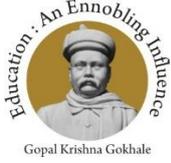


ASSESSMENT OF ELECTION EXPENSES IN MUNICIPAL COUNCILS IN MAHARASHTRA

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FOREWORD

1. Maharashtra is one of the most urbanized States in the Country with nearly 44% of its population living in 358 Municipal Councils / Nagar Panchayats and 27 Municipal Corporations areas. State Election Commission, which was established in 1994, following the 73rd & 74th Amendments to the Indian Constitution, conducts elections for nearly 10,130 seats in these urban bodies every 5 years.
2. State Election Commission is required to conduct above elections in a free, fair and transparent manner in order to provide level playing field to all Political Parties and Candidates.
3. It is a known fact that both the political parties and candidates are required to spend money to inform/educate voters about their vision and policies etc. Besides necessary guidelines, ceiling for election expenses for candidates has been prescribed by the Election Commission. At present, a candidate is allowed to spend between Rs.1.5 lakh to Rs.3 lakhs depending upon the size of the Municipal Council.
4. In spite of the above guidelines and ceiling on expenditure, it is widely reported in the media that both the candidates and political parties spend huge amounts of money, in order to influence and buy voters, which hampers the purity of the elections.
5. State Election Commission engaged the services of Gokhale Institute of Politics & Economics (GIPE), Pune in the month October of 2016, to assess, the actual use of money in the Municipal Council elections scheduled to held in November,2016.
6. I am happy that GIPE has conducted a survey of 18 municipal councils with the help of 18 observers from 21st November 2016 to 27th November 2016 and have come out with very interesting findings, some of which are as follows:-
 - a. actual expenditure incurred by the candidates is generally four times higher than that of the prescribed limits, and
 - b. nearly Rs. 9 crores are spent by all the political parties and candidates put together in every municipal council, indicating a total of Rs. 1,800 crores approximately for 211 municipal councils for which elections were held between November,2016 and January,2017.
7. I take this opportunity to congratulate Smt.Manasi Phadke, Dr. Rajas Parchure and the entire team of GIPE for making this analytical study possible.
8. I am further pleased that Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics is publishing the survey findings in a booklet form elucidating their methodology and analysis. I am sure this will help in improving the quality of the candidates in future and result in more free, fair and transparent elections.

Shri. J. Saharia
State Election Commission
Maharashtra

January 18, 2017

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I am very pleased to present the report titled “Assessment of Election Expenditure in Municipal Council Elections in Maharashtra” to the discerning readers and scholars. As you must be aware, the State Election Commission of Maharashtra has been conducting local body elections in Maharashtra from 1994. It has been working tirelessly to increase the voter turnout and conduct elections in a free, fair and transparent manner.

One of the forces which distorts the level playing field immensely is the prevalence of money power. Candidates and political parties spend immense amount of funds on not only regular expenses such as promotional meetings, bill boards etc., but have also been known to distribute cash and liquor. It is important to assess the total amount of expenses that actually happen in the weekly run-up to the elections. Not only is this important in terms of an election-documentation exercise, but it also will serve as a useful input in expense limit revisions by the SECM. Such an exercise has never been attempted in Maharashtra; every process from creating a methodology to verification of estimates had to be developed creatively and yet, without compromising on academic vigour. I am happy to state that Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics has completed this challenging task successfully. Our findings are extremely interesting and will serve to complement and further the literature on local body elections fruitfully.

Let me express my gratitude to Shri Jageshwar Saharia, State Election Commissioner, Maharashtra, for granting this interesting study project to the Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics. Shri Shekhar Channe, Secretary, State Election Commission, Maharashtra, guided and supported us at every stage of the project.

Mrs. Manasi Phadke has been the chief co-ordinator and principal author of this report and has been driving the processes right from the methodological construction of the problem to writing the report, meticulously. I congratulate her for coming out with a timely and interesting publication. Pramod Sadolikar helped us to identify reporters and observers for this project in far flung areas, for which I thank him. Vishal Gaikwad and Vilas Mankar were given the responsibility of taking daily reports from all observers and maintain daily records of the observations. They both have done so in an exemplary fashion and their friendly communication with the observers helped the project along immensely. We had especially invited Shri Anand Agashe and Shri Abhay Kulkarni to guide the reporters at the commencement of the project as well as to moderate the FGDs at the end of it. I express my gratitude to both these senior reporters for sharing their knowledge so generously with us. Prof. Rajesh Bhatikar handled the editing of the report very efficiently. Our young Research Assistants Vaishnavi Dande, Raksha Iyengar, Bhavesh Pathade, Shital Shitole and Preet Mehta were a delight to work with and completed their tasks enthusiastically. Ms. Manisha Shinde took care of the accounts part of the project efficiently. We received support from the Accounts and other teams within the Institute too, all of which

helped us to complete this on time. Last but not the least, I want to express my sincere gratitude towards all reporters who agreed to be our “observers” for this project. Without their meticulous and timely inputs, this project could never have been completed. All in all, it has been a wonderful team effort and I congratulate every member of the team for their efforts and enthusiasm.

This project helped us to gain deep insights into the dynamics of local body elections from an expenditure perspective. I am sure that the report will serve as a useful addition to the existing literature on the subject.

Prof. Rajas Parchure
Offg. Director
Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics
Pune

January 18, 2017

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

164 Municipal Councils went into election mode from 28th November 2016. The Model Code of Conduct (hereafter referred to as MCC) was notified for all the Councils on 15th October 2016. The MCC is a set of guidelines that political parties as well as candidates wishing to contest elections have to adhere to. The MCC has evolved through a consensus of all political parties which have agreed to “abide by the principles embodied in the said code in its letter and spirit”. The MCC comes into force upon notification of the date of elections by the State Election Commission of Maharashtra in respective local bodies and covers five major sections regarding which guidelines have been issued. These are:

1. General Conduct
2. Meetings
3. Processions
4. Polling Day
5. Polling Booth

The role of the MCC is to ensure that elections in the local area are conducted in a free, fair and transparent manner.

1.1 Objectives of the Study

Though the guidelines for conduct of candidates and parties have been given clearly, violation of the code of conduct is a known and observed phenomenon throughout Maharashtra. The temptation to flout the guidelines for personal advantage gets stronger as the election date approaches. Bribing the voters through distribution of money, freebies and liquor, at times intimidating the voter, giving hate speeches, disrupting meetings and processions of opponents, etc. are known violations of the MCC. In other words, use of money and muscle power is a known phenomenon during the elections in Maharashtra.

While money power is evident, there has been no formal attempt to assess the extent of money spent by candidates/parties on elections to local bodies. Depending upon the classification of the Municipal Council as A, B or C, the SECM has set limits on expenditure a candidate may undertake to contest a seat from that Council. While post-facto, all candidates submit records of expenses which are invariably well within the expense limits, the actual amount of spending is known to be well above these limits.

The objective of this survey was to assess the extent of actual expenditure incurred by a candidate during the week prior to elections in the Municipal Councils in Maharashtra.

1.2 Timeline of the Study

The survey commenced on 21st November and concluded on 27th November 2016. Since the polls were scheduled on the 27th November, the timeline provided the observers an opportunity to actually observe, assess and report on the actual expenditure on field in the week leading to the elections.

CHAPTER 2

MUNICIPAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS IN MAHARASHTRA: SALIENT FEATURES

The 73rd Amendment to the Constitution, which gave constitutional status to the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI), was passed in 1992. The same Amendment provided for creation of the State Election Commission of Maharashtra (SECM) for conduct of elections in urban and rural local self-governance bodies. All urban and rural local body elections in Maharashtra since 1994 have been conducted by the SECM. While urban bodies include Municipal Corporations, Municipal Councils and Nagar Panchayats, rural bodies encompass Zilla Parishads, Panchayat Samitis and Gram Panchayats.

In Maharashtra State, at the time of establishment of the SECM, some of the local bodies, rural as well as urban, were already in existence and were functioning with elected members. It was decided to allow such local bodies to continue and hold elections to these local bodies as and when they completed their 5-year term. Thus, in Maharashtra, all local bodies do not go to polls at the same time. Different local bodies, urban and rural, go to polls as and when their 5-year term ends.

Since its establishment, the SECM has conducted 4 rounds of elections in all the local bodies. The first round was from 1994-98, the second round was from 1999-2003, the third from 2004-08 and the fourth from 2009-13. From 2014 onwards, the fifth round of elections is being conducted by the SECM across all rural and urban local bodies in Maharashtra. Whilst some bodies have already conducted the fifth round of elections, in nearly 26 out of 36 districts in Maharashtra, all urban and rural bodies will go to polls from November 2016 to March 2017.

Following are some of the salient features of Municipal Council elections in Maharashtra¹.

1. Voter turnout for Municipal Council elections across all rounds of elections stands at 70.77 per cent. The voter turnout percentage sharply increases in the elections held in 2004-08, whereas the standard deviation across Councils drops. This implies that almost all Councils show better voter turnout levels in the 2004-08 elections.
2. Voter turnout in a Council in any round of elections significantly depends on the voter turnout in that Council in the past round. Thus, a Council with a high turnout in the last round of elections is likely to show higher turnouts in the next round too. Thus, in influencing voter turnouts, it is important to acknowledge the role of the “voting culture” of that area.
3. Voter turnout for a Council not only depends on its own past records, but also on the voting behavior observed in the neighboring Councils. Thus, it is found that high

voting Councils and low voting Councils tend to cluster together. Thus, voting behavior patterns span across areas wider than those under a single Municipal Council. Whilst designing voter awareness programs, they ought to be designed for wider areas rather than for particular Councils.

