

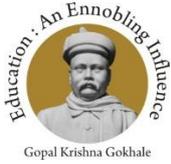
# **HOW DO RURAL VOTERS RATE THE POLLING PROCESS?**

## **A POST-POLL VOTERS' SURVEY IN 5 MAJOR ZILLA PARISHAD ELECTIONS IN MAHARASHTRA**

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**FOREWORD**

1. Realizing that free, fair and transparent election is the backbone of the democracy, the Indian Constitution was amended in 1992 providing for a separate State Election Commission (SEC) in each State for conducting elections to all the Local Bodies. It has been a continuous endeavor of the SEC to ensure maximum participation of the people in these elections in a transparent and pure manner.
2. Looking at the major elections to 211 Municipal Councils, 25 ZillaParishads, 263 Panchayat Samitis and 10 Municipal Corporations which were scheduled to be held between October, 2016 and February, 2017, SEC undertook some major electoral reforms like the following :-
  - i) Filing of the nomination paper and affidavit by the candidates with the help of computers
  - ii) Revision of Model Code of Conduct and strategies for its strict implementation
  - iii) massive publicity drive by involving all concerned stockholders like Universities, Colleges, Corporate houses, Cooperative Housing Societies, Banks, Hotels and restaurant associations etc. to increase the voting percentage etc.
3. Efforts were also made to make the voting a pleasant experience for the voters through initiatives like ---
  - i) Mobile Applications (called FAQ) to answer nearly 2000 Frequently Asked Questions regarding the electoral process etc.
  - ii) Mobile Application (called True Voter ) to help voters to find their names in the voter list and locate their polling stations etc.
  - iii) Publication of the summary of the affidavit of the various candidates through a) Notice Board, b) Website, c) paper advertisement and d) flex outside the polling stations
  - iv) provision of all basic necessary facilities like drinking water, toilet, electricity, shade etc. for all the voters including physically handicapped persons etc.

4. Since the above elections involved nearly 70% population of the State, SEC decided to conduct a Voter's Survey regarding the people's perception about the polling process and the new initiatives undertaken by it. SEC engaged the services of Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, Pune for the above survey.
5. I am happy that GIPE, Pune carried out the above survey in 5 Municipal Corporations and 5 ZillaParishads by contacting nearly 6500 and 4000 voters respectively.
6. Questions asked by GIPE from the above voters/respondents, once they had voted, covered the following broad areas :-
  - i) facilities at the polling stations
  - ii) time spent during the voting
  - iii) cleanliness of the booth,
  - iv) facilities for the handicapped,
  - v) ease of voting, etc.
7. Rural voters have given a good score on various aspects of the polling process. However, facilities for the handicapped need to be improved upon. Efforts of the SEC of putting the flex outside the polling stations showing details of each candidate were appreciated by most.
8. I take this opportunity to congratulate Smt. Manasi Phadke, Dr. Rajas Parchure and the entire team of Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics for making this analytical study possible.
9. I am further pleased to learn that Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics is publishing the survey findings in a book form, elucidating their methodology and analysis. I am sure this will help in improving the quality of the candidates in future and result in more free, fair and transparent elections.

**Shri. J. Saharia**

State Election Commission

Maharashtra

March 14, 2017

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

I am very pleased to present this report titled “How Do Rural Voters Rate The Polling Process? A Post-Poll Voters’ Survey In 5 Major Zilla Parishad Elections In Maharashtra”. The State Election Commission of Maharashtra has been working tirelessly to document all aspects of voting in local body elections. In this publication, voter perceptions regarding the polling process and the overall experience of voting have been documented.

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

Mrs. Manasi Phadke has been the chief co-ordinator and principal author of this report and has been driving the processes right from the methodological construction of the problem to writing the report, meticulously. I thank Prof. Dnyandeo Talule, who has been our partner in YASHADA, for lending his time so generously to this project. I must also thank Mr. Rajendra Pawar, YASHADA, who helped us identify local partners and NGOs in the rural areas to carry out the survey. Vishal Gaikwad was our key support for conducting the field survey and also was instrumental in training our team of enumerators all over Maharashtra. Ms. Manisha Shinde too handled training of various rural teams, apart from which she also handled the quality check of the data. Anjali Phadke was our chief support for statistical analysis. Prof. Rajesh Bhatikar handled the editing of the report very efficiently. Mr. Rohit Deshpande, Seed Infotech Pvt. Ltd. gave us the software support for carrying out the survey using Android devices. Mr. Vilas Mankar gave the technical and printing assistance to the project.

This survey was carried out in 5 districts of Maharashtra, wherein local educational institutions as well as NGOs helped us to complete the survey. I hereby acknowledge the support given by Ravindra Shinde (Pune and Nashik), the Community Action for Rural Development (CARD) Society (Amravati), Surabhi Swayamsevi Sanstha (Raigad) and School of Social Sciences, Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University, Nanded (Aurangabad).

