

# Contesting Municipal Elections: Motivations & Strategies

(A Study of Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation Elections 2012 and 2017)

Report of a Research Project  
Undertaken by

**Mr. Sanjay Patil**

Under the Guidance of  
**Professor Surendra Jondhale**  
Department of Civics & Politics  
University of Mumbai

*An Initiative of*  
Institute of Democracy, Elections and Good Governance



A Wing of  
State Election Commission, Maharashtra  
2017

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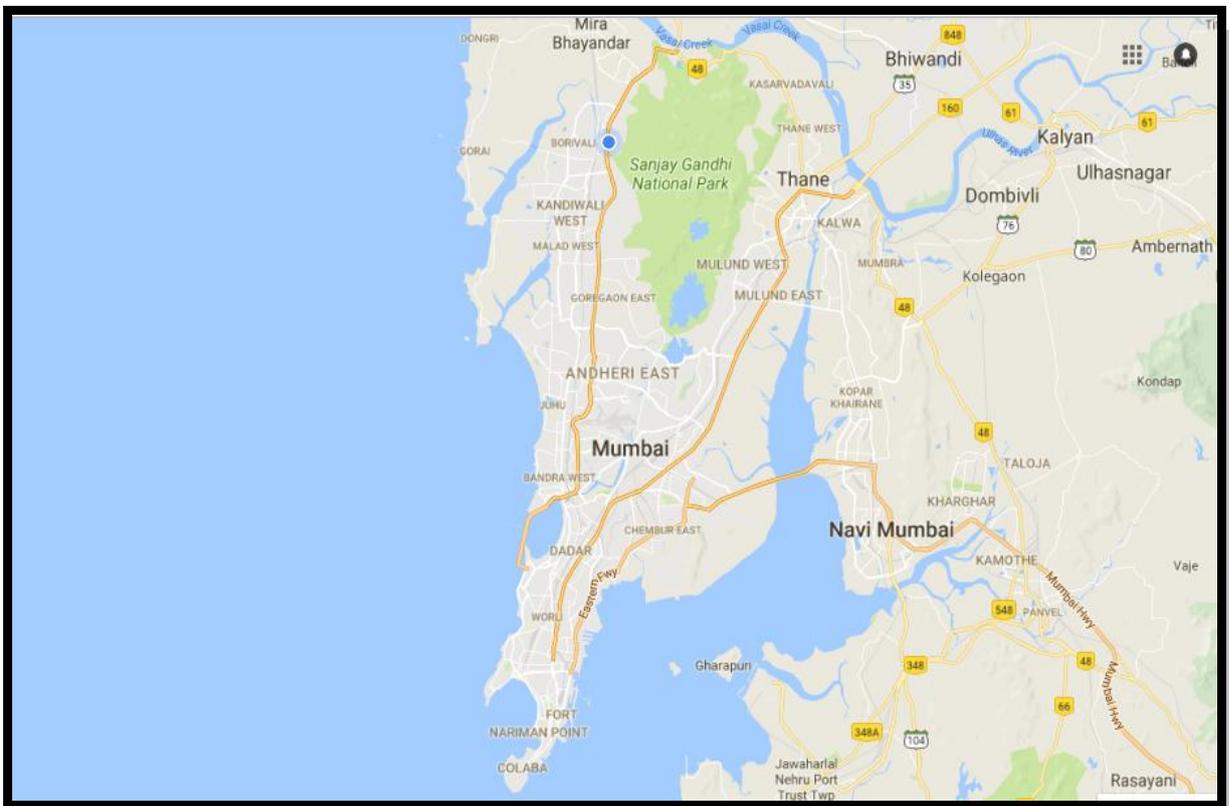
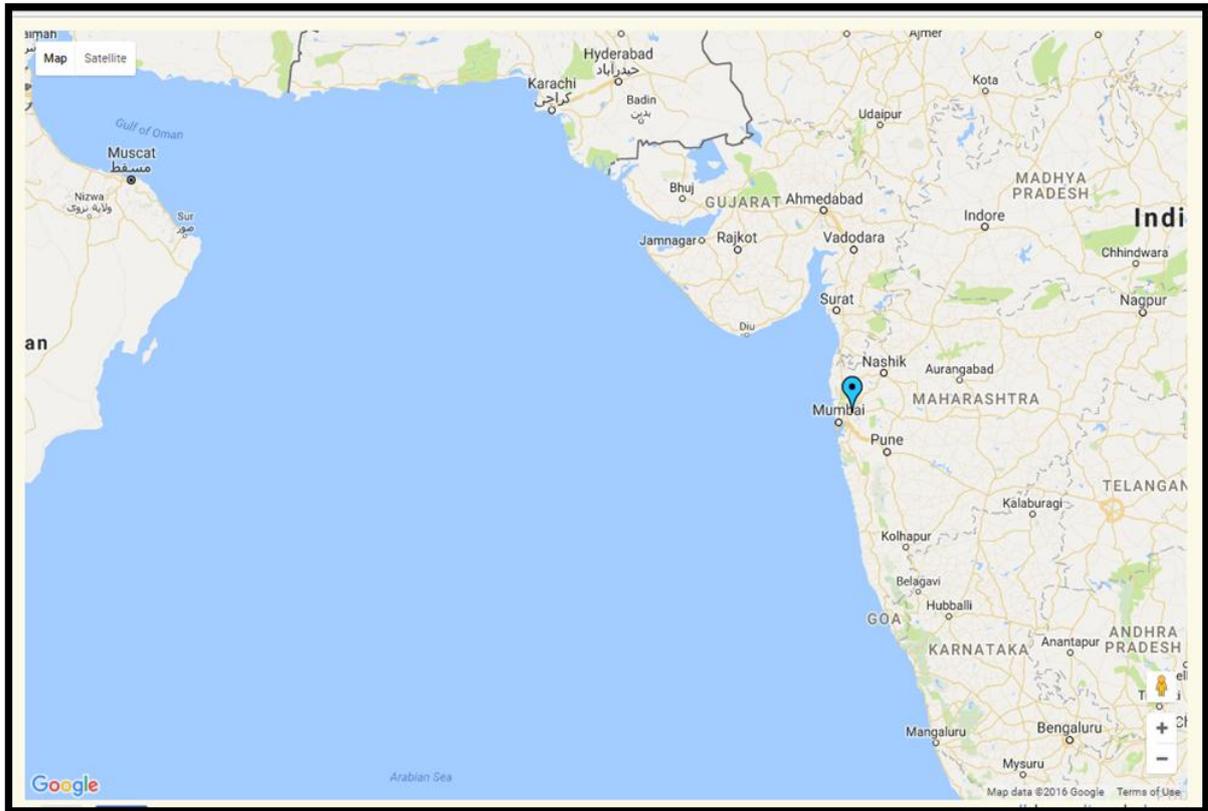
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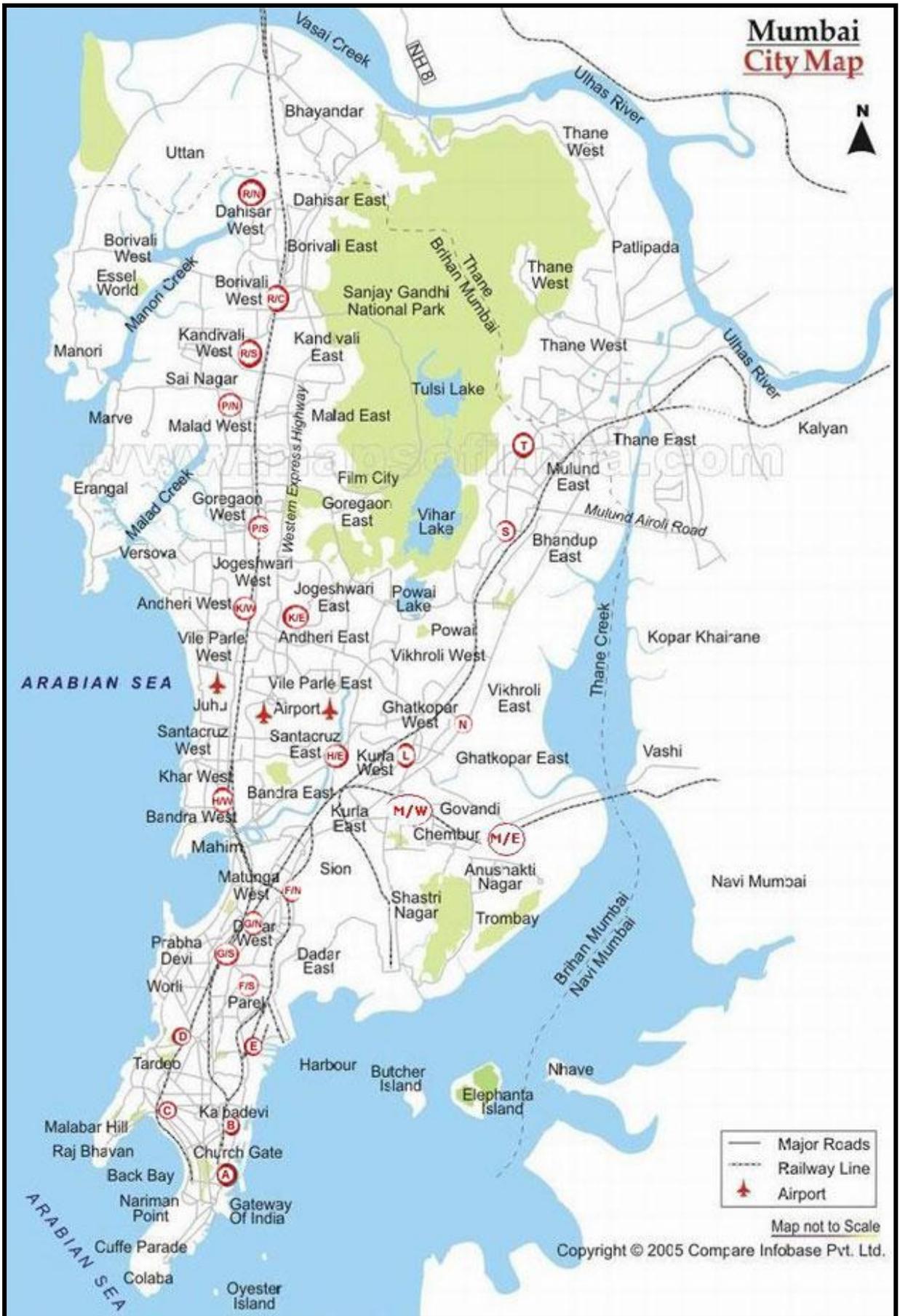
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## Locating Mumbai from google Satellite Map







## Table of Contents

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<i>Illustration- Locating Mumbai from Google satellite map</i>	<i>ii</i>
<i>List of Tables</i>	<i>vi</i>
<i>List of Graphs</i>	<i>vi</i>
<i>Foreword</i>	<i>vii</i>
<i>Preface</i>	<i>viii</i>
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	<i>x</i>
<i>Executive Summary</i>	<i>xiii</i>
<b>1. Introduction and Research Methodology</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. Motivation, Political Recruitment and Urban Politics: A Theoretical Framework</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>3. From Bombay to Mumbai: Journey of the City</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>4. Electoral Politics of the City</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>5. Why and How People Contest: Understanding Candidate's Motivations, Strategies and Challenges</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>6. Discussion</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>7. Major Concerns and Suggestions for Reforms</b>	<b>116</b>
<b>Appendix</b>	
<b>i Interview Questionnaire</b>	<b>124</b>
<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>127</b>

## List of Tables

---

<b>Sr. No.</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Page No.</b>
1.	Party Wise Seat Position in BMC Elections 1992-2017	58
2.	Reservation Status 1992-2017	58
3.	No. of candidates contested the election 1992-2017	59
4.	Reservation* Gender Electoral Participation (contested candidates)	59
5.	Winning Share- Gender wise 1992-2017	62
6.	Female Participation and Winning in General Seats (Non-women)	62
7.	Independent Candidates Reservation wise 1992-2017	64
8.	Winning position of the main parties across Reserve Categories	65
9.	BMC Election 2017: Reservation Pattern	91

## List of Graphs

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<b>Sr. No.</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Page No.</b>
1.	Gender wise Participation 1992-2017	60
2.	Gender wise Winners 1992-2017	62
3.	Independent Candidates	63
4.	Voter Turnout 1992-2017	64

## FOREWORD

I am happy to mention that University of Mumbai was one of the first Research Institutes to respond to the appeal of the State Election Commission, Maharashtra to conduct research in the neglected sphere of the local body elections.

Mr. Sanjay Patil, Research Coordinator under the guidance of Dr. Surendra Jondhale, Professor of the Department of Civics and Politics has conducted a detailed study entitled “Contesting Municipal Elections: Motivations and Strategies (A Study of BMC Elections 2012 and 2017)” prior to the elections in February 2017. The study tries to understand the motivational factors behind candidates contesting various elections. It also tries to understand the various methods used by candidates to influence the voters. The study has come out with some very interesting suggestions and recommendations.

I am happy that the above research report is now being published for wider dissemination and future reference. I am sure that various stakeholders would find this report immensely useful.

I take this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Sanjay Patil and Dr. Surendra Jondhale for the above report.

**J. S. Saharia**  
**State Election Commissioner**  
**Maharashtra.**

## **Acknowledgements**

At the outset, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all those who assisted and supported me during this research work.

To begin with, I am extremely grateful to the State Election Commission of Maharashtra and the University of Mumbai for giving me the opportunity and entrusting me with this responsibility. The research was commissioned by the State Election Commission of Maharashtra. I wish to express my sincere thanks to Shri. Jageshwar Saharia, State Election Commissioner, Maharashtra for extending an opportunity, in the form of this project to the Department of Civics and Politics, University of Mumbai. I also wish to extend my gratitude to Shri. Shekhar Channe, Secretary, State Election Commission, Maharashtra, for his involvement in the project through his timely and valuable guidance to me. This project would not have seen the light of the day without the guidance, sheer ambition and goodwill of my excellent teacher and guide Dr. Surendra Jondhale. He was always by my side to extend all possible help for this project. My sincere and heartfelt thanks to Shri. K. Suryakrishnamurty, Deputy Collector, Government of Maharashtra, for his guidance and support throughout the process of the project along with some excellent academic inputs at every stage. I express my gratitude to Dr. Sudha Mohan (Professor & Head), Department of Civics and Politics for allowing me to work on this project and being extremely positive and encouraging at all times. I am thankful to Shri. Jagdish More, PRO, State Election Commission, Maharashtra for his help and support. I would also like to thank officials at the State Election commission namely Ms. Reena Phansekar, Under Secretary, Ms. Pranali Ghonge, Assistant Commissioner, Shri. Atul Jadhav, Section Officer and others for their help and support.

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write more articulately. She has been the biggest source of strength and inspiration for me in the entire process.

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Scheduling meetings with corporators was an extremely tough task which became simpler with the help of Shri. Yuvraj Mohite (Senior Journalist), Shri. Vinayak Dige and Shri. Sameer Surve.

I would like to thank my Ph.D. Guide Dr. Mrudul Nile and other faculty members of the Department for their continuous support and encouragement. Dr. Mrudul Nile is always a great source of inspiration for me in all my research endeavors. His inputs, valuable feedback and networking helped the project immensely. I would like to thank Prof. Sachin Pardhe and Smt. Sneha Shete, for the continuous encouragement that kept me going.

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Last but not the least, I would like thank all the candidates and respondents who took time out from their busy schedules for the interviews which helped the project immensely.

**Sanjay Pandurang Patil**

## **Executive Summary**

The State Election Commission of Maharashtra has taken up the initiative of collaborating with Universities and Civil Society organizations engaged in election-related studies and reforms to undertake research on local bodies of self-governance. The rationale behind it was the lack of systematic studies on local body elections. The current study focuses on the motivations and strategies of the candidates contesting Municipal elections with reference to the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) elections of 2012 and 2017. It is the second report looking at candidate motivations and strategies in local body elections after a detailed study on the Kalyan Dombivali Municipal Corporation (KDMC) Elections of 2015.

While looking at the motivations and strategies of candidates, the research aims to look at the entire process of local body elections in today's day and time- from fielding candidates to winning elections. It also aims to look at some of the concerns raised with respect to elections in today's times including the increasing use of money and muscle power, electoral malpractices, etc. The study was undertaken with an intention to contribute to the process of policy formulation and election-related reforms by studying local bodies of self-governance in detail.

In a megacity like Mumbai whose demographic structure is diverse and complex at the same time, studying electoral processes is a challenging task. The city has grown in leaps and bounds over the last few decades with neo-liberal market forces directly influencing the aspirations and ambitions of its people. Elections at such a juncture are nothing more than a spectacle with a large amount of money being spent on electoral campaigning. With time, electoral activities have also gained sophistication and professionalism as campaigning is assuming newer forms with the excessive use of technology and social media.

While understanding the dynamics of elections in such a megacity, it is important to look at the 'processes' rather than merely studying the 'results'. The research is an attempt to understand what goes behind each and every stage in the whole electoral process- from a candidate's decision to contest an election to campaigning strategies deployed and later electoral results.

The first chapter- ‘Introduction and Research Methodology’ is an entry point into the research. It tries to look at the theoretical basis of local self-governments and local body elections in order to understand their dynamics. While doing so, the special focus lies on the 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments which provided for decentralisation of power thus forming a three tier system of elections at the national, state and the local level. Through these amendments and Article 243-K and 243-ZA of the constitution, an independent status was given to the State Election Commission in order to ensure that elections are conducted in a free and fair manner at the local level. The chapter also presents some demographic details- population of the city being one important factor that needs to be considered before studying the city. It further lays down the research design which includes the rationale behind the said research, research questions, objectives and scope of the study.

In the second chapter- Political Motivation, Political Recruitment and Urban Politics: A Theoretical Framework the researcher has explored the idea of candidate’s motivation (political motivation) especially with respect to the motivational factors behind contesting elections in a larger theoretical context of political recruitment. Secondly, an attempt has been made to place the research problem in the framework of urban politics. Through a detailed review of literature, the chapter tries to provide a conceptual framework to the research. Most importantly, it tries to answer the ‘why’ and the ‘how’ of the candidate’s decision to contest an election. At a point, when elections have become extremely competitive especially in a city like Mumbai, it is important to understand as to why individuals take the decision to contest and how they arrive at that decision. When individuals decide to contest an election, they have to ‘risk’ numerous factors. The chapter tries to delve deeper into what makes individual take risks by theorising the concept of risk itself in this context. It also tries to situate the research into the larger framework of urban politics and political recruitment.

In order to study the elections in Mumbai, it becomes imperative to study the history, growth and politics of the city. The third chapter- From Bombay to Mumbai: Journey of the City tries to plot the journey of the city- from an Island to now a megapolis. The chapter looks at the complex dynamics of Mumbai and its politics by looking at the history, geography and socio-economic development over the last three centuries in general and two decades in particular. As the city transitioned from Bombay to Mumbai, it

underwent rapid transformation and dramatic changes in its demography along with some starking changes in its economy, politics and social life. The chapter tries to look at the evolution of the Municipal Administration in the city from 1668 after the East India Company took over to the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation today which is regarded as the country's richest municipal corporation. It also tries to parallelly trace the history of the city which was at the epicentre of some of the important social movements including the reforms movement during the British era and the Samyukta Maharashtra Movement in the 1950s. It also tries to look at the changing landscape of the city- from the textile mills that were a source of employment for thousands of migrants who settled in the city in search of jobs to the plush high rises and malls that are now home to some of the country's biggest commercial entities.

The fourth chapter titled 'Electoral Politics of the City' aims to trace the changes in the city's electoral patterns. Looking at electoral data from 1992 to 2017 Brihanmumbai Municipal elections, an attempt is made to analyse the changing trends in the elections over the years. With the help of official election data for all these years, some trends with respect to the number of candidates contesting elections, their gender composition, reservation wise candidates contesting the elections, independent candidates, party-wise results over the years etc. The chapter plots some of the key trends in the political developments of the city across the last 25 years. It also traces the emergence and journey of two parties - the Sena and the BJP across the time span of these years and the changes brought about in the city's electoral politics with the changing equations between these two parties.

The third and fourth chapter helped establish some of the key arguments that would follow in the fifth chapter in detail. The fifth chapter- Why and How People Contest: Understanding Candidate's Motivations, Strategies and Challenges tries to find answers to some of the major research questions with the help of in-depth interviews of candidates, party workers and election officials. From the demographic, social backgrounds of candidates to their opinions about elections and electoral norms, the chapter tries to look at a number of processes that go behind the act of contesting an election at the local body level. It tries to look at some of the major determining factors behind an individual's decision to contest an election, the process of selection for party nomination, role of money, strategies used during campaigning etc. The chapter thus tries to look at the

changing nature of elections and how this affects the decision of candidates to contest elections.

The sixth chapter- Discussion tries to discuss all the arguments put forward in the chapters before. While trying to look at why candidates chose to contest elections, it also tries to look at some of the broader trends with respect to elections and the challenges that one comes across at every stage.

The report also lists a few recommendations based on the findings of this study which would then be put forward to the State Election Commission of Maharashtra for consideration.

## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction and Research Methodology**

Local government finds a mention in the constitutions of very few countries. Of them, fewer contain rules for local governance. The Constitution of India, as adopted and enacted in November 1949, did not envisage any role for local governments but for an entry in the state list of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution, and a specific article in the chapter on Directive Principles of State Policy, requiring the states to take steps for organising panchayats. The changes made by the 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> amendments in the Constitution are innovative and have given a new dimension to the system of governance at the local level in the country (Srivastava, 2002).

While it has been 135 years after Lord Ripon's resolution on local self-government laid the foundation of democratic form of municipal governance in the country, municipal governance as a whole came of age only recently. Until the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act (CAA) was passed in 1992, urban local bodies (ULBs) such as the municipal corporations, municipalities and Nagar Panchayats did not have powers to function as independent institutions of self-governance. The amendment made it mandatory to conduct regular elections to local bodies and lessened the interference of state governments in dismissing elected local bodies.

It is not that the municipalities and panchayats were not in existence prior to these amendments; almost every state did set up these institutions in accordance with the law passed by the state legislature. Many states also had a three-tier structure of Panchayati Raj in existence as recommended by the Balwantrai Mehta Committee. Functions, powers and responsibilities were assigned to them through state legislations, and where necessary, executive powers were delegated to them under the rules, and administrative instructions. They also had powers of taxation in a limited way and were entitled to grants for general or specific purposes. The changes made in the Constitution do not create any new set of institutions but recognise afresh the role that these bodies can play in promoting economic development and social justice in urban areas and in the villages, and in improving services essential for better community life (Ibid).

Local Self-government is an inevitable part of the democratic administrative system. It is widely accepted that self-governing institutions at the local level are essential for the

development and spread of democracy and for effective people's participation at the grass-root level. They form an integral part of the entire democratic process. 'Grass-roots of Democracy' based on small units of government enable people to feel a sense of ownership, responsibility and to inculcate the values of democracy. At the same time, it also offers a unique opportunity to participate in public affairs, including development-oriented work.

The Constitution of India in Article 40 of the Directive Principles of State Policy, states- "The State shall take steps to organize village panchayats and endow them with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of self-government".

While the constitution talks about organisation of village panchayats, no such reference for urban local bodies was found. This might be because elected municipal bodies were in existence in most urban areas under the state legislations even before the Constitution was framed. Prior to the 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> amendments, this is the only article which spoke about 'self-government' for the village panchayats. No definition of 'self-government' was given in the Constitution or in the state legislations constituting rural and urban local bodies. These legislations provided for elected local bodies with a list of obligatory and optional functions with some powers to raise their own resources through taxes, duties, tolls and fees. Reservation of seats for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes was also ensured in the state legislations. Periodic elections were mandated but were seldom held on time. In many states, the term of elected bodies was continued indefinitely or these were replaced by administrators appointed by the state government. Even when elected bodies were in existence, these worked under the supervision and control of district officers, and were at times superseded without any arrangement for a time-bound election to replace them (Srivastava, 2002).

The Directive Principle of State Policy was given a Constitutional status through the 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment Acts. The Historic Acts in terms of opening the opportunities for participation was finally passed on April 22, 1993. The 73<sup>rd</sup> Amendment is about Rural Local Governments (which are also known as Panchayati Raj Institutions or PRIs) and the 74<sup>th</sup> Amendment made the provisions related to Urban Local Governments (Nagarpalikas). The 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Amendments have created uniformity in the structures of Panchayati Raj and Nagarpalika institutions across the country. These amendments

provided constitutional recognition to the institutions of local self-governance. The basic features of these Constitutional Amendments were reservation of seats, constitution of State Election Commission, powers to Gram/Ward Sabha and transfer of certain subjects through XI and XII schedule. The Act aimed at the larger participation of people in rural and urban areas in terms of not only the elites but also the amalgamation and inclusion of various marginalised sections like the women, dalits in local governance. According to Narayana (2005), “It was an attempt towards decentralisation of the highly centralised system of parliamentary democracy in India. With these amendments the structure of governance has changed permanently from a two-tier to a three-tier system of governance with union, state, and panchayats/nagarpalikas as the three-tiers of governance.”

The 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments, perhaps the most substantive amendments since the adoption of the constitution, envisage Panchayats and Municipalities as institutions of local self-governance. The three-tier system of local governance also acts as a means to build synergies between a representative and direct democracy and participatory governance, resulting in the deepening of democracy at the grassroot level. They are neither agencies of the government nor any sort of departments in the conventional sense within the framework of the government. They are democratically elected bodies and the heart of these institutions is the participation of the citizens. Substantive democratization works when each individual is empowered to participate in governance, ask questions, take decisions, raise resources, and prioritise the social and economic agenda for local development in order to ensure social and political accountability. Such a vision of democracy requires democratization from below and true devolution of power to the people.<sup>1</sup>

The theoretical basis of local self-government is democratic decentralization. The idea of decentralization is in a way, inherent in the democratic ideal in its application to the political organisation. The 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment Acts (1992) of the Indian Constitution attempt to further the goal of democracy at the grass-root level through decentralization of power. “In many states, local bodies had become weak and ineffective on account of failure to hold regular elections, prolonged suppression and inadequate devolution of powers and functions and were criticized for not being able to perform effectively as vibrant democratic units of self- governance” (Bhardwaj, 2012). These

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<sup>1</sup> <https://malayalanatu.wordpress.com/2010/10/06/power-to-the-people-local-self-governance-and-democratization/> accessed on 26<sup>th</sup> June, 2016.

amendments of the Constitution have not only made it mandatory to hold elections at the interval of five years on a regular basis but also devolved powers and functions on these institutions and thus created legal conditions for the effective functioning of local democracy.

The rationale for decentralisation comes from the need to strengthen participatory democracy, facilitate responsive governance, ensure greater accountability and enable public service delivery according to diversified preferences of the people. The possibility of greater visibility and linkage between revenue-expenditure decisions is supposed to ensure greater responsiveness and accountability. There are some who advocate decentralisation as an end in itself while others take this as a means to strengthen the democratic fabric through participatory governance and responsive and accountable public service delivery.<sup>2</sup>

As the study focuses on elections to urban local bodies, it would be important to look at the 74<sup>th</sup> constitution amendment and urban politics in detail. The 74<sup>th</sup> amendment to the Constitution (the Act) sought to decentralize decision-making in cities and towns through the creation of elected Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) thereby contributing to the democratization process. Some of the key features of the act were: introduction of a list of functions for the ULBs, establishment of ward/s committees in areas having a population of over 0.3 million, periodic and timely elections of ULBs, devolution of finances to the ULBs as per suggestions of the State Finance Commissions (SFCs), and coordination of multiple agency functions through the Metropolitan Planning Committee (MPCs) and District Planning Committee (DPCs) (Batra quoted in Pancholi, 2014).

### **Urban Politics:**

The distribution of power as well as existing power structures in India are changing as a result of new opportunities made possible by the ongoing economic reforms that were introduced in the early 1990s as Indian urban regions and regional corridors emerged as engines of economic growth as well as centers of political decision-making (Brenner, 2004).

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<sup>2</sup><http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/democracy-strengthened-by-decentralisation/article7830185.ece> accessed on 23<sup>rd</sup> September, 2017.

The 1990s era saw two major changes in the dynamics of urban politics- the advent of liberalisation which opened up global markets and carried an aspirational value for a local citizen and political decentralisation which gave prominence to local political actors. These two important developments acted like catalysts of change in the existing political scenario of the country especially in the urban milieu as it saw the entry of new actors into the mainstream political process.

The era saw a rapidly changing face of the country with the consumer being at the centre of all trade and exchange and the citizen getting access to almost every political and social development through television, advertisements and businesses which were flourishing in the era. This is the time when apart from politicians, real estate developers, landowners, civil society groups and bureaucrats started reinventing themselves to adapt to and take advantage of a rapidly transforming urban environment.

Thus, in the 1990's along with the Mandal phenomena, dawn of Liberalisation and passing of the 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments with the provisions of reservation of seats for women and backward sections, political offices hitherto the preserve of the dominant sections of the society now opened up for the marginalized ones. While the structural aspect of elections was envisioned to be an inclusive one, functionally, the very act of contesting elections in current times has become a big and costly affair where both money and muscle power is tested. The general impression is that with the increasing use of money and muscle power and with the advent of new technology coupled with huge electoral competition; it has become rather difficult for a common person to contest even local level elections (leave aside Vidhan Sabha or Lok Sabha elections). Despite this, one can see a huge number of people contesting elections to the Lok Sabha, Vidhan Sabha and local self-government institutions even as they fare very poorly and have to lose their deposit.

The current study focuses on the motivations and strategies of the candidates contesting Municipal elections with reference to the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) Elections of 2012 and 2017.

### **Background of the Study:**

Elections in India are regarded as the biggest celebration of the country's democracy. Unlike many other nations with a colonial past, the citizens of the country did not have to

fight for their voting rights. Right to free and fair elections is enshrined in Part XV of the Indian Constitution from its very inception. The Constitution of India has vested in the Election Commission of India the superintendence, direction and control of the entire process for conduct of elections to Parliament and Legislature of every State and to the offices of President and Vice-President of India. Elections are conducted as per the constitutional provisions and the laws made by the Parliament. The Representation of the People Act, 1950, mainly deals with the preparation and revision of electoral rolls and the Representation of People Act 1951, with all aspects of conduct of elections and post-election disputes. The Election Commission strives hard to conduct elections in a free, fair and transparent environment at regular intervals as per the law and guidelines of the Constitution.

More than six decades after independence, the furore over elections still continues with more pomp and grandeur, especially with the advent of liberalisation, globalisation and the accompanying political decentralization as a result of which the nature of the electoral system, participation patterns and political mobilisation is undergoing drastic changes. With the burgeoning forms of communication, propaganda has become bigger than ever.