4. Around 45% of seats are reserved for SC, ST and BCC candidates across all Councils. It is a popular perception that voter turnout gets affected by how the seats are reserved in different constituencies. However, the data shows that proportion of reserved seats within a constituency has no impact on voter turnout at all.
5. However, even if reservation of seats does not bring about political activism from perspective of voters, it does bring about higher levels of political activism from perspective of political parties. Political parties tend to engage in greater level of competition in those areas where the reservation of seats for SC, ST and BCC candidates is higher.
6. Political parties also engage in more tightly fought contests when the voter turnout is high. With a lower voter turnout, chances of a single party dominating the Council are higher. Hence, if a political party has a stronghold over a Municipal Council, and if the voter turnout in that Council tends to be low, there is a chance for the competitor party to try and break the stronghold of the former. Hence, it is in such Councils that there will be bitter contests amongst political parties. It is here that effective implementation of the Model Code of Conduct is very important.
7. Data also shows that political parties engage in tougher competition over seats in areas with lower development quotients. Thus, high voter turnout areas in less developed areas with higher level of reservations for SC, ST and BCC candidates are the obvious contenders for witnessing bitterly contested elections between political parties. It is here that the MCC machinery should be concentrated.
8. Around 17% of the seats in Municipal Councils are held by independent candidates. Independents tend to win more with higher voter turnout; they also tend to win less in areas with higher proportion of reserved seats. Councils belonging to economically well-developed districts normally have a higher proportion of independent candidates winning the elections. In every round of elections, there are Councils wherein no independent candidate has won even a single seat. Similarly, there are very few Councils wherein all seats were won by only independent candidates. There are only two Councils, namely, Maindargi Council in Solapur and the Pachagani Council in Satara, wherein all seats have been captured only by independents repeatedly.

CHAPTER 3

MONEY POWER, CAMPAIGN FINANCE AND EXPENSE LIMITS

Former PM Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee said famously, “Every legislator starts his career with the lie of the false election return he files.” This statement, coming from a Prime Minister of arguably the biggest democracy in the world, creates a logical platform to discuss the role of money power in elections, and whether expenditure limits manage to curb it.

World over, one finds different views, rules and indeed laws pertaining to campaign finance i.e. raising of funds by political parties to fund their election expenses, as well as pertaining to limits on election expenses.

In the US for example, there are strict rules governing campaign finance i.e. how much finance can be raised by candidates from small individual contributors, large individual contributors, political action committees, and self-finance. The rationale of the move is quite simple. If donors excessively support political campaigns financially and those candidates win, then the policy of the candidates threaten to mirror the view of a small but financially influential part of the society. Thus, issues of concern to the majority of the populace could take a backseat, whilst the Government policies and programmes get swayed by the interests of the rich donor class. Unrestricted donations towards campaign finances could thus threaten the very spirit of elections and democracy. However, in the US, whilst there are tight controls over campaign finance, there are no controls over how the candidates may then spend the money so obtained. In the highly contested Presidential election in 2016, Hillary Clinton raised \$1191 million in campaign finance, whereas Donald Trump raised only \$646.8 million. The money was spent on print and electronic media, rent, payroll and administration in the local state offices, telecommunications, etc. Thus, the total amount of campaign funding raised by the two Presidential candidates alone in the 2016 US elections stood at about \$1837 million. In Rupee terms, this translates approximately into Rs.11940 crores. The overall cost of the election is much higher; the Centre for Responsive Politics² estimates this to stand at about \$6.9 billion i.e., about Rs.45000 crores.

Compare this to the combined campaign cost of the Modi and Gandhi campaigns, which is estimated to be about \$205 million³ (or about Rs.1332 crores) together. Thus, the campaigns of the most visible leaders in the 2014 Indian elections works out to be a tenth of the campaign finance raised by the American Presidential candidates.

However, the cost of the overall NDA and UPA campaigns in India, according to the Centre for Media Studies, worked out to be a mind-boggling \$5 billion⁴ or Rs. 33000 crores, which is an astounding 72 per cent of the overall US election expenditure.

Comparison of election expenses to the GDP estimates of the respective countries provides some interesting insights. The overall expenses of the US Presidential campaign account for 0.03 per cent of the US GDP, whereas the overall expenses of the Indian Lok Sabha elections 2014 accounted for 0.25 per cent of the Indian GDP.

Comparison of cost of elections per voter is another way of arriving at cross country comparisons. In the US, the cost of elections worked out to be about \$52 per voter in 2016, whereas in India the cost of 2014 LS elections per voter was about \$7.69 per voter. This is still higher as compared to the UK, where the cost of elections per voter stood at \$1.85.

The main difference in elections in India and the US is the fact that while in the US the source of funding is regulated, in India, it is the quantum of expenditure on elections that is regulated.

Issues of limits on expenses by parties and candidates, limits of political contributions by different entities etc. are covered in India under RoPA, 1961, Income Tax Act, 1961 and the Companies Act, 2013. Currently, there are no limits on individual as well as corporate contributions to political parties. However, for corporate contributions, the company has to be at least three years old and cannot contribute more than 7.5% of its aggregate net profits of the preceding three years. Further, there are no limits on political parties accepting contributions. Only if the contribution from individual or a corporate body stands at more than Rs.20000, then the political party is expected to make a disclosure to the Election Commission in every financial year. Further, companies are also required to disclose the amounts given to political parties, together with their P&L statements every financial year. The glaring issue or loophole here is the limit of Rs.20000⁶. If individuals make multiple contributions of Rs.19999 to a political party in the course of a year, this contribution completely evades disclosure⁵. Secondly, it is important to realize that such contributions could either be from individuals practicing corrupt or worse, criminal activities. It is this money that is then used to distribute cash, gifts or liquor amongst the voters, thereby swaying voter preferences. It also sets off a vicious cycle wherein muscle or money power of the individual candidates backs the money power of political parties, which, after coming to power, are forced to condone the illicit activities of the donors. Thus, disclosure of all amounts accepted by political parties as contributions has become the focal point of the current debate on electoral reforms in India.

That higher expenditure by candidates and/or political parties can and does distort the level playing field and adversely affects the electoral prospects of candidates with lower election budgets, is a harsh reality of Indian elections; however, placing limits on expenditure in order to create a level playing field appears to be a utopian idea that may instead fuel corruption.

Imposition of expenditure limits as a tool of creating a level playing field is flawed; further, the actual expenditure limits allowed are too low to be realistic.

These issues create a backdrop in which the present study has been undertaken. In Maharashtra, the State Election Commission of Maharashtra conducts elections to the local bodies, i.e., Municipal Corporations, Municipal Councils and Nagar Panchayats (urban governance bodies), and Zilla Parishads, Nagar Panchayats and Gram Panchayats (rural governance bodies). The framework of setting limits on election expenses is common to all Election Commissions across the country.

It is a known phenomenon that money power plays a bigger role in local body elections as compared to national polls. Cash, liquor and freebies are distributed more aggressively at the local levels, because the candidates represent wards with smaller voter base sizes. While the media often reports on instances of money power deployed during elections, there has been no formal study to assess how much money could actually be changing hands during local body elections in Maharashtra.

It must be noted that election expenditure begins nearly 8-10 months prior to the elections. Such expenditure could be in the form of sponsorship of Ganesh Mandal activities during the Ganesh festival, “Haldi-Kunku” programs around Navratri, cricket matches or music fests during winter, etc. Such sponsorship is actually an expense towards brand building, which is considered as a positive contributor in the upcoming elections. Corporators have been known to build pukka roads, clear drainages, even paint compound walls of housing societies as the elections draw close. Distribution of freebies can range from distributing trash-cans for wet and dry garbage to appeal to the sentiments of the eco-friendly, upper middle class lobby in Pune, to distribution of cotton shopping-bags in Shirdi. If this expenditure is incurred before the election is announced and the Model Code of Conduct is enforced, then there is no apparent violation of the MCC.

However, once the election is declared (typically 40 days prior to the actual polling date), the Model Code of Conduct (MCC), which also includes guidelines on expenditure, becomes applicable to those zones. The State Election Commission declares limits of “Allowed Expenses” for candidates and the candidates are required to submit disclosure of the actual expenses incurred towards elections from such time as the MCC become applicable. Now, the branding effort has to be intensified just at the same time when the MCC come into effect; the candidates thus over-spend, thereby violating provisions of the MCC and later, under-quote their expenses, thereby flouting the disclosure norms.

It is really difficult to fathom the extent of money power in municipal elections; a naive method is to apply the Lok Sabha factor of 0.25 per cent of Indian GDP to the Maharashtra State GDP from urban areas. The CSO estimates for Maharashtra SGDP in 2016 stand at about Rs.18 lakh crore. If we assume that 50 per cent of the same comes from urban areas, and if we apply the 0.25 per cent factor, it implies that the total election expenses in urban Maharashtra could be around Rs.2250 crores.

This creates a logical backdrop to explain the objective of the present study. The present study aims to create a formal estimate of the total election expenses that may be incurred by candidates contesting in Municipal Council elections. It needs to be noted that the study tracks only the election expenses incurred by candidates in the week preceding the elections. Such a study not only helps to get an estimate of the money power in the local body elections in Maharashtra, but will also be useful in terms of eventually revising expenditure limits realistically.

CHAPTER 4

SAMPLING CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE STUDY

Sampling is a crucial part of the survey design. The sample has to be sufficiently representative of the population so that the results obtained on the basis of the sample can be generalized to the population.

The 164 Municipal Councils wherein elections were held in November were spread across Maharashtra. It was decided to choose 10-15 per cent of the Councils, i.e. about 22 Municipal Councils, based on cost and time considerations. This also appeared reasonable since it covered 16-18 districts across the geographical spread of Maharashtra.

Cluster sampling was used in a 2-stage procedure to identify the Municipal Councils in which the study would be undertaken. The following section gives a detailed explanation of the sampling design.

2.1 Two-stage sampling process

Following steps were used in identifying the 16 Councils for the purpose of the survey.

Step I: Cluster Sampling Design for Identifying 20 Councils

An earlier study² of election data by Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics suggests that Municipal Councils can be classified into “clusters” by the patterns in the following 4 variables:

1. Level of competition between political parties or “swing” (High, Medium, Low)²
2. Voter turnout (High, Medium, Low)
3. Proportion of reserved seats in the Council (High, Medium, Low)
4. Political alignment of the local party in power with the party in power at State Government level (High, Medium, Low)³

This classification or cluster analysis is relevant for the sampling design at hand because Councils with high level of competition amongst political parties are likely to witness a much higher play of money and muscle power as compared to Councils dominated by a single party.