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

**Prof. Rajas Parchure**

Offg. Director

Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics  
Pune

March 14, 2017

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Zilla Parishads in Maharashtra are in election mode. 26 out of 34 Zilla Parishads in Maharashtra went into elections in 2017. Some of these were held on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2017, whereas the others were held together with the Municipal Corporation elections on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2017.

In the run-up to the Zilla Parishad elections, the State Election Commission of Maharashtra (SECM) was actively involved in creating various voter awareness programs with the objective of creating a higher voter turnout in Maharashtra rural body elections, because true representation can only happen with more participation. It was also actively involved in screening and scrutinizing the candidate profiles, so that clean candidates without criminal background can get a level playing field.

An earlier study by Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics assesses the quality of ZP and PS representatives in Maharashtra and comes out with interesting, and yet, worrisome findings. The study finds that candidates who contest ZP and PS elections tend to mostly come from politically-oriented families, with very low levels of education. Further, many of them, especially those who contest on reserved seats, are given tickets by political parties even when they have little or no experience of grassroot politics. This seriously undermines the quality of candidature at the ZP and PS level.

How can better representatives come to the fore? How can electoral authorities ensure that local political parties will field better experienced and non-criminal candidates?

One effective way to restrain political parties from giving tickets to “tainted” candidates is to make the background of such candidates known to the voters. This year, the State Election Commission created a rule that the affidavits of the candidates with information on their age, educational qualification, criminal background (if any) and asset-liability statements would be displayed outside the polling booth. It is pertinent from a policy continuation perspective to assess how rural voters have reacted to this new move.

Similarly, voter reactions to other aspects of the polling process too need to be documented and assessed. These include time spent in the queue for voting, cleanliness of the booth, facilities for the handicapped, ease of voting, etc. Documentation of voter reactions to poll processes will be an important step in terms of reforming electoral field operations over a period of time.

At the initiative of the SECM, Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics planned a post-poll survey to be conducted on the day of elections to cover the issues mentioned above.

## CHAPTER 2

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main objective of the post-poll voters' survey was to understand voter perceptions regarding various aspects of the polling process. As has been mentioned in the earlier chapter, the study also aimed at finding voter reactions to the directive of the SECM to display outside the polling stations the affidavits of the candidates pertaining to their educational qualifications, criminal background and asset-liability declarations.

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main research questions with which the survey was designed were the following.

#### **I. Voter Perception regarding polling –process**

This first set of questions was designed to understand voter perceptions regarding the actual polling process. The answers to these queries would be important in terms of understanding whether operational issues were hampering the voting process.

- a. Are the voters satisfied with the cleanliness of the booth?
- b. Are there special facilities to help handicapped voters with the process?
- c. Do the voters feel satisfied regarding the working condition of the Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs)?
- d. The Zilla Parishad and Panchayat Samiti elections are always held at the same time. Thus, the voter votes for her ZP representative as well as for the PS representative in the same booth. Do voters have an issue in terms of understanding this system of casting two votes? How do voters rank the “ease of how to vote”?
- e. Are the election officers courteous?
- f. What score do voters give to the overall voting experience in the Corporations in Maharashtra?
- g. How much time does it take for a voter to cast her vote from the time she enters the polling station to the time she exits it?

#### **II. Voter perceptions regarding the Affidavits displayed outside the polling stations**

The other main objective of the survey was to gauge whether rural voters have liked the SECM move of displaying candidate information outside the polling stations. This move was created in order to enable the voters to have a more informed opinion about the candidates before casting their votes. Has this move really empowered the voters? If yes, to what extent? The following research questions were the second focus area of the survey.

- a. Did the voter read the candidate information displayed outside the polling station?

- b. Was the information displayed in a language understood by most voters?
- c. Did the voters perceive this move to be a good move?
- d. Had the information pertaining to the candidate displayed outside the polling station changed their decision about whom to vote for? How?

### **III. Voter Perceptions about other issues faced on the day of polling**

Voting is a unique experience in rural Maharashtra. This experience could be marred by extra-zealous party workers creating nuisance outside polling stations or by other instances wherein political parties try to influence the voters. Following research questions were created to focus on this aspect of the polling experience.

- a. Political parties normally have some presence near polling stations. Most of them construct temporary sheds or pandals to assist voters to find their name in the voters' list, identify the booth number inside the polling station, etc. Most candidates and/ or political parties tend to arrange vehicles to get the voters to the polling stations. This creates a goodwill for the candidate, which the latter hopes translates into more votes for him at the polling station. Hence, there is quite a scuffle between parties to offer free rides to and from the polling station to the voters. Did these issues lead to party karyakartas creating nuisance outside the polling stations?
- b. There are many instances of cash being distributed or liquor, free food and gifts being given to voters to influence their votes. What are the voter perceptions regarding these issues? Have they witnessed any of these issues at a personal level?