While Indians are justifiably proud of their democracy, there are a number of areas which need to be strengthened for them to realise the true potential of a well-functioning democracy. There persists a series of burning issues hampering the democratic piousness and productive representation in Indian society. The rampant issues which are vitiating the election process are dominance of money power and muscle power, criminalisation of politics, financing of election, booth capturing, intimidation of voters, buying voters, tampered electoral rolls, abuse of religion and caste in the soliciting of voters, etc. Several attempts have been made on the part of the Election Commission to increase the voter turnout in the elections so as to maintain the vibrancy of the Indian Democracy. Several electoral reforms were carried out in last 66 years after the amendment of the Representation of People Act 1951 with the purpose of keeping the electoral system free and fair and increasing people's participation in the democratic systems of governance.<sup>3</sup>

The 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> amendment to the Constitution of India have given constitutional sanctity to the Panchayat Raj System. These amendments provide for the establishment of

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<sup>3</sup> Background paper on electoral reforms: Prepared by the Core-Committee on Electoral Reforms, December 2010.

an independent State Election Commission for the conduct of elections to the urban and rural local self-government bodies. These consist of Municipal Corporations, Municipal Councils, Nagar Panchayats in urban areas and Zilla Parishads, Panchayat Samitis, Village Panchayats in rural areas of Maharashtra. It has made provision of Article 243-K and 243-ZA wherein State Election Commissions were established. The main objective of 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> amendment and making this provision was to give an independent status to the State Election Commission so that elections are conducted in a free and fair manner, without any other intervention. While the Constitution lays down the structure of the urban and rural self-governments in principal, it was incumbent upon state governments to give financial and administrative autonomy to these bodies by transferring powers from the state list to the local jurisdiction. However, there seems to be a lack of will on part of the state governments to transfer the powers to local bodies. Without transfer of subjects and financial autonomy, the provisions of decentralisation have more or less remained on paper leading to poor implementation of the very essence of local powers.

The amendments intended to take governance to the local level by encouraging local elections and participation of women and the marginalised sections in the whole process. However with time, increasing use of money and muscle power in these elections have almost defeated their original purpose. Individuals belonging to reserved castes can contest from constituencies reserved for these castes and generally cannot afford to contest through open seats as they lack the required resources. While reservations for female candidates intended to make women politically independent, seats reserved for women are today eyed by the already powerful politicians. These men often try to convince parties into giving tickets for their wives, daughters, daughter-in-laws to contest as a 'token' on their behalf thus usurping all the political gains for themselves and their families. Thus, reservations which were meant to enrich democracy seem to have created a proxy democracy.

### **Urban Population:**

There is a concentration of urban population in large cities and existing urban agglomerations. As per census 2011, there are 53 million plus cities in India accounting for about 43 per cent of India's urban population. Also, the increase in the number of towns in India from 5,161 in 2001 to 7,935 in 2011 can be primarily attributed to the growth of small towns around bigger urban agglomerations. About 377 million Indians

comprising about 31 per cent of the country's population live in urban areas, with an average annual addition of 8 million (Bandyopadhyay, 2014).

According to World Urbanization Prospects, 2011, the share of persons living in urban areas in India rose by 3.4 per cent in the decade 2001 to 2011 while it had risen by only 2.1 per cent in the decade 1991 to 2001. Recent projections show that by 2031, about 600 million Indians will reside in urban areas, an increase of over 200 million in just 20 years (Twelfth Five Year Plan) If we rank the cities in the world by population, Mumbai and Delhi are among the top ten and Kolkata among the top 15 (if population density is the criterion for ranking) all these three Indian megacities are among the top 6 cities in the world. (Ibid)

Maharashtra ranks as the third most urbanised state in the country, behind Tamil Nadu (48.45%) and Kerala (47.72%). Maharashtra was the second most urbanised state in 2001. . As per the 2011 provisional census of Maharashtra, there are 11,23,72,972 persons, of whom 6,15,45,441 are in rural and 5,08,27,531 are in urban areas. In terms of percentage, 45.23 per cent of the state population is in urban area as against the 31.16 per cent at the national level. Highest percentage of urban population is found in two districts, Mumbai and Mumbai Suburban. Other districts having high percentage of urban population are Thane (76.92 per cent), Nagpur (68.30 per cent) and Pune (60.89 per cent). Urban population growth accounted for 62.8% of total population growth in Maharashtra. While Mumbai, Thane, Nagpur and Pune are the most urbanised districts, Gadchiroli, Sindhudurg and Hingoli are the least urbanised. An urban area, according to the Census definition, comprises o places with a municipality, corporation, Cantonment Board or notified town area committee.<sup>4</sup>

Growth rate of population in urban areas of Maharashtra is 23.67 percent which is much higher as compared to rural population. Population in the rural areas has increased just by 10.34 percent, over the last decade. Total urban population of Maharashtra is 50.82 million and is increasing at faster rate compared to other states in India. People are migrating from rural areas to urban areas due to availability of employment, education and business opportunities. This urbanization has resulted in higher competition for available resources

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<sup>4</sup> <http://archive.indianexpress.com/news/45--of-maha-population-is-urban-census/819090/0> accessed on 27<sup>th</sup> September, 2017.

like land, housing, etc. This has also resulted into a sharp growth in prices of land and houses, in bigger cities.

While the population of urban areas has seen a steady rise in the country over the years, its economy has also seen a boom with time. Estimates by the Central Statistical Organisation, available for a few years, indicate that the share of the urban sector in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of India increased from 38 per cent in 1970–71 to 52 per cent in 2004–05. The mid-term appraisal of the Eleventh Five Year Plan projected the urban share of GDP at 62–63 per cent in 2009–10, which is at present around two thirds of the GDP and it is likely to become 75 per cent in 2021 (Bandyopadhyay, 2014).

With increasing urbanization in India, citizens' expectations and demands regarding the quality of democratic institutions are likely to increase. Consequently, democratic institutions are under pressure to evaluate and improve the quality of services. One of the key institutions that determine the future of urban India is the electoral system and its processes.

The above trends clearly reflect the significance of urban local governance in the country.

### **Electoral Studies in India:**

The development of election studies in India has been influenced by the evolution of electoral politics, especially of Lok Sabha and the State Legislative Assembly elections. Also, the theoretical development of election studies in developed countries, especially in the USA, has triggered the study of this discipline in newly independent countries like India. Voting behaviour models mainly of Columbia and Michigan Studies have had an impact on election studies in India especially with respect to determining the important research questions. Party identification, issues, candidates, campaigns, voter turnout, socio-economic status of voters and other areas have been recognized as important realms for studies in voting behaviour.

The survey of the studies on elections reveals the role of diverse factors which influence voting behaviour during elections in India. Some of these studies highlight the role of caste, tribe and religion (Kothari 1962 and 1971; Sirsikar, 1967 and Yadav 1999), whereas others (Sirsikar 1967; Kothari, 1971) emphasize on the occupation, income, education and the age of voters in influencing the voting behaviour. Yadav (1999) analyzed 4 M's -

Mandal, Mandir/Masjid and the Market influencing political behaviour in India during 1990's. Suri (2004 and 2009) focuses on the impact of economic factors on the elections in India. Some other issues like Gender (Deshpande, 2004 and 2009), village and party factions (Weiner, 1962); Urban Exposure (Kothari, 1971), Partisanship or party identification (Sheth, 1971); government's performance (Jones 1971), Dalit and Adivasi leadership (Sheth, 1971; Shah, 1973), Dalit Voting Patterns (Verma, 2009), Political Participation (Palshikar and Kumar, 2004; Kumar, 2009), influence of Media (Varma and Sardesai, 2014), role of crime and money (Sastry, 2014), issues of development (Kadekodi and Hanagodimath, 2015), Personality and Leadership factor (Shastri and Syal, 2014) also appear in the findings of few studies. In sum, partisanship, the political legacy of the candidate, leadership, caste, class, religion, economy, performance of the government, corruption, influence of media, role of crime and money, immediate issues before the election etc. are some of the significant factors which influence voters' behaviour in India. However most of the elections studies have focused on Parliament and Assembly elections and very little research has been done on local body elections.

### **Concerns of the State Election Commission of Maharashtra:**

With a view to promote research on local body elections, the State Election Commission of Maharashtra has taken up the initiative of collaborating with Universities and Civil Society organizations engaged in election-related studies and reforms to undertake research on local bodies of self-governance.

This study finds its basis in the discussions and deliberations held by the State Election Commission of Maharashtra with the Universities and Civil Society organizations to overcome the problems of low voter turnout and malpractices during elections. The main objective of the study was to understand the motivational factors of candidates contesting local elections. It also aims to understand and analyse the strategies used by the candidates in order to influence voters during the elections. Further, it tries to identify the sources of election funds of the candidates. The study was undertaken with an intention of contributing to the process of policy formulation and election-related reforms by studying local bodies of self-governance in detail. The study of local body election (municipal elections) was conducted with reference to the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) Elections of 2012 and 2017.

**Rationale:**

Although a large amount of literature is available on Lok Sabha and Assembly elections, not too many systematic studies exist on local body elections pertaining to the motivations and strategies used by candidates in the country. Secondly, it was found necessary to understand the political economy of local elections post-globalisation and its impact on elections. It was also interesting to understand the changing strategies and motivational factors in local level elections considering the competitive nature of elections in local bodies. It was also an interesting thread of enquiry into looking at the similarity and differences in motivational patterns of the candidates contesting elections as opposed to the motivational factors laid down by analysts and experts especially in these times as elections have become costlier.

**Research Questions and Objectives of the study:**

The research has explored the following research questions:

1. What are the motivational factors for candidates while contesting local elections?
2. What difficulties do the candidates face while completing formalities for the nomination form?
3. What strategies do they employ for their election campaigning?
4. How do the candidates arrange for funding their election?

**Objectives of the Present Study:**

Specific objectives of the research were as follows:

1. To understand the motivational factors behind an individual's decision to contest an election.
2. To analyse the social, demographic and economic background of the candidates contesting an election
3. To analyse the means used by candidates for influencing voters
4. To understand the sources and influence of money used by candidates in the elections
5. To suggest reforms to simplify the process of filing the Nomination forms and the entire electoral process as a whole.

**Scope of the research:**

The research focuses on BMC Elections of 2012 and 2017. The need to conduct a detailed research about the strategies and motivations of candidates during BMC elections was a product of a series of deliberations with the State Election Commission of Maharashtra. A need was felt to look closely at the elections of the largest corporation in the country. Any research situated in and around Mumbai has to be conducted on a larger canvas considering the socio-political and economic diversity of the space, which in itself is a grooming ground for political activity. The election commission was particularly keen on understanding two key things about urban body elections. One, what kind of people come forward to contest elections and Two, to understand as to why some people having a politically active life still choose to stay away from contesting elections (dislike towards active electoral politics).

**Locating Mumbai:**

Mumbai is considered to be a global city. The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) is one of the oldest and the richest municipal corporations in the country. Greater Mumbai, with an area of 603 square kilometres, consisting of the Mumbai City and Mumbai Suburban districts, extends from Colaba in the south to Mulund and Dahisar in the north, and Mankhurd in the east. Its population as per the 2011 census was 12,442,373. It is also the wealthiest city in India, and has the highest GDP of any city in South, West, or Central Asia. Mumbai has the highest number of billionaires and millionaires among all cities in India. Hinduism is a majority religion in Mumbai city with 65.99 % followers. Islam is second most popular religion in the city of Mumbai with approximately 20.65 % people following the religion. In Mumbai city, Christianity is followed by 3.27 %, Jainism by 4.10 %, Sikhism by 0.49 % and Buddhism by 0.49 %. Total number of slums in Mumbai city numbers 1,135,514 in which population of 5,206,473 resides. This is around 41.84% of total population of Mumbai city.<sup>5</sup>

The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation comprises of 227 directly elected Councillors representing the 24 municipal administrative wards, five nominated Councillors having special knowledge or experience in municipal administration, and a Mayor whose role is mostly ceremonial. In the 2012 municipal corporation elections, of the 227 seats, the Shiv

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<sup>5</sup><http://www.census2011.co.in/census/city/365-mumbai.html> accessed on 28/06/2016

Sena-BJP alliance secured 107 seats, holding power with the support of independent candidates in the MCGM, while the Congress-NCP alliance bagged 64 seats.

It is a hub of employment opportunities for all: educated or uneducated, skilled or unskilled, from all the corners of the country. Every political party intends to get control over the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation. Different political parties have constructed vote banks in different municipal constituencies based on the dominant population of a particular community in that particular geographical region. Some regional political parties have been exploiting nativist feelings over the years to woo the local voters. Being the financial capital of India, it historically remains an industrial centre of India and a gateway to the global capitalist economy and hence it is considered to be a big achievement to win BMC elections.

All the above factors prompted the researcher to identify three major areas of research: 1. The Political Economy of Mumbai 2. Control over the 'global city' and 3. The influence or prestige that the '*urbs prima*' holds at the National and International Level.

### **Research Methodology:**

The basic purpose of the study is to understand the motivational factors for candidates contesting municipal elections and the strategies used by them to influence voter's behaviour during the elections. It also tries to understand the stages involved in the entire decision making process of contesting an election for a candidate. The study was conducted by using quantitative as well as qualitative methods of data collection.

It was undertaken in two stages. In the first stage, based on the election results of the last 25 years (1992-2017), electoral data was collected and segregated from official gazettes of the results. This data included the details of all the candidates who had contested the corporation elections in these years, ward reservations and their gender profile. Party-wise winners were also listed. The total number of independent candidates in all these elections and their data was also compiled. This was done in order to study the trends in electoral participation over the years.

Secondly, a total of 50 candidates were selected for in-depth interviews by using systematic-random sampling. These candidates were chosen from those who had contested the 2012 elections to the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation. While selecting these

candidates, due attention was paid to ensure that candidates from across parties, genders and castes are selected for the interviews. The selected bunch of respondents included winning candidates, those who lost the elections and even those who contested independently and won or lost. Keeping a brief questionnaire as a reference point, these interviews were jotted down individually and then trends were analysed for the said research. Most questions that were asked to the candidates were open ended and had huge scope for detailed responses.

Apart from interviewing candidates, detailed interviews of several individuals who were politically active and involved in the whole pre-election process, party work, campaigning etc over the years but who did not contest elections were conducted to get more clarity as to what prevents these individuals from directly contesting elections. Interviews of some of the key officials who were closely working with the entire electoral process were also conducted for the project.

As work for this project was kickstarted when the 2017 municipal elections were around the corner, the researcher thus got a great opportunity to closely observe election campaigning across various wards in the city which further helped in understanding what kind of means are used by political parties to lure voters into voting for them.

### **Difficulties in Approaching the Candidates:**

The researcher has worked on the similar kind of research project (KDMC Elections 2015) as part of the State Election Commission's initiative to study local body elections. One knew of the difficulties in approaching the candidates for the interviews. Considering the confidential nature of most political activities, most candidates were initially apprehensive about meeting personally. It turned out to be more difficult to get the interviews of selected respondents in BMC as compared to that of KDMC. After the project began, BMC elections were just round the corner- barely a month and a half away, as a result of which respondents (corporators or candidates) were reluctant to respond to interview requests. With an attempt to get representative samples (respondents), some candidates were closely followed for around six months (around 10 corporators), while some others (around 15) were followed for more than a month in order to get their interviews. But in most of the instances meetings could not be scheduled despite a lot of effort. On several instances, candidates cancelled fixed appointments for interviews giving multiple reasons. Even as an attempt was made to meet these corporates with the help of some journalist

friends and political contacts, they failed. Hence, it proved to be a difficult task to get the appointments fixed with these elected representatives. Despite all these rejections, the researcher, managed to get an in-depth interviews of 27 candidates and 14 senior party workers while realizing that they were earlier hesitant due to the fear of their responses being misused or circulated outside. After the researcher ensured them of the secrecy and also gave a clear idea about the kind of questions that would be posed, this obstacle was somewhat overcome.

The reluctance of candidates and respondents for allowing to be interviewed seemingly confirmed the popular perception towards politicians. An attempt was made to avoid one's own conceptions about politics which is at the risk of coming in the way of the research process.

### **Data Reporting:**

The questions (Annexure attached) used for the reference of the interviews tried to enquire about the socio-political background of the candidate, his/her own set of political associations, electoral history, initial thoughts while contesting an election, political motivations leading to their decisions, challenges faced while arriving at a decision, stages involved in reaching towards the final decision of contesting the election, funds and election strategies, etc. Basically, the research focuses on political motivations and rational strategy of the candidate in contesting an election.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Motivation, Political Recruitment and Urban Politics: A Theoretical Framework**

In the last two and half decades, Indian cities have been experiencing social, economic, physical, and political change as a result of policies of economic liberalisation and decentralisation of power. A significant proportion of growth in the Indian economy has been concentrated in urban areas. Urbanisation is taking place at a faster rate in India. The change that is taking place in terms of urbanisation and development is unprecedented in its rate and scale. According to 1991 Census, population residing in urban areas in India was 11.4 per cent. According to 2001 census, it increased to 28.53 per cent, and crossed the mark of 30 per cent as per 2011 census, standing at 31.16 per cent. “New forms of urban development like large mixed-use townships with high-quality infrastructure are emerging on urban peripheries. Private sector involvement in infrastructure provision has also grown, and the national government has implemented urban policy reforms requiring greater decentralization” (Dupont, 2011). All of these factors have changed the dynamics of politics in Indian cities.

The researcher explored the idea of candidate’s motivation (political motivation) especially the motivational factors behind contesting the elections in the larger theoretical context of political recruitment. Secondly, an attempt has been made to place the research problem in the framework of urban politics. Further, the power structure in India is rooted in culture, caste, class, religion, identity, gender, community etc. A deeper understanding of this socio- economic and demographic basis is essential to study the dynamics of local body elections.

#### **Theorizing Urban Politics in India:**

Over the last four decades, cities across the country have undergone a rapid transformation at all levels. With the forces of liberalization entering the country from the late 1980s, India’s cities were at the center of all change and development. Mumbai too was not an exception although it was already a commercial city since colonial times and was already open to global trade. As lines between the local and the global started getting blurred, cities like Mumbai shifted their focus from traditional trading activities to consumer centric services. With the entry of new economic forces, one could see a significant shift in the nature of politics in the city. In this period the concept of government underwent a

change thus transforming into governance. The government was no longer considered as the sole actor in policy making and implementation. The era was marked by the entry of new actors like private sector companies, big corporates, NGOs, urban designers, realty companies, media, etc. The changing economic forces led to the emergence of a service oriented economy which further led to the creation of the 'new middle class' in urban cities. With the new entrants setting up their base in the city, land became a very important commodity. Big corporate houses that required plush infrastructure to keep pace with liberalized forces tried to acquire huge pieces of lands to set up their offices. With increasing opportunities, the city saw a huge influx of population coming in from the rural areas thus exerting pressure on the city's infrastructure, housing and other basic amenities. In order to accommodate its people, the geographical limits of the city underwent an expansion stretching its land limits.

While the middle class and the elites largely benefited from the development at the time, the poor were shifted to the margins even further as the city and its new forms had no space to accommodate them with their needs. Politics was at the center of all these changes. While a class of politicians largely benefited with the coming in of global companies and big corporates, it used the development agenda at two levels. At first, it tried to woo the new middle class by creating an ambition of a better life and livelihood in the modern city. At another level, it also made an attempt to retain its traditional vote bank by merely showing the poor a ray of hope to survive in this booming megapolis. Development created a sort of an interdependency between the political class and the corporates/builders. While corporates/builders needed politicians to give a green signal to their upcoming projects by surpassing the tedious regulations and getting required approvals, politicians were equally benefiting as they got 'monetary rewards' for allowing corporates/builders to use the norms in their favour. "It has been argued that the most powerful Mumbai governance stakeholders are not, in fact, politicians, but rather the very powerful real estate and building business firms of Mumbai" (Wit, 2017).

Any discussion on the electoral politics in the urban local bodies needs to be placed in this neoliberal context where new economic forces dominated by big corporates, realty sector, global investors and NGOs shape the political discourse of urban governance. The study of Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation elections 2012 and 2017 can be located in the above framework.

**Motivation:**

Motivation - political ambition, drive, determination - could be expected to play a critical role in recruitment. Motivational factors can be understood as psychological predispositions to run office which become catalysts for action within a given opportunity structure. The reasons for running for political offices are complex and varied. Although motivation seems likely to prove an important factor in recruitment, there has been little work on the political ambition of candidates contesting elections, especially in India. One reason for the neglect is widespread skepticism about whether it is possible to understand ambition on a systematic basis, since motivations are hidden, complex, fluid, and open to the problems of rationalization.

Dahl (quoted in Paige, 1977) in his *Modern Political Analysis* in a chapter on 'Political Man', identifies four important groups: the powerful, the power seekers, the political strata and the apolitical strata. This classification implies that the political leaders are to be found among the powerful and power seekers. In a subsection on "power seekers and leaders", Dahl asks why people seek power and critically evaluates three answers: "collective good", "self-interest" and "unconscious motives". In a subsection on "the powerful", he asks why some people gain more power than others and gives us reasons "differences in the amount of resources are used" and "differences in the skill or efficacy with which resources are applied." These differences, in turn, are found to be dependent upon situational and motivational factors such as objective availability, opportunities, genetic differences, value and incentives.

Ali and Sharma (1983) in their *Political Sociology: A New Grammar of Politics* attempted to analyse three distinct perspectives on the distribution of power in society. The first is the notion of classical democracy that postulates the rule of the majority. Freudian psychology and the exposure of human infirmities and irrationality in public as well as private affairs and the increasing complexity of the business of government have combined to destroy the myth that democracy is based on the will of the majority or on the will of the people. The second view is that even a democracy depends on leadership and the conception of democracy, therefore, must come to terms with the realities of unequal distribution of resources and skills of leadership and power in society. Among those who have attempted to reconcile the value of democracy with the fact of power, Schumpeter stands out as a prominent thinker who holds that it is not the people but the few who rule with the consent of the majority. The third view is elitist and proclaims that it is not only a

fact but also a desirable phenomenon that a dominant minority rules regardless of the forms of government. This is the view of Vilfredo Pareto, Gaetano Mosca and Robert Michels- the Italian neo-Machiavellians who were opposed to both democracy and socialism. They were skeptical about democracy because it is the few who possess the necessary power and skills to rule and as they are specially endowed to rule, it is as well that they should rule.

It means skills of leadership and resources are significant when one wants to be politically active or wants to contest for power. Thus, ideally very few who have the interest in politics and possess necessary skills and required resources are actively involved in political activities. Through this research, an attempt has been made to explore the candidates' motivational factors behind contesting an election and their personality traits. The basic purpose of the study is to explore- 'how and why people become politicians or contest an election' with special reference to local body elections.

### **Understanding Political Recruitment:**

Work on political recruitment explores how and why people become politicians, studying the critical stages through which individuals move into political careers. Candidate selection is the main activity of any political party, where political access is traditionally controlled by 'a series of "gatekeepers" and the narrowest gate of all is that guarded by the candidate selectors' (Gallagher and Marsh, 1988).

Pippa Norris and Joni Lovenduski in their groundbreaking (1995) study *Political Recruitment: Gender, Race and Class in the British Parliament* constructed the 'supply and demand model' which provides a dominant framework for understanding the dynamics of the recruitment process. This model looks at the outcomes of the particular party's selection process with the help of interaction between the supply of candidates who wish to contest and the demands of party gatekeepers who select these people. While looking at the whole process of political recruitment, the duo looks at how political parties, not operating within a vacuum are influenced by the demand and supply and the recruitment process is thus shaped and structured by the broader political system.

Meryl Kenny's (2013) innovative work *Gender and Political Recruitment: Theorizing Institutional Change* tries to examine the gendered dynamics of institutional innovation, continuity and change in candidate selection and recruitment. It rests on the insights of

feminist institutionalism and looks at the candidate selection process in post-devolution Scotland through a micro level study of the demand and supply model. The work helps to enhance analyses some pertinent questions in gender and politics scholarship – as well as political science more broadly – including how institutions produce and reproduce unequal power distributions and how and why institutional change occurs, as well as understanding the relationship between different actors and their institutional context. The evidence from the Scottish case demonstrates that the dynamics of institutional power relations, continuity and change need to be filtered through a gendered lens. It also suggests that accounts that ignore or underplay these gendered dynamics are not only incomplete but also ‘accredit and perpetuate distorted accounts of the political world’.

Pippa Norris and Joni Lovenduski (1995) drew a distinction between three levels of analysis in order to understand political recruitment. First, there are systematic factors which set the broad context for recruitment within any country - the legal system, electoral system, and party system. Second, there are factors which set the context within any particular political party - notably the party organisation, rules and ideology. Lastly, there are factors which most directly influence the recruitment of individual candidates within the selection process – notably the resources and motivation of aspirants and the attitudes of gatekeepers.

Joseph Schlesinger's (1996) influential work *Ambition and Politics: Political Careers in the United States* which emphasized on rational choice theories of office-seeking suggests potential ambition only becomes manifest within a particular opportunity structure. That is, candidates choose to run for office in response to the possibilities which are available. Opportunities are determined by the institutional and political environment, notably the structure of elected offices and the rules which define the way to achieve these offices.

As per the rational choice models which look at the decision to contest in terms of the costs and benefits of pursuing the office, it is assumed that all politicians are rational goal seekers desiring higher office.

Simple utility model in a way assumed individuals to contest only due to their belief in the probability of high success. As per the model, candidates run if they believe the probability of success is high, when the perceived benefits of office are great, and/or when the cost of losing is low. The rational actor model, in contrast, does not seek to explain

why some people are ambitious for office. It simply takes this as a given, and tests certain deductive predictions about how politicians will react to the structure of opportunities (Norris and Lovenduski, 1995). Indeed, for this reason, Hibbing (quoted in Norris and Lovenduski, 1995) has correctly suggested that the so-called theory of ambition is, in fact, a theory of office-seeking.

Conn, Meltz and Press (1973) in their article '*The concept of Political Rationality*' present a great analysis of the concept of rationality that applies to elections. According to this, there are two types of rationality- Individual rationality and rational strategy. While the former refers to action and behaviour that is taken for individual gains or benefits, the latter points out the behaviour and actions taken for collective benefit expecting a larger pay-off. "An individual acts rationally when he prefers what he chooses, that is, if he chooses that alternative from a given set which provides him with the highest expected utility"... "When used in this sense, rationality still includes purposive behavior, but the referent of appraising rationality shifts from the individual's preference orderings to the strategic environment when it comes to rational strategy".

### **Why would an individual think of contesting an election, when there is a huge risk of losing?**

Elections these days have become very competitive and require huge amount of funds for political campaigning and propaganda. Further, contesting election means aiming to secure a political or public office thus losing privacy to a large extent and becoming open to public scrutiny for both- public and political actions. Even after winning elections candidates have to face continuous pressure from people and the opposition parties to perform well. It thus becomes imperative to see why candidates still risk all their resources in order to contest elections.

The 'Why and How' of contesting elections may involve a complex process of decision making for individuals those who are interested in it. Arriving at the decision of contesting an election may comprise multiple stages in terms of discussion with the 'Self' and 'Others' before reaching the final decision of contesting election. 'Others' includes family, friends, community members, support networks, party etc. Opportunity structure, personal ambition, leadership skills, time and resources are essential aspects which shape the candidate's decision about contesting an election.

Contesting elections in a city like Mumbai is a herculean task. Every political party and the elites try to be in power positions and influence policy making in order to have control over the richest municipal corporation in the country. A single administrative ward in the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation is as big as an assembly constituency thus giving immense power to the local representatives. Hence, there is huge competition for every seat since every candidate and socio political and economic force tries to bring its own representative in the power position.

### **Decision Making:**

Decision and behavior may be regarded as the core characteristics of the decision-making phenomena. They involve a process of human thought and reaction about the external world, which includes the past and possible future events and the psychological consequences, to the decision maker, of those events. The essence of decision making seems to integrate both beliefs about specific events and people's subjective reactions to those events. For instance, decisions are responses to situations and may include three aspects. First, there may be more than one possible course of action under consideration. Second, decision makers can form expectations concerning future events that are often described in terms of probabilities or degrees of confidence. Finally, consequences associated with possible outcomes can be assessed in terms of reflecting personal values and current goals (Oliveira 2007).

### **Risk factor:**

Every individual is a political being. His actions, thoughts and orientations are a product of several complex decision-making processes. The process of arriving at a decision to contest elections is a tough one. The most important factor that can take people away from this step is the risk involved in the whole process- from deciding to the final stage of election results, there is risk involved at every stage.

The Wikipedia encyclopedia defines 'risk' as the potential of gaining or losing something of value. Values (such as physical health, social status, emotional well-being or financial wealth) can be gained or lost when taking risk resulting from a given action or inaction, foreseen or unforeseen. With such a definition, one wonders why people choose to 'risk' a lot of factors including their tangibles like wealth, income etc. and their intangibles like

prestige, social status etc. for an act like contesting elections which does not promise any fixed outcome.

In the case of elections, risks are of two kinds- those of abstract nature and those who have a more concrete end. The abstract risk factors put an individual's prestige, influence and social position at stake. Concrete factors include risking one's money, agenda, perks and prestige if the candidate does not successful in the elections.

The most important factor that is at stake for any candidate is his personal and political prestige. A candidate holds a position of respect amongst his community, caste group and class. This is either on an individual level (fear of being isolated from one's own community with failure) or community level (fear of losing the prestige of one's own family/ social group within the community and amongst other communities). Along with prestige is one's influence which is at stake. Political power gives an individual enormous capacity to wield influence on the decision making process. This power also alleviates one's social position that one acquires through the exercise of influence in public matters. Winning an election alleviates this influential capacity while losing one often makes it redundant.

The most important concrete factor that a candidate has to risk while contesting an election is the money invested in the whole electioneering process. Elections have become a costly affair in today's time. With the campaigning and image building processes requiring huge sums of money, a candidate's decision to contest in itself means that a huge amount of money is at stake. This money, often spent on social causes- like repairing local roads, painting buildings to woo voters etc., gives no guarantee of the voter giving a positive ballot in his favor. In several cases, people's loyalty shifts very easily from time to time. The risk of losing money is often accompanied by the resulting hurdles in getting one's work done- as there is also a loss of social influence. The candidate often chooses to put his existing perks and prestige at stake.

Keeping all these factors in mind, it is very interesting to see and understand why, despite all these risk factors does an individual choose to contest an election- the motivations both immediate and long term behind his decision.

In this theoretical context, the researcher has studied the motivational factors of candidates contesting the local election (with special reference to Mumbai), problems faced by them during the nomination process, their sources of funding for the election and strategies used by them while campaigning for the election.

### **Review of Literature:**

From traditional approaches to approaches from social psychology and the behavioral ones, scholars, over the years have tried studying the issue of political drive amongst aspirants for the last several years. The traditional approach describes 'how early political ambitions crystallize, develop and evolve during a politician's lifetime, drawing on historical sources such as personal diaries, memoirs, letters, official government papers, and interviews with contemporaries' (Norris and Lovendusky, 1995). This is useful in recording the careers of politicians, party representatives as most of them rose to power positions from scratch.