Similarly, Councils with higher voter turnout tend to experience higher presence of political parties. Hence, one would be more likely to see a higher movement of money in these Councils as compared to those with low voter turnout.

Where the proportion of reserved seats is high, caste could play a big role in attracting the voters. Election dynamics, electoral tactics and money power issues would accordingly be different in those Councils with high proportion of reserved seats and those with a lower proportion of reserved seats. There is another inherent advantage in using this variable for classifying the Councils. Normally, Councils with higher proportion of reserved seats are those wherein the development quotient is slightly lower. Hence, classification by this variable also gives us a classification by level of development.

If the local party in power is politically aligned with the State incumbent (i.e., party in power at the state government level), there could be inherent advantages to the local incumbent, leading to an impact on usage of funds required for election purposes. Thus, classification of Councils as per above mentioned variables would be useful and relevant to create a sampling design for the survey.

Step I was then to classify the Councils using each of the variables mentioned above. Following steps were used.

1. Classify Councils into those with high, medium and low swing. Sample 2 Councils from high swing areas, 2 from low swing areas and 2 from medium swing areas. Thus, 6 Councils were identified using the swing quotient.
2. Classify Councils into those with high, medium and low voter turnout. Sample 2 Councils from high voter turnout areas, 2 from low voter turnout areas and 2 from medium voter turnout areas. Thus, 6 Councils were identified based on voter turnout.
3. Classify Councils into those with high, medium and low reservation proportions. Sample 2 Councils from high reservation proportion areas, 2 from low reservation proportion areas and 2 from medium reservation proportion areas. Thus, 6 Councils were identified based on their reservation proportions.
4. Classify Councils into those with political alignment and those without political alignment in the last round of elections (2009-13). Sample 2 Councils from those which are aligned with the State incumbent and 2 from those which are not aligned with the State incumbent. Thus, 4 Councils were identified based on their political alignment quotient.
5. This gives a total of 22 Councils.
6. There is a fifth variable using which the referred study classifies Councils. Councils can also be classified using the proportion of independents winning seats in the elections. There is one Municipal Council namely Maindargi in Solapur district,

which is a very unique Council in that it has witnessed 100% of the seats being won by Independents in last 3 rounds of elections.

7. The Maindargi Council could have very different electoral dynamics due to this unique feature and hence, the 23rd Council was chosen purposively.
8. The Chopda Municipal Council has a medium voter turnout and a high swing quotient. It was selected under both the criteria. Thus, the total number of Councils chosen was 22.

Step II: Ensuring a Geographical Spread

Of the 164 Councils moving into election mode in November and December, there is a larger concentration in Aurangabad division (39 Councils) followed by Pune (33 Councils) and Amravati (33 Councils). The sample drawn had to reflect this geographical concentration too. The proportion of 164 Councils in each division was used to choose the relevant number of Councils in the sample in that division. The following table shows the sampling pattern in detail.

Table 4.1: Selection of Municipal Councils in the Sample

Sr. No.	Geographical Spread of the Councils and the Sample		Voter Turnout			Proportion of reserved seats in the Councils			Swing			Political Alignment with State Incumbent (2009-13)		100% Seats won by Independent Candidates (Purposive, atypical selection)	
	Divisions	No. of Councils with elections in 2016	Proportional number of sample Councils	Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High	Yes		No
1	Amravati	33	4												
2	Aurangabad	39	5	Buldhana											
3	Konkan	17	2	Beed											
4	Nagpur	13	2				Vengurla, Roha*								
5	Nashik	29	4												
6	Pune	34	5												
	Grand Total	164	22												

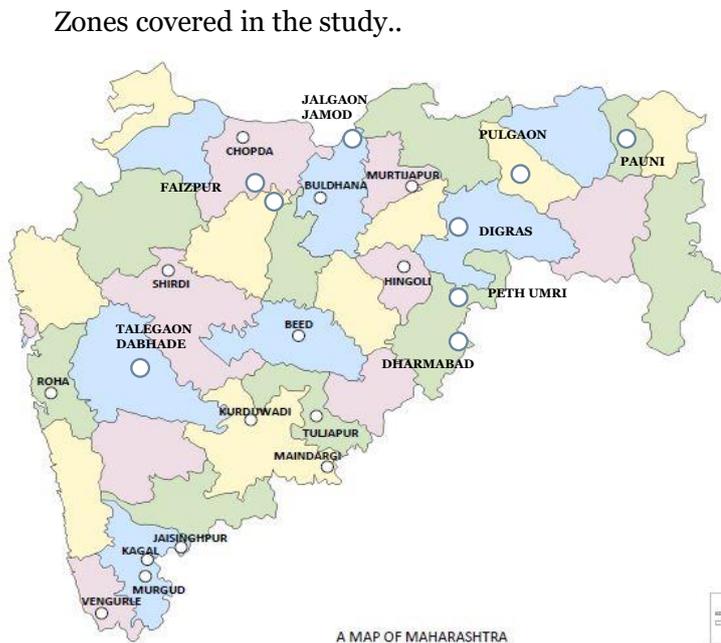
*In the above sampling plan, Vengurla and Malwan Councils had been selected in the Konkan division. Both of these Councils have a low proportion of reserved seats and belong to the Sindhudurg district. It is hence likely that electoral issues in both the Councils could be similar and hence, Malwan was dropped from the sample and in its place Roha Council from Raigad district in Konkan division, which is also a Council with a low reservation proportion, was chosen randomly.

Further, Buldhana and Jalgaon Jamod are both in the Buldhana district; but no substitutions were made because the underlying criteria by which these Councils were chosen were different.

Another case is Chopda and Faizpur. Both the Councils are in Jalgaon district in Nashik division, but again the underlying criteria through which these were selected are different and hence, no substitutions have been carried out there.

Thus, a sample of 22 Municipal Councils covering 16 districts of Maharashtra was drawn for the purpose of the study. The following map shows the geographical coverage of the study.

**Map 4.1: Municipal Councils chosen for election expense analysis
(Phase II and Phase III)**



2.2 Phase II and Phase III of elections in Municipal Councils

Elections to the Municipal Councils were conducted in three phases. Of the above 20 Councils, 16 Councils went to polls on 27th November 2016, whereas 4 Councils went to polls on 14th December 2016. These are referred to as Phase II and Phase III of Council elections by the State Election Commission of Maharashtra. The observations from Phase II as well as Phase III have been covered in this report.

2.3 Practical Issues in Sampling

As the chapter on the methodology reveals, the Institute engaged the services of press reporters from the respective Municipal Council areas to observe the scenario in the respective Council area during the week preceding the election, and report on the approximate range of expenditure that could have been incurred in the election vis-à-vis the expenditure limits prescribed by the State Election Commission. However, since we could not identify suitable political reporters in Digras, Jalgaon Jamod, Faizpur and Pulgaon, the study could not be undertaken in these areas.

Since Pulgaon was dropped from the sample due to practical difficulties, the Nagpur division is somewhat under-represented. It may be noted that only 13 Councils in Nagpur went to polls in Phase II and Phase III and hence, it was anyway decided to sample only two Councils. However, with the Pulgaon Council being dropped, only one Council from Nagpur is covered under this study. Despite our efforts, we also could not identify a suitable reporter in any of the other Councils in Nagpur division having high reservation of seats similar to Pulgaon. Hence, no substitution could be made for Pulgaon.

Thus, this report is based on the observations of 18 Municipal Councils from 15 different districts. The Councils, the districts in which they are situated and their administrative division is as follows:

Table 4.2: Final List of Municipal Councils in which the study was carried out

Sr. No.	Name of Municipal Council	District	Division
1.	Beed	Beed	Aurangabad
2.	Dharmabad	Nanded	Aurangabad
3.	Hingoli	Hingoli	Aurangabad
4.	Peth Umri	Nanded	Aurangabad
5.	Tuljapur	Osmanabad	Aurangabad
6.	Talegaon-Dabhade	Pune	Pune
7.	Kagal	Kolhapur	Pune
8.	Murgud	Kolhapur	Pune
9.	Jaisingpur	Kolhapur	Pune
10.	Kurduwadi	Solapur	Pune
11.	Maindargi	Solapur	Pune
12.	Shirdi	Ahmednagar	Nashik
13.	Chopda	Jalgaon	Nashik
14.	Buldhana	Buldhana	Amravati
15.	Murtijapur	Akola	Amravati
16.	Roha	Raigad	Konkan
17.	Vengurle	Sindhudurg	Konkan
18.	Pauni	Bhandara	Nagpur

CHAPTER 5

METHODOLOGY FOR ASSESSMENT OF ELECTION EXPENSES

The formal study to undertake assessment of expenses in the weekly run up to the Municipal Council elections is unique and first of its kind attempted in India. It is certainly the first of its kind attempted on local body elections in Maharashtra. While estimates of the actual election expenses may be informally available at the Council level and might get sporadically reported in media too, these are largely estimates or “guesstimates” which leave a lot to be desired in terms of the attempts to scientifically verify their accuracy.

5.1 Quantitative Assessment of Expenses

The main strength of the present study is its attempt to verify the accuracy of the claims made therein. Accuracy of estimates largely depends on how the study is methodologically constructed. Given that this was the first attempt at probing into election expenses at a Municipal Council level in Maharashtra, there was no ready and available methodological construct which we could have followed. Thus, a methodology to assess election expenses was formulated from scratch. The details of the same are given below.

- As has been detailed in the earlier chapter, a sample of 22 Municipal Councils was chosen as per the sampling design in which to carry out the study. Of these, the study could be actually carried out in 18 Municipal Councils.
- In each of the Councils, reporters were appointed as “observers”. Their task was to report their observations regarding election expenses incurred daily by different candidates in different wards. The format in which they were directed to report daily expenses is given in Appendix A.
- Each reporter was required to choose two wards in which the elections were fiercely contested, and two in which there was no major spending on campaigning.

