as to the capability of the diverse parties. This had indirectly strengthened the support for Cong.I, the only party which had national standing. In 1991 elections, BJP made every effort to gain national status and contested independently as an alternate party to Cong.I. We investigated the respondents' opinions on a one party majority or coalition governments. Respondents were asked to select the statements that came closest to their own views on the formation of the government after the elections.

TABLE IV.21 RESPONDENTS OPINION ON ONE PARTY GOVERNMENT

Attitude variable	Number	Percentage
One party should gain a majority and form a government	776	67.1
A clear majority may not be necessary but the party with the highest number of seats should form the government.	124	10.7
There need not be a majority but some parties can form a coalition government	152	13.1
Don't Know	103	9.1
Total	1155	100

As seen in the table IV.21, more than two thirds (67.1%) of respondents preferred a one party government and this was felt in all the three constituencies. However, 13.1% preferred the formation of a coalition government by a merger of the parties without a majority. A tenth (10.7%) opined that the party that won the highest number of seats, if not a majority could form the government. These statements reflect a clear understanding of the electoral system, taking into cognisance of earlier failures of coalition governments. A majority of the respondents preferred a one party majority. In the following section we give the access and frequency of media exposure and the sources of information during the elections.

SECTION III

ACCESS AND FREQUENCY OF EXPOSURE TO MEDIA

Access to the media is assessed in terms of respondents subscribing to a newspaper, owning a radio, television or video and the frequency of exposure. This is evaluated from Table IV.22, IV.23 and IV.24.

TABLE IV.22 THE RESPONDENTS ACCESS TO THE MEDIA

Media	Yes		No		No answer	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Subscribe to newspapers	738	63.9	413	35.7	4	0.4
Own radio	1047	90.6	104	9.0	4	0.4
Own television	853	73.8	301	26.1	1	0.1
Own video	186	16.1	943	81.6	26	2.3

TABLE IV. 23 ACCESS TO MEDIA IN THE THREE CONSTITUENCIES

Media	Secunderabad		Hyderabad		Nagarkurnool	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Newspapers %	255 70.6%	106 29.4%	344 69.5%	151 30.5%	139 46.5%	160 53.5%
Radio %	340 94.2%	21 5.8%	454 91.7%	41 8.3%	253 84.6%	46 15.4%
Television %	321 88.2%	40 11.0%	378 76.4%	117 23.6%	153 51.3%	146 48.7%
Videos %	86 23.9%	275 76.8%	84 17.0%	411 83%	16 5.4%	283 94.6%

TABLE IV.24 FREQUENCY OF EXPOSURE TO THE MASS MEDIA

SECTION I

Sometimes 2-4 days a week, Regularly 5-7 days a week.

Media	Never		Sometimes		Regularly	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Read newspapers	168	14.5	234	20.3	753	65.2
Read magazines	313	27.1	457	39.5	385	33.4
Listen to radio	91	7.9	435	37.7	628	54.4
Watch TV	163	14.1	257	22.3	735	63.6

SECTION II

Sometimes - Once a fortnight, Regularly - at least once a week or more.

Media	Never		Sometimes		Regularly	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Watch video	558	50.9	411	35.6	156	13.3
Watch Cinemas	221	19.2	733	63.4	201	17.4

ACCESS AND READERSHIP OF NEWSPAPERS

As seen in table IV.22, newspapers were subscribed to by nearly two thirds (63.9%) of the respondents. Income was a determinant in the subscription of a newspaper. Among those earning below Rs.500 (£12), less than 10% subscribed to a newspaper while 50% in the income between Rs.1000-Rs.2000 (£20-£40) and more than 90% over the income of Rs.4000 (£80) subscribed to a newspaper. 70% urban respondents in Secunderabad subscribed to the newspapers compared to 46% rural respondents in Nagarkurnool. Subscription was not a determinant of readership as over 85% of the respondents read a newspaper or were being 'read to'. Being 'read to' generally means that newspapers are read by some literate persons and others gather around them, listen and discuss the news or pick up information at casual meetings.

Newspapers were read regularly by 65.2% respondents, sometimes by 20.3% and 14.5% did not read newspapers. Magazines were read by three quarters of the respondents and one third (33.4%) read them regularly.

ACCESS AND FREQUENCY OF RADIO LISTENERSHIP

90.6% of households owned a radio. Even in rural areas radio ownership was high because of the low cost transistors. Over 60% of the households in the lowest income group, Rs.250 (£5) per month possessed a radio. Over 90% of the households in Secunderabad and Hyderabad owned radios compared to 84.6% in Nagarkurnool. Radio listening was high. Only 7.9% never listened while 54.4% heard the radio regularly and 37.7% sometimes. The regularity of listening to radio was third after newspaper reading (65.2%) and watching television (63.6%).

ACCESS AND FREQUENCY OF TELEVISION VIEWERSHIP

Television was owned by 73.8% of the respondents. This, on an average, was quite high compared to the average TV ownership in the country given the low income levels. 50% of respondents earning less than Rs.1000 (£20) did not own TV sets. Nearly 85% of the households over this income group owned TV sets. The ownership of TV was high in urban compared to rural constituencies. In Secunderabad, 88.2% of the respondents owned TVs compared to 51.3% in Nagarkurnool.

Even though TV was not owned, it was seen by 85.9% of the respondents. In the rural areas, it is watched in the community centres, in the houses of the local leaders or in the neighbourhood - whoever possessed a TV. Similarly, in the poorer sections of the urban areas, television is watched in the homes of employers or neighbours. Television was regularly watched by 63.6% of respondents, About 14.1% did not watch and 22.3% watched sometimes.

As the ownership of television was high in urban compared to rural constituencies, the viewership of television was dependent on the ownership as was clearly evidenced by higher frequency of exposure in Secunderabad compared to Nagarkurnool. About 30.8% of rural respondents did not watch TV compared to less than 10% of the urban. Similarly double the percentage, 63.3% watched TV regularly in urban areas compared to 30% in rural areas.

As seen in table IV.23, in the three constituencies there were differences in the frequency of TV viewing by the maximum number of respondents from the Secunderabad constituency.

ACCESS AND EXPOSURE TO VIDEOS

VCRs and Video Cassettes Players (VCP) have yet to penetrate the Indian market. Only 16.1% of the respondents had access to videos. Due to high cost they are confined to higher income groups in the urban areas. Only five respondents from the rural areas in our sample possessed a video. Over half (50.9%) the respondents had never watched videos. A third (35.6%) had watched them sometimes and 13.5% watched regularly. However the ownership of videos was not a criterion for election communication through the videos. VOWs were extensively used during the elections as a popular form of political advertising for the diverse Indian audiences.

CINEMA VIEWING

With the increasing reach of TV, cinema viewing is claimed to have been reduced. However, we find that nearly 80% of respondents went to the movies. Film and film based programmes are popular and highly rated both on radio and television as concluded in the following chapter.

THE SOURCES OF INFORMATION SOUGHT DURING ELECTIONS

In view of the extensive media coverage and the interpersonal forms used for disseminating election information, we examined the sources of information sought by respondents for election information. In the following chapters we have discussed in detail each of these media and the extent to which they helped in the voting decisions.

TABLE IV.25 SOURCES OF MASS MEDIA AND INTERPERSONAL FORMS SOUGHT FOR ELECTION INFORMATION

Sources	lot	Somewhat	Not at all	Don't know
	%	%	%	%
Newspapers	34.3	47.1	12.7	5.9
Radio	22.4	58.4	14.1	5.1
Television	28.2	50.5	14.3	7.0
Posters	8.7	47.9	35.5	7.9
Handbills	5.6	34.9	43.4	16.1
Public meetings	6.6	27.3	56.1	10.0
Family	22.5	47.1	23.8	5.2
Local leaders	7.5	27.3	55.0	10.2
Friends & neighbours	16.6	54.3	23.8	5.3

Mass media of newspapers, radio and television were extensively sought as important sources of election information by nearly 85% of the respondents. As observed in table IV.25, 34.3% depended a lot on newspapers, 28.2% depended on TV and 22.4% on radio. Nearly half of them, depended to some extent on these media for election information. Printed literature like posters and handbills were somewhat sought by about half the respondents.

Among the interpersonal forms; discussions with family was to be sought a lot by 22.5%, and somewhat by 47.1% of the respondents. Discussions with social groups like friends and neighbours were rated second, a lot by 16.6%, and somewhat by 54.3%. 7.5% depended a lot and 27.3% depended somewhat on local leaders for election information. 6.6% depended a lot election meetings and 27.3% of the respondents were likely to attend public meetings for election information.

SUMMARY

Though the respondents did not show a high level of interest in politics, we found that they were generally well informed about the political system of the country. About half the respondents were interested in politics but it was not a much discussed topic by nearly two thirds of the respondents. Their opinions on leaders and government reflected their disillusionment and loss of faith in them, yet they were interested in the elections and sought various media for election information. Though the respondents expressed their dismay at the leaders and the government, over two thirds (64.9%) cared about the outcome of the elections and the formation of government. While nearly a quarter (24%) did not care who won the elections, 80.8% of the respondents were likely voters and therefore cared about the result of the elections. A large majority of them preferred a one party government to a coalition government.

Access and exposure to the mass media was high as ours was a fairly urban educated sample and mass media were sought for election information along with discussions with family, friends and local leaders. In the following chapter we discuss the exposure and impact of the mass media.

CHAPTER V

THE USES AND IMPACT OF MASS MEDIA DURING THE 1991 ELECTIONS

In this chapter we analyze respondents access to and readership of newspapers and magazines, listening to radio and watching television. We include the interest in the coverage of political news and the extent of influence of election news and political advertisements in newspapers and magazines. Similarly, for the electronic media, we evaluate the exposure to and influence of election programmes and PEBs on the voting behaviour of respondents.

SECTION I

THE USES AND IMPACT OF NEWSPAPERS

In Chapter IV, we outlined the access to and frequency of newspaper readership. Of the total 1155 respondents, 63.9% subscribed to a newspaper: In Secunderabad 70.6%, in Hyderabad 69.5%, and in Nagarkurnool less than half (46.5%) subscribed to newspapers. A higher percentage of urban when compared with rural respondents subscribed to a newspaper. Readership among the respondents was high. 85% either read newspapers or were being 'read to'. This pattern of diffusion from 'one to many' is common in smaller towns and villages and was observed by the researcher during the course of field work. On the whole, in the three constituencies, over three quarters of the respondents were reading newspapers.

Readership was highest in Hyderabad with 85.5% followed by 84.1% in Secunderabad. In Nagarkurnool, though only 46.5% actually subscribed to newspapers, the readership was high at 77.2% accounting for those to whom newspapers were read.

TABLE V.1 EDUCATION AND THE READERSHIP OF NEWSPAPERS

Educational level	Read Newspapers		Do not read	
	N	%	N	%
Uneducated	18	17.8	83	82.2
Primary	80	62.5	48	37.5
Secondary	127	82.5	27	17.5
Intermediate	228	94.2	14	5.8
Graduation	336	92.3	28	7.7
Post Graduation	132	97.1	4	2.9
Technical	27	100	-	-
Others	3	100	-	-
Total	956		202	

Table V.1. shows that the regularity of newspaper readership tends to be related to the level of education. However, among the educated 7.7% graduates and 2.9% post graduates did not read newspapers. On the other hand, 17.8% of the uneducated and 62.5% of those educated up to the primary level were readers or listeners of newspapers.

TABLE V.2 THE READERSHIP OF NEWSPAPERS BY GENDER

Frequency	Male		Female	
	N	%	N	%
Never	66	10.1	102	20.2
Sometimes	122	18.9	112	22.1
Regularly	461	71.0	292	57.7
Total	649	100	506	100

From the gender stand point, almost 90% men and 80% women read or have newspapers read to them. Men (71%) are more regular readers than women (57.7%). While there is no significant difference between men (18.9%) and women (22.1%) occasional readers, double the number of women (20.2%) compared with men (10%.1) do not read newspapers. 71% men and 57.7 % women are regular readers (Table V.2).

NEWSPAPERS READ BY THE RESPONDENTS

Telugu newspapers were most popular in the three constituencies and had a high readership. English newspapers followed next and only a small segment read Urdu dailies. Extensive coverage was given to elections in newspapers and Cong.I, BJP, TDP and other parties had used the Telugu press for their advertising campaigns. Respondents were asked to name the newspapers they generally read. Interestingly, many respondents marked more than three newspapers. A number of respondents when asked informally revealed that more newspapers were read by them only during important occasions, elections among them.

TABLE V.3 NEWSPAPERS READ BY RESPONDENTS

S.No.	NEWSPAPERS	YES		NO	
		N	%	N	%
1.	Eenadu (Telugu)	551	47.7	604	52.3
2.	Andhra Jyothi (Telugu)	268	23.2	887	76.8
3.	Udayam (Telugu)	271	23.5	886	76.5
4.	Andhra Prabha (Telugu)	216	18.7	939	81.3
5.	Deccan Chronicle (English)	422	36.5	733	63.5
6.	The Hindu (English)	229	19.9	926	80.1
7.	Indian Express (English)	199	17.2	956	82.8
8.	Newstime (English)	110	9.5	1045	90.5
9.	Siasat (Urdu)	74	6.4	1081	93.6
10.	Rahnuma-e-Deccan (Urdu)	28	2.4	1127	97.5
11.	Others	29	2.5	1126	97.5

Table V.3, shows the largest circulated Telugu daily, Eenadu had the highest readership of 47.7% among the respondents, followed by Andhra Jyothi (23.2%) and Udayam (26.5%).

Among English newspapers, the maximum number of respondents (36.5%) read Deccan Chronicle. This paper, published from Hyderabad, Vijayawada and Visakhapatnam, is considered to be a local paper with three fourths of its circulation in Hyderabad and Secunderabad. The Hindu, read by 19.9%, and Indian Express read by 17.2% are the two nationally oriented English dailies with editions published from Hyderabad as well as several other centres. Newstime, the English newspaper published by the Eenadu group is read by less than 10% of the respondents and appeared to be not as

popular as its Telugu counterpart. Cong.I and BJP had extensively advertised in most of these English newspapers.

Of the Urdu newspapers, Siasat, was read by 6.4% of respondents while Rahnuma-E-Deccan was read by 2.4%. The readership of Urdu newspapers was restricted to the urban areas of Hyderabad. The leader of MIM, Sultan Salahuddin Owaisi had stated that because of low readership (due to low literacy), newspapers were not part of his media strategy in reaching the electorate¹. About 2.5% of the respondents also read newspapers other than those listed. These included The Times of India, The Hindustan Times, a Tamil and a Kannada daily.

INTEREST IN POLITICS AND ATTITUDE TO THE COVERAGE GIVEN TO POLITICAL NEWS IN NEWSPAPERS

As discussed in Chapter II, elections had increased the coverage given to the political developments in newspapers. We therefore investigated the respondents interest in such news before and during the elections.

INTEREST IN POLITICAL NEWS IN GENERAL AND DURING ELECTIONS

TABLE V.4 INTEREST IN POLITICAL NEWS BEFORE AND DURING THE ELECTIONS

Period	Very Interested		Somewhat interested		Not at all interested		Don't know	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Pre Election	190	16.4	606	52.5	215	18.6	144	12.5
During and after the elections	288	24.9	645	55.9	171	14.8	51	4.4

¹ Interview with Sultan Salahuddin Owaisi by the author on 20 June, 1991.

During the pre-election phase, over half (52.5%), the respondents were somewhat interested in political news, while 16.4% were very interested. Interest in political news began picking up during the elections. Very interested response increased from 16.4% to 24.9% and somewhat interested from 52.5% to 55.9%. A little over 80% displayed interest in political news. Significantly, two thirds of the respondents who were not sure and 3.8% of non-interested also appear to have started taking interest in political news during and after the elections (Table V.4).

TABLE V.5 GENDER WISE INTEREST IN ELECTION NEWS IN THE NEWSPAPERS

Interest in Political news during elections	Men		Women	
	N	%	N	%
Not at all	57	8.8	114	22.6
Somewhat Interested	362	55.7	283	55.9
Very Interested	210	32.3	78	15.4
Don't Know	20	3.2	31	6.1
Total	649	100	506	100

During the elections the level of interest in political news had increased. More than half of both men and women displayed some interest in political news during elections. Women (55.9%) crossed men (55.7%) by a fraction here. However, in the very interested category, we found double the number of men (32.3%) against women (15.4%). The gap increases substantially in the 'not at all' category. Nearly two thirds of the women (22.6%) against one third men (8.8%) were not at all interested in political news during elections.

COVERAGE GIVEN TO POLITICAL NEWS

On the coverage given to political news in newspapers we examined the attitude to the coverage given to political news and later the election news.

TABLE V.6 ATTITUDE TO COVERAGE GIVEN TO POLITICAL NEWS BEFORE AND DURING THE ELECTIONS

Attitude to coverage	Too much		Adequate		Too little		No answer/Don't Know	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Coverage given to Political news	169	14.6	565	48.9	99	8.6	322	27.9
Coverage given to Election news	178	15.4	638	55.2	60	5.2	279	24.2

Regarding the coverage given to election news, over half (55.2%) of the respondents found the coverage in newspapers to be adequate. On the other hand 15.4% found the coverage to be excessive, virtually the same as in the first round. Though the coverage in newspapers was extensive, only 5.2% of the respondents found it to be too little. In comparison, during elections, there was a decrease in the number of respondents from 8.6% to 5.2% who found the coverage too little, showing a three percentage point increase in the satisfaction level among the very interested. The interest and attitude to information were linked. Most of the respondents who were very or somewhat interested found the coverage adequate or too little, while those not interested found the coverage too much.

NEWSPAPERS AS A SOURCE OF ELECTION INFORMATION

In the first wave, we enquired about the sources of information sought for election information and the extent of use of each medium on a scale ranging from a lot through a fair amount or not at all. Earlier studies by Varma & Narain (1978), Kaur (1989 and Kar & Choudary (1992) found that newspapers were most sought after for election news. In our study too we found that newspapers were an important source of election information in the urban and rural areas. Earlier, we found that more than one third (34.3%), the highest in the entire sample, depended a lot on newspapers and 47.5% a fair amount with differences in the constituencies and among men and women.

TABLE V.7 NEWSPAPERS AS SOURCE OF ELECTION INFORMATION IN THE CONSTITUENCIES

Constituency	A Lot		A fair amount		Not at all		No opinion	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Secunderabad	163	45.2	138	38.2	43	11.9	17	4.7
Hyderabad	189	38.2	232	46.9	52	10.5	22	4.4
Nagarkurnool	44	14.7	174	58.2	52	17.4	29	9.7

As seen in table V.7, in the urban constituency of Secunderabad nearly half (45.2%) depended a lot, followed by 38.2% in Hyderabad while less than half of these (14.8%) in rural Nagarkurnool depended a lot on newspapers. A reverse trend was seen in the fair amount category. 58.2% in Nagarkurnool, 46.9% in Hyderabad and 38.2% in Secunderabad depended a fair amount on Newspapers.

Women were less dependent on newspapers for information than men. The highest percentage (27.6%) of women said that they would depend a little on newspapers while the highest percentage of 41.8% men said that they would depend a lot on newspapers for election information. Nearly a fifth of women, (18.8%) did not intend to

look at the newspapers compared with 8.7% men. In the second phase we asked if the information regarding parties and candidates they sought from newspapers had helped them in the decision-making process.

DID THE COVERAGE GIVEN TO ELECTION NEWS IN NEWSPAPERS HELP IN THE DECISION TO VOTE ?

After evaluating the opinions on interest and coverage given to election information, we investigated if newspapers had helped the respondents in their voting behaviour. In Chapter.IX, we have given the effects of media in terms of knowledge gain, change in attitudes to political parties and voting behaviour. Here we analyze the use and influence of the media in the decision making process.

TABLE V.8 NEWSPAPERS AS A SOURCE OF ELECTION INFORMATION AND THE EXTENT TO WHICH THEY HELPED IN THE DECISION TO VOTE

Variable	A lot		A fair amount		Not at all		No opinion	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Newspapers as source of election information	396	34.3	544	47.1	147	12.7	68	5.9
Did newspapers help in voting decision ?	204	17.7	577	50.0	152	13.2	222	19.1

As in Table V.8, for those one third respondents (34.3%) who claimed newspapers to be a source of election information, only half (17.7%) appear to have been helped 'a lot' in their decision

to vote. The response appears to be almost balanced in the 'fair amount category' (47.1% and 50%) and 'not at all' (12.7% and 13.2%) categories. However, the gap widens in the 'no opinion' category where the figures are 5.9% and 19.1%. The maximum shift is from the 'a lot' category that adds up to 19% offering no opinion about newspapers helping in their decision to vote.

TABLE V.9 MEN AND WOMEN WHO WERE HELPED BY NEWSPAPERS IN THEIR DECISION TO VOTE

Variable	Men		Women		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
A lot	127	20.3	77	16.3	204	17.7
A fair amount	360	57.5	217	46.6	577	50.0
Not at all	78	12.5	74	15.9	152	13.2
No opinion	84	9.7	138	21.2	222	19.1
Total	649	100	506	100	1155	100

More men (77.8%) than women (62.9%) were influenced by newspapers in their decision to vote. As in Table V.9, 20.3% men and 16.3% women were influenced 'a lot' and approximately around half of them (over half of the men 57.5%) and little less than half women (46.6%) were influenced a fair amount. Conversely, 12.5% men and 15.9% women were not at all influenced by newspapers in their decision to vote. Double the number of women (21.2%) when compared with men (9.7%) had no opinion. Earlier we found that readership of newspapers had also increased during the elections.

POLITICAL ADVERTISING

THE DIRECTORATE OF ADVERTISING AND VISUAL PUBLICITY (DAVP)

The DAVP is the biggest advertising agency through which the state and the central governments publicity is carried out. Through multi-media campaigns, DAVP functions to inform, educate and motivate people on matters of national concern. It releases over 20,000 advertisements a year in newspapers and journals on behalf

of the government in almost all the Indian languages. Several campaigns have been conducted on important socio-economic themes such as national integration, communal harmony, health and family welfare, environment, conservation of energy, upliftment of weaker sections of society and removal of social and economic evils. Revenues from government advertisements enable the survival of a number of small and medium newspapers. During elections, DAVP in coordination with the government agencies including the EC ran a multi-media publicity campaign among voters to exercise their franchise as a right.

EXPOSURE TO GOVERNMENT ADVERTISEMENTS

In the first phase of the survey, we examined the respondents' exposure to government advertising which could be a forerunner to establish the readership of advertisements and understanding of the party advertisements that were to follow during the elections. In the post election survey we investigated the exposure to party advertisements and how far they had helped in voting decisions. In the first survey, there were two questions on whether the government advertisements were seen and how they were evaluated. More than half answered in the affirmative

TABLE V.10 RESPONDENTS OPINION ON GOVERNMENT ADVERTISEMENTS

Attitude variable	Number	Percentage
Very Informative	145	12.6
Somewhat Informative	325	28.2
Not at all informative	106	9.1
Do not remember	76	6.6
Don't Know	133	11.5
No Answer	370	32.0
Total	1155	100

Among those who saw the advertisements as in Table V.10, 12.6% found them very informative and 28.2% somewhat informative. We presume that respondents were not very clear about the term 'government advertisements' and generally assumed them to include any advertisements. However in the post election survey, more reliable information was obtained on the political party advertisements, the respondents' opinions on the advertisements as informative, interesting or persuasive and how far they helped them in the voting decision.

PARTY POLITICAL ADVERTISEMENTS IN NEWSPAPERS

ORG estimated that the national and regional parties spent a total of Rs.84 million (£1,680,443)² on press advertisements. In Table V.11, using ORG data we detail the amounts spent by the parties in newspaper campaigns all over the country. Almost all the parties had released advertisements in newspapers. Cong.I (59.1%) was the biggest spender. Its nearest rival, the BJP (19.2%) spent one third the amount on advertising. JD stood fourth among spenders (3.2%) below AIADMK, a regional party which spent double the amount (6.5%) than JD, a national party. TDP spent a meagre 0.11%. However though there is an indication of what most parties spent during the elections, we find that the amount spent by the communist parties, CPI and CPM are not mentioned. We found that these parties spent a small amount (included in others-category) and most publicity efforts were made by the party to release printed literature and through interpersonal forms like large and small group meetings.

With such large amounts of money spent on party advertisements in Indian terms we examined the exposure and impact of these advertisements on our sample electorate.

² Source: Operations Research Group, Content Analysis of Political Advertisements in the 1991 general elections.

TABLE V.11 THE AMOUNTS SPENT BY POLITICAL PARTIES IN PRESS ADVERTISING IN 1991

Political Party	Amount Spent £*	Percentage
Cong.I	992,346	59.1
BJP	324,232	19.29
AIADMK	110,058	6.55
JD	54,427	3.24
Samajwadi Janata Party (SJP)	51,486	3.04
Janata Dal (Gujarat)	36,824	2.19
BJP/Shiv Sena	32,734	1.94
Independents	18,898	1.13
DMK	16,460	0.98
AIADMK & Cong.I	10,672	0.64
Others**	8,980	0.53
Akali Dal (Badal)	3,711	0.23
Gomantak National Front	3,572	0.21
Akali Dal (Mann)	3,438	0.20
AISSEF	2,312	0.14
Shiv Sena	2,292	0.13
TDP	1,984	0.11
Janata Pksha	1,412	0.08
Haryana Vikas Manch	1,172	0.07
Maharashtravadi Gomantak Party	1,127	0.06
Assom Gana Parishad	813	0.04
S.V.Dal	428	0.03
Congress (S)	353	0.02
Shiromani Akali Dal	332	0.02
Tripura Peoples's Front	148	0.01
RSPI (M)	126	0.01
Jharkhand Mukti Morcha	106	0.01
TOTAL	£ 1,680,443	100

*Conversion rate £1.00 = Rs.50

** The parties that spent less than £100 on press advertising.

THE EXPOSURE TO PARTY ADVERTISEMENTS IN NEWSPAPERS

We first examined the respondents exposure to the advertisements of the political parties and later investigated their impact in terms of recall of the advertisements, whether they were informative, interesting and persuasive and finally, the extent to which respondents were influenced in their voting decisions.

TABLE V.12 GENDER WISE PARTY ADVERTISEMENTS IN NEWSPAPERS

Gender	Party advertisements seen		Not seen		Don't know/No answer	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Men	397	61.2	165	25.4	87	13.4
Women	234	46.2	158	31.2	114	22.5
Total	631	54.6	323	28.0	201	17.4

As shown in table V.12, over half (54.6%) had seen the party advertisements in newspapers. Political advertising as such had gained a high degree of awareness among the electorate since 1984. In 1989, the highly illustrated full and half page Cong.I advertisements with their controversies, criticisms and parodies had caught the attention of most readers. About two thirds men (61.2%) and nearly half the women (46.2%) had seen the advertisements of political parties.

TABLE V.13 THE POLITICAL PARTY ADVERTISEMENTS SEEN BY RESPONDENTS

Political Party	Ads seen		Not seen		No Answer	
Cong.I	517	44.7%	634	55%	4	0.3
BJP	386	33.4%	764	66.2%	5	0.4
TDP	354	30.6%	788	68.3%	13	1.0
JD	67	5.8%	1083	93.8%	5	0.4
MIM	38	3.3%	1111	96.3	6	0.5
Others	43	3.7%	1112	96.3	-	-

As observed in table V.13, nearly half, (44.7%) of the respondents had seen Cong.I advertisements, followed by those of BJP with 33.4% and TDP advertisements seen by 30.6%. However there was a small response to other parties. For the MIM the response was low as the party gave importance to interpersonal forms and had minimal press advertising.

THE RESPONDENTS' REACTIONS TO CONTENT OF POLITICAL ADVERTISEMENTS

We recorded the respondents' opinion on the advertisements in terms of them being informative, interesting and persuasive, and finally if they influenced the respondents voting behaviour. Informative - to find the extent to which the respondent felt that advertisements gave them enough information about the party; interesting - the extent to which the respondent was interested to read and understand the advertisement; and last persuasive - whether the respondent found the appeals persuasive enough for a positive response. Responses to each political party have been separately analyzed as there were several multiple responses.

TABLE V.14 THE RESPONDENTS' REACTIONS TO POLITICAL ADVERTISEMENTS

Political Party	Total	Informative		Interesting		Persuasive	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Cong.I	517	207	40.0	220	42.6	82	15.8
TDP	354	92	26.0	164	46.3	62	17.5
BJP	386	90	23.3	177	45.9	89	23.0
JD	67	35	52.2	22	32.8	3	4.5
MIM	38	11	29.0	13	34.2	3	7.9
others	43	11	25.5	15	34.9	7	16.3

NOTE: The percentages are taken from those who saw the advertisements as in table V.13 and not all the respondents.

Cong.I Advertisements

From the table V.13, of all those who had come across party advertisements the maximum number (44.7%) had seen the Cong-I advertisements in newspapers. As seen in table V.14, of those who had seen the Cong-I advertisements, 40% found them informative and 42.6% found them interesting. Only 15.8% found them persuasive. The high frequency of publication and large sizes of the Cong.I advertisements had caught the attention of the readers and could persuade 15.8%.

BJP Advertisements

A third (33.4%) of the respondents came across BJP advertisements. Of those who saw them, nearly half (45.9%) found them interesting. 23.3% found them informative and an equal percentage (23%) found them persuasive. The BJP press advertisements as discussed mainly attacked the Cong.I and persuaded the people to give them a chance to govern as all other parties had failed.

JD/NF Advertisements

Only 5.8% of all those who had come across party advertisements could notice JD advertisements. Of these over half (52.2%) found

them informative, nearly one third (32.8%) informative but only a minuscule (4.5%) persuasive.

TDP advertisements

Nearly a third (30.6%) who saw the party advertisements noticed the TDP advertisements. Over a quarter (26%) of those who had seen the TDP advertisements found them informative. Nearly half (46.3%) found them interesting and 17.5%, the highest percentage found them persuasive.

MIM advertisements

The least number (3.3%) of all those who had seen the advertisements of the political parties saw the MIM advertisements in the newspapers. Of them 29% claimed that they were informative, a third (34.2%) said that they were interesting and 7.9% said that they were persuasive.

Advertisements of Other Parties

Advertisements of other parties were seen by 3.7% among those who had seen the advertisements of political parties. A third (25.6%) found them informative, less than half (34.9%) interesting and 16.3% persuasive. The low recall of other party advertisements could in part be attributed to the limited finances and restricted use of newspapers.

Big spenders got better noticed. Cong I (44.7%) led the others followed by BJP (33.4%), TDP (30.6%), JD (5.8%), other parties (3.7%) and MIM (3.3%). The JD/NF advertisements were found to be most informative at stated by half (52.2%) the respondents who saw them. This was followed by Cong.I (40%), MIM (29%), TDP (26%) and BJP (23.3%) advertisements. One third to half the respondents found these party advertisements to be interesting; TDP (46.3%), BJP (45.9%), Cong.I (42.6%), MIM (34.2%) and JD (32.8%).

None of the party advertisements could cross the 25% mark on persuasiveness. BJP (23%) advertisements led the field, followed by other parties (16.3%), TDP (17.5%), Cong.I (15.8%), MIM (7.9%) and JD(4.5%). As this was the first study that evaluated the impact of political advertising in India, there was no precedent for comparison. The results of this study would, therefore lead the field for subsequent campaign studies.

THE IMPACT OF PARTY ADVERTISEMENTS IN INFLUENCING VOTING DECISIONS

A lot of money was spent by political parties for advertising in newspapers. Here, we evaluate the impact of political advertising in terms of converting voters or at least as a source of motivation to vote for a given party. The impact of advertising can be assessed in terms of creating awareness, interest and in persuading prospects to take a particular course of action.

TABLE V.15 THE EXTENT OF INFLUENCE OF PARTY ADVERTISEMENTS

Variable	N	%
A lot	53	4.6
Somewhat	318	27.5
Not at all	282	24.4
Don't Know	447	38.7
No Answer	55	4.8
Total	1155	100

Over a quarter (27.5%) of the respondents were somewhat influenced by political party advertisements in newspapers and a little less than this number (24.4%) claimed that these advertisements had no influence on them at all. Only 4.6% of the respondents reported that they were influenced a lot by party advertisements. However, the largest chunk of responses (43.5%) are found in the don't know /no answer categories.

TABLE V.16 CONSTITUENCY WISE IMPACT OF POLITICAL ADVERTISEMENTS

Constituency	A Lot		Somewhat		Not at all		No opinion	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Secunderabad	22	6.3	108	30.0	83	23.0	148	40.9
Hyderabad	20	4.0	143	28.9	130	26.3	202	40.8
Nagarkurnool	11	3.7	67	22.4	69	23.1	152	50.8

As seen in table V.16, half of the respondents in rural Nagarkurnool (50.8%) had no opinion to offer about advertisements of political parties. Such was the response of 40.8% of the respondents in Hyderabad and 40.9% in Secunderabad. But advertising campaigns in newspapers had some impact on 30% of the respondents in Secunderabad, on 28.9% in Hyderabad and on 22.4% in Nagarkurnool. Political advertising campaigns appear to have made a lot of impact on less than 10% of the voters in all the three constituencies. It could, therefore be concluded that a third (36.1%) of the respondents in Secunderabad, 32.9% in Hyderabad and 26.1% in Nagarkurnool felt in various degrees the impact of advertisements of political parties.

Though more than half the respondents who had seen the advertisements found them informative, interesting and persuasive in degrees, the campaigns had a very low effect at the highest level as less than 5% (4.6%) stated that they were highly influenced by the advertisements. There was more positive approach as 27.5% were somewhat influenced by the advertisements. A fourth (24.4%) were not influenced. 5.4% men were motivated compared to 3.6% women and nearly the same number of men and women were somewhat motivated. In the constituencies, as in Table V.16, advertisements helped a lot for 6.1% of respondents in urban Secunderabad compared to about 4% in Hyderabad and 3.7% in Nagarkurnool. Therefore it could be concluded that the newspapers campaigns had an impact on 36% in Secunderabad, 32% in Hyderabad and 26% in Nagarkurnool.

SECTION II
THE USES AND IMPACT OF THE PERIODICAL PRESS

In the first phase, we surveyed the readership of magazines and the kinds of magazines generally read. In the second phase we asked the respondents about exposure to party advertisements and investigated their effectiveness in terms of exposure, and how far if at all they helped them in their voting decisions.

TABLE V.17 THE FREQUENCY OF MAGAZINE READERSHIP

Frequency	Number	Percentage
Regularly	385	33.3
Sometimes	457	39.6
Never	313	27.1
Total	1155	100

As seen in table V.17, one third (33.3%) of the respondents are regular magazine readers and over a third (39.6%) read magazines sometimes. Therefore, close to three quarters (72.9%) of the respondents read magazines, while a little more than a quarter 27.1% do not read magazines.

TABLE V.18 THE NUMBER OF MAGAZINES READ

The number of magazines read	Number	%
Four or more	9	0.8
Three	459	39.7
Two	193	16.7
One	93	8.1
None	313	27.1
No answer	88	7.6
Total	1155	100

As shown in table V.18, over a third (39.7%) of the respondents read three magazines. 16.7% read two and half this number (8.1%) read only one magazine. Only 0.8% read four or more magazines. 7.6% chose not to answer the question.

In the kinds of magazines, the Sunday supplements of Telugu and English newspapers were the magazines mentioned by most respondents. In a general analysis, the number of magazines named amounted to more than a hundred including weeklies, fortnightlies with some mentioning reading annuals and year books. Among those magazines which had over 50 to 100 readers comprised of news magazines which were more popular than the others. The generally mentioned ones were India Today, The Week, Sunday, and The Illustrated Weekly of India which has since ceased publication. Among all the periodicals the most read magazine was India Today followed by Sunday, a weekly news magazine published from Calcutta and The Week published from Kottayam in Kerala³.

Among the Telugu magazines, Swati was most popular magazine followed by the Sunday supplements⁴ of the Telugu newspapers. Other magazines mentioned included - Sitara, Saritha, Manorama and Vanitha Jyothi. As most political parties, especially the Cong.I had used magazines, we examined the exposure to and impact of advertisements in the magazines.

³ Among other magazines Frontline the news magazine published from Madras was read by 11 respondents. Sports magazines like Sports star and Sports week were read by 20 respondents. The general knowledge and current affairs magazine 'Competition Success Review' was read by 22 respondents and Science Digest read by 11. Film magazines like Stardust, Movie and Cine Blitz were together read by 26 respondents. Women's magazines, Femina and Women's Era were read by 22 respondents. Other magazines read by less than ten respondents ranged from business magazines to professional journals.

⁴ In the Sunday supplements of daily newspapers, Andhra Sachitra Vara Patrika was read by 40 respondents followed by Andhra Jyothi with 38 and Andhra Prabha by 35.

**EXPOSURE TO AND IMPACT OF PARTY ADVERTISEMENTS IN THE PERIODICALS
PARTY ADVERTISEMENTS SEEN IN MAGAZINES**

TABLE V.19 PARTY ADVERTISEMENTS SEEN BY RESPONDENTS

Attitude variable	N	%
Yes	445	38.5
No	649	56.2
Don't remember	36	3.1
No Answer	25	2.2
Total	1155	100

More than a third, (38.5%) had recalled seeing the advertisements of political parties in the magazines, while more than half of the respondents were either non-readers and/or did not read the magazines in which the party advertisements were published. Moreover, as found earlier a majority of by respondents read the Sunday supplements of newspapers.

POLITICAL PARTY ADVERTISEMENTS IN MAGAZINES

TABLE V.20 PARTY ADVERTISEMENTS SEEN IN MAGAZINES

Political Party	Ads seen		Not seen		Do not remember		No Answer	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Cong.I	272	23.5	154	13.3	22	1.9	707	61.2%
BJP	189	16.4	123	10.6	13	1.1	830	71.8%
JD	38	3.3	36	3.1	9	0.8	1072	92.8%
TDP	34	2.9	40	3.5	5	0.4	1076	93.2%
SJP	17	1.4	31	2.7	1	0.1	1106	95.8
Others	11	1.0	37	3.2	8	0.7	1099	95.2

The recall of Cong.I advertisements was the highest. As seen in table V.20, 23.5% of the respondents had seen Cong.I advertisements in magazines followed by 16.4% who had seen BJP advertisements. Just over 3% of the respondents had seen JD (3.3%) and TDP (2.9%) advertisements while only 1.4% had claimed to have seen SJP advertisements. Between 60 - 95% of the respondents had either not seen, did not remember or had no answer about seeing party advertisements in magazines.

TABLE V.21 EXTENT TO WHICH MAGAZINE ADVERTISEMENTS HELPED IN VOTING DECISION

Attitude variable	Number	Percentage
A lot	70	6.1
Somewhat	195	16.9
Not at all	143	12.4
No opinion	699	60.5
No answer	48	4.2
Total	1155	100

As observed in table V.21, party advertisements in magazines helped only 6.1% of the respondents in their decision to vote and to some extent for 16.9% while 12.4% were not at all helped. The remaining respondents did not answer or had no opinion.

SUMMARY

With over 35,000 newspapers and magazines being published in the country, the readership of newspapers and magazines was high with many reading upto four magazines. Respondents listed as many as 100 periodicals with different periodicities. The Sunday supplements of newspapers, especially those of the Telugu newspapers, were as popular as magazines. Among the periodicals, news magazines were popular. 'India Today' was the most read English magazine and Swati in Telugu.

Magazines were not a popular medium for political advertising and most of the political parties used the daily newspapers, except for BJP and Cong.I which used selected English and regional language magazines. BJP only used India Today with centre and double spreads for better impact while Cong.I used over 400 English and vernacular magazines, selecting many nationally circulated English news magazines, film and general interest magazines and two or three regional magazines with three or four insertions for greater visibility.