Harold Lasswell's *Psychopathology and Politics* published in 1960 provided an alternative to this traditional approach to understand political ambition. The study was derived from social psychological theories which assumed that politicians have certain needs or drives developed through socialisation during their early childhood, which they seek to fulfill through their political activism. For Lasswell, "politicians have a distinctive kind of personality which causes them to seek office". In a series of studies during the 1930s, Lasswell argued that politicians are characterised by intense cravings for deference, which are rationalised in terms of the public interest.

James David Barber divided politicians into four types on the basis of their activity and willingness to continue to serve. 'Spectators' were defined as those who enjoy the conviviality and excitement of the legislature, but take little part in its substantive work. 'Advertisers' were the upwardly mobile younger careerists who found that the work provided beneficial business contacts. 'Reluctants' were the more passive elderly members motivated primarily by a sense of duty. Lastly, 'lawmakers' were the active members who made government work (Norris and Lovendusky, 1995).

Individuals often adapt to being politicians in various ways which meet their personal needs. Their early childhood personality developed has a major impact on their latter political behaviour. "Given the inherent problems of understanding such a complex

phenomenon as 'personality' for a wide range of politicians, subsequent work in this field has looked more narrowly at 'incentives', defined as needs such as status or sociability which politicians seek to meet through political work" (Barber quoted in Woshinsky, 1973 quoted in Norris and Lovendusky, 1995).

Pippa Norris and Joni Lovenduski (1995) in their pioneering study, *Political Recruitment: Gender, Race and Class in the British Parliament* look at a broadly institutionalist approach which is a combination of the broader institutional and political context of recruitment and a micro analysis of the candidate and selector attitudes. Its framework systematically integrates the insights of the existing literature on political recruitment, ultimately seeking to understand not only 'who the members of the legislative elite are, but, more importantly, why and how they got there'.

In doing so, they identify three broad levels of the political recruitment process. The political system – incorporating the legal system, electoral system and party system – sets the general 'rules of the game'. Within this context, parties are the central gatekeepers and their decisions are shaped by factors such as party organization, ideology, formal party rules and informal norms and practices. Operating within these broader political and party contextual settings are the factors that most directly influence the recruitment of individuals – the resources and motivations of prospective candidates as well as the attitudes of gatekeepers (quoted in Kenny, 2013). This framework is useful for studying the motivations and strategies behind candidates contesting elections. It has been of great help for this research as its theme and arguments go parallel with the research topic.

The issue of candidate motivations has been prominent in the study of elections. Previous studies have identified different motivations. While some argue that candidates are office motivated (Hotelling, 1929) others assume that candidates are policy motivated (Wittman, 1977, 1983 and Calvert, 1985). Both streams, however, assume that candidates are homogeneous in their motivations.

According to the traditional hypotheses of candidates' motivations, candidates care in the same way and only about either winning power or policy (Drouvelis, Saporiti and Vriend, 2012). The traditional multidimensional, or spatial, model of candidate competition (Downs, Davis, Hinich, and Ordeshook quoted in Calvert, 1985) represents the candidate as being concerned solely with winning the election, or, in the same spirit, with

maximizing his plurality or a total number of votes. In addition, it endows each candidate with complete knowledge about what the election results will be, given any particular choice of platforms by the candidates.

However, according to the mixed motivations hypothesis, candidates are concerned not only about winning the election and being in power, but also about the ideological position of the policy implemented afterwards (Calvert, 1985; Ball, 1999; Aragonés and Palfrey, 2005; Callander, 2008; Bernhardt et al., 2009).

Steven Callander (2008) in his *Political Motivations* developed a simple model of two-candidate electoral competitions in which candidates may be either office or policy motivated. The objective of this paper has been to address a basic question previously overlooked by the political economy literature: What are the motivations of those elected to public office? The main finding of the paper is that office-motivated candidates do not dominate elections despite their greater willingness to trade off policy for the perks of office.

A possible classification of candidates' motivations is suggested by the Clark and Wilson incentive typology. According to Clark and Wilson (quoted in Parker, 1972), activity in all organizations may result from three types of incentives: (1) material incentives-based on monetary rewards; (2) solidary incentives-based on rewards derived from organizational participation itself, such as prestige and identification; and (3) purposive incentives-based on the achievement of organizational goals. This classification of incentives has been applied in studies of political party activists and appears potentially useful in the study of political candidates. The validity of the Clark and Wilson typology, however, had never been empirically tested.

Parker (1972) in his *Classification of Candidates' Motivations for First Seeking Office* tested the above theoretical assumptions. He conducted interviews in 1970 with 157 elected and defeated candidates in 12 Georgia counties. Offices sought consisted of state senator, state representative, county commissioner, and sheriff. Respondents were shown a list of reasons that candidates in other studies have given for seeking office. The candidates were asked to indicate how important each of these reasons was as a motivation for first seeking political office. Prior to data collection, it was anticipated that the motivations would be analyzed in terms of the three Clark and Wilson incentive

categories. In addition, the fourth category of "asked-to-run" reasons was created to classify the candidates who said that they ran for office because they were asked to do so. Although this fourth category may beg the question as to why the person was willing to accept a request to seek office, the "asked-to-run" motivations often appear to constitute a separate category. After the data was collected, factor analysis was used to identify motivations that tend to cluster, reflecting a common underlying dimension or factor. "Bored with the occupation" had originally been classified as a solitary motivation, on the assumption that this motivation reflected a desire for social contact. In the factor analysis, however, this motivation loaded heaviest on the material factor. The occupational boredom motivation, therefore, was reclassified in the material category.

Bhambhri and Verma (1971) in *Candidate's Perception of The Voting Behaviour* studied candidate's perceptions about the factors responsible for determining voters' choices in an election at the local level. For this purpose candidate seeking elections for the municipal office in five different municipal areas, Jaipur, Ajmer, Kota, Bikaner and Alwar, were interviewed in October 1970 for the election held on October 25, 1970. In each town, five wards at random' were selected with a view to contacting each contesting candidate. A small questionnaire was administered for eliciting information regarding the socio-economic background of the contesting candidates, and two (open ended opinion) questions were asked to the respondents. The opinion questions were :(1) Which is the most important factor which, by and large, influences the choice of the voters? (2) On what considerations the party ticket is allotted to the candidates for contesting elections?

It was assumed that a candidate involved in electoral battles understands the real World of election and voting behaviour. Further, to win the elections and to defeat the opponent needs an electoral strategy which the candidate evolves by perceiving the thought processes of the voter. According to them, "why, how, and whom a voter votes are serious questions for investigation for an empirical theory of participatory democracy."

The study reveals that personal qualities and caste play an important role in elections in India. The party factor ranks after personal qualities and caste considerations. Since local elections are conducted on ward basis, which is a small unit in community life, the candidates build their own support base on the basis of their services to the ward or community life and caste affiliation. The image of the candidate looms large over voter's choice.

Thus, the theoretical models developed to study the political motivations and electoral competition (Wittman, 1983; Calvert, 1985, Callander, 2008; Drouvelis et al., 2012; Parker, 2012) especially in the Western countries highlight-seeking power and implementing policies as the key motivations behind contesting elections.

As stated above, the issues of candidates' motivations and political recruitment are important in election studies. However, these areas have been more or less neglected in Indian Electoral Studies as the larger focus is on voting behavior. Through this study commissioned by the State Election Commission (after an earlier study on the Kalyan Dombivali Municipal Corporation Elections, 2015), an attempt has been made to study as to why individuals chose to contest elections and the stages involved in the entire decision making process along with the factors influencing this decision.

## **Chapter Three**

### **From Bombay to Mumbai: Journey of the City**

Mumbai is the financial capital of the country which, over the years, has evolved from an island into a global city that lies at the center of the country's economic activity. The city, which has been home to several communities that came here to make a living- including the Portuguese, the British and then the Parsis, Gujaratis, North Indians and others who settled here has seen its economy booming over time. Today, the city which has grown into a huge metropolis comes across as a city of contrasts- diversity, vibrancy and growth on one side while disparity, exploitation and dearth on the other.

With its fast-paced life, the city and its people have become a a point of attraction for the entire world with the undefeatable 'spirit of the city' being hailed at all levels. Over the last few years, as the city has faced innumerable challenges- ranging from those related to security and natural disasters, the fabric of its togetherness and spirit seems to be fading away. Today, the city that houses over 1.2 million people is struggling to come to terms with its new realities- from civic issues to issues of governance. In order to understand the complex dynamics of Mumbai and its politics, one needs to look at the history, geography and socio-economic development of the city over the last three centuries in general and two decades in particular. This chapter tries to look at the city's transformation at four levels, viz. The city's geographical location and expanse, its historic transformation, financial growth and political changes that took place over the years.

#### **Etymology and Early History:**

Mumbai, formerly known as Bombay derives its name from *Mumbadevi*- patron goddess of the native Agri, Koli and Lunar dynasty communities— who were the original inhabitants of the city. Mumbai harbor, which comprised of many small islands was created several years ago by volcanic activity that caused the sinking of a part of the mainland on the west coast. As a result of this, the large island of Salsettee and seven islands of Mumbai came to be separated from the mainland creating one of the world's most natural harbors. These seven islands from South to North were – Colaba, Mumbai, Mazagaon, Parel, Sion, Mahim and Worli.

The sea-voyage of Vasco-da-Gama via the Cape of Good Hope was the beginning of colonization in Western India. Bombay as rechristened by the Portuguese sailor was a

small fishing hamlet and remained as one until 1500 A.D. The local inhabitants of the city were the Kolis, Bhandaris, Pathare Prabhus and Panchkalshi communities.

As per the District Census Handbook, Mumbai, 2011, within a period of less than one and a half century, the Island of Bombay underwent three successive political changes. The island passed from the Mohammedan kings of Gujarat to the Portuguese in 1534. In 1665, it was then transferred to the British Crown from the Portuguese in accordance with a marriage treaty. The island was finally transferred to the East India Company under a Royal Charter in 1668 which marked the beginning of the rise of the city. Further, the consolidation of power of the company in India and its transfer to the crown in 1857 ushered a new age in the life of the city. It became the capital of the 'Bombay Presidency' controlling not only the adjoining territory but the whole of Saurashtra, Karnataka and the Coastal strip of land known as Konkan. Ever since Bombay has been enjoying the status of a state capital. As soon as East India Company took control of the islands they started developing Bombay for purposes of trade. A fort wall was built around the city and the fort of Bombay was established in 1720. These fort walls were later torn down in the year 1864.

### **Physical Location and Topography:**

Geographically, the city has been surrounded by sea on all sides. Its only connection with the mainland was through Thul and Bhor ghat passes that penetrated the Sahyadris which stand as a barrier between Mumbai and the vast hinterland of India that lies across the ghats. It is only after the Mumbai Island came to be connected with the mainland by railways that came to be inaugurated in 1853 and after the construction of the railway line across the Bhor ghat that the railway network was established from Mumbai to all parts of India. These developments led to the growth of the city as the epicenter of international trade as it was now connected to the northern, southern and eastern parts of India. The opening of Suez Canal in 1869 helped the city's trade further. Until the introduction of air travel, 9 out of 10 persons who came to India first landed in Mumbai.

As the city transitioned from Bombay to Mumbai, it underwent rapid transformation and dramatic changes in its demography along with some starking changes in its economy, politics and social life. The transformation of the Mumbai Island into a megacity needs to be studied and examined from all the aspects mentioned earlier.

Being an island city, its expansion on land is naturally restricted leading to land shortage to house the ever-increasing population as the city grows. This scarcity of land has led to an increase in the property prices which today, are one of the highest in the world. Since the city cannot grow horizontally, it grows vertically and has number of tall buildings than any other city in the country. Mumbai does not have any agricultural land. As such, all daily necessities including that of food and other material needed for a living and other human activities have to be brought in from outside since the beginning of the civilization in the city.

With the growth of the city and its emergence as an epicenter of trade during colonial times, a need was felt to establish a modern system of civic administration. The Municipal Administration and institution of local self-government (not in a representative sense) have thus evolved with growing civic requirements in the city.

### **Evolution of the Municipal Administration:**

It would be difficult to imagine that the city did not have a clearly laid municipal administration very until 140 years ago. For about 200 years from the East India Company took over Mumbai in 1668, the city administration was directly under the British governor and his secretaries. As the population grew, the problems of law and order and conservancy increased, thus leading to a need for a municipal body which was then set up in 1792. The Governor General appointed Justices of the Peace to carry out municipal functions, levying house assessments and in order to raise funds for the municipality. Police and municipal functions were combined in the early stages of city's administration. A regular police force was appointed for law and order in 1812 under the care of magistrates.

Between 1807 and 1833, several legislative acts were passed for the advancement of civic life. In this period civic administration was vested in a Court of Petty Sessions. Till the end of 18<sup>th</sup> century, the President and Council directly conducted the administration of Bombay. The administration of town by the Bench of Justices was the subject of frequent comments and it was felt that some better system must be devised for dealing with sanitation and development. However, on account of the inefficiency of the board, the Government decided to alter its constitution by an Act of 1858. Under this Act, three

Municipal Commissioners for the town and island were appointed for carrying out improvement and conservancy. As per the provisions of the Bill in 1872, powers of administering the municipal affairs which were earlier vested with the Bench of Justices were handed over to two representative bodies, the Corporation and the Town Council. The Corporation consisted of 64 members of whom one-half were elected by the rate payers. The Town Council consisted of 12 members of whom 8 were elected by the Corporation. The Municipal Commissioner in matters of finance was directly under the control of Town Council (Maharashtra State Gazetteers, Greater Bombay District, Volume III, 1986).

Lord Ripon made an important pronouncement on Local Self-Government in 1882 which had far-reaching effects on the vesting of powers for local bodies. It was followed by an agitation in Bombay for further extension in the elected representation responsible to citizens thus leading to the passing of the Bombay Act of 1888. This Act marks an epoch and largely continues to be in force as the subsequent amendments have not altered its framework. The outstanding feature of this Act was the creation of three coordinating authorities, viz., the Municipal Corporation, the Standing Committee and the Municipal Commissioner. It increased the number of Councillors from 64 to 72 of which 36 were elected at ward elections by rate payers and graduates of some universities in the British India. It also created territorial constituencies by dividing the city into seven administrative wards for the purpose of an election for the first time.

Then in 1922, the Bombay Act brought about some further constitutional changes. The act did away with the representation of the Justices of Peace and substituted the rate payers franchise by the rent payers. This resulted in an increase of strength of the Councillors to 106 of which 76 members were elected at ward elections and rest nominated by various bodies including Government. During 1931 the strength of the Councillors was thus put at 112. The City Improvement Trust created in 1898 as a separate body was made a part of the Municipality by the Bombay Act of 1933 after its dissolution in 1926.

The Government of India Act of 1935 set the pace for further reforms in the local government sphere. In 1936, the franchise was widened by reducing the rental qualification. It necessitated the division of original seven wards in 19 smaller units. This was done by the Bombay Act XIII of 1938 which also increased the number of Councillors from 112 to 117. This enactment did away with the Government nominations

except for three members who were appointed ex-officio members. The first general elections on the basis of adult franchise introduced in 1942 were held in 1948. The Bombay Act of 1948 was responsible for the division of city in 34 electoral wards for the General Elections of 106 elective seats (Ibid).

The rapid growth of population with hardly any scope for expansion within the city led to the growing dependence of the suburbs on the city for essential services. An urgent need was felt for coordinated development in the suburbs thus rendering the unification of the municipal government of the entire region of Greater Bombay inevitable. The Bombay Act of 1950 extended the limits of the corporation for the purpose of ensuring co-ordination of efficient municipal government. Its strength was also increased from 117 to 135 Councillors. The Corporation became a purely elected body with the general elections that took place in 1952. Further, by passing of the Bombay Act of 1956 the strength of the Corporation was increased by seven Councillors to enable the extended suburbs being represented on the Corporation. The Greater Bombay area was thus divided into 44 wards for general elections with 131 elected seats. By an Act of 1966, the State Government decided to set up 140 single-member constituencies with a non-transferrable vote. Thus, the first civic polls to elect 140 corporators who would govern the financial capital of the country was held in 1968 and the house was elected on this basis in April 1968. In 1982, the Corporators seats were increased from 140 to 170. In 1990, 30% seats reserved for women for the first time. The number of corporators gradually increased to 221 in 1991 and 227 in 2002. The Corporation today is the largest and fully democratic civic body in India which is functioning with popular participation through 227 members (Ibid).

### **Jurisdiction:**

In the British era, Salsette was divided into 129 villages and subsequently, it was split into north and south talukas. The former with 54 villages formed a part of the Thane district and the latter with 36 villages was reconstituted into what was called as the Bombay Suburban District.

Two separate entities viz., Mumbai and Mumbai (Suburban) districts were already into existence before 1950. However, the unit “Greater Bombay” came into existence with the merger of the above two entities for the purpose of municipal administration in April 1950. The region comprised the Bombay Island with its coverage from Colaba points in the south and Mahim on the Western Railway side and Sion on the Central Railway side.

Suburban areas from Bandra to Jogeshwari on the Western Railway side and Kurla to Bhandup including Chembur and Chembur Camp on the Central Railway side were also a part of this region (The District Census Handbook: Mumbai, 2011).

In February 1957, yet another important change was made with the limits of Greater Bombay extended yet again- this time up to Dahisar on the Western Railway side and Mulund on the Central Railway side covering in all an area of 437.7 sq.kms. Thus, Greater Bombay district as a whole, comprising the city proper and suburban areas came into being since 1957. The district was divided into wards and further into sections for administrative purposes and convenience in 1961. The number of sections continues to be 88 as per the 2001 census as it was in the previous censuses. The number of administrative wards increased from 15 in 1971 to 21 in 1981 and further from 23 in 1991 to 24 as per the 2001 census and the number of administrative wards remain the same in 2011 Census.

During the 1991 Census, the Greater Bombay region was divided into three major parts- (a) Island City, (b) Eastern Suburbs, (c) Western suburbs. Post-1991, there was a complete overhaul of the region at the district level but not at the municipal corporation level. The newly created Mumbai district covers an area of 9 municipal administrative wards and the Mumbai (Suburban) district covers 15 municipal administrative wards. The entire city is divided into six administrative zones. The zones are supervised by the Deputy Municipal Commissioners while the administrative head of each ward is an Assistant Commissioner. Apart from these, there are departmental heads who supervise the work of the major departments pertaining to civic administration (Ibid). In 1995, the city of Bombay was renamed as Mumbai giving in to the long-standing demand of the Shiv Sena under its leader Balasaheb Thackeray.

The civic government of Bombay renamed as the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (MCGM) now has the jurisdiction of over a total area of 603 sq. km. with a population of 1,24,42,373 as per the 2011 Census. The tremendous growth of population in the city has given rise to a number of problems with respect to planning with several challenges with respect to maintenance and administration being faced by the corporation. Thus, for administrative purposes, Greater Mumbai is now divided into 6 zones, each consisting of 3 to 5 wards named alphabetically.

MCGM has the privilege of having one of the earliest experiences in local self-government in British India. The Bombay Municipal Corporation Act, 1888, which continues to govern the city, is largely the brainchild of Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, the first Indian President of the corporation. The act has incorporated the complete comprehensive concept of an ideal structure of Municipal Government, with a dichotomy of the deliberative and executive wings of the corporation thus serving as a model for other corporations. Today, MCGM handles the entire gamut of civic affairs and its Development Plan (DP).

The Municipal Corporation has an elected body consisting of 227 elected members with the Mayor of Mumbai as the presiding authority a leader of the house representing the majority party as well as a leader of the opposition.

### **Making of the City:**

Mumbai is essentially a city built by the British who wanted to serve their commercial interests from the beginning. Unlike other cities in the country, it is essentially a city of immigrants. Three hundred years ago the city was not more than a small hamlet comprising of the Koli people. Britishers invited and facilitated the trading communities to come and set up their businesses in the city. In view of the special encouragement given to the Parsis, the number of Parsi settlers in the city considerably went up in the 1850s. The Parsis were employed to supply cloth to the English merchants in the city on a regular basis. Gujarat had been their home initially however over the last 300 years, they made Mumbai their home. The Parsi community has not just made a significant contribution to the making of the city but has also risen to great eminence in doing so. The Baniyas of Gujarat were resourceful and were sent to Deccan in 1672 to invite other merchants in order to set up their businesses in Mumbai. Mumbai thus came to be developed as a trade-center. The primary interest of most communities that came to the city was business and money-making, they all lived in harmony for several years despite being from different castes religions, cultures, ethnicities and linguistic backgrounds.

After the introduction of the first railway line in 1853, the first cotton mills were opened in Bombay in the following year with the increased connectivity from rural areas to the city. Until this time Bombay used to export raw cotton to Britain and re-import textile. Bombay's black cotton soil was well suited for cultivating cotton. The British leased the lands to the Indian entrepreneurs to run cotton mills. According to Dwivedi and Mehrotra

(quoted in Raju, 2009), “During the period of American civil war from 1861-1865, when the supplies from the USA declined, Bombay’s cotton industries flourished and cotton exports grew. With the construction of the Suez Canal in 1869, Bombay’s importance as a seaport grew and the Bombay Port Trust was established in 1870. These are the two significant world events, which had an effect on the early economic growth of the city.”

While Marathi is spoken by the largest single group in the city with the language also being the official language of Maharashtra; Gujarati and Hindi have an equally dominating influence. The commercial world is dominated by the Gujaratis while the lingua franca of the city is Hindi. Mumbai takes everything in its stride- be it tragedy or triumph. The city has stood its ground even after several bomb blasts, floods and other calamities.

Bombay emerged as a major city in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This was the era of the industrial revolution, of textile mills, railways and steamships. But the city’s Raison d’etre was colonialism. From Bombay, British industrial interests in South Asia were coordinated and the city functioned as a major link in the colonial commodity chain. The industrial revolution was almost a universal phenomena, but the ways in which the textile mills, rail roads and steam ships shaped Bombay must be understood in the context of the city’s contemporary global linkages: Bombay, as a place, was in essence the product of colonialism. (Nijman in Shaw, 2007)

### **Western Education and Socio-Political Awakening:**

As the gateway to India, Mumbai was the first to get exposed to Western values and education that helped spread rationalism. Along with this, criticism of the social evils by missionaries stimulated an awakening amongst the people then. As a result of this awakening in western India, stalwarts like Balshastri Jambhekar and Dadoba Tarkhadkar gave a new direction to the society in Mumbai. The renaissance invested India led to the growth of political consciousness giving rise to political associations like Young Bombay and Bombay Association. Bombay Association though was dominated by Shetias and businessmen served as the first training ground for political and constitutional agitation for Indians in order to redress their grievances. The association further became one of the harbingers of the Indian National Congress (INC) set up in 1885. Mumbai got the privilege of hosting the first session of the INC in 1885 thus becoming the epicenter of socio-political reform and consciousness. The city was at the forefront of the Nationalist

Movement with the huge contribution of the textile mill workers and traders in the movement who inhabited the city for a livelihood.

After India's independence in 1947, the territory of the Bombay Presidency retained by India was restructured into Bombay State. The area of Bombay State increased, after several erstwhile princely states that joined the Indian union were integrated into the state. Subsequently, the city became the capital of Bombay State (Census of India, 1961).

### **Bombay and the Samyukta Maharashtra Movement:**

The Samyukta Maharashtra Movement to create a Marathi language state with Bombay as its capital was at its height in the 1950s, giving an expression for the first time to Marathi identity and pride. In 1956, the States Re-organisation Committee (SRC) recommended the creation of linguistic states of Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Karnataka but recommended a bi-lingual state for Maharashtra-Gujarat, with Bombay as its capital but Vidarbha outside Maharashtra which went against the aspirations of the Marathi and Gujarati speaking people in the region. On November 21, 1955, protestors were fired upon by the police demonstrating for the Unilingual State of Maharashtra at Flora Fountain. Bombay was the major bone of contention in the reorganization of states especially Maharashtra and Gujarat. The Bombay Pradesh Congress Committee (BPCC) was dominated by the Shetjis and Bhatjis who were not in favour of dividing the then Bombay presidency into two states namely Gujarat and Maharashtra with Bombay as its capital. It led to a longer struggle amongst the proponents of the linguistic state of Maharashtra largely drawn from the Maharashtra Pradesh Congress Committee (MPCC) and the Central leadership. Congress leaders like S.K. Patil favoured the separation of Bombay city from a linguistically reconstituted Maharashtra or Gujarat. The Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti (SMS) was formed in 1956 to take the battle for Samyukta Maharashtra forward which consisted of several leaders from the left including S.M. Joshi, S.A. Dange and Nanasahab Gore. Some other leaders of the Samiti were - Maina Gavankar, Walchand Kothari, Acharya Atre, Prabodhankar Thackeray and Senapati Bapat. The INC had pledged to introduce linguistic states before independence. However, post-independence, Nehru and Patel were adamantly opposed to linguistic states perceiving linguistic states as a threat to the integrity of India. The Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti stirred the environment against the Congress. The discontent against the Congress government led to the defeat of the stalwarts of Congress by the Samiti in the Second General Election of 1957. With the perceived fear of losing in the upcoming general elections, the Maharashtra

leadership convinced the central leadership for the formation of Samyukta Maharashtra (including Marathwada and Vidarbha) with Bombay as its capital. Thus, a separate Maharashtra state was born on 1 May, 1960.

When the unilingual state of Maharashtra was created, it was a moment of great pride across the state; Mumbai returned to being cosmopolitan and Congress came back to power. But over time, many Marathi speakers felt they had not benefited and were left out of the development process as prominent positions in all fields were grabbed by ‘outsiders’ who had migrated to the city in search of opportunities over the years. As the city started growing financially, the growth in opportunities attracted a wide variety of people to come here in search of a living. This led to a large influx of people from all parts of the country who eventually settled in the city thus generating a sense of isolation amongst the locals who felt that these migrants were eating up on their opportunities.

### **Emergence of Nativism: Politics of Marathi *manoos***

With the feeling of being ‘sidelined’ the Marathi population in Mumbai did not have any leaders after the dissolution of the left-led Samyukta Maharashtra Movement. Striking a chord with these woes of the Marathi *manoos*, Shiv Sena emerged as a political organisation in 1966 promising to ‘fight for the cause of the Marathi *manoos*’. This radically pro-Maharashtrian organisation was founded by a former newspaper cartoonist, Bal Thackeray. The party's name, which literally means "Shivaji's army," refers to the Maratha king Shivaji, who defended the kingdom of the Marathas in the seventeenth century. In its formative years, the Sena targeted South Indians- who at the time were at key positions across institutions in the city inciting its Marathi supporters to shoo these ‘outsiders’ away from the city to reclaim their rights. Sena footed the bill with an understanding between their leaders and those from the ruling Congress party. The entire discourse of politics in the city was converted to identity politics by giving the Maharashtrians an identity of ‘marathi *manoos*’ in the city. The increasing migration to the city coupled with a much lower migration from the city made the local vs outsider conflict graver. Shiv Sena began attacking the South Indians, with the slogan ‘*Uthao Lungi Bajao Pungi*’ (Beat up the lungiwallahs, meaning South Indians).

According to Arun Tikekar (Foreword in Gogate, 2014), “That Mumbai developed due to the contributions from non-Marathi communities – notably the Parsis and Gujaratis also cannot be denied. But it cannot also be denied that Mumbai had a distinct Marathi stamp

on most socio- cultural and political activities for over a century and more. With that Marathi stamp losing its distinct identity, if the local marathis felt uneasy about the loss of their hold over the city, it was understandable.”

Shiv Sena’s discourse was based on two premises- it tried to generate a feeling amongst the locals that the migrants have outnumbered them and would continue to flourish if the locals did not fight against them. A combination of insecurities – economic, political and cultural led to the locals looking at the outsiders with a perceived threat. According to Mary F. Katzenstein (1973), “Relative to their proportion in the Bombay population, Maharashtrais are overrepresented in manual jobs, almost proportionally represented in clerical positions and underrepresented in professional and managerial positions. It is interesting, moreover, that Gujaratis occupy a somewhat larger percentage of the clerical positions than do South Indians- the community said to monopolize clerical jobs. Relative to their proportion of the population, it is true that the two non-Maharashtrian groups included here fare better in non-manual occupations than do Maharashtrais, but there is no evidence that white collar occupations are being "taken over" by non- Maharashtrais”.

Katzenstein further analysed the issue by giving some statistical facts. “In 1961, Maharashtrais were a minority-43 per cent of Bombay's population. Maharashtrais still constituted the largest single linguistic community. The next largest, Gujaratis, were 19%; South Indians including the four major South Indian linguistic communities, comprised 9%; and the Hindi-speakers were 8%. Nevertheless, the fact that non- Maharashtrais numerically exceeded Maharashtrais in their own "native city" clearly affected the outlook of Maharashtrais towards themselves and towards others... The economic and social disparity between Maharashtrais and non-Maharashtrians in Bombay constituted the fundamental source of nativist sentiment in the city; the immediate stimulus to Shiv Sena, however, was not material but psychological: the change in Maharashtraian expectations and consciousness wrought by Samyukta Maharashtra and the revitalization of these feelings achieved through the outcries of ‘Marmik’ precipitated the emergence of organized nativism in 1966” (Ibid).

According to Lele (1995), “The immediate and manifest provocation was a fear of the loss of jobs for Marathi workers in Bombay and a widespread belief that the continuing influx of migrants from the south was responsible for it. The real causes for the fear had matured over the years. Having won Bombay as the capital of the Marathi state against the

resistance of Gujarati capital, there was an expectation among middle-class Maharashtrians that their job prospects in the city would substantially improve. During the first half of the decade, however, no dramatic changes had occurred in this direction.”

According to Deshpande (2014), “Shiv Sena emerged as a saviour of Marathi middle- and lower middle-class settlers of Mumbai, as the city transformed into a national and global financial centre. After dominating the political scene in Mumbai during the 1970s and 1980s, the Sena ambitiously spread its wings to the rest of Maharashtra and for over two decades, remained a loyal associate of the BJP in its version of the politics of Hindutva. Through this chequered political journey, Sena’s exclusionary politics developed many subtexts and invented new adversaries.”

Feeding on to the bottled up frustrations and insecurities of the Maharashtrians who made up roughly 40 percent of the city's population but still remained excluded from the top of the economic heap, Thackeray steadily expanded his political base over the next two decades. In 1985, the Shiv Sena took control of the Bombay Municipal Corporation, and its influence continued to grow.

Although Shiv Sena's early success as a nativist party was due largely to the subordinate status of Maharashtrians in Bombay, its redirection towards the championing of "rightist" causes bore little relation to the status or a particular position of the Maharashtrian community. The Sena's "rightist" activities, rather, appeared to originate from the inflation of political ambition and the assertion of long-standing ideological convictions on the part of Sena's top-ranking leadership (Katzenstein, 1973).