- The study focuses on “how much” is the extent of expenditure and not “who” or “which political party” carried out the expenses. Hence, reporters were asked to maintain a daily track of election activities carried out in the selected wards, and not that of particular candidates or parties.
- Election activities typically included meetings, rallies, processions, campaign vehicles, printing of pamphlets, banners and cut-outs etc.
- Under the activity head “meetings”, reporters had to provide details of the meetings, such as the size of the stage, projectors, generators, banners, LED screens, cut-outs, mikes and sound systems, rented chairs or other seating arrangements, floral arrangements, presence of celebrities, whether people or voters were brought in by trucks for the meetings, whether the meeting was advertised in print media, beverages served at the meetings, caps or stoles distributed during the meetings etc. They also were asked to maintain similar records for chowk sabhas, corner sabhas, processions and rallies organized by political parties or candidates. Since these were observable events, they were also advised to file photographs of such activities in support of their observations. Finally, they were also directed to submit on a daily basis, the estimated expenditure that could have been incurred on election-related activities in the Council. Given that we had the break-up of activities together with the photographs, it was easily possible to create an informal estimate of the expenses for the said meeting. Thus, two expense estimates were created around every activity. One was the overall estimate as reported from the field. The other was an estimate prepared by us based on the individual components of the activities. If the estimate prepared by us was in sharp deviation from what was submitted to us from the field, we’d ask the reporters to verify their estimate by components.
- Under the activity head “pamphlets”, the reporters were asked to collect physical samples of pamphlets and flyers distributed by the candidates and to estimate the cost of printing. While most candidates or parties claimed printing 500 copies of pamphlets, in reality, a much higher number was printed. Some reporters managed to get “inside” information or information from printers, or estimated the total number of pamphlets that must have actually been printed. At our end, we worked out the cost of printing one pamphlet and multiplied it by 40 per cent of the ward voter population to

arrive at a realistic estimate of what the actual printing estimates could be. This was then compared with the estimated expenditure reported by our observers; if the deviation between the two was sharp, then we advised the reporters to re-verify their information.

- The reporters were also asked to keep track of big and small banners, hoardings and cut-outs put up by candidates. The approximate size of the banner multiplied by the cost of the same (which would be readily available from the local authorities) would give us the cost of one banner. They were also expected to observe how many such banners were raised by each candidate/party. Photographs were to be sent to support the observations.
- Under the activity head “campaign vehicles”, reporters were asked to keep a track of the type of vehicles that were used for campaign (auto-rickshaws, jeeps, Sumos, etc.) and the approximate rental and fuel cost per day. Again, the data was to be substantiated through photographs or videos.
- Manpower is a very important component in any election. How many karyakartas or party workers were roped in by the candidates for campaigning and promotional activities? What was the approximate payment made to the workers per day? Such data would provide insight into the manpower cost of the campaign. It is to be noted that this was a typical component of election expenditure wherein no supporting documentation or proof would be readily available, and we had to rely on the reports filed by our reporters from the respective field areas.
- The above mentioned heads of expenses are the “observed” components of election expenses. However, there are various other expenditures incurred in an election in a clandestine manner and therefore, not easily noticeable. Such “invisible” expenses typically include distribution of cash, food, liquor and such other freebies to voters. The nature of these expenses is such that it defies evidence and it is rather difficult to estimate how much amount is actually spent on such activities.
- Reporters were asked to report their estimates of such “invisible” expenses. Very few of these “invisible” expenditures could be backed by photographs or other physical

evidence. However, though it was not possible to verify the claims on such expenditure, some minimal checks were put into place. For example, a claim that Rs.1 crore was distributed amongst poor families was verified in the light of the poverty ratio for the Council, and by dividing Rs. 1 crore by the number of families in the Council to see how much money was given per family. If this number was seen to be “reasonable” or in sync with the trends from elsewhere, it would stand accepted. Else, the reporter would be required to re-confirm the data submitted.

- The above mentioned method of estimation of “observed” as well as “invisible” expenses enabled realistic verification of the reports dispatched by our observers from the field. In the event of any deviation in our estimation vis-à-vis the numbers reported by the observers, or in case of substantial deviation between reports of observers from developmentally similar districts, the estimates would invite immediate scrutiny. This method helped us to create realistic estimates about both observed as well as invisible expenses at the ward level.
- The next step was to use these ward-level estimates to understand the total level of expenditure at the Council level. Two different methods were used for this purpose.
- First, since the reporters were expected to actively track only a few candidates within the chosen wards, we multiplied the expenses reported by a suitable “candidate multiplier” to arrive at a realistic estimate of expenses incurred by all candidates. For example, if there were 6 Nagar Sevak candidates within a ward and 60 Nagar Sevak candidates at the Council level, the candidate multiplier would be 10. However, this would have been too simplistic and perhaps erroneous because in reality all candidates do not have the same capacity to spend. Expenses incurred at a candidate level depend upon his personal financial capacity, his stature within the party, his connections with businesses etc. Hence, reporters were asked to classify candidates they were observing as “strong”, “medium” or “weak” candidates. Further, they were asked to classify how many of the contesting candidates within the Council were strong, medium or weak. Candidate multipliers were applied differentially to different categories of candidates, thereby arriving at an estimate of the total spending within the Council. It is also to be noted that during the 2016 elections, the post of Nagaradhyaksha was also directly contested by candidates. Candidates contesting for

the post of Nagaradhyaksha have typically spent much more than those contesting for the Nagar Sevak seats. Whilst creating the candidate multiplier, care was taken to give separate treatment to the Nagaradhyaksha and Nagar Sevak candidates. This was one method of estimating the total expenditure of the Council.

- Another method used to estimate the total Council expenditure was ‘ward multiplier’. Since the reporters were actively observing only 4 wards, the expenses computed at the ward level were multiplied by a suitable “ward multiplier” to arrive at a realistic estimate of the expenditure incurred across all wards. Here too, care was taken to create different ward multipliers for those wards in which the contest was fierce and in which the seats were not contested very fiercely. This was the second method of estimating the total expenditure of the Council.
- The expenditure estimate arrived from both methods was ideally expected to match; in case of substantial deviation, we cross-checked the evidences yet again. We also looked for secondary data sources such as local newspaper coverage to identify that our candidate multipliers or ward multipliers were not over- or under-estimated.

5.2 Qualitative Assessment of Expenditure

Active observation of the expenditure incurred by candidates was done by the reporters in the week prior to elections, i.e. from 21st November to 27th November. During this period, all reporters filed daily reports on observed as well as invisible expenses, based on which quantitative assessment of the election expenses was arrived at. Along with the records of meetings and other invisible expenses, the observers also provided us with insights in matters such as the local dynamics of caste and religion politics, impact of demonetization on election expenditure, increased usage of social media in promotion, etc. Quantitative estimation of election expenses could only be deemed to be complete in the light of the qualitative factors at play in the elections.

Hence, once the quantitative assessment was completed, a Focus Group Discussion with the reporters was conducted post-elections. The FGD tool brought out various qualitative angles to the observed data on expenditure. A schedule and list of issues around which the Focus Group Discussions were conducted is given in Appendix B.

Chairs Arranged in Preparation of a Political Sabha



Bike rally organised by a political party



“Sponsored meal” for an entire slum



CHAPTER 6**ESTIMATES OF EXPENSES IN MUNICIPAL COUNCILS
IN THE WEEK PRIOR TO ELECTIONS**

The State Election Commission has fixed expenditure limit for candidates contesting in a particular Council, on the basis of classification of the Council as A, B or C category. The post-election returns filed by the candidates on expenditure incurred on the election generally claim that the expenditure has been well within the prescribed limits. However, in reality the expenditure incurred on the field before the elections is much higher than the prescribed limits.

The objective of this study was to assess the extent to which money power manifests itself in the week prior to elections in Municipal Councils in Maharashtra. In the 18 Municipal Councils selected for this survey, apolitical observers were directed to simply record visible instances of money power in the elections to the Councils. These included the legally permitted “regular” expenses such as those incurred on meetings, processions, pamphlets, campaign vehicles etc. which could be typically backed by visual or tangible proof. Observers were also instructed to maintain a record of expenses such as distribution of cash, freebies and liquor as observed directly or through information from reliable sources.

For elections to the Municipal Council, the permissible expense limit per candidate ranges from Rs.1 lakh to Rs. 3 lakhs. We make an assumption that an average expense of Rs.2.5 lakh per candidate would be allowed in all Councils included in the sample. This gives us the “Allowed Expenditure” per Council. We next compare the “Actual Expenses” as computed by us, with the “Allowed Expenditure Limit” in the following table.

Table 6.1: Comparison of Actual Expenditure with Allowed Expenditure in Selected Councils

Council	Division	No. of Contesting Candidates	Allowed Expenditure (Crores)	Actual Election Expenditure (Crores)	Actual / Allowed
Buldhana	Amravati	154	3.85	11.61	3.02
Murtijapur	Amravati	131	3.28	4.95	1.51
Beed	Aurangabad	278	6.95	23.90	3.44
Hingoli	Aurangabad	161	4.03	8.35	2.07
Tuljapur	Aurangabad	73	1.83	13.52	7.41
Peth Umri	Aurangabad	48	1.20	2.80	2.33
Dharmabad	Aurangabad	163	4.08	6.00	1.47
Pauni	Nagpur	121	3.03	5.00	1.65
Roha	Konkan	66	1.65	11.96	7.25
Vengurle	Konkan	77	1.93	7.59	3.94
Chopda	Nashik	128	3.20	11.65	3.64
Shirdi	Nashik	56	1.40	9.04	6.46
Jaisinghpur	Pune	108	2.70	12.43	4.60
Maindargi	Pune	49	1.23	2.87	2.34
Murgud	Pune	55	1.38	4.42	3.21
Kurduwadi	Pune	65	1.63	1.90	1.17
Kagal	Pune	71	1.78	7.63	4.30
Talegaon Dabhade	Pune	48	1.20	7.50	6.25
Average				8.51	3.67

The assessment of the recorded as well as invisible expenses reveals the extent to which money power manifests itself during election week. The average expenditure incurred in Municipal Council elections in Maharashtra is as high as Rs. 8.5 crores per Council.

There are 340 Municipal Councils and Nagar Panchayats in Maharashtra. If we estimate Rs.8.5 crores of expenses per Council, it implies that the election spending on just Municipal Council elections in Maharashtra amounts to Rs.2890 crores.

