

# Political Communication and Public Opinion formation: With Reference to Chhattisgarh Legislative Assembly Election 2018

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**Abstract:** Election is the epicentre of democracy in which the leader is elected by the public. During the election, all political parties get involved in political communication to do the voter in their favour. They create public opinion through communication. Public Opinion is the opinion of the general public. In the Chhattisgarh Assembly Elections 2018, political parties and candidates are using various tools and strategies to create public opinion.

The main objective of the study is to find out the effect of political communication in public opinion formation. For the study, 60 voters from Patan and Bhilai assembly constituencies were selected in a random manner as per the objective. Data is collected by interview and media reports.

The analysis shows that the political parties and candidates are adopting different means of communication in their favour. Personal contact is being considered more effective in assembly elections. WhatsApp and direct mobile conversation were also popular. Inter-person communication brings revenge in the publicity of voters.

**Key Words:** Political Communication and Public Opinion Formation, Inter-Person Communication.

## 1. Background:

Election is the epicentre of democracy in which the leader is elected by the public. During the election, all political parties get involved in political communication to do the voter in their favour. They create public opinion through communication. Political parties and candidates work hard to build public opinion. For this, they use various tools and strategies. Twenty first century is known as communication revolution. Currently, mass communication is at its peak, where information on social media becomes viral at a rapid pace. During the elections, political parties and leaders have also used it effectively. It is said that circumstances change. History also repeats itself. In the midst of this new communication revolution, during the assembly elections, political parties and leaders are again moving towards inter-person communication. In the Chhattisgarh Assembly Elections 2018 also, political parties and candidates have used various means and strategies to create public opinion, including intra-person communication. In the presented research, an attempt has been made to highlight the role of political communication in public opinion during elections.

## 2. Political Communication:

Communication is a two-way process in which thoughts, experiences, facts and influences are transmitted between two or more people. Politics is also not possible without communication. Communication for politics is known as political communication. Political communication stimulates the negotiation of political interests, thus making the political process meaningful.

There are three main ways of implementing political communication:

1. Mass Media.
2. Communication takes place through political parties.
3. Communication through informal channels.

## 3. Public opinion:

It is not possible to define any clear concept of public opinion in any wide and diverse society, but we can broadly say that equality and collectively in individual thoughts, attitudes and beliefs on any subject is public opinion.

Public opinion has special importance in democracy. The importance of public opinion can be seen in the following points:

- Public opinion is an important element in every type of governance.
- The judiciary has the effect of public opinion.
- The executive cannot ignore public opinion.
- Continuous control over the Legislature is possible only through public opinion.
- Public opinion is the basic foundation of democratic governance.

- People's fundamental rights are protected by public opinion.
- Government is also guided by public opinion.

#### 4. Interpersonal communication:

It is a type of communication in which communicator and recipient face to face each other. Interpersonal communication is a two-way process. It involves exchange of thoughts, feelings and information between two people. Feedback has an important place in inter-personal communication. Interviews, official conversations, news compilation etc. are examples of personal communication. Inter-personal communication is the basis of social relationships. Chatting on telephone, e-mail or social networking sites comes under inter-personal communication. Generally, the conversation between two people is placed in the category of inter-personal communication, but some communication scientists consider the conversation between three to five people in the same category.

The salient features of inter-personal communication are as follows:

- Get feedback immediately and better.
- There is confidentiality in the conversation.
- There is a direct connection between the person delivering the message and the person receiving the message.
- The communicator has ample opportunity to influence the receiver.
- Communicators and recipients are very close to each other physically and emotionally.  
In case of disagreement on something, the recipient can understand the communication of the communicator.
- Speech and non-verbal signals are used to send messages.

#### 5. Related Review of Literature:

Tabarez Ahmed Neyaji (2018) has highlighted the diversity and complexity of understanding the changing dynamics of political communication, rather than viewing the media as a singular entity that shapes and interacts with the news media, political parties and the public. Is in the form of a conversation between To understand the complexities of the emerging hybrid media environment and the future of the movement, the emphasis is also on working together in print, television and digital media, rather than separate from each other.