### **Bombay’s Transformation: From Red to Saffron**

Sena’s success in the politics of Bombay marked the transformation of the city’s sentiment from the left red to the saffron right. While the influence of the left- that was earlier strong during the Samyukta Maharashtra Movement and the mill unions started fading away with the nativist sentiment gaining prominence. At the time when Sena entered Mumbai’s political scene, the growing middle-class was in favour of the nativist sentiment thus overshadowing the earlier aspirations of the city’s working class which had supported the left by and large. Gyan Prakash (2010) notes, “Though red flags did not flutter much beyond the mill gates, they signified the working class’s claim on the city. Workers, intellectuals, and political activists saw radical urban dreams expressed in the colour red.

Behind the saffronization of the city, is the story of the destruction of its working-class politics, the extinction of the red city dreamed up by the communist and trade union activist. But this transformation was not only ideological. Saffron displaced red not just by crushing radical thought but also by fashioning and entrenching an urban political culture of populism.”

To reduce the impact of the left unions, Congress tried to encourage the activity of communal forces in order to elevate its own status and strength. This, in turn made the Shiv Sena- a party which emerged as a pro nativist movement to become upfront about its anti-Muslim sentiments thus becoming a formidable force in the city’s politics.

### **Shiv Sena Joined Hands with the BJP:**

The decision of Shiv Sena leadership to become a political party and join the ‘saffron forces’ came as a shock to many of its followers. Sena followers were divided after this development- especially since their Supremo Bal Thackeray had always expressed his desire to stay away from party politics. “Shiv Sena has come a long way from its original incarnation of a social movement. For Bal Thackeray and his aides, establishment and rise of the Sena in Mumbai was a dream come true may be at the connivance of then ruling Congress party which wanted to build a formidable opposition to the unionism of the strong communist lobby in Mumbai. With the communist influence in Mumbai contained and power tasted Shiv Sena leaders were looking out for a bigger role and it was not possible without entering the political arena. The BJP offer with its newly found Hindutva plank, that is, the cause of upholding the cause of nationalist Hindu majority coming handy for Sena leaders...Having entered electoral politics, Thackeray quickly learnt a lesson that attacking migrants in Mumbai is not good politics. South Indians who were earlier easy targets went out of focus as Shiv Sena was obliged to shed at least some of its radicalism when it first tasted victory in the 1985 Bombay Municipal Corporation elections” (Tikekar’s foreword in Gogate, 2014).

Sena’s alliance with the BJP in the days to come helped the party gain a broader support base. In 1985, BJP leader Pramod Mahajan initiated the discussion over alliance keeping in mind the spreading fame of the Sena. The BJP which wanted to set its base in the state found a popular ally in the form of Sena. Both parties had a similar ideological alignment at least on the issue of Hindutva which made the alliance smooth. Since then, the BJP has carefully used the support base of Sena depending on the time and situation. Without

endorsing the regional stand of the Sena, BJP often used the party to bolster its strength nationally.

This alliance did wonders for both parties as they collectively came to power in 1995 defeating the mighty Congress under the leadership of Sharad Pawar. The alliance remained in power in Maharashtra between 1995 and 1999. That undoubtedly, was the peak of the Shiv Sena's glory. However, in the upcoming assembly election of 1999 the Sena-BJP alliance failed to come to power. After the Sena-BJP alliance broke in the 2014 assembly elections (although the two parties later joined hands to form the government), the two parties chose to contest separately even at the 2017 BMC elections thus ending the alliance of over 25 years.

### **Changing Landscape of the City: From Mills to Malls**

It is not possible to speak of the recent history of land, property and its economy in Mumbai without referring to the significant changes that have taken place since the 1980s with the closure of more than 50 textile mills thus altering its topography and affecting almost every aspect of the city. According to More and Bhowmik (2001), "the textile industry occupied a central position in Mumbai's economy till the 1960s." They quote Chandavarkar (1994) who noted that "From the late 19th century onwards, the cotton-textile industry formed the main-stay of Bombay's economy. Its development shaped the growth and character of numerous other activities." More and Bhowmik further state that in 1921, this industry employed 16.2 per cent of the male population and 9.5 per cent of the female population.

Most mills in Mumbai were located in Girangaon or the mill precinct in Central Bombay stretching over a thousand acres, from Byculla to Dadar and from Mahalaxmi to Elphinstone road. There were around 2, 50,000 textile mill workers in Central Mumbai area till 1980. Most workers who worked in the textile industry in Mumbai were migrants from Konkan and Western Maharashtra.

Since the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, Mumbai's mills and its docks, harbors and the railways were critical in shaping the history of the city. The physical structure of the working class neighbourhoods imparted a certain public quality to its social life. The landscape of the mill district was dominated by ramshackle, Jerry-built chawls packed closely into the land between municipal thoroughfares. The worker over time had developed his own culture in

this space. In order to ensure these workers stayed in their mills, the mill owners built small theatres like Bharatmata and would organize *Lavani* and *Tamaasha* performances for them. Every festival was celebrated with pomp and grandeur by these workers thus giving Girangaum its rich culture.

Slowly with mills making profits, employers started exploiting the laborers more and more. The unorganized power looms sector had taken over and it was becoming uneconomical to maintain large scale industrial units within the city limits on account of high power and octroi costs. The workers who were silent until 1974 finally broke the lull after S.A. Dange launched a token strike for 'deferred wage' and 'dearness allowance' that year. In late 1981, Dutta Samant led the workers in a precarious conflict between the Bombay Mill owners Association and the unions, thus rejecting the Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC) - affiliated Rashtriya Mill Mazdoor Sangh which had represented the mill workers for decades. This was followed by a massive strike forcing the entire textile industry of the city to be shut down for over a year. An estimated 2,50,000 workers went on strike and more than 50 textile mills were shut in Bombay permanently. The strike of over two lakh workers in 58 mills, the largest and longest such struggle in India, was subordinated to the fact that the worker's refusal to produce made no difference to the market.

According to Nallathiga (2011), "The 18 month long crippling strike by the mill workers led to huge losses and the running of the Cotton Textile Mills became unviable. Several mills were declared sick and a few even shut down their operations. Only a few managed to survive. It is important to note that the textile mills constituted an important component of the manufacturing industry in Mumbai, which was the backbone of Mumbai's economy till eighties. There were 58 cotton textile mills in Mumbai. Of these, 26 were deemed 'sick' and, therefore, taken over by the Government of India. The remaining 32 mills continued in the private sector. The sick textile mills were proposing to sell off part or whole of their land for quite some years, allowing the redevelopment of the land."

In 1991, the state government had thrown open around 600 acres of mill land covered by 50 odd mills in central and south central Mumbai for redevelopment. However, the state government had put the condition that mill owners would have to give one-third of the land to the BMC for development of open space, another one-third to MHADA to build affordable housing and the rest could be developed by the owner...Out of the 400 acres of

land which could have come to the BMC and MHADA under the 1991 formula, residential and commercial towers now stand on 340 acres of them. The state can at best hope to get just 60 acres of land for affordable housing and development of open spaces from the mill land that remains to be redeveloped.<sup>6</sup> Wherever redevelopment of land has taken place in mill areas, it has proved to be haphazard and totally commercial in nature. Over 1.75 lakh mill workers were promised homes under the state's scheme of housing for mill workers and their families. However, till date, only around 10 thousand workers have got their homes.

The fizzling out of the mills in the city, at a time when real estate around these areas was gaining prominence, changed the socio-demographic setting of the city. Mill lands were bought by rich corporates who erected tall residential structures, malls and business hubs to make profits. Today, mill lands are occupied by plush corporate houses and malls. The hub of employment for the migrants who had settled in the city then, these lands have now become centres for capitalist investment. Spaces that were once home to the city's vibrant culture have now become centres of recreation for the urban elite. In the post mill era, the loss of employment created with the closure of mills was gradually filled with the introduction of service industries in these spaces. Formal, organized sectors, in banking, finance, oil, ICT, transport, healthcare, communications and social services, grew in the earlier regarded mill precincts. With the closure of mills, a large number of laborers moved back to their hometowns in the absence of a livelihood here while those who chose to stay back tried to engage in "small businesses in the informal sector — hawkers, taxi drivers, mechanics, vendors, recycling — began to multiply, delinked from trade unions and regulated conditions" (Clark and Moonen, 2014).

The city, which has always been hungry for space failed to reinvent itself due to its poor planning. With time, salt pans and mangroves only came under the eye of the builders and developers who dreamt of erecting tall structures at the cost of environmental degradation. Natural calamities like the floods on July 26, 2005 and the most recent one on August 28, 2017 underlined the significance of sustainable development. Clogged water drains, stalled metro work and to top it all the callousness of the administration which merely passed the buck was exposed yet again.

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<sup>6</sup> [https://mumbaimirror.indiatimes.com/mumbai/civic/mill-land-development-after-losing-340-acres-of-land-state-returns-to-91/articleshow/59764399.cms?](https://mumbaimirror.indiatimes.com/mumbai/civic/mill-land-development-after-losing-340-acres-of-land-state-returns-to-91/articleshow/59764399.cms) accessed on 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2017

### **Rift within the Sena and the Emergence of MNS**

After reaching its peak, Sena started struggling with its dual identity- on the one hand, Sena supremo Balasaheb Thackeray was opposing westernisation and its influence while on the other, his own nephew Raj Thackeray organised a Michael Jackson concert in 1996 with 70 thousand people attending the event. This was the beginning of a rift within the Sena.

In 2003, Sena's initiative '*Mi Mumbaikar*' a brainchild of Uddhav Thackeray was an attempt to bring north Indians to the Sena fold which did not go well with the old school *sainiks* whose major agenda had earlier been to kick out these sections of people from the city. With the change in Sena's stand, people were looking forward to having a party that did something for the Marathi Manooos.

After retirement of Shiv Sena chief Balasaheb Thackeray, his son Uddhav was the predecessor. He was in charge of the Shiv Sena. Raj Thackeray was fiery and deserved to take over the leadership after Balasaheb Thackeray. He had created his own class of followers as such and his work was well recognised in Mumbai. After a lot of "Ghusmat" (suffocation) in the words of Raj Thackeray, he finally left Shiv Sena. Taking stock of this situation, Raj Thackeray made a re-entry into the politics of Mumbai with a new party- The Maharashtra Navanirman Sena (MNS). The party demanded preferential treatment to the Marathi *manooos* in jobs. Raj Thackeray targeted the '*Paraprantiya*' (those from other regions) to such an extent that billboards in other languages were broken down, hawkers who had migrated from North India beaten up- their businesses vandalized. Coming of MNS marked the revival of an invocation of the Nativist sentiment.

According to Deshpande (2014), "The rise of the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena and its aggressive politics against migrants from the north, in a way forced the Shiv Sena to tepidly move back to its "protector of the Marathi" image and compete for the Marathi vote. But it also provided it with a new adversary in the form of the '*bhaiyyas*' of the north."

### **Population, Migration, Housing, Slums and Homelessness:**

Mumbai has seen its population grow at a rate which is twice that of Maharashtra's and 2.5 times that of the country in the past 100 years. The city's population has grown by a whopping 983 per cent from 11.48 lakh in 1911 to 1.24 crore in 2011. Maharashtra as a

state has meanwhile grown by 423 per cent from 2.14 crore in 1911 to 11.23 crore in 2011. The island city of Mumbai, which was more populous in 1911 has seen an increase only by 245 per cent from 8.93 lakh to 30.85 lakh. In comparison Mumbai's suburbs, which had a population of mere 2.5 lakh in 2011 have grown by a humungous 3555 per cent to 93.56 lakhs. The high growth rate is attributed to the history of migration that the city has seen over the several years. Mumbai, which lied at the epicenter of all economic activity and does even today has brought in a large amount of migrant population in each of its growth years. Census figures point out that over 50 per cent of migration into the state was due to the availability of employment and business opportunities at large. As per these figures, between 1991 and 2001, migrants in Mumbai constituted close to 15 per cent of its population. The area of Mumbai and its adjoining areas like Thane, Navi Mumbai are supposed to have attracted close to 24.89 lakh in migrants. Out of these, over 15 lakh were from outside the state while over 9 lakh were from within the state.<sup>7</sup> This inflow of migrants has also made the city's history, culture and social life more diverse and enriched. But at the same time with migration came tougher challenges of housing, sanitation, health etc.

### **The Phenomenon of Slums:**

According to Desai and Pillai (quoted in Bahalen and Bhagat, 2009), "Existence of slums is a worldwide phenomena, while its definition and type varies from place to place. The main reason behind the origin of Bombay's slums can be traced to its development as an important political and economic centre of the country. It fascinated a large number of people from the rural and small town areas. After the Second World War there was a subsequent rise in population due to economic upheaval. Private enterprises constructed houses with a maximum profit motive which gave birth to buildings known as chawls. These chawls consists of a number of tenements, usually one small room for each family and served by water-closets and water taps for all families. Due to lack of town planning and satisfactory standards laid down by law in respect to minimum accommodation and sanitation, the growth of Mumbai went haphazardly. And the gradual decay and neglecting of chawls made them unfit for human living. Later on, these chawls got overcrowded and congested, lack of hygiene and sanitation converted them to slums. Slums can be grouped into: chawls, semi-permanent residential structure and unauthorised huts up on vacant lands. Population and urban growth have taken place at such a rapid pace that the housing

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<sup>7</sup><http://indianexpress.com/article/cities/mumbai/mumbais-population-growth-rate-is-twice-that-of-the-state/> accessed on 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 2017

sector has not been able to deal with this problem resulting into the development of numerous slums in the city."

Today, "the city's slums manifest the worst form of deprivation that transcends income poverty. They are characterized by acute over-crowding, insanitary, unhealthy and dehumanizing living conditions. They are subject to precarious land tenure, lack of access to basic minimum civic services such as safe drinking water, sanitation, storm drainage, solid waste management, internal and approach roads, street lighting, education and health care, and poor quality of shelter. Many of these habitations are located in environmentally fragile and dangerous zones prone to landslides, floods and other disasters that make the poor residents highly vulnerable. A significant proportion of the slum dwellers also face social burdens and health problems worse than their non-slum and rural counterparts. Many civic bodies do not provide the required municipal services in slums on the plea that these are located on 'illegal' space. Moreover, the scale of the problem is so colossal that it is beyond the means of Urban Local Bodies most of whom lack a buoyant fiscal base and are subject to severe fiscal stress" (Slums in India, A Statistical Compendium, 2011).

In absolute numbers, Municipal Corporation area of Greater Mumbai has the highest slum population of around 6.5 million, followed by Delhi (1.9 million) and Kolkata (1.5 million). About 54.1 per cent of the population of Greater Mumbai Municipal Corporation lives in slums, which is the highest among all cities, followed by Faridabad (46.5 per cent) and Meerut (44.1 per cent). The concentration of slum population in the metropolitan cities is evident from the fact that 33.8 per cent of the total slum population of the country resides in these cities. The Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai alone accounts for about one eighth (12.4 per cent) of the total slum population reported in the country (Slums in India, A statistical compendium, 2011).

According to Amita Bhide (2011), "Slums emerged in the city towards the end of the colonial regime, they began as settlements in spaces that offered opportunities for labour in activities outside city limits such as tanning. They expanded considerably in the 1970s, propelled by the continual droughts in the countryside and the expansion of production activities in the city which demanded cheap labour. These increasing numbers paved way for their recognition as a political constituency and emergence of a parallel economy for serving these settlements. This process has continued unabated with more complex elements being added to a city economy which has shifted towards services and become

informalised”.

While the middle class was setting its base in the suburbs, the plight of poor was even worse. The urban poor, spread across the city is trying to make ends meet in the most precarious conditions. Huge slum settlements in areas like Dharavi, Behrampada and those in the ‘M’ ward in and around Chembur which are home to the poor are facing the brunt of development in ways unimaginable to the ‘urban elite’. Slums occupy about 6 per cent of the total land in the city and house 54.5 per cent of its population. Lack of hygiene, poor access to clean drinking water, toilets and affordable healthcare have made these slums a living den of health hazards. The slum rehabilitation scheme of the government has hardly brought about any positive change in the lives of slum dwellers due to its selective implementation in prime localities across the city.

The homeless in the city lie at the lowest rung of the hierarchy in all ways. In Mumbai, the number of homeless people which does not include people living in slums or small tenements was estimated to be 2 lakh in 2005<sup>8</sup>. This section is mainly engaged in menial jobs and often resort to begging in the absence of livelihood opportunities.

Conflicts over property have been a constant feature in the past and continue to take place between individuals, between groups and communities and between individuals and groups against the state.

Bombay’s lands have been and continue to remain a ‘theatre of conflict’ a phrase used by Mariam Dossal, a noted historian. She says that one needs to understand the politics of land use in order to trace the changing pattern in land use and the conflicts in this evolution. In 1661, Mumbai which was then the union of seven islets with a total area of 49.21 sq. kms and were inhabited by about 10,000 persons was gifted to Charles II, the king of England as dowry on his marriage to the Portuguese princess Catharine of Braganza. Three and a half centuries later, now metropolitan Mumbai extends over an area of 4335 sq. kms. includes the larger island of Salsette to the north, as well as parts of the mainland to the east. Its population veers close to 15 million today. Greater Mumbai is today one of the most overcrowded and polluted cities in the world- a megalopolis, where

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<sup>8</sup> <http://archive.indianexpress.com/storyOld.php?storyId=61907> accessed on 20<sup>th</sup> August, 2017

land commands the highest of premiums and the land market determines much of what happens in the city (Dossal, 2010).

The city's landscape saw a drastic transformation in the 19<sup>th</sup> century with the undertaking of reclamation projects which provided additional land for the development of infrastructure – mills, roads, railways being built at the cost of losing hills and open spaces. This attracted a huge volume of migrants who entered the city lured by the job opportunities it offered with this kind of development. While industries and commercial entities were growing on the one hand, the workers who were contributing to its output were living in barbaric conditions. While most workers had earlier settled in the chawls close to their working spaces, with the closure of the mill industry chawl land also became open for development. The labor class who had not recovered from the economic downfall could in no way, afford the lavish living of the newly formed complexes. With real estate prices soaring each day, even the middle class was forced to shift towards the margins of the city- i.e. to the suburbs as we call them today.

As 'land sharks', politicians, 'dons' of the underworld, builders, contractors, and others caught in this nefarious web of land transactions go for the city's civic and political life and to the degradation of its environment (Ibid).

### **Bollywood:**

In May 1998, the Indian government transformed the world media by granting the 'Industry' status to Bombay cinema. While Bombay was a centre for film production during the 1930s and the 1940s, filmmaking was not regarded as an industrial activity by the government then. Bombay's emergence as the global media capital can be attributed to the emergence and the growth of the film industry whose centre lies in the city. Popularly called as 'Bollywood' the Hindi film industry is acclaimed as one of the biggest film industries in the world. It produces over 1000 films every year. From the era of silent films in the early 1900s to box office hits and blockbusters every week, Indian cinema's success in the last few decades has been centred around the developments in the industry centred in Mumbai.

With the proliferation of cinema, men and women from several parts of the country and even the world have settled in the city in search of work. Areas in and around Goregaon and Andheri have been densely populated by these 'strugglers' who dream to make it big

in the industry. With the growth and economic boom of Bollywood, Mumbai has assumed a special glamor and significance in the outside world. People from across the globe are interested in visiting star residences and movie sets, a business that has now gained commercial significance. The film industry is also an investment ground for big tycoons to spin around their money.

### **Economy of Mumbai:**

Significant changes have taken place in the functional characteristics of Mumbai in recent decades. It had evolved during the colonial phase as a major port city and hence as a center of trade and commerce. In the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it became established as an important industrial center with the textile industry dominating its economy. The industry developed on the outskirts of the then populated areas in Central Mumbai. Since the forties of the last century, the manufacturing sector became more diversified. Industries producing a wide range of engineering products evolved in an extensive suburban manufacturing zone extending from Vikhroli and Bhandup in the east to Andheri and Goregaon in the west. Automobile production along with its ancillary industrial units was an important component. Petro-chemical and chemical industries developed in suburban areas such as Chembur-Trombay, Mulund etc. while within the city, there was a localization of drugs and pharmaceuticals. The manufacturing sector, which dominated the city's economy, began to decline since the 80s of the last century. (Bhagat and Sita, 2011)

With the closure of mills, the revenue generated from the textile industry was lost. With lakhs of people losing their jobs, there was widespread unemployment thus causing the outmigration of a large section of a labor class back to their hometowns. The remaining was absorbed in the newly formed industries. Bhagat and Sita (2011) note that, "Manufacturing has given way to finance and services as the major source of formal sector employment while commercial activities retained their importance. In the manufacturing sector, it is not only the traditional industries that have suffered. The chemical industry which was hailed a decade ago, as a 'sunrise' industry has suffered due to liberalization and opening up of the economy to competition."

As Mumbai grappled with uneven economic development with its evolution from a port town to a manufacturing city its industries changed their orientation- they became capital intensive from the earlier labor intensive production. This shift was a response to the change in the government's policies. Paradoxically manufacturing started declining even

at a time when the city's population was increasing and demanding more jobs, houses and services. According to Patel (2003), "The decline was attributed to two political developments- the fragmentation in the trade union movements on the one hand and the growth of the sons of soil movement on the other hand."

From the late 1960s to early 1980 Mumbai had to cope with several economic and political challenges. The service economy of the city was pulled into the newly formed globalized economy as the government initiated export led growth during the 1980s and adopted liberalisation policies in the early 90s. "Bombay was the first city to take advantage of this opportunity" (Ibid).

Mumbai's economy, which was facing a global crisis was reorganized due to the changes in the global economy. It gave it a new direction with both positive and negative effects. Bombay saw an increase in jobs related to producer services. "By 1994, Bombay handled 41 per cent of domestic air traffic. Its airport handled 75 per cent of the country's imports and 64 per cent of its exports. Employment in financial and business services increased by 43 per cent between the 1970s and 1980s. Bombay collected 25 per cent of the country's income tax revenues and 60 per cent of custom revenues. Its bank controlled 12 per cent of national deposits and a quarter of country's outstanding credits. The number of new issues listed on the Bombay Stock Exchange grew from 203 in 1991-92 to 694 in 1993-94, and the amount of fresh capital in old and new companies increased from 54 billion to 213 billion rupees between these years. The growth in the financial sector and the trend in stocks and bonds as well as the participation of international financial groups in Bombay's Stock Exchange (BSE) lead to ancillary developments such as increase of investment in the communications industry, real estate and the expansion of other services including lifestyle maintenance." (Harris,1995, Deshpande,1996 quoted in Patel, 2007).

Mumbai is now a much more diversified metropolitan economy with genuine competitive advantages. Its competitive sectors include not just banking and insurance, but also consumer goods and services, electronics, healthcare, tourism, media and entertainment, ICT, professional services, transportation and logistics. It's financial and ICT sectors account for over half of leased office space in the city, the latter often concentrated in suburban and peripheral centres (Clark and Moonen, 2014).

Mumbai is the entertainment, fashion and commercial centre of India with the Mumbai Metropolitan Region economy more than \$400 billion (as of 2017). It is also one of the world's top 10 centres of commerce in terms of global financial flow, Mumbai accounts for around 5 per cent of India's economy contributing 10 per cent of factory employment, 30 per cent of income tax collections, 60 per cent of customs duty collections, 20 per cent of central excise tax collections, 40 per cent of foreign trade and rupees 40,000 crore (US \$10 billion) in corporate taxes to the Indian economy. Headquarters of a number of Indian financial institutions such as the Bombay Stock Exchange, Reserve Bank of India, National Stock Exchange, the Mint, as well as numerous Indian companies such as the Tata Group, Essel Group and Reliance Industries are located in Mumbai (Wikipedia, 2017).

Liberalization, and the absence of rural employment opportunities, spurred further immigration from across India, which is responsible for the majority of metropolitan population growth. The city's Marathi-speakers now make up only a third of residents, and relations with incomers from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, and English-speakers, is a source of political tension and division. Mumbai became a city of even more extraordinary economic and cultural diversity, adding an extra layer of complexity to the task of delivering policy (Clark and Moonen, 2014).

### **Celebrating Diversity:**

Mumbai is home to a large number of people, belonging to different religions and cultures. Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Jains, Christians, Sindhis, Zoroastrians, etc, have been living together peacefully in the city over the years. Since Mumbai is a multi-cultural and multi-lingual city, festivals of all kinds are celebrated here with great joy and happiness. On one hand, pandals are set up for Ganesh Chaturthi and on the other; Iftar parties are organized during Ramzan. Some of the festivals celebrated in Mumbai are specific to the city, while some are celebrated through Maharashtra and even all over India. Diwali, Holi, Christmas, Navratri, Good Friday, Eid, Dussera, Moharram, Ganesh Chaturthi, Durga Puja, Maha Shivratri and Gudhi Padava are some of the festivals in the city.

However, with time, the nature of most of these festivals in the city has been changing. A huge amount of money is spent on grand celebrations during Dahi Handi, Ganesh Chaturthi and Navaratri, Gudhi Padava etc. which is provided by local political fronts and leaders. They use these celebrations in order to promote their political agenda and image

in the community by providing funds and logistics to these organizations and putting banners outside the *pandals*. The downside is the appropriation of these festivals by political fronts and cultural organisations who use them to assert themselves culturally and politically. The members of Dahi Handi Groups, Ganesh Chaturthi and Navaratri Mandals are the organized vote banks for political parties who play an important role during elections.

### **Death of a Cosmopolitan City:**

A city that took great pride in its Cosmopolitan culture faced several challenges in the last few years. Following the razing of the Babri mosque in late 1992 in North India, two large-scale riots, one in December 1992 and another, far worse, in January 1993, racked the city. The riots were mainly due to escalations of hostilities after large-scale protests (initially peaceful then turned violent) by Muslims in reaction to the 1992 Babri Masjid Demolition by Hindu Karsevaks in Ayodhya. The riots were followed by a retaliatory 12 March 1993 Bombay Bombings. The 1993 blasts left 257 people dead, injured 1,400 and delivered a massive blow to Mumbai's psyche. The bombings were also metropolitan India's first exposure to terror. The 13 bombs which exploded in quick succession brought the city's most iconic buildings to their knees, the Bombay Stock Exchange and the Air India Building in Nariman Point, two visible symbols of Bombay's standing as the business capital of India.

In 2003, the city froze in terrified *deja-vu*, as blasts humbled two other icons, the Gateway of India and the jewellery hub of Zaveri Bazar. In 2006, serial blasts tore through its busy suburban train network during peak hour rush, killing more than 180 people.<sup>9</sup>

Yet again, on November 26, 2008, Mumbai experienced one of the worst terrorist attacks in Indian history. Its perpetrators, members of the terrorist group Lashkar-e-Taiba, terrorized the Maximum City for three days, targeting some of its most well-known locations and killing upto 166 people. In a three-day onslaught that began on November 26, 2008, 10 terrorists targeted several high-profile locations in Mumbai, including the landmark Taj Hotel at the Gateway, the Oberoi Trident at Nariman Point, Leopold Café, and Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus - killing 166 people and leaving 300 injured.

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-33713846> retrieved on 28th August, 2017

Around 26 foreign nationals were among those killed by the terrorist and 18 security personnel were also martyred in the attack.<sup>10</sup>

Thus, from the above discussion, there has been an attempt to trace the evolution of the Mumbai Metropolitan City over the last three centuries. The city, which is unique in its own ways has seen a different pattern of development which cannot be put into watertight theories of development. The city, which was a gateway to international trade in the colonial times has now gained the significance of being the biggest globalized economy in the country. In more than three centuries of its growth, it has accommodated the interests of all classes and communities while making space for their idea of development. While looking at the city in today's neo liberal times, one needs to understand the intricacies and manifold layers in its socio-economic, cultural and political life.

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<sup>10</sup> <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/what-happened-on-26/11-10-key-points/listshow/55631763.cms>  
retrieved on 28th August, 2017

## **Chapter Four**

### **Electoral Politics of the City**

Mumbai was the first city which was exposed to the western liberal values during the colonial era. The city, which has rapidly transformed from a trade centre to a booming metropolis has remained at the centre of all major political and social changes in the state over the years. Mumbai had been a traditional stronghold and birthplace of the Indian National Congress, also known as the Congress Party. The first session of the Indian National Congress was held in Bombay from 28–31 December 1885. The city played host to the Indian National Congress six times during its first 50 years, and became a strong base for the Indian independence movement during the 20th century. With the emergence and growth of textile mills, the city also witnessed the rise and fall of the trade union movements.

The city of Mumbai has witnessed urbanisation while retaining the regional and nativist sentiment of its people at the same time. The politics of Mumbai in the post 1960s era was heavily influenced by an invocation of the ‘nativist sentiment’ under the Sena.

With the growth in its expanse along with the influx of the migrant population, the city has grown in sizes and forms. The growth in the number of migrants coming to the city in search of work, also brought in a cosmopolitanism in the culture. With time, the city grew and expanded not just in its size but also assumed various forms. Earlier known for its mill precinct the city then transformed into an industrial hub and has with the forces of neo liberalism gained the status of a booming service sector capital. Housing has also seen a similar transformation over the last few decades. The jerry-built chawls which were home to thousands of mill workers have now been transformed into high rises and plush apartments. Huge pieces of land that were once reserved for other purposes (salt pans, non-development lands) are now being made open for development to be able to absorb the sheer volume of population that the city is abode to.

Two major events shaped the city’s political and economic self in the decade of 1990s- the new economic policy introduced by the Indian government which exposed the city to global opportunities and the bringing in of the 74<sup>th</sup> constitutional amendment which gave constitutional status to urban civic bodies providing reservations to women and the

backward sections. While the former catered to the city's rising economic aspiration, the later garnered the political aspirations of its people.

This chapter aims to trace the changes in the city's electoral patterns in the above context. Elections are held every five years to elect corporators to power in the MCGM. The Corporation comprises 227 directly elected Councillors representing the 24 municipal wards, five nominated Councillors having special knowledge or experience in municipal administration, and a Mayor whose role is mostly ceremonial. Looking at electoral data from 1992 to 2017 Brihanmumbai Municipal elections, an attempt is made to analyse the changing trends in the elections over the years.

While the aggregate data showing trends over the years is not easily available anywhere, the researcher has acquired it from the election office of the BMC and made an attempt at collating it. The data was pulled from election gazettes and analysed in order to understand the changing trends in the BMC elections. A detailed history of the evolution and growth of the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation has been mentioned in the earlier chapter.

