

**WHY PEOPLE DO NOT VOTE IN MUNICIPAL
CORPORATION ELECTIONS:
A VOTER-BASED SURVEY IN BRIHANMUMBAI MUNICIPAL
CORPORATION**

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FOREWORD

1. Maharashtra is one of the most urbanized States of the country, with nearly 44% of its population living in 358 Municipal Councils / Nagar Panchayats and 27 Municipal Corporation areas. State Election Commission which was established in 1994, following the 73rd & 74th Amendments to the Indian Constitution, conducts elections to 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 a level playing field to all political parties and candidates.
3. Maharashtra has nearly 9 crore voters who elect more than 2.5 lakhs local representatives every 5 years in various local bodies (27,781 Gram Panchayats, 34 Zilla Parishads, 351 Panchayat Samitis, 358 Municipal Councils and 27 Municipal Corporations). It is unfortunate that voting percentage in the local bodies declines from 70-80% in Village Panchayat to 60-70% in ZP/PS, 55-60% in Municipal Councils and 50-55% in Municipal Corporation Areas. This trend is common for all the elections held in 2002, 2007 and 2012.
4. Since low voting percentage is a matter of great concern, the State Election Commission asked the Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, Pune in 2016 to conduct a survey and find out the reasons for low voting percentage in the area governed by the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation.
5. I am happy that GIPE has conducted a scientific survey in 7 low and 3 high voter turnout wards of Mumbai covering nearly 3000 respondents from 3rd January to 12th January, 2017 and come out with some very interesting results, some of which are as follows:-
 - i) Mumbai voters not only have a low Political Interest Quotient, but also show very low engagement levels vis-a-vis BMC.
 - ii) High income and educated voters residing in Mumbai for less than 5 years are “rare” voters. There is also a gender bias (women are less likely to vote than men) and reluctance amongst youth to vote.
6. I congratulate Dr. Rajas Parchure, Smt. Manasi Phadke and Prof. Dnyandeo Talule for coming out with such an interesting research publication. I am sure that this report will serve as a very useful addition to the existing literature on election studies at a local level.

7. I am further pleased to learn that Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics is publishing the survey findings in a book 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

February 4, 2017

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I am very pleased to present the report titled “Why People Do Not Vote in Municipal Corporation Elections: A Voter-based Survey in BMC” to the discerning readers and scholars of decentralization. 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 issues in Municipal Corporation elections in Maharashtra is that of low voter turnout. Low voter turnouts imply that true representation of a majority gets denied to the population. The first step towards increasing voter turnout is to basically document, understand and analyze the different factors that lead to a low turnout. Only then can the solutions come across fruitfully.

Let me express my gratitude to Shri Jageshwar Saharia, State Election Commissioner, Maharashtra, for granting this interesting study project of documenting and analyzing reasons for non-voting 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. Prof. Dnyandeo Talule has been our partner, lending his time and efforts generously to the completion of the project, for which I thank him. I must also thank Mr. Anand Karandikar, who lent his experience and insights on questionnaire design to our project generously. Mr. Rohit Deshpande, Seed Infotech Pvt. Ltd. gave us the software support for carrying out the survey using android devices. Vishal Gaikwad was our key support for conducting the field survey and analysis. Anjali Phadke handled the entire statistical analysis part of the project single-handedly. Ms. Manisha Shinde was in charge of data quality check, which she completed in a timely and efficient manner. Prof. Rajesh Bhatikar handled the editing of the report very efficiently. Mr. Vilas Mankar gave the technical and printing assistance to the project.

We are thankful to Principals, Faculty members and students of Chikitsak Samuha’s Sir Sitaram and Lady Shantabai Patkar College of Arts and Science and V. P. Varde College of Commerce and Economics, Kelkar Education Trust’s V. G. Vaze College of Arts, Science and Commerce, SIES College of Arts, Science and Commerce, TISS, IIPS, and St. Xavier’s College for participating in the survey and conducting the same extremely sincerely. Students from Symbiosis Institute of Business Management (Pune) also took part in the survey. A team of nearly 75 students was involved as enumerators on field for a period of 10 days. I take this opportunity to especially thank all the students involved in this project for their sincerity and effort.

This project helped us to gain deep insights into voter behaviour at a local body level. 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

Febaury 4, 2017

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The 72nd and 73rd Amendment to the Constitution, which gave constitutional status to the Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRI), was passed in 1992. The same amendment provided for the creation of the State Election Commission of Maharashtra 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 the local bodies to continue with their existence and hold elections in these local bodies as and when a 5-year period of their working came to a close. Thus, in Maharashtra, all local bodies do not go into a state of election at the same time. Different local bodies, urban and rural, go into a state of elections as and when the 5-year period of their existence comes to a close.

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 round was from 2004-08 and the fourth one was 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 had their fifth round of elections since 2014, elections to all urban and rural bodies were held in nearly 26 out of 36 districts in Maharashtra, from November 2016 to March 2017.

The Municipal Corporation elections were held from February 2017 onwards in different parts of the state. Even as the SECM conducted the Corporation elections, one of its main concerns was the poor voter turnout at Corporation elections. In the largest Corporations i.e. Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) and Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC), voter turnout percentages have been quite low.

In a recently conducted study titled “Municipal Corporation Elections in Maharashtra: A Data Analysis (1994-2004)”, Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics has calculated voter turnout statistics of all Corporations in Maharashtra. While the average of all Corporations stands at about 55 per cent, the voter turnout percentages for BMC and PMC stand at 45 per cent and 54.5 per cent respectively.

Not only is the voter turnout in the bigger Municipal Corporations lower, at a ward level, the voter turnout tends to be lower in the more affluent wards. Thus, we find that voter turnout decreases in the more affluent or well-to-do areas.

What really contributes to this low turnout? Is it purely voter apathy? Or is it that voters do not perceive value in the services rendered by Corporations? Or are there other issues wherein the voter does not actively engage with the local body? Are there certain voter attributes that promote or reduce voter turnout? If yes, then once these are identified, stakeholders could create suitable campaigns so as to enhance the voting percentage.

Clearly, the entire process has to start with identifying which attributes may encourage or discourage people to vote. This idea was initiated by Shri J. Saharia, Hon. Commissioner, State Election Commission of Maharashtra in a meeting with various stakeholders. It is in response to this idea that Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, Pune, submitted a proposal to conduct a voter survey titled “Why people do not vote in Municipal Corporation Elections: A Voter based Study in BMC”.

CHAPTER 2

VOTING BEHAVIOUR: THE GLOBAL EXPERIENCE

Predominantly India has so far been a rural democracy and conventional wisdom is that the rural voters in the country outvote urban voters (Kanchan Chandra and Alan Potter, 2016)¹. However, as a result of rural-urban migration, the balance between rural and urban population is now changing and becoming urban centric. Although according to the Census 2011 about 69 per cent of India's population lived in rural areas while 31 per cent in urban, for the first time since Independence (Census, 2011)² the absolute increase in the number of persons living in urban areas during the decade 2001-11 was greater than the absolute increase in number of persons living in rural areas. Compared to the decade 1991-2001, the decade 2001-11 witnessed an increasing trend in the growth rate of urban population (Census, 2011)³. United Nations' Department of Economic and Social Affairs has projected that by 2050 about 50 per cent of Indian population will live in urban areas (United Nations, 2014)⁴ while the same is already true for the states like Maharashtra (Census, 2011)⁵. But in comparative terms, both the share of urban population and its growth in the country are modest. More than half (54 per cent) of the population of China already lives in urban areas while compared to only half of India's by 2050 is estimated to touch the mark of 76 per cent (China's?) (United Nations, 2014)⁶. Three of India's South Asian neighbours viz; Bangladesh, Bhutan and Pakistan already have a higher proportion of urban population respectively 34, 38 and 38 per cent (United Nations, 2014)⁷. The proportion of urban population that is projected by the UNWUP for these countries by 2050 is 56, 55 and 57 per cent respectively (United Nations, 2014)⁸. The urban dwelling of India in 2014 stood at 410 million which is second only to China, also means that even though most of its voters live in rural areas, the country has the largest pool of urban voters in the democratic world (Kanchan Chandra and Alan Potter, 2016)⁹. Even this modest rate of urbanization is shifting the balance between rural and urban voters, so that by 2041, it will not remain a predominantly rural democracy but one in which rural and urban voters are equally balanced (Ibid)¹⁰.

It is known fact that rural India is more active than urban when it comes to voting (Tewari, 2014a, 2014b)^{11,12} (see also ToI 2011)¹³. Respectively in 2009 and 2014 Parliamentary

¹Kanchan Chandra and Alan Potter (2016), Do Urban Voters in India Vote Less?, Economic and Political Weekly, Sep. 24, 2016, Vol. LI, No. XXXIX.

²Census of India, (2011).Ministry Home Affairs, Govt. of India, New Delhi.

³ Ibid.

⁴ United Nations (2014), World Urbanization Prospects: The 2014 Revision, Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

⁵Census of India, (2011), Ministry Home Affairs, Govt. of India, New Delhi.

⁶ United Nations (2014), World Urbanization Prospects: The 2014 Revision, Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

⁷ Ibid

⁸ Ibid

⁹Kanchan Chandra and Alan Potter (2016), Do Urban Voters in India Vote Less?, Economic and Political Weekly, Sep. 24, 2016, Vol. LI, No. XXXIX.

¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹Tewari, Saumya (2014a) Betting on Rural Votes This Time Too, 13th March, www.indiaspend.com/reports.

¹²----- (2014b) Rural India Continues Outvote Urban India, IndiaSpend, 30 May.

elections 65 and 69 per cent of rural voters turned out to cast their votes as against 42.5 and 50 per cent of their urban counterparts. The general participation of urban voters in 2009 was dismal. Studies based on NES data argue that in Parliamentary elections urban turnout in India is lower than rural turnout (Palshikar and Kumar 2004, Kumar 2009, Falcao 2009, National Election Study 2014)^{14/15/16/17}. But at the same time the voter turnout in smaller and medium towns is no different from the turnout in mostly rural constituencies (Yadav 1999)¹⁸ or even higher than turnout in highly rural constituencies and in metropolitan ones (Palshikar and Kumar 2004, Kumar 2009, Falcao 2009, National Election Study 2014)^{19, 20, 21, 22}. Several National Election Study data reveal that in Parliamentary elections urban turnout in India is lower than rural turnout (Jafferlot 2008, Chandra 2013)^{23, 24}. Turnout in metropolitan constituencies of Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Hyderabad and Bengaluru is significantly lower than in other type of constituencies (Auerbach 2015, Yadav 1999, 2000, Palshikar and Kumar 2009, Falcao 2009, National Election Study 2014)^{25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30}.

It is with the grasp and understanding of the facts mentioned above and based on our earlier studies on local self-government election data analysis for the period 1993-2013 which also

¹³Times of India (2011) Urban Population Indifferent Towards Voting, Governance, 13th February.

¹⁴PalshikarSuhas and Sanjay Kumar (2009), Participatory Norm: How Broad Based Is It?, Economic and Political Weekly, 18th Dec. PP. 5412-17.

¹⁵ Kumar Sanjay (2009), Patterns of Political Participation: Trends and Perspective, Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. XLIV, No. XXXIX, PP. 47-51.

¹⁶Falcao, Vanita Leah (2009), Urban Patterns of Voting and Party Choices, Economic and Political Weekly, 26th Sep. Vol. XLIV, No. XXXIX, pp. 99-101.

¹⁷National Election Study (2014), Statistics_National_Election_Study_2014, Economic and Political Weekly, Special Issue-2014.

¹⁸Yadav, Yogendra (1999), Electoral Politics in Time of Change: India's Third Electoral System 1989-1999, Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. XXXIV & xxxv, Aug. PP. 2393-99.

¹⁹PalshikarSuhas and Sanjay Kumar (2009), Participatory Norm: How Broad Based Is It?, Economic and Political Weekly, 18th Dec. PP. 5412-17.

²⁰ Kumar Sanjay (2009), Patterns of Political Participation: Trends and Perspective, Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. XLIV, No. XXXIX, PP. 47-51.

²¹ Falco, Vanita Leah (2009), Urban Patterns of Voting and Party Choices, Economic and Political Weekly, 26th Sep. Vol. XLIV, No. XXXIX, PP. 99-101.

²²National Election Study (2014), Statistics_National_Election_Study_2014, Economic and Political Weekly, Special Issue-2014.

²³Jafferlot Christopher (2008), Why Should We Vote? The Indian Middle Class and the Functioning of the World's Largest Democracy, Patterns of Middle Class Consumption in India and China, Jafferlot Christopher and Peter Van der Veer, Delhi, Sage Publications, PP. 35-54.

²⁴Kanchan Chandra (2013), Patronage, Democracy and Ethnic Politics in India, Clientelism, Social Policy and the Quality of Democracy, Diego Abent and Larry Diamond (eds), John Hopkins Press. Kanchan Chandra and Alan Potter (2016), Dataset on Urbanization in Parliamentary Constituencies in India 1977-2014, Vrsion1.0.

²⁵Auerbach, Adam Michael (2015), India's Urban Constituencies Revisited, Contemporary South Asia, 23:2, 136-50, DOI: 10.1080/09584935.2015.1028026.

²⁶Yadav, Yogendra (1999), Electoral Politics in Time of Change: India's Third Electoral System 1989-1999, Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. XXXIV & xxxv, Aug. PP. 2393-99.

²⁷ ----- (2000), Understanding the Second Democratic Upsurge, Transforming India, Francine Frankel, ZoyaHasan, Rajiv Bhargava and BalveerArora (eds), New Delhi: OUP, PP. 120-45.

²⁸PalshikarSuhas and Sanjay Kumar (2009), Participatory Norm: How Broad Based Is It?, Economic and Political Weekly, 18th Dec. PP. 5412-17.

²⁹Falcao, Vanita Leah (2009), Urban Patterns of Voting and Party Choices, Economic and Political Weekly, 26th Sep. Vol. XLIV, No. XXXIX, PP. 99-101.

³⁰National Election Study (2014), Statistics_National_Election_Study_2014, Economic and Political Weekly, Special Issue-2014.

comprised various aspects of voter turnout, the present study on “Why do people not vote or vote?” was commissioned to Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, Pune.

A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON LOCAL GOVERNANCE

The roots of local governance in ancient India date back to the period of *Rig-Veda* (1700 BC). However, local governance in contemporary India owes its genesis to the establishment of various Municipal Corporations in the country during the British era. A Municipal Council or a Municipal Corporation, in a federal State like India, is an administering local body that oversees city development and makes the provision of public amenities for its citizens. Municipal Corporations are created to look into the governance of bigger cities whereas Municipal Councils look after the governance issues of large towns. In India, the Municipal Corporations have been classified into A+, A, B, C and D categories which is as per the population and Per Capita Income (PCI) of the towns/cities as shown in the table below.

Table No. 2.1: Population under Governance of Municipal Corporations in Maharashtra

Sr. No.	Type of Corporation	Parameter	
		Population Size	PCI* (Rs)
1	Grade - A+	Above 01 Crore	Above 50000
2	Grade - A	25 Lakh To 01 Crore	Above 8000
3	Grade -B	15 To 25 Lakh	Above 5000
4	Grade -C	10 To 15 Lakh	Above 3000
5	Grade - D	03 To 10 Lakh	Not Applicable

Source: GoM Resolution-UDD No. MCO 2014/CR153/UD14/Dtd: 01.09.2014.

Note: * = Per Capita Income.

The norm of population across India is determined by the central government of the country. A Municipal Corporation is established independently or sometimes by elevating the Municipal Council to the level of Corporation.