Over a third (38.5%) of the respondents had come across advertisements of political parties in the magazines. Less than a quarter (23.9%) respondents came across Cong.I advertisements while 16.4% had seen the BJP advertisements. JD and TDP advertisements were seen by about 3.3% and 2.9% of the respondents. Political party advertisements had helped only 6.1% and somewhat for 16.9% in their decision to vote. Interestingly, around three quarters (72.9%) of the respondents read magazines, 33.3% regularly and 39.6% sometimes. What is more 39.7% read three magazines, 16.7% read two and 8.1% read one. Though, less than a quarter (23%) were helped by magazines in their voting behaviour, there was a positive attitude developing towards political advertisements and most respondents did not brush away the prospect of seeing political advertisements in the press, even though it could be relatively restricted to the more educated sections.

SECTION III

THE USES AND IMPACT OF ELECTION PROGRAMMES ON RADIO

RADIO LISTENERSHIP

The Ministry of I & B, Government of India claims that radio reaches 97% of the population. Wide spread ownership of low cost transistor sets is often cited to support this claim. Radios were owned by 90.6% of the respondents and 92.1% listened to the radio. The average frequency of listening was high. There was not much difference on the basis of education, sex or constituencies, but the frequency of listenership varied in the urban and rural sectors.

TABLE V.22 LOCATION AND LISTENERSHIP OF RADIO

Attitude variable	Urban		Rural	
	N	%	N	%
Never	65	7.9	27	8.2
Sometimes	344	41.7	91	27.5
Regularly	415	50.4	213	64.3
Total	824	100	331	100

FREQUENCY OF LISTENERSHIP

We categorised the frequency of listening as; regularly meaning five to seven days a week, sometimes as two to four days a week and never meaning not hearing at all. As seen in table V.22, about two thirds (64.3%) of the rural respondents were regular listeners of radio compared to half (50.4%) of their urban counterparts. More than a third, 41.7% of the urban compared to 27.5% rural respondents listened sometimes. The frequency of listening was high at the regular or sometimes level with people listening nearly everyday. Less than 10% of urban (7.9%) and rural (8.2%) respondents did not listen to radio. These figures do prove that radio is a popular medium of mass communication in India. Education

did not make much difference to listenership, unlike in the case of newspapers.

RADIO PROGRAMMES LISTENED TO BY THE RESPONDENTS

The kind of programmes heard on radio were evaluated in order to get an indication of the frequency of listenership to news and current affairs which generally covered election and political news.

TABLE V.23 FREQUENCY OF LISTENERSHIP TO RADIO PROGRAMMES

Programme Content	Regularly		Sometimes		Never		No Answer	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
News	576	49.9	313	27.1	249	21.5	17	1.5
Current Affairs	156	13.5	395	34.2	568	49.2	36	3.1
Discussions	117	10.1	382	33.1	588	50.9	68	5.9
Film Based	437	37.8	421	36.5	273	23.6	24	2.1
Dramas, Plays	166	14.4	468	40.5	486	42.1	35	3.0
Educational Programmes	129	11.2	348	30.1	634	54.9	44	3.8
Others	17	1.4	111	9.7	738	63.9	289	25.0

From the table V.23, it is clear that news on radio was very popular: half the respondents (49.9%) listened regularly and over a quarter (27.1%) listened sometimes, with an overall 77% respondents tuning to the radio for news. This was confirmed by Bimla Bhalla, Assistant Director, AIR, who stated that there was a very high listenership to news on radio generally and especially during elections. Even the afternoon news bulletins were well received by audiences. Although AIR does not conduct any systematic

research, they get a regular feedback through letters from the audiences⁵. Second, this high listenership could also in part be attributed to the number of newscasts in various languages catering to various segments of the audiences.

Current affairs programmes such as news analysis, commentaries and discussions that were broadcast twice weekly had limited listenership, 13.5% were listening regularly and over one third (34.2%) sometimes. It was observed that better educated men were more inclined to listen than women as against all other groups. However, we found that the election related programmes broadcast during the current affairs programmes were heard by over a quarter of the respondents as further detailed in table V.25.

After the news, entertainment programmes like the film based programmes were most listened to by three quarters (74.3%) of the respondents. Over half (54.6%) of the respondents listened to radio dramas and plays. Educational programmes which have been given high priority in the programme structure of the electronic media for supplementing school and adult-literacy programmes were heard by 11.2% regularly, sometimes by 30.1% and not heard by over half (54.9%) the respondents. Therefore, in analyzing the use of radio by different segments, we could conclude that radio serves more as a medium for information and entertainment and less as an educational medium.

EXPOSURE AND IMPACT OF RADIO DURING ELECTIONS

RADIO AS A SOURCE OF ELECTION INFORMATION

Among the mass media of newspapers, radio and television on which respondents depended for election information, 80.8% stated that they would depend on radio for election information.

⁵Interview with Bimla Bhalla, Asst. Director, All India Radio, New Delhi, 20 April, 1991.

TABLE V.24 RADIO AS A SOURCE OF ELECTION INFORMATION

Attitude variable	N	%
A Lot	259	22.4
A Fair amount	674	58.4
Not at all	163	14.1
No opinion/ No answer	59	5.1
Total	1155	100

As seen in table V.24, 80.8% of the respondents tend to depend on radio as a source of election information. Close to a quarter (22.4%) a great deal and over half (58.4%) a fair amount. This again proves that a majority depend on radio for election information. There was not much difference between of men and women. In the constituencies, the highest number (30.6%) in Secunderabad depended 'a lot' on radio followed by 21.9% in Nagarkurnool and 18.4% in Hyderabad. In the rural constituency of Nagarkurnool, we found that the 84% of the respondents who were listening to radio depended on it for information about the elections compared to the other two constituencies. We further investigated the extent to which respondents heard the election related programmes on radio and how they found the coverage given to election related broadcasts.

RADIO LISTENERSHIP DURING THE 1991 CAMPAIGN

In the second phase, we found out about the extent of exposure to the election related programmes, party election broadcasts and news on radio, and if the election programmes discussed earlier had an impact in terms of increasing their awareness and influencing voting behaviour.

THE FREQUENCY OF LISTENERSHIP TO NEWS AND CURRENT AFFAIRS PROGRAMMES DURING THE CAMPAIGN PERIOD.

In the second phase the listenership increased marginally for the news and current affairs programmes. 20.6% listened regularly and 35.3% heard sometimes, but 44.1% did not listen at all. We then investigated the specific types of election related programmes heard during the campaign period.

TABLE V.25 THE LISTENERSHIP OF ELECTION RELATED PROGRAMMES

Election Programmes	Yes		No		Don't Know	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Discussions on Elections	511	44.2	577	50.0	67	5.8
Election announcements for Voter education	516	44.7	573	49.6	66	5.7
Messages of CEO/CEC	296	25.6	728	63.1	131	11.3
Quiz programmes on elections	281	24.3	770	66.7	104	9.0
Messages of DGP	263	22.8	803	69.5	89	7.7

From the table V.25, discussions, election announcements and election related programmes over the radio were heard by over 40% of the respondents. The regular discussions in the current affairs programmes as well as those incorporated in the feature and special audience programmes were heard by 44.2% of respondents. The election messages in the form of slogans and announcements broadcast in Telugu, Urdu and English on main radio stations as well as part of other programmes were heard by 44.7%. The election messages of the CEC and the CEO (25.6%) and the DGP (22.8%) were heard by a quarter of the respondents.

The higher percentage in the 'not listened' and 'don't know' category could be in part attributed to low level of interest in

politics and also to the lack of awareness of programme schedules that are listed very briefly in newspapers which again is a limiting factor for the illiterate. Unlike the Radio Times or the TV Times in Britain, there is no publication that gives the full details of programme schedules and hence it could be a case of hit or miss. Lastly, there is a low response to current affairs programmes in general and many respondents in the three constituencies appeared to use radio more as an entertainment medium. AIR does not have any scientific methods by which programme ratings are conducted regularly to monitor the listenership of the programmes by which one could compare the present data with the listed figures. We next evaluate the PEB's.

PARTY ELECTION BROADCASTS (PEBs)

The respondents were asked if they heard the PEBs. Nearly half the respondents (46%), had heard election broadcasts. As seen in the table V.26, in all the three constituencies the PEBs were heard by a near equal percentage of respondents, 47.6% in Secunderabad, 46.3%, in Hyderabad and 44.5% in Nagarkurnool.

TABLE V.26 PARTY ELECTION BROADCASTS BY RADIO HEARD IN CONSTITUENCIES

Attitude variable	Secunderabad		Hyderabad		Nagarkurnool	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	172	47.6	229	46.3	130	44.5
No	147	40.7	234	47.3	160	53.5
Do not remember	29	8.0	29	5.8	6	2.0
No answer	13	3.6	3	0.6	3	1.0
Total	361	100	495	100	299	100

This was regarded as a good response by AIR staff at Hyderabad who felt that the PEBs were generally heard by the public, but were not sure of the extent to which they were heard as they did not have

any methods of finding the actual listenership of these programmes. As many respondents claimed to have heard the political party election broadcasts, it was found worthwhile to investigate which party broadcasts they heard.

TABLE V.27 LISTENERSHIP TO THE PARTY ELECTIONS BROADCASTS

Party Election Broadcasts	Yes		No		No Answer	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Cong.I	372	32.2	773	66.9	10	0.9
BJP	347	30.0	803	69.5	5	0.5
JD/NF	166	14.4	981	84.9	8	0.7
SJP	80	6.9	1067	92.4	8	0.6
TDP	169	14.6	979	84.8	7	0.6
CPM	50	4.3	1099	95.2	6	0.5
CPI	32	2.8	1114	96.6	7	0.6

The Cong.I and BJP broadcasts were the highest recalled PEBs with about a third of the respondents. As seen in table V.27, 32.2% of the respondents had heard the Cong.I broadcast by Rajiv Gandhi and a near equal, 30% heard L.K.Advani's BJP party election broadcast. Over 14% heard the PEBs of TDP and JD. The response to PEBs of Communist parties was poor (4.3% CPM, 2.8% CPI). The rise of the BJP independently as against the JD/NF of which it was a part in the 1989 elections was evident from the responses, while the popularity of JD/ NF, which had until recently been in the government appeared to have reduced. The broadcast was heard by only half of those who heard the BJP's and the Cong.I broadcasts. The PEBs of regional TDP, which had only two broadcasts unlike the national parties which had four, were heard by 14.6%, nearly the same as that of its alliance group, the JD/NF.

THE FREQUENCY OF LISTENING TO NEWS ON RADIO DURING ELECTIONS

Respondents were asked the extent to which they heard news broadcasts on radio during the election period. News was heard by nearly three fourths, with nearly a half listening sometimes to regularly. There were multiple responses to those hearing the Telugu, Hindi and English news.

TABLE V.28 RADIO NEWS LISTENED TO DURING THE ELECTIONS

Radio News	Regularly		Sometimes		Never	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Telugu News	340	29.4	456	39.5	359	31.1
Hindi News	164	14.2	340	29.4	651	56.4
English News	216	18.7	326	28.2	613	53.1

As seen in table V.28, Over two thirds (68.9%) of the respondents heard the Telugu news bulletins during the elections. Over a quarter (29.4%) heard these regularly and over one third (39.5%) sometimes. Less than half the respondents listened to news bulletins during the election period in English (46.9%) and Hindi (43.6%). News in English (18.7%) was heard by more respondents regularly than Hindi (14.2%). While over half the respondents did not listen to Hindi (56.4%) and English (53.1%) news bulletins less than a third (31.1%) did not listen to Telugu news bulletins.

TABLE V.29 ATTITUDE TO THE COVERAGE OF ELECTION NEWS ON RADIO

Attitude variable	N	%
Very Good	81	7.0
Adequate	547	47.4
Not at all good	127	11.0
No Opinion	298	25.8
No Answer	102	8.8
Total	1155	100

As table V.29 indicates, more than half respondents found the coverage given to election news as very good or adequate. Nearly half (47.4%) the respondents found the coverage adequate, 7% found it very good, a quarter (25.8%) had no opinion and 8.8% had no answer.

TABLE V.30 THE EXTENT TO WHICH ELECTION PROGRAMMES HELPED IN VOTING DECISION

Attitude Variable	N	%
A lot	53	4.6
A Fair Amount	621	53.8
Not at all	268	23.2
Don't Know	148	12.8
No Answer	65	5.6
Total	1155	100

As seen in table V.30, overall radio helped 58.4% of the respondents in their decision to vote. While over half (53.8%) of the respondents were helped a fair amount, 4.6% were helped a lot.

SUMMARY

91.8% of rural and 92.1% of urban respondents listen to radio. 77% listen to the news. Telugu news was heard by 68.9% of the respondents followed by 46.9% who heard English news and 43.6% who listened to Hindi news. 74.3% listened to entertainment programmes, 47.7% to current affairs programmes and 43.2% to discussions. Four fifths (80.8%) of the respondents depend on radio for election information. Election related broadcasts on radio were heard by

22.8%-44.7% of the respondents during the 1991 elections. About 30% of the respondents heard PEBs of Cong.I and BJP and less than half that number heard those of TDP & JD. Over half of the respondents (54.4%) found coverage of election news on radio satisfactory and significantly, over half of them (53.8%) were helped a fair amount and 4.6% a lot by radio in their decision to vote. In the constituencies the impact of radio was highest in Nagarkurnool. 8.8% said that radio programmes helped a lot. In Secunderabad radio helped a lot for 4% and a fair amount for 27.8% and Hyderabad only 2.5% found the radio programmes very useful and 16.4% found them fairly useful.

SECTION IV

THE USES AND IMPACT OF ELECTION PROGRAMMES ON TELEVISION

Television reaches 84.2% of the population covering an area of 62.9%. It is emerging as the most popular medium with its facility of sight and sound overcoming the illiteracy barrier. Several factors have contributed to this increase in the last three decades since its inception in 1959, with the rapid development of infrastructure at a pace of more than one new transmitter a day in 1984 amounting to 540 transmitters. Low cost black and white television sets have increased the ownership in urban households. National statistics claim a high ownership of TV sets with nearly half the urban households where income is over Rs.4000 (₹80) per month owning a TV set. With an estimated 2,738,000 domestic TVs, AP has the second largest ownership of TV sets in the south after TN. Television was owned by nearly three fourths (73.8%) of the respondents in this sample.

A study conducted nationally by ORG revealed a high viewership of television programmes, especially in the evenings. As shown in the table V.31 below, at the national level, 11% regularly watched the morning programmes, 45% watched in the afternoons and 52% watched

in the evenings. One third (38%) in the mornings, 24% in the afternoons and 28% in the evenings watch TV occasionally.

TABLE V.31 ALL INDIA PATTERN OF TELEVISION VIEWERSHIP DURING TRANSMISSIONS

Variable	Morning %	Afternoon %	Evenings %
Regular	11	45	52
Occasional	38	24	28
Less Often	12	17	8

Source: ORG survey in INFA year Book 90-91. All figures in percentages.

RESPONDENTS PATTERN OF TELEVISION VIEWERSHIP

TABLE V.32 FREQUENCY OF WATCHING TELEVISION AMONG RESPONDENTS

Variable	N	%
Regularly	735	63.6
Sometimes	257	22.3
Never	163	14.1
Total	1155	100

Among our respondents, 85.9% claimed that they watched television. Nearly two thirds, 63.6%, of respondents watch TV regularly and less than a quarter (22.3%) watch it sometimes. 14.1% did not watch TV. The regularity of watching TV at 63.6% was nearly the same as newspaper reading at 65.2%. (table V.32)

TABLE V.33 VIEWERSHIP OF TELEVISION IN THE CONSTITUENCIES

Attitude variable	Secunderabad		Hyderabad		Nagarkurnool	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Regularly	293	81.2	307	62.0	134	44.8
Sometimes	52	14.4	118	23.8	88	29.4
Never	16	4.4	70	14.2	77	25.8
Total	361	100	495	100	299	100

95.6% in Secunderabad, 85.8% in Hyderabad and 74.2% in Nagarkurnool watch TV. 81.2% of the Secunderabad respondents watch TV regularly while 62% in Hyderabad and 44.8% in Nagarkurnool do so. Around a quarter of the respondents in Nagarkurnool (29.4%) and Hyderabad (23.8%) and 14.4% of their counterparts in Secunderabad watch TV sometimes (table V.33).

VIEWERSHIP OF TELEVISION PROGRAMMES

What were the kinds of programmes generally watched on TV. Programmes were classified into categories in general terms and the frequency of viewing was sought for each category. Some of the programmes are presented at regular periodicities as weekly, fortnightly or monthly therefore the regularity of watching does not mean everyday but whenever the programmes were telecast.

TABLE V.34 PROGRAMMES GENERALLY WATCHED ON TELEVISION

TV Programmes	Regularly		Sometimes		Never		No Answer	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
News	728	63.0	223	19.3	191	16.5	13	1.1
Current Affairs	280	24.2	448	38.8	396	34.3	31	2.7
Film based	563	48.8	337	29.2	238	20.6	16	1.4
Dramas/ Plays	441	38.2	423	36.6	272	23.5	19	1.6
Agricultural Programmes*	103	8.9	360	31.2	564	56.6	38	3.3
Educational programmes	127	11.0	443	38.4	549	47.5	36	3.1
Others	548	47.4	432	37.4	125	10.8	50	4.4

* The viewership to agricultural programmes was low in part because of the urban bias in the sample.

The choice of programmes watched by respondents on television were similar to those heard on radio. As seen from table V.34, an

overwhelming four fifths (82.3%) of the respondents watched the news, around two thirds (63.0%) watched regularly and close to one fifths (19.3%) sometimes.

Over three quarters (78%) of the respondents watched films and film-based programmes, with nearly half (48.8%) being regular viewers and 29.2% occasional viewers. The dramas, generally serialised on TV followed third with nearly 74.8% with one fifths seeing them sometimes and the rest regularly.

The response to Current Affairs was comparatively low. The Current Affairs programmes comprise 6.4% of the national network output and 7.5% of regional telecasts. Close to two third (63%) watched the current affairs programmes, a quarter (24.2%) watched regularly and 38.8% watched sometimes. 28.9% men and 18.3% women watched the current affairs programmes and 39.7% women did not watch the current affairs compared to 30% men. The remaining, 37.7% men and 40.2% women watched them sometimes.

Agricultural programmes were least viewed. More than half (56.6%) of the respondents did not see them at all. Of those who do watch 31.2% do so sometimes and only 8.9% do so regularly. The viewership of the agricultural programmes was higher in the rural segments where 15% watched them regularly and 31% watched them sometimes. Around half 49.4% watched educational programmes, but only 11% watched them regularly. Educational programmes generally targeted at youth are telecast in the mornings and late afternoons were seen regularly by 11% and sometimes by 38.4% of the respondents.

The frequency of viewership confirms the habit of television viewing, as most programmes are watched sometimes or regularly, some more frequently than the others. This may be attributed in part to the fact, that in most homes TV is switched on at the beginning of the transmission and switched off at the end of the telecasts. Karan (1990) found that unlike cinema, TV does not

attract a captive audience and is watched along with performing other household activities in India.

EXPOSURE TO NEWSCASTS AND CURRENT AFFAIRS PROGRAMMES ON TELEVISION

Doordarshan has three news bulletins on the national network; one each in the morning, afternoon and evening in Hindi and English. The regional news is telecast once in the evenings in Telugu in AP for about 15 minutes. The national news telecasts on Doordarshan started from New Delhi in 1982 at 8.40 pm in Hindi and at 9.30 pm in English for a duration of 20 minutes each. The morning news bulletins in English and Hindi were telecast after Doordarshan started the morning transmission in February 1987. The afternoon programmes started on 26 January 1989 include short news bulletins in English and Hindi. The regional Telugu news, titled 'Vartalu' (News) is broadcast for 15 minutes at 7.30 pm. In total, there are three newscasts each in English and Hindi and one in Telugu in the evenings. Overall news comprises 16.3% of the coverage on the national network and 9.9% of the regional network.

We examined the exposure to news and current affairs programmes at the first stage and respondents were later tested on their exposure during the election period as vast coverage was given to poll information comprising of news, election analysis and discussions.

TABLE V.35 EXPOSURE TO NEWSCASTS ON TELEVISION DURING CAMPAIGN PERIOD

News	Regularly		Sometimes		Never		No Answer	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Telugu news	583	50.5	286	24.8	249	21.5	37	3.2
Hindi news	462	40.0	321	27.8	333	28.8	39	3.4
English news	453	39.2	290	25.1	370	32.0	42	3.7

As seen in table V.35, Telugu news bulletins were watched regularly by half (50.5%) of the respondents while 40% watched English and 39.2% watched Hindi news bulletins regularly. Overall Telugu news was watched by 75% of respondents as it was the mother tongue of nearly the same percent, and second, being local news, the interest level was also high. A similar trend was seen in the high readership of Telugu newspapers and the local English newspaper 'Deccan Chronicle'.

THE CURRENT AFFAIRS PROGRAMMES WATCHED BY RESPONDENTS

These programmes comprise of Parliament news reviews in Hindi and English which are telecast after the regular evening news bulletin on the national network transmission on the days when parliament meets. Issues of national interest are dealt with in detail in programmes like Focus and Aaj Kal. Other programmes relate to a general round up of national and world events such as, The world this week. We examined the viewership of some of the current affairs programmes that were telecast regularly in English, Telugu and Hindi to get a perspective on the general interest programmes and the political programmes. Many of election programmes were part of these current affairs programmes.

The frequency of viewing current affairs programmes was lower when compared to newscasts. Earlier we found that about a quarter (24.2%) of the respondents watched them regularly and 38.8% sometimes, but one third (34.3%) did not watch any of the current affairs programmes (table V.34). Some of the current affairs programmes had a good viewership as seen in table V.36.

TABLE V.36 VIEWERSHIP OF CURRENT AFFAIRS PROGRAMMES

Current Affairs programmes	Regularly		Sometimes		Never	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
The world this week	403	34.9	293	25.4	459	39.7
Parliament news	165	14.3	395	34.2	595	51.5
Sansad samachar (Parliament news in Hindi)	107	9.3	376	32.5	672	58.2
Focus	104	9.0	325	28.1	726	62.9
Saakshi (Witness)	371	32.1	288	25.0	496	42.9
Aaj Kal (Current Affairs)	108	9.3	309	26.8	738	63.9

Among those who watched current affairs programmes, The World this week an English programme reviewing world events presented by a noted psephologist Prannoy Roy was regularly watched by a third (34.9%) and sometimes watched by 25.4% of the respondents. It is one of the few programmes that comprehensively cover the national and international news events, sports and entertainment. Saakshi (Witness), a programme covering general events was regularly watched by 32.1% and sometimes by a quarter (25%) of the respondents. Parliament news in English was watched by 14.3% but the same in Hindi (Sansad samachar) was the one of the least viewed programmes along with Focus and the Hindi current affairs programmes Aaj kal (Today and Tomorrow) watched by less than 10% of the respondents. Parliament news and Focus programmes that are

telecast immediately after the news were rated low with more than half respondents not watching them at all.

It can be seen from the Table V.36, between 39.7% and 62.9% of the respondents did not see most of the current affairs programmes. Respondents were interested in news in general but appear little interested in getting more detailed information. Therefore it was doubtful if the election related programmes scheduled in the current affairs programmes would be watched. We further examine TV as a source of election information and its impact on voting behaviour.

TELEVISION AS A SOURCE OF INFORMATION FOR ELECTION NEWS

Focusing on the extensive coverage on elections that was planned for radio and TV to educate voters, we asked the respondents if television was a source of election information. Since the general exposure to television was high and news was rated the highest in terms of viewership in all the three languages, television appeared potentially as an important source of information.

As seen in table V.37, over a quarter (28.2%) of the respondents depended a lot on television for election information, this was only next to a third (34.3%) who depended a lot on newspapers while a fifth (22.4%) of the respondents depended a lot on radio.

TABLE V.37 GENDER WISE DEPENDENCY ON TV FOR ELECTION INFORMATION

Attitude variable	Men		Women		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
A lot	217	33.5	109	21.5	326	28.2
A fair amount	312	48.0	272	53.6	583	50.5
Not at all	89	13.7	76	15.0	165	14.3
No opinion	31	4.8	50	9.9	81	7.0
Total	649	100	506	100	1155	100

More men (33.5%) than women (21.5%), depended a lot on TV for election information. As observed in table V.37, half the women depended on television for election information. It could be argued that the figure of nearly 78.7% being dependent on television at varying degrees was high when compared to the level of viewership. It clearly indicated that all those watching television depended on it as a source of information. Moreover there was a low level of interest in the current affairs and political programmes, seen by only a quarter of the respondents. Such exaggerated responses are not uncommon in most surveys despite efforts made by the researcher to get as accurate data as possible. However, the same data was checked in the second phase to find the use and attitudes towards the election coverage during the campaign.

In the second phase of the survey, we examined the viewership of television with an emphasis on exposure to election related programmes. A new development since 1989 and 1991 elections was round the clock news bulletins during the declaration of results. As discussed earlier, These were accompanied by news analysis, voting trends, discussions and interviews.

THE VIEWERSHIP OF TELEVISION DURING ELECTIONS

EXPOSURE TO VOTER EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

We investigated the exposure to election related programmes both at national and state level during the six weeks period, 1 May, 1991 to 19 June, 1991, until the election results were declared. Television was the most popular medium with over 75% respondents regularly watching TV.

TABLE V. 38 THE FREQUENCY OF WATCHING NEWS AND CURRENT AFFAIRS PROGRAMMES

Attitude variable	N	%
Regularly	437	37.8
Sometimes	552	47.8
Never	161	14.0
No Answer	5	0.4
Total	1155	100

Table V.38 shows an even spread in the viewership of news and current affairs programmes. Over a third (37.8%) of the respondents watched regularly and close to half (47.8%) watched sometimes. We further asked if they watched the specific election programmes as discussed earlier.

THE VIEWERSHIP OF ELECTION RELATED PROGRAMMES

The listed programmes in question were: the discussion programmes, question and answer programmes (Quiz), voter education programmes and the talks, interviews with the CEC, DGP, CEO and other officials. The table V.39 gives the viewership of these programmes.

TABLE V.39 SHOWING THE VIEWERSHIP OF ELECTION RELATED PROGRAMMES ON TELEVISION.

Election Programmes	Yes		No		No Answer	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Election Discussions	655	56.7	479	41.5	21	1.8
Election Quiz	432	37.4	715	61.9	8	0.7
Election Announcements	585	50.6	558	48.4	12	1.0
CEC/CEO	430	37.2	714	61.8	11	1.0

DISCUSSIONS

Election discussions rated highest. More than half (56.7%) of the respondents had seen them either in English, Telugu and Hindi/Urdu on the national or regional broadcasts, some of which were part of the regular current affairs programmes and some were included in special programmes in Telugu and Urdu⁶. A maximum number of election related programmes were in the form of discussions.

ELECTION QUIZZES

There was a comparatively low viewership for election quiz programmes which were the question and answer sessions directed at youth and new voters. These were seen by more than a third (37.4%) of the respondents. The low viewership could be partly because there were few telecasts and these were telecast late in the evening between 10.30-11.00 pm.

ELECTION ANNOUNCEMENTS

Discussion programmes were followed by election announcements and were seen by half (50.6%) of the respondents. These were extensive, comprising of information on the rules and election guidelines for candidates to actually showing the voter how to vote in the

⁶In the Urdu programme 'Anjuman' and 'Elections our Responsibility' were important discussion programmes which focused on the individuals responsibility to vote as citizens.

elections. These two minute spots were shown frequently as announcements, animation films and 'pictures with captions.'

ELECTION MESSAGES AND TALKS WITH OFFICIALS INVOLVED IN THE CONDUCT OF ELECTIONS

As discussed earlier, extensive information was provided through messages and interviews with the CEC, CEO and DGP. These interviews were telecast on prime time on the national and regional networks and were seen by over a third (37.2%) of the respondents. T.N.Seshan, the CEC was embroiled in controversy over not only the rules governing elections but also on the postponement of the Punjab poll and on the dates for the second round of polls after the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi. The CEC was briefing the media daily on poll developments and changes in the electoral process. There was a wide coverage given to his briefings in the press, radio and TV. This was a new development in the Indian election scene.

PARTY ELECTION BROADCASTS

We next enquired if the respondents had seen the PEBs of the various political parties on television. These PEB's were telecast once in the prime time slot between 8.45 pm to 9.00 pm and 9.15 pm before the news for which the viewership was generally high. It was found that viewership of PEB's was high as nearly 68.2% of the respondents had seen them. Many respondents were able to recall the names of political parties,

TABLE V.40 PEBs SEEN BY THE RESPONDENTS

Political Party	Yes		NO	
	N	%	N	%
Cong.I	595	51.5	560	48.5
BJP	531	46.0	624	54.0
JD	312	27.0	843	73.0
SJP	215	18.6	940	81.4
CPI	103	8.9	1052	91.1
CPM	73	6.3	1082	93.7

As seen in Table V.40, the PEB of the late Cong.I leader, Rajiv Gandhi was seen by over half (51.5%) of the respondents followed by 46% who saw the BJP telecast of L.K Advani while the JD election telecast by V.P.Singh was seen by a little over a quarter (27%). Former Prime Minister Chandrashekhar's speech for the SJP was seen by 18.6%, while those of CPI and CPM were seen by less than 10% of the respondents. The recall of the PEBs could in part be attributed to the popularity and the ease of recognising leaders such as Rajiv Gandhi, L.K.Advani, V.P.Singh and Chandrashekhar, three of whom were former prime ministers. We further asked their opinion on the content and coverage given on TV.

OPINION ON THE COVERAGE GIVEN TO ELECTIONS ON TELEVISION

TABLE V.41 OPINION THE CONTENT OF ELECTION INFORMATION ON TELEVISION

Attitude variable	Frequency	Percentage
Very good	402	34.8
Good	404	35.0
Not very good	81	7.0
Not at all good	44	3.8
No Opinion	224	19.4
Total	1155	100

As seen in table V.41., over two third (69.8%) found the content of election information on television programmes good. A third (34.8%) found the content of programmes very good while an equal number (35%) found the content good. Nearly a fifth had no opinion. Only a very small percentage of 3.8% were not at all satisfied with the coverage. Most of the respondents gave similar opinion on the coverage given to election information on radio.

TABLE V.42 COVERAGE GIVEN TO ELECTION PROGRAMMES ON TELEVISION

Attitude variable	N	%
Too much	109	9.4
Adequate	664	57.5
Too Little	79	6.8
Don't Know	303	26.2
Total	1155	100

More than half (57.5%) of the respondents reported that the coverage given to election programmes on TV was adequate. While 9.4% found the election programmes on television excessive, 6.8% found them inadequate, and a quarter (26.2%) had no opinion. Given the above factors did TV help them in their voting decisions.

DID THE COVERAGE OF ELECTIONS HELP IN THE DECISION TO VOTE

In order to relate specific data we divided the question into the programmes that focused on elections such as; news and current affairs/discussions, voter education programmes and PEBs.

TABLE V.43 ELECTION PROGRAMMES THAT HELPED THE VOTERS IN THEIR DECISION MAKING

Attitude variable	News and Current Affairs		Voter Education Programmes		Party Election Broadcasts	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
A Lot	138	11.9	42	3.6	66	5.7
A Fair Amount	295	25.5	255	22.1	343	29.7
Not very much	290	25.1	304	26.3	203	17.6
Not at all	234	20.3	254	22.0	259	22.4
Don't Know	198	17.1	300	26.0	284	24.6

From the three tables V.41-43, several interesting facts relating to exposure, attitudes to content and coverage of election information and the extent to which the election related programmes helped the respondents in the final voting behaviour can be inferred.

As in table V.43, news and current affairs programmes helped the most: 11.9% said that these programmes helped a lot and 25.5% said a fair amount taking the overall figure to 37.4%.

The voter education programmes had a low response in terms of impact. They helped a lot for 3.6% and a fair amount for more than a fifth (22.1%). Close to three quarters (74.3%) were not particularly affected. 26% were either not sure or did not find them helpful at all (22%) and (26.3%) found them helpful to a very small degree.

PEBs drew very contrasting results between the exposure and impact. Though 70% had seen the PEBs only 5.7% stated that these leader telecasts had helped them a lot, 29.7% said a fair amount. The others were either not sure and a fifth (22.4%) were not at all

affected. In Secunderabad 7.3% found the PEBs to be very helpful compared to 6% in Hyderabad and 3.4% in Nagarkurnool.

However, one third agreed that the programmes had helped them a fair amount. From varying degrees from a lot to a fair amount, television programmes were being positively used by one third of the respondents in making up their minds for casting their vote.

TELEVISION WAS MOST SOUGHT AFTER DURING THE DECLARATION OF RESULTS

In the 1989 and 1991 general elections, the election results on television were extensively covered by noted psephologists, Prannoy Roy and Vinod Dua, commentating in English and Hindi respectively. The round-the-clock coverage was interspersed with discussions, analysis and interviews with the politicians, academics and media persons through an all India link with National Informatics Centre Network.

Considering the vast coverage given to elections in the mass media, we assessed which media was most sought after for obtaining the election results. An overwhelming 90% of the respondents named Cong.I as the party that had won the majority in the election. Though respondents marked various sources from which they obtained the election results, television was rated highest. 62%, came to know the results from TV a figure far ahead of those who came to know from newspapers (12%) and radio (14%). A small percentage had come to know through other sources like the local leaders (5%), government offices (4.4%) and (2.6%) from other government sources.

SUMMARY

During the 1991 elections, the electronic media of radio and television were extensively used for greater awareness of the political process at the pre and post election stages. The voter education programmes covered every aspect of the electoral process

including guidelines to candidates, voter registration, poll arrangements. They also showed them how to vote on the ballot paper. These were in the form of short announcements, discussion programmes, interviews, skits and animation films. Election news was covered in the newscasts and current affairs programmes in the national and regional networks.

Television in India with its extensive reach and ability of audio and video presentation, overcoming the barrier of literacy was emerging as an important channel of communication with diverse audiences. We found that the general viewership of TV was high with two thirds (63.6%) of the respondents watching TV every day of the week and about a quarter (22.3)% watching occasionally.

In most western democracies television is the focus of all election campaigning and forms the main channel of information about elections and sets the agenda for the elections. In India the system is not quite the same. First, TV in India is government controlled. Second it was a late entrant and is soon becoming a channel of information and education in the electoral process.

The voter educational programmes were seen by about half the respondents who saw many of the listed programmes. The PEBs were seen by an overwhelming 70% of the respondents with the maximum having seen the Cong.I and the BJP telecasts. Though there was a high viewership of the election related programmes and most of them were satisfied with the coverage given to election information, they helped a third of respondents and that too mostly a fair amount in making their voting decision.

The news in all the three languages was heard by over 50% of the respondents though Telugu news telecast once a day was watched more than the English and Hindi news telecasts three times a day. The current affairs programmes were less popular except the English programme, The world this week seen by a third of the respondents.

The round-the-clock coverage during the declaration of election results, through analysis and interviews was well received and appreciated by the people. Three fourths of the respondents of the present study rated the coverage of election results on TV as excellent or good and TV scored over other media as an excellent source of election information.

CHAPTER VI

THE USES AND IMPACT OF OTHER ELECTRONIC MEDIA DURING ELECTIONS

In this chapter, we discuss the use and impact of the alternative forms of electronic media - the video cassettes, audio cassettes and films that have been claimed to be the most effective forms of reaching diverse Indian audiences¹. In the case studies we found that almost all parties had used videos as part of their campaign strategies with some candidates making personal video cassettes. We emphasize the importance of feature and video films and audio cassettes as narrowcasting media, their use and applicability for information, education and entertainment and as techniques of political communication. Finally we report the findings from our survey on the impact of these electronic forms in aiding voting decisions.

Cinema had been a major chronicler of social change reflecting the changing ways of Indian life. It was the only means of mass entertainment until television changed the social context of home entertainment. Hartman, Patil and Dighe (1990) found that entertainment media played a major role in helping to promote receptiveness to new values and an openness to change. More importantly, for the rural and illiterate audiences, the moving images reaching through the mobile cinemas were the only source of information and entertainment.

¹ As stated by Dr. J.K Jain of Jain Studios, New Delhi, pioneer in making political video films in India and the spokespersons of political parties.

SECTION I

VIDEO CASSETTES AS 'NARROWCASTING MEDIA'

One of the promises of the New Electronic Media (NEM) is their ability to personalize mass communication by differentiating audiences through a system of 'narrowcasting' (Paley & Moffett, 1984). Unlike broadcasting, [narrowcasting is the process of targeting specific messages to specific audiences through mass communication technology.] In a diverse and heterogenous country like India, [video technology] has, in principle, vast uses and applicability; it is not only being used for leisure time entertainment at home but also serving educational and informational needs. [It has also become an important form of election communication in India.]

VIDEOS FOR EDUCATION, INFORMATION AND HOME ENTERTAINMENT

Unlike TV, where black and white sets have to some extent reached the lower income groups, the high cost of videos inhibited the penetration of videos in the general market. However, videos have become popular among the upper classes for home entertainment, mainly for watching feature films. Video libraries, with the latest Indian and foreign films have mushroomed in the upper class urban areas, along with video parlours set up in residential and commercial centres for watching feature films at discounted rates.

With the popularity of the videos, newspaper groups initiated the production of video magazines which covered news events, film gossip and business information. 'Newstrack' the news video from the publishers of India Today (Living Media India Pvt. Ltd.) was the first news and current events video and continues to be popular in India and abroad. Several others like 'Eyewitness' produced by The Hindustan Times and 'Observer News Channel' and business videos for specialised audiences are popular, but the movie videos have the highest circulation.

Understanding the potential of videos for narrowcasting information, the Government of India has also initiated several educational and information programmes which are screened through videos. Videos are also being used to facilitate both formal and informal education in schools and other institutions². Another interesting trend has been the use of video cassettes in temples involving taped religious ceremonies shown particularly at festival times. Within India and abroad, video cassettes are being used to spread the messages of religious leaders and the opportunity to view participants engaging in religious discourse. [With the multipurpose use of videos, it was not long before they were incorporated into election campaigns.]

[Videos are part of a 'high tech' communication revolution taking place in India.] While in most democracies, television is the most powerful medium of influence especially in US and Britain, in India television being government controlled does not allow any kind of real political debate. [Realising the effectiveness of the audio-visual medium and in an effort to compete with the state controlled radio and TV, political parties have developed audio cassettes and the Video-on-Wheels (VOWs).] [VOWs have become the most diverse political hard sell.] [Through the use of traditional and folk forms in an information and entertainment format, videos have been a distinctive Indian development and have contributed to the development of 'Entertainment culture' for political election campaigns.]

² Formal education programmes are produced and financed by the University Grants Commission to supplement the overall educational curriculum. Non formal education has focused on social and development education like traffic education, road safety, railway information and airport guides. Development education programmes have focused on family planning programmes, prevention of diseases, environment concerns and home safety. Corporate videos are extensively increasing product identification and increasing the outreach. Videos are also being used for the promotion of tourism in the country.

THE VIDEO-ON-WHEELS

[VOWs are vans with huge 300 inch screens mounted at the rear.] [These vans are fitted with sophisticated equipment, top of the line stereo systems, generators and projection systems which can throw up an image for an audience of over 5,000 at a time.] [These video vans go from village to village and on an average there are five to seven shows daily.] The party workers, through announcements using the bandwagon technique gather people from two to three villages and show the election films. Videos are also a means of informative entertainment during public meetings and rallies. [Screened before the arrival of political leaders (who invariably arrive late for the meetings) they help in keeping the audiences from drifting away.]