The politics of the city and civic body in the last 30 years has been revolving around the Shiv Sena-BJP alliance. In 1968, Shiv Sena entered the political framework of Bombay by winning up to 42 seats of the total 121 in the civic elections. Less than twenty years later, in 1985, the Sena managed to win 75 seats in the civic polls and came to power at Mumbai's municipal corporation. After coming to power, it then joined hands with the BJP at the Lok Sabha as well as Maharashtra Assembly elections in 1989. The party that initially came to power on the basis of its nativist agenda, later took the saffron flag after its alliance with the right wing party (BJP). However, its old loyal found the party's shift from the issue of sons of the soil to right wing ideology unexpected.

In 1992, Sena supremo Bal Thackeray made anti-muslim remarks during the Babri Masjid demolition incident. Further, the Shiv Sena lost Mumbai municipal corporation elections to the Congress. However in 1995, Sena-BJP alliance managed to acquire power for the first time at the assembly elections. In 1997, the Sena managed to regain its lost power at the BMC by winning 103 seats, the highest number of seats for the party till date. After its defeat in 1997, Congress continued to lose its ground at the BMC elections. Meanwhile, Sharad Pawar faction separated from the Congress thus forming the Nationalist Congress Party. Both these parties either individually or collectively could not outweigh the Sena-

BJP alliance. Gaining confidence about its individual might, the BJP's assertion in local politics led to the end of its 25 year old alliance with the Sena. The underlying theme of the alliance was the agenda of Hindutva and recognising each other's strength thereby leading to the Sena recognising BJP's prominence in the national politics and the BJP looking at the Sena as its big brother in regional politics. However, after the 2014 Lok Sabha elections, cordial relation between the two parties was strained due to BJP's increased strength under the Modi wave. With their success, top BJP leadership started looking down upon their regional allies. This led to the breaking alliance between the two parties first at the assembly elections then at the following civic body polls. The politics of Mumbai has been influenced by the above developments that shaped the city's political discourse. The Sena-BJP alliance remained in power for twenty years and the Sena maintained its dominance from 1985 to 2017 except in the 1992 elections.

In 2006, Raj Thackeray, nephew of Bal Thackeray resigning from the Shiv Sena over political differences formed his independent party- the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) which yet again took the nativist agenda forward by targeting the influx of North Indians in the city. While the party managed to mesmerise a large number of people in the city- mainly youngsters by portraying its visionary 'blueprint' for the city, the bubble of its popularity burst soon after as it could not win either numerically or in essence the minds of the city's population. The following table denotes the party positions at the BMC elections from 1992 to 2017.

Data (Table No.1) shows that there has been steady decline in Congress' performance at the civic body elections over the years. Sena's tally rose from 70 in 1992 BMC elections to 103 in 1997 when the party was at its peak. However, the number has seen a marginal decline in the next three elections (98 in 2002, 84 in 2007 and 75 in 2012). In the 2017 election, as mentioned earlier, Sena contested without having an alliance. Though its seat tally increased from 75 in 2012 to 84 in 2017, it could not secure majority at the corporation elections as per its ambition. Even after two big blows to the Sena after the exit of Narayan Rane (who shortly held the post of the Chief Minister while Sena was in power) in 2005 and Raj Thackeray in 2006, it continued to maintain its power over the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation.

BJP, under the leadership of Devendra Fadnavis emerged as the second largest party in the 2017 BMC elections after the Sena (an old ally). BJP's sudden jump from gaining 31 seats

in 2012 to a massive tally of 81 in 2017 can be attributed to the effective leadership of Devendra Fadnavis and the party's aggressive campaign for transparent governance, a promise pitted to counter its old ally. No other party has been successful in pulling off a near impressive performance barring these two old players and the Congress at the corporation elections over the last 25 years.

**Table No.1: Party Wise Seat Position in BMC Elections 1992-2017**

<b>Party Wise Seat Position 1992-2017</b>						
	<b>1992</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2017</b>
<b>Shiv Sena</b>	70	103	98	84	75	84
<b>BJP</b>	14	26	35	28	31	82
<b>INC</b>	111	49	61	71	52	31
<b>NCP</b>	-	-	12	14	13	9
<b>MNS</b>	-	-	-	7	28	7
<b>Samajwadi Party</b>	-	21	10	8	9	6
<b>Others</b>	10	04	0	6	4	3
<b>Independents</b>	16	18	11	9	15	5
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>227</b>

#### **Reservation Status:**

**Table No. 2: Reservation Status 1992-2017**

<b>Reservation Status</b>	<b>1992</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2017</b>
<b>GEN</b>	148	97	99	102	77	75
<b>OBC</b>	-	40	41	41	30	30
<b>OBC/Women</b>	-	20	20	20	31	31
<b>SC</b>	7	10	10	7	5	7
<b>SC/Women</b>	3	4	5	4	6	8
<b>ST</b>	-	1	1	1	1	1
<b>ST/Women</b>	-	1	1	1	1	1
<b>Women</b>	63	48	50	51	76	74
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>227</b>

The 74<sup>th</sup> constitutional amendment provided reservation of seats in the urban local bodies for women and backward caste categories. The above Table No.2 shows the distribution of seats across these reservations from 1992-2017. With reservations, backward castes and women got aspirations of entering into mainstream politics at the local level. This paved way for those who had earlier been denied the opportunities to contest elections. Especially in case of women who had earlier remained away from mainstream politics with the male dominated structure of politics, reservations opened new vistas. In 2012, the state government increased the reservation for women in local bodies to 50 per cent

thereby encouraging a large number of women into local politics. While the participation of women increased numerically over the years, the male dominance over politics did not fade out. Men who were already in power tried to retain it by ensuring that the women in their families contest elections in case the ward becomes reserved. With this trend, women became the face of all political activity which in reality was a product of a man's whims and fancies. An Other Backward Castes category (OBC) woman is seen as the best suited candidate with this reservation pattern- she can contest from four categories- General, OBC, Women, OBC-Women.

**Table No. 3: No. of candidates contested the election 1992-2017**

<b>No. of candidates contested the election</b>						
<b>Election year</b>	<b>1992</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2017</b>
<b>Total seats</b>	221	221	227	227	227	227
<b>Total</b>	<b>2222</b>	<b>2792</b>	<b>2064</b>	<b>2394</b>	<b>2358</b>	<b>2277</b>

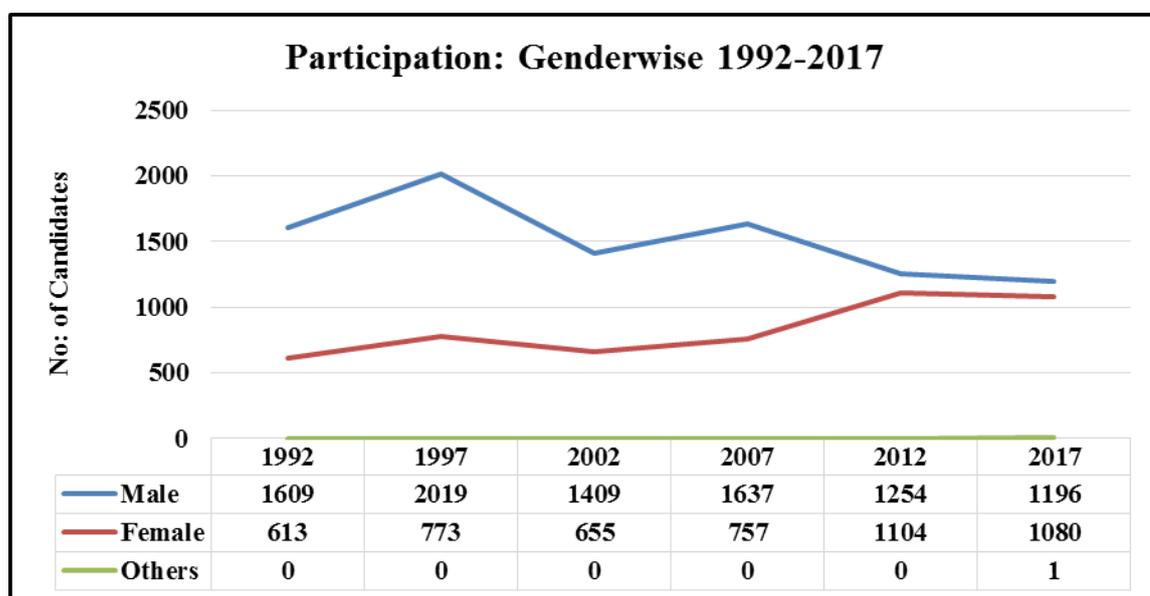
Table no. 3 shows the number of candidates contesting BMC elections over the last 25 years. The data shows a marginal upward jump in 1997 as far as the number of candidates contesting elections is concerned. This particular year marked the introduction of reservations to women and Other Backward Castes in the corporation as per the 74<sup>th</sup> constitutional amendment. However in the very next election, one can see that this number drop from 2792 to 2064. Post 2002, over 2200 candidates have contested the corporation elections until 2017 which means that each seat has around 10 contenders. Data also shows that in 2017 there were fewer candidates in 190 seats as compared to the earlier years.

### **Reservation wise Electoral Participation (contested candidates):**

Table No. 4 shows that there is a steady decline in the number of candidates contesting from general constituencies. The same decline can be noted in the OBC and SC constituencies over the years though the OBC constituency saw a marginal increase in the 2017 elections. After the increase in the reservation of seats for women to 50 per cent in 2012, the number of candidates contesting from this category went up from 508 to 826 from 2007 to 2012. However, it again saw a decline in 2017 with the number going down to 697. On the contrary, one can observe a steady increase in the number of candidates contesting from the OBC- Women constituencies over the years.

**Table No. 4: Reservation\* Gender Electoral Participation (contested candidates)**

Reservation Categories	1992		1997		2002		2007		2012		2017	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
GEN	55	1554	150	1592	95	1120	99	1308	97	1059	83	951
OBC	-	-	8	285	17	205	16	254	2	142	30	165
OBC/W	-	-	92	0	88	0	96	0	131	0	182	2
SC	2	61	15	136	8	90	4	69	3	48	15	72
SC/W	17	0	27	0	32	0	30	0	39	0	71	0
ST	-	-	0	6	0	4	0	5	0	5	0	4
ST/W	-	-	5	0	4	0	5	0	6	0	4	0
W	438	0	476	0	411	0	508	0	826	0	697	0
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>512</b>	<b>1615</b>	<b>773</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>655</b>	<b>1419</b>	<b>758</b>	<b>1636</b>	<b>1104</b>	<b>1254</b>	<b>1082</b>	<b>1194</b>



**Graph No.1: Gender wise Participation 1992-2017**

Data depicted in the above Graph No.1 also shows that in 2012 and 2017, the male-female ratio under the total number of candidates was almost equal. The reason for an almost equal ratio might be the 50 per cent reservation to women in the elections. Between these years the participation of women went up from 27 per cent to 47 per cent.

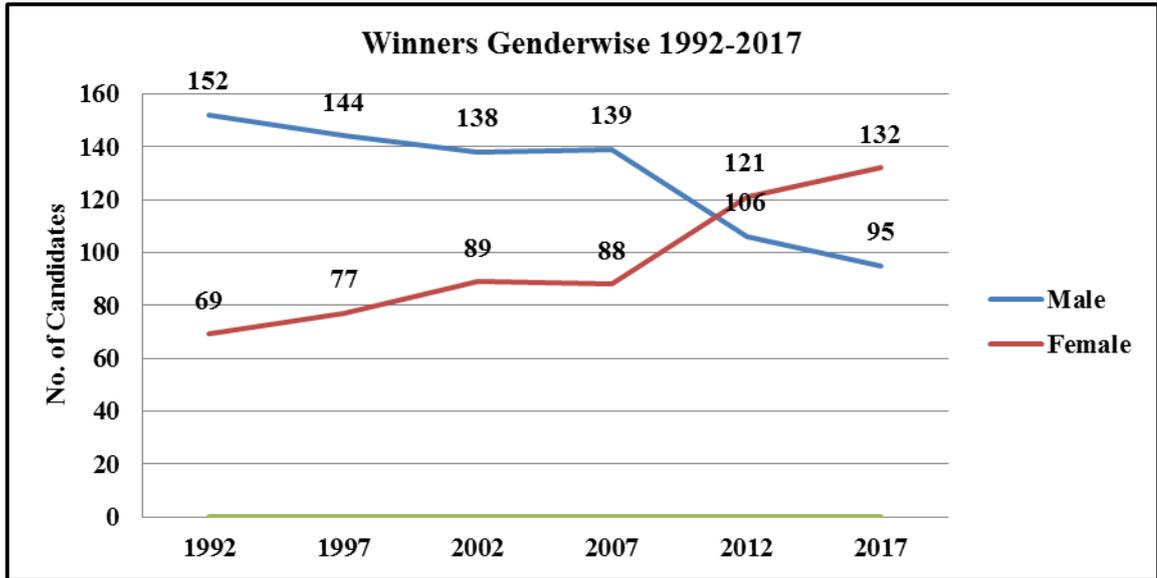
The data was analysed in order to understand the gender-wise distribution of winning candidates in the BMC elections over the years from 1992 -2017. In the current electoral scene, it is still very difficult for female candidates to get an opportunity for contesting an election. Reservation in seats forced the male dominated political structure to provide

opportunities to women in mainstream politics. An earlier study undertaken by the researcher for the Kalyan Dombivali Municipal Corporation Elections 2015 shows that a large number of women could enter into the political fray only due to the reservation policy. When some women tried asking for a ticket in general constituencies, their demands were not paid heed to by the male counterparts who strongly opposed them. The Graph no.1 indicates that from 2007, as the number of males contesting elections steadily declined, the number of women contesting elections increased on the other hand upto the very recent 2017 election. A possible reason for this trend might be the policy of 50 per cent reservation given to women candidates in local body elections in 2012. This allowed women to contest from both general as well as reserved constituencies thus undergoing a numerical surge in their participation.

The data also shows that in 1997, with the implementation of the 74<sup>th</sup> constitutional amendment and the resulting awareness, a fair amount of women contested from the general/ non-women constituencies. In 2012 with the 50 per cent reservation policy, political ambitions of most female aspirants could be accommodated thus resulting in a marginal fall in their numbers from general/non-women constituencies in that year. In 2017 the number rose yet again although not very significantly. With women already being given 50 per cent reservation, there was no encouragement for them to contest from non-reserved constituencies which the male political leaders were now seeing as their only remaining territory. Despite this opposition, 2017 saw the highest number of women (18) winning from general constituencies since 1992.

If we look at party-wise gender ratio of winning candidates, data reveals that Shiv Sena has time and again fielded a significant number of female candidates from 1992 to 2017. From 20 female candidates winning the elections in 1992, the tally from Shiv Sena's women candidates went up to 47 in 2017 elections. This is followed by the Indian National Congress (INC) and the Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP) who had 19 and 47 women winning in the 2017 elections.

Graph No. 2: Gender wise Winners 1992-2017



Gender	1992	1997	2002	2007	2012	2017
Male	68.78	65.16	60.79	61.23	46.70	41.85
Female	31.22	34.84	39.21	38.77	53.30	58.15

Table No. 5: Winning Share- Gender wise 1992-2017

Table no. 5 shows that the winning share of female candidates in the BMC elections has increased over the years.

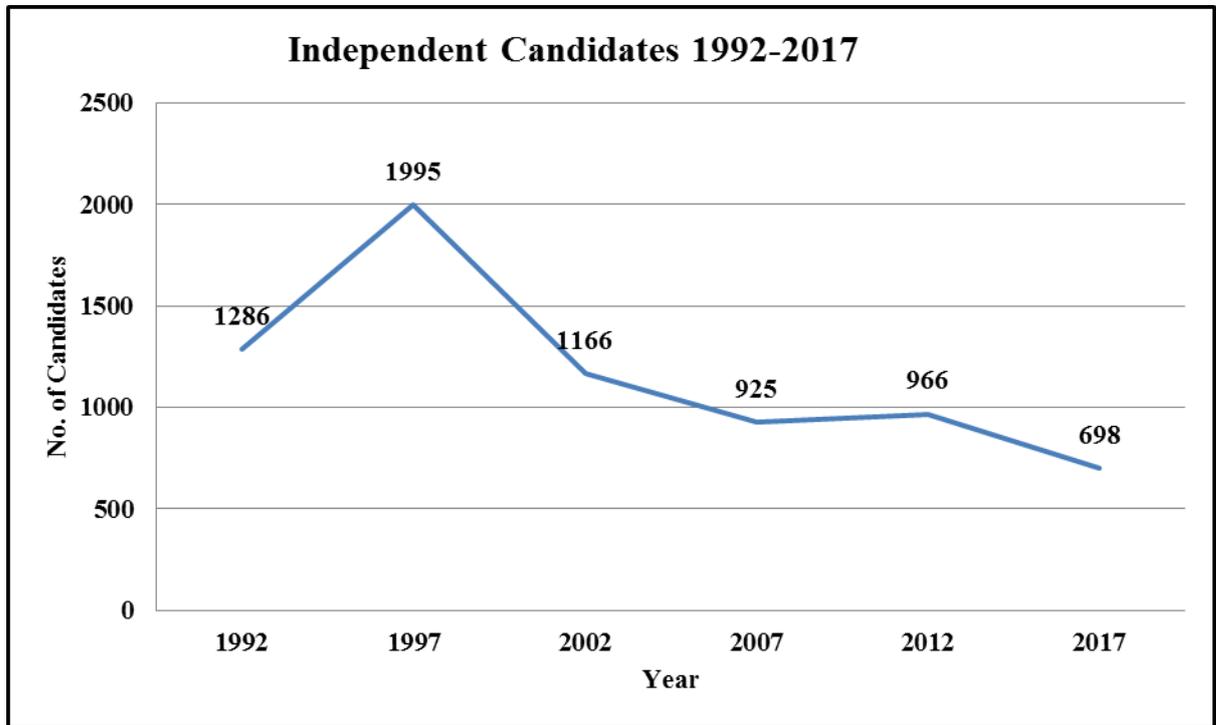
Table No. 6: Female Participation and Winning in General Seats (Non-women)

Reservation	1992		1997		2002		2007		2012		2017	
	PN	W	PN	W	PN	W	PN	W	PN	W	PN	W
GEN	55	4	150	4	95	8	99	9	97	8	83	10
OBC	0	0	8	0	17	3	16	3	2	0	30	4
SC	2	0	15	0	8	2	4	1	3	0	15	4
ST	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>18</b>

Note: \*PN: No. of candidates contested, \*\*W: Won

## Independent Candidates:

Graph No.3: Independent Candidates



There is a general perception that despite the stiff competition, the number of candidates contesting elections and within that the number of independent candidates is steadily increasing. However, election data from 1992-2017 for BMC elections shows that the number of independent candidates contesting for the corporation has seen a decline post 1997 upto 2017 which is clear from the graph below. One of the reasons that the trend can be attributed to is the increasing role of money and muscle power in elections. “As elections became fierce, political parties started pouring in huge amounts of money to woo voters coupled by pressure tactics. In such a scenario, only those individuals who can put in huge amounts of money are given tickets by parties to ensure winnability” (Patil, 2016).

### Independent Candidates Reservation wise- 1992-2017:

For a detailed understanding on the role of independent candidates in corporation elections, the researcher tried to compile the reservation wise data of independent candidates from 1992-2017. Data shows that there is a steady decline in the number of candidates contesting from the General, SC and OBC constituencies (non-women). However, OBC women and SC women constituencies have shown an increase in the number of independent candidates from 2007.

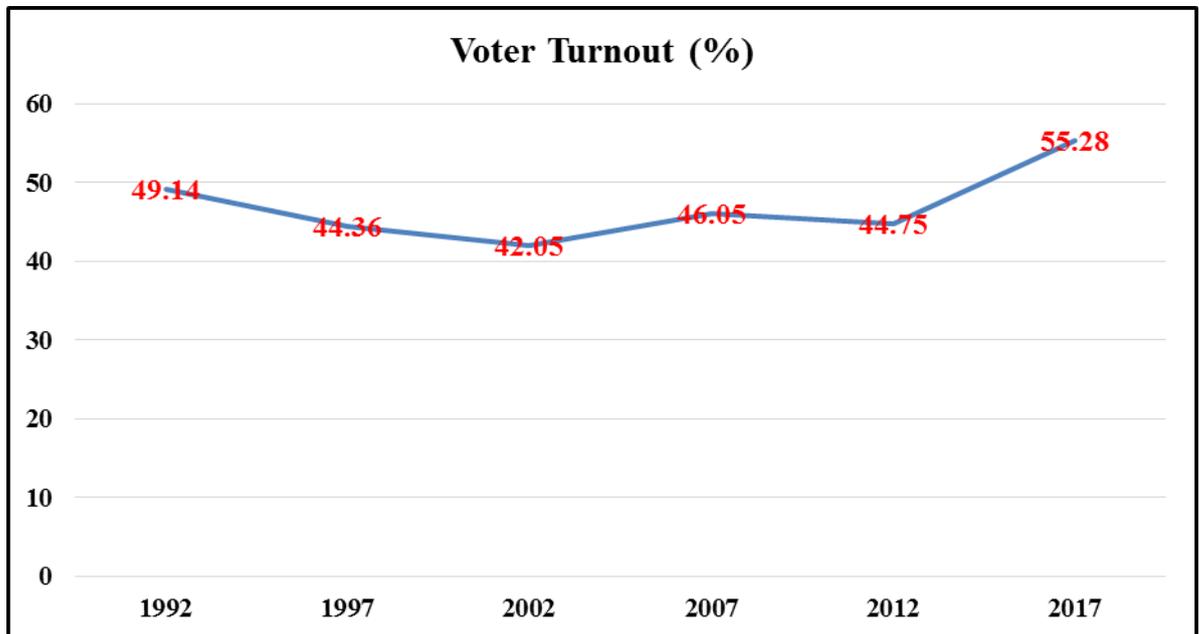
**Table No. 7: Independent Candidates Reservation wise 1992-2017**

Reservation Categories	1992		1997		2002		2007		2012		2017	
	Ind	PN	Ind	PN	Ind	PN	Ind	PN	Ind	PN	Ind	PN
GEN	1020	1609	1327	1742	780	1210	650	1407	596	1156	206	1034
OBC			178	293	78	220	70	270	41	144	89	195
OBC/W			37	92	23	88	10	96	28	131	99	184
SC	39	63	115	151	59	98	19	73	20	51	14	87
SC/W	8	17	16	27	10	32	4	30	13	39	11	71
ST			3	6	0	4	0	5	1	5	5	4
ST/W			2	5	1	4	1	5	2	6	2	4
W	219	438	317	476	215	411	171	508	265	826	272	697
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1286</b>	<b>2127</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>2792</b>	<b>1166</b>	<b>2067</b>	<b>925</b>	<b>2394</b>	<b>966</b>	<b>2358</b>	<b>698</b>	<b>2276</b>

\*Ind.: Independent Candidates, \*\*PN: No of candidates contested

**Voter turnout in BMC elections from 1992-2017:**

**Graph No.4: Voter Turnout 1992-2017**



Over these years, voter turnout at the BMC elections has remained below 50 per cent, with only marginal changes from time to time, which has been a major concern for the state election commission. In 2017, with the special efforts undertaken by the state election commission, the city recorded its highest voter turnout in the last 5 elections with a total voting percentage at 55.28 per cent.

Reservation Type	Seats Won																	
	BJP						INC						SS					
	1992	1997	2002	2007	2012	2017	1992	1997	2002	2007	2012	2017	1992	1997	2002	2007	2012	2017
GEN	10	11	22	14	11	32	70	20	22	26	15	9	49	43	34	50	23	25
OBC		4	6	5	5	9		10	12	16	7	6		21	19	10	9	12
OBC/W		3	1	2	3	12		1	6	6	6	6		13	11	8	14	7
SC		2	1	1	1	1	3	6	5	3	1		3	2	2			6
SC/W			1	1	1	1	2	2	3		2	1	1	1	1	1	2	6
ST															1	1	1	1
ST/W								1	1								1	1
W	4	6	4	5	10	27	36	9	12	20	21	9	17	23	30	13	25	26
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>84</b>

**Table No. 8: Winning position of the main parties across Reserve Categories**

There is a visible dip in the number of seats contested on general ticket post 2007. An attempt has been made to analyse winning position of the parties across Reserve Categories. Table no. 8 shows that the Congress has a stronger caste based vote bank and has won most reserved seats historically. In 2017, Sena won most of the SC and SC/W reservation seats at the BMC elections (6 seats each). In the same year, a surge was seen in the number of OBC seats won by the BJP. In 2017 the party also got thrice the number of seats from the General category as compared to that of 2012. One can see that in 1997 and 2002, a good number of OBC seats were won by the Sena.

Through the above statistical analysis of BMC election results from 1992 to 2017, an attempt was made to understand the changing nature of electoral politics in the city. The data shows a continuous decline of the Indian National Congress (INC) from the city's politics. It would be interesting to study the reasons behind the decline of the Congress. The Sena has maintained its hold over the city's politics though its long-time ally BJP contested separately and won a decent share of seats at the 2017 BMC elections. It can also be seen that some prominent left parties which at one point were at the forefront of the city's politics are vanishing from the electoral scene year by year. Contrary to popular perception the number of independent candidates has not increased over the last 25 years

and has remained more or less constant. One could see the increasing number of female candidates entering into mainstream politics, a trend which can largely be attributed to the reservation for women at Urban Local Bodies. Meanwhile the voter turnout over the years has remained below 50 per cent with 2017 being an exception as the voter turnout was recorded at 55.28 per cent.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Why and How People Contest: Understanding Candidate's Motivations, Strategies and Challenges**

Over the last few years, elections have become nothing less than a spectacle in the country. After the 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments, local body elections have become significant, with strategies used while contesting these elections being at par with those at the national level elections. In today's time, apart from the use of money and muscle power, use of professional strategies has become a crucial factor for winning elections.

With the boom in information technology, every candidate is now focussing on catching the voter at his closest destination- from his mobile phone to social media presence; parties are consciously trying to build their public image which is later used for mobilising people in their favour. A large amount of electoral expenditure in today's time is being incurred on social media management and maintaining the party and candidate's 'social image' across mediums including television, newspapers etc. While the increasing use of technology is benefiting candidates in reaching out to their voters, it has also put them under a constant scanner with their each and every move being traced. In order to maintain their support base, parties and candidates are not relying solely on their 'foot soldiers' and are now creating 'war rooms' comprising of white collared professionals who are often deployed in election campaigning and image building.

With the increasing level of sophistication that has entered the electoral processes in today's day; huge volume of money is spent year on year to retain one's vote bank. Especially in a city like Mumbai which is home to a large number of middle class population, pleasing one's voters -whether it is through appeasement or through ground work is not an easy task with every political party and candidate trying to lay its hands on power positions in the civic body. With the complexities involved in governing a city like Mumbai which was one of the earliest to be exposed to the forces of Liberalisation and Globalisation, politics is often shaped by the dynamics of the new market forces.

Thus, with the changing nature of elections at local bodies - from traditional to commercial, the risk involved in contesting elections increases manifold. At such a juncture, it becomes crucial to understand as to why a particular individual contests an

election, what socio-political-economic background he/she comes from, what the process is leading to his/her decision, what is at stake while one takes the decision, etc. It also becomes important to understand as to why, certain people despite their proximity to a particular party chose 'not to contest' an election.

The research tries to seek answers to all of the above questions using responses from corporators, party workers and politically active individuals. It also tries to understand the entire electoral process at local body level in today's day and time from selection of candidates to electoral victories and defeats.

The main purpose of the interviews conducted was to understand candidates' basic motivation or drive behind contesting an election, the strategies politicians use when building their political networks before and during electoral campaigning and difficulties faced by them while completing the formalities of the nomination forms.

The research is the second study on local body elections after a detailed study on the same theme being conducted with reference to the Kalyan-Dombivali Municipal Corporation (KDMC) Elections of 2015. The report on KDMC tried to plot the stages involved in the decision to contest local body elections along with a detailed analysis of the changing nature of electoral politics in urban and semi urban areas in neoliberal times.

A total of 42 in-depth interviews were conducted by using a structured questionnaire to ensure that important questions were touched upon. At the same time, there was a need felt to open a discussion on the ideas and issues highlighted by the respondents, especially while interviewing the young (first-time) candidates, party workers and female candidates. Initial questions focussed on the socio-political background of the candidates in order to explore the relationship between their family background (social-political and economic) and their political orientations; ideological standing and political recruitment; involvement in socio-political activities and their entry into electoral politics. In-depth interviews focused on questions like - why the respondent had decided to become politically active, what were the stimulating factors towards the decision of contesting an election, what are the qualities/ factors considered by party selectors while offering party tickets, what are the tactics employed in order to maintain a strong network of volunteers throughout the election process and what are the specific campaign strategies employed to woo the voters. The researcher was also interested in understanding more about the generation of electoral

funds and their sources to explore the discrepancies that might occur in law and practice. With respect to party workers, an attempt was made to understand the dynamics involved in the electoral process.

Interviewing political leaders and party workers was a challenging task considering the sensitive nature of information that is divulged in these interviews. As a researcher one has to be aware of asking people to openly discuss 'political practices that some people would prefer remain undocumented' (Arghiros, 2001). During the interviews, a lot of questions posed were in many ways sensitive and often probed into activities like the distribution of gifts/items or money to voters or electoral expenses, etc. that are prohibited by the law of the country. While doing so, the respondents' anonymity has been maintained in almost all the cases.

Considering the uniqueness of every respondent interviewed and the diversity in their style of functioning, the researcher realized that all interviews cannot be assessed in the same manner. Even after the experience of interviewing candidates during the KDMC research, interacting with party workers and candidates in Mumbai was a difficult task. Even as one managed to get their appointments, it was a tough task to get their responses to questions about their electoral strategies and funds used in the whole process. Formal-informal discussions with candidates, party workers and officers in charge of recent elections helped in finding answers to issues in a better way.

### **Candidate's Socio-Economic Background and Political Orientations:**

There are thousands of people pursuing different occupations with sufficient career flexibility, financial security, management skills and leisure time to run for elected office. Many have experience on the first level of the political ladder, from within party offices, voluntary groups, and public bodies. Many have good local networks among community groups, business associations and trade unions. Yet few seriously consider a legislative or governmental or political career, while even fewer run for elections. Why is it so? The supply-side model emphasizes that a combination of motivation plus resources produces the necessary and sufficient conditions for pursuing a political career. The reasons for contesting an election are varied and complex. In order to understand the decision to contest, one has to look at a more converse question- why most party members choose not to pursue a political career (Norris and Lovendusky 1995).

In order to understand the underlying factors behind contesting an election, we have to study the established models of political participation in detail. According to Mair and van Biezen (quoted in Hague and Harrop, 2004), “Voting in a national election is normally the only activity in which a majority of citizens engage. However, throughout the democratic world, anything beyond voting is the preserve of a minority of activists. Indeed the activists are outnumbered by the apathetic. Further, even the activists seem to be reducing their involvement in formal politics, with party membership and turnout in decline in many democracies.”