The establishment of Madras (Chennai) Municipal Corporation on 29 September 1688 marked the beginning of Municipal governance in India. It was established by the British East India Company via a Royal Charter of King James II. The Municipal Corporation of Hyderabad was established in 1869 by the Nizam of Hyderabad who had the governing independence in British India. Subsequently, the Corporations of Calcutta and Bombay were established respectively in 1876 and 1888. The Bombay Municipal Corporation was established by the Bombay Municipal Corporation Act while the Delhi Municipal Council came into being in 1911 when Delhi was proclaimed to be the new Capital of India. Later, by an Act of Parliament, it was elevated to the level of Municipal Corporation on 7 April 1958.

In different States of India, the Municipal Corporation may be known by different nomenclatures. For instance, in Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Haryana, it is known as *Nagar Nigam* while it is known as *MahanagarPalika* in Maharashtra, Goa and Karnataka, *PouroNigom* in West Bengal, *PurPorishod* in Tripura.

DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE AND MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS

The purpose of Municipal governance and strategic urban planning in a country is to create effective, responsive, democratic and accountable local governance framework. Both in India and abroad, democracy and decentralization are the focal points of local governance. The idea of local governance continues to quietly sweep the world. From Bolivia to Bulgaria and from West Africa to South Asia, several countries have been strengthening their local governments and working to make them more responsive and effective (USAID 2000)³¹. Decentralization promotes democracy in myriad ways. Decentralization brings governments closer to citizens and allows people to participate more effectively in local issues concerning development by identifying community priorities (Ibid). This also facilitates the gain of democratic experience of people and elected representatives. Therefore, for the last twenty five years, the concept of ‘participation’ has been widely used in the development discourse. Democratic governance implies participation in the process of formulation, passage and implementation of public policies (Perry Mosley and Day, 1992)³². It is by no means always a positive experience. Local elections provide citizens with an opportunity to vote in or vote out parties from power, thereby making local bodies vibrant and democracy, stronger.

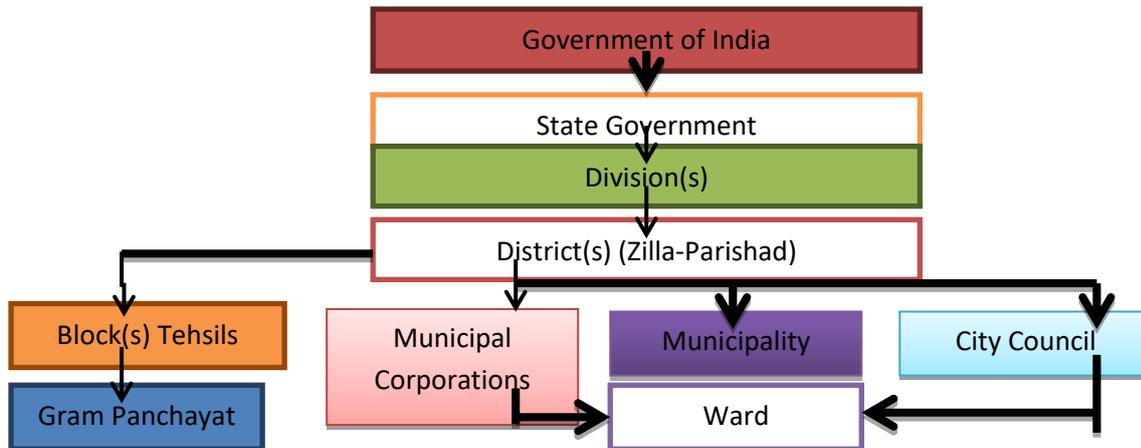
ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE AND DECENTRALIZATION OF POWER AT MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) both of the Municipal Corporation and ZillaParishad, who is an IAS officer, heads the administrative machinery and may also be the District Magistrate in some States. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) supervises the divisions of the Parishad and the wards of the Corporation and executes its development schemes. The pattern of administration can better be understood from the following diagram.

³¹Centre for Democracy and Governance, Decentralization and Democratic Local Governance Handbook, USAID, 20523-3100, PP. 05-06.

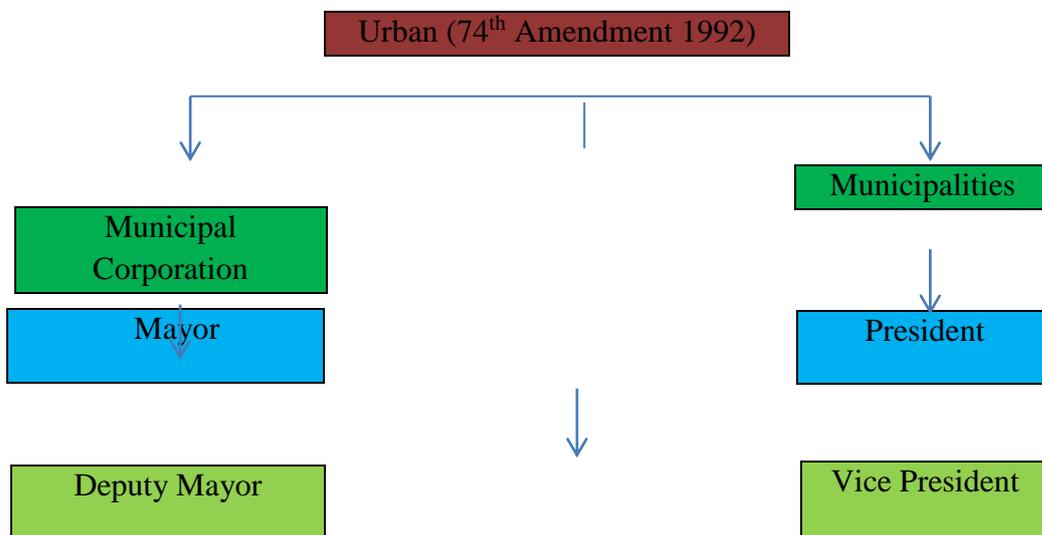
³²Parry, G., Mosley, G. and Day N. (1992), Political Participation and Democracy in Britain. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

**Local Self Government and Decentralization of Power
(73rd and 74th Amendment-1992/Rural +Urban)**



The following diagram elucidates the post 73rd constitutional amendment (1992) structure of decentralization of power through local self-government in India. This is inclusive of both the administrative pattern of Municipal Corporations and the Councils which is indicative of local self-governance and decentralization of power.

**Local Self Government
(Decentralization of Power)**



MUNICIPAL CORPORATION ELECTIONS

In ancient Greece and Rome, and throughout the medieval period, rulers such as the Holy Roman Emperor and the Pope were elected (Encyclopedia Britannica).³³ In the Vedic period

³³Election (Political Science), Encyclopedia Britannica Online, Retrieved Sep. 2016.

of India, the *raja* of a *gana* (tribal group) was apparently elected by the *gana*. The *gana* members had the final say in his election.

In modern democracy, an election is a formal process by which citizens choose their representative to hold public office. Elections have been the fulcrum of modern democracy since the 17th century. Like the Parliamentary elections in India, elections to local bodies are also held every five years. Very often the ruling party or local alliance elected to power at the local urban level is in alignment with the party or combine ruling at the State level even though in Municipal elections local issues are likely to be more dominant than the party philosophy or policies and programmes that the party may adopt at the broader State level.

Post 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments 1992 the State Election Commission of Maharashtra was set up in 1994. Since then it conducts the elections to the local bodies including Zilla Parishads, Panchayat Samitis and village Gram Panchayats for rural democratic setup and the elections to the Municipal Councils and Corporations in urban power structure. Elections to Zilla Parishad and Panchayat Samitis are conducted simultaneously while for Corporations and Councils the elections take place at the regular interval of every five years. Since its inception in 1994 the State Election Commission of Maharashtra has been electing approximately 2.5 lakh “people representatives” in nearly 28,000 local bodies which comprise 26 Municipal Corporations, 340 Municipal Councils and Nagar Panchayats, 34 Zilla Parishads, 351 Panchayat Samitis and approximately 27, 781 Gram Panchayats respectively (J. Saharia, 2016)³⁴.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE AND THE GLOBAL EXPERIENCE OF VOTER TURNOUT AT THE LOCAL ELECTIONS

Low voter turnout in elections is not the concern of Indian democracy alone. Even American democracy has repeatedly experienced the concern of low voter participation in federal elections (Bennett and Resnick, 1990)³⁵ and (Sidney Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995)³⁶. Almost half of the eligible voters of America do not exercise their franchise in Presidential elections, which can broadly be termed as an “evidence of crises in country’s democracy” (Ruy A. Teixeira, 1992)³⁷, (Rosenstone and Hansen, 1993)³⁸. In recent decades, a few studies have attempted to look comprehensively at Municipal level voter turnout in the US. These

³⁴ J. Saharia (2016), Data Based Analysis of Municipal Elections in Maharashtra-1994-2013 (Foreword), R. K. Parchure, Manasi Phadke and Dnyandev Talule, GIPE, Pune, A Study for the State Election Commission of Maharashtra.

³⁵ Bennett and Resnick (1990), The Implications of Nonvoting for Democracy in the United States, American Journal of Political Science 34:771-802; Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995), Voice and Equity: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics, Cambridge, MA: Harvard Uni. Press

³⁶ Sidney Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995), Voice and Equality, Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.

³⁷ Ruy A. Teixeira (1992), The Disappearing American Voter, Washington DC: Brooking Institutions; Rosenstone S. J. and J. M. Hansen (1993), Mobilization, Participation and Democracy in America, New York: Macmillan.

³⁸ Rosenstone S. J. and J. M. Hansen (1993), Mobilization, Participation and Democracy in America, New York: Macmillan; Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995), Voice and Equity: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics, Cambridge, MA: Harvard Uni. Press.

studies suggest that voter turnout in Municipal elections may average half that of national elections, with turnout in some cities falling below a quarter of the voting age population (Alford and Lee, 1968)³⁹, (R. L. Morlan, 1984)⁴⁰ and (Ruby Bridges, 1997)⁴¹. However, the voter turnout at elections to rural local bodies like ZillaParishads in different states of India is often observed to be higher than the turnout at Parliamentary elections. Low voter turnout in Municipal elections raises a number of concerns, the most serious being that the voice of the people in Municipal elections is likely to be severely distorted. Disadvantaged segments of the society, racial and ethnic minorities, the poor, illiterates tend to vote significantly less regularly than others in democratic contests (Rosenstone and Hansen, 1993)⁴², (Sidney Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995)⁴³. And therefore, with low voter turnout, this bias is likely to become more pronounced (Wattenberg, 1998)⁴⁴.

At the local level then, there is a risk that non-participation in the democratic process and consequent low voter turnout may actually distort people's representation. Therefore, increase in turnout in local urban or rural elections is a challenge for strengthening democracy and designing and implementing people-oriented policies and programmes at the local level. Voting in local elections in fact provides citizens with an opportunity to learn about and engage in a democratic process beginning with the grassroots level. Given the proximity of the local government and its relatively small size, it is in many ways easier for citizens to acquire crucial democratic skills and become familiar with the public realm at the local level (ZoltanHajnal, P. G. Lewis and Hugh Louch, 2002)⁴⁵. Election timing is also observed as a vital determinant of voter turnout which matters the most. This is because voter turnout is observed to be much lower in off-cycle than in on-cycle elections. Looking at California, for example, it was found that average voter turnout in an off-cycle election is 35 per cent lower than turnout when city elections are held at the same time as Presidential elections (Sarah F. Anzia 2014)⁴⁶.

“Social capital” is believed to play a dominant role in increasing voter turnout, which in turn improves political representation both at the national and local levels of governance (Mathew

³⁹ Alford R. R. and E. C. Lee (1968), Voting Turnout in American Cities, *American Political Science Review* 62:796-813

⁴⁰ Morlan R. L. (1984), Municipal Versus National Election Voter Turnout: Europe and the United States, *Political Science Quarterly*, 99:457-70.

⁴¹ Ruby Bridges A. (1997), *Morning Glories: Municipal Reform in the Southwest*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton Uni. Press

⁴² Rosenstone S. J. and J. M Hansen (1993), *Mobilization, Participation and Democracy in America*, New York: Macmillan; Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995), *Voice and Equity: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard Uni. Press

⁴³ Sidney Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995), *Voice and Equality*, Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.

⁴⁴ Wattenberg M. P. (1998), *Turnout Decline in the US and Other Advanced Industrial Democracies*. Irvine, CA: Centre for the Study of Democracy.

⁴⁵ ZoltaHajnal, Paul George Lewis and Hugh Louch (2002), *Municipal Elections in California: Turnout, Timing and Competition*, Public Policy Institute of California.

⁴⁶ Sarah F. Anzia (2014), *Timing and Turnout: How Off-Cycle Elections Favor Organized Groups*, University of Chicago Press.

D. Atkinson and Anthony Fowler, 2012)⁴⁷. Voting requires time and information and there is little chance that one vote will change the election outcome; hence the turnout poses a classic collective action problem (Mancur Olson, 1965)⁴⁸. It is argued that social capital may provide a solution to the collective action problem of voter turnout which is defined as “Citizen Engagement in Community Affairs” (Robert Putnam, 1995, P.664)⁴⁹. Social capital can increase voter turnout by increasing the flow of political information through a community. Recent field experiences demonstrate that societal pressure could lead to an increase in voter turnout to the extent of 30 to 38 per cent (Gerber et al, 2008)⁵⁰. However, a contrary view points out that social connectedness may actually lead to decrease in voter turnout in cases where an individual social network creates a force which does not rely on voting to make its voice heard. (Diana C. Mutz, 2002)⁵¹. Also an increase in social capital in heterogeneous communities leads to uncertainty about political views and reduces the voter turnout (Ibid)⁵². In a nutshell, there are good reasons to believe that social capital may have positive or negative effects on voter turnout at every level of democracy, irrespective of rural or urban.

Voter turnout, which refers to the percentage of voters who exercise their franchise at an election, out of the total number of eligible voters, is one significant measure of citizen participation in democratic politics. Worldwide, voter turnout during the period 1945–2001 shows a notable decline, with major decline taking place since the mid-1980s (Rafael Lopez Pintor, 2002)⁵³ and (Maria Gratschew and Kate Sullivan, 2002)⁵⁴. Africa witnessed a pronounced increase in democratic participation during the 1980s when several African nations were riding the wave of democratization. Turnout in North and South American countries during the same period was observed to be stable, as was that of Oceania and Western Europe. During the same period, the Middle East recorded varied turnout while Asia witnessed the most pronounced variations in democratic participation (Ibid)⁵⁵. Average turnout from 1990 to 2001 peaked at 79 per cent in Oceania which was just ahead of Western Europe with turnout proportion of 78 per cent. Both Asia and Central and Eastern European region for the same period had an average voter turnout of 72 per cent while the average in Central and South America was 69 per cent, North America and the Caribbean – 65 per cent. Africa’s average turnout was the lowest at 64 per cent which, by all standards, is higher than the voter turnout at most of India’s Parliamentary elections (Ibid)⁵⁶. The comparison of voter

⁴⁷Mathew D. Atkinson and Anthony Fowler (2012), *The Effect of Social Capital on Voter Turnout: Evidence from Saint’s Day Fiestas in Mexico*, University of California, Los Angeles and Harvard University.

⁴⁸Mancur Olson (1965), *The Logic of Collective Action*, HUP.

⁴⁹Robert Putnam (1995, *Tuning In, Tuning Out; The Strange Disappearances of Social Capital in America*. *PS: Political Science and Politics* 28(4): 664-683.

⁵⁰Gerber, Alan, Donald Green and C. Larimer (2008), *Social Pressure and Voter Turnout: Evidence from a Large-Scale Field Experiment*: *American Political Science Review*, 102(1): 33-48.

⁵¹Diana C. Mutz (2002), *The Consequences of Cross-Cutting Networks for Political Participation*, *American Journal of Political Science*, 46(4):838-855.

⁵²Ibid

⁵³Rafael Lopez Pintor (2002), *Voter Turnout Since 1945: A Global Report*, Stockholm, Sweden: International Institute of Democracy and Electoral Assistance.

⁵⁴Maria Gratschew and Kate Sullivan (2002), *Compulsory Voting*, ARENA, Association of Electoral Administrators, OxonianRewley Press Ltd. United Kingdom.