Radhika Kumar (2017) Political communication refers to the context of interaction between political leaders and the public. One such strategy of communication and movement for democratic politics in India is generally 'padayatra', while being traditional; it also has a spiritual lineage.

Saifuddin Ahmed, Kokil Zaidka and Jeho Cho (2016) Twitter, a popular social media platform, has emerged as a major political communication and campaign tool. This study examines the use of Twitter as a campaign tool during the 2014 Indian general elections, which was the country's first experiment to use social media for political campaigns.

Rahul K. (2016) from e-mailing and e-commerce to e-governance, the Internet has brought us on a single platform that supersedes time and space constraints. Social engagement in socio-political activities and active participation of people in the political agenda has also increased through viral use of social media and networking.

Mati V., Khandoba PK, Guru MC (2015) in their study on the extent of social media by political parties to promote their image and political messages among their supporters and people in social media Checked usage. It was studied based on the responses received from 100 respondents in the Hyderabad Karnataka region. The results reveal interesting information on the types of social media that use the most commonly used social media ratings and their impact on society.

Rune Slothus (2015) has studied the influence of political parties in building public opinion. In this direction, challenges to political parties have been highlighted.

The study by Meyerhoffer (2014) made it clear that opinion polls are an integral part of political communication because they serve as an input factor for the political reporting of media, along with the message of both politicians and their spokespersons.

#### 6. Objectives:

The main objective of the study is to study the effect of political communication in the formation of public opinion with special reference to Chhattisgarh Assembly Elections 2018. In this context, the following objectives have been set:

- To study the report published in the newspaper in the context of campaigning conducted by the candidates during the Chhattisgarh Assembly Elections 2018.
- To study the means adopted by political party and candidates in Patan and Bhilainagar assembly.
- To study the effect of inter-personal communication in public opinion formation during election 2018.

### Sample:

For the study, 60 voters from Patan and Bhilai assembly constituencies were selected in a purposive random manner as per the objective. Both female and male voters were included.

### Methodology:

The presented research is based on content analysis and survey method.

### Data Collection:

Primary and secondary data have been collected for the purpose. Interview was used for the primary data and the report published in the newspaper was collected during the year 05-19 November 2018 as a secondary data. Results have been obtained by analyzing published reports and interactions.

## 7. Results and Analysis:

### Analysis of Report Published in Newspapers:

These days, the media is coloured in electoral colour. Under the media, national-level Hindi newspapers published from Chhattisgarh have been selected. It is clear from the observation of newspapers that all the newspapers have given more attention to the news related to the star campaigners on the first page. Most of the news is related to propaganda by political parties. Election hinges - comment was found on the editorial page. In the Durg-Bhilai edition, there is news of personal campaigning done by the candidates of the Legislative Assembly related to the district. All news papers highlighted public relations, meetings, meetings and rallies held. Social media and WhatsApp were also mentioned.

### Means of Campaigning in Patan and Bhilainagar Assembly:

In the Assembly elections, the candidates have left no stone unturned to campaign. The candidates used all the means of publicity available to them. The main struggle was between the Congress and the BJP in Patan and Bhilainagar assembly. The candidates used Face book, Twitter, WhatsApp to canvassing and public opinion formation and also tried folk dance and Madai, Bazaar-Haat. Set a record of walking and personal contact. It is mentioned in the newspapers that which candidate used the vehicle in the election campaign. The election spending limit kept the candidates under control. The election spending limit kept the candidates under control. In Bhilainagar Assembly; Devendra Yadav of Congress used 19 vehicles for campaigning while Prem Prakash Pandey of BSP used 09 vehicles. Chhattisgarh candidate has taken permission for 41 vehicles and AAP candidate 03 for publicity.

Patan Assembly, Bhupesh Kumar Baghel of Congress used 07 vehicles for campaigning while Motilal Sahu of BJP used 21 vehicles. Chhattisgarh candidate Shankulata Sahu has taken permission for 38 vehicles and AAP candidate Durga Jha for publicity.