The leaders and parties also have their own multi-purpose election vans called by various names like Vishwamitra Prachara Rathams (Publicity vans), Ram Raths, Vijay Raths and Shaheen. [During the 1991 elections NTR put a fleet of 23 VOWs, one for each district in AP to spread the TDP message]. Cultural troupes accompanied each van. The video and audio equipment showed clips of NTR movies and songs, the strategy being, first to entertain and then to inform and persuade.

[Videos have been the natural outcome of the impact that cinema exerts on Indian life.] India is the largest producer of films³. Films are popular sources of information, education and entertainment and have vast reach, especially through the mobile cinemas. The production of films matches the demand as cinema viewing is highly popular among all levels of the population. Film

³ Over 800 feature films and 3000 short films are produced every year. Source: India Reference Annual 1994, Ministry of I & B, Government of India.

music, songs and film related programmes have been most popular on radio and television⁴.

[Films were first used during the 1971 elections in New Delhi where a one minute film was made by Jan Sangh and screened in the New Delhi theatres.] [Again in 1984 the Cong.I used a twenty five minute film on Indira Gandhi titled 'Maa' (mother). About 5000 prints of the film were distributed all over the country (Agarwal, 1989)] The assassination of the popular leader evoked an emotional response from the viewers. After sobbing over her death, the people were treated to [another film on Rajiv Gandhi 'Amethi Ka Suraj (Sun of Amethi-] Amethi is a constituency in UP which Rajiv Gandhi represented) which presented him as the successor who would take over from his mother⁵. The people of India accepted the new leader and gave Cong.I and Rajiv Gandhi an overwhelming victory in the 1984 elections.

[The successful use of films for elections in the 1984 elections set the trend for the use of films through the videos.] [The format of the films has changed, from the documentary biographies of leaders to popular entertainment oriented films.] The moving cinemas and 16 mm projectors have also been replaced by the VOWs. [This technique of using films for political purposes, called 'political campaign films' on VOWs reach audiences all over the country.]

⁴ In the Programmes Composition of National Network on Doordarshan, 24.6% of the programmes, the highest percentage comprises of film based programmes. Source: Television in India (Statistical) 1992.

⁵ The film depicted Indira Gandhi as a fond mother recalling many good qualities of her elder son - his resolve, patience, capacity for caring, small incidents from his childhood. The qualities that he inherited from his grandfather, father and Indira Gandhi herself. The last part of the film showed Rajiv Gandhi in an interview, answering questions about the issues, his hopes, dreams and plans of action for the country.

POLITICAL VIDEO FILMS AND THE 1991 INDIAN ELECTIONS

Political video films are a distinct and unique way of reaching a diverse and often illiterate population. [VOWs reach where the mass media do not.] In 1987, videos were used in the Haryana assembly elections, which it was claimed helped the non Congress parties win⁶. Pioneered by Dr.J.K.Jain, a medical doctor, of Jain Studios in New Delhi who claims videos to be the best tool of election campaigning in India. According to him, videos have the reach, punch and the programmatic stress. As they are targeted to the [audiences located in different regions and presented] [in local languages and dialects,] they form an excellent means of reaching the vast and varied audiences'⁷.

The video trends caught on in the 1989 general elections. There was an extensive usage of the new media - audio and video cassettes. Video technology played a prominent role in the opposition parties 1989 campaign and particularly that of BJP.] Jain Studios rented out 75 video vans to the BJP and in 1991 the number increased to 108 (Manuel, 1993). [By 1991 videos became standard features of election campaigns in India.] The Cong.I, BJP, JD, SJP and the Communist parties were all in the fray to demonstrate their election frontiers with some of them releasing as many as four or five different cassettes with different themes. Translated into several languages these videos reached voters all over the country. [Since political videos were not restricted by any censorship body, videos allowed the parties to compete with each other in mudslinging matches.]

Though the cost of making, duplicating and screening are high, its impact was claimed to be much greater when compared to the print media which reach a small segment of the literate voters, with the

⁶ As claimed in the promotion film of Jain Studios and the leaders of the Haryana assembly.

⁷ Interview with Dr.J.K. Jain in New Delhi, 12 June, 1991.

result that most political parties now put their money disproportionately into videos⁸.

CONTENT OF THE VIDEO FILMS

Political videos offered variety and flexibility to the election messages: [songs, style, theme, music, dance and drama] These films were accentuated with shots of harmonious village life, rustic artisans happily engrossed in their work, the leaders meeting people, holding babies, walking through the dust laden villages and towns listening to the grievances of the citizens.

[Political parties used the news and entertainment formats in the presentation, but the entertainment format was prevalent in most videos.] [Information included party policies, achievements and future programmes along with speeches and interviews with the leaders and supporters.] Songs and dances accompanied the information package. [Folk forms like folk music, theatre and dances using rural instruments were incorporated.] [Historical and religious themes] were extensively used in the political videos.

Political video films were of two kinds;- ['Theme films'] and ['Personality films'] Theme films mainly focused on the achievements of the parties, their policies and future programmes. Personality films were similar to the election bio-pics of leaders like Neil Kinnock in the 1987 British elections and John Major's 'The Journey' in the 1992 elections made for PEBs in Britain. Unlike these TV bio-pics, in India they were included in the videos. The characteristics of leaders were enumerated through music and songs.

[However, most of the films incorporated both these aspects in different parts in a single film.] Almost all video films had personality sketches of the leaders included in them. Another

⁸ As stated by party spokespersons; Anand Sharma of Cong.I, New Delhi and Kishen Reddy of BJP, Hyderabad)

[important aspect in the videos was the publicity for election symbols.] The lyrics of songs highlighted the historical or mythological references and people were urged to vote for the symbol⁹.

All the national political parties brought out a minimum of two video cassettes in the first phase of the elections. Cong.I, BJP, JD and TDP brought out new video cassettes for the second phase of the elections after the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi. Cong.I, BJP, SJP and TDP had used their political videos in the villages and towns of AP. The TDP video projected the alleged atrocities committed by the Congressmen in the aftermath of the assassination to counteract the sympathy wave that would affect the political fortunes of the party. The Cong.I video film made after the assassination traced the leadership of Rajiv Gandhi to his untimely end with shots of his assassination and the funeral that followed in order to persuade the electorate to vote for Cong.I to realize the dreams of the departed leader.

[Political video films had brought in the entertainment culture] but did they achieve the claimed magic? In our survey we evaluated the exposure and the impact of these video films and have placed emphasis in the [rural constituency of Nagarkurnool.] In the first phase of the survey we assessed the access to videos generally, and in the second we questioned the respondents on whether they saw the political videos.

⁹ The Cong.I symbol of 'Hand' was referred to as an experienced one and people were urged to join hands with the 'Hand' and strengthen the Cong.I and Rajiv Gandhi, similarly the BJP symbol of the lotus was projected to bring prosperity wherever it would bloom.

THE EXPOSURE TO ELECTION VIDEOS

ACCESS TO VIDEOS

Due to high cost, VCRS and VCPs are not within the reach of the average Indian and the viewership of videos is still low. As outlined in Chapter IV, in our sample, videos were not accessible to 81.6% of the respondents. In terms of viewership, it was found that half the respondents (50.9%) had never watched videos, 35.6% sometimes and only 13.3% watched regularly.

Ownership of course was not a criterion for watching political videos. Unlike other media, we did not ask the respondents if they depended on videos for election information as it was not a regular means of gaining information, the questions relating to election videos were asked in the second phase of the survey.

TABLE VI.1 VIEWERSHIP OF ELECTION VIDEOS IN URBAN AND RURAL AREAS

Location	Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%
Urban	122	14.8	702	85.2
Rural	103	31.1	228	68.9
Total	225	19.5	930	80.5

TABLE VI.2 ELECTION VIDEOS SEEN IN THREE CONSTITUENCIES

Constituencies	Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%
Secunderabad	47	13.0	314	87.0
Hyderabad	84	17.0	411	83.0
Nagarkurnool	94	31.4	205	68.6
Total/Ave %	225	19.5	930	80.5

As observed in Table VI.1, about a fifth of the sample (19.5%) of the entire sample had been exposed to political video films. In the urban sections 14.8% had seen the videos while in the rural constituencies double the percentage, 31.1% had seen the election videos of political parties. By constituency, the pattern of viewership was as claimed, higher exposure in the rural constituencies. We found that nearly a third (31.4%) of the respondents in Nagarkurnool had seen the political videos compared to 13% in Secunderabad and 17% in Hyderabad. More than two thirds of the rural and four fifths of the urban respondents were unaware of the election videos.

TABLE VI.3 PARTY VIDEOS SEEN BY RESPONDENTS IN URBAN - RURAL AREAS

Party	Urban		Rural		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Cong. I	67	8.1	59	17.8	127	11.0
BJP	98	11.9	74	22.3	174	15.1
TDP	35	4.2	62	18.7	101	8.7
JD	14	1.7	1	0.3	15	1.3

Among the political party videos, a majority of 15.1% of respondents saw the BJP videos, followed by 11% who saw Cong. I and

even less 8.7% saw the TDP video films. It was interesting to note the rise of the BJP in AP. From a virtually non-existent party in the state, it had gained vast popularity and prominence. As seen in table VI.3, in both rural and urban areas, BJP videos were seen more than others. More than a fifth (22.3%) of the rural and 11.9% of urban respondents had seen the BJP videos. Double the rural respondents (17.8%) compared to the 8.1% urban respondents saw the Cong.I videos, but a larger margin was seen in the TDP videos. Four times more rural (18.7%) respondents saw the TDP videos compared to 4.2% urban respondents. The respondents were asked if the video cassettes helped them in their voting decision.

IMPACT OF THE VIDEOS ON VOTING DECISION

TABLE VI.4 EXTENT TO WHICH VIDEOS HELPED IN VOTING DECISIONS

Attitude variable	Number	Percentage
A lot	48	4.2
A fair amount	181	15.7
Not very much	91	7.9
Not at all	270	23.3
Don't Know/No Answer	565	48.9
Total	1155	100

TABLE VI.5 INFLUENCE OF VIDEOS ON URBAN AND RURAL RESPONDENTS

Attitude variable	Urban		Rural	
	N	%	N	%
A Lot	23	2.8	25	7.6
A fair amount	106	12.8	75	22.6
Not very much	54	6.6	37	11.2
Not at all	234	28.4	36	10.9
Don't Know/No answer	407	49.4	158	47.7
Total	824	100	331	100

A sizeable chunk of nearly half (48.9%) (49.4% urban and 47.7% rural respondents) were unsure about videos influencing voting decision. As in Table VI.4 and VI.5, only 4.2% reported that videos helped a lot, 15.7% said a fair amount, 7.9% were not influenced much while nearly a quarter 23.4% were not at all influenced. Overall, videos appear not to have significantly aided voting decision. While there was not much of a difference between urban (49.4%) and rural (47.7%) in the don't know category, response patterns in other categories show that videos have had significantly greater impact on voting decisions of rural respondents. While 2.8% urban respondents reported 'a lot', there were 7.6% rural respondents who joined them. In the 'a fair amount' category, there were 22.7% rural against 12.9% urban respondents. In the 'not at all' category there were only 10.9% rural respondents against a significant 28.4% urban respondents.

SECTION II

AUDIO CASSETTES AS 'NARROWCASTING MEDIA'

Audio cassettes were another electronic development as an alternative to the government controlled radio. [The audio cassettes of speeches and songs as secondary form of election campaigning from loud speakers atop buildings, electric poles, vehicles and trees added to the election festivities and the cacophony. In India, it is common practice to have songs and music during religious festivals, weddings and social occasions. It is difficult for one not to hear these audio cassettes because of their high volume and continuous play.]

Audio cassettes mainly comprised of speeches and songs. [The speeches were those of party leaders and candidates that were generally recorded during public meetings.] [These were edited, copied, sometimes translated and distributed all over the country.] [Apart from these, the speeches of religious leaders especially those of the firebrand Sadhvi Rithambara were used to gain support for the BJP.]

[The party songs highlighted the characteristics of the party and leaders, the symbol, the strategies and the programmes of the party.] [They included patriotic and devotional songs and also pop songs with western music.] Most of the songs were [parodies of popular film tunes] and a number of popular musicians and singers from the film world wrote, composed the music and sang the lyrics.

[Almost all political parties made audio cassettes]. The party songs offered a wide variety: Cong.I used pop singer Parvati Khan to woo the younger elite generation while BJP used folk and devotional songs to glorify the party and the symbol. The JD cassette produced by a popular Hindi film star Raj Babbar, had parodies of familiar film songs and quawallis (songs in Urdu). TDP cassettes had a variety of party and film songs from NTR's movies and his speeches.

(The audio cassettes were extensively copied and distributed all over the country.) Copies numbered between 5,000 to 50,000. Some audio cassettes were also played from homes and commercial centres of party supporters. [In some places these songs were accompanied by street plays and folk theatre.] We have reviewed some of the contents of the audio cassettes of the political parties in the case studies. In the survey we investigated the exposure to these cassettes and whether they helped in voting decisions.

AUDIO CASSETTES HEARD BY THE RESPONDENTS

[The audio cassettes were heard by nearly half (45.4%), of the respondents,] slightly [higher by the rural (46.1%) than the urban (45.1%) respondents.] [A third of the respondents were able to recall the names of the political parties whose audio cassettes they had heard.]

TABLE VI.6 PARTY AUDIO CASSETTES HEARD BY THE RESPONDENTS

Political Party	Yes*		No	
	N	%	N	%
Cong.I	410	35.5	745	64.5
BJP	459	39.7	696	60.3
TDP	380	32.9	775	67.1
MIM	126	10.9	1029	89.1
JD	77	6.7	1078	93.3
SJP	26	2.3	1129	97.7

*Includes multiple answers

As seen in the above table VI.6, respondents had heard the audio cassettes of more than one party. Over a third of the respondents heard the audio cassettes of BJP. Cong.I and TDP. The BJP audios were heard by the largest number (39.7%) of respondents, followed by Cong.I (35.5%) and TDP (32.9%). A significant 10.9% heard the

MIM audios. BJP had made the maximum number (about five to seven) of audio cassettes using the speeches of leaders like L.K.Advani, A.B.Vajpayee and Murli Manohar Joshi, as well as the speeches of religious leaders. These were translated into various languages and distributed extensively. Similarly, the Cong.I which had released four audio cassettes of Rajiv Gandhi's speeches and party songs. A small percentage of less than ten had heard the SJP and JD audios whose advertising in the state was limited as the TDP was in alliance with NF and the SJP was virtually non existent. Again the listenership to audio cassettes was mainly incidental as one hears of them at home, (when played on loud speakers in the street) or in the market place.

TABLE VI.7 THE IMPACT OF AUDIO CASSETTES ON URBAN AND RURAL RESPONDENTS

Attitude Variable	Urban		Rural		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
A Lot	21	2.5	29	8.8	50	4.3
A fair amount	169	20.5	46	13.9	215	18.6
Not very much	182	22.1	74	23.4	256	22.2
Not at all	205	24.9	78	23.6	283	24.5
Don't Know	135	16.4	43	13.0	178	15.4
No answer	112	13.6	61	18.4	173	14.9
Total	824	100	331	100	1155	100

Though audio tapes were heard by 41.4% as part of the urban and rural campaign strategies, they had a partial influence on the voters. This could be in part attributed to the fact that listening to the audio cassettes was incidental and people did not listen to them with complete attention or interest and hence the level of influence was low as evidenced by three fourths of the respondents.

As seen in table VI.7, 4.3% said that audio cassettes helped them a lot and a fair amount for 18.6% of the respondents. About a fifth (22.5%) did not find these helpful. More than two thirds of the rural respondents (8.8%) found the audios very useful compared to only 2.5% of the urban respondents. On the other hand audios helped 20.5% urban respondents a fair amount compared to 13.9% rural respondents.

Overall, less than a quarter of the respondents viewed the videos of any political party. Even in the total rural constituency of Nagarkurnool there was very poor exposure. However the impact depended on exposure. It was high among those who had seen the videos. Of these two media, audio cassettes were found to be very useful to a fifth of those who heard, while the videos had helped most of the respondents who saw them. Therefore, these audio visual media, using the information and entertainment format were popular and were effective, given the fact that they reached the audiences. We next evaluate the role of films for political communication.

SECTION III

FEATURE FILMS FOR POLITICAL COMMUNICATION

In India, films are a major source of entertainment and are claimed to be the best vote catchers¹⁰. In recent years a number of film and TV stars, similar to those in the West have gained entry into politics and have provided glamour to the portals of state assemblies and parliament. [In India, as film stars entered the political arena, films became an important medium of political communication: documentary, feature and video films started being used for communicating electoral strategies.] Film stars have gained access into the political arena and converted their popularity at the box office into votes in the ballot boxes. Feature films were

¹⁰ The Hindu, Hyderabad, 11 May, 1991.

used during election campaigns and film and television stars campaigned extensively during the 1991 elections.

[Films have become the sources of political propaganda especially with the rise in the number of films making political commentaries and satires.] Until recently the movies in Kerala and TN dominated such themes, but in recent years Hindi and Telugu films have reflected similar themes. In the southern states of Tamil Nadu and AP, film stars have acquired their popular image through the roles they portrayed in films.

FILMS AND POLITICS

[The merging of films and politics can be traced to south Indian films as early as the 1950s in Tamil Nadu where parties and movements converted films into propaganda forms by inserting political ideologies, symbols and allegories.] Several scholars, Hardgrave (1965 and 1975), Barnett (1976) and Sivathamby (1981) (Pentane, 1992) have studied cinema connections in Dravidian politics.

[In India, film stars entered politics in 1977 with the formation of the 'National Party' by a noted Hindi film star Dev Anand. He unsuccessfully contested the 1977 elections and the party also faded away. However, in the south, in TN, M.G.Ramachandran (MGR) was the first matinee idol to build a steady support for himself through his mass popularity and similarly in later years NTR emerged successful in AP.]

Star appeal at election time can be partly attributed to the cynical appraisal that the illiterate masses derive their only entertainment from the hugely captivating Indian film industry, and are incapable of distinguishing between the talents required for an actor and a politician. Further, cynicism would suggest that there is little difference, with regard to AP and TN as it has been found

that the masses literally identified the actors with the roles they played (Dickey, 1993).

During the 1991 election, the success of film and television stars as candidates proved to some extent that the popularity gained through films and TV could not be a springboard to parliament but also depended on the popularity of the party they represented. It was evidenced when Deepika Chikhila and Arvind Trivedi, the 'Sita' and 'Ravana' (the Demon God) from the tele-serial 'Ramayana' with the popular support for the BJP in the Gujarat won the elections from constituencies in the state. Deepika was elected from Baroda while Trivedi won from Sabarkantha defeating Mahatma Gandhi's grandson Rajmohan Gandhi of JD. A reverse trend was seen in AP when three popular Cong.I stars lost the elections.

[Films have also contributed significantly to 'personality politics'.] [The political 'personality' in this formulation is someone who inspires votes not because of political record, stand on issues or even communal affiliation, but because of the popularity based on personal attractiveness, family background or physical features and also the roles enacted as in the case of MGR and NTR.] MGR ruled Tamil Nadu for over a decade. After his death the leadership was taken up by Jayalalitha, the present Chief Minister, also a former film star. In AP, NTR the film hero turned politician ruled as the Chief Minister for over five years.

THE USE OF FILM STARS AND FILMS FOR POLITICAL SUPPORT

In TN the strategy was to use stars, first as campaigners and later as candidates. This was evidenced by MGR, who first campaigned for the party and later gained popularity through the 'political roles' that he portrayed, which finally led him into politics and he continued to dominate the political scene until his death in 1987. Through films, the ideals he suggested and espoused could be achieved only through a leader like MGR and 'eventually people

began to think the leader whom they wanted was not somebody like MGR but MGR himself' (Sivathamby, 1981). In 1977 during the state elections, he won a majority and became the chief minister. In AP, NTR followed MGR to establish himself as a successful politician. The rise of NTR could be traced to his multi-faceted film performances, especially the mythological roles that he played and his use of films for election campaigns.

THE RISE OF NTR AND THE ROLE OF FILMS IN ANDHRA PRADESH

NTR entered politics when he formed the TDP in 1982. He followed in the same lines as MGR and claimed MGR as his elder brother (Elder & Schmittehenner, 1985). NTR through his popularity aroused the people of AP to support the TDP and within two years became the chief minister.

According to NTR, 'Films are a medium of the peoples' art and it is the peoples' medium. It is the most powerful medium that has been invented by man. It can be utilized in a variety of ways to educate, entertain, enlighten, instruct and elevate people'¹¹. The voter identification with NTR - the politician, was with his screen personage especially in rural Andhra. NTR's identification with the mythological characters had been a major factor in his sweeping the polls. He had played virtually every mythological character, from Rama to Duryodhana and to Ravana, the demon king in the epic Ramayana. Elder and Schmittehenner (1985) state that NTR is thought to have actually acquired the virtues of the gods in the process of portraying them. It was widely known that NTR was worshipped as god as people in large numbers performed religious rituals in front of him. Even after taking over as the chief minister, NTR continued to be associated with films. His mythological roles have been extremely successful in gaining

¹¹Speech at the inauguration of Festival of Indian Panorama Films 1985 at Hyderabad, 16 August 1985. Speeches of NTR, Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh. Vol.III. Published by Government of Andhra Pradesh.

popularity. During the 1989-91 elections, TDP continued to use films for political communication, with the strategy being first entertain and then inform.

POLITICAL FILMS: CONTENT AND IMPACT

[In AP, films and film stars have made the state a political film industry where the politicians used film actors and films for political propaganda.] [Films have been used in various ways: to project and glorify leaders, raise issues and allegations against political parties and leaders and to open up new issues. Films became the focus of political battles.]

[Feature films were extensively used for political communication.] While TDP released films on the exploitations of the Cong.I, the Cong.I released two films that criticised NTR and his policies. The first of these films 'Kaliyuga Vishwamitra (present day Vishwamitra) was a parody to NTR's 'Brahmarishi Vishwamitra'. The second 'Gandipeta Rahasyam' (Rahasyam meaning the inside story of Gandipeta, the TDP headquarters) revealed the irregularities and misuse of power by the NTR government. Another popular pro-Cong.I actor Krishna appealed to the masses to throw NTR out of power. The Cong.I claimed with pride that both these films were highly successful and the best way to popularize the misdeeds of NTR and win back their lost ground¹².

During the 1991 elections, there was a cinematic battle for support. A 22 minute film called 'Chaitanya Ratham' in which NTR's son Balkrishna, traced the birth of TDP and enumerated the achievements of the party was extensively screened through the VOWs. The screening of NTRs 'Brahmarishi Vishwamitra' was the highlight of TDPs publicity drive. TDP not only used films as part

¹² Interview with Cong.I spokesperson, K. Keshav Rao in Hyderabad, 13 June, 1991.

of the video campaign but also used documentary films¹³ shown in cinema houses in AP.

The popularity of stars portraying religious characters assumed greater significance as actors and actresses of the television serials Ramayana and Mahabharatha, campaigned for the parties. In Baroda, thousands gathered to see the 'reel life Sita' who stood for the elections. For TV actress, Deepika Chikhila a large tribal population of the constituency 'worshipped her as Sita'. Though these may be superficial mythological references, one cannot ignore the cultural factors that have influenced the developments in the Indian social and political systems. However, star popularity and image helped gain access into the political arena but was not the only criteria for winning elections. It was also dependent on the parties that the stars represented and the overall popular support for the parties.

STAR RALLIES AND STAR CANDIDATES

Politicians have used the popular image of film stars as candidates and for campaigning during elections. However, the popularity of the film stars has been misused to a large extent when political parties bereft of popular candidates turned to using film and television stars whom they considered safe candidates to battle against senior politicians. [In 1984 Amitabh Bachchan, the most popular Hindi film superstar and a friend of Rajiv Gandhi, contested and won the Allahabad constituency in UP defeating A.B.Vajpayee, a veteran BJP leader. In 1991, Rajesh Khanna another popular Hindi film actor represented Cong.I against BJP leader L.K Advani in New Delhi in a closely contested election.] Since all the

¹³ The documentaries projected NTR as an able and great leader and saviour of the poor. It highlighted the various development schemes especially the Rs.2 (₹0.4) per kilogram rice scheme and the distribution of low cost clothes that were implemented while NTR was in government.

parties roped in film stars, one could not point to any single party.

In 1991, eleven film and TV stars were candidates for the parliament elections and four contested from the state assemblies. In AP, the major arena for star wars, three popular stars were in the electoral fray. Jamuna, the sitting MP from Rajamundry, Krishnam Raju from Narsapur and Krishna from Eluru. However, star popularity did not help them win parliamentary seats and some of them failed to regain their seats won in the earlier elections.

Two of the three candidates nominated by the BJP won the elections both from Gujarat where BJP won more than three fourths of the parliamentary seats. In Maharashtra, Cong.I was able to retain only one seat, that of Sunil Dutt from Bombay-north west who won the seat for the third time (He has recently resigned as MP after the bombings and outbreak of communal violence in Bombay). Rajesh Khanna lost by a mere 1589 votes to L.K.Advani in New Delhi.

In the south the glamour of the film world failed to win three seats for Cong.I in AP. Therefore, the success acquired through films was not enough to gain political support, but was also in part dependent on the popularity of the party in the constituency or state they represented, as evidenced by the support for BJP in Gujarat and the reverse in AP.

SUMMARY

The content and use of audio-visual media have given a cultural dimension to the political system in the country. A lot of emphasis was placed on the use of audio and video cassettes by all political parties as alternatives to the government controlled radio and television. Though audio and video cassettes were regarded as powerful media by all political parties and videos were claimed to be the major source of political mobilization, in the present study it was quite the contrary to the expectations in terms of reach and

exposure. However, in future if videos, as predicted, are to be the medium for the people towards political enlightenment (and manipulation), it would require the skill of the voters to differentiate between the values, claims and characteristics of each party and not to be carried away by emotional symbolism and persuasive appeals which have been used in abundance by the political parties to swing the voters favourably towards electoral victories.

The role of films and film stars have been analyzed at two levels; one, the impact that cinema (the moving image on the illiterate and rural masses) exerts on the social life of the individuals, second, the roles played by the stars have had a greater effect in the building up of the image, mostly associated with roles. This may be more importantly seen in the actors who have had a longer stay in politics like MGR and NTR and gained popularity from the uneducated and poorer sections who form a large segment of the electorate.

However, we find that though much is reported in the press on the film stars turning to politics, we find that a mere 2% of the candidates were from the cinema world. However a lot of importance is given because of the media coverage given to such personalities. However, we find that the popularity acquired from films alone could not sustain the political fortunes of many candidates. The 1991 results revealed that film stars as candidates could not win seats on their star popularity alone, but were also dependent on the party that they represented. The popularity of star politicians was sustained at the regional level in TN and AP. Only if a star politician could rise above regional representation, then it could be possible for India to expect a Ronald Reagan as the prime minister of the country.

CHAPTER VII

THE USES AND IMPACT OF OUTDOOR FORMS OF POLITICAL COMMUNICATION

Posters, banners, wall writings and symbol displays are an indication of imminent elections in India. They form an essential part of reminder media along with mass and other electronic forms of campaigning. In the present chapter, we evaluate the uses of various forms of outdoor media; posters, handbills, wall writings, symbol displays and cardboard cutouts as sources of communication and report the findings from our survey on the voters' perceptions and dependence on these media.

SECTION I

USE OF PRINTED LITERATURE AS SOURCES OF INFORMATION, EDUCATION AND MOTIVATION

The importance of printed literature can be gauged by its successful use by government for creating awareness of the national programmes. The Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity (DAVP) under the Ministry of I & B, launches multi - media publicity campaigns to inform, educate and motivate people to participate in national programmes for development¹. The publicity is through radio and TV, exhibitions and other print and outdoor forms like posters, wall paintings, hoardings, cinema slides, kiosks, bus/ train/ tramcar panels, tin stencils and stickers.

During the elections, DAVP had launched an advertising campaign to promote greater awareness of the electoral process. As discussed in Chapter III, Section V, apart from the electronic media, the government campaign in 1991 comprised of three posters that aimed

¹ India Year Book 1993, Ministry of I & B, Government of India.

at educating voters on the electoral process. These included persuading voters to exercise their franchise as Indian citizens, cautioning them against being led away by vote seekers and encouraging them to vote freely without being swayed by incentives like transport, money or gifts offered by political parties. These posters were displayed at all government offices, schools and community centres. We discuss the various outdoor media that were used by political parties during the 1991 elections.

SECTION II

POSTERS

Posters formed an important part of election communication to communicate short messages with colourful visuals. They generally highlighted important issues and characteristics of the party and helped in the recognition of leaders, candidates and party symbols - essential for party identification. They also formed the cheapest and easiest means of reaching larger audiences on a limited budget. Posters offered a greater flexibility as they were translated into various languages and printed at regional offices or state units. The sizes of posters varied; from 2' X 2' to 8' X 10' which were put up in spaces erected for movie posters.

Party election posters reached remote villages and were pasted on walls, bus stops, kiosks, schools, government offices, shops, party offices and also at the homes of party supporters. The viewing of these posters is done while passing through the streets and it is not uncommon to find people stopping and gazing at posters. They were generally seen and understood by the literate and the semiliterate. A question by the researcher to an illiterate woman on the issue of understanding a BJP poster pasted on her house wall in a village revealed that her ten year old school-going son read and explained and she in turn passed the message on.

PARTY POSTERS USED DURING THE 1991 GENERAL ELECTIONS

In 1991, all political parties invested extensively in posters. The content varied from the display of the party symbol accompanying the slogan to the party's programmes and promises. Cong.I brought out five to six posters highlighting its strategy of 'Stability'. After the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi, they ran a poster campaign with visuals of the late Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi to arouse sympathy. Three posters with the slogan of 'Maa Bete ka yeh Balidaan, Yaad kare Hindustan' (Let the country remember the sacrifice of the mother and son) urged the voters to vote for Cong.I to realize the dreams of Rajiv Gandhi. These were translated into several languages and released all over the country.

The BJP posters were varied, the party printed posters tailored to national, regional and constituency levels. As earlier discussed, there were large life size posters of party leaders. L.K.Advani, Murli Manohar Joshi and A.B.Vajpayee at party offices. Smaller posters had visuals of party leaders and slogans for ushering in 'Ram Rajya' into the country. SJP printed four posters which highlighted their six point programme and carried the visuals of the party leaders, Devi Lal and Chandrashekar.

In a general survey of the constituencies under study, we found that in Nagarkurnool there were several BJP, TDP and Cong.I posters. Posters of saffron clad NTR with the symbol of the cycle were found along strategic locations in cities, towns and villages. In Secunderabad, BJP posters outnumbered the JD/NF and Cong.I posters. In Hyderabad, BJP and MIM posters were displayed on street lamps, mosques, temples and grocery shops. MIM invested extensively in posters, visuals of Salahuddin Owaisi and the MIM symbol covered entire walls. We investigated voters' perceptions on party posters and the extent to which voters' would look at them as sources of election communication.

POSTERS AS A SOURCE OF ELECTION INFORMATION

In the first phase we asked the respondents if they would look at posters during elections. Later, we compared the impact of these reminder media used by political parties for election information. As seen in table VII.1, about one fifth (21.6%) of the respondents sought posters for election information (8.7% stated a lot and 12.9% a fair amount). More than a third (35.5%) of the respondents were not inclined to look at them or had no opinion and 35% said that they would look a little at the posters (table VII.1).

TABLE VII.1 MEN AND WOMEN WHO WERE LIKELY TO LOOK AT ELECTION POSTERS

Attitude variable	Men		Women		Total	
A lot	79	12.2	22	4.4	101	8.7
A fair amount	88	13.6	61	12.1	149	12.9
A little	249	38.4	155	30.6	404	35.0
Not at all	199	30.6	211	41.8	410	35.5
No opinion	34	5.2	57	11.1	91	7.9
Total	649	100	506	100	1155	100

More men than women were inclined to look at posters; 12.2% men and 4.4% women depended a lot on posters, though there was less difference between men and women at the average level of fair amount and a little. On the whole, more than half (52.9%) women and a third (35.8%) men were not likely to look at posters at all or had no opinion.

**TABLE VII.2 CONSTITUENCY WISE DEPENDENCE ON POSTERS
FOR ELECTION INFORMATION**

Attitude variable	Secunderabad		Hyderabad		Nagarkurnool	
A lot	37	10.2	46	9.3	18	6.1
A fair amount	39	10.8	66	13.3	44	14.8
A little	124	34.3	183	37.0	97	32.5
Not at all	140	38.6	150	30.4	121	40.3
No opinion	21	6.1	50	9.9	19	6.3
Total	361	100	495	100	299	100

About half the respondents from each constituency were likely to look at posters in varying degrees. 10.2%, the highest number of respondents from urban Secunderabad were inclined to look a lot at posters followed closely by those in Hyderabad with 9.3% and 6.1% in Nagarkurnool. 14.8% of the respondents in Nagarkurnool said they would look a fair amount and 32.5% a little.

POSTERS RECALLED BY RESPONDENTS

In the second wave we investigated if the respondents had seen the party posters and could name the parties. An overwhelming 80.3% respondents replied in the positive. As seen in table VII.3, there was a high response in all the three constituencies with 82.9% having seen the posters in Secunderabad. Posters did not catch the attention of about a fifth or less number of the respondents in all the three constituencies. Many of the respondents could recall the posters of political parties that they had seen.

TABLE VII.3 PARTY POSTERS SEEN BY RESPONDENTS IN THE CONSTITUENCIES

Constituency	Yes		No		No Answer	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Secunderabad	299	82.9	55	15.2	7	1.9
Hyderabad	393	79.4	99	20.0	3	0.6
Nagarkurnool	236	78.9	57	19.1	6	2.0
Total/Ave %	928	80.3	211	18.3	16	1.4

TABLE VII.4 PARTY POSTERS SEEN BY RESPONDENTS

Political Party	Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%
Cong. I	751	65.0	404	35.0
BJP	798	69.3	357	30.7
TDP	691	60.0	464	40.0
MIM	419	36.3	736	63.7
JD	192	16.6	963	83.4
SJP	95	8.2	1060	91.8

As seen in table VII.4, about two thirds (69.3%) of the respondents saw the BJP posters followed by 65% who saw the Cong.I.posters. TDP posters were seen by 60% and MIM by 36.3%. BJP, from a near non-existent party in the state had made its presence in a very competitive way with Cong.I and TDP. MIMs posters concentrated in Hyderabad had a good response mainly from the constituency.

TABLE VII.5 THE EXTENT TO WHICH POSTERS REMINDED VOTERS ABOUT PARTIES

Attitude variable	Number	Percentage
A Lot	104	9.1
Somewhat	557	48.6
Not at all	436	38.1
No answer	58	4.2
Total	1155	100

As seen in table VII.5, More than half (57.7%) of respondents were reminded about parties from posters. However, only 9.1% were reminded a lot. Significantly, 38.1% were not at all reminded. Interestingly a sum of 'somewhat' and 'not at all' of 86.7% does not speak highly of party posters. On the other hand the sum of 'a lot' and 'somewhat' amounting to 57.7%, represents the need and use of such campaign material.

SECTION III

CAMPAIGN LITERATURE- HANDBILLS AND LEAFLETS

Leafleteering forms a cheap and effective form of election communication. The distribution of campaign literature like handbills, leaflets, appeals and printed letters are part of political, industrial, university or college election campaigns.

During general elections, with the increase in the number of political parties and growth in population there has been an increase in the number of persons actually receiving the campaign material. Eldersveld and Ahmed (1978), in their study reported that 46% had received campaign literature and in 1977 Kar and Chaudary (1992) reported that 60.9% of the voters under study had received election material.

In 1991, thousands of leaflets were distributed at the national, regional and local levels during public meetings, door to-door campaigns, from election stalls, at traffic intersections and some were pasted on walls. The printed literature ranged from single pieces of paper to well documented long brochures. The contents highlighted the policies and achievements of parties as well as their future programmes with facts and figures, sometimes in comparison with other parties. Though most of these were formatted on general issues, some were more personalised in the form of letters addressed as 'Dear friend or Dear voter.....

Siriskar (1973) states that these campaign materials which inform voters about the candidates qualities and party programmes seek to influence the more articulate and educated sections of voters. However, observing the extensive distribution of these campaign materials at public places, to the educated or the uneducated, we found that parties did not consider it important that people should actually read them and it was enough if people looked at them, recognised the symbol and knew which party had made an effort to give them. Hence, it was not surprising that all parties distributed campaign literature extensively in urban and rural areas even though there was a great deal of wastage. Moreover, parties over years of electioneering believe that voters have come to expect such information and it was inevitable that despite using other forms, parties should continue to use them.

As there was a virtual saturation in the distribution of campaign material, we first investigated the extent to which voters depended on handbills as sources of information, and if they helped them in their electoral behaviour. It was found that 40.5% respondents were positively inclined towards looking at handbills - 5.6% depended a lot, 7.3% a fair amount and 27.6% a little. More men, (45%), than women (35%) were likely to look at campaign literature (Table VII.6)

TABLE VII.6 MEN AND WOMEN WHO WOULD LOOK AT HANDBILLS

Attitude variable	Men		Women		Total	
A lot	36	5.6	29	5.7	65	5.6
A fair amount	64	9.9	20	4.0	84	7.3
A little	191	29.5	128	25.3	319	27.6
Not at all	268	41.1	234	46.2	502	43.5
No opinion	90	13.9	95	18.8	185	16.0
Total	649	100	506	100	1155	100

TABLE VII.7 CONSTITUENCY WISE DEPENDENCE ON HANDBILLS FOR ELECTION INFORMATION.

Attitude variable	Secunderabad		Hyderabad		Nagarkurnool	
A lot	12	3.3	26	5.3	27	8.9
A fair amount	32	9.0	33	6.7	19	6.4
A little	83	23.1	168	33.9	68	22.9
Not at all	181	50.1	178	35.8	142	47.6
No opinion	53	14.5	90	18.3	43	14.2
Total	361	100	495	100	299	100

As indicated in table VII.7, in the constituencies, more respondents (8.9%) from Nagarkurnool depended a lot on handbills than those from Hyderabad (5.3%) and Secunderabad (3.3%), quite the reverse in terms of education with the latter constituencies having more literate people than the former. This held true as party workers stated that education was not a criterion for reading leaflets, it was just enough to look at symbols and recognise the party that had distributed them. It clearly established that voters were well aware of campaign material that was distributed by political parties and more than 40% of them looked at the literature that was distributed.

DID HANDBILLS HELP DURING ELECTIONS

TABLE VII.8 THE EXTENT TO WHICH HANDBILLS HELPED IN THE ELECTION

Attitude variable	N	%
A Lot	55	4.8
Somewhat	445	38.5
Not at all	608	52.6
No Answer	47	4.1
Total	1155	100

There was an overall low response to the impact of campaign material. As indicated in table VII.8, 4.8% found them very useful and 38.5% found them somewhat useful in their decision making while more than half (52.6%) did not find them useful at all or may have not received them. Therefore, though parties distributed these extensively, it appears that the use of such material was a wWe further look at wall writings as another form of outdoor political communication.

SECTION IV

WALL WRITINGS

During elections walls are covered with election graffiti. Wall writings form an important source of publicity in remote villages and are used by government and other advertisers for advertising a wide range of products from hair oils, tooth pastes, cooking oil to those of banks and government messages, especially those of family planning and social issues. It is common to see the graffiti in cities and villages while passing in buses and trains.