⁵⁵Ibid

⁵⁶Ibid

turnout across nations further elucidates a wide range of variations. For example 93 per cent voter turnout in a country like Liechtenstein in Western Europe against 56 per cent in neighboring Switzerland can be attributed to compulsory voting in Liechtenstein. On the contrary, a country like Bahamas where voting is not compulsory, records a turnout of 92 per cent compared with the Haitian average of 47 per cent (Ibid)⁵⁷. Since the 1970s established democracies of the world have recorded a slow but steady decline in voter turnout; however during the same period, several other nations where participative democratic processes strengthened, recorded vast increase in turnout, peaking at about 80 per cent (Ibid)⁵⁸.

There is no doubt that the capacity to read and write, female literacy ratio (FLR), Per Capita Income (PCI), etc. do not necessarily translate into an ability to make coherent and informed political decisions. In fact, it is observed that while voter turnout does increase initially with increase in literacy, it tends to decline in societies where literacy exceeds 90 per cent (Ibid)⁵⁹. There are 9 major electoral systems within parliamentary elections used around the world. Alternative vote used in Australia, Fiji and Nauru demonstrate an average turnout of 91 per cent while Jordan and Vanuatu with single non-transferable vote system have an average turnout of 43 per cent. The other systems do not have such a large deviation, with single transferable vote at 80 per cent and two round system at 63 per cent. An interesting result is the relatively small difference between the two most widely used systems.

Very often the reason cited for low voter turnout is that for many people today democracy has become synonymous with elections and political parties; other than voting once every five years; ordinary citizens are more likely to remain detached from the issues of governance. It is a fact that voter participation has decreased and the established democracies of the world have experienced what is termed as crises of political parties.

The United Nations General Assembly Convention 1979, which seeks to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women, also emphasizes the importance of equal participation of women in public life. However, the question remains as to whether women participation in the overall voter turnout has actually increased. Various studies on voting pattern in Western Europe and North America establish the fact that gender, along with age, education and social class, was one of the standard demographic and social characteristics used to predict levels of civic engagement, political activism and electoral turnout (Tingsten, 1937)⁶⁰, (Almond and Verba, 1963)⁶¹, (Stein Rokkan, 1970)⁶² and (Verba Sidney N, and Norman H. Nie, 1972)⁶³. The studies also reveal that gender differences were narrowing even in the 1950s in advanced

⁵⁷ Ibid

⁵⁸ Ibid

⁵⁹ Ibid

⁶⁰Tingsten H.L.G. (1937), Political Behaviour, Studies in Election Statistics: London: P.S. King.

⁶¹Almond G. A. and S Verba (1963), The Civic Culture, Political Attitude and Democracy in Five Nations, Princeton, N.J. Princeton University Press.

⁶²Stein Rokkan (1970), Citizens, Elections, Parties: Approaches to the Comparative Study of the Processes of Development Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.

⁶³Verba Sidney N, and Norman H. Nie (1972), Participation and Social Equality, Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.

industrialized societies such as the Sweden (Martin Lipset, 1960)⁶⁴. In most societies, when it comes to political activity, men are found to be more active than women (Verba, Sidney N, NieLekajcieSie and Kim Cattreal 1978)⁶⁵. Such gender differences have persisted in spite of significant advances in the levels of education. Usually women are found to be less involved in unconventional forms of democratic participation such as strikes and protest movements, thereby leading to lower participation of women also in conventional democratic processes (Barnes and Kaase, 1979)⁶⁶. However, this finding has been visibly challenged by the female voting pattern in recent times. In the US for example, in the Presidential elections held post 1980, the proportion of eligible female adults who exercised their franchise exceeded the proportion of eligible male adults. The same phenomenon was evident in non-presidential mid-term elections since 1986 (CAWP, 2000)⁶⁷. Overall percentage of female voter turnout in the US outnumbers the male electorate implying that the number of female voters has exceeded the number of male voters in every Presidential election. Similar trends are evident in Britain where the gender gap in turnout reversed in 1979 so that by 1997 elections, an estimated 17.79 million women voted compared with about 15.8 million men (Rafael Lopez Pintor, Maria Gratschew and Kate Sullivan, 2002)⁶⁸. This indicates that the patterns of voter turnout can be influenced by a legal framework that draws citizens towards meaningful political activity (Ibid)⁶⁹. In nations like Barbados and Sweden it is observed that the number of female voters consistently exceeds male voters. Conscious attempts to bring women into political framework can potentially lead to increase in the voter turnout.

Other important factors that may influence voter turnout include the proportion of youth voters to total voters, internet voting, extended polling, and perhaps even compulsory voting. Compulsory voting is not a new idea; countries like Belgium (1892), Argentina (1914) and Australia (1924) were among the first countries to introduce compulsory voting laws (Ibid)⁷⁰.

DOES SOCIAL MEDIA AFFECT VOTER TURNOUT?

Social media have become an integral part of public discourse and communication in the contemporary society (AlinaMuntean 2015)⁷¹. The fast development of social media has caused major changes pertaining the way people find groups of individuals with similar

⁶⁴Martin Lipset (1960), *Political Man: the Social Bases of Politics*, Garden City, New York, Doubleday.

⁶⁵Verba, Sidney N, NieLekajcieSieandKimCattreal (1978), *Participation and Social Equality*, Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press and Verba SK and N, Nie (1972), *Politicization in America, Political Democracy and Social Equity*, New York, Harper and Row.

⁶⁶Barnes S and Kaase M (1979), *Political Action, Mass Participation in Few Western Democracies*, Beverly Hills, Calif: Sage.

⁶⁷CAWP (2000), *Women in State Legislature*, Center for American Women and Politics, Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, 919, Ryders Lane, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 (732) 932-9384: www.cawp.rutgers.edu

⁶⁸Rafael Lopez Pintor, Maria Gratschew and Kate Sullivan (2002), *Compulsory Voting*, ARENA, Association of Electoral Administrators, OxonianRewley Press Ltd. United Kingdom.

⁶⁹ Ibid

⁷⁰ Ibid

⁷¹AlinaMuntean (2015), *The Impact of Social Media Use on Political Participation*, Master Thesis, MA in Corporate Communication, Aarhus University, Student Number: 20107618.

interests, the nature of information, the available news sources, or the possibility to require and share ideas (Stieglitz, Dang-Xuan 2012: 1)⁷². It has had major effects on fields such as advertising, public relations, communications, and political communication (Husain et al 2014: 224)⁷³. More recently, the prominence of social media has been particularly highlighted in politics, given the fact that the use of social networking sites such as Facebook and microblogging services such as Twitter are believed to have the potential to positively influence political participation (Stieglitz, Dang-Xuan 2012: 1)⁷⁴.

Academic research has consistently established that people who consume more news media have a greater probability of being civically and politically engaged. In an era when the public's time and attention is increasingly directed toward platforms such as Facebook and Twitter, scholars are seeking to evaluate the emerging relationship between social media use and public engagement. The Obama presidential campaigns in 2008 and 2012 and the Arab Spring in 2011 catalyzed interest in networked digital connectivity and political action, but the data remain far from conclusive.

The largest and perhaps best-known inquiry into this issue so far is a 2012 study published in the journal *Nature*, "A 61-Million-Person Experiment in Social Influence and Political Mobilization," which suggested that messages on users' Facebook feeds could significantly influence voting patterns. The study data analyzed in collaboration with Facebook data scientists suggested that certain messages promoted by friends "increased turnout directly by about 60,000 voters and indirectly through social contagion by another 280,000 voters, for a total of 340,000 additional votes." Close friends with real-world ties were found to be much more influential than casual online acquaintances (Boulianne, Shelley 2015)⁷⁵.

MUNICIPAL CORPORATION ELECTIONS AND VOTER TURNOUT: THE GLOBAL EXPERIENCE

As observed in the foregoing, low voter turnout in elections is not the concern of Indian democracy alone. Even American democracy has repeatedly experienced the concern of low voter participation in federal elections (Bennett and Resnick, 1990; Verba, Schlozman and Brady, 1995).⁷⁶ Almost half of the eligible voters in America do not turn out at polling booth in Presidential elections, which is an "evidence of crisis in country's democracy" (Teixeira

⁷²Stieglitz, Dang-Xuan (2012), *Social Media and Political Communication: A Social Media Analytical Framework*, Springer-Verlay-2012.

⁷³Hussain K, Abdullah AN, Ishak M, Kamarudin MF, Robani A, Mohin M, Hssan H (2014), A Preliminary Study of Effects of Social Media in Crisis Communication from Public Relations Practitioner's Views, p. 223-27, *Procedia Social and Behavioural Sciences*.

⁷⁴Stieglitz, Dang-Xuan (2012), *Social Media and Political Communication: A Social Media Analytical Framework*, Springer-Verlay-2012.

⁷⁵Boulianne, Shelley (2015), "Social Media Use and Participation: A Meta-analysis of Current Research," *Information, Communication and Society*, 2015. doi: 10.1080/1369118X.2015.1008542. (www.journalistsresource.org, Retrieved: 12.01.2017)

⁷⁶Bennett and Resnick (1990), *The Implications of Nonvoting for Democracy in the United States*, *American Journal of Political Science* 34:771-802; Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995), *Voice and Equity: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard Uni. Press.

1992; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993).⁷⁷ In the recent past the voter turnout at Municipal Corporation elections suggests that in city elections it may average half that of national elections, with turnout in some American cities such as California falling below a quarter of the voting age population (Alford and Lee 1968; Morlan 1984; Bridges 1997).⁷⁸

Such a low degree of voter turnout in local Corporation elections raises a number of concerns. Most serious concern is that the voice of the people in Municipal elections is likely to be severely distorted. Disadvantaged segments of the society, racial and ethnic minorities, the poor, illiterates tend to vote significantly less regularly than others in democratic contests (Rosenstone and Hanson 1993)⁷⁹; Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995)⁸⁰. And therefore, when turnout falls, this bias is likely to become more severe (Wattenberg 1998).⁸¹

At the Corporation level then, non-participation may play a more critical role in policy making. Therefore, increase in turnout in Corporation elections is a challenge for strengthening democracy and designing and implementing pro-people policies at the urban local level. Participation at the local level brings for citizens a relatively easy opportunity to learn about and become engaged in democracy. Given the proximity of local government and the relatively small size, it is in many ways easier for citizens to acquire crucial democratic skills and become familiar with the public realm at the local level (Hajnal and Lewis 2001).⁸² Election timing is also observed as a vital determinant of voter turnout which matters the most. This is because turnout is observed to be much lower in off-cycle than in on-cycle elections. Looking at California, for example, it was found that average voter turnout in off-cycle election is 35 per cent lower than turnout when city elections are held at the same time as presidential elections (Sarah F. Anzia 2014).⁸³

MUNICIPAL CORPORATION VOTER TURNOUT IN MAHARASHTRA

The State of Maharashtra is not an exception to low voter turnout at Municipal elections. Across the time period, voter turnout at Municipal elections in the State is observed to be on the lower side, which is highly unsatisfactory. Most of the Municipal Councils and Corporations which went to polls in 2012 experienced a low voter turnout. In 2012 the voter

⁷⁷Teixeira R. A. (1992), *The Disappearing American Voter*, Washington DC: Brookings Institutions; Rosenstone S. J. and J. M. Hansen (1993), *Mobilization, Participation and Democracy in America*, New York: Macmillan.

⁷⁸Alford R. R. and E. C. Lee (1968), *Voting Turnout in American Cities*, *American Political Science Review* 62:796-813; Morlan R. L. (1984), *Municipal Versus National Election Voter Turnout: Europe and the United States*, *Political Science Quarterly* 99:457-70; Bridges A. (1997), *Morning Glories: Municipal Reform in the Southwest*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton Uni. Press.

⁷⁹Verba Sidney, Schlozman and Brady (1995),

⁸⁰Rosenstone S. J. and J. M. Hansen (1993), *Mobilization, Participation and Democracy in America*, New York: Macmillan; Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995), *Voice and Equity: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard Uni. Press.

⁸¹ Wattenberg M. P. (1998), *Turnout Decline in the US and Other Advanced Industrial Democracies*. Irvine, CA: Centre for the Study of Democracy.

⁸²Zoltan L Hajnal and Paul G. Lewis (2001), *Municipal Elections and Voter Turnout in Local Elections*, University of California.

⁸³Sarah F. Anzia (2014), *Timing and Turnout: How Off-Cycle Elections Favor Organized Groups*, University of Chicago Press.

turnout at Corporations like Mumbai and Thane could not exceed 45 per cent (ToI)⁸⁴. This is evidence of “low engagement of citizens in community affairs” (Mancur Olson 1965)⁸⁵. There are certain wards of Brihan Mumbai, Pune and Pimpri Chinchwad Municipal Corporations where the voter turnout in 2012 elections was as low as 29 per cent. This underlines the fact that the voter turnout in metropolis like Pune, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, Hyderabad and Delhi are historically lower than the medium size town and rural areas. Voter turnout at Municipal elections in Maharashtra thus poses a classic collective action problem. Only high turnout can serve the common public interest in designing policy.

In order to create a policy to increase the voter turnout, it is important that the voter behaviour be analyzed to understand their mind about voting in the elections and thereby the trends in the turnout. Once the trends are understood, it could be possible to target certain areas more intensively for increasing the turnout level.

It is with this vision that a study based on the voter survey in Brihan Mumbai Municipal Corporations was commissioned to Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics at the initiative of the State Election Commission of Maharashtra.

⁸⁴ Times of India, 16.02.2012, Retrieved: 26.09.2016.

⁸⁵ Mancur Olson (1965), The Logic of Collective Action, HUP.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH QUESTION, DATA AND METHODOLOGY

Sampling is a crucial part of 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. A voter perception survey in Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) required a process of identification and selection of wards across the city, and the number of respondents per ward. It also required thought on how to identify the respondents within each ward. This chapter outlines the various sampling aspects of the research proposal.

3.1: RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The average voter turnout in Municipal Corporation elections in Maharashtra is 55 per cent. Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation shows an average voter turnout percentage of only 45 per cent over past 3 rounds of elections. Hence, the core research question for the present study is very simple: Why is it that people do not vote?

Whilst designing the questionnaire, there were a number of associated questions that too had to be handled. These are:

- What are the main reasons for people not voting in Mumbai?
- Could the low voter turnout be a reflection of the fact that people do not have a high level of engagement or association with the BMC?
- Could the low voter turnout be due to the fact that people are dissatisfied with BMC services?
- Can we classify voters as those who never vote (rare voters), those who vote sometimes (intermittent voters) and those who always vote (regular voters)? Is it possible to identify unique characteristics of rare, intermittent and regular voters?
- Is the low voter turnout due to electoral process issues such as the booth being too far away from the residence, or the queues in front of the booth being too long?
- Is the low voter turnout in Mumbai a simple case of urban apathy? If so, is there frustration or indifference or anger associated with apathy?
- What are the main reasons that the regular voters quote for voting?

3.1.1 Tools

Keeping the above mentioned research questions in mind, a close ended questionnaire was specially designed and pre-tested to understand voter attributes that influence voting behaviour. This questionnaire was used for the voter survey in the BMC and is attached in Appendix A.

3.2. SAMPLING METHODOLOGY

Sampling Design in BMC

There are 102,86,579 voters in the BMC area. The two-stage sampling method was used to select the number of voters to study why voters do not vote in the BMC election. The method is described below.

Stage I: To choose number of prabhags

A cluster sampling method was used to choose the prabhags in which the survey would be conducted. Using data on 2012 BMC elections, all wards were firstly clustered into low, medium and high voter turnout (VT henceforth) wards. The average VT for BMC 2012 election was 44.76 per cent with standard deviation 4.97 per cent. The minimum VT was 23.47 per cent and maximum VT was 55.66 per cent.