In a renowned analysis, Milbrath and Goel (1977) divided the American population into three groups, a classification which has since been applied to participation in other democracies. These categories were: a few gladiators (around 5-7 per cent of the population) who fight the political battle, a large group of spectators (about 60 percent) who watch the contest but rarely participate beyond voting and a substantial number of apathetic individuals (about one-third) who are withdrawn from politics.

The nature and behaviour of an individual ultimately defines his/her political participation. Thus the real questions then become - What type of candidates enter and win elections? and What are their real political motivations? The existing literature is not well suited to provide an answer to these questions with reference to local governments in India especially in a city like Mumbai which is complex in terms of its socio-economic and political makeup. The present study thus attempts to explore this issue of candidates' motivations with reference to the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) elections of 2012 and 2017.

Political behaviour or political motivations are shaped by socio-political background (political culture and socialization), personal-political ideology, individual liking and interests, inspiration from charismatic leaders etc. The initial part of the interview questionnaire focused on the socio-political background and political orientations of the candidates. The purpose behind such questions was to understand if the socio-political background of an individual has an impact on his political motivations.

The concept of elections has seen a considerable change over the last few years. In today's day, with political legacy and good financial status, one can get an easy entry into mainstream electoral politics with the help of the resources at their disposal by sidelining

the party workers who may deserve to get the nomination. In most cases, such candidates are just waiting for an appropriate time to get into active politics. Such leaders always get mass support. These individuals do not have to prove themselves at every level of party organisation for getting a party nomination; which otherwise is a tough task for the interested ones- to persuade the party gate keepers to get the party nomination. It is much more difficult for women to get into electoral politics; with the kind of patriarchy that prevails in party organisations which hinder the entry of women party workers into electoral politics. They get a ready-made socio-political network established by their families which make their contest comparatively easy. Further, due to the cultural capital inherited by them, they are comparatively in a better position to prove themselves with the help of their personality and resources available which can be used to easily influence the electorates.

Today's politics demands the potential candidate to possess qualities like - having polished behaviour, good oratory skills, capacity to engage with people, good interpersonal communication skills, a potential to solve people's personal and civic problems, affluent economic status etc. With such qualities, they are successful in developing their influential image amongst the people. Generally what people aspire for is easy access to the leader and his/her potential to get their work done- either personal or civic without taking much time. Thus, the characteristics of constituency leaders are determined by cultural capital, social power and economic wealth/resources.

### **Political Socialisation:**

There are three main sources of influence that shape an individual's political orientation which creates long-term effects. Generally, the primary influence originates from family. As stated previously, children often adopt their parents' ideological values. Some theorists have argued that family tends to be the strongest, most influential force which exists over the lifetime. Secondly, teachers and other educational authority figures have a significant impact on political orientation. Thirdly, peer group and friends circle also determine one's political orientation. Friends often, but not necessarily, have the advantage of being part of the same generation, which collectively develops a unique set of societal issues.

Eric L. Dey (1997) has argued that "socialization is the process through which individuals acquire knowledge, habits, and value orientations that will be useful in the future." Political Socialization plays an important role in the institutionalization and development

of attitudes to, and beliefs about, the political system among citizens. It is particularly important in influencing the degree of participation in political life that is expected of groups and individuals.

Thus, social, demographic and political background of the candidate, personal and political ideology, and personality traits were seen to have a great influence in shaping individual political orientations. Though human beings are considered as political animals, each and every individual may not be politically interested and active. Political interests and choices are shaped by many factors including something as simple as earning two square meals for the family, regressive political environment around him/her, economic well-being, etc. to more complex ones like self-actualization. Lastly, most of those who are political leaders are much above average in terms of their income and social integration. For them, the needs for physical security and a sense of social belonging are quite well satisfied. Despite this, they choose to contest elections time and again due to various other factors like social prestige and power.

The researcher found that most candidates who contested the BMC elections of 2012 and 2017 came from mixed family backgrounds (socio-political). Contrary to the existing theories of political orientation and political socialisation, it was found that having no political background did not become a barrier in shaping an individual's political motivations and aspirations for entering into mainstream electoral politics. A large number of candidates did not have a strong socio-political background but still chose to contest. It was found that parents of several candidates were engaged in some or the other social activities, connected to politically affiliated social/cultural organisations, or affiliated to labor unions. Some of them were also members of political parties even as they were not actively involved in party activities. This association had an influence on their children who, at a very early stage in their life, got exposed to these systems.

Most candidates who were contesting the elections in 2012 and 2017 were first generation politicians from their families. Many among the elected corporators came from poor economic backgrounds who gradually developed interest in politics after having undergone challenges at all levels. These individuals found their political nerve while being a part of a union or taking up an issue which got them close to a political party. Many of them who had shown their leadership potential during their formative years were picked up by political parties after seeing their potential. There were also instances of a

large number of corporators attributing their presence in politics to their respect towards senior party leaders. Several candidates who had earlier faced several development challenges owing to their poor socio- economic conditions later tried to contest elections with an intention to improve the living conditions in their respective localities. Such candidates put forward an alternative to the existing choices promising to address grassroots level issues of water, sanitation, hygiene, etc.

On the contrary, some candidates had a strong political background with members of their family already being a part of mainstream politics. Such candidates revealed that they learnt their earlier lessons in politics by observing the political careers of their family counterparts. For most of them, the stage was already set with an established constituency, known party, office set up, loyal voters and volunteers. For them, getting a party ticket was a cakewalk. With nothing to lose, such candidates were confident and ambitious to make it big into the field and have immense support base to their credit, thanks to the political legacy. Also, some candidates revealed that their parents or close relatives were associated with some or the other social organisations which further got them interested into working for the people. A near one's association with social organisations exposed such candidates to the challenges involved in running a constituency from an earlier stage.

Many candidates became active in politics after having put a considerable number of years into social work. Being a part of several social and local development organisations, these individuals were close to the local population and knew exactly what ails the constituency. From holding positions in these local organisations, they started realising the importance of being in mainstream politics to further their cause. This ultimately led them to take the crucial step with the support of several members from the constituency that they have been working for. Parents of some of the candidates were engaged in social activities, actively dealing with the administration on civic issues. The daily interaction in their homes helped in early political socialisation of these candidates. For some reasons, their parents could not contest elections but later started encouraging their children to take active part in politics.

After interviewing women corporators, it was largely observed that most women were pitted in the elections only after the ambitions of their male counterparts could not be fulfilled due to their wards becoming reserved for women. Many women stated that they were asked to contest elections by their male counterparts- brother, father or husband with

a view to retaining the power in their household after the ward was reserved for women and they could no longer contest elections from the ward. “I had no intentions of contesting an election. I was on the contrary, disinterested in politics. My husband has been in politics for over ten years now. The ward from where he was supposed to contest got reserved for women in 2012. Waiting for the next five years in uncertainty and losing the opportunity to contest would be a big political risk for the family and we would have lost all the popular contact developed over the years. I thus decided to contest to accomplish my husband’s dream” said one such female respondent. Such women were convinced into contesting elections only on the 'behalf of their male counterparts' (mostly husbands) in order to fulfill their political ambitions.

However, women who were representing their male counterparts gradually tried to accustom themselves with the everyday political processes after getting elected. The exposure that they got from representing a constituency has made them more confident while taking decisions. It was however observed that when it comes to taking some of the major decisions, planning electoral strategies, funding electoral campaigns, these women are still dependent on their male counterparts.

Amongst female aspirants, an independent urge to contest elections was found to be more or less absent. Reservation to women in local body elections provided them an opportunity to enter into mainstream politics.

Women belonging to the Backward Caste Category (BCC) seemed to be like an additional backing for a family or candidate who wished to contest from a particular constituency. This is because of the woman's ability to contest from the general, women and BCC in all permutations and combinations. In contrast, the male candidates from the BCC often have to give up on the reservations in the absence of a valid caste certificate to prove so.

An exception to this ‘mere representation’ was a few women who actually had the urge to contest elections and were actively involved in some or the other socio-political activities earlier which provided them a platform to enter into mainstream politics. Such women were often encouraged by their organisations or local supporters to contest in order to solve their issues. These women not only got elected on their own merit but were also successful in retaining their power sometimes for more than 2-3 terms.

### **Engagement in Socio-Political Activities:**

Engagement in socio-political activities provides a platform to budding politicians who then go on to become a part of mainstream political activities. Working on local issues of water, health, education, slums, environment, etc. leading a movement for a social cause at the local level, raising civic issues with the administration and local representatives leads/helps one to get connected with the people at large. This engagement is either intentional or accidental. Accidental in the sense that there was no clear cut plan to get into politics through social work or activism. Intentional means some aspirants had an urge to enter into political career and hence started raising some issues of public importance in order to get acquainted to their wards. It is also called as 'image building' efforts by political aspirants.

In case of Mumbai, a very large number of candidates were local activists or a part of some or the other social organisation in their early years. From fixing open drains to ensuring the supply of safe drinking water and later demanding for recreational facilities in their localities, they did it all. While doing this, candidates worked closely with a political party and later went on to become a part of it. Most candidates had worked in such a manner with their experience ranging from 2-30 years before they finally got an opportunity to contest elections. Active participation in social activities later helped develop political aspirations among several candidates. The reason for the same is the realization on the part of the individuals that without power they may not be able to further their social activities in an effective and far-reaching manner. Very few entered into active/electoral politics from their social activities on popular demand.

For many local activists who had no clear political ambition, contesting an election came as a compulsion to assert their demands after they realized that the system was apathetic towards the complaints of citizens and thus decided to be a part of the system to bring about a change in its approach.

Some individuals who had earlier fought for the cause of the slum dwellers and other disadvantaged sections also went on to contest elections years after they worked for these people due to the realisation that only power positions can help bring about the desired change.

Several young men and women were exposed to political processes due to their involvement in student politics. After being a part of student politics, these individuals gradually started aspiring to be a part of the bigger political group, a journey which then reaches its end as they decide to contest an election in their latter years.

Many candidates were earlier a part of a political party and were active members of the party even before they aspired to contest elections. Working for the party and holding several posts, these individuals wielded a good amount of influence in the local level decision making. In this capacity, they often came in contact with people from their locality and had an experience of solving civic issues on many occasions even before entering mainstream politics. Many of them had worked closely with an existing corporator, local MLA or MP and were thus exposed to civic administration and electoral processes.

It was also found that several individuals who were earlier involved in anti-social activities using their political connections later developed political aspirations and left such activities behind to work for their wards.

As mentioned earlier, there are a large number of candidates who strategically decided to get involved in some socio-political activities (Eg. Raising the issues of roads, water, sanitation, etc. organising some programmes for women and senior citizens, giving donations to Ganeshotsava and Navaratri Utsav mandals etc.) before the declaration of Municipal Corporation elections in order to attract the popular attention towards them.

A few out of those who were in power for the second or the third time, often provided emergency services like ambulance service to their constituencies free of cost or at a bare minimum rate. It was also found that some of the corporators have kept their men at some of the public hospitals like KEM, Sion Hospital, Nair Hospital etc. in order to help people from their wards in getting easy access to health facilities during the emergencies. It was also found that nowadays they concentrate on larger areas by going beyond their constituencies with the fear of changing boundaries of their wards due to delimitation in future. Helping people in getting admissions into schools and colleges for their children, accompanying people in police stations, organising camps for PAN cards and Aadhar cards, helping people in getting their Voting cards,, availing employment opportunities for the needy ones in the ward are some of the initiatives undertaken by most of the

incumbents. The nature of the activities varied from social-community activities to initiatives for women and senior citizens, financially supporting Ganesh-Navratri Mandals, Dahi Handi Mandals, Ambedkar Jayanti Utsav, Shiv Jayanti Mandals, etc.

In the case of female candidates, this pattern was not very common and was hardly seen in some candidates who were running self-help groups for women in the constituency. Most women showed their lack of interest in any such social activities before they got married as they never imagined landing into political positions.

A candidate's social network, personal agenda/ vision (matching that of the party) and his ability to generate influence amongst voters were the key factors in political recruitment. Coupled with this is one's personality which helps the candidate wield power through his rallies/ programs/ political speeches etc. that often make people like the 'candidate' for the 'party' and thus becomes successful in wooing voters. Often leaders (like late Balasaheb Thackeray) generate popularity amongst masses by asserting a particular ideology/agenda (Marathi mannos in his case) which often binds a homogenous group together and makes them loyal supporters of the leaders. The influence of Thackeray and Sena's ideology can be clearly seen amongst several candidates interviewed as they took inspiration from Thackeray's ideological position and his unique way of addressing people.

Identity politics plays an important role in a city like Mumbai which houses a large number of migrants from all over the country who have come here in search of employment opportunities. There are two kinds of political agendas that operate in such a city. One is the broader ideological stand propagated by the party (Eg. Sena's Nativism) and another, the candidate's agenda in order to woo voters. In most cases, candidates despite subscribing to the party's broader agenda often try to convince local voters on the basis of local issues and agendas which are relevant to the ward. All considerations in this regard are largely influenced by their quest for power. Aspirants try to maintain their good relations across social groups. However, data shows that party ticket is important in the elections apart from strong networking in order to win the elections. Established political parties provide organisational structure, vote banks and party workers to candidates which play an important role in winning the election. Party platform is important even after getting elected to raise one's voice on several issues in the corporation. Parties like Shiv Sena that have a proper organizational structure at the local level (Shakhas) provides opportunities for the candidates to grow as political individuals thus contributing to the

political recruitment in the longer run. Now several other parties are also seen following the Sena model.

While the party plays an important role for a candidate in order to win elections, the same candidates do not hesitate to poach into other parties if the party aspirations do not match their own at any given point. It was observed that some of them hardly understand ideological factors, for them political opportunities or opportunism counts.

Female candidates have to face challenges at every stage of the electoral process. Along with the whole process of contesting an election, they also find several obstacles in holding various party positions. While urban women are considered to be more independent than their rural counterparts, the traditional hegemonic power structures in families and societies are still difficult to break through. Most female contestants interviewed by the researcher had no political backgrounds in their maternal families and were not interested in entering mainstream politics even after getting married into a political household. Their position in a political party and the decision to contest an election was a result of multiple factors, of which ward reservations was the most prominent one. Women mentioned that while their male counterparts were keen on supporting their candidature owing to the ward reservations, the support also implicitly indicated their dominance over decisions taken by the women. They were expected to be the shadows of these men acting on their behalf owing to 'the seniority' and 'image' of these men in the larger political spectrum. "Though a large number of women are participating at the local level elections as a result of 50 percent reservations, they are mere puppets in the hands of their husbands or male counterparts in their families," said a women candidate. Another candidate expressed her grief about her family members never encouraging her to enter into politics. "I grew up in a traditional patriarchal family where my education was not a priority. After growing up, I got married into a political household but was not given the opportunity to get into mainstream politics as my husband asked me to stay away from it. Years after his demise, I decided to enter into mainstream politics" she added.

At the organizational level, these candidates have to win the confidence of all their male counterparts to move ahead on the party ladder. Family and societal trust, along with the lack of time and economic dependency hinders the growth of most female candidates in pursuing a career in politics independently. At the party and organisational level, there is

always an inherent bias that a woman corporator cannot run around or be as accessible as her male counterparts can be. Despite all these obstacles, however, women often emerge successful in the elections as their strategizing and campaigning forms are often applauded by the voters irrespective of the political backing that they may or might not have.

### **Arriving at the ‘Final’ Decision:**

The study focuses on why and how people decide to enter into the arena of electoral politics even as it is considered to be a business of full of uncertainties. Arriving at the decision to contest an election is a long and complex process. It is influenced by a number of factors like one’s political aspirations and motivations, the structure of opposition, chances of getting party nomination, support within the party organisation, public support, volunteers/party workers, chances of winning the election, status, power, rewards of political office which are absent in other fields, the number of elected offices available within the system, the career structure in government, powers and functions of the representative, his or her work in the ward, socio-political network in the constituency, financial status, salary, other benefits and powers of patronage associated with the post and lastly, the risks and costs of contesting.

Candidates were asked about their initial aspirations while contesting elections for the first time in order to understand the stages involved in arriving at the final decision. Most candidates (especially male), who were contesting elections for the first, second or the third time, were found to be working on civic issues of public importance, associated with some social organisation or a political party in the past. Most of them had served different party positions at the local level.

A long association with social or political work led to the realization on the part of the aspirants/candidates that it was difficult to work without power positions in the civic body. This generated aspirations for contesting elections amongst these individuals to assume power positions in order to further their body of work. Many of them wanted to bring about a change in the ward with respect to development activities. Some of them were engaged in the political campaigning of their friends, acquaintances or previously elected corporators during the earlier elections. They were found working towards the elections and building their image in the ward one or two years in advance.

While the above factors laid the ground for their political aspirations, ward reservations and alliances with political parties were the triggering factors that helped them arrive at a final decision while contesting on a party ticket. In the wards that were reserved, candidates often tried fielding women from their families to retain their power and political influence in the ward.

In several cases, some promising individuals are often picked by MLAs and MPs with their long term association with a party or the MLA/MP. While these individuals work for the area that has been allotted to them, they often get to come in the good books of these MLAs/MPs. Such individuals later have high chances of being asked to apply for a party ticket for which these respective leaders often endorse them with party supremos. Further, these leaders try to ensure that their candidates win the elections so that they retain their influence over these wards and can continue working for the people at the same time. With this micro level political networking, these leaders ensure that their constituencies and supporters are benefited in order to retain their voters. For candidates, having such leaders as godfathers takes them a long way which otherwise is difficult to achieve even after striving hard for the party and doing enough groundwork.

Even as political leaders endorse their people at local body elections, they always try to ensure that this does not challenge their supreme position in the party and within the constituency. Candidates who later try to bypass them are later brought under control by their leaders with their wings chopped off through key political decisions. Leaders are thus looking for individuals who would follow them with great trust and who would remain loyal to their 'saheb' (or master). It was seen that young, promising individuals were often denied tickets with the very fear that their ambition would come in the way of their leaders.

Individuals who came from families with a strong political background often said that the sheer fact that politics was a part of their family led to them taking up politics. Just like any other profession, they said politics came naturally from the previous generation to them.

One of the most prominent factors for individuals to take the decision of entering into mainstream electoral politics was reservation. With the provision for inclusion of women constituencies, a large number of women were pushed by their male counterparts to

contest on their behalf as several wards became reserved for women. With ward reservations for women, the only way to retain power for male politicians is to try and field a female family member in the elections. Along with women, several individuals from SC, ST and OBC backgrounds came forward to contest elections due to seat reservations. These candidates, who in several cases would not have contested otherwise, aspired to contest elections with their wards becoming reserved. Several women who came from OBC caste groups were the perfect finds for a party as they had the chances of contesting from maximum number of combinations in the seat matrix.

It was also found that some people were coming ahead to contest elections without being under a political banner. They wanted to experiment with the alternate models of electoral politics and civic governance. Such individuals had their own idea behind this thought—they were looking for transformation in the civic governance through awareness among the people about the lack of accountability, ignorance and corruption in the BMC. Secondly, they wanted to put forward their idea of governance and show that elections can be contested and won without money. In a sense, they had an ‘ideal’ approach towards politics. Some of them wanted to change the negative notions of politics. They wanted to challenge the existing system and prove that good work can be done in politics. “While working on social issues it was realised that genuine civic issues are ignored by corrupt politicians and administrators, nobody is concerned with real problems of people despite a huge budgetary allocation for development activities,” said one such candidate who was keen on fighting the issue of corruption in the corporation with the help of people’s participation.

A young candidate said, “I wanted to experiment with the idea of good governance in reality after completing my graduation in Political Science”. Contesting from one of the most backward and neglected wards in Mumbai, he wanted to take up the issues of people in his locality. “I wanted to represent the problems of people living on the margins here. In today’s negative political scenario, I wanted to create a good alternative,” he added.

A candidate spent almost 60% of his monthly income over the last 15 years on addressing the issues of people in his nearby localities. “This ward is the most neglected ward in the city. There is no water and people have to pay two rupees for a small bucket of water. The toilets are filthy and women prefer going out in the open over the dirty toilets. All parties

have failed to address these major issues and hence people from the locality insisted that I should now contest,” he added.

A young bunch of individuals decided to contest the 2017 BMC elections without any political backing and financial support. This young brigade was inspired by the quest for alternate politics. Frustrated with the lack of basic amenities like water, sanitation and roads and while dealing with the administration, they eventually decided to contest the election on popular support. Their appeal amongst the youth was good and the larger public supported them for their cause of ‘good governance’ and ‘corruption free governance’. They generated their electoral funds through public contributions (crowd funding) and extensively used social media to reach out to the larger population in their constituency. They were reluctant to go with any political party.

While many such candidates had good intentions, contesting the election was an ordeal for them mainly because they lacked full time dedicated human resources and financial support. While several citizens supported them with a view to bringing about a change in their localities, these citizens could dedicate only little time to aid them in the campaigning.

In the 2007 elections several citizen groups or local communities fielded their own candidate with an aim to fight for a common cause. Seven such corporators managed to get elected to the BMC that year from across the city.

It was also found that a good number of candidates were contesting under the banner of small parties even as they were not sure of winning the election. When a candidate from Western suburbs was asked about the reason for this trend, he said “Elections are the best medium to reach out to the larger society and convey one’s (party’s) agenda and speak about people’s issues. Hence, even as someone like me had no guarantee of winning, I decided to take the risk”.

Association with a political party, social or community organisation, involvement in the activities of public importance provides impetus towards developing political motivations in terms of contesting an election. Despite this relationship, everyone who is associated with a political party or is engaged in social activities is not necessarily interested in contesting an election. Only a sizeable number of individuals amongst them, in fact, take

the final decision. After delving deeper into this, one sees that 'strategic rationality' is at the centre of all the political decisions taken by the candidate. The researcher tried to probe into the political psychology of candidates in order to understand the psychological mechanism leading to the decision about contesting an election. Factors like gender, caste, age, socio-political (family) background, political or personal ideology, political orientations economic security, personality traits were found to play an important role in shaping one's political motivations. It was found that the decision of an individual to contest an election was broadly based on 6 factors:

- 1. Political ambitions and aspirations**
- 2. Political legacy and Patronage**
- 3. Insistence or recommendation by volunteers and friends or popular demand**
- 4. The structure of opposition**
- 5. Chances of getting elected**
- 6. Opportunities and benefits**

Before elections, political parties organised political groups and interested individuals engage in socio-political networking and strategies for the upcoming elections. Political parties engage in evaluating the performance of their existing members and conducts surveys in all the constituencies to find out the best possible candidates to accelerate the process of nomination. Discussions are held at the block level or ward level organisations to find out interested candidates. Individuals interested in contesting elections thereafter start lobbying for the ticket at the party level; engage in image building at the constituency by roughly considering the ward formations and reservation patterns. These involve party leaders at the local level along with party workers with the strong public support and work in the constituency, active and influential citizens, economically affluent individuals etc. Political parties also try to woo disappointed aspirants from other political parties or strong independent local candidates whose chances of winning are high into their party with the assurance of a ticket in the upcoming elections. They also reorganize their different wings like the social or cultural wing, mahila aaghadi, and different kinds of unions with party affiliations etc. from the point of view of upcoming elections. Incumbents use officeholders' benefits to build up their image in order to retain their ticket from their ward or in case of getting ward reserved for women they try to secure the ticket from the party for the family member itself. In the case of the ward reservation turning to other caste groups, they leave no stone unturned to secure a ticket from other wards to remain in

power. Based on electoral prospects and the candidate's capacity to spend money in the elections, party selectors engage in strategies for the selection of candidates.

Thus, individuals with political ambitions and aspirations (self-motivation) across political parties or those contesting independently present themselves as the best-suited bet to contest elections. In search of strong candidates, political parties often, on their own offer tickets to influential personalities or community leaders who they think have some electoral prospects. On some occasions, based on the leadership qualities and work in the party organisation; party workers, volunteers and friends often recommend names of their leaders to the party or insist on a particular name for the candidature from a particular ward. In some places, people also rally behind their leaders for taking up the candidature. In any case, individual interests in contesting an election, organizational and leadership qualities, public support, availability of time and economic resources ultimately determine the final decision of contesting an election. According to Norris and Lovendusky (1995), "constraints on resources (such as time, money and experience) and motivational factors (such as drive, ambition and interest) determine who aspires to the legislature."

In the case of female candidates, they are often pushed by their male counterparts (most of whom are already established names in the ward) to take up the candidature in their names. All the planning and strategizing are done by the male members while the women are informed about their roles and duties only a few days before elections. Their suggestions hardly matter as the election agenda is already set by the male members.

### **Factors that determine a candidate's decision:**

The researcher tried to understand the dynamics and undercurrents of responses of candidates on the most determining factors leading to the decision of contesting an election. Responses were highly varied. Some of the prominent reasons for contesting elections as cited by the respondents were as follows- in order to do social work in a more significant way, in the service of society and community, to bring about a (desired) change in the society, to develop civic amenities and infrastructure, to fight against corruption in the BMC, to provide alternative models of governance etc.

There were different categories of people (in terms of occupations) who contested the election like young men and women, experienced party workers or leaders, those engaged in social work and related activities, businessman (especially engaged in land related

occupation- realty sector, construction and building, cable and internet etc.) social activists, teachers, community leaders, bankers, professionals, retired persons, housewives, members or presidents of self-help groups, politically active and existing corporators, economically affluent individuals etc.

From the discussions with candidates, it was revealed that a large number of individuals having diverse backgrounds and aspirations contest elections- from sheer personal motivation to being introduced by their political masters and with a view to provide an alternative, there were many reasons why individuals decided to contest elections.

Some candidates were confident of winning the elections and were firm on their decision to contest. Many candidates revealed that they were offered ticket by the party high command based on their contribution to the party. Some candidates revealed that they were not very confident of winning elections but saw that as an opportunity to put across the party's stand on socio-political issues. In their campaigns these candidates focussed on putting across the larger agenda of their party. For some candidates who were extensively working on the issues of people at the local level, reservations opened opportunities to enter into mainstream politics.

In today's time with the growing competition involved in elections, money and strong political connections (favouritism and nepotism) play an important role in the whole electoral process. Some candidates aspired to contest the election with the help of their financial strength. Such aspirants who were financially strong were often captured by political parties as they showed readiness to spend money. In many cases, some of the deserving candidates were often side-lined to give tickets to candidates with a strong financial background. This had upset many old timers and party loyalists who could not manage to convince their masters the way in which those with economic might did. Disappointed with the party's stance of not acknowledging their long time efforts, many such candidates moved to other parties to contest elections. Even parties in several cases, are in search of such candidates as their work can be used to strengthen the party's support base in wards where the party position is weak. Over the last few years, a large number of candidates were seen contesting elections independently. After interviewing some of the independent candidates it was found that there were varying reasons behind an individual's decision to contest elections outside the shield of a party. The first kind was that of such aspirants who at some point in time were associated with the party and had

worked on local issues being with the party. However, despite their efforts some such candidates who did not get the party ticket later decided to contest independently as they were confident that people in their wards would support them in their work even without the party umbrella. As mentioned earlier, such candidates were often denied tickets to make space for some financially strong individuals who lacked the experience but could wield their influence due to their financial power. With the feeling of being side-lined, such candidates were fierce and aggressive in their stance and were confident of their victory.

Some individuals wanted to contest independently without any party ticket with a view to offering an alternate model of governance. Having a strong background of social work and addressing local level issues, these individuals who were earlier away from mainstream politics realised that getting into the system would help their work in many ways.

In several wards, common citizens who have been associated with citizen's groups, local level forums etc. were also seen contesting elections. In many places, such candidates decided to contest as a large section of population in their wards was dissatisfied with all the other political choices and encouraged such candidates to represent their issues. Several such individuals who were not financially strong contested the elections on the basis of crowd funding and public support.

There were some candidates whose candidature was strategic. They are fielded by parties or sometimes by candidates themselves in order to divide the vote share of the opponent in the respective constituency to ensure that he/she does not secure majority votes. An attempt is made to field a candidate whose social background is somewhat similar to that of the opponent which might help in dividing the votes.

Some candidates fill their nomination forms only to withdraw them later. Such candidates are not serious contenders and are merely using this as a gimmick to earn some quick bucks. Often, an attempt is made to 'manage' such candidates before elections to ensure that vote share of popular candidates is not divided.

Some candidates also mentioned that in some instances, parties field independent candidates of the same caste or community of their strong opponent to break his or her electoral strength.

There is also a section of people who often see the whole process of contesting elections as a win-win situation. These individuals wish to gain some publicity in their local wards and thus decide to contest without strong preparations. While they are aware of their fates even before they decide to contest, they decide to take the gamble. It was found that several such people hardly had any following within their constituency.

### **Kinds of Candidates: From Loyal Party Workers to Money Makers:**

Those who move up in the party based on their work (related to the party and for people) follow traditional ways of building their organisation and constituency. Such candidates have their work to the credit apart from the party prestige which helps them gain popularity. Such candidates who move up the ladder- from being a simple karyakarta to a corporator are active in their respective wards. They are aware of the local issues in their wards and try to solve them on a personal level. Being familiar with the people there, they are accessible to the public 24x7. From providing help to people in getting necessary documents like PAN card, aadhaar, ration card to putting in a word for school and college admissions, extending medical help providing employment opportunities, etc these candidates do all that they can for the people.

Those who enter in the politics based on money power bypass all the traditional ways of building their constituencies by trying to capture party workers based on their financial power. Many a times, supporters of such candidates often take money from them as they realise that such offers only last during the elections. One should however note that people who reap economic benefits from a candidate might not necessarily be 'loyal' to him. Several individuals, despite supporting the candidate and getting all the benefits with a promise to vote for him, can actually vote for another candidate. In the whole process however, deserving candidates often lose out on their opportunities to perform.

In every party, there are many who are interested in contesting elections. Candidates have to earn a party ticket with great efforts- sometimes by working day in and out while some other times by wielding their financial strength. Aspirants have to create their mark in the organisation with their political skills and leadership qualities to better their chances of being shortlisted for becoming one of the contenders for the ticket. When some individuals stand out in the organisation, it is seen as a threat to their potential position by several others who then lobby to strike him down.

Creating a wing of loyal supporters and party workers helps to put pressure on party leaders. People support candidates who work for them during their critical times. They stand with those leaders who are always ready to help them, are trustworthy and can win their hearts through oratory skills. Those who can garner public support and create trust amongst the senior party leadership and workers have high chances of being offered a party ticket.

### **Politician-Builder-Bureaucracy Nexus:**

With money gaining prominence in local level elections today, elections no more remain 'independent' of commercial interferences. Several candidates revealed that securing more and more money remains one of the biggest aspirations of individuals contesting elections. However even before they get elected, huge amounts of money needs to be poured in order to appease voters to support them. With the growing competition, parties and candidates are trying to spend as much as they can in the whole electoral process to increase their winnability. Candidates reveal that just as parties and candidates are looking for investors to fund their political activities, some investors who have the financial strength are also trying to fund political parties to further their business interests in the long run. By funding political parties, several builders try to form a nexus between them and the political lobby. These builders fund electoral campaigns, give sponsorships etc. in order to ensure that a particular party and candidate wins. Such parties and candidates are later expected to extend 'political favours' for these builders- like awarding them big contracts, tenders, etc.