The ratio of actual to allowed expenses has an average of 3.7. This implies that actual expenses are nearly 4 times as much as the allowed limit of expenses.

The standard deviation of the ratio of actual expenses to allowed expenses is 1.8. We next cluster Councils and see which Councils cluster more closely around the average. It is interesting to observe that those Councils in which the ratio of estimated to allowed expenses exceeds the average by more than one standard deviation include temple towns of Shirdi and Tuljapur. These temple towns have a lot of footfall and typically experience an infrastructure deficit in terms of roads, transport facilities, hotels, sanitation etc. Thus, there are big developmental opportunities in these towns, and hence big Council budgets. These are big opportunities for contesting Councillors and hence, one tends to find higher ratio of estimated to actual expenses in such Councils.

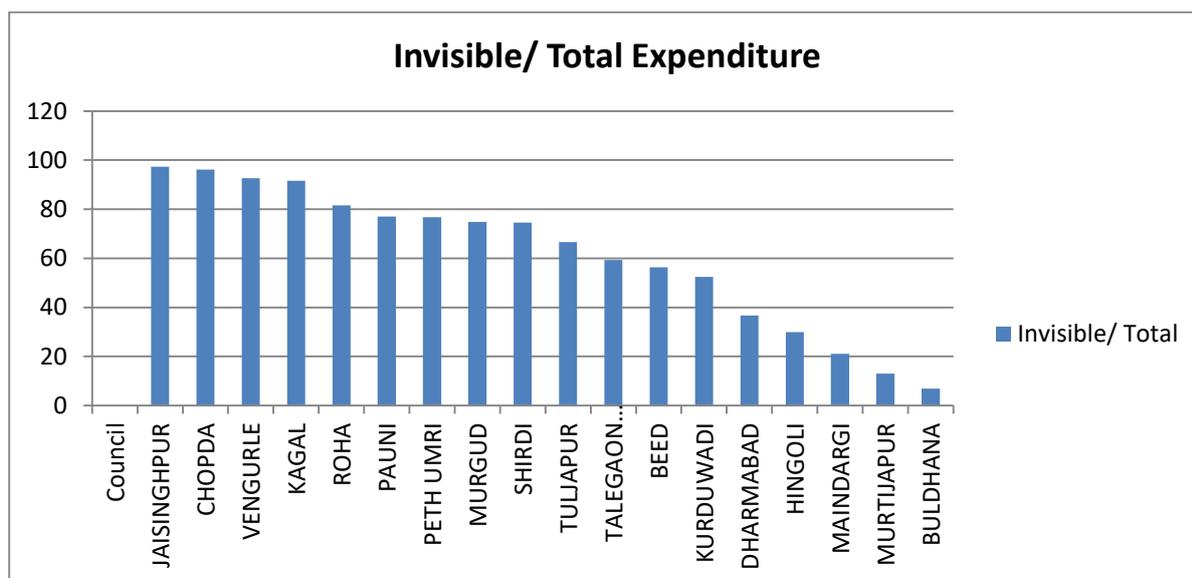
Table 6.2: Clusters of Ratios of Actual to Allowed Expenses in Councils

	Council	Division	Actual / Allowed	Actual/ Allowed (Cluster Average)
High Expense Cluster	Tuljapur	Aurangabad	7.41	6.84
	Roha	Konkan	7.25	
	Shirdi	Nashik	6.46	
	Talegaon Dabhade	Pune	6.25	
Medium Expense Cluster	Jaisinghpur	Pune	4.60	3.29
	Kagal	Pune	4.30	
	Vengurle	Konkan	3.94	
	Chopda	Nashik	3.64	
	Beed	Aurangabad	3.44	
	Murgud	Pune	3.21	
	Buldhana	Amravati	3.02	
	Maindargi	Pune	2.34	
	Peth Umri	Aurangabad	2.33	
	Hingoli	Aurangabad	2.07	
Low Expense Cluster	Pauni	Nagpur	1.65	1.45
	Murtijapur	Amravati	1.51	
	Dharmabad	Aurangabad	1.47	
	Kurduwadi	Pune	1.17	

Further, it was observed that nearly 60 per cent of these expenses are "invisible" and are incurred on liquor, cash distribution or gifts. Only 40 per cent of the expenditure is incurred on meetings, processions, pamphlets, etc. It is likely that only a part of this 40% gets reported to the authorities. The results are shown in the table and graph below.

Table 6.3: Break-up of Total Expenditure into Regular and Invisible Expenditure

Council	Regular Expense	Invisible Expense		Total Expenditure (Rs. Crores)	Invisible/ Total
	Meetings, Pamphlets, Vehicles (Rs. Crores)	Money, Food And/ Or Gifts Distributed (Rs. Crores)	Liquor Distribution (Rs. Crores)		
Buldhana	10.81	0.8	0	11.61	6.89
Murtijapur	4.1	0.11	0.5	4.71	12.95
Beed	10.45	13.5	0	23.95	56.37
Hingoli	5.85	2.5	0	8.35	29.94
Tuljapur	4.52	9	0	13.52	66.57
Roha	2.2	9	0.77	11.97	81.58
Vengurle	0.56	7.03	0.01	7.59	92.65
Chopda	0.45	10	1.2	11.65	96.13
Shirdi	2.3	6	0.74	9.04	74.58
Jaisinghpur	0.33	12	0.12	12.45	97.32
Maindargi	2.27	0.3	0.31	2.88	21.11
Murgud	1.11	0.06	3.25	4.42	74.84
Kurduwadi	0.91	1	0	1.91	52.43
Kagal	0.64	7	0	7.64	91.67
Peth Umri	0.65	2	0.15	2.8	76.79
Talegaon Dabhade	2.55	4	0.45	7.5	59.33
Dharmabad	0.8	2	0.2	6	36.67
Pauni	1.15	3.2	0.65	5	77.00

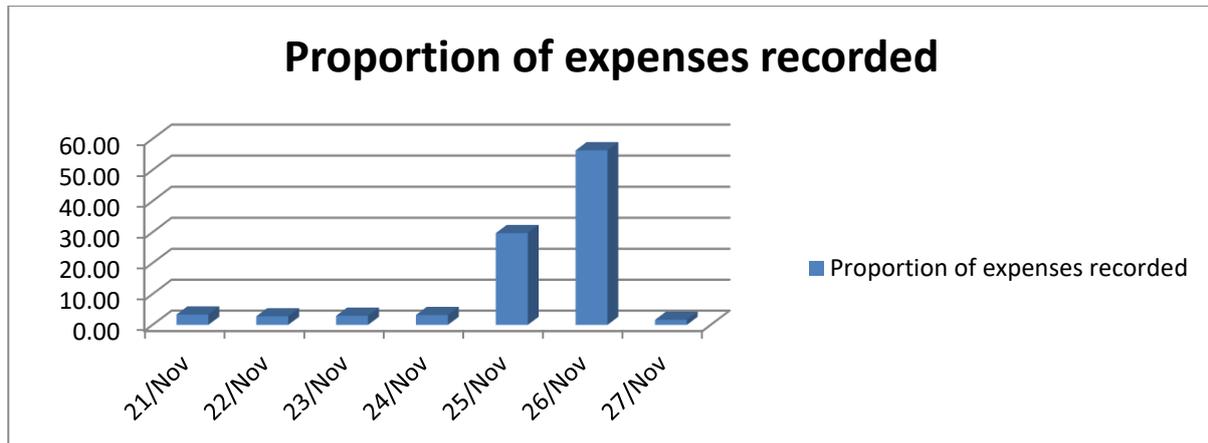
Graph 6.1: Council-Wise Ratio of Invisible Expenditure to Total Expenditure

The Councils which have the highest ratios of invisible expenditure to total expenditure are in Pune, Konkan and Nashik divisions, as is seen from the table below.

Table 6.4: Ratio of Invisible to Total Expenditure by Administrative Divisions

Council	Invisible/ Total	Division
Jaisinghpur	97.32	Pune
Chopda	96.13	Nashik
Vengurle	92.65	Konkan
Kagal	91.67	Pune
Roha	81.58	Konkan
Pauni	77.00	Nagpur
Peth Umri	76.79	Aurangabad
Murgud	74.84	Pune
Shirdi	74.58	Nashik
Tuljapur	66.57	Aurangabad
Talegaon Dabhade	59.33	Pune
Beed	56.37	Aurangabad
Kurduwadi	52.43	Pune
Dharmabad	36.67	Aurangabad
Hingoli	29.94	Aurangabad
Maindargi	21.11	Pune
Murtijapur	12.95	Amravati
Buldhana	6.89	Amravati

The expenditure increases exponentially in the run up to the elections. From the commencement of observations on 21st November, to 27th November, the day of polling, maximum expenditure was observed on 25th and 26th. The same is shown below graphically.

Graph 6.2: The proportion of expenses recorded daily in the final week before election

We next compute the correlation between the ratio of actual expenditure to allowed expenditure and other relevant variables.

Table 6.5: Correlation Co-efficients between Ratio of Actual Expenditure to Allowed Expenditure and different Variables

Variables	Correlation Co-efficient
Estimated /Allowed Election Expense and Council Budget Size	0.31
Estimated /Allowed Election Expense and No. of Candidates Per Ward	0.37
Estimated /Allowed Election Expense and proportion of SC and ST voters in the total voters	-0.32
Estimated /Allowed Election Expense and Political Alignment with the State Government in the 2011 elections	0.47

It is interesting to note that the ratio of estimated expenditure to allowed expenditure has a high level of correlation with Council budgets. Bigger the budgets of the Councils, higher the ratio of actual expenditure to allowed expenditure.

Secondly, the ratio depends on the number of candidates per ward. The higher the number of candidates per ward, higher is the level of competition which, in turn, pushes up the ratio of actual expenditure to allowed expenditure.

In the Councils where a higher number of seats is reserved on account of higher proportion of SC and/or ST population, the ratio of actual expenditure to allowed expenditure is lower. This could be indicative of the fact that caste dynamics plays a major role in influencing electoral outcome and hence candidates tend to spend less in wards with higher SC and/or ST voter population.