Identifying the research questions exactly is an integral part of any survey. Once the research questions are designed, the next step is to construct a tool or a questionnaire in order to get proper answers to the questions. The questionnaire prepared for this survey is given in Appendix A of the report.

## CHAPTER 3

### DESIGN OF SURVEY AND SAMPLING CONSIDERATIONS

Sampling is a crucial part of survey design. The sample has to be sufficiently representative of the population so that the results obtained on basis of the sample can be generalized to the population. A voter perception survey in the different Zilla Parishads in Maharashtra required a process of selection of the ZPs, identification and selection of talukas within the district in which the survey could be carried out and the number of polling stations to be covered per taluka. It also required thought on how to identify the voter respondents at every booth. This chapter outlines the various sampling aspects of the research proposal.

#### SAMPLING PLAN

26 Zilla Parishads went to polls in February 2017. Due to time and cost considerations, it was not possible to cover voters in all ZPs for the survey. Hence, it was decided to sample the Zilla Parishads in each of the six divisional headquarters in Maharashtra.

The 36 districts of Maharashtra are divided into 6 administrative divisions, namely Konkan, Pune, Nashik, Aurangabad, Amravati and Nagpur. The divisions have been created for administrative convenience; however, it is also seen that the divisions offer an insight into district groups that are distinct by their geographical characteristics, climatic and agricultural characteristics and hence, also different by their economic and political dynamics. The divisional headquarters of the divisions are in Mumbai, Pune, Nashik, Aurangabad, Amravati and Nagpur districts respectively.

It was decided to conduct the survey in the Zilla Parishad of the district hosting the headquarter of every division, so that the sample would show enough heterogeneity across voters. Mumbai is the only district which does not have a rural area and hence does not have a Zilla Parishad. It was hence decided to conduct the survey in the Raigad district in Konkan division. The ZP of Nagpur did not have its election on any of the chosen dates, and thus the survey was finally conducted in Zilla Parishads of Raigad, Pune, Aurangabad, Nashik and Amravati.

Please note that the elections for the district level Zilla Parishad and taluka level Panchayat Samiti happen on the same day. Thus, a voter casts two votes; one, to elect her representative to the Panchayat Samiti and the other, to elect her representative to the Zilla Parishad. Hence, a crucial component of the sampling plan was also to identify the talukas in which the survey would be conducted. These details are described later in the chapter.

Drawing up of the sample plan firstly entails identification of the proper sample frame for the purpose of sampling. The following table shows the differences in the numbers of valid voters in each of the selected Zilla Parishads as per the 2012 SECM data.

**Table 3.1: Number of Valid Voters in each Zilla Parishad**

| ZP DIVISIONAL HEADQUARTER | ZP         | Valid Voters |
|---------------------------|------------|--------------|
| Konkan                    | Raigad     | 1424362.00   |
| Pune                      | Pune       | 5083594.00   |
| Nashik                    | Nashik     | 2271597.00   |
| Amravati                  | Amravati   | 1331710.00   |
| Aurangabad                | Aurangabad | 1392566.00   |
|                           |            | 11503829.00  |

## APPROACH I

Using the entire voter population of the five ZPs could be one possible population frame. This implies that we would sample some voters directly out of 1.15 crore voters and then use the Probability Proportional to Sampling (PPS) method to further decide how many voters to select from each of the Corporations. While this is a relatively simple method of sampling, taking the entire population of 5 ZPs is not an appropriate frame since the voter population of Pune district by itself forms nearly 44 per cent of the total voting population, whereas Amravati, Aurangabad and Konkan hardly account for 11 per cent. The skew in the voter population of the said ZPs is high and hence, this kind of a population frame was seen to be incorrect.

## APPROACH II

### 1. CLUSTER SAMPLING

Hence, the Corporations were classified using a simple cluster analysis on the basis of their voter populations. Pune and Nashik ZPs get classified as a separate cluster, whereas the ZPs of Raigad, Amravati and Aurangabad get classified into another cluster. For each of the clusters, the population frame is the total number of voters registered in the 2012 elections for the districts included in that cluster.

Using a 2 per cent margin of error, the sample size for the first cluster (Pune and Nashik) gets determined at 2401 voters. The second cluster consists of ZPs (Amravati, Raigad and Aurangabad) that are inherently smaller than those included in the first cluster. This needs to reflect in the sample size too and hence, a 2.5 per cent margin of error was applied to the second cluster. In this way, the sample size of the second cluster was fixed at 1537.

### 2. APPLYING PPS

Next, the Probability Proportional to Sampling (PPS) method was applied to Cluster I and Cluster II in order to further determine how many voters to sample in each of the Corporations in the cluster. The details are given in the column titled “Required Sample Size”. The following table elucidates.