During elections there is hectic 'wall writing' activity. Reports in newspapers stated how some political parties had reserved wall spaces as soon as the elections were announced. The party would later place the name of candidates with the symbol or slogans.

Symbols were generally stencilled or crudely painted. Most of the messages on walls simply read as 'Vote for (name of the party). or 'Vote for... (name of the symbol) along with the reminder of the polling date.

Some interesting and amusing slogans appeared on the walls which formed an arena for wordy duels of attacks and counter attacks between parties. Some newspapers reported that there was a 'slogan war' that went up on the walls². There were also protests and coercion between parties and public in connection with using walls for writing slogans, pasting posters and other graffiti. In an article 'Writing on the wall' by Viju James, it was stated that there were no set limits on the battering that a state, a city or the people are subject to during elections'. Wall writings continue to remain much after the elections, as there is no rule or condition, where the damage caused to walls by the graffiti are to be cleared by parties or candidates who used them³.

Our interviews with leaders revealed that though posters and wall writings did destroy the aesthetic value of the country, it was important for the uneducated and poorer sections of voters on the street for whom this may be the only source of political information and secondly it was an important form of daily reminder media.

In the three constituencies under study, we found that walls were prominently painted with symbols and slogans of Cong.I 'hand', BJP's 'lotus', TDP's 'cycle' and the JD's 'wheel'. In Hyderabad, some walls were completely covered with graffiti and posters. After

² Slogan War, The Hindu, Madras, 14 May, 1991

³ 'The Writing on the Wall, The Times of India, Bombay, 3 March, 1990. An example of the lasting nature of the campaigning undertaken nearly two decades ago was found in Bombay, when wall writings of the 1971 elections and the posters of H.R.Gokhale and Shanti Patel from Bombay North west had still remained.

posters, wall writings were the second most important form of reminder media about the elections as in table VII.9, 8.2% stated that wall writings had reminded them a lot and 40.6% were somewhat reminded. 46.8% were not affected while 4.2% did not have any opinion.

TABLE VII.9 EXTENT TO WHICH THE OUTDOOR MEDIA HELPED DURING ELECTION

Media	A lot		Somewhat		Not at all		No Answer	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Posters	104	9.1	557	48.6	436	38.1	58	4.2
Leaflets/ Handbills	55	4.8	445	38.5	608	52.6	47	4.1
Wall Writings	95	8.2	469	40.6	541	46.8	50	4.2
Cardboard cutouts	65	5.6	431	37.3	615	53.3	44	3.8
Symbol displays	88	7.6	537	46.5	485	42.0	45	3.9

SECTION V

PARTY SYMBOLS

Symbols have been, and may still be important in Indian elections with largely illiterate voters identifying parties with symbols rather than candidates. Politicians are aware of this and hence fight for particular symbols (Kumar,1991). All parties and candidates are allotted a symbol by the EC of India and election campaigns are planned to give wide publicity to associate parties and candidates with symbols. We discuss the importance of symbols, kinds of symbols, their publicity during elections and report the extent to which respondents were able to recognize party symbols.

SYMBOL ALLOCATION BY ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

The EC allots symbols to all parties and independent candidates. Since the first general election in 1951 - 1952, except for the CPI which retained its symbol of 'Ears of corn and sickle', most party symbols have changed with splits in the parties. The Congress symbol of a 'Pair of bullocks', for over two decades was changed to 'Cow and calf' in 1971 and in 1978 was replaced by the 'Hand' which has since remained. The BJP symbol changed from the 'Lamp' of the BJS to 'lotus' in 1980. The JP formed by the merger of four major opposition parties won the election in 1977 on the 'Chakra Halidar' (farmer carrying a plough within a wheel) symbol. The NF formed in 1989 won the election defeating the Cong.I on the symbol of the 'Wheel'.

After the split of the NF coalition in 1990, JD led by V.P.Singh retained the 'wheel' which had won them the 1989 elections. The break-away SJP was given the symbol of 'A woman carrying a pot on her head'. However, it chose to contest the elections on the old Janata Party symbol of 'Chakra Halidar', after Subrahmaniam Swamy, former SJP minister and a professional lawyer won the EC recognition to use the symbol to represent the party. TDP in AP was represented by a 'Bicycle', and MIM used the symbol of the 'Scales'.

THE KINDS OF SYMBOLS

In the past decade there has been a modernization in the kinds of symbols. Earlier symbols had rural connotations and were identified with the large rural and agricultural population. Most parties had rural and agricultural connotations such as, a pair of bullocks, corn and sickle, the farmer and plough, hammer and sickle and others like the charka (wheel) being used individually or as woman spinning the charka. Animal and bird symbols were also popular with the elephant, lion, horse etc. used as symbols. Modern symbols included telephones, scooters, watches and televisions.

During 1989 and 1991 elections a variety of symbols were given to candidates and parties. Some symbols were interesting and amusing ranging from animals, eatables, cosmetics to hardware and home appliances. These included pressure cooker, gas cylinder, kettle, ceiling fan and bicycle. In addition, the new symbols included a balloon, ladies purse, camel, cock, eagle, cupboard, axe, belt, black board, bat, candle, brick and a women carrying a basket on her head. Parties and candidates used various techniques to publicize these symbols through mass, outdoor and other channels.

PUBLICITY OF SYMBOLS BY POLITICAL PARTIES

Political parties and independent candidates gave wide publicity to the symbols. Symbols were associated with religious, cultural and everyday concepts to connote symbolic meanings. Symbols were incorporated in all the advertisements, glorified through songs in audio and video cassettes and prominently placed on posters, wall writings, displays, flags, stickers, badges, caps, T-Shirts, etc.

Cong.I's symbol of the 'hand' was to reflect the superiority of the party as 'an experienced hand', the hand which would protect/shield people against all problems. Voters were urged to join hands with the Cong.I's 'hand' on which it was claimed India's future was written' to make a strong and stable government in India⁴.

BJP sought religious connotations with their symbol. The lotus flower was associated with deities and the ritual of using flowers during ceremonies. The 'Lotus' in full bloom was said to bring about happiness and peace in the country. At some BJP meetings, lotus flowers were distributed to the audiences.

⁴ These were highlighted in political songs and were also the views of the party candidates and supporters as gathered at election meetings and during interviews.

In 1989, The JD symbol of 'chakra' (wheel), was interpreted as the 'wheel of fortune' for the party and 'Kaal Chakra' (wheel of doom) and 'Sudarshan Chakra' (the weapon of Lord Krishna) to bring doom to Cong.I. The references held good till the party won the election in 1989 but its fortunes declined in the 1991 elections. SJP attempted to revive their popularity on the old Janata Party symbol of 'a farmer carrying a plough within the wheel'. As the party had oriented their strategy to grassroots development at the rural level, the symbol matched their strategy.

TDP symbol of the 'Bicycle', the common man's form of transport, was promoted through displays of real cycles, and in many places they were also illuminated. MIM had one of the most significant symbol display campaigns in Hyderabad. These included posters, decorated scales, cardboard and illuminated displays. The walls in the constituencies were covered with paintings and posters of the symbol.

Symbols were constantly referred to during election meetings by leaders and candidates. At one of the BJP meetings that we attended, the candidate constantly urged electors to vote for the symbol rather than him as the candidate. Symbols were also tattooed on hands and shoulders of supporters. The voters were also shown how to place their stamp on the symbol on the ballot paper through video films. With such intense and extensive efforts by political parties in publicizing the symbols, we investigated if voters recognized the symbols of some of the major parties.

RECOGNITION OF ELECTION SYMBOLS

TABLE VII.10 THE ELECTION SYMBOLS RECOGNISED BY THE RESPONDENTS

Party Symbol	Yes		No		No Answer	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
TDP	1089	94.3	48	4.1	18	1.6
Cong. I	1131	98.1	19	1.7	5	0.4
JD	899	77.9	253	21.9	3	0.3
MIM	885	76.7	267	23.1	3	0.3
BJP	1008	87.4	143	12.4	5	0.3
CPM	661	57.3	489	39.9	4	0.4
SJP	687	59.6	461	39.9	7	0.5
CPI	613	53.1	515	44.6	27	2.4

Respondents showed a fairly high level of awareness in recognising the symbols in all the constituencies. As seen in table VII.10, Cong. I symbol of the 'Hand' was recognised by 98.1%, followed by the TDP symbol of the 'Bicycle' recognised by 94.3%. The JD symbol of the 'Wheel' that was very popular in the 1989 elections was recognised by 77.9% and the BJP symbol of the 'Lotus' flower by 87.4%. In Hyderabad 95% recognised the MIM symbol compared to about 40% in Nagarkurnool.

The SJP symbol of the 'farmer with a plough', though discontinued for many years and though the party did not have a large publicity drive in the state, it was well recognised. It was interesting to note that many respondents named it as the earlier Janata Party. One could associate this as a clever tactic of the party to refresh the voters memory on the use of a popular symbol.

DID SYMBOL DISPLAYS HELP IN REMINDING ABOUT THE ELECTION

We further asked the respondents if symbol displays reminded them about the party to vote for during the election. As shown in table VII.9, about 7.6% of the respondents said that symbols reminded them a lot and 46.5% were somewhat reminded but 42.1% were not affected. Symbols rated second (46.5%) after the posters in the somewhat helped category as stated by 48.6% respondents. They rated third at 7.6% in the 'helped a lot' category preceded by posters with 9.0% and wall writings with 8.2%.

SECTION VI

CUTOUTS OF LEADERS AND CANDIDATES

While western media is devising new methods of election campaigning and exploiting the electronic forms of communication, developing countries like India are devising new techniques of visual as well as electronic forms to reach the diverse electorate. Their effort to increase the visibility of leaders has resulted in the use of life size presentation of huge **cardboard cutouts** of party leaders and candidates.

The use of cutouts are a recent development in Indian elections. These huge 20'-30' imposing cutouts of leaders and candidates constantly remind and appeal to the voters. Earlier consumer products like soft drinks and tooth pastes were advertised in forms of large cardboard cutouts, but now the same are being used by political parties.

During the 1984 elections, Cong.I had first used large cutouts of the blood splattered body of Indira Gandhi to arouse sympathy. However, these cutouts came into prominence during 1989 elections when NTR's cutouts in the form of various religious deities were erected at all important junctions and cross roads in AP and Delhi. In the 1991 elections, leaders appeared in several guises at different locations in the cities and major towns. Cong.I put up

huge cut outs of Rajiv Gandhi, while those of L.K.Advani and A.B.Vajpayee represented the BJP.

The use of cutouts was restricted to major cities and towns due to their high cost. Party persons estimated the cost of each cutout to range from Rs.50,000 to Rs.90,000 (£1000 to £1800) depending on the size. Though most party workers failed to establish the usefulness of such expensive investments, they observed that they were somewhat useful in creating the 'election atmosphere' to remind voters to vote for their parties⁵. One BJP member observed that these cutouts helped in recognition of leaders especially in the last two elections. The days of the Nehru-Gandhi family, who were easily recognised were over, but the other leaders needed this publicity for recognition especially with the rise in multiparty system and more than two leaders competing for the prime ministerial position. Moreover, it was believed that cutouts projected a personal appeal for support from the leaders themselves⁶.

In our constituencies, the cutouts of Rajiv Gandhi, L.K.Advani, and NTR were prominently displayed in Secunderabad and Hyderabad while those of Owaisi were found in Hyderabad. We asked the respondents if these were useful in their decision to vote. As in table VII.9, 5.6% of the respondents were reminded a lot and 37.3% somewhat. Over half, 53.3% were not affected.

⁵ Interviews of the author with the spokespersons of Cong.I, TDP and BJP.

⁶ Authors interviews with members and supporters of Congress-I, MIM and BJP.

SUMMARY

Posters along with leaflets and folders were important components of the multimedia publicity campaigns of the government by the DAVP for publicising various government schemes. During elections, the DAVP used posters along with radio and television as part of the government voter education programme.

Party posters formed an effective low cost reminder medium and reached remote rural areas. With little effort the message was read and understood by the semi-literate. Handbills formed sources of political communication supplementing public meetings and door-to-door campaigns.

We examined the extent to which these outdoor media reminded respondents of the party to vote. In the first phase nearly three quarters of the respondents did not mark them as sources of information. These findings helped us to establish the importance attached to these media which are otherwise labelled as a nuisance, and tampering with the environment by their excessive use. 10% of the respondents were reminded a lot by these media. However, they rated high at the medium level of 'somewhat helped' by nearly half the respondents. Posters were rated the highest in the somewhat category by nearly half (48.6%) of the respondents. Posters were closely followed by the symbol displays and wall writings.

Even after the introduction of large scale advertising campaigns through print and electronic forms, these mainly outdoor forms were extensively used and had to some extent reminded nearly half the respondents. Indian audiences are still accustomed to look at these media during elections, despite criticism of their effectiveness and use.

CHAPTER VIII

INTERPERSONAL FORMS OF POLITICAL COMMUNICATION

INTRODUCTION

In India, along with the use of the mass media, electronic and outdoor forms of campaigning discussed so far, the conventional forms of mass contact such as public meetings, rallies and elections tours of candidates and leaders continued to be important techniques of reaching the electorate. Given the massive crowds that turn up at these election meetings, we would term these forms of electoral persuasion as **Mass Interpersonal Channels (MIC)** affecting political behaviour. Second, in the literature on political communication and behaviour, importance is given to the influence of family, friends, neighbours and local leaders in the voting process categorised as **Internal Interpersonal Channels (IIC)**.

This chapter is divided into three parts; first we examine the importance of MICs and evaluate their credibility in the light of reports in press, the opinions of leaders and party spokespersons, and finally report voters' perceptions of public meetings, their dependence on public meetings for election information and effectiveness in voting decisions. In the second part we examine the influence of IICs. In the third part, we investigate certain individual perceptions of respondents on the factors that influenced their own voting behaviour and that of their community. We conclude with a comparative note on these interpersonal forms that formed important sources of information and persuasion on voting behaviour.

SECTION I

MASS INTERPERSONAL CHANNELS

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Public meetings (PMS) have been a popular conventional form of election campaigning in India. Since the first general election in 1951-1952, election campaigns have been characterised by PMS, processions, posters, wall writings and handbills (Mehta, 1971). As the oldest forms of election campaigning they are still considered to be very effective in influencing the electorate according to leaders and spokespersons of various political parties¹. PMS are regulated by the EC on the criteria for maintenance of law and order, to avoid political clashes and disturbance to normal life. The detailed factors governing such meetings are given in Appendix-F.

Given the socio-economic structure, and limited use of mass media compounded with low literacy levels and deficient transportation systems, the major means of reaching the electorate was through interpersonal channels. The face-to-face, one-to-few channels during the freedom struggle and the pre-independence era, changed to larger meetings and gradually led to mass public meetings. Indira Gandhi, in one of her interviews, on the lack of use of electronic media during elections, stated that her votes did not come from the media, but through her meetings with the masses (Eapen, 1991).

In the Indian election studies, it was found that most campaign coverage was reported on what the leaders said during the public meetings and rallies and electoral trends were based on the content of speeches of political leaders, size of gatherings and reactions of crowds at public meetings (Mirchandani, 1977; Paul, 1984, 1989;

¹Interviews with party spokespersons of Cong.I, BJP, JD and SJP

Ahuja & Paul, 1991). Party leaders were accompanied by an entourage of journalists and photographers who reported on campaign speeches along with interviews with leaders while on the campaign trail.

Therefore, in the past as well as in the present, election campaigns are analyzed and presented in the newspapers and electronic media based on campaign meetings of party leaders and candidates. During elections, PMs give the electorate an opportunity to see and listen to leaders, evaluate their strengths and weaknesses and develop a positive or negative attitude without relying on any other intermediate sources. Second, the turnout at these rallies helps parties to estimate their popularity and the support they can expect during elections. Third, these meetings give an opportunity to the leaders to improve their rapport with the masses, clarify queries raised by the people, persuade voters and also to get a feedback. Since the last two elections, the speeches made by leaders at PMs were recorded and made into audio cassettes and some were incorporated in video cassettes.

PMs are characterised by all India tours of party leaders crisscrossing the country. Moreover, these become significant as most candidates depend upon the popularity of their leaders for boosting the campaign, often leading to the entire campaign strategy being dependent on the performance of one or a few leaders. During the 1991 elections, apart from leaders and candidates, PMs were addressed by religious leaders, family members of the candidates, popular film and television stars, retired civil servants and leading party supporters.

PMs OF POLITICAL PARTIES DURING THE 1991 ELECTIONS

Leaders used every mode of travel to cover the entire country or state while the VOWs spread the messages through the villages. Rajiv Gandhi was the sole national campaigner for Cong.I, until his assassination on 21 May, 1991. He reportedly toured 250 constituencies spread across UP, Bihar, West Bengal, Maharashtra,

Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, Orissa, TN and the North Eastern states. After his assassination, senior Cong.I leaders P.V.Narasimha Rao, N.D.Tiwari, Arjun Singh and Sharad Pawar campaigned in over 300 constituencies where elections were to be held on 12 and 14 June. BJP's strategy was to have at least one senior leader from among Murli Manohar Joshi, L.K.Advani, A.B.Vajpayee or Rajmata Scindia to address a PM in a constituency at least once during the campaign period.

In AP, NTR as Chairman of the NF addressed meetings all over the state from atop his campaign vehicle 'Chaitanya Ratham'. In Hyderabad, MIM leader Owaisi had based his entire campaign strategy on PMs. He addressed three or four meetings daily during the election period. This was possible for MIM as it was a local party and could concentrate its efforts within the vicinity of Hyderabad making it easier for the leader to continuously interact with the people.

Another development in the 1991 campaigns was the PMs addressed by religious men and women. Shahi Imam called on the Indian Muslims to vote for JD/NF and Sadhvi Rithambara of VHP actively campaigned for BJP. Her meetings all over the country drew large crowds and some of her audio cassettes were widely circulated. In Delhi, the VHP, organised a massive Saadhu Sammelan (Congregation of the Hindu ascetics) where over 3000 holy men gathered from all over India. The leaders called upon the Hindus to support the BJP.

A young sixth standard student, Kranthi Hindwani campaigned for BJP in Gujarat. He mesmerised the crowds with his compelling recitation of the Hindu epics and couplets from Vajpayee's poems. Every BJP candidate in Gujarat wanted him to campaign in his constituency².

² India Today, 30 April, 1991 and Eye Witness - Election Special, May 1991, Video cassette brought out by The Hindustan Times. New Delhi.

In order to reach the electorate, every mode of travel, from aeroplanes and helicopters to bicycles and camels were used. India Today called it the 'Age of the Jet setters'. In 1991 the star campaigners resembled political jet setters, being airborne for at least 4-5 hours each day, hopping from one constituency to another in the frantic race against time to get them to their electoral destinations³.

ELECTION RALLIES/PROCESSIONS

In the election processions, candidates accompanied by national or local party leaders moved around the main roads in jeeps followed by party workers and supporters carrying flags, distributing handbills and shouting slogans. Such processions moved from door-to-door and some times ended up with street receptions for candidates. Streets were decorated with flags, posters and arches with welcome signs to greet the candidates. At such processions, supporters generally garlanded the leaders and sometimes arranged food and drinks.

Political parties believed that processions were important in projecting the popularity of the leaders who believed in 'power' and 'show of strength' through such activities. EC of India regulates political processions during elections through a set of rules (See Appendix - F). Similarly, in rural areas these processions take the form of walkabouts where leaders and candidates travel on foot (Padyatras) in the villages greeting people and listening to their grievances, sometimes giving instant solutions and making promises.

³ The three major parties - Cong.I, BJP and JD hired private aircrafts and helicopters to enable their star campaigners to cover maximum ground. In this way, eight aeroplanes and nine helicopters were said to have been used by the leaders, some at an hourly rate of Rs.10,000 (£200). India Today, 31 May, 1991.

The most colourful rallies were those of film and television stars who addressed PMs and participated in election processions. BJP processions were colourful with religious connotations. In Gujarat, Deepika Chikila was paraded through the streets dressed as 'Sita' (the role she played in the TV serial Ramayana). L.K.Advani was shown atop the vehicle with 'bow and arrow' or with the Sudarshan Chakra - the weapon of the Hindu God, Krishna. Also draped around him was a shawl printed with Rama all over. Therefore, these PMs, rallies and processions not only continued but also became more colourful and attracted large attention. They also came under criticism in the press as a farcical and exploitative activity.

ARE PUBLIC MEETINGS A FARCE ?

In recent years it was argued that people have understood the farce of mass gatherings where people were gathered through hired men with incentives of cash or kind and were herded like cattle in trucks and transported to and from the site of the meetings. Free meals and cash lure the crowds to such meetings (Kumar, 1991). In 1991 some public meetings were cancelled due to lack of support One such was a meeting of the former Prime Minister Chandrashekhar at Hyderabad which the researcher was to attend was cancelled because the local leaders did not manage to collect enough crowds. Reviewing such trends, Kumar (1991) comments:

Though the large gathering of loud speakers, music and other fanfare tends to create the impression of a 'mela' (fair) for the villagers, the real message gets diffused. Politicians and especially the big bosses, believe that the jamboree impresses the people by creating an impression of awe, power and popularity of the leader. By now the masses know very well that such gatherings are organised through hired middle men who bring hired audiences in hired trucks. In fact the extravagance and deceit involved in creating such an illusion of popularity is more likely to create revulsion than awe.

On the other hand the small gatherings addressed by the local leaders and elders can create an atmosphere of intimacy and trust and the messages also have a greater credibility.

Though similar instances have been reported, one cannot completely rule out the popularity and effectiveness of these PMs, especially those addressed by party leaders which draw large crowds and have formed an important and credible source of election information. Our study showed several interesting aspects of the importance given to PMs, in terms of the intention of respondents to attend public meetings as well as their dependence on them making this MIC, an indispensable form of election communication.

RESPONDENT'S OPINION ON PUBLIC MEETINGS

In the first phase, we investigated the extent to which respondents depended on public meetings as a source of information and whether they were likely to attend the PMs of parties. In the second phase, we enquired if they attended the meetings and how far the meetings helped them in their decision making process.

TABLE VIII.1 MEN AND WOMEN WHO INTENDED TO ATTEND PUBLIC MEETINGS

Attitude variable	Men		Women		Total	
Yes	186	28.7	51	10.1	237	20.5
No	389	59.9	388	76.7	777	67.3
Not yet decided	47	7.2	31	6.1	78	6.7
Don't Know/No Answer	27	4.2	36	7.1	63	5.5
Total	649	100	506	100	1155	100

**TABLE VIII.2 RESPONDENTS IN CONSTITUENCIES LIKELY
TO ATTEND PMS**

Constituency	Yes		No		Not yet decided		Don't know/NA	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Secunderabad	53	14.7	282	78.1	16	4.5	10	2.7
Hyderabad	78	15.8	362	73.1	27	5.4	28	5.7
Nagarkurnool	106	35.4	133	44.5	35	11.7	25	8.4

As shown in table VIII.1, two thirds (67.3%) of the respondents had no intention to attend PMS. They included 59.9% men and 76.7% women. Only one fifth (20.5%) said they intended to attend such meetings. Men (28.7%) outnumbered women (10.1%). Women showed little interest in PMS as was evidenced by their intention to attend them. 6.7% had not decided to attend PMS and 5.5% had no definite answer.

The rural - urban difference is quite noticeable in table VIII.2. While 35.4% of rural Nagarkurnool respondents were likely to attend PMS, less than half their counterparts in Hyderabad (15.8%) and Secunderabad (14.7%) were likely to do so. While about three fourths of urban respondents (Hyderabad 73.1% and Secunderabad (78.1%) said that they were not likely to attend PMS, less than half their rural (Nagarkurnool 44.5%) counterparts said so. Rural Nagarkurnool (11.7%) had more than double the number of those who had not yet decided when compared with urban Hyderabad (5.4%) and Secunderabad (4.5%).

PMs AS SOURCES OF ELECTION INFORMATION

TABLE VIII.3 GENDER WISE DEPENDENCE ON PMs FOR ELECTION INFORMATION

Attitude variable	Men		Women		Total	
	N	%	N	%		
A lot	58	8.9	18	3.7	76	6.6
A fair amount	241	37.1	74	14.6	315	27.3
Not at all	299	46.0	349	69.0	648	56.1
No opinion	51	8.0	65	12.7	116	10.0
Total	649	100	506	100	1155	100

As shown in table VIII.3, over half (56.1%) of the respondents did not depend on PMs as source of election information. Women (69%) outnumber men (46%) by over 20% here. Only 6.6% of the respondents depend a lot on PMs for election information. This includes about two thirds men (8.9%) and over one third (3.7%) women. Over a quarter (27.3%) who depend a fair amount on PMs for election information include over double men (37.1%) than women (14.6%). 10% who had no opinion comprised of 8% men and 12.7% women .

TABLE VIII.4 CONSTITUENCY WISE DEPENDENCE ON PMs FOR ELECTION INFORMATION

Attitude variable	Secunderabad		Hyderabad		Nagarkurnool	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
A lot	39	10.8	22	4.3	16	5.4
A Fair Amount	73	20.2	114	23.0	128	42.9
Not at all	210	58.2	307	62.0	131	43.6
No opinion	39	10.8	52	10.7	24	8.1
Total	361	100	495	100	299	100

As shown in table VIII.4, almost half (48.3%) of Nagarkurnool respondents depended on PMs for election information when compared with just over a quarter of respondents from Hyderabad (27.3%) and Secunderabad (31%). From another angle, well over half of urban and less than half of rural respondents do not depend on PMs at all for election information. They include 62% from Hyderabad, 58.2% from Secunderabad and 43.6% from Nagarkurnool.

Therefore, nearly half of the respondents depended on PMs in varying degrees from a lot to a little for information on candidates and parties. More men than women intended to attend or depended on public meetings. Earlier we found that of the 33% of the respondents who depended on public meetings as a source of election information, 20.5% intended to attend the PMs while 6.7% were undecided. In the second phase of the survey, we asked the respondents if they had attended the PMs and how far they helped them in their voting decisions.

RESPONDENTS WHO ATTENDED THE PUBLIC MEETINGS

TABLE VIII.5 GENDER WISE RESPONDENTS WHO ATTENDED THE PUBLIC MEETINGS

Gender	Yes		No		No answer	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Men	303	46.7	322	49.6	24	3.7
Women	105	20.8	379	75.0	18	4.2
Total	408	35.3	701	60.7	46	4.0

46.7% men and almost half this number of women actually reported that they attended PMs. This means a little more than one third (35.3%) of the respondents attended PMs of candidates and political parties. Almost half of the men (49.6%) and three quarters of women (75%) did not attend PMs. However, 35.3% had attended the public meetings of the various political parties or the religious leaders,

15 percentage points more than the 20.5% who intended to attend. A near equal urban (34.1%) and rural (38.7%) respondents attended the election meetings. The number of women, 20.8% who attended public meetings was doubled as only 10% had intended to attend the PMs in the first phase showing an increased interest in elections.

TABLE VIII.6 PARTY MEETINGS ATTENDED BY RESPONDENTS

Political Parties	Yes		No		No answer	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Cong.I	204	17.7	946	81.9	5	0.4
BJP	273	23.6	877	76.0	5	0.4
TDP	151	13.1	999	86.5	5	0.4
MIM	52	4.5	1099	95.2	4	0.3
SJP	18	1.6	1132	98.0	5	0.4
Others	10	0.9	1124	97.3	21	1.8

As seen in Table VIII.6, there were multiple responses as respondents attended the meetings of more than one party. PMs of BJP (23.6%), Cong.I (17.7%) and TDP (13.1%) were better attended than those of MIM (4.5%), SJP (1.6%) and others (0.9%). Moreover, unlike other parties, BJP meetings were not only addressed by their own leaders but also by VHP, RSS and religious leaders. At one such meeting of Sadhvi Rithambara attended by the researcher, there was a large gathering of women. MIM meetings attracted their hard core support group.

THE IMPACT OF PUBLIC MEETINGS IN VOTING DECISION

TABLE VIII.7 GENDER WISE INFLUENCE OF PMs ON RESPONDENTS

Attitude variable	Men		Women		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
A Lot	69	10.6	54	10.7	123	10.6
A Fair amount	175	27.0	69	13.6	244	21.1
Not very much	62	9.5	37	7.3	99	8.6
Not at all	134	20.6	117	23.1	251	21.7
Don't Know/No Answer	209	32.2	229	45.3	438	38.0
Total	649	100	506	100	1155	100

TABLE VIII.8 CONSTITUENCY WISE INFLUENCE OF PUBLIC MEETINGS

Attitude variable	Secunderabad		Hyderabad		Nagarkurnool	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
A Lot	29	8.0	44	8.9	51	17.0
A fair amount	85	23.5	92	18.6	67	22.4
Not very much	15	4.2	69	13.9	15	5.0
Not at all	48	13.3	149	30.1	54	18.1
Don't know/ No answer	184	51.0	141	28.5	112	37.5
Total	361	100	495	100	299	100

As observed in table VIII.7 and VIII.8, over 10% of the respondents claimed that they were influenced a lot by the PMs in their decision to vote, while double the number (men 20.6% and women 23.1%) reported that they were not at all influenced. A little more than a quarter of men (27%) and half that number of women (13.6%) were influenced a fair amount. There is no significant difference

between men (9.5%) and women (7.3%) in the 'not very much' response category. But the difference is apparent in the 'fair amount' category which has half the number of women (13.6%) compared to men (27%). Over one fifth of men (20.6%) and about a quarter of women (23.1%) were not at all influenced by attending PMs in their decision to vote.

As shown in table VIII.8, double the number of those who were influenced a lot by PMs in their decision to vote were found in Nagarkarnool (17%) when compared with Hyderabad (8.9%) and Secunderabad (8.0%). On the contrary 30.1% Hyderabad respondents, 18.1% in Nagarkarnool and 13.3% in Secunderabad were not at all influenced.

Around a quarter of the respondents were influenced a fair amount in Secunderabad and Nagarkarnool and less than that in Hyderabad (18.6%). 13.9% were not very much influenced in Hyderabad, less than half that number in Nagarkarnool (5.0%) and one third of that number in Secunderabad (4.2%). The responses flatten out touching one fifth mark in all categories to 'a fair amount' response with Secunderabad (23.6%) Nagarkarnool (22.4%) and Hyderabad (18.6%). Half the Secunderabad (51%), one third of Nagarkarnool (37.5%) and a quarter of Hyderabad (28.5%) respondents had no definite answer.

SUMMARY

Overall PMs were attended by a third of the respondents in the urban and rural constituencies. Though only 20.5% intended to attend the PMs, about 15% more actually attended. 59.6% men and 76.6% women respondents indicated that they had no intention to attend PMs of candidates and political parties. They include three quarters of Hyderabad 73.2%, Secunderabad 78.1% and a little less than half (44.5%) of rural Nagarkarnool respondents. Men (28.7%) outnumbered women (10.1%) by three times in their intention to attend PMs. While over one third (35.4%) of rural Nagarkarnool

respondents desired to attend PMs half this number in urban Hyderabad (15.8%) and Secunderabad (14.7%) shared this intention. Amongst the parties, the BJP meetings were attended by 23.6% of the respondents followed by those of Cong.I and TDP. PMs had helped nearly a third, a lot for 10.6% men and women and a fair amount for 21.1%. In actual terms, 80% of all those who attended the election meetings found them useful to some degree in their decision to vote.

The response to the MICs of communication was high. Nearly half the number of men attended some meetings. This could well relate to the election tours of party leaders and justify the amount of money and time spent by leaders on their election tours hiring aeroplanes and helicopters. Though in western democracies, developments in mass media, opinion polls, public relations and national campaigns have bypassed electioneering at the constituency level, in India, despite the use of mass media, campaigning at the constituency level, including street corner meetings, door-to-door calls, handshakes and personal calls still dominate the electoral activities of the political leaders. The proximity and face-to-face contact with party workers and community meetings with candidates as evidenced in the campaigns do go a long way in mobilizing support. We next evaluate the impact of the door-to-door campaigns.

DOOR-TO-DOOR CAMPAIGNS AND WALKABOUTS

Door-to-door campaigns are a means of reaching the electorate in their homes to identify the likely supporters and opponents. During the elections, candidates, party workers and important members of society who wield influence in the areas approached voters personally and persuaded them to support parties and candidates. Though this approach is limited to local level canvassing it is claimed by parties to be highly useful in persuading the indifferent and uninterested voters. We found that party workers, elected or nominated at the district and state levels form a

liaison between the party and voters and were constantly interacting with the voters in areas they represented and kept the party leaders well informed about the trends of support⁴. This regular interaction with local residents formed a means of long term affiliation with political parties and candidates.

During elections, activities are focused with organised strategies. Communication programmes are undertaken with candidates and workers who conduct regular door-to-door campaigns. Party supporters and volunteers are recruited for decentralised work to mobilize support right from the registration of voters to the final act of voting.

Organizational support at the grassroots level was an important prerequisite for campaigning at the local level, hence efforts were made by parties to strengthen the organization at the village, district and state levels. A party of long standing like Cong.I has a well established decentralised system of party workers who are identified with them. In the years between 1989-91, the BJP also increased its network from the northern states to the entire country. However, parties, like the NF and SJP, have yet to develop their network of support to co-ordinate their work at the grassroots level. TDP and MIM have a well organised network of party functionaries in the state and MIM in Hyderabad.

Though the interpersonal meetings were considered to be more effective in rural and semi urban areas, we find evidence from our study that these techniques were important even in urban areas, where voters were also motivated by the personal visits of party workers. During the 1991 elections, all parties were actively involved in door-to-door campaigns in the urban and rural areas. In our constituencies we found that Cong.I, BJP, TDP, MIM and several independent candidates conducted door-to-door campaigns, street

⁴ Author's interviews with Cong.I and BJP party workers in Hyderabad and Nagarkurnool.

corner meetings and walkabouts. MIM was most prominent in Hyderabad. The party workers in the primaries were involved in campaign activity and in organising public meetings and walkabouts.

BJP had an extensive campaign in the state. According to a BJP activist their work was much more difficult as they intended to make inroads into Cong.I and TDP strongholds⁵. TDP, through their network, were able to gauge the voters attitudes through the extensive information and feedback system. Based on assessments of party representatives, they were confident of regaining political power in the state. We investigated the reactions of respondents who were approached by various political parties, and the extent to which their coming made a difference to their voting behaviour.

VOTERS VISITED BY THE PARTY WORKERS

Given the large numbers in the Indian electorate, an overwhelming 70% respondents reported to have been visited by workers of political parties in the door-to-door canvassing. Given the fact that most parties gave importance to interpersonal meetings, there was no reason to doubt the magnitude of the workforce and expected changes that could be brought by personal encounters.

TABLE VIII.9 RESPONDENTS APPROACHED BY PARTY WORKERS

Location	Yes		No		No Answer	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Urban	567	68.8	203	24.6	54	6.6
Rural	241	72.8	66	19.9	24	7.3
Total/Average %	808	70.0	269	23.3	78	6.7

⁵ Interview with Kishen Reddy, BJP spokesperson in Hyderabad, 16 May, 1991

As shown in the table VIII.9, slightly more rural (72.8%) respondents were approached than their urban (68.8%) counterparts. Among the constituencies, 73.3% respondents in Nagarkurnool were 70.9% in Secunderabad and 67% in Hyderabad were met by party workers.

TABLE VIII.10 POLITICAL PARTY WORKERS WHO VISITED THE RESPONDENTS

Political Party	Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%
Cong.I	513	44.4	642	55.6
BJP	608	52.7	547	47.3
TDP	360	31.2	795	68.8
MIM	139	12.0	1016	88.0
JD	101	8.7	1054	91.3
Others/Independents	87	7.5	1068	92.5

Respondents were approached by more than one political party as there were multiple responses from the respondents. From table VIII.10 it can be observed that, BJP workers reached more than half (52.7%) respondents. This brings into focus the extensive campaign techniques that were employed by BJP at the grassroots level for mass mobilization. TDP party workers approached nearly one third, (31.2%) respondents. In Hyderabad, the contest was between the BJP and MIM and in Secunderabad, it was between the Cong.I and BJP, but in Nagarkurnool the contest was between the TDP and Cong.I. In Hyderabad constituency 12% respondents were met by MIM party workers. We further asked the respondents if their coming made a difference to their voting decision.

THE EXTENT TO WHICH DOOR-TO-DOOR MEETINGS MOTIVATED RESPONDENTS TO VOTE

Overall party canvassers were able to motivate 11.2% of the respondents a lot and 20% a fair amount. On the contrary, they were not successful with 29.8% of the respondents and not at all successful with 21.2% of the respondents.

TABLE VIII.11 RESPONDENTS MOTIVATED BY DOOR-TO-DOOR CAMPAIGNS

Attitude variable	Secunderabad		Hyderabad		Nagarkurnool		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
A Lot	53	14.7	40	8.1	36	12.0	129	11.2
A fair amount	96	26.7	111	22.4	24	8.1	231	20.0
Not very much	89	24.7	177	35.8	78	26.0	344	29.8
Not at all	60	16.7	89	18.0	95	31.8	244	21.1
Don't know	59	16.4	67	13.5	59	19.7	185	16.0
No Answer	4	0.8	11	2.2	7	2.3	22	1.9
Total	361	100	495	100	299	100	1155	100

In the constituencies, 41.4% urban respondents in Secunderabad (14.7% a lot and 26.7% a fair amount) were better persuaded by door-to door campaigns of party canvassers than their rural counterparts in Nagarkurnool (20% comprising 12% who said a lot and 8% who said a fair amount). Though it was felt that personal meetings were important for persuading the rural electors, we found that urban respondents were more affected by the door-to-door campaigns.

Double the number of respondents in rural Nagarkurnool (31.8%) revealed that they were not at all motivated by the door-to-door campaigning by party canvassers when compared with their urban counterparts in Hyderabad (18%) and Secunderabad (16.7%).

SUMMARY

Door-to-door campaigning and walkabouts constituted an essential component of electioneering. These forms help party workers to develop a rapport and provide candidates and parties to explain their stand on issues. Most political parties deployed a network of supporters for canvassing and for organising processions in the local areas. Over 70% of our respondents were approached by party workers and candidates. While 74.2% of the rural respondents were contacted, 68.9% of their urban counterparts were approached. BJP workers approached more than half (52.7%), followed by Cong.I (44.4%), TDP (31.2%) and others.

Canvassers and candidates succeeded in motivating 32.3% in varying degrees. (11.2% were motivated a lot and 20.1% were fairly motivated) but were not able to succeed with over half (51%). However it would not be true to say that such strategies are not effective as door-to-door campaigns were moderately effective. Interestingly, more urban voters were motivated than their rural counterparts.

SECTION II

INTERNAL INTERPERSONAL CHANNELS

So far we have discussed the mass media and mass interpersonal channels as sources of information and influence on political behaviour. In this section we analyze the internal forms of communication like family, social groups and local leaders. We examine how far social and cultural factors of caste, language and religion are significant in influencing the political behaviour at the group and community levels as campaigns are generally targeted

at specific groups that vary in different parts of the country. Political parties refer to these groups as 'Vote Banks' where these groups vote en bloc as advised by community or religious leaders rather than as individuals.

This section is in four parts: we first establish the importance and characteristics of family and other social groups; second, we evaluate the extent to which respondents sought and depended on family, friends, local community and religious leaders for political information; third, we analyze the importance given to certain social factors that are likely to influence an individual's personal voting behaviour and those of the community and last, we conclude with an evaluation of these forms on voting behaviour.

ROLE OF FAMILY AS A SOURCE OF INFORMATION AND INFLUENCE IN VOTING BEHAVIOUR

Guru (1991) argues that family forms the primary unit of political socialization and political behaviour. Earlier studies have revealed that families voted as units. There has been a change in the Indian family structure and we tried to find out if they reflected any changes in voting patterns.