Finally, a very interesting correlation is observed between the ratio of actual expenditure to allowed expenditure and the political alignment quotient of a Municipal Council. We construct a dummy variable to show "Political Alignment." If the party winning maximum number of seats at the local level was the same as the party in power at the State level in 2011 elections, then the dummy variable takes value 1, otherwise 0. The INC-NCP parties were in power in the 2011 elections. Thus, those Councils with a domination of INC-NCP at local level were given value 1. It is in these Councils that the ratio of actual expenditure to allowed expenditure is seen to be higher. Thus, Councils with INC-NCP incumbents have shown higher ratio of actual to allowed expenses.

CHAPTER 7

INTERESTING ELECTION STORIES FROM SELECT MUNICIPAL COUNCILS

Chapter 4 presented a quantitative assessment of election expenses within select Municipal Councils in Maharashtra. As stated earlier, all quantitative assessments were corroborated with the qualitative factors around the elections in the Councils.

This chapter presents interesting insights into the electoral dynamics of some of the Municipal Councils. These insights were developed on the basis of our conversation with the observers, their daily reports as well as the discussions during the FGD. For some of the Councils, the observers also submitted day-to-day observations on the main events. Such observations have been included in a tabular format, with brief description, wherever possible.

7.1 MURGUD

Murgud, once famous for its rice trade market, is a quiet, nondescript place throughout the year, without any disturbance on account of major political activity. Strict implementation of the Model Code of Conduct by the Election Commission has resulted in lower incidence of violence in the city; however, the flow of money during elections continues to remain one of the major violations of the MCC.

The election held on 27th November 2016 was important in many aspects. Though the election in Murgud was by and large peaceful, the money power and false promises made to voters were visible in the promotions of different parties. With 90% voter turnout, 8500 people voted out of the total 9400 voters in the city. The expenditure in the last week before the elections is expected to be Rs. 4.4 crores.

For the Nagaradhyaksha position, three strong candidates from different parties along with one independent candidate are estimated to have incurred an expenditure of Rs. 40 lakhs each. For 17 Nagar Sevak positions, 45 candidates belonging to parties and 8 independent candidates incurred an estimated expenditure of Rs. 2.8 crores.

Three wards in the city were already expected to favour one party; yet, an amount of Rs. 8 lakh was spent by the candidates in these wards. Every voter was given Rs. 2000; young

voters were issued passes for lunch and dinner in hotels, as well as for petrol. Some voters were given packets of mutton in their homes. Expenditure on alcohol was also incurred. More expenditure was incurred on bringing voters from other villages.

In ward 6 and 8, brothers from the same family were contesting the elections. These two wards were the most active wards during the elections. In these 2 wards alone, there was an estimated expenditure of Rs.1.1 crores. Most of the expenditure was on helping voters with the election process, food, mutton packets, alcohol, bringing voters from other villages etc. In the last 2 days before the election, the cost of a vote went as high as Rs.10000.

Ward 3,4 and 7 witnessed intense competition. In some wards, Independents emerged as winners. These candidates allegedly spent Rs. 20 lakh on an average for buying votes.

Candidates and their supporters arranged Haldi Kunku programs and visited different houses; rates were fixed for buying the vote of the members of a family. Money was not only physically distributed but there were also instances of it being transferred electronically. Voters readily accepted money from all candidates.

Demonetisation did not have any effect on the elections. All candidates used old currency notes for various activities and the voters too accepted the old currency notes. Some voters asked the candidates to pay their municipal, electricity bills.

Some candidates used the accounts of the voters to deposit old currency notes.

Observations in the elections

- 1) Voters were easily influenced by money, food and alcohol.
- 2) Even though candidates and parties spent a lot of money during elections, the voters' decision remained uncertain.
- 3) Loyalty towards a party, candidate has reduced. Trust in the promises made by candidates has also reduced.
- 4) Even after strict guidelines of MCC, the expenditure on food, alcohol and other factors did not appear to have reduced.
- 5) The electoral system seems to be running according to the will of the powerful candidates.
- 6) Voters accept that selling their votes is unethical, but little resistance is offered to the candidates when they distribute money.

- 7) Some candidates even went to the extent of deploying school children during elections for purpose of distribution of election material, etc.
- 8) What matters more in the week prior to the election is promotion by the candidate through distribution of money and freebies; development as a campaign issue generally takes a backseat.
- 9) Ability to win is the major factor in the selection of candidates by the parties. In the process, individual qualities of the candidates are often ignored.
- 10) With the help of money power, even an Independent candidate can win in the elections.
- 11) Greater the size of the ward, more is the expenditure incurred.

Table 7.1.1: Daily events in Murgud in the Week prior to Elections

21-11-2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were unsubstantiated reports that some Nagar Sevaks of a particular party received bribes to the tune of Rs.15 lakhs to defect to other parties.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All major parties and Independent candidates held corner sabhas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young voters were given passes to hotels and dhabas. Daily around 1000-1500 people were handed over Rs. 140 per head for non-veg dinner.
22-11-2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to bazaar day, there were no rallies or corner sabha held but voters demanded money to buy vegetables. Around Rs.3 lakhs were allegedly distributed to voters for buying vegetables.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old notes of Rs. 500 and Rs.1000 denomination were distributed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large scale promotion across the city included vehicle rallies and door to door promotion.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apart from daily food, packets of 1kg and ½ kg of mutton were distributed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paid news was seen in various (local) news papers

23-11-2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• LCD screens used for promotion
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A large number of karyakartas was seen visiting petrol pumps.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Door to door promotion conducted by each party
24-11-2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Women participation was high in different rallies
25-11-2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Woman volunteers were sent door to door for haldi kunku programs
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promotion through SMS and Voice call observed
26-11-2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Voter awareness about the symbols was undertaken by the respective parties.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Huge amount of cash distributed.
27-11-2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Religion- based election promotion was seen on a large scale
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Around Rs. 4 lakhs were spent on alcohol

7.2 JAISINGPUR

In the build up to the elections, candidates tried to reach out to the voters in the area by providing books and stationery to students from poor families, helping the people in getting ration cards, helping senior citizens with pension, or dealing with problems faced by people in government offices like municipal corporations, hospitals etc.

Every candidate contesting the election begins his preparations 6 to 8 months before the voting day. The first stage of preparation involves understanding the various problems faced by the voters and gaining their trust by addressing the problems. One of the major works undertaken by most of the candidates was construction of drains across the respective wards. New drains were constructed, old ones were repaired and the Municipal Council was given proper alerts prior to the scheduled cleaning of the drains. Proposals for construction of public toilets across the city were also submitted to the Council. Since shortage of water supply was a major problem in the city, the candidates exerted pressure on the Municipal Council to augment the water supply.

In ward number 6, the parties contested very aggressively. Throughout the day, projectors were used to propagate the work done by the candidates. For promotion, caps, t-shirts, badges and scarfs with logo were distributed among the people. Every night, around 60-70 karyakartas would gather in front of the candidate's house to collect their wages. There was an interesting contest in ward number 10, where the incumbent Independent candidate was again contesting elections. Parties were reluctant to contest in that ward, because they knew it would be very difficult to defeat him. Due to the welfare activities undertaken by the candidate in the past 5 years, he had high popularity and support from the voters which was hard to break. Digital banners, scarfs and badges carrying the name of the candidates, flyers and pamphlets were used for promotion in this ward.

In other wards, it was observed that party karyakartas were not paid in cash for their help in promotional activities; instead, they were compensated through free breakfast, lunch and dinner.

From 21st November 2016 to midnight of 28th November 2016, all parties arranged food, breakfast, alcohol for 600 to 700 people daily. Further, 300-400 male and female karyakartas were paid daily wages of Rs. 200 to Rs. 300. The elections saw higher attendance of women in promotional meetings, especially women in the age group 25-28 years. Some even carried

their 3-4-month baby with them; most of them had left their household activities to attend the promotions of the party.

Even though wine shops were closed during elections, alcohol was sold through the shops illegally. Police vehicles were on patrol, but none of them were able to spot the sale of alcohol. The general belief was that the police had accepted bribes to allow the sale of alcohol during the elections. During these 6 days, the sale of alcohol was higher than usual. The wine shops and bars were totally occupied during these 6 days. Many candidates had already kept the required inventory of alcohol for distribution to the voters. The candidates believed that distribution of alcohol to the voters was an effective way to ensure their votes. The candidate who provided more and costly alcohol to the voters was considered to be having a higher chance of winning in the elections. Every night there was a huge crowd outside the hotels and dhabas for dinner. Every candidate patronised a specific hotel, with instructions to serve vegetarian or non-vegetarian food.

The prominent parties together printed 3000 pamphlets and flyers which were distributed to voters across the city. For promotions, autorickshaws, Tata Sumos, Maruti Omni vehicles were used. These vehicles were mounted with speakers and screens and used to ply from one part of the city to another. Projectors were also used for promotions.

Table 7.2.1: Daily events in Jaisingpur in the Week prior to Elections

21/11/16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hotels were booked for providing liquor and food to the voters • There was a 25 – 30% increase in bar hotel earnings • Meetings, rallies were organised by major parties
22/11/16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were 4 rallies carried out by various parties • Food and alcohol was provided to the partyworkers post rallies • Everyone participating in the rally was provided printed stoles, badges and flags • There was extensive use of vehicles fitted with loudspeakers and digital banners for campaigns
23/11/16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corner meetings were held by two parties.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rallies carried out by two parties saw a participation of more than 100 people
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food and liquor was provided to those who took part in the rallies
24/11/16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parties distributed greeting cards to voters
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various rallies and corner meetings were held by parties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was provision of food and liquor for party workers
25/11/16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various rallies and corner meetings were held by parties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vehicles fitted with loudspeakers and digital banners were used for campaigning
26/11/16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partyworkers of one party went door-to-door to extract information about voter preference
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voter slips were given out to voters by parties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One front carried out a huge rally drawing a crowd of 3000 people
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An orchestra was organised by one party
27/11/16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport facility was arranged for voters by all parties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were arrangements made to bring in voters living outside and get votes cast
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amounts ranging from Rs.2000 to Rs.10000 were distributed to voters

7.3 MURTIJAPUR

During the week from 21st November 2016 to 27th November 2016, Murtijapur witnessed rampant use of money power.