Table 3.1: Descriptive Statistics for Low, Medium and High VT Clusters

VT Cluster	Number of wards in the cluster	Mean	Std. Deviation	Coefficient of Variation (CV)
High	101	49.94	2.27	0.05
Medium	75	44.36	1.79	0.04
Low	51	37.93	3.12	0.08
Total	227			

Table 3.2: Co-Efficient Of Variation in Low and High VT Clusters

VT Cluster	CV	Sample Prabhag
High	0.05	3
Low	0.08	7
Σ		10

On the basis of cost and time considerations, it was decided to select 10 prabhags out of the 266 prabhags on which the 2012 data was available. Since the research problem focuses on why people do not vote, the sample should technically contain more prabhags from the low VT cluster as compared to the high VT cluster. In order to decide the ratio of prabhags chosen from low and high VT cluster, we used the Co-efficient of Variation of VTs. It is observed in the above table that the CV for high VT is nearly half of that for low VT cluster; this implied that the number of Prabhags from the low VT cluster could be almost double the number of Prabhags chosen from the high VT cluster. Hence, 7 prabhags were chosen from low VT and 3 prabhags were chosen from the high VT clusters.

Selection of number of sample Prabhag

The 51 prabhags in the low VT cluster were arranged in an ascending order and were classified into 7 intervals. From each interval, a prabhag was randomly chosen. In this fashion, 7 prabhags from the low VT cluster were chosen to represent the low VT areas in Mumbai. The prabhags should technically also show a robust geographical spread. If the chosen prabhags were too close to each other, only then purposive substitutes were given to the chosen prabhag so that a good geographical coverage would be attained.

Similarly, in order to choose 3 prabhags showing high VT, the high VT cluster was arranged in an ascending order and was classified into 3 categories. In each category, a prabhag was chosen randomly.

Following is the final list of low VT prabhags that has been chosen using this methodology.

1. Mumbadevi
2. Union Park (Bandra)
3. Swami Samarth Nagar (Andheri)
4. New Collector Colony (Malad)
5. Borivali TPS
6. Anushakti Nagar
7. Dharavi Transit Camp

Following is the final list of high VT prabhags that has been chosen using this methodology.

1. Datar Colony (Mulund)
2. Gavdevi (Bhandup)
3. Bholar Ghatla Village (Chembur)

Stage II: To Choose Number of Voters in Each Prabhag

In the next stage, it was necessary to understand how many voters would be chosen per prabhag. The number of voters in the ward was used as the basic frame to choose a sample. With 95 per cent confidence level and 3.5 per cent error of margin, a sample size 348 was chosen in each Prabhag. Thus, 380 sample voters with consideration of 15 per cent non-response (or loss of data) would be chosen in each prabhag for the interviews. This implies that total number of voters interviewed in 10 wards of BMC would be 3800 to 4000. If we consider total number of voters in BMC as the population frame, the sample size works out to be 4273 at 5 per cent level of significance and 1 per cent margin of error. Thus, the sample size of 4000 as chosen by us seemed to be sufficient.

Right-Hand Rule of Sampling to Identify the Household

An examination of the voter lists for the different prabhags reveals that the address of the voters is given in a very sketchy fashion, rendering it impossible to contact the voter using a systematic sampling plan. Hence, systematic sampling to identify the voter was not possible for this survey.

A simple right-hand rule was created to identify the household. Within each prabhag, 8 broad areas were identified. 48 households were to be identified through the right hand sampling method in each area and thus, a sample size of around 380 would be completed.

In the right hand sampling method, a household is randomly chosen as a start point. If the household is in a building, the enumerator is asked to move 10 buildings to her right to identify the next household. If the household is in a slum area, the enumerator is asked to move 20 houses to the right to identify the next house. In this fashion, the right hand sampling rule was employed to identify the household from which the respondent was to be identified.

Identifying the Respondent within the Household

Once the enumerator identifies the household, the next step is to enable him to identify the respondent within the household. One way of doing this is to use the Kish grid, which gives a good gender and age distribution over the sample. But, in many areas within the BMC, nuclear households are more the rule than the exception. In such cases, the Kish grid may not

be the best method to identify the respondent. Hence, a simple rule of identifying the respondent was created.

In the first household randomly selected, the enumerator was to take the responses from a voter who is ready to answer the questions. If this respondent was “Male” above 40 years of age, the enumerator was asked to interview “Female” above 40 years of age in the next interview. The third interview was to be held vis-a-vis “Male” below 40 years of age and the fourth vis-a-vis “Female” below 40 years of age. If such a respondent was not present at that time in the household, the enumerator would typically schedule an appointment and return for the interview. If a person with the required gender and age profile was not present in that household at all, then and only then was the enumerator allowed to look for a substitute respondent.

The voter survey in BMC was conducted from 3rd January 2017 to 12th January 2017.

CHAPTER 4 WARD-LEVEL DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE SAMPLE

This chapter outlines the ward level voter characteristics as observed during the course of the survey.

As has been mentioned earlier, 7 wards with low voter turnout ratios and 3 wards with high voter turnout ratios were chosen within the sample. The wards with low voter turnout percentages are Mumbadevi, Union Park (Bandra), Swami Samarth Nagar (Andheri), New Collector Colony (Malad), Borivali TPS, Anushakti Nagar and Dharavi Transit Camp. The wards with high voter turnout ratios are Datar Colony (Mulund), Gavdevi (Bhandup) and Bholar Ghatla Village (Chembur)

The following map shows the geographical spread of the wards.

Figure No. 4.1: Geographical Distribution of Wards Selected in the Sample



*Red dots denote the low VT Prabhags and the green dots denote the high VT Prabhags chosen in the sample.

The above map shows a very interesting trend. Most of the low voter turnout wards seem to be located on the western side of Mumbai whereas high voter turnout wards are located in the eastern part.

Following is the ward-wise voter turnout in the BMC 2012 elections

Table No.4.1: Ward-Wise Voter Turnout in BMC 2012 Elections

Ward No.	Ward Name	Ward	Total Voters	Total Votes in 2012 election	VT	Cluster
219	Mumbadevi	C	48225	14795	30.68	LOW
176	Dharavi Transit Camp	G/N	55366	18371	33.18	LOW
95	Union Park	H/W	52040	18737	36.00	LOW
55	Swami Samarth Nagar	K/W	44700	14528	32.50	LOW
136	Anushakti Nagar	M/E	54038	19758	36.56	LOW
147	Bholar Ghatla Village	M/W	46650	25850	55.41	HIGH
43	New Collectors Colony	P/N	39062	14983	38.36	LOW
14	Borivali T.P.S	R/C	51318	20152	39.27	LOW
110	Daatar Colony-CGS Quarters	S	48468	25292	52.18	HIGH
106	Gavdevi Bhandup (Tobinpada)	S	33433	17950	53.69	HIGH

Following table indicates the sample number of voters from whom responses were collected in every ward.

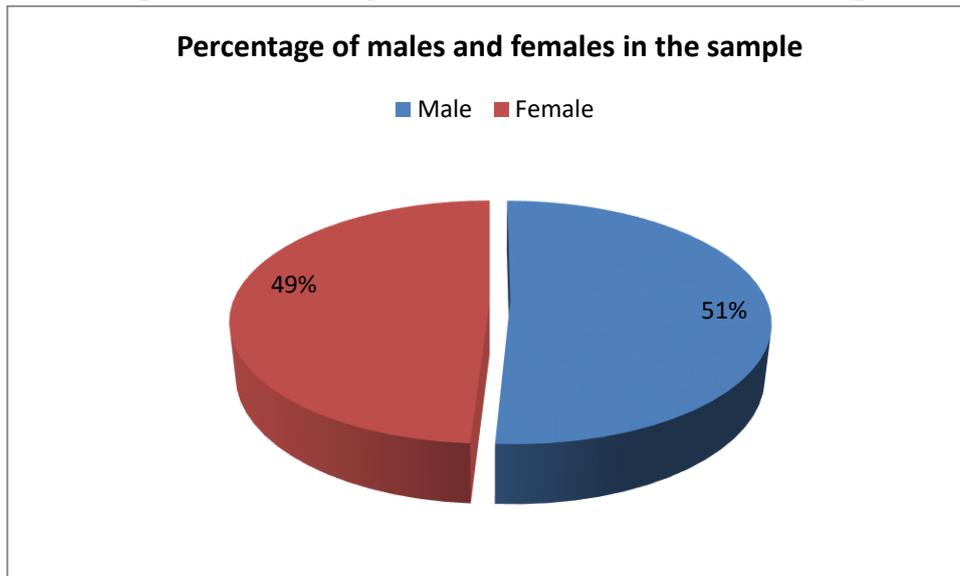
Table No.4.2: Ward-Wise Distribution of Number of Voters Covered In the Sample

Sr.No	Sample Ward	Sample Voters
1	Borivali	262
2	New Collectors Colony	313
3	Swami Samarth Nagar	151
4	Union Park	221
5	Gavdevi Bhandup (Tobinpada)	393
6	Daatar Colony-CGS Quarters	262
7	Anushakti Nagar	193
8	Bholar Ghatla Village	354
9	Dharavi Transit Camp	353
10	Mumbadevi	284
	Total	2786

Great emphasis was laid on getting both male and female voters to respond to the questionnaire. Typically, male voters may have different reasons for not voting or may have completely different perceptions about the BMC as compared to the female voters. Hence, it was important that no gender bias crept into the sample. The gender distribution within the sample is shown in the following table.

Table No. 4.3: Ward-Wise Gender Distribution within the Sample

		Ward * Gender Crosstabulation			
		Gender			Total
Ward		Male	Female	Other	
Borivali	Count	134	128	0	262
	% within Ward	51.1%	48.9%	0.0%	100.0%
New Collectors Colony	Count	178	135	0	313
	% within Ward	56.9%	43.1%	0.0%	100.0%
Swami Samarth Nagar	Count	64	87	0	151
	% within Ward	42.4%	57.6%	0.0%	100.0%
Union Park	Count	138	83	0	221
	% within Ward	62.4%	37.6%	0.0%	100.0%
Gavdevi Bhandup (Tobinpada)	Count	209	184	0	393
	% within Ward	53.2%	46.8%	0.0%	100.0%
Daatar Colony-CGS Quarters	Count	129	133	0	262
	% within Ward	49.2%	50.8%	0.0%	100.0%
Anushakti Nagar	Count	103	90	0	193
	% within Ward	53.4%	46.6%	0.0%	100.0%
Bholar Ghatla Village	Count	165	188	1	354
	% within Ward	46.6%	53.1%	.3%	100.0%
Dharavi Transit Camp	Count	180	173	0	353
	% within Ward	51.0%	49.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Mumbadevi	Count	118	166	0	284
	% within Ward	41.5%	58.5%	0.0%	100.0%
Total	Count	1418	1367	1	2786
	% within Ward	50.9%	49.1%	.0%	100.0%

Graph 4.1: Percentage of Males and Females in the Sample

Mumbai's cosmopolitan culture is reflected in the many languages that her citizens speak. The sample included a good distribution of people speaking different languages. This is shown in the next table.

Table No. 4.4: Ward-Wise Distribution of Mother Tongue Languages of Voters in the Sample

		Mother tongue													
		Marathi	Hindi	Gujarati	Tamil	Telgu	Kannada	Malayalam	Rajasthani	Punjabi	Bengali	Sindhi	English	Other	Total
Borivali	Count	134	44	58	2	3	5	1	3	0	1	0	2	9	262
	% within Ward	51.1%	16.8%	22.1%	.8%	1.1%	1.9%	.4%	1.1%	0.0%	.4%	0.0%	.8%	3.4%	100.0%
New Collectors Colony	Count	152	107	12	3	5	10	5	1	6	1	1	2	8	313
	% within Ward	48.6%	34.2%	3.8%	1.0%	1.6%	3.2%	1.6%	.3%	1.9%	.3%	.3%	.6%	2.6%	100.0%
Swami Samarth Nagar	Count	16	53	18	3	0	0	4	2	9	1	12	23	10	151
	% within Ward	10.6%	35.1%	11.9%	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.6%	1.3%	6.0%	.7%	7.9%	15.2%	6.6%	100.0%
Union Park	Count	117	71	7	1	4	2	2	1	1	2	1	5	7	221
	% within Ward	52.9%	32.1%	3.2%	.5%	1.8%	.9%	.9%	.5%	.5%	.9%	.5%	2.3%	3.2%	100.0%
Gavdevi Bhandup (Tobinpada)	Count	256	91	5	27	0	5	2	1	2	1	0	0	3	393
	% within Ward	65.1%	23.2%	1.3%	6.9%	0.0%	1.3%	.5%	.3%	.5%	.3%	0.0%	0.0%	.8%	100.0%
Daatar Colony-CGS Quarters	Count	182	13	27	8	1	5	5	4	2	1	4	1	9	262
	% within Ward	69.5%	5.0%	10.3%	3.1%	.4%	1.9%	1.9%	1.5%	.8%	.4%	1.5%	.4%	3.4%	100.0%
Anushakti Nagar	Count	47	75	44	4	0	2	2	1	3	0	4	3	8	193
	% within Ward	24.4%	38.9%	22.8%	2.1%	0.0%	1.0%	1.0%	.5%	1.6%	0.0%	2.1%	1.6%	4.1%	100.0%
Bholar Ghatla Village	Count	91	103	20	94	9	13	1	3	2	0	0	0	18	354
	% within Ward	25.7%	29.1%	5.6%	26.6%	2.5%	3.7%	.3%	.8%	.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.1%	100.0%
Dharavi Transit Camp	Count	165	123	30	9	2	3	3	4	3	2	1	4	4	353
	% within Ward	46.7%	34.8%	8.5%	2.5%	.6%	.8%	.8%	1.1%	.8%	.6%	.3%	1.1%	1.1%	100.0%
Mumbadevi	Count	104	110	45	1	6	6	0	0	1	0	1	1	9	284
	% within Ward	36.6%	38.7%	15.8%	.4%	2.1%	2.1%	0.0%	0.0%	.4%	0.0%	.4%	.4%	3.2%	100.0%
Total	Count	1264	790	266	152	30	51	25	20	29	9	24	41	85	2786
	% within Ward	45.4%	28.4%	9.5%	5.5%	1.1%	1.8%	.9%	.7%	1.0%	.3%	.9%	1.5%	3.1%	100.0%

Engagement levels of the populace with the local bodies are likely to affect voter turnout. It is likely that those people who have been residing in Mumbai for a long period of time enjoy a greater engagement with the BMC, whereas those who have recently moved in are not likely to have such engagement with the BMC. It is also likely that people who have resided in Mumbai for less than 5 years have not added their names to the BMC voters' list. The following table shows a ward-wise distribution of the sampled voters who have resided in Mumbai for less than 5 years, between 5 to 10 years and for more than 10 years.