Family structure has changed from joint to nuclear families especially in urban areas. Most respondents were from nuclear families. However, in Nagarkurnool, we found several joint families who were classified as Cong.I, BJP or Communist supporting families based on the continued support that at least two generations have given to particular parties. There was also a noticeable change in the members of families supporting different parties and also standing as candidates. This was evident in the Scindias of Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh and the Rajus in Vizianagaram in AP. In Gwalior, Rajmata Vijaye Raje Scindia and her daughter represented the BJP, while her son Madhav Rao Scindia, represented the Cong.I. In Vizianagaram, Anand Gajapathi Raju represented the Cong.I, and his brother Ashok Gajapathi Raju represented the TDP.

Press reports from northern India suggested that political and religious uprisings had led to changes in voting behaviour within families, especially in the women's voting behaviour. Most women were more likely to vote for the BJP⁶ after the Hindutva campaign. We did not find similar trends in our constituencies. Women respondents consulted their men or simply made men answer our questions claiming their responses were the same as those of their spouses. To evaluate such changes and trends, we investigated the extent to which respondents depended on discussions with family. We believed that with the increase in media exposure, the importance given to the influence of family might be reduced.

FAMILY AS A SOURCE OF ELECTION INFORMATION

As seen in Table VIII.12, Despite the exposure to mass media and MIC, 69.6% (22.5% depended a lot and 47.1% a fair amount) of the respondents depend upon family as a source of election information. Only a quarter 25.7% do not depend on family for election information. Men and Women sought family discussions as sources of information on political issues.

Almost three quarters of women respondents (74.7%) against two thirds of men (65.6%) stated that they depend on family as a source of election information. Moreover more men (23.9%) than women (20.8%) depend a lot on the family for such information. On the other hand, over half the women (53.9%) depended a fair amount on the family as against less than half 41.7% men. But more men (27.7%) are less dependent on the family for election information than women (23.1%).

⁶ The Hindustan Times, New Delhi, 21 May, 1991

TABLE VIII.12 GENDER WISE DEPENDENCE ON FAMILY AS A SOURCE OF ELECTION INFORMATION

Attitude variable	Men		Women		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
A Lot	155	23.9	105	20.8	260	22.5
A fair amount	271	41.7	273	53.9	544	47.1
Not at all	180	27.7	117	23.1	297	25.7
Don't know	43	6.7	11	2.2	54	4.7
Total	649	100	506	100	1155	100

TABLE VIII.13 CONSTITUENCY WISE DEPENDENCE ON FAMILY FOR ELECTION INFORMATION

Attitude variable	Secunderabad		Hyderabad		Nagarkurnool	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
A Lot	109	30.2	99	20.0	52	17.4
A fair amount	159	44.0	241	48.7	143	47.8
Not at all	79	21.9	128	25.8	91	30.4
Don't know	14	3.9	27	5.5	13	4.4
Total	361	100	495	100	299	100

As shown in table VIII.13, between the constituencies, urban respondents in Secunderabad (30.2%) and Hyderabad (20%), depended a lot on family as a source of election information than Nagarkurnool (17.4%). Over 40% and less than half respondents in all the constituencies depend a fair amount on discussions with the family. 30.4% in Nagarkurnool, 25.8% in Hyderabad and 21.9% in Secunderabad are not at all dependent on family. We examined how important it was to consult family members in the voting behaviour.

RESPONDENTS LIKELY TO FOLLOW ADVICE OF FAMILY MEMBERS IN VOTING BEHAVIOUR

While 70% of the respondents depended on discussions with family for political information, where actual voting behaviour was concerned, just over half (51%), considered it important to consult family members for advice to vote. 18.7% considered it very important and 32.3% somewhat important. The other half were negatively inclined towards consulting the family members. 22.2% did not find it very important.

In respect of the final voting behaviour, 23.4% of the respondents were influenced a lot by the family and 46.2% were somewhat influenced. Overall, over two thirds, (69.6%), appear to have been influenced by the family. Although it was presumed that families were more influential in rural areas, we, in fact, found that the importance given to families was higher in urban constituencies. Therefore family remains an important source of information and influence in voting behaviour.

THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL GROUPS

In all social systems people aggregate as social groups. The political parties use these groups to channelise political information through leaders of these small groups in villages and small towns. With close proximity of houses, men, women and children, gather for an evening talk. These social groups become important sources of election information in voting behaviour patterns within the communities. They often have the potential to become the 'Blocks' of votes that are wooed by the political parties. Through a series of questions, we established the formation of such groups, the homogeneity of groups and the general topics of discussion with emphasis on political discussions. The analysis was done by constituency, gender and education.

SOCIAL GROUPS OF RESPONDENTS

As seen in table VIII.14, An overwhelming 88.1% of the respondents interacted with friends and neighbours. While over two thirds, 64.8% met sometimes, 23.3% got together regularly. There were a lot of similarities in the social groups within the constituencies and between men and women.

TABLE VIII.14 FREQUENCY OF INTERACTION WITHIN SOCIAL GROUPS

Attitude variable	Number	Percentage
Regularly	269	23.3
At times	749	64.8
Never	109	9.4
No Answer	28	2.4
Total	1155	100

TABLE VIII.15 AVERAGE SIZE OF THE GROUPS

Number of Persons	Number	Percentage
Less than 5	420	36.3
5-10	388	33.6
11-20	53	4.6
More than 20	18	1.6
It varies from time to time	144	12.5
No answer	132	11.4
Total	1155	100

From table VIII.15, we found that over a third (36.3%) of the groups comprised of less than five and 33.6% were between 5-10 members. Thus around two thirds were in small group situations. We further evaluated the characteristics of these groups.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SOCIAL GROUPS

We examined if respondents interacted with persons of similar background as themselves in terms of age, occupation, language, caste and religion. The respondents were asked to mark the extent to which the given statements in the questionnaire were true or untrue on a four point scale as true, untrue, uncertain or if they preferred not to answer. The responses are presented in table VIII.16.

TABLE VIII.16 SIMILARITY OF SOCIAL GROUPS BY AGE, OCCUPATION AND LANGUAGE

Attitude variable	Age		Occupation		Language	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
True	472	40.9	367	31.8	586	50.7
Uncertain (may or may not)	359	31.1	430	37.2	238	20.6
Untrue	173	15.0	202	17.5	187	16.2
No Answer	151	13.0	156	13.5	144	12.5
Total	1155	100	1155	100	1155	100

Did the members move around with the same age group?

40.9% of the respondents confirmed that they socialised with persons of their own age group while 31.1% said that they may or may not mix with persons of their own age group. 15% tend to socialise with other age groups and 13% did not respond at all. Women, tend to interact with women of other age groups when compared with men.

Do members of social groups do the same work?

While socialization to the extent of 31.8% is true within occupational groups, less than half this number (17.5%) confirm it is not so, while 37.2% opine that it may or may not be so. Language appears to bring together 50.7% of the respondents to which another 20.6% can be added further. It is untrue for 16.2% of the respondents and 12.5% chose not to answer.

Nearly a third, 31.7% of the respondents were in the same occupation and generally socialized with colleagues, while 37% replied in the negative or were uncertain, signifying greater socialisation among friends, relatives and neighbours, as stated by 17.5%. More men than women moved around with members of the same occupation. Language was not a restrictive factor as 80% respondents spoke Telugu.

TABLE VIII.17 SIMILARITY OF GROUPS BY RELIGION AND CASTE

Attitude variable	Belong to the same Religion		Belong to the same Caste	
	N	%	N	%
True	322	27.9	172	14.9
Uncertain	356	30.8	348	30.1
Untrue	312	27.0	454	39.3
No answer	165	14.3	181	15.7
Total	1155	100	1155	100

Did Respondents move around with members of same religion ?

Some interesting findings were noted in responses to whether respondents moved around with members of the same religion and caste. In table VIII.17, we find that though 80% of the respondents were Hindus, over a quarter (27.9%) of the respondents do and do not socialise on the basis of religion. This could partly be

attributed to the religious uprisings and caste differences that had become controversial issues during the elections and respondents were hesitant to admit their differences.

Did respondents socialize with members of same caste

Over 30% may or may not socialise on the basis of religion or caste. 39.3% are certain that they do not base their socialisation on caste. About 15% of the respondents chose not to answer to these questions. Only 13.1% reported that they mixed exclusively with persons of their own caste. Though most of the respondents were not hesitant to reveal the caste they belonged to, many preferred to be uncertain about moving about with members of their caste and religion.

Age (72%), language (71.3%) and occupation (69%) appear to be important if not possible characteristics that lead people to socialise in groups. For over half the respondents caste and religion was not a restricting factor for socialization.

TOPICS OF DISCUSSION AT SMALL GROUP MEETINGS

The talks at group meetings ranged from day-to-day general matters to specific areas. Though the topics are not definitive and most of them overlap, they do give an indication of the major issues discussed. Nearly three fourths marked most of the categories. A respondent stated 'when we get together, we discuss anything and every thing', 'we do not get together to discuss a set of topics, it's not a trade or business meeting'⁷.

There was little variation in each of the listed topics. As seen in table VIII.18, day-to-day matters were most discussed (65.7%), followed by social issues (60.9%) and gossip (56.7%). Political matters rated fourth (50.1%) followed by economic issues (47.8%).

⁷ Mr.Chandra Reddy, resident of Nagarkurnool.

TABLE VIII.18 TOPICS OF DISCUSSION AT SMALL GROUP MEETINGS

Topics of discussion	Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%
Day-to-day	759	65.7	396	34.3
Political issues	579	50.1	576	49.9
Social issues	704	60.9	451	39.1
Economic issues	552	47.8	603	52.2
Gossip	655	56.7	500	43.3
Others	228	19.7	927	80.3

As seen in the above table VIII.18, day-to-day matters were generally discussed by nearly two thirds or 65.7% of the respondents in all the three constituencies followed by social affairs, gossip and economic affairs. Political discussions rated fourth in the order of priority by 50-60% respondents in each constituency. Among the constituencies, politics were discussed the most by 60.3% of the respondents from Nagarkurnool, followed by those in Hyderabad (53.3%) and 50% in Secunderabad. Even though 60% of the respondents in Nagarkurnool discussed politics, it was the last among the topics of importance.

Social issues were discussed by 60.9% of the total respondents. They were most discussed by 66.9% respondents from Nagarkurnool followed by 62.3% in Secunderabad and 56.4% in Hyderabad. Economic issues were discussed by 47.8% of the respondents. It was rated last in all three constituencies compared to other subjects. Economic issues were discussed by 65.2% of the respondents from Nagarkurnool followed by 48.4% in Secunderabad and 32.2% in Hyderabad.

During elections, politically active persons in such groups become influencing agents and mobilize members for supporting and voting for candidates and parties. The influence of social groups of neighbours and friends was important especially among the younger generation. Therefore, we further examined the extent to which these social groups formed sources of political information and influence in voting behaviour.

THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL GROUPS: LOCAL LEADERS, FRIENDS AND NEIGHBOURS

THE ROLE OF LOCAL LEADERS

In India, with high illiteracy rates, the two-step flow from mass media to community leaders to masses has been successful in diffusion of innovations. Accordingly, information provided by the media or government agencies is most likely to reach the higher status and better educated members of the community commonly referred to as the Opinion leaders and trickle down from them to the others. This was confirmed in three villages in a study conducted on mass media and village life (Hartman, Patil & Dighe, 1991).

Opinion leaders are constantly interacting with people giving information and motivating them on adoption of new ideas, technologies and the government's policies and programmes. For street corner meetings and home visits, opinion leaders have become important sources for channelising information. The changes have been seen in the adoption of farm practices, agricultural technologies and rural industries⁸. The obvious examples are, the literate villagers reading a newspaper aloud to others, or raising topics first encountered through the media for discussion at a tea shop or small group meeting.

⁸ Members of Field Publicity units of the government, the village development workers as well as certain educated members of the village serve as opinion leaders

Just as the various consumer groups use the opinion leaders for persuading persons about new products and technology, political parties use them as sources of influence in the community groups to gain political support as they become important in communicating and convincing the local communities. Earlier we found most parties had held door-to-door campaigns to reach the electorate through the party functionaries elected at the local units. Here we discuss the dependence and influence of these leaders in mobilising support for parties and candidates.

TABLE VIII.19 DEPENDENCE ON INTERNAL SOURCES FOR ELECTION INFORMATION

Sources	A lot		A fair amount		Not at all		No Opinion /Don't know	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Friends and neighbours	192	16.6	628	54.3	275	23.8	60	5.3
Local Leaders	87	7.5	314	27.2	635	55.0	119	10.3

TABLE VIII.20 CONSTITUENCY WISE RESPONDENTS DEPENDENT ON LOCAL LEADERS

Attitude variable	Secunderabad		Hyderabad		Nagarkurnool	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
A Lot	47	13.0	27	5.5	13	4.3
A fair amount	70	19.4	97	19.6	148	49.5
Not at all	218	60.4	301	60.8	116	38.8
Dont know / No answer	26	7.2	70	14.1	22	7.4
Total	361	100	495	100	299	100

As seen in table VIII.19, double the number (16.6%) of respondents depend a lot and a fair amount on friends and neighbours when compared with local leaders (7.5%). The same holds true for those who do not depend at all or who offered no opinion. Over half the respondents (54.3%) depended a fair amount on friends and neighbours for election information and almost the same percentage of respondents (55%) do not depend for such information on local leaders.

In the constituencies, over one third in Nagarkarnool (38.8%) and a less than two third of the respondents in Hyderabad (60.8%) and Secunderabad (60.4%) do not depend at all on local leaders for election information. While nearly half the respondents in Nagarkarnool (49.5%) depended a fair amount on local leaders, only 19% of their urban counterparts did so. While 13% of Secunderabad respondents depended a lot on local leaders, around 5% of their counterparts in Hyderabad and Nagarkarnool did so.

Earlier we found that most parties had held door-to-door campaigns to reach the electorate through the local party functionaries elected at local units. Here we discuss the dependence and influence of these leaders in mobilising support for parties and candidates.

THE INFLUENCE OF FRIENDS AND NEIGHBOURS

The influence of friends and neighbours was more important than local leaders but scored less than family. A little less than two thirds of the respondents in rural Nagarkarnool (64.5%), over half in urban Secunderabad (54.6%) and a little less than half in Hyderabad (48%) depended a fair amount on friends and neighbours for election information.

TABLE VIII.21 CONSTITUENCY WISE DEPENDENCE ON FRIENDS & NEIGHBOURS FOR ELECTION INFORMATION

Attitude variable	Secunderabad		Hyderabad		Nagarkurnool	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
A lot	79	21.9	76	15.3	37	12.4
A fair amount	197	54.6	238	48.0	193	64.5
Not at all	70	19.3	150	30.3	55	18.4
Dont Know /No answer	15	4.2	32	6.4	14	4.7
Total	361	100	495	100	299	100

While a little over one fifth in Secunderabad (21.9%) depended a lot on friends and neighbours only 15.3% of their counterparts in Hyderabad and 12.4% in Nagarkurnool did so. Less than one third did not depend on friends and neighbours in Hyderabad (30.3%), while a fifth of their counterparts did not do so in Secunderabad (19.3%) and Nagarkurnool (18.4%). We further investigated if there was any difference of opinion in the different age groups.

TABLE VIII.22 AGE AND THE DEPENDENCE ON FRIENDS & NEIGHBOURS FOR ELECTION INFORMATION

Attitude variable	18-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	56-65	65+
	%	%	%	%	%	%
A lot	14.0	18.4	15.7	18.2	18.0	11.1
A Fair Amount	53.8	52.7	56.7	56.0	52.5	66.7
Not at all	26.9	24.9	22.6	18.9	21.3	11.1
No answer	5.3	4.0	5.0	6.9	8.2	11.1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

In the age wise distribution, as observed in table VIII.22, the age group 26-35 years are a majority of nearly 70% who would depend a lot (18.4%) and a fair amount (52.7%) on social groups

for providing election information. These are closely followed by the young voters (18-25 years) of which 14% depend a lot and 53.8% a fair amount. About a quarter do not depend on social groups for election information of which the young voters occupy the highest position with 26.9% and the senior citizens over 65 years the lowest at 11.1% indicating a downward trend in the dependency on social groups.

INTERPERSONAL INFLUENCES IN THE DECISION TO VOTE

Noting the importance given to family, friends and neighbours and local leaders we asked the extent to which they actually consulted them in their voting decision. The question asked was 'Talking about the local people in your area, who were the people most involved in helping you to decide ? Enquiries were focused on the discussions in the family, discussions with friends and neighbours and talking to local leaders.

TABLE VIII.23 THE INFLUENCE OF INTERNAL INTERPERSONAL SOURCES OF COMMUNICATION

Internal Personal factors	A lot		Somewhat		Not at all		No Answer	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Discussions with friends and neighbours	167	14.5	606	52.5	317	27.4	65	5.6
Discussions with local leaders	77	6.7	384	33.2	642	55.6	52	4.5
Others	48	4.2	132	11.4	909	78.7	66	5.7

Discussions with Friends and neighbours, local Leaders and others.

Over half the respondents were somewhat influenced on their decision to vote on account of discussions with friends (52.5%) but not at all influenced by discussions with local leaders

(55.6%) as indicated in table VII.23. Double the number of respondents were influenced a lot by discussions with friends (14.5%) than with local leaders (6.7%). But discussions with local leaders somewhat helped a third (32.3%) of the respondents. Discussion with others helped only 4.2% a lot and somewhat for 11.4% respondents.

SUMMARY

Respondents looked upon discussions with the family and friends and neighbours and to some extent the local leaders as important sources of political information in both urban and rural areas. A low percentage of urban respondents depended upon local leaders compared to a higher percentage of rural respondents in Nagarkurnool.

In the final voting decisions, nearly three fourths of the respondents were influenced by families. Friends followed with two third respondents. Local leaders helped 40%, but on an overall basis they were more prominent in the rural constituency. Despite the use and impact of mass media and interpersonal factors, the ultimate decision to vote is that of the individual. We therefore examined some of the individual factors that influenced the voting behaviour of the respondents.

SECTION III

PERSONAL FACTORS INFLUENCING VOTING BEHAVIOUR

The Indian constitution was built upon equality, justice, fraternity and liberty offering the people the advantage of following any belief, faith or worship. Over the years, political parties, especially Cong.I has used electoral tactics of dividing the society into many unequal blocks through localized appeals to the dominant majorities thereby claiming to maintain the socio political fabric of secularity in the country, at the same time enjoying political support for over four decades. However, the emergence of other rival parties like BJP, SJP and JD structuring

their political support on such issues as caste, religion and economic differences, parties have been able to break the Cong.I foothold (Ahuja & Paul, 1991).

During the 1991 elections, voters were bombarded with various issues, religious 'fatwas' and clarion calls from political parties and several community and social groups. We attempted to investigate how individuals' perceived these messages and if these factors tended to influence voting behaviour. The question asked was: In deciding how to vote, how important would you consider the following aspects:

1. To consult and follow the advice of family members.
2. To make a decision after evaluating the performances of the various parties.
3. To follow the advice of senior and respectable members of the community.
4. To follow the religious leaders.
5. To follow the majority of the caste group.

The respondents were given five statements and were asked to mark on a five point scale the level of importance they gave to each of the factors as, 'very important', 'somewhat important', 'not very important', 'not at all important' and 'no opinion'.

TABLE VIII.24 PERSONAL FACTORS AFFECTING VOTING DECISIONS

Attitude variable	Follow members of family		Decide after evaluation of parties and candidates		Follow senior members of community		Follow advice of religious leaders		Follow members of caste	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Very important	216	18.7	318	27.5	86	7.4	102	8.8	97	8.4
Somewhat important	372	32.2	302	26.1	267	23.1	153	13.2	155	13.4
Not very important	256	22.2	229	19.9	296	25.6	249	21.6	228	19.7
Not at all important	230	19.9	162	14.0	361	31.3	489	42.4	490	42.4
No opinion	81	7.0	144	12.5	145	12.6	162	14.0	185	16.1
Total	1155	100	1155	100	1155	100	1155	100	1155	100

1. To make a decision after evaluating the performances of parties and candidates. As seen in table VIII.24, an important criteria for impartially selecting a particular party, only over a quarter, 27.5% considered it very important and 26.1% found it somewhat important to evaluate the credentials of the candidates before casting their vote. 19.9% did not find it very important and 14% not at all important to evaluate the party characteristics before taking a voting decision. 12.5% did not have any opinion on the issue. It would not be wrong to conclude that the performance of party and its evaluation for its merits and demerits was not a very important factor for nearly half the respondents.
2. To follow the advice of senior and respected members of the community. During the 1991 elections several senior members of the community like the senior public servants, army personnel, industrialists and others, expressed their support for particular parties and campaigned for them during the elections. Was it true that people would take their voting decision by following the members of the community. 7.4% of the respondents reported that it was very important to follow the dictates of the senior members of the community while more than four times this number (31.3%) did not consider it important and a quarter of the respondents (25.6%) did not find it very important. Therefore 30.5% appear likely and over half (56.1%) may probably follow the advise of the community members in their decision to vote.
3. To follow the advice of religious leaders of the Community. As discussed in the earlier chapters, during the 1991 elections, religious leaders had campaigned for the BJP and JD. Opinion polls showed a marked support for these two parties who had aroused the voters on religious grounds.
42.4% of the respondents felt that it was not at all important to follow the advise of religious leaders while voting. While 8.8% respondents considered it very important to follow the religious leaders, 13.2% said it was somewhat

important, thereby making one fifth of them likely to follow the religious leaders. However 14% who had no opinion may consider the advise of religious leaders in exercising their franchise.

Given the communally polarised voters in the Hyderabad constituency it was somewhat difficult to attach much credibility to these findings with people not giving much importance to religious groups. Moreover, the results from the polling booths in the localities in Hyderabad indicated a definite voting pattern in the Hindu and Muslim dominated areas. We presume that, with intense communal riots in the run up to the election, religion had become a sensitive issue and maybe people preferred to be non-committal. Earlier too, we found a similar response, when most respondents refused to answer if they socialised with members of the same caste or religion.

4. To follow a majority of the members of the Caste

Like religion, caste had also become an controversial factor in dividing the electorate. JD/NF had made it their main election issue. Only 8.4% respondents stated that it was very important while 13.4% found it somewhat important. However, about 40% of the respondents may not follow the fellow caste members in their voting behaviour. A near identical trend was noticed on the importance given to caste and religious factors in making voting decisions. Even in Nagarkurnool, a reserved constituency for an SC candidate, there was little declared inclination to vote on caste basis.

THE RESPONDENTS' VIEWS ON COMMUNITY VOTING BEHAVIOUR

We further investigated the respondents' perceptions of how others generally voted. In this we found quite the opposite views from the respondents' own attitudes. The respondents were asked to scale their opinions on factors of caste, religion and party affiliation through the question, How do you think other people in the community generally voted in the elections?

TABLE VIII.25 RESPONDENT VIEWS ON HOW OTHERS IN THE COMMUNITY VOTED

Attitude variable	Caste		Religion		Party affiliation	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
A lot	385	33.4	447	38.6	310	26.8
Somewhat	284	24.5	254	22.0	403	34.9
Not at all	244	21.1	216	18.7	204	17.7
Don't know	162	14.0	142	12.3	134	11.6
No answer	80	7.0	96	8.4	104	9.0
Total	1155	100	1155	100	1155	100

While less than 10% of the respondents said that caste and religion were important factors for their own voting decisions, more than half agreed that others voted on these two factors. As seen in the table VIII.25, 58% respondents said that others voted based on caste (33.4% a lot and 24.5% somewhat) and 60.6% (38.6% a lot and 22% somewhat) voted based on religion. Contrary to their own attitudes, less than a quarter, positively stated that other community members voted on the basis caste or religion.

In examining how far party affiliation affected the voting patterns as families were referred to as Cong.I or BJP or Communist supporting families over their long time association with the parties, we found that over a third (34.9%) said that party affiliation was somewhat reflected in the voting behaviour and 26.8% respondents opined that a lot of people voted because of their affiliation with the parties.

SUMMARY

The importance given to the three major internal sources of political information, family, friends and neighbours and local leaders of the community became important in exchanging information and discussion. Though local leaders were not significant in the urban constituencies, their influence was more important in the rural constituency. The interaction with family not only formed an important source on which the respondents

depended for information, but it also formed a significant source of influence in voting behaviour for nearly half the respondents. In assessing the social factors affecting voting behaviour, interesting results emerged as questions were approached from different angles to review the answers and establish a degree of credibility of the respondents attitude towards elections.

To follow the members of the family was an important factor in voting decisions for half the respondents (very important for 18.7% and somewhat important for 32.2%). We could conclude that in India, despite the changes in the family structure and greater exposure to the mass media 'families generally supported and voted as single units'. Discussions with local leaders had helped only a very few respondents. Though earlier studies on the diffusion of innovations have established the importance of the local leaders in bringing about change at the grassroots level, in our study, discussions with the local leaders had helped 6.8% respondents a lot in their voting decisions.

In evaluating individual factors influencing voting behaviour, nearly half (27.8% said that it was very important and 26.2% said it was somewhat important) the respondents did not find it important to evaluate the characteristics of the party before making their voting decision.

In following the members of caste and religious groups in their voting behaviour, an equal percentage (42.5%) of the respondents emphatically stated the extreme of 'not at all important'. Contradictory views were found when respondents were questioned on their own voting behaviour in relation to caste and religion and their opinions on those of the community voting behaviour. An under current of this view can be found when 40% appear quite likely to consider their views. Also in our constituencies, caste uprisings were not so apparently felt, but in Hyderabad the voters were highly divided on religious grounds, the clever voters refrained from admitting their voting behaviour on the same grounds.

CHAPTER IX

VOTING BEHAVIOUR AND THE IMPACT OF THE CAMPAIGNS

Thus far we have evaluated how the mass media and interpersonal forms of communication have helped in gaining information and helping voters to decide. We now evaluate the extent to which these factors led to voting or non-voting behaviour and the overall impact of the campaigns in the 1991 elections. We investigated the respondents voting behaviour in the 1991 elections with a review of their voting patterns in the 1989 elections and whether the assassination influenced voting behaviour (in Nagarkurnool). Second, we examined the extent to which respondents campaigned for the party they supported, third we evaluated the non-voting trends; and last, examined how far the campaigns helped them in their voting behaviour.

The voting act is a response to internal and external stimuli, the former in terms of preference and commitment, and the latter in the context of pressures, campaigning and manipulation (Varma & Narain, 1973). Voting behaviour of a community is to a large extent conditioned by its cultural orientation and general political disposition. The main reasons for party preference have been identified in broad categories as: past record and future expectations, group representations, ideology and programmes, role in the freedom struggle, the ruling party, family traditions, electoral issues, and personal image of the leaders (Quaraishi, 1987).

Though it may be understood that many of the voters gave information on their intention to vote and their final voting behaviour, one could not take it to be totally credible or accurate as our interviewers found the respondents hesitant in

revealing the names of the party that they intended to vote for and for whom they had finally voted. However, we have taken the available information provided to at least gauge the general attitudes to voting. Analyses from the first and the second phases were checked and reviewed in order to evaluate the changes in the trends of voting behaviour and finally, to determine the extent to which campaigns helped them in their ultimate voting behaviour.

The intention to vote reflects the readiness of the voter to exercise his franchise, and in doing so be receptive to political information through the mass media and other channels of communication. Intention to vote may be defined as a mental resolve to action (Varma and Narain,1973). We have evaluated the voters' intention as well as the final act of voting.

SECTION I

VOTING BEHAVIOUR IN THE 1989 AND 1991 ELECTIONS

TABLE IX.1 RESPONDENTS' INTENTION TO VOTE IN THE 1991 LOK SABHA ELECTIONS

Voting Intention	N	%
Intended to vote	980	84.9
Undecided	112	9.7
Will not vote	49	4.2
No answer	14	1.2
Total	1155	100

Despite reports of disinterest and indifference among voters in the national daily press¹, an overwhelming 84.9% intended to vote during the elections. As observed in table IX.1, 9.7% were undecided and only a small 4.2% had decided not to vote. This relatively high trend of intention to vote was observed in both men and women and also in the three constituencies.

¹The Hindu, Madras, 22 April, 1991 and The Times of India, Bombay, 12, May 1991.

TABLE IX.2 RESPONDENTS WHO VOTED IN THE 1989 AND 1991 ELECTIONS

Attitude variable	1989		1991	
	N	%	N	%
Yes	897	77.7	902	78.1
No	243	21.0	208	18.0
No answer	15	1.3	45	3.9
Total	1155	100	1155	100

Reviewing the 1989 elections in table IX.2, we found that 77.7% of respondents had voted in the 1989 elections. As seen in table IX.1, though 84.9% respondents intended to vote in 1991, actually 78.1% claimed to have finally voted, a negligible increase from the 1989 elections.

The total all India voter turnout during 1991 was 51%, and in AP it was 61.42%. As seen in table IX.3 the actual official record of voting pattern reveals that against the above responses, 77.12% in Hyderabad, 59.96% in Nagarkurnool and 45.08% in Secunderabad of the eligible voters had actually exercised their franchise.

TABLE IX.3 CONSTITUENCY WISE VOTING PATTERN AMONG THE ELECTORATE IN THE THREE CONSTITUENCIES.

Constituency	Size of the electorate	No of persons voted	Valid votes	% of electors who voted
Secunderabad	1,183,787	533,666	526,930	45.08
Hyderabad	1,296,145	999,602	984,878	77.12
Nagarkurnool	1,001,633	600,608	579,204	59.96
Total	2,481,575	2,133,876	2,091,012	

Source: Report on the Tenth General Elections to the House of the People in India. Election Commission of India, New Delhi 1991.

TABLE IX.4 CONSTITUENCY WISE RESPONDENTS WHO VOTED IN 1991

Constituencies	Yes		No		No Answer	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Secunderabad	281	77.8	61	16.9	19	5.3
Hyderabad	401	81.0	79	16.0	15	3.0
Nagarkurnool	220	73.6	68	22.7	11	3.7
Total	902	78.1	208	18.0	45	3.9

However, in our sample, there were distinct variations in voting behaviour compared with the average turnout in the constituencies with a majority of the respondents having voted. As seen in table IX.4, in the three constituencies, three fourths of the respondents claimed to have voted in the elections, with the highest, 81% in Hyderabad, followed by 77.8% in Secunderabad and 73.6% in Nagarkurnool. Compared with the official turnouts as shown in table IX.3 there was a difference of nearly 33 percentage points in our sample from Secunderabad, 77.8% of the respondents in our sample claimed to have voted compared to the official turnout of 45.08%. In Hyderabad, the difference was only 3.9% points, with the turnout of 77.1% when 81% of our respondents claimed to have voted. In Nagarkurnool the difference was 13 percentage points.

TABLE IX.5 GENDER WISE RESPONDENTS WHO VOTED IN 1989 & 1991

Attitude Variable	1989				1991			
	Men		Women		Men		Women	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	540	83.2	357	70.6	523	80.6	379	74.9
No	101	15.6	142	28.0	126	19.4	127	25.1
No Answer	8	1.2	7	1.4	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	649	100	506	100	649	100	506	100

As in table IX. 5, in the 1989 elections men outnumbered women by 12.6 percentage points among the respondents who cast their

vote. 83.2% men voted and 70.6% women voted. In all the three constituencies the percentage of male voters was higher than female voters. In 1991 the trend seem to be similar with a marginal decrease in the number of men (80.6%) and and increase in the number of women (74.9%) who voted.

THE PARTIES MOST LIKELY TO BE VOTED FOR BY THE RESPONDENTS

We examined which parties the respondents intended to vote for compared to those they voted for in 1989, and the parties that they finally claimed to have voted in 1991.

TABLE IX.6 THE PARTY THAT THE RESPONDENTS INTENDED TO VOTE (FIRST PREFERENCE)

Political Party	N	%
Cong.I	311	26.9
TDP	113	9.8
BJP	390	33.8
MIM	39	3.4
JD	28	2.4
CPI/CPM	9	0.8
Others	251	21.7
No answer	14	1.2
Total	1155	100

As seen in table IX.6, BJP was the first preference for one third (33.8%) of the respondents followed by over a quarter (26.9%) who favoured Cong I. A significant number, a little more than a fifth (22.3%) appeared to keep their option open to others. TDP (9.8%) was the choice of less than 10% of the respondents. The low 3.4% choice for MIM can be accounted for MIM's influence in the old city areas of the Hyderabad constituency. JD (2.4%) and CPI/CPM parties (0.8%) have been chosen by a very small number of respondents.

TABLE IX.7 CONSTITUENCY WISE PARTIES LIKELY TO BE VOTED FOR BY THE RESPONDENTS (FIRST PREFERENCE)

Political Party	Secunderabad		Hyderabad		Nagarkurnool	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Cong.I	85	23.5	145	29.3	81	27.1
TDP	18	5.0	45	9.1	50	16.7
BJP	126	35.0	128	25.9	136	45.5
MIM	8	2.2	26	5.3	5	1.6
JD	11	3.0	14	2.8	3	1.0
CPI/CPM	2	0.5	6	1.2	1	0.3
Others	108	30.0	127	25.7	17	7.7
No Answer	3	0.8	4	0.8	7	2.3
Total	361	100	495	100	299	100

As observed in table IX.7, BJP was the most favoured first preference party in Nagarkurnool with the maximum (45.5%) respondents followed by those in Secunderabad (35.0%) and a close second choice in Hyderabad (25%). Cong.I led the field in Hyderabad (29.3%), was second choice in Nagarkurnool (27.1%), and third (23.5%) in Secunderabad. Interestingly 30% of the respondents in Secunderabad and 21.7% in Hyderabad appeared to keep their options open in contrast with a small 7.7% of their counterparts in Nagarkurnool.

TDP was third choice in Nagarkurnool (16.7%) and fourth in urban Hyderabad (9.1%) and Secunderabad (5%). Except in Hyderabad where the MIM party was selected by 5.3% respondents its influence elsewhere was insignificant. The JD and Communist parties fared even worse. We further enquired the second most preferred party/alternate party, if the respondents were unable to vote for the first party of their choice.

TABLE IX.8 THE ALTERNATE PARTY THAT RESPONDENTS WERE LIKELY TO VOTE FOR (SECOND PREFERENCE)

Political Party	N	%
Cong.I	261	22.6
TDP	164	14.2
BJP	224	19.4
MIM	39	3.4
JD	64	5.5
CPI/CPM	16	1.4
SJP	6	0.5
Others	378	32.7
No answer	3	0.3
Total	1155	100

One third (32.7%) of the respondents preferred to keep an open mind, as seen in table IX.8. This is an increase of 10 percentage points from the previous response. There were a lot of duplications with many of the respondents marking the same party as the first and second choice, indicating a firm intention to vote for a particular party. In contrast to the first choice earlier, Cong.I was the second preferred party as over one fifth (22.6%) chose Cong.I, with the BJP at (19.4%) not far behind. TDP fared better with 14.2% respondents when compared with the previous 9.8% as did JD with 5.5% against 2.4% and Communist parties with 1.4% against 0.8%. MIM (3.4%) appears to have retained its previous supporters. Table IX.9 examines the distribution of party preferences in the three constituencies.

TABLE IX.9 CONSTITUENCY WISE ALTERNATE PARTY LIKELY TO BE VOTED BY THE RESPONDENTS

Political Party	Secunderabad		Hyderabad		Nagarkurnool	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Cong. I	88	24.4	68	13.7	105	35.1
TDP	31	8.6	60	12.1	73	24.4
BJP	65	18.0	98	19.8	61	20.4
MIM	4	1.1	29	5.9	6	2.0
JD	18	5.0	23	4.6	23	7.7
CPI/CPM	1	0.3	11	2.2	4	1.3
SJP	1	0.3	5	1.1	0	0.0
Others	151	42.0	201	40.6	26	9.0
No answer	2	0.6	0	0	1	0.3
Total	361	100.3	495	100	299	100.2

As referred in table IX.9, over 40% of the respondents of Secunderabad (42.3%) and Hyderabad (40.6%), preferred to give other than established political parties a try. Over a third (35.1%) the largest group in Nagarkurnool preferred to give Cong.I. the alternate option, while TDP (24.4%) and BJP (20.4%) were the parties most chosen by the Nagarkurnool respondents. Therefore in Secunderabad, Cong.I was most favoured alternate party by 24.4% respondents followed by BJP with 18% and TDP by 8.6%. In Hyderabad, BJP had gained popularity with 19.9% likely to vote for it. Cong.I was preferred by 13.7% and TDP was close with 12.1%. These trends indicate the changes in parties that respondents had voted for in 1989 and in 1991 elections.

THE PARTIES RESPONDENTS VOTED FOR IN 1989 AND THE SAMPLE VOTE IN THE 1991 ELECTIONS

78% of respondents claimed to have voted in the elections. Most people did not hesitate to reveal the party that they voted (by then it was established that the interviewers were involved in academic work).

TABLE IX.10 COMPARISON BETWEEN THE PARTY VOTED IN 1989 AND 1991

Party voted for	1989		1991	
	N	%	N	%
Cong.I	490	42.4	282	24.4
BJP	127	11.0	409	35.4
TDP	146	12.6	111	9.6
JD	25	2.2	32	2.8
MIM	27	2.3	60	5.2
CPI/CPM	5	0.4	8	0.7
Others	4	0.3	21	1.8
Do not remember	331	28.8	232	20.1
Total	1155	100	1155	100

As seen in table IX.10, BJP showed a marked improvement, gaining 24.4 percentage points between 1989 (11%) and 1991 (35.4%) as revealed by the respondents. On the other hand Cong.I was the major loser, losing 18 percentage points on voter choice between 1989 (42.4%) and 1991 (24.4%). TDPs vote share dropped by three percentage points from 12.6% to 9.6% .

Marginal gainers were MIM with three percentage points (2.3% to 5.2%), JD and communist parties with less than one percentage point. While over a quarter (28.8%) claimed that they could not remember the party they voted in 1989, only a fifth (20.1%) claimed this in 1991. MIM which won the Hyderabad seat obtained 5.2% gaining three percentage points.

Overall of the 33.8% respondents who intended to vote for BJP, a little more than same percent (35.4%) finally voted for it. BJP had effectively made inroads into the state with an overall 9.64% vote share in the state, won the Secunderabad constituency but narrowly missed the Hyderabad seat by four percent votes in a close contest with MIM. We further examine the voting behaviour

in relation to the constituencies, gender, age and religious background for significant trends.

TABLE IX.11 CONSTITUENCY WISE PARTIES VOTED FOR IN THE ELECTIONS

Political Party	Secunderabad		Hyderabad		Nagarkurnool	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Cong.I	89	24.7	107	21.6	86	28.8
BJP	145	40.2	181	36.6	83	27.8
TDP	24	6.6	41	8.3	46	15.4
MIM	3*	0.8	49	9.9	8	2.7
JD	13	3.6	11	2.2	8	2.7
CPI/CPM	3	0.8	1	0.2	4	1.3
Others	16	4.4	5	1.0	0	0.0
Do not remember	68	18.8	100	20.2	64	21.3
Total	361	100	495	100	299	100

* Though there was no candidate, some persons marked MIM.

In the constituencies there were distinct differences in the voting patterns. In Table IX.11, it can be seen that a majority of urban respondents in Secunderabad (40.2%) and Hyderabad (36.6%) voted for the BJP. BJP cornered the second highest votes, (27.8%) in rural Nagarkurnool too.