There were reports of distribution of cash by all parties in the fray. Even Independents allegedly distributed cash and freebies such as grocery items, oil cans etc. to sway voter preferences. It was reported that voters in the district even accepted old notes which were by then demonetised by the government. Food and alcohol distribution was common place in the week prior to the elections. These elections also saw some new marketing gimmicks by political parties to attract voter attention. Some parties created promotional videos and posted it on WhatsApp and Facebook. A 30-minute video is estimated to cost around Rs. 70,000-80,000.

Parties also conducted many sabhas, rallies etc. People from rural areas were brought to these sabhas and rallies, and were purportedly given cash incentives to attend these promotional events.

Everyday around Rs. 80 lakh were allegedly spent in the district and overall around Rs. 4.9 crores combined expenditure was incurred by all the candidates, even after the Model Code of Conduct was enforced.

On the other side, the Government took innovative measures such as Patha Natya, JanJagruti programs to increase voter awareness 5 candidates contested for the Nagaradhyaksha post, whereas 123 candidates contested for the Nagarsevak posts in Murtijapur district.

Table 7.3.1: Daily events in Murtijapur in the week prior to Elections

21/11/16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Almost a lakh of rupees was spent on pamphlets and stickers by various parties • Approximately a sum of Rs. 10 lakh was spent on vehicles for campaigning • Extensive use of digital banners by various parties for campaigning
22/11/16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major parties held several corner meetings • Old notes of Rs. 500/1000 denomination, and food, was distributed • There were reports of distribution of cash among voters.
23/11/16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One major party carried out a huge rally • Several meetings were organised by another major party • Food distribution observed through various parts of the city
24/11/16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major parties held several corner meetings • Liquor and food distribution observed
25/11/16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was extensive use of vehicles fitted with loudspeakers and digital banners for campaigning • Various parties distributed cash to voters to buy their votes
26/11/16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual contestants were allegedly bought off by the leading parties for Rs.10 lakhs • Party workers were paid Rs.1000 on a daily basis
27/11/16
No data reported

7.4 HINGOLI

.There were many corner meetings, rallies held by various parties. The candidates also met many of the voters personally to appeal for votes. There was no adverse effect on the elections due to demonetization. Many candidates for the Nagarsevak and Nagaradhyaksh posts distributed old 500 and 1000 rupee notes to the voters. More than a crore of rupees was allegedly distributed by various parties to the voters.

While distribution of cash was rampant, there was no distribution of other gifts by any party to the voters. There were various parties held by the candidates where liquor and food was distributed to the voters.

Out of the 91 polling centers in Hingoli, 13 were deemed to be “sensitive” centres due to earlier history of illicit polling. These centres were equipped with CCTV and there was tight security in place. There were reports of cash being confiscated from vehicles in the areas near the polling centers.

Table 7.4.1: Daily events in Hingoli in the week prior to Elections

21/11/16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings were organised by two major parties.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Another major party organised corner meetings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expenses were incurred towards beverages, meetings, hoardings, manifestos and handbills
22/11/16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One major party held 5 corner meetings across the city
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major expenses were made towards cutouts, banners, pamphlets, digital banners
23/11/16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major expenses were made on meetings, fuel, food, beverages and loudspeakers.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of autos and helicopters by parties for campaigning

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flags, stoles and badges were given by parties to those taking part in the rallies
24/11/16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 corner meetings and 1 rally was organised by one party. Another party held 4 corner meetings.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expenses included those on helipad and governmental expenses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labourers were paid to participate in various activities, meetings, rallies held by the parties.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A major portion of the expense was towards food given to the party workers
25/11/16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autos and vehicles fitted with TV screens and loudspeakers were used for campaigning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One party held 6 corner meetings across Hingoli
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A motorcycle rally was carried out by another party
26/11/16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were reports of voters receiving Rs.5000 per head as the price of the vote. Party workers were treated to hotel food and alcohol.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some votes were also bought for Rs.1000.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parties treated party workers at a bar
27/11/16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parties provided breakfast, lunch and transport facility to voters.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were paid news articles in 4 major newspapers by various parties

7.5 MAINDARGI

Demonetisation of Rs. 500 and Rs. 1000 notes was announced a few days prior to the Municipal elections. All parties took the opportunity to distribute old notes of Rs. 500 and Rs. 1000 to buy votes. For ten days leading upto the voting day, all parties arranged vegetarian and non-vegetarian food for party workers and other voters as well. During these ten days, virtually no one cooked at home. Voters were treated to good food; it is estimated that the political parties must have spent Rs. 10 lakhs each just on food.

This led to an increase in the business of grocery stores in the vicinity. The dhabas and hotel bars in Maindargi were generally housefull in the evenings as they had been booked by various parties to provide food for the voters.

Auto rickshaws, jeeps, motorcycles fitted with loudspeakers were generally deployed for campaigning. A large amount of money was spent on printing manifestos, handbills, stoles, flags and other such promotional material. The amount was generally under-quoted on bills and receipts so that they did not exceed the permissible limits. Every party held corner meetings and rallies. Expenses were incurred on chairs, digital banners, loudspeakers, crackers, garlands. Even after incurring all such expenses, every party is estimated to have distributed more than Rs.15 lakhs in cash on the day prior to the voting day.

Almost 4000 voters of Maindargi live in Mumbai, Pune, Ichalkaranji, Ahmednagar and in Gulbarga, Aland in Karnataka. Parties arranged to bring nearly 2000 of these voters to Maindargi and made to cast their votes. The expenditure incurred on bringing the voters to Maindargi from various other cities is estimated to be Rs. 40 lakhs.

Maindargi has a voter count of 10150 of which 8207 cast their votes in this election. There are a total of 8 wards in Maindargi. There were 17 open positions for the post of Nagarsevak and 1 for Nagaradhyaksh. There were 49 candidates running for Nagarsevak and 4 for Nagaradhyaksh. The total spending by various parties is estimated to be around Rs. 2 crores. Food, liquor and cash distributed to the voters accounted for the largest part of the total expenditure.

7.6 VENGURLA

Politically, Vengurla is a highly and fiercely contested Municipal Council. The total number of voters in Vengurla stands at 9140. One estimate is that out of these, at least 6000 voters were bribed by various parties active in Vengurla. Instances of distribution of cash, liquor and food including mutton packets were commonly observed in the week leading up to the elections. Of the total election expenditure, at least 60 per cent appears to have been incurred on such expenses.

Chairs Arranged in Preparation of a Chowk Sabha



7.7 KURDUWADI

In the Kurduwadi Municipal elections, it is estimated that approximately Rs. 2 crores was spent by various parties and individual candidates contesting for the Nagarsevak and Nagaradhyaksh positions.

According to a survey by a local organisation, voters were allegedly paid Rs. 4000 to Rs.5000 by parties to vote for their candidate. Many voters stepped out to vote only after being paid by parties.

It was found that hotels in Kurduwadi registered a turnover of Rs. 2-3 lakhs during this election period. An exorbitant amount of money was spent on campaigning which involved street plays, meetings, processions and rallies, vehicles fitted with loudspeakers and projectors. These rallies saw participation of around 250 women who were paid Rs.200 each per day. There were 12-15 corner meetings held during this time by various parties. A total of 95 vehicles were used by various parties for campaigning. These vehicles, fitted with loudspeakers and digital banners, were hired for Rs. 3000 rupees per day. In the 10 days prior to the elections, an expenditure of Rs. 2 crore was estimated to have been incurred in Kurduwadi.

Every party spent excessively on badges, car stickers, manifestos, mufflers, fireworks, drinking water packets, water bottles, food, alcohol, tea, breakfast, petrol, diesel. Rallies and processions were carried out before holding meetings. There was extensive use of drums during these rallies. Also, those who owned two and four wheelers were paid well by the parties for using the vehicles for various rallies. Two to three hundred women were also paid well on a daily basis to take part in various rallies. Extensive use of digital media for campaigning was witnessed during this election. It is also known that every party distributed Rs.4000 to Rs.5000 per voter in cash to attract voters.

7.8 ROHA

During the election, there were many instances of violation of Model Code of Conduct. Parties made various promises to the voters. Promises included safety to the poor, housing for the poor, jobs to the unemployed, etc. In fact, biodata of unemployed people were obtained and several people were offered contractual jobs during the elections.

Voters in slum areas were supplied with wheat, rice, sugar and other groceries. Each Mahila Bachat Gat was given Rs. 25000-30000 to support their business. Money was distributed for construction of a temple. People living in buildings, slums and other areas were provided with food, alcohol and cash every day. Lakhs of rupees were spent on rallies and sabhas of different parties. Different parties invited dignitaries in the city to influence the voters. Such dignitaries were paid from Rs.20000 to Rs. 50000 depending upon the capacity of the party.

Auto-rickshaws and four wheelers were stationed in the city to help voters reach the voting booths. In every ward, around 100 voters were brought through this service. Voters were given money to change their votes from one party to another.

In the elections, 4 out of the 8 wards witnessed very close competition. Some candidates also distributed laptops and printers to some party workers. The night before the voting, the police did not allow party candidates or members to interact with voters after 10pm. However, some candidates were seen moving across the city till morning and interacting with voters. Even after strict instructions from police, members of different parties continued to break the rules.

Even though the limit for expenditure was clearly defined, candidates of all the major parties spent lakhs of rupees on paper advertisements and banners. Most of the expenses had been done on providing food and alcohol to the people in the city.

Band Group in a Political Procession



7.9 UMRI

Total voters in Umri are 11,571. Due to lower number of voters, money power plays a dominant role in the victory of any party. The party which invests an enormous sum of money in the election is generally expected to win. During the 2016 elections, about 7000 out of the 11500 voters were allegedly paid huge sums of money to buy their votes. An amount ranging between Rs.2000 and Rs.7000 was allegedly distributed to each voter to influence his/her vote. It is estimated that food and beverages worth Rs. 1.4 crores were distributed to voters across the city.