Table No. 4.5: Ward-Wise Distribution of Number of Years of Stay of Voters within That Ward as Covered In the Sample

	No. of years of stay in the survey area			Total
	Less than 5 years	5 - 10 years	More than 10 years	
Borivali	26 (10%)	30 (11.4%)	206 (78.6%)	262
New Collectors Colony	21 (6.7%)	43 (13.73%)	249 (79.5%)	313
Swami Samarth Nagar	8 (5.29%)	10 (6.62%)	133 (88.07%)	151
Union Park	19 (8.5%)	22 (9.95%)	180 (81.44%)	221
Gavdevi Bhandup (Tobinpada)	19 (4.83%)	40 (10.18%)	334 (84.98%)	393
Daatar Colony-CGS Quarters	24 (9.16%)	23 (8.77%)	215 (82.06%)	262
Anushakti Nagar	5 (2.6%)	27 (13.98%)	161 (83.41%)	193
Bholar Ghatla Village	14 (3.95%)	34 (9.6%)	306 (86.44%)	354
Dharavi Transit Camp	13 (3.6%)	43 (12.18%)	297 (84.13%)	353
Mumbadevi	11 (3.87%)	24 (8.45%)	249 (87.67%)	284
Total	160 (5.74%)	296 (10.6%)	2330 (83.63%)	2786

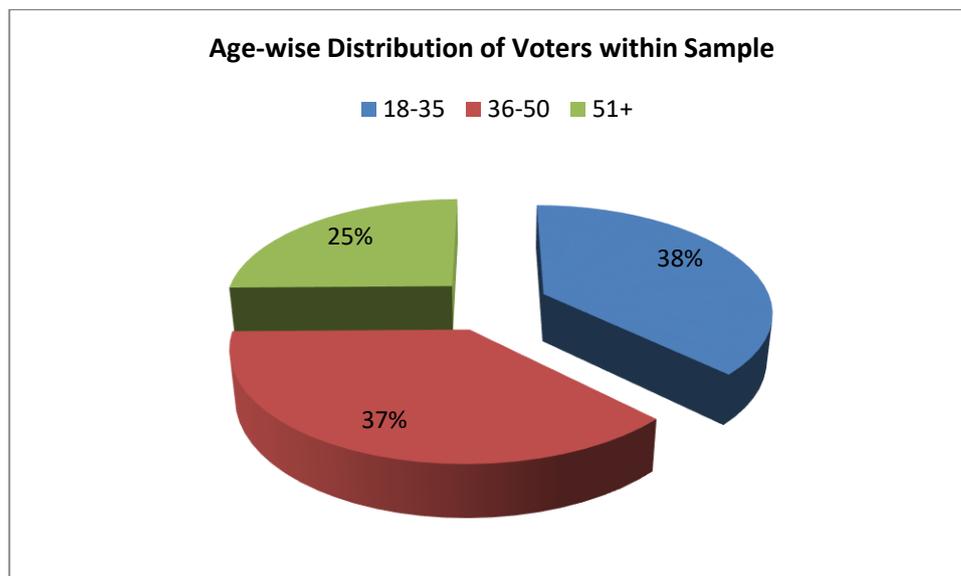
The table indicates that less than 10 per cent of the interviewed voters are new to Mumbai; in any ward selected (high or low voter turnout notwithstanding), one finds that the interviewed voters have mostly stayed in Mumbai for more than 10 years. Since the sampling plan and procedure was very carefully designed and implemented, one may say that this sample reflects the truth about the entire population within the selected wards in Mumbai. Thus, one may infer that in all of the wards, the average level of in-migration within past 5 years stands at about 5 to 6 per cent, which is a very small percentage. On an average, about 84 per cent of the population has been staying in Mumbai for more than 10 years. Now, if this information is collated together with the low voter turnout percentage, then it implies that there is a great

reluctance to vote. People reside in Mumbai for many years, but do not vote in the local body elections. This, by itself, is indicative of the urban apathy visible in Mumbai.

Generally, younger people tend to have higher expectations and lower engagement quotients vis-a-vis local bodies. Hence, it was important that the sample covers voters from different age groups. A ward-wise look into the education levels of respondents is given below.

Table No.4.6: Ward-Wise Distribution of Age of Voters Covered Within the Sample

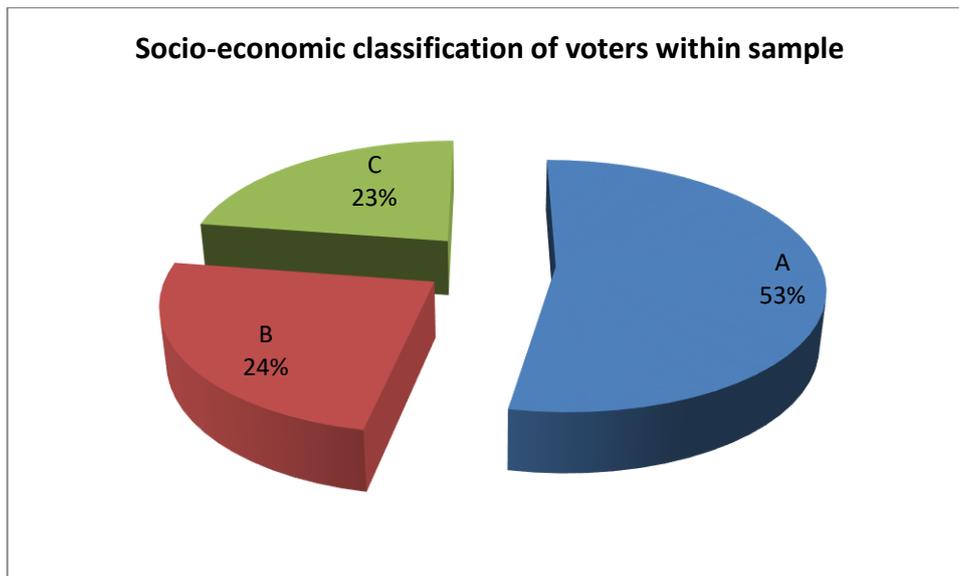
		Ward * Age Group Crosstabulation			
		Age Group			Total
Ward		18-35	36-50	51+	
Borivali	Count	103	104	55	262
	% within Ward	39.3%	39.7%	21.0%	100.0%
New Collectors Colony	Count	87	102	124	313
	% within Ward	27.8%	32.6%	39.6%	100.0%
Swami Samarth Nagar	Count	48	48	55	151
	% within Ward	31.8%	31.8%	36.4%	100.0%
Union Park	Count	121	69	31	221
	% within Ward	54.8%	31.2%	14.0%	100.0%
Gavdevi Bhandup (Tobinpada)	Count	137	152	104	393
	% within Ward	34.9%	38.7%	26.5%	100.0%
Daatar Colony-CGS Quarters	Count	96	94	72	262
	% within Ward	36.6%	35.9%	27.5%	100.0%
Anushakti Nagar	Count	62	77	54	193
	% within Ward	32.1%	39.9%	28.0%	100.0%
Bholar Ghatla Village	Count	141	140	73	354
	% within Ward	39.8%	39.5%	20.6%	100.0%
Dharavi Transit Camp	Count	126	146	81	353
	% within Ward	35.7%	41.4%	22.9%	100.0%
Mumbadevi	Count	121	109	54	284
	% within Ward	42.6%	38.4%	19.0%	100.0%
Total	Count	1042	1041	703	2786
	% within Ward	37.4%	37.4%	25.2%	100.0%

Graph 4.2: Age-wise Distribution of Voters within Sample

Finally, it is also important to understand the socio-economic classification of the voters covered in the sample. This study uses the “New Socio-Economic Classification (SEC) System” by the Media Research User’s Council (MRUC) to classify Indian households into different socio-economic groups. The new SEC model is heavily based on the Indian Readership Survey (IRS)’s model of using the education level of the main earner of the family together with the number of assets owned by the family to arrive at the socio-economic classification (SEC henceforth) of the respondent. The following table shows the ward-wise distribution of SEC of households from which voter respondents were selected.

Table No. 4.7: Ward-Wise SEC of Households from Which Voters Were Selected In the Sample

Ward	Socio-Economic Classification			Total
	A	B	C	
Borivali	140	68	54	262
New Collectors Colony	129	84	100	313
Swami Samarth Nagar	130	14	7	151
Union Park	138	46	37	221
Gavdevi Bhandup (Tobinpada)	179	125	89	393
Daatar Colony-CGS Quarters	195	51	16	262
Anushakti Nagar	133	32	28	193
Bholar Ghatla Village	89	111	154	354
Dharavi Transit Camp	169	94	90	353
Mumbadevi	176	54	54	284
Total	1478	679	629	2786

Graph 4.3: Socio-economic Classification of Voters within Sample

CHAPTER 5

VOTER BEHAVIOUR IN BMC

As has been mentioned in the introductory part of the report, the focal point of this study is to understand why people do not vote. To this end, it is important to understand voter attributes that either promote or deter voting. In this chapter, some voter attribute indices have been created on the basis of the information shared by the voter respondents during the field survey. For example, voters were asked questions about their participation in various political activities such as signing petitions, attending rallies and candle-light marches etc. Similarly they were quizzed about their interest in local politics. The answers to these questions allow the construction of a “Political Interest Index” of the voters. It logically follows that the more politically active voters may have a higher probability of voting. Thus, this chapter shows the construction of 3 major voter attribute indices, all of which could have a bearing on the eventual voter turnout percentage at the ward level.

5.1 VOTER ATTRIBUTE-INDICES

This section helps to understand the construction of three major Voter-Attribute Indices, all of which help in eventually analyzing voter turnout at a ward level. These three indices are:

1. Political Interest Index
2. BMC Engagement Index
3. BMC Ratings Index

The Political Interest Index (hereafter referred to as PII) helps us to understand how politically active the voter is. The index is constructed for each individual voter and the index numbers for voters within a ward are then averaged to understand the PII at a ward-wise level.

The BMC Engagement Index (hereafter referred to as BMC-E) helps us to understand the engagement quotient of the voters vis-a-vis the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation. The index too is constructed for each individual voter and the index numbers for voters within a ward are then averaged to understand the BMC-E at a ward-wise level.

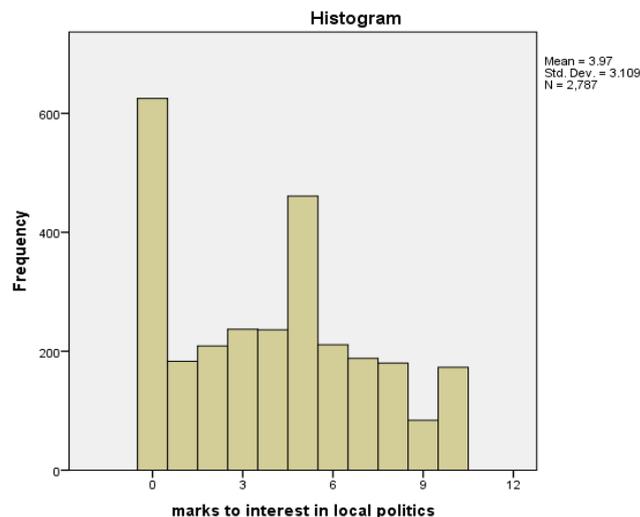
Finally, the BMC Ratings Index (hereafter referred to as BMC-R) helps us to understand how satisfied the voters are with respect to the different services provided by the BMC. This index too is basically constructed at the level of the individual voter and index numbers for voters within a ward are then averaged to understand the BMC-R at the ward-wise level.

The next section explains the detailed construction of the PII.

5.1.1 The Political Interest Index (PII)

In assessing voter turnout, the political interest quotient of the voters at an individual level could be a causal factor. How interested is the voter in local politics? This question was asked to the voter in the questionnaire and the voter was asked to self-assess her interest in local politics by giving a score from 0 to 10, with 0 indicating no interest and 10 indicating maximum possible interest. Graph 5.1 indicates that 22 per cent of the voters have simply indicated zero interest in politics. The average interest in local politics for Brihanmumbai works out to be 3.96. The score given by the voter herself on “interest in local politics” is treated to be Component 1 of the PII. The maximum value of this component is 10 and the minimum is 0.

Graph 5.1: Ranking given by voters to their own interest in local politics



Does the voter’s engagement with political processes end with him or her casting a vote? Or does the voter continually influence the political process by taking part in activities such as political rallies and demonstrations, signing of petitions, candle light marches etc.? Participation of the voter in these activities signals the readiness of the voter to engage more deeply with the local politics and hence gives a signal of the voter being politically active. On the other hand, reluctance to participate in such activities implies that political activism of the voter is quite low.

In order to gauge the political activism quotient of the voter, the questionnaire carried a menu of seven political activities that the voter may have engaged in the past or would be likely to participate in, in the future. Following is the question:

B1) In which of the following social/ political activities have you taken part in the past or are likely to take part in the future?

1. Sign a petition
2. Attend a demonstration

3. Take part in a candle-light protest
4. Attend a political rally
5. Volunteer for a political candidate
6. Write a letter to a newspaper
7. Call into a chat show on politics on TV
8. None of the above

The table 5.1 indicates the overall number of respondents who had participated in or were likely to participate in various political activities. It can be seen that nearly 72 per cent of the respondents have never participated in any of the activities at all and are not likely to do so either. This implies that the basic level of involvement of the BMC voter base with the political processes is fairly weak. 17 per cent of the voters have participated in (or are likely to participate in) a political rally, another 7.6 per cent have signed (or are likely to sign) a petition pertaining to a social or political cause and 7 per cent of the people have volunteered (or are likely to volunteer) for a political candidate.

Table 5.1: Number of Respondents in the Sample who have Participated in Different Political Activities

Respondents Who've Taken Part In The Activity Or Are Likely To Participate In It	Per Cent
Sign A Petition	7.61
Attend A Demonstration	5.02
Take Part In A Candle-Light Protest	5.24
Attend A Political Rally	17.73
Volunteer For A Political Candidate	7.14
Write A Letter To A Newspaper	4.13
Call Into A Chat Show On TV	1.61
None Of The Above	71.98

While constructing the PII, participation of the respondent in the political activities forms Component 2. The respondent scores one point if she participates in any one of the activities as given in Q. B1. Thus, the respondent gets a score of 3 in Component 2 (participation in political activity) if she has participated in 3 of the activities. The higher the engagement of the voter in the polity, the higher is the score in Component 2. The maximum value of Component 2 is 7.

Thus, the minimum value of Component 1 is 0 and maximum is 10. The minimum value of Component 2 is 0 and maximum is 7. The values in both the components are added to get the total score for each individual voter. This total score is then divided by 17 to get the PII. The

average value of PII so calculated for BMC stands at about 26; the same value is slightly higher for the PMC (31.45).

It is interesting to note that the Political Interest Index differs across age groups as well as genders. Following table elucidates.

Table No. 5.2: Age-wise distribution of Political Interest Index

Age	PII
18-35	27.16
36-50	26.15
51 +	24.83

Source: Field Survey

Thus, the PII value is maximum in the 18-35 age group. It is obvious that there is no major variation in the PII levels between different age groups. This is a worrisome trend and indicates that there is a uniform political disinterest across all age-groups in Mumbai. However, the younger population does show a slightly higher interest level than the other age groups. The next table shows the PII values for male and female voters.

Table No. 5.3: Gender-wise distribution in the Political Interest Index

Gender	Political Interest Index
Male	28.87
Female	23.41

Source: Field Survey

The Political Interest Index values for male and female voters are 28.87 and 23.41 per cent respectively. The overall interest in local politics or the tendency to participate in various political activities seems to be lower in women as compared to men.

5.1.2 The BMC Engagement Index (BMC-E)

Voter turnout could be also be impacted by the level of voters' engagement with the BMC. Higher the engagement quotient, more likely it is that people would come out to cast a vote for the local body. How can one assess the engagement quotient of the voters with the local body?

The questionnaire carried three questions which were pertinent in terms of assessing this issue. These are:

B3) How many times in the last 5 years have you visited the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation?

1. Never 2. 1-5 times 3. 6- 20 times 4. More than 20 times

B4) How many times in the last 5 years have you met with a Corporator (or any other official?) for a service required at a personal level?

1. Never 2. 1-5 times 3. 6- 20 times 4. More than 20 times

B5) How many times in the last 5 years have you met with a Corporator (or any other official?) for a service required at a ward level?

1. Never 2. 1-5 times 3. 6- 20 times 4. More than 20 times

These questions were designed to gauge how deeply the BMC features in the regular life of voters. If voters have never visited the BMC in the past 5 years, it implies that their engagement with the local body is at a minimum. Many voters tend to approach the local corporators for a service required at a personal level. For example, voters may seek the assistance of the local Corporator to obtain bed facilities in a hospital, or to resolve ward-level issues such as an overflowing garbage bin. Such contacts with the Corporators for services required at a personal or at a ward-level demonstrate some interface between the voter and the BMC.