The Secunderabad seat was won by the BJP. While it was narrowly ahead of the BJP in Nagarkurnool with 29.1% votes, Cong.I was 15 percentage points away from the BJP in Secunderabad (24.7%) and Hyderabad (21.6%). While the influence of TDP was manifest in Nagarkurnool (15.4%) and that of MIM (9.9%) in Hyderabad, the influence of these parties and others was not significant elsewhere. Incidentally, about 20% of the respondents did not reveal the party they voted for.

TABLE.IX.12 THE PARTIES MEN AND WOMEN VOTED IN THE 1989 AND 1991 ELECTIONS

Political Party	1989				1991			
	Men		Women		Men		Women	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Cong.I	284	43.8	206	40.7	166	25.5	116	22.9
BJP	78	12.0	49	9.7	253	39.0	156	30.8
TDP	91	14.0	55	10.9	66	10.2	45	8.9
NF/JD	23	3.6	2	0.4	16	2.5	16	3.2
MIM	12	1.8	15	3.0	16	2.5	44	8.7
CPI (M)	5	0.8	0	0.0	6	0.9	2	0.4
Others	2	0.3	2	0.4	15	2.3	6	1.2
Do not remember	154	23.7	177	34.9	111	17.1	121	23.9
Total	649	100	506	100	649	100	506	100

Among men and women there was a marked shift towards BJP from 1989 to 1991. As observed in table IX.12, While over 40% men (43.8%) and women (40.7%) voted for Cong.I in 1989, this was reduced to half in 1991 with 25.5% of the men and 22.9% of the women voting for the party. On the other hand BJP had increased its vote tally by more than three times from 1989 when compared with 1991 among both men (1989-12%, 1991-39%) and women (1989-9.7%, 1991-30.8%). The gains and losses among others does not appear significant. Unlike reports in the press, in our constituencies more women did not vote for the BJP.

We further observed the voting trends in terms of age groups as in table IX.13. We have taken only the three major parties and the state MIM, hence the totals of the tables do not tally with the overall figures.

TABLE IX.13 PARTY WISE VOTING BY AGE GROUP IN 1991

Age Group	Cong.I		BJP		TDP		MIM	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
18-25	66	23.4	107	26.2	23	20.7	10	16.7
26-35	85	30.2	156	38.2	45	40.6	31	51.7
36-45	66	23.4	72	17.7	25	22.5	11	18.3
46-55	33	11.7	47	11.5	15	13.5	3	5.0
56-65	24	8.5	21	5.2	3	2.7	3	5.0
66+	8	2.8	6	1.5	0	0.0	2	3.3
Total	282	100	409	100	111	100	60	100

In 1991, three quarters of the respondents claimed to have voted for either Cong.I, BJP, TDP and MIM. One fifth claimed that they did not remember who they voted for while the rest voted for other parties. In table IX.13 and IX.14 we isolated the block of voters in Cong.I, BJP, TDP and MIM to determine age-wise voting preferences for these parties.

The age groups 26-35 years and the young voters between 18-25 years contribute a major chunk of the votes for any party. As observed in table IX.13, it contributed 50% of the votes for the BJP, 40.6% to the TDP, 38.2% to the BJP and 30.2% to the Cong.I. The age groups 18-25 years and 36-45 years contributed over 20% to Cong.I and TDP while they got the maximum votes in the 26-35 years category.

Identical trends were observed among the distribution of age groups who voted for different parties. 30-40% who were in the age group of 26-35 years voted for BJP, Cong.I and TDP except in the case of MIM where over half (51.7%) of the voters in this age group voted for MIM. About a fifth of the votes for all parties came from the age group 18-25. Cong.I got (23.4%), BJP (26.2%) and TDP (20.7%) while 16.7% of the same age group voted MIM.

Cong.I, BJP and TDP got 11%-13% of their votes from the 46-55 year old while MIM got only 5%. Cong.I got the highest 11.3% of votes from the 56 years and above age group compared to BJP (6.7%) and MIM (8.3%).

TABLE IX.14 VOTING BY AGE GROUP FOR PARTIES IN 1991

Age Group	Cong. I		BJP		TDP		MIM		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
18-25	66	32.0	107	51.9	23	11.3	10	4.8	206	23.9
26-35	85	26.8	156	49.2	45	14.2	31	9.8	317	36.8
36-45	66	37.9	72	41.4	25	14.4	11	6.3	174	20.2
46-55	33	33.7	47	47.9	15	15.3	3	3.1	98	11.3
56-65	24	47.0	21	41.2	3	5.9	3	5.9	51	5.9
65+	8	50.0	6	37.5	-	-	2	12.5	16	1.9
Total	282	100	409	100	111	100	60	100	862	100

Overall 23.9% in the age group 18-25 years cast their votes for these parties. 51.9% from this group voted of the BJP, 32% voted for the Cong.I, 11.3% for TDP and 4.8% for MIM.

The age group 26-35 years was dominant among different age groups with 36.8% of the voters. Of this group, nearly half (49.2%) voted for the BJP. 26.8% for the Cong.I, 14.2% for TDP and 9.8% for MIM. 20.2% of the respondents made up the age group 36-45 years. Of this group 41.4% voted for BJP, 37.9% for the Cong.I, 14.4% for the TDP and 6.3% for the MIM. 11.3% were from the age group 46-55 years. Of this too nearly half (47.9%) voted for the BJP and 33.7% for Cong.I.

A small 5.9% of the age group comprised of 56 to 65 years age group. Here 47% voted for Cong.I and 41.2% voted for BJP. 1.9% who made up the 66 years and above category had 50% choosing to vote Cong.I, 37.5% for the BJP and 12.5% for the MIM.

BJP leads the rest scoring between 41.2% and 51.9% in the age group 18-65 years. The Cong.I is nearest contender. Except in the oldest groups 56 years and above, BJP has got extra votes in all other age groups.

TABLE IX.15 RELIGION WISE DISTRIBUTION OF THOSE WHO VOTED IN THE ELECTIONS (IN THE THREE CONSTITUENCIES)

Religious Groups	Yes		No		No Answer	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Hindus	723	77.9	168	18.1	38	4.0
Muslims	95	88.0	12	11.5	1	0.9
Sikhs	8	57.1	6	45.8	-	-
Christians	69	74.2	18	19.4	6	6.4
Others	7	61.9	4	28.4	0	0.0
Total/Average %	902	78.1	208	18.0	45	3.9

TABLE IX.16 RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND OF RESPONDENTS AND THE PARTIES THEY VOTED.

Religion	Cong.I		BJP		TDP		MIM		Others	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Hindu	227	24.4	372	40	86	9.3	17	1.8	227	24.4
Muslim	26	24.0	18	16.7	10	9.3	37	34.3	17	15.7
Sikh	3	21.4	5	35.7	2	14.3	0	0.0	4	28.5
Christian	23	24.7	12	12.9	12	12.9	6	6.5	40	43.0
others	3	27.2	2	18.2	1	9.1	0	0.0	5	45.5

India is generally talked about as a communally fragmented electorate. In the table IX.16 we examine the voting pattern on religious lines. The highest turnout (88%) was of the Muslims

compared to 77.9% Hindus followed by Christians and others. 40% of Hindus voted for BJP, a Hindu revivalist party with the secular Cong.I getting 24.4% of the Hindu vote. While the Muslim MIM party secured 1.8% of the Hindu vote, the regional TDP got 9.3% of the Hindu vote. 24.4% of the Hindus either voted for others or kept away from the polling booth. Muslims (88%) turned out in the largest numbers to vote. One third (34.3%) preferred to vote for the MIM, followed by 24.0% for Cong.I, and interestingly 16.7% voted for the BJP.

Cong.I (24.7%) got the highest number of votes from the Christians. 12.9% of the Christians voted for the BJP, 12.9% for the TDP and 6.5% for MIM. The Sikhs are not a dominant group in AP. Over a quarter (28.6%) chose not to answer. Incidentally, nearly half (45.5%) of other communities likewise had no answer but 27.2% voted for the Cong.I, 18.2% voted for BJP and 9.1 for the TDP.

THE TIMING OF THE DECISION TO VOTE AND EXPOSURE

In evaluating the effectiveness of campaigns we investigated the timing of the decision to vote and evaluated the findings in terms of the constituencies and the religious background of the respondents.

TABLE IX.17 THE TIME OF THE DECISION TO VOTE

Attitude variable	N	%
Long before the election campaign	563	48.7
Early in the campaign	195	16.9
During the campaign	143	12.4
On the voting day	53	4.6
No answer	176	15.2
Don't Know	25	2.2
Total	1155	100

As observed in the table IX.17, nearly half (48.7%) of respondents had decided who to vote for long before the election campaign. Campaigns, we presume, were important to the other half of those who were undecided, who decided early in the campaign, during the campaign or on the voting day. 16.9% stated to have decided early in the campaign, 12.4% decided during the campaign and 4.6% decided on the voting day. In terms of the decision taken, based on the religious groups, nearly two thirds of Muslims 65.2% had decided early in the campaign compared to 48% Hindus. There were no interesting differences by constituencies.

On the whole, most respondents had decided early or long before the campaigns were launched. Here two factors become significant, one, the need and effectiveness of large scale election campaigning when most of the electors had already decided on the party they wanted to vote, and second, the mass mobilization campaigns especially those of the BJP and JD/NF that had begun long before the elections were announced gaining momentum and support from the voters.

NON-VOTING TRENDS IN THE ELECTIONS

If voting is an act of ultimate political behaviour, then it is equally important to ascertain why people refrained from voting. The voter turnout in India has been averaging between 50-60% and in 1991 it was estimated at a lower level of 51%. Though every effort was made by political parties and the government to persuade voters to exercise their franchise non-voting trends continued. We therefore asked the non-voters, their reasons for not voting in the elections and compared these responses with those of the 1989 elections.

THE REASONS FOR NOT VOTING IN 1989 AND 1991

In the 1989 elections 22.3% of the respondents did not vote for various reasons and nearly the same percentage 21.9% did not vote in 1991. Several interesting inferences arise from the reasons for which the respondents did not vote.

TABLE IX.18 REASONS FOR NOT VOTING IN 1989 & 1991

Reasons for not voting in the elections	1989		1991	
	N	%	N	%
I was away on that day	60	23.2	43	17.0
I was not eligible to vote	25	9.7	-	-
I was scared to vote	NA*	NA	38	15.0
My vote would not make a difference	50	19.4	53	20.9
I don't think any of the parties were worth voting for	31	12.0	58	22.9
I did not receive information about parties and candidates	7	2.7	7	2.8
Any other	13	5.0	31	12.3
No particular reason	57	22.1	13	5.1
No answer	15	5.8	10	4.0
Total Non voters	258	100	253	100
Voters	897	77.7	902	78.1
Total	1155	100	1155	100

* This question was not asked in the first wave of the survey.

As seen in the table IX.18, 9.7% of the respondents who were not eligible to vote in 1989, were in the voters' list in 1991. More respondents were available on the day of polling in 1991 than in 1989. While 23.2% respondents claimed they were away on voting day only 17% were away on the polling day from their home town. Like wise, those who were present but kept away from the polling booth because their vote would not make a difference increased marginally from 19.4% to 20.9%. Similarly, the number of those who kept away for no particular reason decreased substantially from 22.1% to 5.1%.

However disenchantment with political parties kept more voters away from the polling booth in 1991 than 1989. While in 1989, 12% of the respondents felt that none of the parties were worth voting for, nearly double the number (22.9%) felt that way in

1991. This trend was also seen in a number of articles published in the newspapers that the voters were tuned away from the electoral system².

There was very little change for those who did not vote on account of either no information about parties and candidates. It could be inferred that a large amount of election information had filtered to the grassroots level and the electorate was well informed by political parties and government agencies through mass and interpersonal channels.

In the second round of data collection, another variable 'I was scared to vote' was introduced to cover the 1991 election. 15% of those who did not vote chose this reason to keep away from the polling booth. The rise in political violence was regularly reported in the past elections with cases of booth capturing, voters being barred or threatened from casting their votes and widespread rigging in some states. In Hyderabad such reports were common. This reason was not surprising as the researcher in an attempt to cast her own vote faced the same experience of seeing some voters being pushed away and herself went home. The other reasons included sickness or being busy with personal work. Next, we examined the voters involvement in the elections and if they campaigned for the party they supported.

DID THE RESPONDENTS CAMPAIGN FOR THE PARTY THEY VOTED ?

The support for the party can be gauged by the way of people helping out in campaign activity, campaigning at the local community level, in the publishing and distribution of campaign literature, collecting funds for the party and organising public meetings and processions. Therefore, in the first round, we introduced the question 'Did you campaign for the party you voted?

² The Hindu, Madras, 16 May, 1991.

TABLE IX.19 THE RESPONDENTS WHO CAMPAIGNED FOR THE PARTY

Attitude variable	Men		Women		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	149	22.9	62	12.2	211	18.3
No	493	75.9	432	85.4	925	80.1
Don't Know/No answer	7	1.2	12	2.4	19	1.6
Total	649	100	506	100	1155	100

As seen in the table IX.19, nearly a fifth of the respondents (18.3%) reported that they were involved in campaigning indicating an involvement in the political process. More men (22.9%) than women (12.2%) campaigned for the parties they supported. We also asked the respondents if party affiliation in any way affected the community voting behaviour

TABLE IX.20 DID THE COMMUNITY MEMBERS VOTE BECAUSE OF PARTY AFFILIATION

Attitude Variable	N	%
Not at all	204	17.7
A little	403	34.9
A lot	310	26.8
Don't know	134	11.6
No answer	104	9.0
Total	1155	100

Affiliation with a party affected people's voting behaviour. As seen in table IX.20, 61.7% of the respondents believed that community members vote on account of the party affiliation. Of these 26.8% stated a lot and 34.9% a little while 17.7% said that community voting behaviour is not on account of such affiliation.

DID THE ASSASSINATION MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO THE VOTING DECISION

In Hyderabad and Secunderabad, elections were held before the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi. But in Nagarkurnool, elections were held after the assassination. In the overall result of the elections in AP, TDP had prominently gained 12 of the 17 seats in the first phase but it was routed in the second phase with the Cong.I gaining most of the seats. The gain was claimed to be mainly because of the 'sympathy factor' in favour of Cong.I. We asked the voters of Nagarkurnool, where the Cong.I candidate had won, if the assassination had made a difference on their voting behaviour.

TABLE IX.21 THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE ASSASSINATION INFLUENCED VOTING BEHAVIOUR IN NAGARKURNOOL.

Attitude variable	N	%
A Lot	90	30.1
Somewhat	93	31.1
Not at all	76	25.4
No answer	40	13.4
Total	299	100

It was found the 28.8% had voted for Cong.I and a close 27.7% voted for the BJP followed by 15.4% who voted for TDP. In Nagarkurnool nearly a third 30.1% respondents stated that the assassination did influence their voting decision a lot and 31.1% to some extent. Interestingly, more women, 20.1% compared with 15.3% men were influenced by the assassination.

SECTION II

THE IMPACT OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGNS

We finally asked the respondents the extent to which the party campaigns helped them in their decision to vote. Four separate statements were framed to evaluate if the campaigns helped in

knowledge gain about parties and candidates, credibility of the campaigns if parties forced them to believe things that were incorrect, to judge impartially the best party to vote for and if the campaigns helped them change their opinion on the images of parties and leaders.

TABLE IX.22 THE EXTENT TO WHICH CAMPAIGNS HELPED THE VOTERS

Attitude variable	A lot		Somewhat		Not at all		No answer	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
To increase your knowledge about political parties and candidates	168	14.5	621	53.8	249	21.6	117	10.1
Forced you to believe things that were not correct	83	7.2	407	35.2	539	46.7	126	10.9
To judge impartially the best party to vote for	182	15.7	525	45.5	321	27.8	127	11.0
To change your views on the images of the parties and their leaders	121	10.5	507	43.9	389	33.7	138	11.9

The response to the campaigns was high as indicated in table IX.22. Campaigns had helped in increasing knowledge for two thirds (68.3%) of the respondents (a lot for 14.5% and 53.8% somewhat). Over a fifth (21.6%) were not helped at all by party campaigns in either increasing their knowledge about parties or candidates.

It was also revealed that voters were not led away by the presumed false promises of the political parties. Close to half (46.7%) felt that party campaigns did not force them to believe things that were not correct while 7.2% said that they did force them a lot and over one third (35.2%) said that they were forced a little to believe things that were not correct.

61.2% of the respondents believed that campaigns of political parties helped them to judge impartially the best party to vote for. Of these 15.7% were helped a lot. Over a quarter (27.8%) were not helped at all by the campaigns.

Campaigns were also useful at a medium level in changing the respondents views on the parties thereby indicating a positive impact of the campaigns. Over half (54.4%) the respondents were influenced by party campaigns to change their views on the images of parties and their leaders of which 10.5% were influenced a lot. One third (33.7%) remained unaffected by the campaigns. Over 10% of the respondents preferred not to answer the above questions. The changes in attitude differed between men and women and the level of education.

1. THE EXTENT TO WHICH CAMPAIGNS HELPED TO INCREASE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT POLITICAL PARTIES

TABLE IX.23 THE EXTENT TO WHICH CAMPAIGNS INCREASED KNOWLEDGE ABOUT PARTIES AND CANDIDATES

Constituencies	A lot		Somewhat		Not at all		No Answer	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Secunderabad	59	16.3	208	57.6	63	17.5	31	8.6
Hyderabad	74	14.9	289	58.4	80	16.2	52	10.5
Nagarkurnool	35	11.7	124	41.5	106	35.5	34	11.4
Total	168	14.5	621	53.8	249	21.6	117	10.1

Over two thirds (68.3%) were helped by campaigns of political parties in increasing knowledge about parties and candidates among the respondents. While such campaigns were of some benefit to over half (53.8%), a lot of benefit accrued to 14.5% and of no benefit to over one fifth (21.6%) of the respondents. While around 15% of the respondents in urban Secunderabad (16.3%) and Hyderabad (14.9%) claimed that campaigns had increased their knowledge about parties and candidates a lot, only 11.7% made such a claim in rural Nagarkurnool. While over half the

respondents in Hyderabad (58.4%) and Secunderabad (57.6%) claimed that their knowledge was somewhat increased by campaigns, only 41.5% said so in Nagarkurnool. While 17.5% in Secunderabad and 16.2% in Hyderabad stated that campaigns did not increase their knowledge, double the number (35.4%) said so in Nagarkurnool. About 10% of respondents did not answer.

TABLE IX.24 EDUCATIONAL LEVEL AND THE EXTENT TO WHICH CAMPAIGNS INCREASED KNOWLEDGE ABOUT PARTIES AND CANDIDATES

Educational level	A Lot		Somewhat		Not at all		No Answer	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Uneducated	17	16.8	39	38.6	26	25.7	19	18.8
Primary	10	7.8	72	56.3	33	25.8	13	10.2
Secondary	12	7.8	88	57.1	41	26.6	13	8.4
Intermediate	47	19.4	127	52.5	47	19.4	21	8.7
Graduation	53	14.6	195	53.6	84	23.1	32	8.8
Post graduation	29	21.3	77	56.6	14	10.3	16	11.8
Technical	-	-	21	77.8	3	11.1	3	11.1
Others	-	-	2	66.7	1	33.3	-	-
Total/ Average%	168	14.5	621	53.8	249	21.6	117	10.1

According to Table IX.24, less than 10% (8.8%) uneducated and the rest with different levels of education made up the sample. The degree of benefit differed with these levels. Over one fifth (21.3%) of post - graduates, 19.4% intermediates, 14.6% graduates and 16.8% of uneducated respondents reaped the maximum advantages in increasing knowledge about parties and candidates from campaigns. For those respondents whose educational level ranged between primary and secondary level the percentage was between seven to eight.

Over half the respondents whose education ranged from primary level to graduation, there was some knowledge gain on account of campaigns, while in the case of uneducated it was over one third

(38.6%), two thirds (66.7%) for those with other qualifications and over three quarter (77.8%) in the technical category.

For about a quarter of the respondents in the uneducated category (25.7%), primary level category (25.8%), secondary level category (26.6%) and graduates category (23.1%), there was no knowledge gain an account of political campaigns. Incidentally, one third (33.3%) with other qualifications, 19.4% with intermediate, 11.1% with technical and 10.3% of post graduates did not benefit from political campaigns. While 18.8% of the uneducated had no answer, it was much less for the others (ranging between 8.4% and 11.8%).

2. THE EXTENT TO WHICH CAMPAIGNS FORCED THE RESPONDENTS TO BELIEVE THINGS THAT WERE NOT CORRECT

TABLE IX.25 DID THE CAMPAIGNS FORCE THEM TO BELIEVE THINGS THAT WERE INCORRECT

Constituencies	A Lot		Somewhat		Not at all		No Answer	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Secunderabad	16	4.4	142	39.3	169	46.9	34	9.4
Hyderabad	64	12.9	190	38.4	192	38.8	49	9.9
Nagarkurnool	3	1.0	75	25.1	178	59.5	43	14.4
Total	83	7.2	407	35.2	539	46.7	126	10.9

The credibility of the campaigns were assessed in terms of their believability in what was said in the election campaigns in light of the fact that there is a general indifference to election promises made by the leaders which are never fulfilled. As seen in table IX.25, an equal number of over 38% of the respondents in Hyderabad were somewhat or not at all forced by the election campaigns while 12.9% believed that they were forced a lot to do so. 59% of the respondents in Nagarkurnool, 46.9% in Secunderabad and 38.8% Hyderabad claimed that they were not at all forced by election campaigns to believe things that were not correct. In Nagarkurnool, 59% of the respondents revealed that campaigns did not force them to believe incorrect things while 25.1% felt that

they were somewhat forced. Only 1% felt they were forced a lot to believe.

In Secunderabad, while 4.4% of the respondents claimed that they were forced a lot to believe the incorrect, 39.3% stated that they were somewhat forced and 46.9% of them answered in the negative and stated that campaigns did not force them to believe things that were incorrect.

From the data, it appears that urban voters can be influenced better by political campaigns than rural voters. While 14.4% in Nagarkurnool did not reveal what they thought about the issue, in the urban constituencies, it was just above 9%. Here one could reiterate the conclusion of earlier studies on the political maturity of the India voter (Kar & Chaudary, 1992; Vakil, 1994).

TABLE IX.26 EDUCATION AND THE BELIEVABILITY OF ELECTION CAMPAIGNS

Educational level	A Lot		Somewhat		Not at all		No Answer	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Uneducated	4	4.0	27	26.7	46	45.5	24	23.8
Primary	4	3.1	41	32.0	66	51.6	17	13.3
Secondary	11	7.1	50	32.5	77	50.0	16	10.4
Intermediate	13	5.4	79	32.6	130	53.7	20	8.3
Graduation	29	8.0	138	37.9	166	45.6	31	8.5
Post Graduation	19	14.0	55	40.4	47	34.6	15	11.0
Technical	2	7.4	17	63.0	7	25.9	1	3.7
Others	1	33.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	66.7
Total	83	7.2	407	35.2	539	46.7	126	10.9

Though the higher educated respondents said that campaigns had increased their knowledge about parties, they also agreed that campaigns to some extent made them believe things that were incorrect. As seen in the table IX.26, 46.7% of the respondents had no belief at all in the claims made in the election

campaigns. While 25.9% with technical qualifications, post graduates (34.6%) and the uneducated (45.5%) lie below average, those educated up to primary, secondary and intermediate level, comprising of more than half the sample are non believers with graduates at 45.6% not far behind.

Those who believed a lot make up 7.2% of the respondents. 14% post graduates followed by graduates (8.0%), secondary level (7.1%) and technically qualified (7.4%), Intermediate (5.4%), the uneducated (4%) and those who went to primary schools (3.1%) are the ones who believe a lot in the election campaigns.

Interestingly, the most educated and the least educated generally appear to be the greatest believers and non believers of the election communication campaigns. Close to a quarter of the uneducated respondents shield away from committing themselves with any response.

3. TO JUDGE IMPARTIALLY WHICH PARTY TO VOTE FOR

How useful were the election campaigns in helping respondents in selecting which party to vote. Were the election campaigns helping to increase knowledge, chose between the alternatives to make an impartial judgement on the political party to vote.

TABLE IX.27 TO JUDGE IMPARTIALLY THE BEST PARTY TO VOTE FOR

Constituencies	A Lot		Somewhat		Not at all		No Answer	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Secunderabad	45	12.5	187	51.8	97	26.9	32	8.9
Hyderabad	60	12.1	233	47.1	150	30.3	52	10.5
Nagarkurnool	77	25.8	105	35.1	74	24.7	43	14.4
Total	182	15.7	525	45.5	321	27.8	127	11.0

TABLE IX.28 EDUCATION AND THE EXTENT TO WHICH CAMPAIGNS HELPED TO JUDGE IMPARTIALLY THE BEST PARTY TO VOTE FOR

Educational Level	A Lot		Somewhat		Not at all		No Answer	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Uneducated	19	18.8	42	41.6	17	16.8	23	22.8
Primary	22	17.2	42	32.8	50	39.1	14	10.9
Secondary	25	16.2	68	44.2	45	29.2	16	10.4
Intermediate	32	13.2	118	48.8	67	27.7	25	10.3
Graduation	63	17.3	170	46.7	96	26.4	35	9.6
Post graduation	12	8.8	70	51.5	42	30.9	12	8.8
Technical	9	33.3	13	48.1	3	11.1	2	1.5
Others	0	0.0	2	66.7	1	33.3	0	0.0
Total	182	15.7	525	45.5	321	27.8	127	11.0

As in table IX.27, election campaigns had helped a quarter (25.8%) of Nagarkurnool respondents a lot to judge impartially which party to vote for and for only half their urban counterparts in Secunderabad (12.5%) and 12.1% in Hyderabad. Some help from the campaigns was claimed to have been availed by half (51.8%) the Secunderabad respondents, 47.1% in Hyderabad and 35.1% in Nagarkurnool. More than a quarter of the respondents in all the constituencies were not at all helped by the campaigns in choosing the best party to vote for.

In terms of level of education and the ability to judge the party to vote for, we observed interesting and conflicting trends. From table IX.28 it can be seen that over half (51.5%) of the post graduates and 41.6% respondents who did not attend school and a third (32.8%) of those who attended school up to the primary level claimed that they were helped somewhat by political campaigns to judge impartially the best party to vote for. Around 50% of others who studied beyond primary level also used campaigns to narrow down their choice of a party.

Among the uneducated, 17.8% claimed that they were helped a lot, while an almost equal number, 16.8% claimed that they were not at all benefited. 45.5% said that they were somewhat benefited. 17.2% of those who were educated upto the primary level appear to have benefited a lot. But around double this number appear to take opposite positions: 32.8% saying somewhat and 39% stating that they were not at all benefited. From 10.9% there was no answer.

16.2% of the secondary school were benefited a lot, while close to double this number (29.2%) claimed the opposite. While almost the same percentage, around 17% (except Intermediates-13%) of those educated till the graduation level stated that the campaigns helped them a lot to make an impartial decision, 8.8% post graduates felt the same.

4. THE EXTENT TO WHICH CAMPAIGNS HELPED TO CHANGE VIEWS ON IMAGES OF LEADERS AND PARTIES

Fourth, on the question of whether the campaigns helped them to change their views on the images of parties and leaders. 10% of them found themselves convinced about changing their opinions of the parties. Campaigns helped nearly a half (43.9%) of them to some extent, but for one third (33.7%) of the respondents in all the three constituencies and at the different educational levels campaigns did not change their opinions in any way.

TABLE IX.29 THE EXTENT TO WHICH CAMPAIGNS HELPED TO CHANGE VIEWS ON THE IMAGES OF PARTIES AND LEADERS IN THE CONSTITUENCIES

Constituencies	A Lot		Somewhat		Not at all		No Answer	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Secunderabad	38	10.5	179	49.6	110	30.5	34	9.4
Hyderabad	50	10.1	225	45.5	156	31.5	64	12.9
Nagarkurnool	33	11.0	103	34.4	123	41.1	40	13.4
Total	121	10.5	507	43.9	389	33.7	138	11.9

TABLE IX.30 EDUCATION AND EXTENT TO WHICH CAMPAIGNS HELPED TO CHANGE VIEWS ON IMAGES OF PARTIES AND LEADERS

Education	A Lot		Somewhat		Not at all		No Answer	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Uneducated	8	7.9	40	39.6	27	26.7	26	25.7
Primary	19	14.8	49	38.3	49	38.3	11	8.6
Secondary	6	3.9	73	47.4	55	35.7	20	13.0
Intermediate	31	12.8	113	46.7	74	30.6	24	9.9
Graduation	39	10.7	161	44.2	126	34.6	38	10.4
Post Graduation	14	10.3	60	44.1	48	35.3	14	10.3
Technical	4	14.8	9	33.3	9	33.3	5	18.5
Others	0	0	2	66.7	1	33.3	-	-
Total	121	10.5	507	43.8	389	33.7	138	11.9

As in table IX.29, campaigns helped a lot for 11% of Nagarkurnool respondents to change their views on the images of leaders and parties and conversely it also did not help 41.1%, the highest number in the same constituency. Nearly half the respondents in Hyderabad (45.5%) and Secunderabad (49.6%) found the campaigns somewhat helpful in changing their opinions on leaders and parties while only a third (34.4) in Nagarkurnool had the same opinion.

The level of education made a little difference on the extent to which the campaigns helped. As seen in table IX. 30, nearly half the educated and the uneducated respondents said that the campaigns somewhat changed their views on the images of party leaders and candidates. Campaigns helped a lot for 14.8% of those educated upto the primary level and with technical qualifications followed by the Intermediates (12.8%), graduates(10.7%), post graduates (10.3%).

Two thirds of the respondents positively stated that campaigns had helped them gain information and increased their knowledge about political parties and candidates. Campaigns had to some

extent increased their opinion of parties and leaders, but were not convincing enough to motivate them to vote for a particular party.

SUMMARY

In the 1991 election, more than three fourths, 78% of respondents claimed to have voted in the three constituencies. There was marked change in the parties they voted for from 1989 and 1991 elections. There was a shift towards the BJP from the respondents who had earlier voted for Cong.I or TDP. In 1989, over 40% of respondents had voted for Cong.I followed by 13.1% who voted for TDP. The BJP was third with 11.6%. In 1991 there was a shift towards the BJP in all the three constituencies. 37.4% voted for BJP while a quarter, 25% voted for Cong.I. Less than 10% had voted for TDP. MIM in Hyderabad got only a small percentage of 2.7% votes, despite the highest number of respondents being from Hyderabad constituency. Since the higher percentage of respondents were Hindus, BJP scored over it in this sample from a communally divided electorate. 16.7% Muslims voted for BJP while only 1.8% Hindus voted for MIM. Party affiliation was an important determinant of continued support and loyalty to a party for which most of the respondents clearly agreed that a lot of people in their community voted because of party affiliation.

A fifth, 21% of the respondents did not vote. Though the reasons for non voting were many, the most prominent ones were a sense of indifference and a lack of interest to the political system. A fifth of the respondents claimed that none of the parties were worth voting for, while nearly the same percentage thought that their vote would not make a difference. The fear of violence kept 15% from casting their vote. The assassination of Rajiv Gandhi in the middle of the election made a difference to 60% of the voters in Nagarkurnool.

Finally, election campaigns had helped in increasing the information level on the political process especially among the educated. Over three fourths of the educated stated that campaigns had helped increase their knowledge either a lot or somewhat. The respondents were not led away by the false promises generally made by the politicians during elections as stated by half the respondents, but the others were taken in by the false promises made by parties to gather votes. Overall campaigns had helped two thirds of the respondents either a lot or somewhat in making their voting decisions and also in their views about the leaders and parties.

CHAPTER X

CONCLUSIONS

Organised and systematic political communication in India is a phenomenon of the 1980s. Since the 1980 general election and thereafter the 1984, 1989 and 1991 elections, the system of political communication has evolved from the conventional to the modern and from the grassroots to the national. The years between 1984 and 1991, were particularly important in bringing about changes in Indian election campaigning. The 1991 election was claimed to be the biggest media event in the country's history, at a time of unusual political and cultural upheaval.

The use of professional advertising agencies for political communication first began in the 1984 general election by Cong.I under the leadership of Rajiv Gandhi, and by 1991 almost all parties were using marketing and advertising agencies to promote their leaders and policies. The 1991 election, was notable in many ways. It was one of the biggest electoral exercises, with the modernization not only of election campaigns but also the use of new technology in the conduct of elections. Satellite technology and computers were used to monitor the elections through a giant earth station in New Delhi. A direct communication link was established between the EC of India at Delhi and the states. The system generated enormous data on the elections and could also detect booth capturing and rigging.

In comparing the system of political communication in the western countries, we find that the general practices of campaign management and the uniform system of national campaigns are not conducive to the Indian context, given the diverse electorate, with low levels of literacy, multiplicity of languages and the poverty of the country. Unlike the western countries, where election campaigns are centered around television, in India radio and TV, the media of the masses are controlled by the government

and generally project the governments point of view. Though used for creating awareness of the political process and motivating persons to participate in the electoral process, they allow little in the form of political debates or advertising, except for the PEBs.

But despite limitations of the mass media, Indian campaigns have adapted from the new technologies to suit its diverse nature. Through a system of narrowcasting, audio and video technology has contributed to the development of innovative methods of electioneering at the grassroot level. Traditional and modern techniques have melded into Indian campaigning. For example, we found that the public meetings of leaders were accompanied by video presentations about the party policies. Audio cassettes are extensively used for persuading people with speeches of party leaders and party songs. Though audio cassettes are popular they do not form a substitute for radio. PMs, rallies and personal meetings of leaders continued to be important in reaching the electorate and the organizational support from local workers was important in mobilizing support at the grassroots. Outdoor forms like the posters, wall writing and symbol displays are popular and were extensively used to remind and persuade those sections of voters not reached by the other forms.

Indian campaigns have acquired an organizational and professional framework through well researched campaigns and a systematic multi-media approach. Campaigns were professionally managed as most parties used advertising and marketing agencies. Cong.I initiating with the services of four advertising agencies to plan and execute its campaign. The campaign objectives were drawn on basis of indepth research conducted by political parties and research organizations for gauging public opinion on the attitudes of voters to the political process in general, and in particular on the policies and image of the leaders. This was evident in the Cong.I and BJP campaigns. Parties communicated their electoral strategies with extensive use of mass and interpersonal channels with well defined themes and media

schedules. Campaigns revolved around themes such as 'Stability' of the Cong.I, 'Ram, Roti and Insaaf' of BJP and the social equality of JD/NF. The independent local party like MIM did not have any such theme but stressed local issues and the minority status of the Muslims.

Indian campaigns were generally negative. Political communication during elections centered around attack and counter attack strategies in mudslinging matches mostly between the Cong.I and other parties. But in 1989, when Cong.I projected itself through a highly illustrated negative attack campaign in the press, it had resulted in a backlash among the public and from within the party. Hence, in 1991 the party had a more positive approach. In 1991, though most parties cautiously used attack strategies in the press campaigns, it was surprising to note that, in the videos and audio cassettes, they resorted to name calling and abuse. This was evident in almost all the video films and in the audio cassettes. In the Cong.I video, the leaders of other parties were referred to as 'hungry wolves' and in the TDP video Cong.I workers were referred as Goondas (vandals). The audios of Sadhvi Ritambhara of VHP came under criticism from the public for its abusive language.

Newspapers formed the most important source of election information for the literate in the urban and rural areas. The extensive coverage in the newspapers is largely restricted to factual and descriptive reporting. There is limited commentary in the form of editorials and opinion columns. Similarly the PEBs in the electronic media offer little to objectively evaluate the parties when leaders of parties are given time to read their policies and appeal to the electorate. These rather dull messages broadcast at the prime time were seen or heard by respondents but were of little use in voting behaviour. Despite the government control, a change in political broadcasts could be made in the mode of presentation, similar to the Party Political Broadcasts in the UK. Moreover, on radio and TV, politicians are not

subjected to any interrogation nor is there any comment by broadcast journalists.

In India there is high political awareness of issues and electoral discourse although the voter turnout in 1991 was as low as 51%. Campaigns of the major political parties were evaluated on their effectiveness on voters selected from three constituencies in AP. The sample was skewed by gender and higher status, but it is this section of the Indians who are rapidly growing as the 'middle class' (classified without the connotations of caste or religion) the section of the population (As extensively discussed in Chapter III, Case Study of JD/NF) who are forming a large section of the Indians and have to some extent contributed to the changes in the electoral support for parties.

POLITICAL SYSTEM AND THE 1991 GENERAL ELECTIONS

India is the largest competitive democracy in the world with a population of over 840 million and an electorate of 521 million. Elections to the Lok Sabha are held every five years, unless the parliament is dissolved under unfortunate circumstances. Since independence in 1947, ten general elections have been held, the last one, a mid-term election was in 1991. Congress had monopolised the Indian political system and formed the government at the centre in eight out of ten elections. The stability of Congress showed signs of falling, first in 1977 and later in 1989 elections, when non-Congress parties combined to form the governments. These governments failed to complete their term and lasted less than three years. On both occasions, Cong.I emerged victorious in the subsequent mid-term elections.

In 1991, the failure of two successive coalition non-Congress governments within fifteen months led to the 1991 elections. The 1991 mid-term general election was generally a culmination of the instability of the party system with four of the nine national parties, three led by former prime ministers and the BJP with L.K.Advani as the likely prime ministerial candidate contesting

the 521 seats that went to the polls. The regional parties in the states, especially in AP and TN made efforts to strengthen their support within the state as well as at the national level. Parties tried to arouse the electorate on caste, religious and sectarian grounds among other issues of rising prices, inflation and increasing unemployment. The voters were subjected to intense and extensive political communication by parties and government. The campaign practices of these parties were studied and their impact on a section of the electorate in AP was evaluated.

CONGRESS-I

Cong.I was led by Rajiv Gandhi and after his assassination in the middle of the election, by the present Prime Minister, P.V.Narasimha Rao. The party won 227 seats, 12 short of a majority and an all India vote share of 37.57%, two percentage points less than 1989. There were definite pre and post assassination trends with overall a 7.75% swing after the assassination. In the pre assassination phase, Cong I won 50 of the 196 seats with a success rate of only 25.51% and in the second phase, it won 177 seats, with a success rate of 62.11%. In AP, there was a similar trend with rival TDP as Cong.I won 23 of the 41 seats, though the vote share dropped by 5.17%. In the first phase Cong.I won only three seats and in the second round, Cong.I gained 20 of the 25 seats

Cong.I campaign was the most extensive among all the parties. The party projected itself as the only one that could establish a stable government. Four advertising agencies and private producers were involved in the campaign. The objectives of the campaign were drawn from intensive research conducted by the advertising agencies and MARG to gauge public opinion. Rajiv Gandhi oversaw the planning of the campaign. Mass and interpersonal channels were used to reach different segments of the electorate. In the newspaper campaign, ten different target groups were identified to represent ten important policies of the party. According to ORG estimates, the party spent ₹1,680,433 on the press campaign, which was about 59% of the entire amount

spent by political parties. Party advertisements were published in over 400 newspapers and magazines. Audio and video cassettes, posters, stickers and direct mail shots were extensively used. The audio cassettes included devotional and patriotic songs while pop songs with western tunes were used to persuade the young voters. Video films with programmes and policies were translated into various regional languages and shown through VOWs. Until his assassination on 21 May, 1991, Rajiv Gandhi was the sole national campaigner in the country addressing public meetings. The party changed its electoral strategy to gain the electorate's sympathy and the assassination led to a swing in support. Though the party did not win a majority of seats, it was able to form the government.

Cong.I newspaper advertisements were seen by more than half the respondents who found them interesting and informative, but less than 10% respondents were motivated a lot. Nearly half of them were somewhat motivated. The audio and video cassettes had helped in their voting decisions. However, in the outdoor and the interpersonal channels, BJP had scored over Cong.I, as voters recalled being far more exposed to the BJP campaign than all other parties.