After having detailed conversations with a variety of candidates, the researcher drew some inferences. Most candidates were motivated into contesting elections due to one of the following or the combination of many reasons like-

- Accelerating their business activities (Helps in getting various approvals and access to officials also gets indirect favour from administration and private citizens)
- Monetary gains (through realty sector, illegal constructions, hawkers and other civic work related contracts) being the corporator
- Earning prestige or social status

- Bringing about infrastructural and other changes in the ward to improve the quality of civic amenities
- Accelerating their social/community work related activities
- Engaging in policy making in a direct way
- Providing alternate models of governance
- Fighting against the corruption in the BMC
- For a common cause in the constituency like issue of slum development or housing etc.

At the fundamental level, candidates were seen covering their naked ambition under the cloak of public service. Thus, access to power to fulfill ones political ambitions or aspirations (derive personal satisfaction from being in power), prestige, enjoying political perks and patronage, engaging in policy making in a direct way or to bring about a desired change, monetary rewards or economic considerations (formal and informal), accelerating social activities and public service (experience gave an intrinsic benefit based on a sense of civic duty) and ideology were seen as the most determining factors behind contesting the municipal elections.

However, in the case of female candidates, it was found that these factors hardly play a determining role in taking a decision about contesting the election. Except few candidates self-political motivation was found to be absent in most others. It was the political aspiration and ambition of their male counterparts in the family and the efforts to keep the power centre within the family that they tried to retain as the ward became reserved for women. Their male counterparts only convey their decisions to the women whose political ambitions did not seem to be as significant as that of men. There are very few candidates whose decision to contest election is a result of self-motivation and independent of the choices made by their family members.

Through in-depth interviews and discussions, it came to light that despite the alleviation in socio-political and economic status of women, their status in the political scene still continues to be symbolic even at the local level elections. Women often remain mere puppets in the hands of their male counterparts and are often compelled to contest by the male members for their own benefits even when they are not ready for the same. However, with the increasing awareness, the picture has been changing. After the first

election, these female candidates became more confident and start asserting for some say in the decision making.

BMC Elections data from 1992-2017 shows that with the implementation of the 74th Constitutional Amendment and the resulting awareness, a fair amount of women have been contesting from the women as well general/ non-women constituencies in Mumbai. In 2012, with the 50 per cent reservation policy, political ambitions of most female aspirants could be accommodated thus resulting in a marginal fall in their numbers from general/non-women constituencies in that year. In 2017, the number rose yet again although not very significantly. With women already being given 50 per cent reservation, there was no encouragement for them to contest from non-reserved constituencies which the male political leaders were now seeing as their only remaining territory. Despite this opposition, 2017 saw the highest number of women (18) winning from general constituencies since 1992.

Getting a ticket from a particular party is a herculean task for a female candidate. Long association and involvement in the party programmes and activities are not enough. For a woman with high political motivations and independent thinking securing a ticket and later going on to win the elections takes much more. She has to get acceptance of all the counterparts in the organisation and especially those who are at decision-making levels. As a result of this, several female candidates with no political family background were often denied tickets even in the reserved wards. Male leaders or existing corporators usually try to keep the constituency in their own hands by using their political and economic influence to get a ticket for their wife, daughter or sister when the ward is reserved for women.

Like women, candidates belonging to lower caste groups have a more difficult ordeal to undergo. Such candidates cannot easily think about contesting an election from the general constituency. In General Constituencies' tough competition is observed, as more and more powerful candidates contest the election. They are ready to spend huge sums of money to get elected. Thus, interested aspirants with fewer resources and mainly from scheduled caste backgrounds do not risk contesting from such wards unless there is a big party offering a ticket. According to a candidate belonging to Scheduled castes, "Political parties have a detailed data base of demographic details (caste wise, religion wise, region wise, etc.) of general constituencies (prepared by paid private agencies) based on which

they decide about the nomination. Even candidates prepare an arithmetic based on socio-communal identities of the voters in the ward. Professional agencies are there in the market which provide the complete data to the candidates. Due to tough competition, everybody is ready to spend huge sums of money to get elected. Thus, interested aspirants with fewer resources and mainly from Scheduled Caste backgrounds think twice before contesting from such wards without a strong party support.” The 2017 BMC Election data shows that on an average, 11 to 12 candidates contested from Non-reserved i.e. General Constituencies whereas 6 to 7 candidates contested from Reserved constituencies.

It becomes even more challenging for Scheduled caste female candidates who contests from general constituencies. According to one such candidate, “My opponents tried to spread lies against me that since I am an atheist I would work against their religious practices...They even tried to ensure that I won’t get a place for election office and my advertisement won’t come on local TV cable network.” One candidate said that campaigning is done in such a way that voters from upper castes also think twice about voting for scheduled caste candidates in the General constituency.” While these obstacles exist, the very fact that there are caste reservations in electorates is of utmost significance as it provides access to men and women from these castes to participate in mainstream politics- something that otherwise seems a distant task for them.

If we look at the seat reservations and candidates who contested against these seats with respect to the 2017 BMC elections, one can see the dominance of general caste categories in general constituencies.

**Table 9: BMC Election 2017: Reservation Pattern**

	<b>General</b>	<b>SC</b>	<b>ST</b>	<b>BCC</b>
<b>General Constituencies</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Women Constituencies</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>31</b>

Statistical analysis of the 2017 BMC Election shows that of the total 227 seats 75 were for the General caste categories in General Constituencies and 74 seats were reserved for Women in the General caste category. Statistical analysis shows that out of 2276 total number candidates who contested the 2017 BMC Elections, 1034 candidates contested from the constituencies reserved for the General caste categories in the General Constituencies in which 902 (87.23 per cent) came from General caste category, 111

(10.74 per cent) from SC category, 3 (0.29 per cent) from ST category and 18 (1.74 per cent) from Backward Castes Category (BCC).

When these 1034 candidates of different caste groups contesting from the General Caste category of General Constituencies were examined along with their 'Election Result' through cross tabulation, the researcher found that 67 (out of 902) candidates from general or open caste category, 3 from SC (out of 111) and 5 from Backward castes (out of 18) won the elections.

On the other hand, 697 candidates contested from General caste category (Women Constituencies) of which 637 (91.39 per cent) were from General caste category, 47 (6.47 per cent) were SCs, 3 (0.43 per cent) were STs and 10 (1.43 per cent) belonged to BCC category. Out of the 697 candidates of different caste groups contesting from the General Caste category of Women Constituencies were examined along with their 'Election Result' through cross tabulation, it was found that 72 (out of 637) candidates from general or open caste category and 2 from Backward castes (out of 10) won the elections. None of the candidates from SC/ST backgrounds could win a seat. This data supports the narrative provided by scheduled caste candidate during the interview and reveals the role of caste in shaping electoral decisions or choices at local body elections.

After analysis, one could see that a decent number of candidates (15 per cent) between 18 to 30 years of age were found to be contesting the 2017 BMC election. Some of the prominent reasons for youngsters being attracted to politics were- attraction towards politics, prestige associated to the profession, economic benefits. It was also seen that a large number of young aspirants decided to contest with a view to providing a good alternative in their respective wards. In 2017, 31 per cent candidates who contested the elections were between 31-40 years of age group while 34 per cent candidates were from 41-50 years age group. This is the age group where individuals usually work towards the development of their self-actualization needs. Several candidates from this group said that they were contesting elections to use their expertise and experience for the betterment of the society.

During the interviews, it came to light that a candidate's occupation and economic status were very prominent factors in inducing his political aspirations. A candidate with a political background and economic security can easily think about entering into electoral

politics. In the case of BMC, a large number of candidates were in some or the other way involved in the realty sector, construction, building or infrastructure development, cable-internet networks etc.. Such candidates were interested in furthering their business interests by manipulating policy decisions in their favour.

Of the 2276 candidates who contested the 2017 BMC elections, 961 candidates (42.22 per cent) were involved in business activities. 348 candidates (15.29 per cent) came from the service sector, 286 (12.56 per cent) were professionals and 485 (21.31 per cent) were housewives. Of the 227 total seats, 123 (nearly 50 per cent) individuals come from business backgrounds. While 49 out of the 123 candidates (39.83 per cent) were from BJP, 41 (33.33 per cent) were from Shiv Sena.

Although in public life they seemed to show active participation in solving civic issues or improving the standard of civic services, in reality, they left no stone unturned to exert their influence in politics to further their own interests. As mentioned earlier, a close nexus could be seen between the politicians-bureaucrats and builders. A nexus was also found between BMC officials, corporator and hawking agents who eye for haftaas thus exploiting the system.

Thus, one can see factors like socio-political background, political orientation, wealth, gender, caste, religion, age, and occupation with personality traits (leadership qualities) play a very prominent role in shaping individual political motivations when it comes to contesting an election.

### **Survey of Public Support by the aspirants:**

Public support was a key factor in motivating individuals to contest elections. Often, people are confident of gaining public support and thus decide to venture into electoral politics. Such individuals mentioned that maintaining cordial relations with people across all sections helped them establish a strong support base in their favour.

The urge to pursue a career in politics through contesting an election which emerges from strong self-motivation or after one is offered a ticket is the first step in the complex decision-making process. This urge reaches the next stage when aspirants try to take stock of public support for their candidature in the constituency. Usually, before they make a final decision on contesting, aspirants make it a point to meet various leaders of different

communities, social organisations and famous personalities in order to get legitimacy to their decision. “I consulted several close aides, senior leaders in the constituency and social activists after which I tried to take stock of public support. When some people responded positively, it boosted my confidence”, said a candidate. This socialization also helps them in lobbying towards a particular political party for a ticket. Those who are contesting the election for the second or the third time usually make all the efforts in building their constituency for the upcoming one or two years in advance. “I was working in the constituency for 6 months before elections, meeting people in the every corner of the ward, building up the support of people for my candidature. During this period, I tried to solve several civic issues and got work done from the MLA fund. This helped to generate trust and confidence in the ward where I was planning to contest from.” said a candidate.

Several kinds of candidates emerged after studying the BMC elections. Some individuals had spent several years in the organisation. Such people first worked for the people and later approached political parties for a ticket. Another bunch of candidates held monetary might and tried to secure a ticket for themselves with the help of money. Such candidates were willing to contest from any ward and did not necessarily do any groundwork. Also, individuals with a political legacy were confident of winning the elections and in most cases did not feel the need to take stock of the public support. Sometimes, honest and hardworking individuals are given tickets by the parties in the absence of a strong alternative in some wards. In some cases, common citizens, who were active in local citizen groups and organisations were encouraged by people from the ward to contest elections.

Generally, public acceptance and acknowledgment are considered to be the most important factors in the decision to contest an election.

### **Tendency to Accept Candidates:**

In our society, factors like gender, caste, class and religion play an important role in determining the tendency of acceptance of the candidate by the people. Popularity or acceptance of a leader in the community or constituency depends on personal qualities of the candidate, his/her oratory skills, polished behaviour- cultural capital, economic wealth, potential to solve local or personal problems of the people, social power (caste)-leadership

of a social class, religion, and gender. When it comes to Mumbai however, the most important factor for people to accept candidates is the candidate's ability to work for them and stay available at all times. Individuals who often support people at the time of calamities, address their local issues and solve local conflicts are often popular in these wards.

Though socio-demographic identities play an important role in electoral politics, these factors alone may not motivate a candidate to contest an election (while one knows that these factors alone may contribute to winning the election). Ultimately, popular acceptance of the candidate and realization of that acceptance on the part of a candidate finally leads to the decision of contesting an election. Thus, along with individual political motivations and aspirations, popular acceptance and realization of the same is essential in finally reaching the decision. After making his/her mind, the candidate either approaches a political party for a ticket or decides to contest independently.

### **Approaching a Political Party:**

Political parties play a determining role in the entire electoral process and political recruitment. A party offers visibility, organisational structure, a programme and a ready vote bank to aspirants. Aspirants thus try to contest elections on party nominations. Before the electioneering process at the corporation level starts, political parties generally undertake a survey of each ward to understand the names of the popular individuals in every ward. These surveys attempt to gauge possible candidates or public perception towards politically active names in the ward. Sometimes, parties send their observer to discuss the nomination with office bearers at the local level.

Long association with the party, involvement in the party work and programmes, good rapport in the organisation and constituency in general, social status, public network, leadership qualities, experience, capacity to spend money, positive survey report etc. helped the interested candidates in lobbying with the political party for the party nomination.

Political parties invite applications from aspirants for party nomination along with their detailed profiles and work done in their constituencies. After a detailed scrutiny of all such applications, eligible candidates are called for an interview before a party panel.

The selection committee is a secret box. Interested candidates have to convince the gatekeepers for considering their claim on the nomination during the interviews. Winnability is the most important factor in the selection of candidates. Apart from that, selectors are interested in knowing candidate's financial position. The entire process goes on until the last day. Interested candidates cannot rely on the promises made to them by the senior leaders for the party ticket.

The party organisation at the local level plays an important role in the process of selection of candidates. Interested candidates have to win the confidence of party office bearers at the local level in order to make their claim stronger in the party from a particular ward. They also engage in lobbying with high officials in the party for recommending their names for the nomination. Anything can happen till the last hour.

Local level organisational leaders have a key position in the whole selection process as they recommend the names of potential candidates. Generally, these leaders have the first claim over nominations due to their long association with the party. Local MLA's and MP's get some seats for their close aids- some of them also play an important role in the distribution of tickets. "Recommendations play a very important role in the whole nomination process. Any aspirant who wishes to get a party ticket should be recommended by a strong person in the selection committee. From lower officials to the higher-ups, each one tries to influence the entire selection process to their benefit," revealed a candidate.

In case where the organisational structure of a party is weak, conventional steps in the whole ticket allocation process are often bypassed. Candidates in such parties are often recommended by the party high command. The selection process lacks transparency and works more or less at the whims and fancies of the top leader.

Also, some parties unlike the convention do not conduct any interviews to select candidates even as they invite applications for the same. Often, party leaders talk to all the aspirants who are then asked to cooperate with the one who gets a ticket. Final selection in such cases is done on the basis of survey reports, party observer's reports and the recommendations of local level leaders.

In the competitive scenario, financial transactions are very common for lobbying in favour of the name with party leadership through middlemen. Those who are denied the

opportunity often allege that financial transactions were involved in giving away party tickets. "Parties sell tickets at high rates. Parties do not offer you a ticket unless you are ready to pour in huge amounts of money. On many occasions, parties collect such money in the name of party funds," said a candidate.

When aspirants visit party officials/office during this phase, an attempt is made to gather huge crowds along with them in order to show their numerical strength to increase their chances of getting a ticket. For an aspirant to even approach his party for a ticket, a huge support base of volunteers is required.

Sometimes political parties on their own offer tickets to deserving party workers or any other influential persons based on their electoral prospects. Instances of those who are disappointed by the rejection of their nomination claims leaving the party have become a regular practice for political parties. Such candidates often challenge their previous party by either joining another party or by contesting the election independently.

In order to get a party ticket, a woman candidate, with no political background has to get acceptance from all the male members of the ward organisation. Without the acceptance of majority male members in the organisation, it is not possible for the party leader to give a candidanship to a woman. Thus, a clear manifestation of patriarchy is seen at party level in giving tickets to female candidates.

In seeking to explain the social bias evident in most legislatures, Norris and Lovenduski (quoted in Kenny, 2013) explicitly integrate gender into the dynamics of supply and demand. "The effect of gender on political recruitment can be seen as both a supply-side and demand-side effect. On the supply side, due to wider systemic factors such as the public-private divide, the sexual segregation of the work force and patterns of gender socialization, we might expect women to have less time, money, ambition and confidence than their male counterparts. Meanwhile, demand-side explanations suggest that the social bias in the legislature reflects the direct or imputed prejudices of party selectors. Party gatekeepers evaluate applicants in accordance with a wide range of factors, including both formal and informal selection criteria, and choose candidates depending upon judgments about these applicants. In cases of direct discrimination, party selectors make positive or negative judgments of potential candidates on the basis of characteristics seen as common to their social group, rather than as individuals – for example, asking gender

discriminatory questions in the selection process. In cases of imputed discrimination, party selectors make positive or negative judgments of potential candidates on the basis of the anticipated reaction of the electorate to a particular social group. As such, parties may be reluctant to select women either because ‘selectors are directly prejudiced against women candidates’ or because ‘they fear women may lose votes’. Supply-side and demand-side factors interact at each stage of the political recruitment process; for example, potential applicants may decide not to come forward because of anticipated failure or perceived discrimination in the selection process”.

Factors like caste, gender, religion, language and money influence choices at the local level. For the existing candidates, based on their performance, it becomes easy to retain their ticket either with them or within their family. New candidates however, have to face competition within the party for getting a ticket. Every interested candidate tries to build his/her lobby through contacts either in the party or through middlemen. Favouritism, nepotism, lobbying and the use of money power often takes place in the selection process. A senior party worker of a recognised party mentioned that the earlier selection process was democratic. “Today, ‘manage culture’ has become common everywhere,” he added.

In several cases, parties do not declare tickets till the very last day, a move which is often taken to avoid defection on the eve of elections that might cause a huge loss to the party. Due to this, individuals who do not get tickets hardly get any chance to try their luck elsewhere at the very last minute.

### **Requirements to get a party ticket:**

Members of the selection committee scrutinize the work of candidates on various grounds. Generally, the following factors are considered by the parties while offering a party ticket to a particular aspirant:

1. High chances of winning/Winnability
2. Financial strength/ Money Power
3. Public support/rapport or public network
4. Local candidate or Constituency Links
5. Work in the party
6. Work in the ward
7. Character/ Image of the aspirant

## 8. Experience

Existing candidates leave no stone unturned to retain their wards. In case of the ward turning into a women's constituency in the process of ward formation before the elections, the candidate tries to secure a ticket for a female member of his family. If the ward turns into a reserved one for caste groups, the candidate usually tries to get ticket from another ward. Some candidates whose wards got divided during the delimitation process raised questions about the entire wards formation process itself. According to a candidate, "Some wards have been completely divided into two to three wards in order to break down the vote banks of a particular community. In spite of objections, there was no action was taken. Economic considerations play a very important role in all these actions and manipulations."

After analysing the data, one can infer that the capacity to win along with political influence and economic strength is the major factor that plays a very significant role in the distribution of tickets at party levels. Political parties declare the candidate list on the basis of all these factors while taking into consideration their party interests.

### **Challenges in the decision-making process:**

Through in-depth interviews, it was realised that the entire electoral process - from the initial thought of contesting the election to finally arriving at the decision is extremely complex and full of challenges. An attempt was made to understand in detail about what thought process goes behind an individual's decision of contesting elections.

Some individuals revealed that their association with social work and party related activities helped them in dealing with the challenges involved in the electoral process. "I had a long term association with social work and the party organisation and politics was not new for me. As a party worker, I was familiar with the challenges associated with elections" said one such candidate.

Several candidates mentioned that contesting elections means taking up dual risks. At one level, an individual has to face the opponents and strategise for the party. However at the same time, one has to also deal with the opposition and resistance from within the party. "Most members from the party were considering my name for the ticket. However till the last minute, there was anxiety as some individuals from the party were trying their own

chances. I always feared ‘what if they troubled me or came in my way of winning?’ I was able to get over this initial apprehension in the days to come” said a candidate.

Several aspirants said that a strong political legacy helped them in the whole process- from getting a party ticket to winning the elections. “Even as I was new to politics, people knew me due to my father, who had served the ward for several years. Whenever I went to meet people during the elections, people always assured that they would vote for me thanks to my father’s goodwill. They entrusted me with power as they saw it as an extension of my father’s work” said a candidate.

While ward reservations helped several aspirants enter into the mainstream political arena, some candidates also faced challenges after some wards became reserved for female candidates and those from SC/ST and OBC backgrounds. In several cases where male candidates fielded their female counterparts after the wards becoming reserved for women, these women had to face a lot of anxieties. With their lack of political experience, these women lacked the required confidence to contest elections. “I was asked to contest the election by my husband after our ward became reserved. At that point, I had no political experience and was not sure if I could take up such a major responsibility along with my daily household responsibilities. Gradually however, I managed to overcome all these fears” said a female candidate.

Another male candidate revealed, “I was preparing for the elections a year and a half in advance. All the preparations for the same were done. However my ward got reserved for an OBC candidate and I had to shift to the next ward in order to contest. Everything was planned, strategy was set, and volunteers were ready. At some point of time, I was thinking of withdrawing my decision of contesting the election. However, I decided to contest and in order to put across my perspective in front of people. I was confident of winning from the original ward, but was a little apprehensive about winning from a new ward. There was very little time to work in the new ward.”

When individuals who have been fighting for local issues decide to contest an elections, with a strong public support, their opponents often try to pressurise them to withdraw their nominations by offering money. “Often, existing corporators call and pressurise these new candidates as they feel threatened by their growing popularity. Having experienced such a thing in the past, my opponent sarcastically asked me why I wanted to contest the election

with a view to threaten me into withdrawing. He later offered me an amount of rupees 15 lakh to withdraw my nomination. I did not take the offer and fought the election but the pressure was immense” said a candidate.

Thus an aspirant often struggles in the entire process of decision making - from his initial thought of contesting the elections to actually entering into the electoral battlefield, challenges are multifold. Some candidates confessed that they were hopeful about winning the elections and furthering their work in the respective fields. They however saw the cut-throat competition and the amount of money being poured and thus decided to not contest elections the next time.

Even as one’s long association with the party helps individuals in approaching the party for a ticket, with many such interested aspirants approaching at the same time not everyone can be given the chance in the very first instance. Often promising individuals who have been working for a party for years have to wait for two to three terms or more than that in order to secure a ticket from the party. Before elections, every such aspirant tries his/her trump cards to secure a party ticket.. However, selection committees in political parties often consider seniority, work in the party organisation, winnability etc. while distributing tickets.

In Mumbai, Sena and BJP had an alliance for the last 25 years. Thus, based on the distribution of tickets, candidate from either of these two strong parties got an opportunity to contest. Often due to this kind of a seat arrangement, several senior candidates of both parties could not secure a ticket. In 2017, as these two parties decided to contest separately, a large number of individuals got an opportunity to contest. Thus, it was observed that alliance, structure of opposition, competition and reservation influences aspirants decision of contesting elections.

### **Nomination Process:**

Affidavits and Nomination forms are mandatory formalities for candidates who wish to contest an election. They cover personal information (gender, age, occupation, caste details in case of candidates contesting from reserved constituencies), educational qualification, political party details, financial status and information about a candidate’s criminal background. In the 2017 BMC elections, the State Election Commission introduced online nomination system for candidates. While the new system was welcomed

by most candidates, they complained of some technical issues in the system. Some candidates said that they have a tough time in filing these nomination forms online. They claimed that the process was time consuming and tedious. A few of them also complained about the site being down due to heavy traffic. “Even as the process became online, we had to give hard copies to the election officer of our ward and the deposit amount had to be paid in cash. What was the point of going online when transactions were still not online” asked a corporator. However candidates lauded the steps taken by the Election Commission to ensure transparency and accountability in the overall electioneering process.

With the complexities involved in completing the formalities of nomination and securing the requisite documents, it was found that candidates generally preferred to hire legal and financial advisors to complete the nomination formalities.

### **Managing Electoral Funds:**

As mentioned earlier, a candidate with a political background and security of resources can easily think about entering into electoral politics. Here, resources are taken as a range of assets which can be employed as an advantage while pursuing a political career. This includes personal and family income, self or organizational financial contributions, time, political experience, social power, and support networks (social and political). According to Norris and Lovenduski (1993), “it is a combination of resources plus motivation which form the necessary and sufficient conditions for seeking a legislative seat. Many people have the time and money to run for office, but without commitment and ambitions/aspirations they cannot use these resources for political objectives. Others may have nursed a long-standing ambition to be in the legislature, but without the experience or contacts, they may never succeed. Resources could be expected to influence either the supply or demand-side of the candidate selection process or both.”

All the candidates interviewed during the research univocally agreed to the fact that elections are becoming expensive day by day and a common man cannot think of contesting an election considering its costly nature. Thus, the researcher tried to understand as to how candidates manage their electoral funds and other resources required for electoral purpose. While it was initially difficult to get information on the electoral expenses and sources of funds from candidates, they later revealed the details of their spending on the condition of anonymity. In 2012, for Municipal Corporations of ‘A’

category like BMC, the State Election Commission had allowed an upper limit of Rs. 5 lakh while in 2017 this amount was raised to Rs. 10 lakh which can be spent for campaigning and rallies. It is mandatory for candidates to submit their electoral expenses every day to the concerned authorities. However, it was seen that in most cases, election expenses ranged between Rs. 50 lakh to 2 Crores. In some wards however, expenses were found to be 'fairly lower' than the others. Such wards were called as 'safe wards' as spending on electoral activities was lower here. Some of these wards were Marathi dominated traditional forts of the Sena.

Expenses are incurred on image building, maintenance of ward, donations to different kinds of organisations, actual election campaigning, expenses on volunteers etc. Candidates expressed that their electoral expenditure went way above the permissible expenditure due to the immense competition in their respective wards. A candidate expressed his anger over the increasing use of money in elections at the local level. "Over time, parties are pouring in more and more money into election related activities. Parties are making elections a money game by giving tickets to candidates who are financially strong and thus in a position to put in huge amounts of money," said the candidate.

A huge amount of money is spent by candidates on organizing socio-cultural activities and giving donations to Ganeshotsav, Navratrotsav and Dahi Handi mandals etc. Existing candidates have to give donations during these festivals to maintain their 'good image' in the constituency. They organise programmes like Haldi kunku on Makar Sankranti or Mangalagaur for women where female counterparts from their family actively participate and are able to project themselves as potential leaders. They try to attend each and every function in the ward including marriages, engagements, Satyanarayan Pooja and often give handsome gifts in kind or cash in these ceremonies. They also help people for securing school/college admissions, facilitate admissions to hospitals and have to also incur medical expenditure at critical times for the needy. Notwithstanding this, few candidates were found to be running their own social organisations for the youth, women or senior citizens in their wards in order to build up a good network of people. They also provided services like an ambulance in the wards to help people at the time of emergencies. According to candidates, these activities require a huge amount of resources. On the condition of anonymity, a candidate revealed that the cost of image building for 5 years is around 2 to 5 Crores rupees for a candidate. However, all these activities organised or

undertaken in order to contribute to their image building and 'routinisation of charisma' in their constituencies often operate without any paper work.

Apart from this, the researcher found that a huge amount of money is distributed by the candidates to the voters during the elections to get their votes. Election becomes so prestigious that they don't hesitate to spend a great sum for winning it. Money is not only distributed in slums but also in plush housing societies. Even educated families don't hesitate to take money from the candidates. People take money from all but vote as per their own wishes. Some candidates also offer gifts in kinds like sarees to voters. They also distribute gift items during Ganeshotsav or Navratri like Samai, goddess's saree etc. to woo the voters. Some take voters to picnic spots and resorts or religious places to win their votes. Even in high-class societies, people ask candidates for payment of maintenance bills, infrastructure development etc. It was found that almost all the candidates were complaining about this issue of bribe for votes. According to a few of them, even the self-help groups don't hesitate to ask for money against the number of votes they have. In fact, they bargain with candidates against the number of votes they have. Even those who said that they don't bribe voters confirmed that they have to engage in "tod-phodiche raajkaran" for which they require money. They cannot ignore such vote brokers at any cost. A candidate also mentioned that even after working religiously for people, one has to distribute money during elections as the opposition is engaged in such activities. "People change their loyalties for money," he added.

Candidates also have to spend a huge amount of money in maintaining a team of karyakartas (volunteers) which includes expenses for their tea, snacks and food. In many cases, people are hired (at Rs. 300 to 500 per day) as karyakartas during the election by the candidates.

Apart from this, huge sums of money and resources are also required for the office and its staff, travelling, conducting public meetings, rallies, hoardings, posters and other publications for distribution purpose.

With cut throat competition, parties and candidates often have to deploy a large amount of human resources in campaigning and election related activities. Candidates said that the sheer expense involved in taking care of the basic needs of these volunteers- providing them food and taking care of their other things requires huge amounts of money. "In

today's day and time, with a huge number of volunteers being deployed for electoral campaigning, even feeding these people means an expenditure of 5-10 lakhs," said a candidate.

Candidates also mentioned that in several cases, expenditure figures are often bloated in order to scare the opposition. While some candidates did say that if one has worked with the ward, people elect them on the basis of their work rather than looking at any other considerations many others said that irrespective of groundwork, money was used in swinging voters until the very last minute.

As mentioned earlier, elections have become more sophisticated with the tremendous use of technology in campaigning and other electoral activities rather than relying on only the traditional foot soldiers. Several parties today, appoint professional agencies to devise their electoral strategies and to handle their social media presence.

### **How are Funds Arranged?**

Almost all the candidates bear a large share of these expenses. Though they show party contribution on paper, only a few candidates get help from the party. In rare instances, the party bears the actual electoral expenses of the candidate in the absence of which they have to arrange for funds on their own either from their own savings, or loans/donations from people from the wards. Some candidates said that they had received financial help from their close friends and/or people in the constituency. Some existing candidates also said that they had contested their first election entirely on people's donations or support. Some candidates who emerged out of citizens groups or social organisations contested elections on the basis of crowd-funding.

Many others were found to be aided by businessmen, real estate barons, hawking agents those who are in construction, etc. Through these people, they are successful in pouring in huge amounts of money into the whole electoral process. Financially influential individuals are often requested to give donations to parties and candidates in order to cover their electoral expenditure. In return, politicians are often expected to extend certain favours to such individuals. With the strict vigilance of the State Election Commission and the concerned departments, candidates take help in terms of logistics, sponsorships for food, etc. from donors. While some provide transport to volunteers and candidates, others take care of the printing and publicity costs. Such donations are often unaccounted.

## **Election Strategy:**

Elections have become so competitive these days that candidates deploy all sorts of techniques- from conventional means to higher managerial strategies of political communication and networking (based on their electoral experiences) and thus leave no stone unturned to get the best results in the elections.

### **Pre-election strategy by new candidates:**

1. Image building
2. Donations to Ganeshotsav, Navaratri Utsav, Dahi Handi etc.
3. Socio-cultural Activities- organizing some programmes/activities for students, women and senior citizens
4. Involvement in party activities
5. Working on civic issues in wards

Pre-election strategy for candidates goes on for a period of 6 months to 2 years in advance. During these days, aspirants work on some of the local issues of people like fixing their water, gutter and metre (water, sanitation and electricity). Through their 24x7 availability, they try to garner trust in the minds of their voters which in the long run, helps them in gaining public support. People are looking for such leaders who are easily accessible to them and stand by them at all times. Aspirants have to ensure that they work for a larger geographical area as they are not sure about ward reservations and delimitation at this point.