The answers to the above three questions (B3, B4, B5) are used to assess the BMC Engagement Quotient of the voter. The answer “never” is given a score 0, the answer “1-5 times” is given a score 1, “6-20 times” is given score 2 and “more than 20 times” shows a high level of engagement and is given score 3.

Thus, the maximum score on each of the questions is 3 and the minimum is 0. Putting the three engagement activities together, the maximum score that a voter may additively get is 9 and the minimum is 0.

The score for each individual voter is worked out by simply adding the individual engagement scores. The voter score is divided by 9 (the maximum value) to derive the BMC Engagement Index (BMC-E).

Tables 5.7, 5.8 and 5.9 indicate that the engagement of the voters with the BMC has tended to be quite low on all three counts. 50 per cent of the voters have never visited the BMC in the past 5 years; 56 per cent voters never interacted with a Corporator for a personal issue; 64 per cent have never interacted with a Corporator for a ward level issue.

Table No. 5.4: How Many Times In The Past 5 Years Did You Visit The BMC?

	Frequency	Percent
Never	1405	50.4
1-5 times	1051	37.7
5-20 times	209	7.5
more than 20 times	121	4.3
Total	2786	100.0

Source: Field Survey

Table No. 5.5: How Many Times In The Last 5 Years Have You Met With A Corporator For A Service Required At A Personal Level?

	Frequency	Percent
Never	1571	56.4
1-5 times	1010	36.3
5-20 times	140	5.0
more than 20 times	65	2.3
Total	2786	100.0

Source: Field Survey

Table No. 5.6: How Many Times In The Last 5 Years Have You Met With A Corporator For A Service Required At A Ward Level?

	Frequency	Percent
Never	1799	64.6
1-5 times	762	27.4
5-20 times	149	5.3
more than 20 times	76	2.7
Total	2786	100.0

Source: Field Survey

Based on the answers to all the questions, the overall BMC-E was worked out for each individual voter. The average score of all voters within a ward was used to indicate BMC-E at the ward-wise level. The following table indicates the ward-wise BMC-E values.

Table No. 5.7: Ward-Wise Scores of BMC-E

Ward	BMC Engagement
Daatar Colony-CGS Quarters	12.38
Swami Samarth Nagar	12.95
Anushakti Nagar	14.74
Union Park	15.84
Borivali	17.47
Bholar Ghatla Village	18.90
Gavdevi Bhandup (Tobinpada)	19.37
New Collectors Colony	21.05
Mumbadevi	21.09
Dharavi Transit Camp	23.14
Average	17.67

It is extremely interesting to note that there is no obvious pattern to the BMC Engagement Index. The Engagement score is very high in Dharavi, which is a ward with low socio-economic classification; however, it is also very high in Mumbadevi, with a high socio-economic classification. The three high voter turnout wards i.e. Datar Colony, Bholar Ghatla Village and Gavdevi show varied levels of BMC Engagement. The average value of the BMC-Engagement Index works out to be only 17.67.

Table No. 5.8: Age-wise Distribution of BMC Engagement

Age	BMC Engagement
18-35	15.48
36-50	19.32
51 +	21.23

Source: Field Survey

As per the survey, most of the visitors to the BMC or the Corporators are voters aged 51 years and above; thus it is thus this age group that shows the highest BMC-Engagement scores.

Table No. 5.9: Gender-wise distribution of BMC Engagement

Gender	BMC – Engagement Index
Male	23.18
Female	13.39

Source: Field Survey

The above table indicates that male voters enjoy a much higher engagement with the BMC as compared to female voters.

Table No. 5.10: Marital Status and BMC Engagement of Voters

Marital Status	BMC- Engagement
Married	19.24
Unmarried	15.28
Others	15.16

Source: Field Survey

Married voters have a higher BMC engagement than other groups; of course, this might just be a reflection of the fact that age and BMC Engagement show a positive correlation. See table 5.12. The BMC engagement value for married voters stands at 19.24, whereas that for unmarried voters stands at 15.28.

Table No. 5.11: No. of years of residence in Mumbai and BMC Engagement

No. of years of stay in Mumbai	BMC- Engagement(Per Cent)
Less than 5	12.01
5 - 10 years	13.89
More than 10 years	19.37
Average	18.37

Source: Field Survey

Number of years of stay emerges as a major factor in affecting BMC Engagement levels. BMC engagement of the voters who have been residing in the city for more than 10 years is on the higher side (19.37) as compared to the voters who have been residents of Mumbai for lesser time.

5.1.3 The BMC Ratings Index (BMC-R)

Yet another factor that could influence voter turnout percentage could be the voter perception regarding services provided by the BMC. The BMC provides a plethora of services ranging from road maintenance, transport, schools, hospitals and fire brigades to parks and entertainment facilities.

The questionnaire asks the voter how frequently she uses each of 14 services provided by the BMC and asks her to rate the same on a scale of 0 to 10. Responses of non-users, intermittent users and regular users are given different weightages, with the responses of non-users getting the lowest weight and those of the regular users getting maximum weight. The maximum score possible for each of the services is 10; the maximum overall score is 140. The overall score of the voter is given a weight depending on whether the voter is a non-user, intermittent user or regular user, thus enabling the creation of the BMC-R Index at the individual level.

The following table shows that the overall satisfaction of voters in the sample in terms of BMC services stands at about 50 per cent. The table also gives a ward-wise break-up of the BMC-R.

Table No. 5.12: Ward-wise and service-wise scores of BMC-R

Ward	BMC Rating													Total
	Education	Transport	Road	Water	Drainage or Sewage	Electricity	Garbage collection and management	Sport	Entertainment	Telephone	Fire Brigade	Parks	Health	
Borivali	40.98	61.70	51.79	79.29	55.39	56.33	58.91	21.29	22.03	24.64	51.46	42.36	47.17	42.78
New Collectors Colony	29.22	46.65	43.86	62.62	44.77	65.50	54.51	17.23	12.64	20.84	36.56	24.65	34.16	33.53
Swami Samarth Nagar	42.94	58.18	43.29	74.45	51.80	79.02	57.28	37.47	37.97	43.76	38.20	52.97	57.11	48.77
Union Park	52.09	58.58	53.47	67.44	50.77	59.79	57.42	40.90	38.67	43.08	65.81	63.47	56.60	53.18
Gavdevi Bhandup (Tobinpada)	36.45	54.19	47.80	74.14	51.02	64.30	60.85	17.28	8.29	22.70	52.43	27.75	43.47	37.85
Daatar Colony-CGS Quarters	42.33	55.23	52.82	82.73	59.14	76.87	65.74	35.56	35.16	40.10	62.09	65.77	51.48	52.28
Anushakti Nagar	38.06	62.29	48.44	75.22	55.73	71.84	58.32	27.47	27.95	27.37	55.56	39.91	48.16	44.99
Bholar Ghatla Village	32.13	54.48	51.98	73.43	52.89	72.21	65.31	21.64	16.91	20.67	44.71	34.59	44.85	39.82
Dharavi Transit Camp	51.80	61.80	49.92	62.95	47.28	58.72	54.35	39.83	34.64	47.83	67.58	60.95	57.11	52.58
Mumbadevi	49.50	57.55	54.71	69.76	52.95	66.75	59.40	45.68	46.17	53.75	70.84	59.12	59.73	56.42
Total	40.99	56.47	49.78	71.49	51.68	65.81	59.27	29.18	25.85	32.94	55.11	44.51	49.11	45.40

As with the BMC- Engagement Index, no clear pattern in rating of the BMC services emerges at a ward-wise level. Thus, it doesn't seem to be necessarily the case that low satisfaction with BMC services causes lower voter turnout in certain wards.

Thus, this chapter shows the construction of three indices, namely, the PII, BMC-E and BMC-R indices, which reflect the interest of the voter in local politics, the engagement or association of the voter with the BMC and the satisfaction of the voter with the services provided by the BMC respectively.

The study finds mixed results. It is not apparent that the PII values in the low VT wards are low and those in the high VT wards are high. Neither is it the case that BMC Engagement or BMC ratings show distinctively different patterns in low and high VT wards. One of the reasons for lack of apparent patterns is the high level of heterogeneity that one finds within wards. Most wards in Mumbai have areas of affluent societies as well as those of shanties of slums clustered close to each other. This creates a lot of "noise" in terms of voter behavior and hence, the indices do not allow for clear patterns of voting behavior to emerge.

However, all the indices i.e. PII, BMC-Engagement as well as BMC Ratings show low values across all wards; this indicates the presence of reluctant and disinterested voters throughout all wards of BMC. Even if the data exhibits a lot of noise in terms of no clear patterns coming through, one clear conclusion of the exercise conducted above is that voter awareness programs will have to be run systematically across all wards, irrespective of whether it was classified as a low or high VT ward.

CHAPTER 6

RARE, INTERMITTENT AND REGULAR VOTERS

One of the decided objectives of the study was to identify those voters in Mumbai who are rare, intermittent and regular. Once the voters were identified by their voting behaviour, it would be easy to understand those attributes that promote or deter voting. This chapter outlines the methodology that was used so as to classify voters into rare, intermittent and regular.

CLASSIFYING VOTERS AS RARE, INTERMITTENT AND REGULAR

In order to classify voters into rare, intermittent and regular, the questionnaire carried the following questions:

Did you vote in the BMC 2012 elections? Y/N

Did you vote in the BMC 2007 elections? Y/N

Those voters who responded as having voted for both elections were classified as regular, those who responded that they'd voted in one of the elections were classified as intermittent and those who responded that they had not voted in both were classified to be rare.

However, these questions created responses with a heavy bias. When probed about the past two elections, nearly 70 per cent of the voters responded by answering that they had voted in both the elections. Given that the voter turnout in the 2012 elections was just 45 per cent, and given that the sample was being chosen in 7 low voter turnout wards and only 3 high voter turnout wards, it was obvious that there was a heavy response bias towards replying in the affirmative to the question on whether they had voted in the past two elections amongst the voters. A methodology was created to identify those voters who may indeed have voted in both the past elections in BMC.

Firstly, those who'd replied that they hadn't voted in both the earlier elections were classified to be rare. Also, those who'd replied that they had voted only in one of the past 2 elections were classified to be intermittent. The assumption was that there was no bias being observed in these replies.

Next, the attributes of the rare and the intermittent voters were examined. A very interesting trend came to light. It was found that the median Political Interest Index value for the rare and intermittent voters was less than 29.41. This was indicative of the fact that those people who voted rarely or intermittently would exhibit lower political interest.

Interestingly, some of the voters who'd claimed that they had voted in both the past elections too showed a PII value of less than 29.41. These were then re-classified as intermittent voters. Those voters who'd replied that they had voted in both the earlier elections and had a PII value of more than 29.41 were retained within the dataset as "regular" voters.

The following table indicates the final percentage of rare, intermittent and regular voters within the sample.

Table No. 6.1: How Regular are the Mumbai Voters?

BMC Voter Classification	Frequency	Per Cent
Rare	648	23.3
Intermittent	1081	38.8
Regular	849	30.5
Total	2578*	100.0

*This is lesser than the sample size because some voters were ineligible by age to vote and hence have not been classified.

About 30 per cent of Mumbaikars vote regularly, and another 23 per cent vote rarely. 39 per cent of the voters in Mumbai are intermittent voters. It is these 39 per cent that have to be reached through the voter awareness efforts and through innovative campaigns so as to convert them into the regular voting category.

Since voter awareness programs have to be targeted towards rare or intermittent voters, it is important to understand which categories of Mumbaikars are the ones with highest percentages of rare and intermittent voters. The following parts of this chapter show those categories of the Mumbai demographics in which a high incidence of rare and intermittent voters might be found.

Table No. 6.2: Gender-wise distribution of Rare, Intermittent and Regular Voters

Gender	BMC Voter's Classification(Per Cent)		
	Rare	Intermittent	Regular
Male	21.9	36.2	35.2
Female	24.6	41.5	25.6
Total	23.2	38.8	30.5

Source: Field Survey

Females are mostly rare (24.6 per cent) or intermittent (41.50 per cent) voters; hence the awareness campaign needs to focus more intensively on getting the women voters to vote. Only 25.6 per cent of the female voters from across all wards were found to be the regular voters as compared to 35.20 per cent males.

Table No. 6.3: Socio-Economic Classification and Rare, Intermittent and Regular Voters

Socio-Economic Classification	BMC Voter's Classification			
	Not Eligible by Age	Rare	Intermittent	Regular
C	8.7	25.8	32.5	33.1
B	6.8	18.7	45.5	29.0
A	5.6	22.1	46.4	25.9
Total	7.5	23.2	38.8	30.5

Source: Field Survey

The above table shows some interesting trends. The percentage of regular voters keeps increasing as we move from the voters classified as socio-economic classification “A” to “B” to “C”. It is in the A and B category that one finds maximum percentage of intermittent voters; it is thus obvious that the voter awareness campaigns will have to be run more intensively for the middle income and well-off groups in Mumbai. The proportion of rare voters in both the affluent (22.10 per cent) and low income group category (25.80 per cent) is found to be substantially higher.

Table No. 6.4: Age Distribution and Rare, Intermittent and Regular Voters

Age Group	BMC Voter's Classification(Per Cent)		
	Rare	Intermittent	Regular
18-35	37.1	24.8	18.1
36-50	16.2	47.2	36.5
51 +	12.9	47.2	39.8

Source: Field Survey

It is the elderly population of Mumbai which forms the most solid voter base, with 40 per cent of these voters getting classified as regular voters. Similar numbers are also observed for the middle aged voters. The truly worrisome voting percentages are seen in the youngsters of Mumbai, with only 18 per cent voting regularly and 37 per cent getting classified as rare

voters. Voter awareness programs will have to be specially designed to get the youngsters to vote in the BMC elections.

Table No. 6.5: Religion and Rare, Intermittent and Regular Voting

Religion	BMC Voter's Classification(Per Cent)		
	Rare	Intermittent	Regular
Hindu	22.5	37.5	32.5
Muslim	25.5	45.7	23.0
Other	30.3	38.8	23.7

Source: Field Survey

In Mumbai, when arranged by religion, one finds that the proportion of the regular voters is highest whereas the percentage of rare voters is the lowest amongst the Hindus.

Table No. 6.6: Mother Tongue and Rare, Intermittent and Regular Voting

Mother tongue	BMC Voter's Classification(Per Cent)		
	Rare	Intermittent	Regular
Marathi	17.6	40.7	33.2
Hindi	28.5	36.3	29.1
Gujarati	24.4	36.5	33.1
Other	34.3	32.9	22.4

Source: Field Survey

The proportion of regular voting amongst Marathi and Gujarati speaking people is much higher (33.20 per cent) as compared to regular voters of any other language, but the fence-sitters (intermittent) in this category are also sizable; 40.7 per cent of Marathi voters and 36.5 per cent of Gujarati voters are intermittent. The percentage of rare voters amongst voters speaking Hindi and other languages is the highest.

Table No. 6.7: Caste-wise classification and Rare, Intermittent and Regular Voters

Caste	BMC Voter's Classification(Per Cent)		
	Rare	Intermittent	Regular
Open	24.1	38.1	30.5
SC	20.6	40.1	29.4
ST	28.2	48.7	20.5
OBC	20.3	39.9	32.5
Other	23.8	42.5	27.5

Source: Field Survey

When arranged by caste categories, OBCs have the highest proportion of regular voters. They also show the lowest proportion of rare voters. But across all caste categories, the proportion of intermittent voters is substantially high.

Table No. 6.8: Period of Stay in Mumbai and Rare, Intermittent and Regular Voting

No. of Years of Stay in The Survey Area	BMC Voter Classification (Per Cent)		
	Rare	Intermittent	Regular
Less than 5 years	45.0	21.3	17.5
5 - 10 years	38.9	33.8	18.6
More than 10 years	19.7	40.6	32.9

Source: Field Survey

Period of immigration and the number of years of stay in Mumbai matters sharply in terms of impacting voting percentage. As one moves from voter classes which have been in Mumbai for less than 5 years to those who've been in Mumbai between 5-10 years to those who've been in Mumbai for more than 10 years, one finds an uncanny increment in the percentage of regular voters and a similar uncanny reduction in the percentage of rare voters. Clearly, the higher the number of years of stay in Mumbai, the more likely the person will be a regular voter.