BHARATIYA JANATA PARTY

BJP emerged as the biggest gainer in the 1991 elections with 119 seats and a 20.9% vote share, a rise from two seats in 1984 and 85 in 1989. Though it emerged as the largest opposition party, the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi and the subsequent postponement of voting in more than half of the constituencies prevented a strong swing for the BJP. The party had one of the most sustained campaigns. It made every effort to gain national status as an independent party and an alternative to Cong.I. The campaign began after the party withdrew support from the NF government, much before the elections were announced.

The BJP first played on the communal card through a well organised 'Hindutva' campaign with the support of the VHP and the RSS. Advani's successful all India 'Rath Yatra' was followed by several mass mobilization programmes. These mass mobilization strategies, with the decentralised network of party workers enabled the party to gain a large following from the rural and poorer sections. The well publicised all India campaigns of leaders helped the party to gain extensive support.

In the run-up to the elections the party projected itself as a secular party than a communal one. The campaign strategy was built around the concepts of 'Ram, Roti and Insaaf' to bring about Ram Rajya. In general terms, these concepts focused on the 'Freedom from fear', 'Freedom from want' and 'Justice for all'. At the same time the party attacked Cong.I on charges of pseudo secularism, misrule and corruption. After the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi, the party projected itself as the only one to bring about stability.

BJP had the second most extensive advertising campaign after Cong.I. The party advertised in the English and vernacular newspapers, but of magazines, only used India Today. The party spent large sums on the electronic and interpersonal channels. Over 100 VOWS were hired from Jain Studios in New Delhi to spread the BJP message. The party made three to four video films during elections and one after the assassination. Apart from the PMS held by the four major leaders of the party, religious leaders held rallies and campaigned for the party. Most prominent among them was Sadhvi Ritambhara, whose speeches, through audio cassettes were extensively distributed in the country. Apart from these, street plays, musical programmes and door-to-door campaigns were used to mobilize support. Print forms, including posters, flags, handbills, stickers and photographs of Lord Rama and the proposed temple at Ayodhya were widely circulated.

We found a remarkable shift in support for BJP in our three constituencies. BJP took over a share of votes from Cong.I and

TDP, the two major parties in the state. Though the party won only the Secunderabad constituency in AP, its vote share in the state increased to 9.64% from 1.97% in 1984. The election campaign was successful in the urban constituencies when the twice elected Cong.I candidate was defeated by the BJP. The contest with MIM in Hyderabad was noteworthy. In a communally divided constituency, after hectic campaigning, on the polling day, large scale rigging was resorted to as some polling booths recorded 90% voting. However the twice elected MP, Salahuddin Owaisi finally won the election, but with a small majority.

A large number of respondents were exposed to the BJP press campaign. Nearly half the respondents found the advertisements to be informative and interesting and the maximum number from among the respondents were motivated by them. The video films were seen by the highest number of respondents in both urban and rural constituencies. Over half the respondents had attended the BJP public meetings and were approached by the party workers in door-to-door campaigns which had again persuaded respondents to vote for the party. In the three constituencies, nearly a third of the respondents had voted for BJP.

THE JANATA DAL/NATIONAL FRONT

The JD/NF party was made up of a coalition of national parties and was in friendly alliance with regional parties like TDP in AP, Assom Ghana Parishad and DMK in TN along with the support of CPI and CPM. In the 1991 elections the party stressed the need to bring about social equality through the implementation of the Mandal Commission Report (MCR).

Limited resources restricted an elaborate press advertising campaign and since the campaign was directed towards the rural and poorer sections of the electorate the party did not find the need for large scale advertising. Hence, the campaign was based on the election meetings and posters. Some literature on issues was circulated to various sections of the audience. Overall the strategy helped the party to gain support from the backward

sections in Bihar and some parts of UP, and also the Muslims by giving them greater privileges as a minority community. In AP, it was in alliance with TDP and contested two seats.

Though efforts were made to regain the popularity similar to that of 1989, it was one of the worst losers winning only 54 seats losing 87 seats from the 143 it had won in 1989. In AP, its alliance party TDP won 13 seats and the CPI and CPI(M) won a seat each in Nalgonda and Miryalguda with a vote share of 1.96% and 2.97%.

TELUGU DESAM PARTY (TDP)

The regional TDP, had gained national recognition in 1984 when it emerged as the largest opposition party with 30 parliamentary seats. However in 1989 it lost power in the state to Cong.I and its number in parliament was reduced to two. In 1991 the party was in alliance with NF and made efforts to regain their popularity in the state. The leader, NTR toured the state to regain the trust of the Telugu people. The campaign strategy was to attack the Cong.I government in AP on alleged charges of mismanagement, corruption and communal violence in comparison with TDPs seven year rule. Telugu newspapers advertised the poll strategies but emphasis was placed on the electronic forms. Audio and video cassettes, documentary and feature films were used, with the technique of, first to entertain and then to inform. Twenty three publicity vans called as the Vishwamitra Prachara Rathams, one for each district in the state were deployed to spread the TDP message. 15 minute documentary films were shown in the local cinema theatres. The party also used posters and huge cutouts of NTR in the guise of various Hindu gods.

The assassination of Rajiv Gandhi had led to widespread violence in the state. It was alleged that the Cong.I workers had resorted to violence and had destroyed properties of the non Cong.I parties which included three cinema theatres owned by NTR himself. This led to an indefinite fast by NTR to protest against the alleged atrocities committed by Cong.I workers. Criticised,

as an election gimmick to counteract the sympathy wave, it did little to shift the balance of support from Cong.I. TDP with other non Cong.I parties brought out a video film to project the alleged atrocities but failed in restricting the sympathy wave for Cong.I. The assassination influenced more than a third of our respondents in Nagarkurnool. TDP gained 12 of the 17 seats in the first phase but only one in the second phase. Cong.I on the other hand, won three in the first phase and 20 of the 25 seats in the second phase.

MAJLIS-ITTEHADUL-MUSLIMEEN (MIM)

MIM was the independent party with the origins in the erstwhile princely state of Hyderabad. Since independence, the party has practised communal politics and has the support of a large Muslim population of the state, mainly concentrated in the state capital. Over the years, the party had retained power in the city politics despite the Cong.I domination in the state. During 1991, it faced a keen contest with BJP in the communally sensitive constituency and emerged victorious but with a small majority.

MIM has a centralised leadership in Sultan Salauddin Owaisi. The party has sustained its popularity through philanthropic activities for the Muslim communities with emphasis on education, women and child development and the upliftment of Harijans. During elections it functioned through a decentralised network of elected party workers working within the polling booth areas called the Primaries. The campaigning was through public meetings and walkabouts of Salahuddin Owaisi along with posters and cutouts. During meetings, he stressed general issues like electricity, water, housing and minority status of Muslims. The party had a varied display of its election symbol, (Scales) which was decorated or illuminated. Elections in Hyderabad were marked by violence and alleged rigging by the rival parties, BJP and MIM, of which MIM emerged winner by a small margin of 4.12% vote share.

With the changing political scene and greater political awareness through the media, we could from our study define the profile of the average Indian voters and their perceptions of the political process. We found that a majority of the voters are in the age group of 18-45 years being born in the post Independent India. The size of the households indicates a shift from the joint to the nuclear families. There is an increase in the level of education among the voters and education has an effect on the interest in the political process. Men outnumber women in participating in the political process. Hence, most of the voter behaviour studies are structured with a male bias. The average Indian rural and urban voters do not show much interest in politics with women showing even lesser interest. However, they are well informed of the political system and the functioning of the government and show interest in the electoral process.

The 1991 elections were described as one of the biggest media events. Mass media was extensively used in the national campaigns by the parties and by the government to increase awareness and for greater political participation.

MASS MEDIA AND POLITICAL COMMUNICATION

NEWSPAPERS

Newspapers were an important source of election information. A general survey of most national, regional and local newspapers circulating in the three constituencies indicated that newspapers gave detailed coverage on the elections. These included news stories, editorials, opinion polls and campaign trends of major parties. National, regional and local papers offered profiles of constituencies and candidates, and trends of support in opinion polls. Most newspapers and several magazines brought out special supplements on the election.

Most national and regional parties used the press for political advertising. Cong.I has used 400 newspapers, followed by the BJP. These two parties used national and regional papers while

financial constraints restricted other parties who concentrated on the regional and local press.

The readership of newspapers was high among our respondents. 85% read or were read to. More than half read newspapers at least four times a week. Regional and local newspapers were more popular than national newspapers, Eenadu in Telugu and Deccan Chronicle in English had the highest readership.

Newspapers formed the most important source of election information for urban and rural voters. When we asked the respondents the extent to which they sought newspapers for election information, almost all (85%) of readers answered in the positive and more than a third (34.3%) stated that they depended a lot on newspapers. Regarding the interest in political news in newspapers, 16.4% were very interested and this increased to 25% during elections. More than half (55%) of the respondents found the coverage given to election news adequate. When asked if the coverage on elections in newspapers helped them in deciding how to vote, 17.7% said that it had helped them a lot and half (50%) of them were helped a fair amount.

Political advertisements in the newspapers were seen by over half (54.6%) of respondents. Big spenders got better noticed. Cong.I (44.7%), BJP (33.4%) and TDP (30.6%) advertisements were noticed by more than a third of the respondents. While most of the advertisements were found to be informative and interesting less than a quarter of the respondents found them to be persuasive. BJP scored here as 23% of the respondents found their advertisements persuasive followed by the TDP (17.5%) and the Cong.I (15.8%).

The impact of advertisements was at a medium level as it somewhat influenced a quarter (27.5%) and only 4.6% a lot in deciding how to vote. Therefore nearly two thirds of the respondents were not affected by the political advertisements. Political advertising is yet to take off on a more competitive scale in India.

MAGAZINES

The readership of magazines was high as three quarters of the respondents were reading magazines with a third (39.7%) of them reading at least two to three magazines. The Sunday supplements of the newspapers were popular. Cong.I and BJP as well as the regional parties including TDP had released advertisements in the magazines.

Over one third (38.5%) came across political party advertisements in the magazines. A little less than a quarter (23.9%) had come across Cong.I advertisements while 16.4% had seen the BJP advertisements. JD and TDP advertisements were seen by less than 3% of the respondents. Political party advertisements had helped only 6.1% a lot and 16.9% somewhat in their decision to vote. Less than a quarter were helped by magazines in their decision to vote.

THE BROADCAST MEDIA: RADIO AND TELEVISION

Radio was the most easily accessible medium for both the rural and urban populations. Television ownership was high in the urban areas compared to the rural areas but the viewership was high in both rural and urban areas. Radio and TV under the Ministry of I & B reach about 97% and 84% of the Indian population respectively. Election programmes on radio and television covered a wide range of topics by specialists drawn from various backgrounds. These were in the form of discussions, messages, plays, quizzes and poetry. A round-the-clock programme during the declaration of election results was interspersed with discussions, interviews and news reports. Though comprehensive information was given in these pre-election programmes, they were not adequately publicised and it could be a hit or miss situation. But, during the elections and the declaration of results, the viewership of television was high and most of our respondents had found the coverage to be very good.

THE IMPACT OF RADIO

90% of our respondents owned and listened to radio. More than half (54%), listened regularly. News on radio was the most popular programme as half the respondents listened regularly. However, current affairs programmes were not very popular, 44% never listened to them and less than a third listened sometimes.

When asked how much they depended on radio for election information, 70% sought radio as a source of election information. 22% depended a lot while 58.4% a fair amount. During the election period, 21% respondents listened regularly to the news and current affairs programmes and 35% heard them sometimes. Nearly 70% heard the Telugu news, while the Hindi and English news were heard by less than half the respondents. 44.7% heard the announcements and slogans followed closely by the discussion programmes in English, Hindi and Telugu that were heard by 44.7%. The other election related programmes such as the messages of government officials and quiz programmes were heard by about a quarter of the respondents.

The PEBs of the national and regional parties had a fair response. They were heard by 46% of the respondents with the Cong.I and BJP broadcasts heard by about 30%. TDP and JD broadcasts were heard by less than 15%. More than half (54%), found the coverage given to election information on radio to be very good or adequate. Radio formed an important source of information and helped a fair amount for half the respondents in their voting decisions. A higher number (8.8%) of respondents in rural Nagarkurnool, were more influenced by radio compared to those in the urban areas.

TELEVISION

Television reaching 84% of the population and overcoming the barrier of literacy is emerging as one of fastest growing mass media with international networks - the CNN, BBC, STAR and ZEE TV, now reaching the urban audiences. 74% of our respondents owned a television and over 85% watched it. The programmes

generally watched on TV were similar to radio, with news watched by 63%. Telugu news was popular compared to the Hindi and English news. The current affairs programmes were not regularly watched except for The world this week watched regularly by 34.9% of the respondents.

Television formed a major source of election information for 78% of the respondents (a lot for 28.2% and somewhat for 50.5%). Nearly a third (33.5%) of men and a fifth (21.5%) women. Nearly 80% watched the news during the election. Over half (57%) watched the discussions, the short announcements and slogans. The interviews with officials like the CEC and DGP were watched by a third of the respondents. The PEBs on television, telecast between the Hindi and the English news in the evening by the national parties were seen by more than two thirds, (68.2%) of respondents. Like the radio broadcasts, here too, the Cong.I telecast was seen by over half (51.5%) the highest number of respondents, followed by those of BJP (46%), JD (27%), SJP (18.6%), (8.9%) CPI and (6.3%) CPM. This may be, in part because these PEBs were telecast before the news for which there was high viewership and partly because the respondents recalled those parties whose leaders they were able to recognize and associate with parties.

Television was a major source of information on the election results. An overwhelming 70% found the content given to election news very good or good, and over half found the coverage adequate. PEBs drew contrasting results between exposure and impact. While over 70% had seen the PEBs only 5.7% were helped a lot and 29.7% were helped a fair amount. The news and current affairs programmes helped a lot for 11.9% and a fair amount to a quarter of the respondents. The other voter education programmes had the least impact at the highest level. Only 3.6% stated that they were helped a lot by the voter education telecasts. Overall, the election related programmes helped a quarter of the respondents, that too mostly a fair amount in their voting decisions

OTHER ELECTRONIC MEDIA-VIDEO AND AUDIO CASSETTES

There was an increased and extensive use of audio and video cassettes during the 1991 election from the 1989 general election. This could well be one of the permanent features of election campaigning in India, at least till Indian TV is granted full autonomy and could be used for political advertising or have PEBs and Election debates similar to those in Britain or USA.

Videos have brought in an entertainment culture to political election campaigning in India. Given the diverse nature of the Indian electorate, videos, using localised dialects, combining a package of news, information and entertainment have provided a wider scope for election information. In evaluating the election videos of major parties, we found the content of most videos was similar. These videos included the policies and programmes of the party, highlighted the characteristics of the leaders and popularised the symbols. Without any censorship laws governing them, video films abused the rival parties and leaders.

Songs, commentaries, folk theatre and folk songs accompanied the visuals. Each party brought out at least two to three videos. BJP, Cong.I and TDP also released separate videos after the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi. Cong.I to gain the sympathy, BJP to project itself as the only party to bring about stability in a crisis situation and TDP to project the atrocities committed by the alleged Cong.I members to counter the expected sympathy wave for the Cong.I.

Election videos were generally targeted particularly for the rural electorate, and since our sample was more urban oriented, the exposure was low. Overall, about a fifth (19.5%) of the respondents saw these videos. Double the number of rural (31.1%) respondents saw them compared to the urban (14.8%). In rural Nagarkurnool, a third (31.4%) saw the election videos. BJP videos seen by 15% had the maximum viewership in the rural and urban areas followed by those of Cong.I (11%) and TDP (8.7%). Videos were effective as three fourths of the respondents who saw them

found them useful in their voting decisions. Therefore, the impact of the videos depended on their exposure as all those who saw them stated their use in the affirmative.

Audio cassettes of songs and speeches played through loud speakers from election stalls, tree tops, etc. in rural and urban areas added to the election festivities and noise pollution. The listening to audio cassettes was incidental and nearly half (45.4%) of the respondents had heard them. Here too the BJP scored high. The party cassettes were heard by nearly 40% of the respondents closely followed by a third (35.5%) who heard Cong.I and (32.9%) TDP cassettes. Audio cassettes were of little help to a majority (80%) of the respondents. Less than 5% stated that they helped them a lot while 18.6% were helped a fair amount thereby making it difficult to estimate the importance of audio cassettes as a substitute for the government controlled radio.

Feature and documentary films along with with video films were part of the political communication media during the elections. Documentary films of TDP were shown in cinema houses and through the videos. Film and television stars were used by parties for campaigning and as candidates, some of who also won the elections. However, the results revealed that popularity gained through films was not an only criteria for winning elections, but it also depended on the popularity of the party that they represented.

INTERPERSONAL FORMS OF POLITICAL COMMUNICATION

Indian campaigns continue to be characterised by interpersonal forms of political communication which continue to be effective. Public meetings, door-to-door campaigns, rallies and processions, walkabouts, street corner meetings and the election tours were a means of personally interacting with the electorate. Second, importance was given to the influence of family, friends, neighbours and the local leaders as the forces of influence within the community.

Despite the development of national campaigns (largely restricted to the English language press) newspapers and other print and electronic forms, PMs continued to be important. Leaders of the major parties toured the country by hiring aeroplanes and helicopters to address in as many constituencies as possible. Meetings of religious leaders, senior party leaders and film and television stars drew large crowds. MIM in Hyderabad based its entire campaign strategy on public meetings and walkabouts.

Though there was criticism regarding the use of hired men to attend such meetings, we found that a third of our respondents depended on public meetings as a source of information and attended the meetings, a near equal number from the urban and rural constituencies. Nearly half (47%) the number of men, and a fifth women attended the meetings. We tend to link this to the BJP meetings that were well attended.

The large attendance and support for BJP in AP was an indication of the extensive campaign techniques employed by the party which did not have a single seat in the state. This was also obvious from the exposure to the press campaigns, outdoor and interpersonal forms in which the BJP scored over Cong.I and TDP, the main parties in the state and in Hyderabad it provided a tough contest for the MIM. Overall, PMs had influenced 10.7% of the respondents a lot and 21% a fair amount. A maximum of 39% in rural Nagarkurnool were influenced by these PMs.

The door-to-door campaigns also could not be totally ruled out of campaign strategies. 70% of the respondents were approached by party workers and candidates. A lot of importance was given to mobilizing voters at the grassroots through a network of supporters. We found that organizational support was very important for gaining long term support for the party. Cong.I, BJP and TDP had well organised network of representatives and supporters in the state and the constituencies. In Hyderabad, we found a well organised MIM party with a centralised single

leadership of Salahuddin Owaisi and a decentralised system of party activists who worked at the level of polling booths.

70% of the respondents were approached by the party workers of which, more than half, were approached by the BJP workers, followed by those of Cong.I and a third by TDP. MIM reached 12%. About a third of the respondents, half of those who were contacted were motivated by the party workers, giving this system a success rate of 50%. It was interesting to note that more urban voters were motivated by canvassers compared to their rural counterparts.

In the Internal Interpersonal channels of communication; family, friends and neighbours and local leaders became sources of exchanging political information and influencing voting behaviour. The interaction within families as the primary source of socialization formed a significant source of influence on voting behaviour. Nearly three fourths of the respondents in the urban and rural areas and those from small and large families stated their dependence on families, leading us to conclude that in India families supported and voted as single units. It also disqualified press reports that there were changing trends with women supporting BJP in the northern states of Uttar Pradesh. In the south, and in our constituencies, we did not find any such trends and there was not much difference and slant towards BJP in their voting behaviour.

Friends and neighbours formed important sources of information and influence, 15% stated that discussions with friends had helped them in their voting behaviour. Though discussions with local leaders were important in the transfer of information and change at the grassroots level, we found a relatively low response to these leaders as sources of information or influence in voting behaviour, even in rural Nagarkurnool.

PERSONAL FACTORS INFLUENCING VOTING BEHAVIOUR

Apart from the various sources of information sought and exposed to from the mass and interpersonal channels, we asked the respondents opinions on the importance they gave to campaigns and the issues projected by the political parties in their voting behaviour and that of their community. Party campaigns had exhibited a variety of issues for the electorate to evaluate their characteristics and chose between alternatives. We tested some such factors whether they decided after evaluating the candidates and parties, followed senior members of the community, caste or religion. Surprisingly, only a quarter of the respondents found it very important to evaluate the characteristics of parties before making their voting decision.

Second, when asked if they would follow the members of their caste or religion (especially in the two constituencies, Hyderabad which was communally sensitive and Nagarkurnool, reserved for a SC candidate), contrary to expectations, we found that two thirds of the respondents stated that these two factors were not at all important in their voting decisions. However, on a cross examination on their opinions on the voting patterns of the community, the response was quite the reverse. Almost half stated that the members of the community based their voting behaviour on caste and religious factors.

OUTDOOR FORMS OF POLITICAL COMMUNICATION

Outdoor forms of communication were an important reminder media and added to the electioneering. They formed cheap, yet important sources of election communication for the poor and illiterate. For many it may be an eyesore, but parties claimed that they were a daily reminder of the forthcoming elections. Walls were full of election graffiti with posters, slogans and symbols.

Along with these were huge displays of the symbols, which are still important in the Indian elections when largely illiterate voters identify parties through symbols. Symbols were illuminated with colourful decorations to aid in their recognition. Symbols

representing parties and candidates were varied. The modern symbols like televisions, clocks, radios and fans were an indication of growing urbanization. Earlier symbols mainly consisted of agricultural and rural implements such as bullock carts, farmer and a plough etc. The extensive publicity of symbols had aided most of our respondents in identifying the political parties with their symbols and more than half stated that symbols had reminded them about the elections.

A fairly new development were the huge 10-30' cutouts of leaders in the cities appealing to people. These were thought to be important for the recognition of leaders from the competing political parties, especially since the days of leaders of the Nehru-Gandhi family who were easily recognised were over.

These outdoor forms were a reminder media for more than a third of the respondents. Among the outdoor reminder media, posters were rated the highest, followed by symbol displays, wall writings, handbills and cardboard cutouts. In the first phase, many of the respondents stated that they would look at posters and handbills for election information. We conclude that Indian audiences are still accustomed to look and expect these media, despite the criticism of its use. If it could be argued that an urban and literate sample showed a positive attitude to these outdoor forms, then we could state that it would be even more important to the rural and less educated voters to whom other forms are less accessible.

ATTITUDES TO THE POLITICAL PROCESS AND POLITICAL BEHAVIOUR

In the general analysis on the attitudes of the Indian voters to the political process, we found that about half the respondents were interested in politics, the percentage being much lower among women. Politics was not a commonly discussed topic during social interactions. However, respondents showed a high level of awareness of national and regional current events. Most of them scored average to high scores. They were well informed about the failure of coalition governments and a majority stated a

preference for a single party to form the government. A third of the respondents expressed their dissatisfaction with the functioning of the government and had lost faith in the politicians who did not understand their problems. Yet, 70% were interested in electoral process and 78% had actually voted.

CHANGES IN VOTING BEHAVIOUR

In the final chapter we discussed the respondents' voting behaviour in 1991 in comparison with 1989. Though over 85% respondents had intended to vote, 78% claimed to have actually voted. There was a lot of difference between the voter turnout of the respondents and the actual voting turnout in the three constituencies. There were distinct changes in the parties support in 1989 and 1991. The shift was towards the BJP from Cong.I and TDP. In 1989, 42.4% respondents had voted for Cong.I and in 1991 there was a decrease by nearly 18 percentage points as 24.4% voted for Cong.I in 1991. On the other hand, there was a three fold increase in the number of those who voted for BJP - 11% voted in 1989 and 35.4% in 1991. There was a decrease in three percentage points in the support for TDP (from 12.6% to 9.6%). BJP claimed the highest percentage of vote in the Secunderabad and Hyderabad constituencies, but in Nagarkurnool it was a close second to the Cong.I. Interestingly, in Hyderabad, some Hindu respondents voted for BJP and Cong.I, though MIM had won the seat. There was not much difference in the voting trends between men and women for particular parties. However, 40% respondents who were over 56 years of age voted for Cong.I. While 16.7% Muslims claimed to have voted for BJP and a small 1.8% Hindus claimed to have voted for MIM. Involvement in the campaigns was not particularly high as about a fifth (18.3%) of the respondents stated that they had campaigned for the party they supported.

The non voting trends were important to note for motivating them for greater participation in the future elections. A fifth, (21%) of the respondents did not vote. Though the reasons for non voting were many, the most prominent ones were a sense of

indifference and a lack of interest to the political system. A fifth of the respondents claimed that none of the parties were worth voting for, while nearly the same percentage thought that their vote would not make a difference. The fear of violence kept 15% from casting their vote.

The assassination of Rajiv Gandhi in the middle of the election changed the election scene in India. Election dates were changed, campaign strategies were altered. The results for the Cong.I at the all India level and in AP in the pre and post assassination elections clearly indicated the sympathy factor that led to their victory. It made a difference to 60% of the voters in Nagarkurnool in their voting behaviour and the Cong.I candidate got elected.

IMPACT OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGNS

As respondents were potentially exposed to the election campaigns through several forms of media, we compiled the possible effects and usefulness of the election campaigns. Overall there was a positive attitude to the election campaigns. Over two thirds said that the election campaigns had helped them in their voting decisions, a lot for 15% and to some extent for half the respondents. The effects in terms of knowledge gain, change opinion of leaders and parties, to make an impartial judgement after evaluating the parties of campaigns varied depending on the educational level, constituencies and gender.

Over two thirds (68%) respondents stated that campaigns had increased their knowledge about political parties and candidates. Though more than half the respondents in Secunderabad and Hyderabad found the campaigns useful in increasing their knowledge, the same was not felt by more than one third in Nagarkurnool. Election campaigns had helped in increasing the information level on the political process especially among the educated. Over three fourths of the educated stated that campaigns had helped increase their knowledge either a lot or somewhat. A contrasting trend showed that the uneducated and the

higher educated post graduates derived the maximum benefit in increasing knowledge from the campaigns.

When enquired if the campaigns were useful in making an impartial judgement on the party to vote for. Campaigns has helped 26% of Nagarkurnool voters a lot compared to half (12%) the respondents in Secunderabad and Hyderabad. In both these constituencies campaigns had helped at a moderate level with most of the respondents being somewhat influenced.

Since most parties gave extensive information comparing their policies with their rival parties through the advertisements and in audio and video cassettes, we asked voters if the campaigns had helped them to change their views about leaders. Campaigns had helped a lot for 10% and somewhat for 43.9% of respondents in changing their views about parties and leaders. One third were not at all effected and 12% did not answer indicating a low level of credibility of the party campaigns among voters.

As generally believed that politicians never kept their election promises, we investigated if voters were forced to believe things that were incorrect. Nearly half of them disagreed and were not misled by the false promises generally made by the politicians indicating a high level of understanding of the electoral process among the voters. However, a third, stated that campaigns had to some extent forced them to believe in incorrect aspects about parties and candidates. It clearly reflects the maturity of the Indian voters who were not easily carried away by what was said during the elections.

Therefore, two thirds of the respondents expressed the fact that campaigns had helped them gain information and increased their knowledge about parties and candidates and to some extent increased their opinion on the images of the parties, they were not convincing enough to be motivated by them to vote for a particular party.

In our research, we found ample evidence on the effects of media and changes in the electoral communication pattern. Of course we could not attribute the changes to one particular media system, but given the complex nature of the Indian political and communication systems, the social and cultural diversities of the electorates, India cannot be compared to any one particular model of communication and we cannot generalize on any one particular medium to be either most effective or least effective. An integrated effort through the use of different forms of mass, interpersonal and outdoor media had to be used to reach the largest electorate in the world.

Extensive coverage was given to elections in all the national and regional newspapers and many papers brought out supplements for the readers. Newspapers were most sought by the educated in both urban and rural areas. Regional language and local English newspapers had higher readership than the national ones and voters found the coverage given to elections adequate. Apart from Cong.I and BJP, most political parties had concentrated on the regional language press for advertising. Political advertisements in the newspapers had motivated a fifth of the respondents in their voting decisions.

Though radio, as the medium of the masses continues to be popular, in the past decade, the growth and reach of TV was being effectively used for bringing about greater awareness and change among the people. Experiments and research on several development programmes have shown the impact of television in both urban and rural settings. Radio and television were geared to the elections. During the run-up to the elections and in the announcement of results, we found that radio and television were used for creating awareness about the electoral process and motivating people for greater participation. The results enabled the people to increase their knowledge about the formation of the government. The pre-poll programmes were well planned and targeted to various segments of the electorate including youth and women and offered a variety.

Last, in terms of motivation and participation, the party campaigns had increased the awareness and interest in the electoral process, to some extent helped change views on leaders and parties and to make an impartial judgement on the party to vote for, but had not increased the voter turnout which at 51% at the all India level was the second lowest since the first general election in 1952. Some political commentators attributed this to the weather conditions, when for the first time the general elections were held in the middle of summer. However Hyderabad recorded an all India highest voter turnout at 77%.

The electronic forms did not allow for any real debate between the parties for the electorate to objectively evaluate the parties before making their voting decision. Hence efforts are to be initiated to take these factors and the non voting trends to motivate the people to exercise their franchise in the future elections.

THE MODERNIZATION OF PARTY CAMPAIGNS

Since we have concentrated on the electoral strategies of parties and changes in the kinds of campaigning, we have argued that the impact of the western techniques of campaign planning have resulted in the modernization of campaigns with concepts derived from the American techniques. Indian political party campaigns have acquired a more professional approach through the use of commercial marketing techniques which have been in use in the western democracies. Almost all political parties had employed the services of marketing and advertising professional agencies to develop their campaign strategies. The campaign objectives were drawn after formal and informal methods of research and well documented data collected through opinion polls, through professional or private agencies deployed by the parties or the advertising agencies. The election themes and media schedules to reach various segments were carefully and systematically planned.

During 1991, direct attack strategies were used most parties. However, Cong.I as a lesson from 1989 campaign had developed a more positive strategy in the press campaigns but in the other electronic forms as well as in the public meetings resorted to attack and abuse. The personalities of leaders were projected through the press advertisements, in audio cassettes and in video films. These audio-visual effects have contributed in a large way to the use and development of new and innovative strategies. Outdoor forms including posters, symbols displays and cutouts reminded people of the elections.

The Indian campaigns within a short span of less than a decade and two general elections have provided a large synthesis of political campaigning, developing their own peculiar systems suited to the socio-economic and cultural needs. The traditional forms have been melded into modern technology. For example, we found the use of traditional folk theatre and folk songs in Cong.I videos to present their policies and programmes and in the BJP cassettes, references were made from the religious scriptures.

Campaign techniques differed from party to party. But campaigns depended on the resources available. Extensive campaigns were undertaken by Cong.I and BJP who had far more resources than the other parties and got better noticed. The use of video and audio cassettes was successful and would be a permanent feature in the election campaigns unless television is used more extensively for political broadcasts. However, we argue that, given the reach of TV and its successful use in several social and developmental programmes, and more importantly its success in the production of pre and post election broadcasts, it could also open a fair debate for the political parties. The post election broadcasts during the declaration of results were rated as excellent by nearly three fourths of our respondents. In a democracy, all political parties should be allowed to present their views, especially on radio and TV, the media of the masses. This would enable the voters to objectively evaluate the parties and make

a fair judgement which was not possible through the party videos which obviously presented a one sided view of the party that produced it. Moreover the expenditure on videos would considerably reduce the campaign expenditure by parties. Videos could also be governed by similar code of conduct as PEBs, but with modifications on the content and presentation.

Another development could be in the form of interviews and discussion programmes. Leaders and spokespersons of parties could be interviewed and interrogated by journalists, and indirectly, this could also reduce the huge expenses incurred in the public meetings by the leaders. The text could be translated into the local languages at the regional networks.

Evaluation of these multi media events on a diverse electorate presents immense opportunity for research and analysis of voter behaviour, if one could overcome some of the hurdles we faced. Since this was a pioneering effort in understanding political communication and its impact in India, we were able to identify several problems in the conduct of the research. Another rural constituency would have given a more balanced view to our report and to evaluate the impact of the electronic and interpersonal communication strategies. Despite efforts for a systematic analysis, locating respondents was a major inhibiting factor, which in a way created a doubt on the reports of other surveys. The houses were poorly numbered and sometimes the addresses did not match the names of persons on the voters lists. The identification card system planned to be completed by the next general elections could be useful in conducting similar research in the future.

Indian elections provide a wide spectrum of communication activity and extensive information could be generated on the strategies used by the parties. Given the limitations of resources we were able to get a fair understanding of the system in the urban and rural areas. Further research, through the techniques of observation and indepth interviews, could reveal

the political socialization and behaviour of the electorate in a particular village or city.

Another factor that needs to be investigated is the voting behaviour of Indian women. We did not find much literature on the women's political socialization and electoral behaviour though they formed half the electorate. In our study, we found differences in the voting behaviour of the urban and rural women. Political parties had special strategies for persuading women, Cong.I had targeted their campaigns to motivate women to vote, BJP had used the religious banner to motivate the women, JD/NF had reserved a percentage for women representatives in their list of candidates and in Hyderabad, special schemes for the development of women had motivated them to vote for the party.

Finally our study indicates that education, urbanization, gender, caste, religion are important factors that influenced the receptivity to electoral communication. Education was an important factor, though the increased level of information had no doubt increased awareness of the political process, but these organised strategies cannot determine the final outcome, even in the west, never mind India.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A LETTER FROM ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

Gram: ELECCOM
NEW DELHI

Telex:ND 31-61312
371342
FAX: 3713412

SECRETARIAT OF
ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA

NIRVACHAN SADAN,
ASHOK ROAD, NEW DELHI-110001

No. 577/2/93/3609

Dated: 27-9-1993 . 199 .

To

Kavita Karan,
Flat 6,83 Anson Road
Tufnell Park
London N.7 0AS
UK

Subject:- Data on the percentage of urban & rural voting patterns at the all India level and in the State of Andhra Pradesh.

* * *

Madam,

With reference to your letter dated 2nd September, 1993, on the subject cited, I am directed to say that the Commission does not have the information requested by you.

Yours faithfully,

(K. J. RAO)
UNDER SECRETARY.

**APPENDIX B SCHEME OF BROADCAST OVER AKASHVANI AND
DOORDARSHAN BY RECOGNISED POLITICAL
PARTIES DURING ELECTIONS TO THE LOK
SABHA/STATE ASSEMBLIES**

1. Facilities of broadcasts on Akashvani and Doordarshan may be given to political parties recognised as 'National' parties and 'State' parties by the Election Commission under the Election symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968.
2. (a) In the case of elections to the Lok Sabha, 'National' and 'State' parties may be given facilities for broadcasting from the principal Akashvani Station and Doordarshan Kendra (where there is one) in every state in which general election to the Lok Sabha is to be held.
(b) Broadcast from the principal station in the state will be radiated from all other Akashvani stations in the State.
(c) In addition, 'National' parties may be given facilities to have Central broadcasts from All India Radio, Delhi and Delhi Doordarshan Kendra which will be relayed from all AIR/Doordarshan Kendras.
(d) In the States where a general election to the Legislative Assembly of the State is held simultaneously with the general election to the Lok Sabha, there may not be any need for giving separate time for broadcast/telecast for such Assembly Election.
3. In case a 'State' party recognised by the Election Commission in one or more states under the Election symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order 1968, fields a sizeable number of candidates for election in a State in which it is not recognised, a gist of the election broadcast made by the said 'State' party in any one of the States will be covered in the regional news bulletins of the Radio Stations in that State.
4. Broadcast on Akashvani may be of 30 minutes duration (in two broadcasts of 15 minutes each. Telecast from Doordarshan may be of 15 minutes duration.
5. The dates of Radio broadcasts/telecasts will be pre-determined in consultation with the Chief Election Commissioner or his representative, in the case of Central and National Broadcasts from Delhi, and the Chief Electoral Officer of the State, in the case of broadcasts/telecasts from the Principal Akashvani Stations and Doordarshan Kendras.
6. The order in which and the date on which the various recognised political parties may broadcast/ telecast from Akashvani and Doordarshan will be determined by draw of matching lots by the authorities concerned as mentioned in item 5 above.

7. The time for radio broadcasts and telecasts at the National level will be as follows;
 - Broadcasts.....Between 9.15 P.M. and 9.45 P.M.
 - Telecasts.....Between 9.20 P.M. and 9.35 P.M.
 The time for the radio broadcasts and telecasts at the State level will be between 7.00 P.M and 9.00 P.M.
8. The actual persons participating in the broadcasts may be chosen by the 'National' or the 'State parties, as the case may be.
9. The Broadcasts on Akashvani/Doordarshan will not permit;
 - i. Criticism of friendly countries
 - ii. Attack on religions or communities
 - iii. Anything obscene or defamatory
 - iv. incitement to violence
 - v. anything amounting to contempt of court
 - vi. aspersions against the integrity of the President
Judiciary.
 - vii. anything affecting the unity and integrity of the nation
 - viii. any criticism by name of any person
 - ix. Exhibition of films on or after the date of issue of notification under section 30 of the R.P. Act, 1951 and date(s) of poll projecting the image of cine actors and actresses who have joined politics; sponsored programmes by political parties to telecast/broadcast during election period; and
 - xi. Telecast/ broadcast of programmes of Prime Minister/ Chief Ministers/Ministers having a direct relation or bearing on elections. However, telecast/broadcast or programmes on official activities of Prime Minister/Chief Ministers/Ministers will be permitted.
 Note: The parties or their representatives shall submit the script of their broadcast in advance.
10. The 'party' broadcasts will be in addition to any panel discussions or other programmes of political education organised in the course of the ordinary functioning of the broadcasting media.
11. The 'party' broadcasts will be made after the notification calling for election is issued and will be concluded forty eight hours before the end of the first polling date.
12. No 'party' will be allotted time either on AIR or Doordarshan on Sundays.

APPENDIX C THE SCHEDULE OF THE PARTY POLITICAL BROADCASTS

THE BROADCAST SCHEDULE OF THE PARTY ELECTION BROADCASTS AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL AND IN THE STATE OF ANDHRA PRADESH

The schedule for the Election Broadcasts on radio of the various political parties issued through a press note by the All India Radio, Hyderabad a month prior to the broadcasts. We have added the names of leaders or representative who recorded the election messages.

SCHEDULE FOR THE NATIONAL POLITICAL BROADCASTS AND TELECASTS The election broadcasts made by major political parties started from 1 May 1991. Each party made one television and two radio broadcasts at the National level and two radio broadcasts at the state level. The following table shows the timings for the political broadcasts on radio and television at the national and state level of the National Parties.

POL. PARTY	NATIONAL RADIO		STATE RADIO		TELEVISION
	9.30 PM	9.45 PM	7.15 PM	8.05 PM	
BJP		1.5.91 13.5.91		4.5.91 14.4.91	6.5.91
CPI	17.4.91	2.5.91	15.5.91	3.5.91	13.5.91
CPM	15.5.91	4.5.91	6.5.91	15.5.91	11.5.91
Congress-I	4.5.91 16.5.91		4.5.91	13.4.91	10.5.91
Congress-S	3.5.91	14.5.91	14.5.91	1.5.91	9-5-91
Janata Dal	1.5.91 14.5.91		3.5.91 17.5.91		7-5-91
Janata Dal (S)	5.5.91 13.5.91		16.5.91	2.5.91	8.5.91
Janata Party	2.5.91	15.5.91	2.5.91 13.5.91		12.5.91
Lok Dal LKD		3.5.91 16.5.91	1.5.91	16.5.91	14.5.91

Source: Economic Times, 2 May, 1991.