As mentioned in the earlier section, aspirants and incumbents often engage in image building activities in the prospective wards for the upcoming election. They maintain a good rapport with different kinds of socio-cultural organisations and Ganeshotsav, Navaratri Utsav and Dahi Handi mandals by offering them decent donations. During emergencies, they often aid people in all ways possible by providing them services, relief material etc.

They actively engage in party activities at the local level in order to familiarize their image among the volunteers and people in the ward. They attend all the activities and programmes organised by the party to get in touch with the influential leaders of the party. During the party membership drive, Assembly and Lok Sabha elections they try to project their leadership by mobilising their supporters and volunteers. Before elections, they

undertake initiatives like voter registration drive, PAN card and aadhaar card registration etc. to develop their public contacts. Such kinds of activities help aspirants or incumbents in gaining acceptance among the masses at a local level which as per them, often bear fruits during the election.

Those who are not associated with any party either get closer to a party of their choice or engage in activities or movements to raise the issues of civic importance with the administration. They don't leave an opportunity to project themselves as a prospective candidate for the upcoming elections.

### **Campaigning Strategy:**

The election strategy is decided by a close group of people considering the nature of the constituency and competition from the opposite side. In the case of most female candidates, the entire electoral strategy is handled by the male member of their family and these women have to merely go for door to door campaigning or attend the rally or chowk sabhas.

The first and foremost part of the strategy is a detailed study of the voters list of the ward from which the team takes stock of the public support. From the voters list, they decide their campaigning strategy and target their respective vote bank. In some cases, they are also seen planning bogus voting by finding the names of migrated voters in the list.

During elections, apart from door to door campaign, public meetings, *chowk sabhas*, distribution of pamphlets, manifesto and work report, aspirants meet community leaders, influential persons and presidents of various social/cultural groups (*Ganesh and Navaratri mandals*) for better networking. They also invite several famous personalities for their meetings during the election campaigning to attract crowds. In the recent times, candidates often use technology and social media in order to strategically face the opposition and win the election by circulating WhatsApp messages, sharing pictures on Facebook, circulating digitized data etc.

Candidates while designing their strategy try to calculate estimates of their total votes by keeping an eye on their loyal voters, those who are on the borderline and those who support their opponents. They often know how many votes are enough to win from a particular ward and only try to influence voters in that proportion. In this exercise, the

ward is subdivided booth-wise and some trusted volunteers are assigned each booth to look after the respective voters from their booths. Many a times, this planning is at a very micro level wherein a representative is appointed for every housing society/locality.

In several cases, an attempt is made to understand the strategy of the opponents by bringing in their men into one's party-fold. Sometimes, individuals who are dissatisfied with the party or have been denied a ticket often aid the opposition in understanding its strategy as they are often promised money and a political position in return.

Every political party and candidate tries to ensure that it retains the majority volunteers of social organisations, cultural groups etc. in their fold to make their campaign fierce. As mentioned above, the funds that are provided to these organisations are an attempt to ensure that its members stay loyal to the candidate or the party. During electoral campaigns, candidates arrange food and liquor to their volunteers.

Migrated and shifted voters are contacted and requested by candidates for voting- even travelling expenses are paid to them. Candidates arrange vehicles for voters on the election day- from their residence to the booth. Last two hours on the day of voting are strategically important where voters and volunteers bargain for money against votes and candidates are also ready to pour more money on voters in order to get their votes.

In this entire exercise, along with the party name and symbol, the work of candidates' matters as it helps attract people to vote for them. While party plays an important role in gaining support, a candidate has to prove his own work rather than depending only on party loyalties.

### **Incumbency Advantage:**

Incumbency can act as a double edged sword. While it can benefit candidates who use the opportunity to work for the people, it can also go against them if they fail to prove their worth. It is seen that existing candidates work well in advance for the elections. Those who wish to contest the upcoming election start engaging themselves in the ward a year or two in advance. Every attempt is made by the incumbent (male) to keep the ward in his hand even if the ward gets reserved for women. In such cases candidate tries to get party nomination to the female counterpart in his family. Incumbent candidates use office-

holders benefits to improve their electoral prospects. Parties also look at the winnability of the candidate at this point.

## **Chapter Six**

### **Discussion**

In the post-liberalisation world, as cities are becoming smart, so are its elections. Over the last few years, elections to Municipal Corporations have become nothing less than a spectacle with a huge amount of money being spent on the entire electoral process. Elections have also become more sophisticated with social media and technology playing a very important role in the entire process- from establishing a candidate's political identity to publicising his work and party programmes, everything is just a click away in today's tech-driven world.

With the face of elections changing every second, competition has become more fierce and cut-throat. Elections in today's time have become a huge gamble with parties and candidates pouring in all their monetary might and prestige to secure power. With growing competition, the risks involved in contesting elections have also multiplied with time. When a candidate invests more- in terms of money, might and prestige, he also faces the risk of losing all that if results do not turn out in his favour. At such times, it becomes a subject of curiosity as to why individuals chose to face all these risks in order to contest elections.

The 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment acts of 1992, which gave Constitutional status to Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) respectively, brought about a greater decentralisation and aimed to increase the involvement of the community in planning and implementing schemes thus, increasing accountability. Along with regular periodic elections to local bodies, these amendments also provided for the reservation of women and backward classes in the society including the Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) in local bodies. The introduction of these amendments came at a time when the world was witnessing several remarkable changes in the form of Liberalisation, Globalisation and Privatisation (LPG). Along with the 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> constitutional amendments, the flourishing economic opportunities which were brought into the country with LPG led to the generation of political consciousness and economic aspirations amongst people. The resultant aspirational class, (which can be regarded as the new elite) that was mainly involved in businesses like land dealings, construction and realty sector found a place in the new political structure.

Along with the surge in development and earnings, the new elite also found it necessary to wield its power and influence both to secure its ends financially and to also alleviate its social position by influencing people. This need to establish itself politically along with the growing economy of elections- where huge sums of money were required to woo voters, led the lobby to become directly active in politics over the years and often got the legitimacy of the people by wooing them with the promises of better infrastructure.

Despite all these developments on the one hand, cities like Mumbai started facing development challenges due to the increasing population, shortage of basic amenities along with the constraints in infrastructure and housing. Slowly, people started demanding leaders who could provide them basic amenities and not mere promises of world-class infrastructure. As these civic issues became the top priority for people, a new class of social leaders tried to establish its political base. Now, the promises were not of sky rocketing towers or malls, but of fixing local pipelines and avoiding power cuts.

With a change in the aspirations of people along with growing financial opportunities, the nature of urban politics underwent a significant transformation. This was followed by a boom in the housing, infrastructure and development projects. Development was thus a major political agenda where every political party and aspirant tried to acquire control over policy formulation and power positions. Growing interdependence between development and politics has led to the entry of a new kind of aspirants into mainstream politics who have not necessarily emerged from socio-political activism. A large number of them engage in realty sector, construction and infrastructural activities or are sponsored by those who engage in such activities. This, however does not mean that good people do not come into politics. A large number of individuals who have earlier worked at the grassroots level are now trying to provide an alternative by contesting elections.

Through this research, an attempt was made to answer some of the commonly raised concerns with respect to Municipal Corporation elections- from the issue of elections becoming more costly to the nexus between Politicians-Builders/Businessmen and Government. It tries to look at the issue of political motivations and strategies at two levels. One- it tries to look at the factors that motivate candidates in order to contest elections-from political legacy to an urge to providing an alternative and Two – it tries to look at the challenges faced by candidates in the whole process.

One of the most recurring trends that emerged out of the study was the changing nature of elections in today's neo-liberal times in a megapolis like Mumbai. From detailed interviews with candidates across parties, it was observed that elections in today's time have become much more complex than they earlier were. With the growing significance of money, elections have somewhat assumed the role of a commercial activity- those who have the financial might often look at the act of contesting an election as an 'investment' which can yield them good returns in the long run if they are elected. Today, a different class of individuals- who otherwise had no political aspirations are willing to pour in money into elections. Many such individuals however tried to hide their ambitions of power and resulting benefits under the garb of 'working for the people'. Political ambitions, structure of opposition, competition, benefits resulting from political positions, public support etc. shape ones decision of contesting an election.

With more money in their kitties, political parties are also found to be functioning in a somewhat corporatized way with the role of 'foot-soldiers' becoming less prominent day by day. As parties erect war rooms and appoint social media managers, they are no more relying on their loyal supporters and volunteers to campaign and strategise for them. Hence, several such foot-soldiers who have worked religiously for a party for a long time are often denied tickets for the tickets are only given to those who can showcase their monetary might and who the party thinks are "winnable". With no hopes of being given an opportunity, these volunteers then no more care about the issues of people in the ward and attempt to pocket profits for themselves wherever possible. Parties too, are in search of a candidate who can build their might and give very little significance to real grassroots level work of candidates. It was also seen that 'Ideology' hardly played any role in local body elections. While the party does have its own agenda, candidates often follow their own style of working considering the diverse demographic structure of electoral wards in Mumbai.

At every stage in the electoral process, 'money' seems to play an important role. When a candidate has initial thoughts of contesting an election, he has to think about pooling in the necessary financial resources to be able to 'buy' a party ticket. To establish his/her work, a lot of spending is also incurred in ward related development activities as an aspirant needs to nurture the constituency at all times. Even after getting a ticket, one needs to spend at every stage- from campaigning to marketing oneself on social media to paying 'volunteers' on polling and counting days. Sometimes, candidates revealed that they also

spent huge amounts in ‘managing’ some of their opponents, which is a huge challenge for new candidates who might not have the financial strength and manipulative skills required for this. Voters, socio-cultural organisations, residential societies, self-help groups etc. often bargain for money in return for their votes. However, even after they reap financial benefits, no one can assure their loyalties towards that candidate or party. It should thus be noted that as much as the political aspirants, voters are also responsible for the entry of corrupt practices into politics.

Post 1990s elections are said to have become increasingly competitive with the extensive use of money. While aspirants continue to pour in money to increase their chances of winning, the trend in the long run proves to be dangerous as it disrupts one’s trust in the democratic process of elections. Ultimately, this leads to hampering the growth and development of the city as it encourages wrong practices of favouring some contractors and developers by tweaking norms. Some of the resulting activities including illegal constructions, protection rackets, etc. pose a challenge to a sound civic life.

Apart from money, caste, gender and community considerations also play an important role in making electoral choices. In several cases where the ward became reserved for Backward Caste Groups, incumbent corporators had to try their luck in other constituencies. In several cases where the wards became reserved for female candidates, male candidates often fielded their female family members- including their daughters, wives, daughter-in-laws in order to retain their power. After interviewing several such women who had contested on ‘behalf’ of their male counterparts, it could be seen that even after working as a corporators for some years, almost all their political choices and decisions were dictated by their male counterparts. Despite provisions for the entry of women and backward sections of the society, dominant groups still continue to rule in some of the major power positions using the rules to their advantage.

As opposed to the popular perception that the number of independent candidates has been increasing, data showed that the number of independent candidates did not show a significant increase over the last 25 years. It is however important to note that some individuals tried to contest independently with a view to provide an alternative. Many such candidates were earlier involved in citizens groups, social organisations etc. and saw elections as an opportunity to further their goal of working for the people in their localities.

A wide variety of candidates were found to be contesting elections at the local level. Some of the characteristics of candidates contesting an election are as below:

- **Candidates without a political lineage:**

Most candidates had no political legacy as far as elections were concerned. Many of them had climbed up the political ladder from being a simple *karyakarta* to becoming a candidate with the help of their experience and political skills. A large group of individuals who possess huge amounts of money are also showing interest in electoral politics in the recent times.

- **Socio-politically active:**

Several individuals who were earlier a part of social organisations later went on to develop aspirations for contesting elections. In many cases, they were encouraged by the people in the wards where they were working for several years. Such individuals had the public support and were thus seen as potential candidates by some prominent political parties. Some individuals who worked as members of a particular political party and worked for people in the past were also given an opportunity to contest by their party leadership in the absence of a stronger alternative in that ward.

- **Association with some political party or the other:**

A long association with a political party proved to be beneficial for an aspirant's prospect of getting a ticket. Parties in most cases observe the work of some of its volunteers over the years and often decide to offer tickets to them. Being with a party also helps aspirants get the necessary experience, resources and requisite skills for contesting an election.

- **Economically well-off and strategic:**

Several aspirants who were financially strong were confident of their prospects in electoral politics. Such individuals had money at their disposal and could take care of pre-election activities and the risks involved with greater ease. Parties too were in search of such candidates who could pour in money (thereby saving the party some money) in the whole electoral process with their chances of winning being bright. Despite this, it was found that there were people who challenged this norm and got elected solely on the basis of their work for the people in their wards.

- **Polished behavior and good oratory skills with great engaging capacity:**

In today's day and time when elections are becoming more and more sophisticated, a new class of professionals was seen taking part in mainstream politics. These individuals had all the necessary soft skills- including the knowledge of English, presence on social media etc. and were successful in wooing educated and young voters.

- **Assertive yet assimilative:**

While working in a city like Mumbai where socio-political and economic dynamics are extremely complex, it is important for aspirants to consider the needs of everyone. Often, potential candidates have to assimilate the interests of a diverse variety of people in order to make everyone feel that they are working for them. While a candidate is expected to assert for the rights of the people in his ward, he is also expected to be assimilative of the varied needs of people.

## **Chapter Seven**

### **Major Concerns and Suggestions for Reforms**

While interviewing candidates, they raised certain concerns about the current electoral process. The following concerns and suggestions for reforms are based on two studies conducted by the researcher - one with respect to the 2015 KDMC elections and another on BMC elections of 2012 and 2017.

#### **1. Orientation for aspirants:**

The general impression is that with the increasing use of money along with muscle power and after the advent of new technology leading to an increasing use of social media platforms, further met with fierce electoral competition, it has become rather difficult for a common citizen to contest even local level elections (*let alone Vidhan Sabha or Lok Sabha*). This was evident while studying the KDMC elections of 2015 and BMC elections of 2012 and 2017. It was observed that those who are economically powerful get easy entry into electoral politics with the help of the resources at their disposal by sidelining those party workers who deserve to get the nomination. Factors like gender, caste, religion, age etc. play a very prominent role in shaping individual political motivations when it comes to contesting an election. People belonging to the Scheduled Castes, minority communities and female aspirants cannot even think of contesting an election from non-reserved constituencies. Thus, socio-economic and political conditions along with the constructed fear about electoral politics discourages many from directly participating in the electoral process.

Considering this socio-psychological set up, Municipal Corporations (which are the only government bodies that directly work with people at the urban level) and the State Election Commission should take up an initiative and organize orientation and counseling for aspirants in order to address their fears and to aid them with technical formalities involved in the entire electoral process like filling the nomination and affidavit forms, understanding electoral rules and norms, etc. Especially where the form filling process is online, there should be training sessions to ensure that aspirants can fill them with ease and without any glitches. This would encourage potential aspirants in contesting local body elections.

## **2. Revision of the Voters List:**

During both the studies, it was found that the existing voters list used for local body elections is the same as the one made for Vidhan Sabha elections. The same list is bifurcated as per the ward formations at the municipal level. It was found that the list has not been revised for a long time and the law for local body elections makes it mandatory to use voter list of Assembly elections. In the absence of the revision of electoral roll, the existing list is often found to have names that are no longer present in the constituency, along with those who might have migrated and the deceased which often raises concerns over the tampering of votes with the help of such names.

In order to bring about reforms in the current electoral system, it is imperative for the State Election Commission to recommend the Election Commission of India to undertake the task of revision of the voters list at the earliest.

The need to have a revised and updated electoral list was also backed by some senior officials who were on duty during the 2015 KDMC elections and BMC elections of 2012 and 2017 stating that the move would bring in more transparency and accountability to the existing electoral process at the local level. In order to bring about reforms in the current electoral process, the State Election Commission should request/recommend the Election Commission of India to take this as one of the most important tasks at hand, as opined by many respondents. To achieve this task, fresh registration drives should be conducted to register eligible but unregistered voters in the constituencies from time to time. In this endeavor, inter-departmental coordination could be developed to make the system more voter-friendly.

A new system could be developed which can interlink the data through death certificate, marriage certificate etc. with voter registration. There should also be a link between the death registration list and the list of voters in the wards. While issuing death certificates, there should be a clause regarding issuing the same only after the cancellation of the individual's name from the voter list. Names of all the deceased individuals from within the constituency should be deleted once a death certificate is raised by the registering office. For married women, there should be a clause in the Marriage Registration Form with the help of which they can add a new address or change their name as per which changes would be reflected in the voter list.

A more practical application of technology is the computerization of the electoral roll, which should lead to improvements in the accuracy and transparency of the registration process. Such technical innovation (whilst it cannot solve problems faced by potential voters with poor access to computers) would facilitate a continuous process of updating the electoral rolls, rather than the periodic updating of the electoral register (MacMillan, 2014).

### **3. Voter ID cards:**

In several cases, candidates expressed their concerns over the process of voter registration and distribution of voter IDs. It was found that on several instances those names that have been registered before hand are not reflected in the final list or often there are mistakes in the names and addresses of voters. Quite often, names of voters from one ward appear in the list of another ward. Before elections, the voter list is often released officially either online or through other means which is often not accessible to a voter. This often leaves huge scope for errors on the part of the departments concerned.

Candidates also mentioned the great difficulty that voters encounter while making corrections with respect to their names and addresses on the electoral rolls. Thus, it was found that most people wanted the system to become transparent and simple which would, in turn, encourage a lot of them to register themselves and vote in the elections- thus solving the major issue of low voter turnout.

The issue of Voter ID is related to the Election Commission of India. The State Election Commission should request the Election Commission of India to take an initiative/campaign to solve the problems of voter registration, personation and electoral corruption through the 'smart' voter cards.

### **4. Curbing the practice of 'Bogus voting':**

Those voters who have either migrated or died but whose names still exist in the list are often used by political parties for malpractices like bogus voting as reported by many respondents interviewed for the study. While there was no way to verify these claims, an updated voting list would be able to plug this loophole, if at all it exists. In the case of bogus voting, those who are engaged in such practices should be held responsible and be penalized as per the law.

No political party will support cleaning of voters list. The actual solution is to make the voters list valid for only five years in urban areas after which it should be mandatorily built from scratch. This will need some mindset change but unless this is done the voter list will continue to have problems.

#### **5. Curbing the ‘bribe for votes’ practice:**

It is the general observation that people get allured by money and gifts offered to them by the candidates and different political parties during elections. During the interviews, respondents (candidates) also mentioned that the distribution of money and other rewards in kind in exchange of votes was a common practice during elections.

According to Trilochan Sastry (2014), “Any winning candidate who spends lavishly in elections will focus on recovering his investment or returning favours to those who funded him/her. The same is true of political parties and of ruling coalitions. A superficial analysis says that voters have become savvy, take money from all candidates, and then vote for the candidate of their choice. Therefore the misuse of money no longer affects the outcome. This is clearly not true as the earlier analysis reveals. But even if it were true, governance will suffer no matter who wins because all have spent huge sums. A clean election process is important to ensure good governance, even if it has no impact on the final outcome. Elections are not only about who wins but also about the quality of governance we get. The problem of misuse of funds in elections goes to the heart of the matter.”

As per the Election Commission of India’s Website, “Acceptance of money to vote for a candidate is a corrupt practice of bribery under Section 123 (1) of R. P. Act, 1951. It is also an offence under section 171-B of Indian Penal Code and is punishable with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to one year or with fine or both”. The State Election Commission is already trying its best to curb these malpractices. Corrupt practices used by candidates and political parties should be arrested at the very beginning by providing strict vigilance at all times which would ensure that the candidates are deterred from such malpractices.

As per the guidelines of the State Election Commission, ‘Special Vigilance Squads’ need to be appointed by the Municipal Corporation/Election Officers in order to ensure that the candidates observe the guidelines given in this regard as per the Model Code of conduct.

Acceptance of money, gifts in kind, liquor or other intoxicants to vote for a particular candidate/ party or not to vote for him/the party is also considered as bribery according to the guidelines of the Election Commission of India. Thus, those who are found engaged in such kind of practices should be booked under the appropriate law and it should be given due publicity in the media to curb such practices of ‘bribe for votes’.

Political parties need to be made accountable. They must be made to accept donations only electronically, all donors must give their name, address and PAN number. No cash donations can be accepted. Parties need to submit their list of donors and their expenses annually to SEC which will be published on website of SEC.

#### **6. Limiting the Electoral Expenses of Candidates:**

A candidate is not free to spend as much as he likes on the election. The State Election Commission, Maharashtra prescribes that the total election expenditure shall not exceed the maximum limit prescribed under an order dated 30<sup>th</sup> July, 2011. However, as per the law for local elections, there is no legal limit prescribed for expenditure by candidates and parties. The SEC has prescribed limits but there no legal provision for punishment in case the limit is exceeded.

As per report no. 255 prepared by the Law Commission of India on electoral reforms in March 2015, ‘it is well established that money plays a big role in politics, whether in the conduct or campaigning, for elections’. The report cites the guidelines of the Election Commission of India, issued on 29<sup>th</sup> August 2014, stating that- *“concerns have been expressed in various quarters that money power is disturbing the level playing field and vitiating the purity of elections.”*

The State Election Commission has limited the electoral expenses of candidates in order to provide a level-playing field to all candidates. As per the revised guidelines, for Mumbai and those civic bodies with 151 to 175 members, the limit was set at Rs 10 lakh from the earlier limit of Rs 4 lakh. For civic bodies with members between 116 and 150, the amount was set at Rs 8 lakh and between 85 and 115 at Rs 7 lakh. For 65 to 85 member civic bodies, the expenditure limit was set at Rs 5 lakh.

Candidates often said that they had to spend the money due to growing competition in order to keep their vote banks intact at any cost. Supplementing this claim is the

conclusion of the 2002 report of the National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution which was affirmed by the Apex court in the *PUCL v Union of India case* (2003).

*It states-*

*“One of the most critical problems in the matter of electoral reforms is the hard reality that for contesting an election one needs large amounts of money. The limits of expenditure prescribed are meaningless and almost never adhered to. As a result, it becomes difficult for the good and the honest to enter legislatures. It also creates a high degree of compulsion for corruption in the political arena. This has progressively polluted the entire system. Corruption, because it erodes performance, becomes one of the leading reasons for non-performance and compromised governance in the country. The sources of some of the election funds are believed to be unaccounted criminal money in return for protection, unaccounted funds from business groups who expect a high return on this investment, kickbacks or commissions on contracts etc.”*

Despite having some mechanisms to limit the electoral expenditure of candidates and with respect to the disclosure of contributions to parties and candidates, there are certain lacunae in its monitoring process. In fact, one of the major concerns regarding expenditure and regulation about contribution to political parties is that the apparently low ceiling of candidate expenditure increases the demand for black money, cash contributions and drives campaign expenditure underground, causing parties to conceal their actual source of funds and expenditure.

The issue of electoral finance has continued to play a major part in the perception of the role of the Election Commission and the conduct of elections. The impression that ‘black money’ dominated political campaigns has persisted, despite attempts at reform (McMillan in Jayal and Mehta, 2014). The study of BMC election 2012 and 2017 also found that an amount of Rs. 50 lakh to Rs. 5 crore is spent on elections.

From these studies, it was realized that to curb electoral expenses through vigilance is just an ideal thought. In fact, no such limits should be prescribed. All expenses should be published on website of political party along with names and addresses of those who received money from the party and those who donated money to the party. Political parties should be treated like companies/industries.

## **7. Continuous Monitoring during the Campaigning:**

Considering the fact that electoral expenses of most candidates exceed the prescribed limit set by the State Election Commission for local body elections, the Commission should not depend only on the election expenditure accounts submitted by the candidates. There should be continuous vigilance on the spending by each candidate and political party by the Municipal Corporation as per its guidelines in this regard. Candidates have to submit their electoral expenses to the concerned officials within the 30 day time window after the declaration of results. Those candidates who fail to do so should not be allowed to contest any of the election for the next 6 years.

Last two hours on the day of voting are strategically important where voters and volunteers bargain for money against votes and candidates are also ready to shower more money on voters in order to get their votes. It was found that migrated voters are often contacted and requested by candidates to vote for them. In such cases, candidates vouch to pay for the voters' traveling expenses and also, at times arrange vehicles for them to reach the booth from their homes on the day of voting.

Any arrangement, direct or indirect, to carry any voter to or from the polling station by any kind of vehicle used for transport is a criminal offence (refer Section 133 of Representation of People Act, 1951). Also, any attempt to influence the voters is also considered as an offence by the Election Commission. While stringent actions should be taken against those who are not following the Model Code of Conduct during the elections there should be a continuous monitoring of these activities by the State Election Commission to keep a tab on them.

## **8. Awareness Drive on 'Voters' Education':**

The State Election Commission of Maharashtra has been collaborating with the universities and colleges as well as housing societies to generate awareness about voter registration. Many registration drives were also conducted with their help in those respective areas. A need is however felt to make such drives an annual activity rather than being limited to the pre-election period considering the ignorance of a large number of people in registering/updating their information.

An awareness programme should be undertaken by the State Election Commission on 'Voters Education' with the help of NSS students, Civil Society Organizations and

through the media to curb the practices of bribe for votes and the practice of gift distribution in return of votes during the elections. As pointed out by Sastry (2014), “a deeper understanding of the link between black money, vote buying, corrupt elections and corrupt government delivering bad governance needs to be built. They sometimes do not see how they themselves suffer and get bad schools, healthcare, roads, corrupt government, and bad implementation of various government schemes.....Needless to say, media support is vital.”

#### **9. Improving the Online Nomination System:**

In the 2017 BMC elections, the State Election Commission introduced online nomination system for candidates. While the new system was welcomed by most candidates, they complained of some technical issues in the system. Some candidates said that they have a tough time in filing these nomination forms online. They claimed that the process was time consuming and tedious. A few of them also complained about the site being down due to heavy traffic. The State Election Commission should ensure that the system is simple, error free and user friendly. Considering that a large number of aspirants fill their nomination forms on the last day, care should be taken to ensure that the system does not crash and runs smoothly without any errors. Along with online nomination forms, candidates should be allowed to pay their nomination fees online rather than having to pay them in cash.

#### **10. Police approvals for campaigning activities:**

Many candidates complained that getting police approvals and protection for campaigning activities like rallies, sabhas etc. becomes a very difficult task. A few candidates alleged that police officials demanded money to grant permissions to them in many cases. On the other hand, with staff crunch and the huge volume of demand, local police cannot provide permissions to all those who apply at the same time. In order to overcome this issue, better coordination needs to take place across Police forces and State Reserve Police forces can be brought in. With this, it can become easier to grant permissions for campaigning in sensitive areas while curbing malpractices through vigilance at the same time.

**Appendix I**  
**Interview Questionnaire**

<b>Ward no.</b>	
<b>Reservation category</b>	
<b>Candidate's Name</b>	
<b>Name of Political Party</b>	
<b>Gender</b>	Male:                      Female:
<b>Age</b>	
<b>Religion</b>	Hindu / Muslim/ Christian/ Sikh/ Buddhist/ Jain/Other _____
<b>Caste Category</b>	General/ OBC/ SC/ ST/ Other _____
<b>Educational Qualification</b>	
<b>Occupation</b>	Business/Self Employed/Service/Daily Wages/ Retired/House-wife/Student/Social service _____
<b>Family income (Annual)</b>	Less than One Lakh 1 Lakh to 2.5 Lakh 2.5 Lakh to 5 Lakh 5 Lakh to 10 Lakh 10 Lakh to 25 Lakh 25 Lakh to 50 Lakh 50 Lakh to 1 Crore 1 Crore and 5 Crore 5 Crore and Above -----
<b>Election Expenses (Rs)</b>	
<b>Address</b>	
<b>Mobile no.</b>	
<b>Email</b>	
<b>Electoral History:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incumbents</li> <li>• Inheritors</li> <li>• Challengers (are candidates fighting a seat held by another party)</li> </ul>

<p><b>Previous experience of standing for Election (if any)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elected to local government:</li> <li>• Contested for Corporation before:</li> <li>• Held local party office:</li> <li>• Held regional party office:</li> <li>• Local pressure group office:</li> <li>• Other community group office:</li> <li>• Professional association office :</li> <li>• Student organisation office:</li> <li>• Trade union office:</li> <li>• Women's organisation office:</li> <li>• Years of party membership:</li> </ul>
---------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

1. Do you have a family background of social work and associated activities?
  2. Do you have a family background of politics?
  3. Since how long have you been engaged in social or political activities related to issues of public significance? Why? (Political Experience)
  4. When did you first think of contesting an election?
  5. What was the most determining factor leading to this decision?
  6. Did anybody ask/recommend your name to contest the election?
  7. What was in your mind when you were thinking about contesting an election?
  8. Please share some of the challenges that crossed your thoughts when you were thinking about contesting an election?
  9. Did you try to take any stock of public support for your candidature from your constituency? (Through verbal surveys etc).
  10. Was the decision a result of your public acceptance and popular acknowledgement?
  11. (For party candidates) How did you approach the political party? On what basis did you decide to contest for a particular party?
  12. (For party candidates) For how long have you been trying to get a ticket? (No. of attempts or No. of years?) Party Organization Experience
  13. What problems did you face for getting the party ticket? (Please share your experience of the selection process)
- Candidate satisfaction with the selection process:
- Fair
  - Democratic
  - Efficient

- Complicated

14. What are the requirements to get a party ticket for contesting the elections?
15. Describe the nomination form filling process? Was it simple or complicated?
16. How much funds according to you are required for contesting the Municipal elections?
17. How did you arrange the funds for your elections? State some major sources.
18. How much part of the expenditure for elections was contributed by the party?
19. What was your strategy for the election (campaigning)? List two important ones.
20. Tell us something about your election agenda. What were the two major agendas?
21. Why did you zero down on those points?
22. How did you manage your volunteers/ karyakartas? What was the incentive promised?  
(Support networks)
23. Did you get support from any of your community organizations (social, religious, cultural, nativist)?
24. How did you find the election commission's administration and police during the entire process of electioneering? Was there enough effort to ensure free and fair elections?
25. What reforms do you recommend in the electioneering process?
26. What is your opinion about 50% reservations to women candidates?
27. What is your opinion about the NOTA option on the ballot? Will it change the current election system? If yes, why and how?

**Some specific questions for women candidates:**

1. Whose decision was it that you should contest the elections?
2. If it were your decision, what was the determining factor behind it?
3. As a woman, does your political agenda differ from the other male candidates? If yes how?
4. Who decides the political campaigning and where do the funds come from?

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