Table No. 6.9: Marital Status and Rare, Intermittent and Regular Voters

Marital Status	BMC Voter's Classification (Per Cent)		
	Rare	Intermittent	Regular
Married	19.4	44.4	35.8
Unmarried	37.5	16.8	12.7

Source: Field Survey

35.80 per cent of those who are married and settled in the city are regular voters while 44.4 per cent of them belong to the category of intermittent voters; this is in line with voter studies elsewhere which suggest that married people tend to vote more regularly as compared to the unmarried people. 37.5 per cent of the unmarried people are rare voters and only 12.7 per cent are regular; unmarried people are also likely to be young and hence this trend again suggests that it is the youth population of the city which forms the reluctant voter base and has to be targeted through voter awareness programs.

Table No. 6.10: Voters with children and Rare, Intermittent and Regular Voters

Do You Have Children?	BMC Voter Classification (Per Cent)		
	Rare	Intermittent	Regular
Yes	18.6	45.1	36.1
No	28.0	43.2	25.8

Source: Field Survey

Voters with children are likely to have a higher engagement with the future of the city and hence are likely to vote more regularly. This thought is corroborated by data trends. People with children are seen to be regular voters and 36.10 per cent of them cast their vote regularly. However, about 45 per cent of people with children are also intermittent voters and 18.60 per cent rare ones. The voters without children are likely to be young voters; thus once again it is the young voter group that is seen to be the rogue group in terms of voter turnout.

Table No. 6.11: Educational Status and Rare, Intermittent and Regular Voters

	BMC Voter Classification(Per Cent)		
	Rare	Intermittent	Regular
Illiterate	9.9	60.5	28.4
Schooling upto Std. IV	10.0	65.6	22.2
Std. V to Std. IX	24.4	46.1	25.8
SSC to HSC	23.4	43.3	24.8
College Including Diploma, But Not Graduate	28.4	7.7	8.4
Graduate / Post Graduate, General	33.8	27.0	25.4
Graduate / Post Graduate, Professional	54.2	16.7	24.0
Total	27.2	36.5	23.5

Source: Field Survey

As the level of education increases, the voting percentage decreases. The percentage of rare voters amongst illiterates is 9.9 per cent, but the corresponding percentage of rare voters amongst Graduate or Post-Graduate Professionals is as high as 54.2 per cent. In the study, Post Graduate and Post Graduate General education has been defined to be education up to Ph. D. Level; Post Graduate Professional education includes CA, CS, Medical, Legal

professionals, Pharmacy, etc. It is thus the highly qualified voters of Mumbai who are the rare voters.

Thus, there are 4 key characteristics of rare and intermittent voters:

1. Female voters are seen to be rare or intermittent voters
2. The age group 18-35, despite a high Political Interest Index, has a large percentage of rare or intermittent voters
3. It is the high income groups within which the percentage of rare or intermittent voters is high
4. The highly educated people are rare or intermittent voters.

It is hence, amongst these 4 voter categories that voter awareness programs are truly needed. However, in order to reach to these categories of voters, it is also important to understand which media has a bigger reach vis-a-vis women, young people, high income groups and highly educated voters. The next chapter sheds light on the media penetration for these categories of voters.

CHAPTER 7

VOTER BASE AND MEDIA REACH

For designing voter awareness strategies, it is important to understand how to reach the intermittent voters, so as to persuade them to vote. One of the questions in the questionnaire was aimed at understanding how voters access political news; do they read newspapers, or do they listen to news on radio or do they watch it on TV? The following table elucidates.

Table 7.1: Voters' Frequency of Using Media Information / Political News

Frequency With Which Voters Catch News	Voters Reading Newspapers for news on politics	Voters Listening in to Political News on Radio	Voters Watching Political News on TV
Per Cent			
Never	21.4	74.9	6.5
Once a Week	11.3	8.5	5.5
Twice a Week	8.1	3.8	5.3
Thrice a Week	5.0	1.4	5.0
More Than Thrice a Week	2.7	0.9	5.0
Daily	51.6	10.4	72.90

Source: Field Survey

51.6 per cent of the voters read newspapers regularly for understanding news on politics while the proportion of those watching political news on TV daily is 72.90 per cent. However, hardly 10.4 per cent of the respondents listen to political news daily on radio; thus, it is TV and newspapers that come across as major media sources to reach out to the voters.

The same thing is observed if the data is sliced as per low and high voter turnout wards, as is shown below. Voter awareness programs have to be undertaken much more aggressively in low voter turnout wards; in these wards, TV and newspapers have the maximum reach, as is shown in the three tables given below.

Table No. 7.2: Reading of Newspaper by High and Low Voter Turnout

Ward Characteristics	Reading Newspaper (Per Cent)		
	Never	Sometime	Regular
High VT	19.4	18.5	62.2
Low VT	25.0	21.0	54.0
Total	21.4	19.4	59.2

Source: Field Survey

Table No. 7.3: Frequency of Listening Radio News by High and Low Voter Turnout

Ward Characteristics	Listening Radio News (Per Cent)		
	Never	Sometime	Regular
High VT	74.3	11.6	14.1
Low VT	76.0	13.5	10.5
Total	74.9	12.3	12.8

Source: Field Survey

Table No. 7.4: Frequency of Watching TV News by High and Low Voter Turnout

Ward Characteristics	Watching TV News (Per Cent)		
	Never	Sometime	Regular
High VT	6.7	10.2	83.1
Low VT	6.0	11.6	82.4
Total	6.5	10.7	82.8

Source: Field Survey

Another category of rare and intermittent voters is the women. Again, it is observed that TV is the best way of reaching the female voters; 81 per cent of women voters watch TV for political news regularly. Newspapers come a distant second with only 50 per cent of women using newspapers as a source for political news. Radio is again not an effective way to reach women for giving political news. The following three tables elucidate.

Table No. 7.5: Reading of Newspapers by Gender

Gender	Reading Newspaper (Per Cent)		
	Never	Sometime	Regular
Male	15.2	16.4	68.4
Female	27.7	22.5	49.7

Source: Field Survey

Table No. 7.6: Listening Radio News by Gender

Gender	Listening Radio News (Per Cent)		
	Never	Sometime	Regular
Male	74.6	12.3	13.1
Female	75.3	12.3	12.4

Source: Field Survey

Table No. 7.7: Watching TV News by Gender

Gender	Watching TV News (Per Cent)		
	Never	Sometime	Regular
Male	6.4	9.2	84.4
Female	6.5	12.4	81.1

Source: Field Survey

The study also indicates that it is the highly educated people amongst which the proportion of rare and intermittent voters is high. The following table shows the reach of media sources amongst education categories of Mumbaikars.

Table No. 7.8: Reach of News Papers, Radio and TV By education

Education	Reading Newspaper			Listening radio news			watching TV news		
	Never	Sometime	Regular	Never	Sometime	Regular	Never	Sometime	Regular
Illiterate	81.5%	7.4%	11.1%	80.2%	13.6%	6.2%	12.3%	22.2%	65.4%
Schooling upto Std. IV	37.8%	27.8%	34.4%	64.4%	20.0%	15.6%	11.1%	20.0%	68.9%
Std. V to Std. IX	41.7%	28.0%	30.3%	71.6%	16.6%	11.8%	4.4%	10.3%	85.2%
SSC to HSC	22.5%	20.4%	57.1%	77.1%	9.9%	13.1%	5.0%	8.3%	86.7%
College including diploma, but not graduate	9.0%	40.6%	50.3%	74.8%	11.0%	14.2%	3.9%	13.5%	82.6%
Graduate / Post Graduate, general	11.2%	22.1%	66.7%	81.4%	10.7%	7.9%	7.1%	12.7%	80.2%
Graduate / Post Graduate, professional	3.1%	22.9%	74.0%	77.1%	12.5%	10.4%	9.4%	13.5%	77.1%
Total	24.4%	24.2%	51.4%	76.4%	12.4%	11.2%	6.4%	12.1%	81.5%

Source: Field Survey

Note: N=Never, S=Sometime and R=Regular

As the level of education goes on increasing, the proportion of voters reading newspapers daily also increases. 66.70 per cent of the post graduate and 74.0 per cent of professional degree holder voters from the city read newspapers regularly whereas the proportions of these two categories of voters watching TV news are 80.2 and 77.1 per cent. Thus, TV and newspapers are again the preferred sources of political news for the highly educated people in Mumbai.

The study also finds that it is the young voters which are mostly rare and intermittent voters. The following three tables show a very interesting trend; the percentage of young voters who tend to follow political news regularly is lowest amongst all the age groups. Thus, young voters are not “regular” in terms of following news; however, amongst those who do follow it regularly, TV again emerges as the most powerful medium of reaching them.

Table No. 7.9: Reading of Newspapers and Age of voters

Age Group	Reading Newspaper (Per Cent)		
	Never	Sometime	Regular
18-35	22.1	27.7	50.2
36-50	22.9	17.4	59.8
51 +	18.2	10.0	71.8

Table No. 7.10: Listening to Political News on Radio and Age of Voters

Age Group	Listening Radio News (Per Cent)		
	Never	Sometime	Regular
18-35	75.2	12.6	12.2
36-50	73.9	13.4	12.8
51+	76.0	10.4	13.7

Table No. 7.11: Watching Political News on TV and Age of Voters

Age Group	Watching TV News (Per Cent)		
	Never	Sometime	Regular
18-35	6.5	13.2	80.2
36-50	6.6	9.7	83.7
51-60	6.1	8.5	85.3

Finally, the study indicates that rare and intermittent voters are mostly seen to be in the high income groups (Socio-economic classification A and B). It is again seen that TV and newspapers are the best way to reach this category of voters too.

Table No. 7.12: Reading Newspapers, Listening Radio and Watching TV News by Socio Economic Classification

Socio-economic classification	Reading Newspaper			Listening radio news			watching TV news		
	Never	Sometime	Regular	Never	Sometime	Regular	Never	Sometime	Regular
C	12.7%	17.1%	70.2%	76.5%	11.0%	12.4%	5.5%	9.9%	84.6%
B	25.8%	22.4%	51.8%	77.3%	12.1%	10.6%	4.0%	10.9%	85.1%
A	37.0%	21.6%	41.3%	68.5%	15.6%	15.9%	11.4%	12.4%	76.2%
Total	21.4%	19.4%	59.2%	74.9%	12.3%	12.8%	6.5%	10.7%	82.8%

Note: N=Never, S=Sometime and R=Regular

Thus, it is through TV and newspapers that voter awareness campaigns can go to the relevant intermittent voter groups in the most efficient manner.

CHAPTER 8

WHY PEOPLE DO NOT VOTE

As has been mentioned earlier, a low voter turnout has been the Achilles Heel of Municipal Corporation elections within the BMC. In the last 3 rounds of elections, the average voter turnout was seen to be only around 45 per cent. In a way, this implies that the Corporators who are elected to run the city are representatives of only half of the populace; this by itself undermines the process of true representation and democracy. But the matter is actually even more serious than this. If we assume that there are 5 candidates contesting elections and that each candidate gets exactly the same number of votes, then the 55 per cent voter turnout really implies that each candidate gets exactly 11 per cent of the votes. Now if one of the candidates is to get even 12 per cent of the votes, that candidate wins the elections with only 12 per cent of the voter base supporting him. Thus, with low voter turnout and more number of candidates in the fray, the winning Corporator eventually represents a very small proportion of the population, again raising issues of whether the democratic process creates true representation.

Thus, increasing voter turnout has become a key issue for the State Election Commission in the upcoming elections. In order to increase the turnout, it is firstly important to understand and analyze why people do not vote in the first place.

WHY DO PEOPLE NOT VOTE IN THE BMC?

The questionnaire used for the study contained a key question to understand the main research question: Why people do not vote in BMC elections. A menu of nearly 26 possible options was given to the respondents; and respondents were free to choose multiple options for answering why they do not vote. For those people who said that they've voted regularly or intermittently in the past, the question asked was why, in their opinion, do other voters not exercise their right to vote.

It is extremely important to note a sampling issue here. As has been mentioned in the chapter on sampling, a systematic sampling plan, wherein the enumerators of the study only interview selected voters from the voters list, was attempted but was seen to be infeasible in Mumbai, owing to the very sketchy addresses given in the list. Had the systematic sampling plan been adhered to, then the responses of only registered voters would have been recorded, since the selection of voters would have taken place from the voters' list. However, since this was infeasible, a right hand sampling plan was chosen wherein the enumerators had to choose respondents in a given locality by leaving out 20 houses between two respondents. *Now, in such a sampling plan, there is no way to guarantee that the voter so chosen is necessarily a registered voter.* And hence, the question about non-voting had to contain an additional option as the answer: My name was not in the voting list.

Selection of this option by respondents is also an interesting and worrisome fact by itself; the proportion of people selecting this option in the sample indicates the number of people who are not even registered as voters with the electoral authorities even if they are eligible to vote. However, it is of course possible to understand reasons for a low voter turnout; one only needs to classify the sample respondents into those who are registered voters and those who aren't, and then look at the reasons for non-voting amongst only the registered voters within the sample to get the top reasons for a low voter turnout.

Following are the top 3 reasons for people not voting in BMC elections:

1. Casting my vote has not changed anything so far (27%)
2. My name was not in the voter's list (25%)
3. All candidates are more or less of same quality (25%)

All the 3 reasons are associated with different aspects; the main reason is an apathy issue, whereas the second is an electoral process-related issue.

The study shows that it is 4 categories that the voting is rare or intermittent. These are:

- a. Age group 18-35
- b. Females
- c. High income groups
- d. Highly educated people

The reasons for not voting given by youngsters, female voters, high income groups and highly educated people exactly echo the top 3 reasons given above. Thus, the reasons given above seem to be the most important reasons for not voting recorded in the BMC.

If one is to segregate the voters by those whose name is in the voters' list, the top three reasons for low voter turnout in BMC elections emerge:

1. Casting my vote hasn't changed anything so far
2. All candidates are more or less of same quality
3. I didn't think my vote would matter

Now, all of the above reasons are connected to urban apathy. There is frustration, that one's vote has not managed to bring about any change in the past, and there's despondence, that one's vote does not really matter. Finally, there is also a lot of disappointment with the quality of candidates.

Thus, amongst the registered voters, it is mostly apathy that dominates the reasons for not voting.

CHAPTER 9

SUGGESTIONS TO THE BMC FOR ENCOURAGING VOTING

Given that the reasons for non-voting have been documented, voter awareness programs have to be now designed and targeted scientifically to convert non-voters into voters. The BMC was given the responsibility of creating an awareness program for getting voters added to the voters list. Similarly, it has been given the responsibility of creating an awareness regarding exercising the right to vote. Following are some of the suggestions which could help the BMC in these responsibilities:

- In the sample, 25 per cent of the respondents were not registered voters, even if they were eligible voters. Most non-registered voters respondents in these areas shared informally that the process of getting themselves registered as a voter was extremely tiresome and time-consuming. If the BMC could host a permanent election-kiosk online dedicated to sharing information with people pertaining to where they could get themselves registered and further setting up appointments so that it saves time and efforts for the people, it may encourage people to register themselves. The election-kiosk should function permanently, not just in the annual run-up to the election. Of course, this will help the cause of voter registration in the medium or long run and should not be seen as a measure of increasing voter turnout in the immediate, upcoming elections.
- For the upcoming elections, it is pertinent to note that it is the younger age-group between 18-35 in which the voting percentage is low. Voter awareness programs need to be run more intensively in colleges; street plays, posters, hoardings need to be put up in colleges and technical institutes.
- The children (if any) of voters belonging to the 18-35 age group are likely to be quite small and in pre-primary or primary schools. If the BMC could issue guidelines to schools to dictate a simple line such as “Vote for securing the future of your child” to children in the week prior to elections in the daily diary, the message will reach the targeted age group strongly
- Hoardings or any visual art work created for voter awareness should have special emphasis on the youthful voters and there should be dedicated artwork for encouraging women voters to exercise their right to vote
- Shopping malls, retail grocery centres such as Big Bazaar, ladies changing rooms in shopping malls could be used for displaying the posters urging women voters to exercise their right.
- Brand ambassadors for voter awareness campaigns could be women.