BJP candidate from Bhilai Nagar, Prem Prakash Pandey, met with Gardon and the people working out in the stadium separately in the morning. Congress candidate Devendra Yadav used to meet youth, sportspersons and elders at the sports ground in Boria every morning. Devendra Yadav has done public walking by walking 30 to 35 km daily. In the Patan Legislative Assembly, Bhupesh Baghel preached the first round in 167 villages. He visited door to door. He gave great importance to the small nook. Moti Lal Sahu gave important place to cultural programs for promotion. In the first round, Bhupesh held 50 meetings, while Motilal Sahu held 250 meetings.

Khadke and Rahul Gandhi are the main star campaigners of the Congress for Bhilai Nagar and Patan Vidhan Sabha, and then Yogi and Amit Shah become the chief star campaigners of the BJP.

All candidates should be active on social media. Rahul Gandhi's WhatsApp and direct mobile conversations were also popular.

## 8. Effects of Inter-Personal Communication on Public Opinion during Election 2018:

In the public opinion, an attempt has been made to know the effect of inter-personal communication by interview. The interaction was taken from the voters of Patan and Bhilainagar assembly. The following are related to interview:

- Who is contesting elections from your Congress party?  
In response to this question, 30 out of 30 voters of Patan assembly said that Bhupesh Baghel is contesting from the Congress party. All the voters of Bhilainagar assembly also said that Devendra Yadav is from the Congress party.
- Who is contesting from BJP party?  
In response to this question, only 15 out of 30 people of Patan assembly gave full name. 10 people only said surname. 05 said no Forgot name. All the voters of Bhilainagar assembly also named Prem Prakash Pandey.
- Who is contesting from AAP party?

In response to this question, only 08 out of 30 of Patan assembly named. The rest said, I don't know. The voters of Bhilainagar Assembly also reacted in a similar manner.

- Who is contesting from BSP?

In response, only 10 out of 30 of Patan assembly had information. The voters of Bhilainagar Assembly also reacted in a similar manner.

- Which party is the wave this time?

In response to this question, both the Patan and Bhilainagar assembly members said that they cannot say anything.

- What is your opinion about the candidate of the Congress Party?

In response to this question, people gave positive opinion about Bhupesh Baghel of Patan Vidhan Sabha and said that from here on, Bhupesh Baghel needs as much. The voters of Bhilainagar Assembly reacted mixedly. But the trend of youth was towards Devendra Yadav. Everyone knew that Devendra Yadav is the Mayor of Bhilai.

- What is your opinion about the candidate of the BJP party?

In response to this question, most people of Patan assembly said that Moti Lal Sahu does not know well. Everyone knew that Prem Prakash Pandey is a minister. But some people feared victory. When asked what your opinion about AAP candidate is, most of the people of both the assembly constituencies said they do not know.

When asked what your opinion about the candidate of BSP / Chhattisgarh party, most people of both Patan Vidhan Sabha and Bhilainagar said they do not know.

- Can an Independent candidate win the election this time?

In response to this question, most of the people of both the assembly constituencies have no independent candidate.

Has any candidate contacted you?

- In response to this question, 26 out of 30 of Patan assembly said that his son-son of Bhupesh Baghel had come home to meet him but 10 people said that Bhupesh Baghel has also met Baghel. The people of Bhilainagar assembly said that workers of BJP and Congress had come home. Some said they have met Devendra Yadav before. People said that the BSP / Chhattisgarh candidates and workers had also come.

- What was the experience after meeting the candidate?

On this, all the people of Patan assembly said that it was very nice to meet Baghel's son and daughter. They had good behaviour. The people of Bhilainagar Assembly were also positivity react towards Yadav.

This time the Election Commission had observed expenses, due to which public relations was done in the assembly elections. The public opinion about the candidates who made personal contact has been seen positively. Inter-personal communication became possible through personal contact. Information related to the interaction of voters shows the importance of personal communication.

## 9. Conclusion:

It is important to connect with the public in elections. Dialogue is necessary to connect with the public. Only then public opinion can be done in your favour. Inter personal communication is like a radar which plays an effective role in generating opinion at the time of elections.

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