**SCHEDULE OF THE ELECTIONS BROADCASTS IN ANDHRA PRADESH
I. FIRST ROUND**

S.N.	Date	Time/PM	Political Party	Party/leader Representative
1.	7.5.91	8.00	CPI (M)	M.Hanumantha Rao
2.	7.5.91	8.15	Lok Dal	Pentasam Gupta
3.	8.5.91	8.00	BJP	Bangaru Laxman
4.	8.5.91	8.15	C P I	C.H.Rajeswar Rao
5.	9.5.91.	8.00	JD(S)	D.Ramachandra Reddy
6.	9.5.91	8.15	JD	Kishen Singh
7.	10.5.91	8.00	Indian Congress (S)	Alwar Das
8.	10.5.91	8.15	JD	Chaitanya
9.	11.5.91	8.00	Indian National Congress (Cong. I)	V.Hanumantha Rao
10.	11.5.91	8.15	Telugu Desam	A.Madhav Reddy

II. SECOND ROUND

S.N.	Date	Time of Broadcast /pm.	Political Party	Party leader/representative
1.	13-5-91	8.00	C P I	S.Sudhakar Reddy
2.	13.5.91	8.18	Janata Dal	P.Rambramam
3.	14.5.91	8.00	B J P	C.H.Vidyasagar Rao
4.	14.5.91	8.15	Janata Dal (S)	C.Manik Rao
5.	15.5.91	8.00	Telugu Desam	Mr.Ahmed
6.	15.5.91	8.15	Indian Congress (S)	Alwar Das
7.	16.9.91	8.00	CPI (M)	K.Satyanarayana
8.	16.9.91	8.15	Janata	Absent
9.	17.5.91	8.00	Indian National Congress	N.Janardhan Reddy
10.	17.5.91	8.15	Lok Dal	Anjaneyulu

**APPENDIX D CONTENT ANALYSIS OF PRE-POLL PROGRAMMES
ON TELEVISION**

The following is the list of election programmes on television during the pre election and the post elections. We have given the title of the programme along with the general content.

S. No	Date 1991	Title of the programme	Minu-tes	Time
1.	5 April, 1991	Election code for candidates	2	7.00 pm
2.	6 April 1991	Election code guidelines	2	7.47 pm
3.	7 April, 1991. 8 April, 1991 10 April, 1991 11 April 1991	Election Guidelines in Telugu and Hindi	2.5 2 2 2	8.37 pm 10.20 pm 6.20 pm 8.38 pm
4.	11 April, 1991	Current Affairs 'Election guidelines and rules for application'	15	
5.	16 April 1991	National network(Discussion) 'Elections in Punjab	30	9.50-10.22 pm
6.	22 April, 1991	Appeal by the Chief Election Officer of AP. Mr.T.Kamalnathan on the arrangements made for the poll	15	7.00pm
7.	22 April, 1991	Interview with Chief Election Commissioner. T.N.Seshan	20	8.20 pm
8.	29 April, 1991	Telugu Satire 'Bommala Atta' (Dolls Play) A drama on politicians and voting attitudes	52	7.50pm
9	29 April, 1991	'Your Voice' An animation film to Vote Fearlessly and Honestly' in English. (Short message)	1.5	8.20pm

10	2 May, 1991	'Slogans on elections' Urdu Programme covering 1.Booth Capturing 2.Vote Fearlessly 3. Do not Accept bribes and transportation	20 min	8.20 pm
11	2 May, 1991 3 May, 1991	Morning Transmission 'Quickie on Elections' on National and state network	2 2	8.57 am 9.52 am
12	4 May, 1991	a.Election guidelines and Slogans in Telugu. b.Slogans on Elections	2 2	5.25 pm 7.45 pm
13	6 May, 1991	Slogans on Voting Slogans on Voting	2 2	7.23pm 8.00 pm
14	6 May, 1991	Party Election Broadcasts (PEB) begin. Regional in AP. Janata Dal by Babul Reddy	15	7.45 pm
15	6 May, 1991	Party Election Broadcast (National Network) BJP Dr.Murli Manohar Joshi	15	8.20 pm
16	6 May, 1991	'Election scene in A.P.' Coverage on National English news.	45	7.05pm
17	7 May, 1991	PEB, Regional, BJP. M.Venkaiah Naidu	15	7.45 pm
18	7 May, 1991	Discussion ' The 10 the Lok Sabha Elections: An Observation. Hyderabad TV. Participants.I.J.Naidu, Rtd. Chief Secretary, M.V.Narayan Rao. Rtd. DGP, Moderator G.Sri Hari, Journalist.	15	8.05 pm

19	7 May, 1991	PEB. National. Janata Dal V.P.Singh	15	8.20pm
20	8 May, 1991	PEB Regional. Janata Dal Kota Janardhan Rao	11	7.45pm
21	8 May 1991	PEB, National, SJP Chandrashekhar	14	8.20pm
22	9 May, 1991	Captions on 'How to cast votes' Telugu	4	6.24pm
23	9 May, 1991	PEB Regional Janata Party. Kishen Lal	14	7.45pm
24	9 May, 1991	PEB National Indian National Congress (S) K.P.Unnikrishan	14	8.20pm
25	10 May, 1991	PEB Regional INC(S) (T) Alwar Das	14	8.00pm
26	10 May, 1991	National Network. Report of T.N.Seshan to Andhra Pradesh	7	9.30pm
27	10 May, 1991	Guidelines for candidates	2	8.17pm
28	10 May, 1991	PEB, (National) Cong.I Rajiv Gandhi	15	8.20pm
29	13 May, 1991	Discussion 'Elections our Responsibility'. Participants: M.Virabhadhra Rao, Leela Sugunamani and Potturi Sambasiva Rao.	20	6.00 pm
30	13 May, 1991	Slogans on voting	2	6.20 pm
31	13 May, 1991	PEB (Regional), TDP, Raghuma Reddy	14	7.45 pm

32	13 May, 1991	Election and Campaigning 'Security Measures' -A Report, By Superintendent of Police, Nizambad district and Director General of Police.	14	8.04 pm
			1	8.18 pm
		Slogans on Elections	2	
33	13 May, 1991	PEB.National CPM by Harkishen Singh Surjeet	14	8.20 pm
34	14 May, 1991	Slogans on Elections	2	6.49 pm
35	14 May, 1991	PEB. Regional, Cong.I by V.Hanumantha Rao	14	7.45 pm
36	14 May, 1991	Discussion on the 'Rights of the voters 'Participants A.Sambasiva Rao, Dr.Siva Reddy and Potturi Venkateshwar Rao(Regional)	15	
37	14 May, 1991	PEB.National, Janata Party by Chandrashekhar	15	8.20 pm
38	15 May, 1991	PEB.Regional CPI(M) by Bal Gangadhar Rao	12	7.45 pm
39	15 May, 1991	Telugu Play' Elections have come'	11	8.09 pm
40	15 May, 1991	PEB, National CPI by A.B.Bardhwan	14	8.20 pm
41	15 May, 1991	Quickie on Elections National	2	9.56 am
42	15 May, 1991	Quiz on Elections	40	10.20 pm

43	16 May, 1991	Discussion for women 'Mahila Voters and our Responsibilities' Participants Smt.Malladi Subbamma, S.Padmawathi Sarma, S.V.Soubhagyalaxmi and N.Annapurna (Regional)	24	6.00 pm
44	16 May, 1991	PEB. Regional, CPI by A.Dasari Nagabhushan Rao(Telugu) and Aziz Pasha (Urdu)	15	7.45 pm
45	16 May, 1991	'Anjuman' Regional Urdu Programme. 'Aap Ke Liye' (For You) Programme base on statements of eminent personalities on elections. 'Vote and its importance'.	12	8.00 pm
46	16 May, 1991	PEB, National Lok Dal by Ram Avdesh Singh Slogans on Voting	14 2	8.20 pm 9.28 pm
47	16 May, 1991	'Prashn Manch' (Hindi Question Time (Quiz) on Elections)	40	10.23 pm
48	17 May, 1991	Morning transmission 'Quickie on Elections'	1	8.04 am
49	17 May, 1991	PEB. Regional. Lok Dal T.Satyanarayana Prasad	14	7.45
50	17 May, 1991	Discussion-Regional. 'Elections 1991: Problems before people'. Participants. Dr.Sarojini Regani Osmania University, Ch. Brij Kishore JNTU, B.Ravi Kumar, D.Sitaram journalist.	20	6.45 pm

51	16 May, 1991	Afternoon programme National network. 'Elections 1991 Vote ? Quiz programme in English'		2.12 pm
52	18 May, 1991	Quickie on Elections- Telugu Slogans on elections -Telugu	1 1	7.26 pm 7.27 pm
53	18 May, 1991	Hindi discussions National-'Chunav (election) '91'	20	10.20 pm
54	19 May, 1991	'Many Dreams in Elections' Telugu Play	16	5.31 pm
55	19 May, 1991	'Talk on Votes and Elections (Telugu Play)	27	8.00
56	19 May, 1991	'Arrangements for Elections in AP' by C.Kamalnathan CEO, AP and Commissioner of Police.	10	8.27 pm
57	19 May, 1991	Regional- 'Slogans on Elections' Control Room Phone no. in case of problems. Filler on elections	3 2	8.37 pm
58	19 May, 1991	Interview 'Election 1991' National. Pran Chopra interviews T.N.Seshan Chief Election Commissioner	28	9.57 pm
59	20 May, 1991	Slogans on Elections	3	6.27

ELECTION PROGRAMMES BEFORE THE SECOND ROUND OF POLLS

S No	Dates 3 June - 18 June, 1991	Election Programmes	Durati on mins	Time
1.	3 June, 1991	Telugu Programme 'Elections have come'	16	6.02 pm
2	8 June, 1991	National. President's message.'Elections and responsibilities of citizens'	17	8.20 Pm
3.	9 June, 1991	'Focus'-Elections 1991', Journalists in conversation with T.N.Seshan. Participants. Dilip Padugaonkar, Prabhu Chawla and Nihal Singh.	20	10.20 pm
3.	10 June, 1991	'Elections 91'. Current Affairs Review on elections		6.00 pm
4.	12 June, 1991	Discussion, Regional - 'Violent Attitudes in Elections'.Participants- Potturi Venkateshwar Rao, Journalist, V.P.Rama Rao, Former Chief secretary,,K.V. Subramanyam, former Home Secretary.	23	
5.	13 June, 1991	Mushaira (Urdu poetry) on elections	30	8.05 pm
6.	14 June, 1991	Slogans on Elections	5	6.29 pm
7	16 June, 1991	RESULTS OF ELECTIONS Election Analysis in Telugu Discussants. Prof.Vardhachary, D.Sitaram Journalist, P.Venkateshwarlu, A.B.K.Prasad	12	7.49 pm
8.	16 June, 1991	Election Analysis in Telugu. Same participants as above.	15	11.15 pm

9.	17 June, 1991	Election Analysis Telugu Participants. G.S.Vardhachary, P.S.Sundaram, A.Satynarayanand C.Gyaneshwar	15	9.05 am
10.	17 June, 1991	Election Analysis. Telugu, P.Venkat Rao, Prof. Madhusudhan Reddy, Venugopal Reddy (BJP) and Pannala Subramaniam Bhattu	14	1.46 pm
11.	17 June, 1991	Election Analysis in Telugu Same participants as above	30	11.15 pm
12.	18 June, 1991	Election Analysis - Participants, P.Venkat Rao, Prof.R.V.R.Chandrashekhar Rao, G.Madhav Reddy, Prof. Acharya and Prof Hargopal.	14	7.55 pm

**APPENDIX E MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE GUIDANCE
OF POLITICAL PARTIES AND CANDIDATES**

I GENERAL CONDUCT

1. No party or candidate shall indulge in any activity which may aggravate existing differences or create mutual hatred or cause tension between different castes and communities, religious or linguistic.
2. Criticism of other political parties, when made, shall be confined to their politics and programmes, past records and work. Parties and candidates shall refrain from criticism on all aspects of private life, not connected with the public activities of the leaders or workers of other parties. Criticism of other parties or their workers based on unverified allegations or on distortions shall be avoided.
3. There shall be no appeal to caste or communal feelings for securing votes. Mosques, churches, temples or other places of worship shall not be used as a forum for election propaganda.
4. All parties and candidates shall avoid scrupulously all activities which are 'corrupt practices' and offenses under the election law; such as the bribing of voters, intimidation of voters, canvassing within 100 metres of a polling station, holding public meetings during the period of 48 hours ending with the hour fixed for the close of the poll, and the transport and conveyance of voters to and from polling station.
5. The right of every individual for peaceful and undisturbed home life shall be respected, however much the political parties or candidates may resent his political opinions or activities. Organising demonstrations or picketing before houses of individuals by way of protesting against their opinions or activities shall not be resorted to under any circumstances.
6. No political party or candidate shall permit its or his followers to make use of any individual's land, building, compound wall etc, without his permission for erecting flag-staff, suspending banners, pasting notices, writing slogans etc.
7. Political parties and candidates shall ensure that their supporters do not create obstruction in or break up meetings and processions organised by the other parties. Workers or sympathizers of any political party shall not create disturbances at public meetings organised by another political party by putting questions orally or in writing or by distributing leaflets of their own party. Processions shall not be taken out by one party along places at which meetings are being held by another party. Posters issued by one party shall not be removed by workers of another party.

POLLING DAY

All political parties and candidates shall-

1. Cooperate with the officers on election duty to ensure peaceful and orderly polling and complete freedom to the voters to exercise their franchise without being subjected to any annoyance or obstruction.
2. Supply to their authorised workers suitable badges or identity cards.
3. Agree that the identity slips supplied by them to voters shall be on plain (white) papers and shall not contain any symbol, name of the candidate or the name of the party.
4. Refrain from serving or distributing liquor on polling day and during the twenty four hours preceding it.
5. Not allow unnecessary crowds to be collected near the camps set up by the political parties and candidates near the polling booths so as to avoid confrontation and tension among workers and sympathizers of the parties and candidates.
6. Ensure that the candidate's camps shall be simple - They shall not display any posters, flags, symbols or any other propaganda material. No eatables shall be served or crowds allowed at the camps
7. Co-operate with the authorities in complying with the restrictions to be imposed on the plying of vehicles on the polling day and obtain permits for them which should be displayed prominently on those vehicles.

POLLING BOOTH

Excepting the voters, no one without a valid pass from the Election Commission will appoint observers. If the candidates or their agents have any specific complaint or problem regarding the conduct of the elections they may bring the same to the notice of the observer.

PARTY IN POWER

The party in power whether at the Centre or in the State or States concerned, shall ensure that no cause is given for any complaint that it has used its official position for the purposes of its election campaign and in particular-

- (i) (a) The Ministers shall not combine their official visits with electioneering work and shall not also make use of official machinery or personnel during electioneering work;
- (b) Government transport including official aircrafts, vehicles, machinery and personnel shall not be used for furtherance of the interest of the party in power;
- (ii) Public places such as maidans etc. for holding election meetings and use of helipads for air flights in connection with elections, shall not be monopolised by itself. Other parties and candidates shall be allowed the use of such places and facilities on the same terms and conditions on which they are used by the party in power;

- (iii) Rest houses, dak bungalows or other government accommodation shall be allowed to be used by other parties and candidates in a fair manner but no party or candidate shall use or be allowed to use such accommodation (including premises appertaining thereto) as a campaign office or for holding any public meeting for the purposes of election propaganda;
- (iv) Issue of advertisement at the cost of public exchequer in the newspapers and other media and the misuse of official mass media during the election periods for partisan coverage of political news and publicity regarding achievements with a view to furthering the prospects of the Party in Power shall be scrupulously avoided.
- (v) Ministers and other authorities shall not -
 - (a) announce any financial grants in any form or promises thereof; or
 - (b) lay foundation stones etc. of projects or schemes of any kind; or
 - (c) make any ad-hoc appointments in government, public undertaking, etc. which may have the effect of influencing the voters in favour of the party in power.
- (vii) Ministers of Central or State Govt. shall not enter any polling station or place of counting except in their capacity as a candidate or voter or authorised agent.

**APPENDIX F CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ELECTION MEETINGS
AND PROCESSIONS**

1. The party or candidate shall inform the local police authorities of the venues and time of any proposed meeting well in time to enable the police to make necessary arrangement for controlling traffic and maintaining peace and order.
2. A party or candidate shall ascertain in advance if there are any restrictive or prohibitory orders in force in the place proposed for the meeting. If such orders exist, they shall be followed strictly. If any exemption is required from such orders it shall be applied for and obtained well in time.
3. If permission of licence is to be obtained for the use of loud speakers or any other facility in connection with any proposed meeting, the party or candidate shall apply to the authority concerned well in advance and obtain such permission or licence.
4. Organisers of a meeting shall invariably seek the assistance of the police on duty for dealing with persons disturbing a meeting or otherwise attempting to create disorder. Organisers themselves shall not take action against such persons¹

Source: Consolidated instructions of the Election Commission of India in connection with conduct of elections; 1991.

RULES GOVERNING PROCESSIONS

1. A party or candidate organising a procession shall decide before hand the time and place for the starting of the procession, the route to be followed and the time and place at which the procession will terminate. There shall ordinarily be no deviation from the programme.
2. The organisers shall give advance intimation to the local police authorities of the programme so as to enable the latter to make necessary arrangements.
3. The organisers shall ascertain if any restrictive orders are in force in the localities through which the procession has to pass, and shall comply with the restrictions unless exempted specially by competent authority. Any traffic regulations or restrictions shall also be carefully adhered to.
4. The organisers shall take steps in advance to arrange for passage of the procession so there is no block or hindrance to traffic. If the procession is very long, it shall be organised in segments of suitable lengths, so that at convenient intervals, especially at points where the procession has to pass road junctions, the passage of held-up traffic could be allowed by stages, thus avoiding heavy traffic congestion.

5. Processions shall be so regulated so as to keep as much to the right of the road as possible and the direction and advice of the police on duty shall be strictly complied with.
6. If two or more political parties or candidates propose to take out procession over the same route or parts thereof at about the same time, the measures to be taken to see that the processions do not clash or cause hindrance to traffic, the assistance of the local police shall be availed of for arriving at a satisfactory arrangement. For this purpose, the parties shall contact the police at the earliest opportunity.
7. The political parties or candidates shall exercise control to the maximum extent possible in the matter of processionists carrying articles which may be put to misuse by undesirable elements, especially in moments of excitement.
8. The carrying of effigies purporting to represent members of other political parties or their leaders, burning such effigies in public and such other forms of demonstrations shall not be countenanced by any political party or candidate.

APPENDIX G LIST OF INTERVIEWS

The following is a list of persons interviewed for the study apart from the informal opinions taken from academicians, newspaper editors, advertising professionals, broadcasters and producers of radio and TV programmes, party candidates, local party leaders, party workers and voters.

Mr. Mahesh Prasad, Secretary Information and Broadcasting, Government of India. New Delhi.

Mr. T.N.Seshan, Chief Election Commissioner. Government of India, New Delhi.

Mr. Kamalnathan, Chief Electoral Officer, Government of Andhra Pradesh.

Mrs Bimla Bhalla, Asst. Director, News Services, All India Radio New Delhi.

Mr. Vijay Karan, Director, Central Bureau of Investigation, New Delhi.

Mr. Balkrishna, Director General Doordarshan, Hyderabad, Government of Andhra Pradesh.

Mr. Gopal Krishna, Deputy Director, All India Radio Hyderabad. Government of Andhra Pradesh.

Dr. J.K Jain, Director, Jain Studios. New Delhi

Mr. Jaipal Reddy, Spokesperson Janata Dal/National Front. New Delhi

Mr. Pranab Mukerjee, Spokesperson, Cong.I. New Delhi.

Mr. Anand Sharma, MP Spokesperson Cong.I. New Delhi.

Mr. K.R. Malkani. Vice President, Bharatiya Janata Party. New Delhi

Dr. Anand Kumar, Jawahar Lal Nehru University, New Delhi

Mr. Kishen Reddy, In-charge of State Elections, BJP, Hyderabad.

Sultan Salahuddin Owaisi, Leader MIM, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh.

Mr. Babul Reddy, Party Leader Janata Dal, Hyderabad.

Dr. Manohar Rao, Akhil Bhartiya Vidyarthi Parishad. Hyderabad.

Mr. Chandrababu Naidu, Secretary and Spokesperson, Telugu Desam Party, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh.

Dr.M.A.Ahmed, Director, Darul Muarif, Osmania University.
Trustee, Darul Salam Education trust,

Mr.K.Keshav Rao, Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee, Hyderabad.
Andhra Pradesh.

Mr.R.Ravindran, Director, R.K.Swamy/BBDO Advertising Pvt. Ltd.
New Delhi

Mr.Probir Purokayastha, Vice President, Clarion Advertising
Services, New Delhi.

Mr.Ved Paul, Chief Executive, Graphisads Pvt. Ltd. New Delhi.

Mr.Shyam Sundar Sain, Chief Executive, Aditi Advertising Pvt.
Ltd.

Mr.Achal Paul, Megacorp Advertising and Marketing Pvt. Ltd. New
Delhi.

Mr.Hari Prasad, Niha Communication Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh

APPENDIX H QUESTIONNAIRE

1. S.No -----
2. Name Mr/Miss.Mrs/ / _____
3. Address _____
4. Location. 1, Urban 2.Rural
5. Name of the constituency _____
6. Sex 1.Male 2. Female
7. Age (years)
1. 18-25 2. 26-35 3. 36-45 4. 46-55 5. 56-65 6. 65+
8. Mother Tongue
1. Telugu 2. Hindi 3.Urdu 4.English 5. Other
9. Total Number of members in the House hold.
1. Adults _____ 2. Children _____
10. Which Realign do you follow?
1. Hinduism 2. Islam 3. Sikhism 4. Christianity
5. Other (specify) _____
11. How Often do you go to the Temple, Mosque, Church or Gurdwara?
1. Never 2.Rarely 3.Sometimes 4.Regularly
12. Which caste do you belong to? _____
13. Educational Background
1. Uneducated 2. Primary Education 3. Secondary Education
4.Intermediate 5.Graduation
6.Post Graduation 7.Technical education/ Vocational Training 8.
Any other
14. Kind Of Job/Occupation
1. Unemployed 2.Student 3./Government/Public Sector
4.Private Enterprise/ Sector 5. House wife
6. Agricultural worker/Labourer/farmer 7.Retired 8. Other
15. How much is the average income of your family per month?
1. Less the Rs.250 2. 250-500 3. Rs.501-1000 4.Rs.1001-2000
5. Rs.2001-3000 6. Rs.3001-4000 7. 4001+
16. Do You
1. Subscribe to a newspaper
2. Own a radio
3. Own a Television
4. Own a VCP/VCR

PART - II

17. Will you let us know the extent to which you expose yourself to the following media?

Regularly- 5-7 days a week

Sometimes- 2-4 days a week

Rarely - Once in a week or less

Media

1.Never 2.Rarely 3.Sometimes
4.Often 5.Regularly

1. Read Newspapers
2. Read magazines
3. Listen to radio
4. Watch Television
5. See films at the Cinema.

18. Do You read a newspaper or are 'read to someone in your family?

1. Yes

2. No.

If 'No' Go to Question 24.

19. Which of the following newspapers do you read?

1. Andhra Prabha
2. Andhra Jyothi
3. Eenadu
4. Udayam
5. Deccan Chronicle
6. Indian Express
7. The Hindu
8. Newstime
9. Siasat
10. Rahnuma-e-Deccan
11. Other (Specify) _____

20. Thinking about newspapers, how interesting is political news to you?

1. Not at all interesting

2. Somewhat Interesting

3. Very interesting

4. No answer

21. Regarding the coverage of political news in your newspapers, do you think that the coverage given is too little, adequate or too much?

1. Too Little

2. Adequate

3. Too much

4. Don't Know

5. No Answer

22. In the Newspaper that you read, have you seen any advertisements released by the government?

1. Yes 2. No

23. If Yes did you find them?

1. Very Informative

2. Somewhat informative

- 3. Not at all informative
- 4. Do not remember
- 5. Don't Know
- 6. No Answer

24.a) Coming to magazines, Do you read them?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

b) If Yes can you name three magazines that you generally read

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

25.a) How about radio. Do you listen to the radio?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

25.b) What kind of programmes do you listen to?

- 1. Never
- 2. Sometimes
- 3. Regularly
- 4. No Answer

- 1. News
- 2. Current Affairs
- 3. News analysis/Discussions
- 4. Film Songs/music
- 5. Dramas and plays
- 6. Educational Programmes
- 7. Any other

26.a) Coming to Television, do you generally watch television

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

b) What kind of Programmes do you generally watch

- 1. Never
- 2. Sometimes
- 3. Regularly
- 4. No Answer

- 1. News
- 2. Current Affairs
- 3. Film Songs/Music
- 4. Dramas/Serial
- 5. Agricultural and Farmers programmes
- 6. Educational Programmes
- 7. Any other

c) In terms of specific Programmes, how often have you seen the News in the past four weeks?

- 1. Never
- 2. Sometimes
- 3. Regularly
- 4. No Answer

- 1. Regional news in Telugu
- 2. National News in Hindi
- 3. National news in English

- d) And what about programmes like?
- 1.The World this week
 - 2.Parliament news
 - 3.Sansad Samachar
 - 4.Focus
 - 5.Saakshi
 - 6.Aaj Kal
 - 7.Any other
27. Thinking about news and current affairs programmes do you find the time given to coverage given to politics and current affairs too much, adequate or too little.
- 1.Too little
 - 2.Adequate
 - 3.Too much
 - 4.Don't Know
 - 5.No answer
28. On Television along with the programmes there are a number of advertisements, How much do you like to watch them?
- 1.Do not like them at all
 - 2.Like them a little bit
 - 3.Like them a lot
 - 4.No opinion
 - 5.Don't know
- 29.a) In the area that you live in, do people get together to talk about every day matters
- 1.never
 - 2.Sometimes
 - 3.Regularly
 - 4.No Answer
- b) And what would you generally talk about?
- 1.Day-to-day matters of work
 - 2.Political matters
 - 3.Social Problems.
 - 4.Economic issues
 - 5.Local gossip
 - 6.Any other
- c) Roughly how many people gather on these meetings?
- 1.Less than five
 - 2.About 5-10
 - 3.11-20
 - 4.More than 20
 - 5.It depends
 - 6.No answer

d) Thinking about the people in your group how true would you say are the following statements?

1. Definite true
 2. Uncertain
 3. Definite untrue
 4. No answer
1. Most persons who assemble with me belong to the same age group as me
 2. Most of them are doing the same work as I am
 3. Most of them are of the same religious group as me.
 4. Most of them speak the same language as me
 5. Most of them are of the same caste group as I am

PART III

30. Generally speaking, could you tell me how interested you are in politics and the political developments in the country.
1. Not at all interested
 2. Somewhat interested
 3. Interested when it concerns me
 4. Very interested
 5. Don't Know
 6. No Answer
31. Thinking about politics do you discuss political matters with others.
1. Never
 2. Once in a while
 3. Quite often
 4. Almost daily
 5. No answer
32. In the past few months government has called attention to a number of issues. From the following list let me know how much do you know about them.

1. Never	2. Know a	3. Know	4. No
heard	fair	a lot	answer
of it	amount		

Issues.

1. The recent communal riots in out state
2. The Government of Dr. Chenna Reddy has been replaced
3. The 'Buddha' statue fell into the tank bund.
4. In some of our districts there is a lot of naxalite problem
5. Babri Masjid-Ayodhya temple issue
6. Reservation of jobs for the backward classes.

33.a) Considering voting, did you vote in the last Lok Sabha election?

1.No 2. Yes

b) If Yes, which party did you vote for?

1.Cong.I 2.BJP 3.TDP 4.JD 5.MIM 6.CPI 7.CPM
8.BSP 9.Can't remember 10.Don't know/no answer

c) Did you campaign for the party you voted.

1.Yes 2.No

34. There are a number of reason why people did not vote. From the following what describes your reasons for not voting.

1.I was away on that day

2.I was not eligible to vote

3.My vote would not make a difference

4.I don't think any of the parties were worth voting for.

5.I did not receive information about parties and candidates

6.Any other

7.No reason

8.No Answer

35 a) In the forthcoming elections what source will you seek for getting information about candidates and parties

1.A lot 2.A fair amount 3.Not at all

4. No opinion

1.Look into newspapers

2.Radio

3.Television

4.See Posters

5.Handbills and leaflets

b) And what about

1.Discuss with local leaders

2.Discuss friends & neighbours

3.Family

4.Listen to public announcements

5.Any other(specify)

36. During the election will you be attending any of the election rallies and public meetings held by the parties

1.Yes 2.No 3.Not yet decided 4.Don't Know 5.No answer

37. In deciding whom to vote, how important would you consider the following aspects

1. Very Important
2. Somewhat important
3. Not very important
4. Not at all important
5. No opinion

1. Consult and follow the advice of the family members.
2. To make a decision after evaluating the performance of the various parties
3. To follow the advice of senior members of the community
4. To follow the advice of religious leaders of the community
5. To follow a majority of the members of the caste

38. If you had to choose which of the following statements comes closest to your own views on how the country should run after the next election?

1. One party should gain a majority and form the government
2. A clear majority may not be necessary but the party with the highest number of seats should form the government
3. There need not be a majority but some parties can form a coalition government.

39. Thinking about our country's leaders, to what extent would you tend to agree or disagree on the following statements

1. Strongly agree(SA)
2. Tend to agree
3. Tend to disagree(TD)
4. Strongly disagree(SD)

1. Leaders committed to development of the country
2. Leaders do not know and understand my problems
3. I have confidence & trust in the leaders
4. I am not at all satisfied with the way the present government works

40. During the forthcoming elections, would you care who wins the elections

1. Do not care at all
2. Somewhat care
3. Care a lot
4. Don't know
5. No answer

41. Thinking about the elections, how much do you think is the way the people vote influenced by
- 1.The Caste they belong to
 - 2.Their long term affiliation with the party
 - 3.The religious group that they belong to
42. In the forthcoming election are you likely to vote
- 1.Yes
 - 2.No
 - 3.Not yet decided
43. If 'Yes' which party are you most likely to vote for
- 1.Cong.I
 - 2.TDP
 - 3.BJP
 - 4.MIM
 - 5.JD
 - 6.CPI
 - 7.CPM
 - 8.BSP
 9. Any Other(specify)
44. In case you are unable to vote from the party that you have mentioned , which is the next party that you would vote for
- 1.Cong.I
 - 2.TDP
 - 3.BJP
 - 4.MIM
 - 5.JD
 - 6.CPI
 - 7.CPM
 - 8.BSP
 9. Any Other(specify)

-
46. Thinking about the caste system in our country, to what extent would you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	1	2	3	4	5
	Do not	Somewhat	Agree	Don't	No
	agree	agree	a lot	know	answer

- 1.It is a part of our social system and should be present
- 2.It is creating unnecessary problems in our society and must be abolished
- 3.Reservations in govt. and educational institutions should be based on the caste classification

QUESTIONNAIRE -II

1. S.No.
2. Name of the respondent
3. Address
4. Location 1.Urban 2.Rural
5. Name of the Constituency

6. Do you know which party secure the maximum number of seats in the just completed election
1.Cong.I 2.TDP 3.BJP 4.MIM 5.JD 6.CPI 7.CPM
8.BSP 9. Any Other(specify)

7. How did you come to know of the results of the elections
1.Newspapers
2.Radio
3.Television
4.Friends and Neighbours
5.Local leaders
6.Local party offices
7.Government offices
8.Any others

8. How did you find the coverage given to election results .
1.Excellent 2.Good 3.Fair 4.Poor 5.Don't Know
1.Newspapers
2.Radio
3.Television
4.Others

9. In the past few weeks how interested were you in following up the political development and elections in the newspapers
1.Not at all interested
2.Not very interested
3.Fairly interested
4.Very interested.
5.Don't know
6.No answer

10. Do you think that the coverage given to the election news in the newspapers was
1.Far too much 2.Just enough 3.Too little 4.Don't Know

11. Has the coverage of election news helped you in deciding how to vote .
1. A lot 2.Somewhat 3.Not at all 4.No Opinion

12. Turning to the Party advertisements, have you seen any of the advertisements of the political parties in your newspapers.
1.Yes 2.No 3.Do not remember 4.No Answer

13. If Yes, which party/ies did they belong to
1.Cong.I 2.TDP 3.BJP 4.MIM 5.JD 6.CPI 7.CPM
8.BSP 9. Any Other(specify)

14. Did you find these advertisements
1. Informative 2. Interesting 3. Persuasive 4. Don't know
5. No answer

1. TD
2. Congress
3. BJP
4. JD
5. MIM
6. Any Others

15. Have these advertisements motivated you to vote for a particular party
1. Not at all 2. Somewhat 3. A lot 4. Don't know/No answer

16. What about magazines. Have you been reading the magazines that you read regularly
1. Yes 2. No 3. No answer

If Yes,

17 a) Have you seen any of the party ads in the magazine that you read.
1. Yes 2. No 3. Do not remember 4. No answer

b) Can you name the parties and the magazine
Parties Name of magazine

1. Cong
2. BJP
3. Janata Dal
4. Telugu Desam
5. JD
6. Others

c) Did these help in deciding whom to vote
1. A lot 2. Somewhat 3. Not at all 4. No Opinion
5. Don't Know/No answer

18. During the elections there were a lot of symbols we associate with parties. Can you recognize which party they belong to
1. Yes 2. No

1. TD
2. Congress
3. JD
4. MIM
5. BJP
6. CPI
7. SJP
8. CPI

- 19 a) What about listening to the radio? In the past six weeks how often did you listen to the political and current affairs programmes
 1.Never 2.Sometimes 3.Regularly
- b) In particular did you listen to the following Broadcasts
 1.Yes 2.No 3.Don't Know
- 1.Discussion with CEO
 2.Talk with the DGP
 3.Quiz Programme on
 4.Discussions on elections
 5.Election messages to voters
 6.Any other
- c) Did you listen to the Election Broadcasts of Party leaders
 1.Yes 2.No 3.Do not remember 4.No Answer
- d) If Yes, which party did they belong to -
 1.yes 2.no
- 1.Congress
 2.BJP
 3.Janata Dal
 4.SJP
 5.TDP
 6.CPM
 7.CPI
- e) How often did you hear the news on radio
 1.Never 2.Sometimes 3.Regularly
- 1.Telugu News
 2.Hindi News
 3.English News
- f) Overall how did you find the coverage given to elections on radio
 1.Very good 2.Average 3.Not at all good 4.No opinion
 5.No answer
- g) Has coverage on radio helped you to decide vote

- 20 a) Coming to television, how often did you see the political and election related programmes.
 1.Never 2.Sometimes 3.Regularly
- b) In particular did you listen to the following programmes
 1.Yes 2.No
- 1.The Discussion programmes on elections with various groups of important persons
 2.The Quiz on elections
 3.The Voter education announcements
 4.Talks with CEC and other officials
 5.Any other

- c) Did you see the Party election telecasts by the leaders of various political parties.
1.Yes 2.No

If No, go to point (e)

- d) If yes can you name the parties
1.Cong.I 2.BJP 3.Janata Dal 4.SJP 5.CPI 6.CPM
7.Any Other
- e) What about the coverage given to election information on TV
1.Very Good 2.Good 3.No opinion 4.No at all good
5.No Answer
- f) Overall how did you find the coverage given to election information on TV to be
1.Too much 2.Adequate 3.too little 4.Don't know /No answer
- g) Have the coverage of election programmes, news and party broadcasts help you in deciding how to vote
1.yes, a lot 2.A fair Amount 3.Not very much 4.Not at all 5.Don't Know 6.No answer

1.Coverage of News and current affairs
2.The Election Programmes
3.Party Election Broadcasts

- 21 a) In the area that you live in did you see the election posters stuck at different places
1.Yes 2.No
b) If Yes, which parties did they belong to, You may answer as many as you have seen
1.Congress 2.BJP 3.Telugu Desam 4.MIM 5.Janata Dal
6.SJP 7.Any other

- 22 a) How about the songs and speeches of leaders on audio cassettes. Did you hear them on the loud speakers
1.Yes 2.No 3.Do not remember
b) If Yes, which parties belong to
1.Congress 2.BJP 3.Telugu Desam 4.MIM 5.Janata Dal
6.SJP 7.Any other

- 23 a) What about video/cinema shows telling us about the parties and the leaders, did seen any video shows during the campaign
1.Yes 2.No
b) If Yes, Which parties did they belong to
1.Congress 2.BJP 3.Telugu Desam 4.MIM 5.Janata Dal

- 6.SJP 7.Any other
- 24 a) Did audio tapes and video cassettes help you in deciding how to vote in the elections
 1.Yes a lot 2.A fair amount 3.Not at all 4.Don't know
 5.No answer
 b) Did video tapes help in deciding how to vote
 1. A lot 2.A fair amount 3.Not at all 4.Don't know
 5.No answer
- 25 a) Did you attend any public/ election meetings and rallies of parties
 1.Yes 2.No
 b) If Yes, which one did you attend
 1.Congress 2.BJP 3.TDP 4.MIM 5.Janata Dal 6.SJP
 7.Any other
 c) Did attending these meetings help in deciding to vote
 1.Yes a lot 2.A fair amount 3.Not at all 4.Don't know
 5.No answer
- 26 a) By the way, did any canvassers come to your house asking you to vote for a party
 1.Yes 2.No
 b) Which parties did they belong to
 1.Congress 2.BJP 3.TDP 4.MIM 5.Janata Dal 6.SJP
 7.Any other
 c) Did their coming motivate you to vote for their party
 1.Yes a lot 2.A fair amount 3.Not at all 4.Don't know
 5.No answer
27. Finally, did you vote on polling day
 1.Yes 2.No 3.No answer
28. If yes,
 Which party did you vote for
 1.Congress 2.BJP 3.TDP 4.MIM 5.Janata Dal 6.SJP 7.Any other
29. When did you decide to vote for the party
 1.Long before the polling day
 2.Early in the campaign
 3.During the campaign
 4.On the polling day
30. In deciding to vote which of the following media helped you most in getting information about parties and candidates, please rank in order
 1.Newspapers 2.Magazine 3.Radio 4.Television 5.Video shows
31. Did posters, hand bills, wall writings and cutouts of leaders remind you of the party you had to vote for
 1.Not at all 2.Somewhat 3.A lot
 1.Posters
 2.Handbills
 3.Wall writings
 4.Cardboard Cut outs
 5.Symbol displays

6.Hoardings

32. Talking about the local people in your area, who were the people most involved in helping you to decide whom to vote in the election

1.Not at all 2.Somewhat 3.A lot

- 1.Discussions with family
- 2.Local leaders
- 3.Attending public meetings
- 4.Talking to party activists
- 5.Any other

Question no. 33 for Nagarkurnool voters only

33. Did the assassination of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi have an influence on your voting behaviour

1.Yes a lot 2.somewhat 3.Not at all

34. The reasons why people did not vote. From the following what describes your reason for not voting

- 1.I was away on that day
- 2.I was scared to go and cast my vote
- 3.My vote would not make a difference
- 4.I don't think any of the parties were worth voting for
- 5.I did not receive information about parties and candidates
- 6.Any other
- 7.No reason

35. Did the election campaigns help you in

1.Not at all 2.Somewhat 3.A lot

- 1.To increase knowledge about political parties and candidates
- 2.Forced you to believe the things that were not correct
- 3.To judge impartially the best party to vote for
- 4.To change your views on the images party of parties and their leaders

Thank You

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