- It is the highly educated people who are rare or intermittent voters. Highly educated people are likely to be employed in high salary jobs within the industries in Mumbai. The BMC could request corporate bodies to host voter awareness programs on employee email networks. HR departments could be requested to host small reward programs for all employees showing the indelible ink mark on their finger the next day.
- It is also the high income groups which do not vote. BMC could request banks to send emails to HNI-depositors to sensitize them to the cause of voting. Similarly, BMC could use car showrooms for display of voting awareness posters to target the high income groups.
- The best way to reach any of those demographics which lead to rare or intermittent voting is through use of newspapers and TV as media.

CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSIONS

This report summarizes and analyzes the primary data on voter attributes obtained through the pre-election voter survey of Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation. The main research question around which this survey was conducted is why people do not vote in the Municipal Corporation elections. The data collection exercise was conducted in January 2017. The study not only helps in understanding the voter behavior in different wards and their attributes better, but also has immense value in terms of planning relevant policies for improving the voter turnout in Municipal Corporation elections. Following are the main findings of the study:

1. Looking at the ward wise voter turnout we find that the wards along western Mumbai, wherein the bulk of the development was initially concentrated, seem to have lower voter turnout.
2. Most wards are characterized by low Political Interest Index, low BMC engagement and low ratings for BMC services.
3. The study finds that 23 per cent of the voters in Mumbai are “rare” voters, 39 per cent are “intermittent” and 30 per cent are “regular” voters.
4. The 4 categories of the population which are rare or intermittent voters are voters in the age group 18-35, women, high income groups and highly educated people.
5. Voters in the age group 18-35 have a higher political interest quotient, but are largely rare or intermittent voters. Given their high interest in local politics, it should be easier to motivate this group to vote, through innovative voter awareness campaigns.
6. Women are rare or intermittent voters and should be motivated to vote. The study has come up with a number of suggestions to promote engagement vis-à-vis female voters.
7. High income and highly educated voters also tend to be rare or intermittent voters. The BMC can use innovative campaigns and partnerships with corporate bodies, banks etc. in order to reach this target audience effectively.
8. TV and newspaper campaigns would both be equally effective in reaching out to the target group of voters.

Thus, this study provides numerous insights pertaining to voter turnout, voter attributes, political interest of voters from different wards, BMC engagement of voters and their perception regarding quality of Municipal services. It also provides insights into attributes such as education, age, gender and caste-wise dynamics to explain the reasons for non-voting in BMC limits.

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Appendix A

Questionnaire on “Why people do not vote in Municipal Corporation elections”

- A1-1) Enumerator Name
- A1-2) Survey Start Time
- A1-3) Survey End Time
- A1-4) Date
- A1-5) Latitude
- A1-6) Longitude
- A1-7) Altitude

Questions pertaining to Voting

B1) How interested are you in local politics?(Give marks out of 10. 0 is minimum and 10 is maximum)

B2) In which of the following social/ political activities have you taken part in the past or are likely to take part in the future?

1. Sign a petition
2. Attend a demonstration
3. Take part in a candle-light protest
4. Attend a political rally
5. Volunteer for a political candidate
6. Write a letter to a newspaper
7. Call into a chat show on TV
8. None of the above

B3) How many times in the last 5 years have you visited the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation?

1. Never
2. 1-5 times
3. 6- 20 times
4. More than 20 times

B4) How many times in the last 5 years have you met with a Corporator (or any other official?) for a service required at a personal level?

1. Never
2. 1-5 times
3. 6- 20 times
4. More than 20 times

B5) How many times in the last 5 years have you met with a Corporator (or any other official?) for a service required at a ward level?

1. Never
2. 1-5 times
3. 6- 20 times
4. More than 20 times

B6) How would you rate the service provision done by the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation in the past 5 years? (Give marks out of 10 for the following services)**Education**

B6-1-1) How frequently have you used Education facility provided by BMC?

1. Regular 2. Sometimes 3. Never

B6-1-2) Give marks for the facility out of 10.

Transport

B6-2-1) How frequently have you used Transport facility provided by BMC?

1. Regular 2. Sometimes 3. Never

B6-2-2) Give marks for the facility out of 10.

Roads

B6-3-1) How frequently have you used Road facility provided by BMC?

1. Regular 2. Sometimes 3. Never

B6-3-2) Give marks for the facility out of 10.

Water

B6-4-1) How frequently have you used Water facility provided by BMC?

1. Regular 2. Sometimes 3. Never

B6-4-2) Give marks for the facility out of 10.

Drainage / Sewage

B6-5-1) How frequently have you used Drainage / Sewage facility provided by BMC?

1. Regular 2. Sometimes 3. Never

B6-5-2) Give marks for the facility out of 10.

Electricity

B6-6-1) How frequently have you used Electricity facility provided by BMC?

1. Regular 2. Sometimes 3. Never

B6-6-2) Give marks for the facility out of 10.

Garbage collection and management

B6-7-1) How frequently have you used Garbage collection and management facility provided by BMC?

1. Regular 2. Sometimes 3. Never

B6-7-2) Give marks for the facility out of 10.

Sports

B6-8-1) How frequently have you used Sports facility provided by BMC?

1. Regular 2. Sometimes 3. Never

B6-8-2) Give marks for the facility out of 10.

Entertainment

B6-9-1) How frequently have you used Entertainment facility provided by BMC?

1. Regular 2. Sometimes 3. Never

B6-9-2) Give marks for the facility out of 10.

Telephone

B6-10-1) How frequently have you used Telephone facility provided by BMC?

1. Regular 2. Sometimes 3. Never

B6-10-2) Give marks for the facility out of 10.

Fire Brigade

B6-11-1) How frequently have you used Fire Brigade facility provided by BMC?

1. Regular 2. Sometimes 3. Never

B6-11-2) Give marks for the facility out of 10.

Parks

B6-12-1) How frequently have you used Parks facility provided by BMC?

1. Regular 2. Sometimes 3. Never

B6-12-2) Give marks for the facility out of 10.

Health

B6-13-1) How frequently have you used Health facility provided by BMC?

1. Regular 2. Sometimes 3. Never

B6-13-2) Give marks for the facility out of 10.

In each of the following elections, did you cast your vote?

B7-1) Did you cast your vote in Loksabha2014 ?

1. Yes 2. No 3. I was not eligible by age

B7-2) Did you cast your vote in Loksabha2009 ?

1. Yes 2. No 3. I was not eligible by age

B7-3) Did you cast your vote in VidhanSabha2014 ?

1. Yes 2. No 3. I was not eligible by age

B7-4) Did you cast your vote in VidhanSabha2009 ?

1. Yes 2. No 3. I was not eligible by age

B7-5) Did you cast your vote in Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation 2012 ?

1. Yes 2. No 3. I was not eligible by age

B7-6) Did you cast your vote in Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation 2007 ?

1. Yes 2. No 3. I was not eligible by age

B7-7) In which booth did you cast your vote in BMC 2012 Elections?

B8-1) Did you feel proud about casting a vote in the 2012 BMC elections?

1. Yes 2. No

B8-2) Did you feel guilty about not casting a vote in the 2012 BMC elections?

1. Yes 2. No

B9) How was your voting experience in the 2012 BMC elections?

Enumerators to shuffle laminated cards and ask the respondent to choose and return the ones that are applicable. Enumerator will examine the numbers on the back of the returned cards and enter those numbers into the tabs.

B10) What were the main reasons for you not voting in the BMC elections? (Respondents may choose multiple options)

- a. I did not know where to vote
- b. My name was not in the voter's list
- c. My name was missing in the voters' list despite having received the voter slip
- d. Someone had already cast a vote on my name
- e. My name was in the voter list of a ward which was far too away from my current residence
- f. The long queue at the booth dissuaded me from voting
- g. There was a function/ ceremony in my family
- h. I/ family member was ill
- i. I was out of town
- j. I was too busy at work
- k. I did not get the day off from my job
- l. Taking the day off would have meant loss in income
- m. I had been intimidated or scared into not casting my vote
- n. I didn't know enough about any of the candidates to make an informed decision
- o. No candidate belonging to the party I support was contesting the elections
- p. No candidate belonging to my religion was contesting the elections
- q. No candidate belonging to my caste category was contesting the elections
- r. I didn't like any of the candidates or political parties
- s. I didn't think my vote would matter
- t. I wasn't concerned with the issues of the campaign
- u. I just wasn't interested in the BMC election
- v. I am handicapped and hence never vote
- w. None of the candidates was known to me?
- x. Casting my vote has not changed anything so far
- y. All candidates are more or less of same quality
- z. Any other (specify)

B11-1) What were the main reasons for you voting in the BMC elections? (Respondents may choose multiple options)

- a. I felt it was my duty as a citizen to participate in the local elections
- b. My colleagues and friends would have looked down on me, if I had not voted
- c. I knew that a particular candidate was very good and I wanted to bring him to power
- d. I wanted to cast my vote for the candidate belonging to my religion
- e. I wanted to cast my vote for the candidate belonging to my caste category
- f. Candidates or political parties visited my home to persuade me to vote
- g. All members in our social group (Ganesh Mandal, political group, school, Bachat Gat) decided to vote
- h. I didn't want anyone else to cast a vote on my name
- i. It is very convenient to vote as the booth is very close to my home
- j. My employer gave the day-off specifically so that the employees could
- k. Any other (specify)

B11-2) In your opinion, what are the reasons for people not voting in the BMC election?

- a. I did not know where to vote
- b. My name was not in the voter's list
- c. My name was missing in the voters' list despite having received the voter slip
- d. Someone had already cast a vote on my name
- e. My name was in the voter list of a ward which was far too away from my current residence
- f. The long queue at the booth dissuaded me from voting
- g. There was a function/ ceremony in my family
- h. I/ family member was ill
- i. I was out of town
- j. I was too busy at work
- k. I did not get the day off from my job
- l. Taking the day off would have meant loss in income
- m. I had been intimidated or scared into not casting my vote
- n. I didn't know enough about any of the candidates to make an informed decision
- o. No candidate belonging to the party I support was contesting the elections
- p. No candidate belonging to my religion was contesting the elections
- q. No candidate belonging to my caste category was contesting the elections
- r. I didn't like any of the candidates or political parties
- s. I didn't think my vote would matter
- t. I wasn't concerned with the issues of the campaign
- u. I just wasn't interested in the BMC election
- v. I am handicapped and hence never vote
- w. None of the candidates was known to me?
- x. Casting my vote has not changed anything so far
- y. All candidates are more or less of same quality
- z. Any other (specify)

B-12) What, in your opinion, could be done by the following stake holders to increase voter turnout in the upcoming BMC elections?

B12-a) Candidates

B12-b) Political Parties

B12-c) Media

B12-d) State Election Commission

B13) How likely are you to cast your vote in the upcoming 2017 BMC elections? Respondent to indicate percentage.

B14) Assume that the quality of candidates contesting in the 2017 BMC elections is extremely good. Now how likely are you to cast your vote in the upcoming 2017 BMC elections? Respondent to indicate a number on the scale 0 to 10. (10 indicates 100% chance and 0 indicates no probability)

B15-1) Which of the following attributes would you like to see in the candidate representing you? Choose only three attributes.

- a. Should be accessible
- b. Should be able to drive ward-level developmental projects
- c. Should be non-corrupt
- d. Should not have criminal history
- e. Should be a degree holder candidate
- f. Should have good leadership skills
- g. Should be less than 40 years of age
- h. Should meet people in the ward regularly to understand ward-level issues

B16) Would the chances of you casting a vote increase if :

1. You received a reminder the earlier evening.
2. You received a reminder on the morning of the voting day.
3. The timings of the poll were extended upto 9:00 p.m.
4. You were consulted about ward level issues by the candidates prior to the voting
5. You were allowed to cast your vote on the internet.
6. The election were to be held on a holiday / non-working day.

Basic Information

A1) Respondent Name

A2) Ward Number

A3) Address

A4-1) Mobile / Landline Phone

1. Yes
2. No

A4-2) If yes, then Number

A4-3) If no then name of person who know you

A4-4) If no then number of person who know you

A5-1) Identification Number

1. Aadhar Card
2. PAN Card
3. Driving License
4. Election Card
5. Any Other

A5-2) Card Number

A6) Age

A7) Gender

1. Male 2. Female 3. Other

A8) Which religion do you follow?

1. Hindu 2. Muslim 3.Sikh 4. Christian
5. Buddhist 6. Parsi 7.Jain 8. Other (Specify)

A9-1) Category

1. Open 2. SC 3.ST 4.OBC 5. Other (Specify)

A9-2) Mother tongue

1. Marathi 2. Hindi 3.Gujarati 4.Tamil 5. Telugu
6. Kannada 7. Malayalam 8.Rajasthani 9.Punjabi 10. Bengali
11. Sindhi 12. English 13. Other

A10) What is your marital status?

1. Married 2. Unmarried 3. Living with someone, but unmarried
4. Divorced / Separated 5. Widowed

A11) Do you have children?.

1. Yes 2. No

A12) No. of years of stay in the survey area

1. Less than 5 years 2. 5 - 10 years 3. More than 10 years

A16) Who is the main earner of the family?

1. Myself 2. Father 3.Mother 4. Grandfather
5. Grandmother 6. Uncle 7.Aunt 8. Brother
9. Sister 10. Cousin 11. Other (specify)

A17) Upto what level has the main earner of the family studied?

1. Illiterate
2. Schooling upto Std. IV
3. Std. V to Std. IX
4. SSC to HSC
5. College including diploma, but not graduate
6. Graduate / Post Graduate, general
7. Graduate / Post Graduate, professional

A13) Education of the respondent

1. Illiterate
2. Schooling upto Std. IV
3. Std. V to Std. IX

4. SSC to HSC
5. College including diploma, but not graduate
6. Graduate / Post Graduate, general
7. Graduate / Post Graduate, professional

A18) What is your main occupation?

1. Student
2. Housewife
3. Retired
4. Unemployed
5. Daily wage earner / Labour
6. Salaried job
7. Business
8. Trader / Trading agency
9. Self-employed professional
10. Other (pl specify)

A19) In which year did you attempt the Std X exam?.

A20) How regularly do you read the newspapers?

- | | | |
|------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Never | 2. Once a week | 3. Twice a week |
| 4. Thrice a week | 5. More than thrice a week | 6. Daily |

A21) How regularly do you listen to news on radio?

- | | | |
|------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Never | 2. Once a week | 3. Twice a week |
| 4. Thrice a week | 5. More than thrice a week | 6. Daily |

A22) How regularly do you watch news on TV?

- | | | |
|------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Never | 2. Once a week | 3. Twice a week |
| 4. Thrice a week | 5. More than thrice a week | 6. Daily |

A23) How often do you offer prayers/ Pooja/ Namaz?

- | | | |
|------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Never | 2. Once a week | 3. Twice a week |
| 4. Thrice a week | 5. More than thrice a week | 6. Daily |

A24) Items owned/ have access to at home

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Electricity connection | 6. Refrigerator |
| 2. Ceiling fan | 7. Washing Machine |
| 3. LPG stove | 8. Personal Computer/ Laptop |
| 4. Two wheeler | 9. Car/ Jeep/ Van |
| 5. Colour TV | |
| 10. Air Conditioner | |
| | 11. Agricultural land owned |