Those who attended rallies and sabhas were paid Rs. 200 each. During elections, expenditure on banners, posters, pamphlets, flyers etc. was estimated to be approximately Rs. 2 lakh. Expenditure on alcohol was estimated to be Rs.15 lakhs. 2 wheelers, along with fuel coupons, were provided to the karyakartas for promotions, all of which was sponsored by party candidates. Every day at different locations arrangements for vegetarian and non-vegetarian food were made for karyakartas. The total expenditure on just the food component for karyakartas is estimated to be Rs. 4 lakhs.

Late Night free meal offered in a small street



The State Election Commission of Maharashtra has set the limit of expenditure in Municipal elections, for each candidate, through the Model Code of Conduct (MCC). However many candidates were seen blatantly violating the MCC and no investigation was conducted by the local authorities against such candidates. The expenditure on rallies is expected to be Rs. 4 lakh. The total amount of money spent by all candidates and parties in Umri in the week prior to the elections was estimated to be around Rs. 3 crores.

People attending a Political Sabha



7.10 BEED

In Beed, the frontline parties deployed all their strength to win the elections. All parties promoted their candidates and highlighted the work they intended to undertake in Beed. However, by and large, the people in Beed believed that the candidate who incurred maximum expenditure was most likely to win the election. Money power and caste considerations were largely exploited to sway the votes of the public in Beed.

Before the Model Code of Conduct was declared, many parties tried to sway the voters in their favour by giving them attractive schemes. In the Beed Municipal Council elections, 17 candidates contested for the Nagaradhyaksha post and 285 candidates for 50 Nagarsevak posts. They are estimated to have spent about Rs.5.73 crores on elections. This expenditure was visible through the rallies, sabhas, digital promotions, banners, hoardings, food and beverages etc. Photographers and videographers were present at every Sabha. Innovative tactics such as sky balloons were used during the course of this election. 23 different political advertisements appeared in newspapers. Mobile phones were allegedly distributed amongst the voters as gifts to lure them into voting for a particular candidate. One party even invited team of the movie “Sairat” to inaugurate a program organized to educate people about WiFi. It was worrisome to note that school children were paid in the old Rs. 500 notes to distribute flyers and pamphlets amongst the voters. Money was freely distributed amongst voters; one estimate is that each voter was paid Rs.1000 for his/her vote.

Even after setting a clear expense limit for candidates by the Election Commission, the expenditure in the election was seen to be far higher.

Table 7.10.1: Daily events in Beed in the Week prior to Elections

21-11-2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One Front hosted around 22 sabhas in the city and around 20 labours were employed for the sabhas.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 23 ads were published in the local newspapers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of photographers and videographers were used in the Sabhas.
22-11-2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A major national party conducted corner sabhas in various parts of the city.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large number of banners was put across the city and autos with speakers were employed for promotion.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hand bills of Rs. 2,00,000 were distributed in the city.
23-11-2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sabhas were hosted by parties wherein stage, mike, speakers were installed and also 4 wheelers were employed for promotion
24-11-2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One party hosted a sabha for the voters
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handbills of Rs. 1.5 lakhs were distributed among the voters.
25-11-2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two parties conducted sabhas for the voters
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nearly 100 labours employed for the bigger Sabhas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The per Sabha expenses ranged from Rs. 3 lakh to Rs. 30 lakhs
26-11-2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One party conducted Sabha for the voters

7.11 BULDHANA

The Buldhana Municipal Council elections 2016 witnessed fierce and bitter competition amongst the candidates.

Earlier, elections in Buldhana had never taken place on the basis of caste and religion, but the 2016 elections saw both caste as well as religion being invoked to sway the preferences of the voters.

Expenditure incurred on the Municipal elections in Buldhana in 2016 is expected to be to the tune of Rs.7.6 crores. It was observed that candidates who contested the Nagaradhyaksha post incurred most of the expense and candidates who contested the posts of Nagar Sevaks did not spend out of their own pockets. Innovative campaign strategies such as Prachar Rathes were used by the Nagaradhyaksha candidates. Door-to-door campaigning was resorted to by almost all parties. Social media too was used on a large scale for promotion; SMSes and voice mail messages were sent urging voters to vote for a particular candidate. There were reports of laptops and printers being distributed to candidates and karyakartas.

However, despite aggressive campaigning by all candidates, the voter turnout actually decreased in the 2016 Buldhana elections.

Table 7.11.1: Daily events in Buldhana in the Week prior to Elections

21-11-2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One party hosted big sabha in the presence of a prominent leader. • Around Rs. 1.2 lakh each was spent by three major parties on rallies and sabhas
22-11-2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No sabha or rallies seen in the city • Door to door promotion was done by the major parties • Arrangement for food and drinks was done for the karyakartas

23-11-2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No sabhas or rallies were seen in the city
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bar coupons were distributed to the karyakartas and arrangement for food and drinks was done by the respective parties.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest amount of expenditure on foods and drinks.
24-11-2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Jalgaon, one party conducted a sabha in the presence of a prominent leader.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People from outside of the city were present in a huge number
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No other sabhas and rallies by any other parties were held.
25-11-2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One party held a rally in the city with door to door promotion of the candidate.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Huge amount of money was invested in the minority class candidates
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horse trading and deflection of candidates observed
26-11-2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest amount of election expenditure was done on food and alcohol.
27-11-2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No noticeable activities were observed on the voting day.

7.12 CHOPDA

In the Chopda Municipal body elections of 2016, the display of money power was unlike any of the previous elections. Money was showered on the voters on the day prior to the elections as well as on the election day.

There were bogus votes cast and money was distributed in front of the very officers who are responsible for maintaining decorum in the polling booths. For the first time in the last 50 years, there has been such widespread distribution of money. It is estimated that an amount of 10 to 12 crores was distributed by all parties in the form of old notes of Rs. 500 and Rs. 1000. Many voters stepped out for voting only after receiving cash, many a times from more than one party.

However, no incident of cash distribution was recorded by Police. Liquor and food at hotel bars was arranged for everyone in Chopda, mainly for youngsters who were going to cast their votes for the first time. While almost all the votes were cast, it appeared that votes were cast not to support a good candidate who could bring in development, but only because of the money paid.

Every candidate contesting the Nagarsevak and Nagaradhyaksha posts put up banners, cut-outs and hoardings across Chopda. No candidate seemed to abide by the expense limit set by the Election Commission. However, it appeared that in the absence of any action against the candidates/parties for blatant violation of EC guidelines,

During the election it was observed that there was a lack of labourers on the field for farming activities. This was because all the parties were paying them Rs.100 for 2 hours for participating in their rallies.

Table 7.12.1: Daily events in Chopda in the Week prior to Elections

21-11-2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handbills were distributed by all the candidates. • Around Rs. 5 lakhs were spent on dinner in hotels
22-11-2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large scale promotion on autos and rickshaws observed • Old notes of Rs. 500 and 1000 denomination were distributed

- Huge amount of money was spent on dinner in hotels.
- This continued through all days upto the polling day.

23-11-2016

- Cash distribution continued, with all parties distributing cash amongst voters
- Corner Sabhas were organized; a total of 800 corner Sabhas were organized upto the polling day

27-11-2016

- A candidate who was expecting to lose the election attempted a sword attack on the candidate who was expected to win the election in a particular ward
- A complaint was registered in the Chopda police station

Rickshaw fitted with loud speakers for campaigning



CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSIONS

- This study is the first of its kind attempt to estimate the actual expenditure carried out in Municipal Councils in the week prior to elections
- Although candidates and political parties always report expenses that are well within the limits set by the State Election Commission of Maharashtra, the actual expenses done by them are much higher
- On an average, there is an expenditure of Rs.9 crores per Municipal Council in Maharashtra in the week prior to the elections
- The actual expenses done by candidates and parties is observed to be at least 4 times higher as compared to the allowed expenditure limits set by the SECM
- Temple towns such as Shirdi and Tuljapur were seen to have higher ratios of actual to allowed expenses as compared to other Councils
- Councils with big budgets are the ones where the actual expense is much higher as compared to the allowed expenditure
- Councils with tough competition between strong candidates tend to have higher ratios of actual to allowed expenses
- Councils with INC-NCP incumbents were seen to show higher ratios of actual to allowed expenses
- Finally, Councils with higher reservations show lower ratios of actual to allowed expenses

APPENDIX A: FORMAT FOR DAILY REPORTING BY OBSERVERS

Sr. No	Observed Events	Any proof submitted (Yes/ No)	If so, what (photos, audio recording, newspaper clipping)	Remarks/ Observations
1	Meetings			
	Vehicles seen at the meeting			
	Approximate Size of podium			
	Approximate number of karyakartas/ party workers seen at the meeting			
	Beverages served in the meeting			
	Celebrities			
	Projectors/ TVs for display			
	Generators			
2	Hand bills			
3	Hoardings, Banners, Cut outs etc. (please indicate number and size)			
4	Vehicles with mounted loudspeakers			
5	Any other campaign expenses			

APPENDIX B

FGD Structure and Discussion Points

1. Every participant to fill out the information sheet on expenses observed in his Council, without discussion with the others. RAs to collect it immediately.
2. Every participant to give a 3-4 minute talk on the elections at the Council he/she has covered. This talk should ideally encompass the political structures in the Council, electoral strategies, change in power dynamics, ways in which voters were approached, innovative campaign strategies

Potential Discussion Points:

1. Who won the elections in your Council? Did the candidates with higher expenses win more?
2. Has demonetization caused any impact in terms of the cash/ gifts distribution?
3. Did more voters cast their votes in the afternoon than in the morning? If yes, why may that be the case? Was there news of cash being distributed on the day of the elections?
4. This time, the Nagaradhyaksha elections were held directly. What was the change in electoral strategies that you observed because of this move? Did the Nagaradhyaksha candidates spend more as compared to Nagar Sevak candidates? By how much?
5. Were SMSes, Whatsapp messages, other social media being used innovatively by candidates. Has the composition of spending by candidates moved to more formal methods such as spending on marketing firms that offer media services?
6. The voting percentage in Councils is normally around 70%. How much was the voter turnout in the Council elections this time? Has it improved? What is the reason for non-voting?

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