**Table 3.2: Sampling Plan in the 5 Zilla Parishads at 95% Confidence level**

| Corporation                     | Total Voter Population (2012 election) | Margin of Error (%) | Required Sample Size |
|---------------------------------|--|---------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Cluster I</b>                |  |                     |                      |
| Pune and Nashik                 | 7355191                                | 2                   | 2401                 |
| of which                        |  |                     |                      |
| Pune ZP (69%)                   |  |                     | 1656                 |
| Nashik ZP (31%)                 |  |                     | 744                  |
| <b>Cluster II</b>               |  |                     |                      |
| Raigad, Aurangabad and Amravati | 4148638                                | 2.5                 | 1537                 |
| of which                        |  |                     |                      |
| Raigad (34%)                    |  |                     | 522                  |
| Aurangabad (33%)                |  |                     | 507                  |
| Amravati (33%)                  |  |                     | 507                  |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                    | <b>11503829</b>                        |                     | <b>3938</b>          |

Thus, a total sample size of about 3900 voters was finalized for this survey. The next step was to create a “Coverage Plan” to sample within the said ZPs.

### **3. COVERAGE PLAN FOR IDENTIFYING TALUKAS AND VILLAGES (ZP BOOTHS)**

A sample survey in ZP areas is typically more challenging than a survey in Municipal Corporation limits because the ZPs cover the entire rural population of a district; the geographical coverage of ZPs, is thus, very vast. The second issue that different constituencies of the ZPs occur in different talukas, making sampling more challenging. Following were the steps used in order to create a good coverage plan for the ZPs.

The total number of seats in a Zilla Parishad indicate the total number of constituencies within which the elections will be conducted. In consultation with the SECM, it was decided to sample around 10 per cent of the total seats in each of the chosen ZPs. Thus, there are 75 seats in the Pune ZP and hence it was decided to sample in 7 constituencies. Further, it was decided that each of the constituencies should be from a separate taluka; this would ensure a good geographical spread and would bring in responses from voters belonging to different socio-economic classifications across the district. Thus, for Pune ZP, 6 talukas were chosen in which the survey was conducted. The talukas were chosen in a way that hilly, tribal, remote areas,

highly industrialized, and agriculturally rich talukas would be covered. It was further decided to conduct the survey in two villages in each of the talukas. The following table elucidates.

**Table 3.3: Coverage of talukas and booths within the chosen Zilla Parishads**

| ZP DIVISIONAL HEADQUARTER | Final Sample | No. of seats | 10% of the constituencies to be chosen | No. of booths to be covered in the ZP (2 per constituency) | Sample per booth | No. of enumerators needed per booth | No. of enumerators required in that district |
|---------------------------|--------------|--------------|--|--|------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| Raigad                    | 522          | 62           | 6                                      | 12   | 43               | 2                                   | 24   |
| Pune                      | 1656         | 75           | 7                                      | 14   | 118              | 5                                   | 70   |
| Nashik                    | 744          | 73           | 7                                      | 14   | 53               | 2                                   | 28   |
| Amravati                  | 507          | 59           | 6                                      | 12   | 42               | 2                                   | 24   |
| Aurangabad                | 507          | 60           | 6                                      | 12   | 42               | 2                                   | 24   |
|                           | 3938         |              |  |  |                  |                                     | 170  |

Election day is a tricky day for surveys. The administrative machinery as well as political parties and candidates tend to be highly distrustful of any enumerators wanting more information from the voters. It was hence assumed that one enumerator may be able to contact only 25 voter respondents in a day maximally. Thus, two enumerators were appointed at most polling stations where the sample per booth exceeded 25. The calculation in the following table shows that the project would require appointments of 170 enumerators throughout Maharashtra.

#### 4. IDENTIFYING THE VOTER-RESPONDENT

Any sample plan has to create steps to move from the most aggregated survey level, in this case the voting population of the 5 selected Zilla Parishads, to the most disaggregated level, in this case the voter-respondent. Following were the instructions given to the enumerators for identifying the voter-respondents.

- a. Enumerators were asked to contact voters post-voting i.e. after they had exited the polling station. Thus, enumerators were to talk to only those people with the indelible ink mark.
- b. They were further instructed to spread out the sample throughout the day. This instruction was particularly relevant because voters from different socio-economic classifications cluster to the polling station at different times of the day. It has been a known fact that cash and liquor distribution are rampant on the eve of the polling day and on the morning of the polls. Both cash and liquor are used to influence the voting preferences of the lowest socio-economic groups. Hence, these groups normally tend to vote late in the day. This was easy to monitor since the survey was carried out using Android devices. This enabled the monitoring team in Pune to take real-time updates of the sample coverage throughout the day.

- c. Enumerators were asked to maintain a gender balance in choosing the voter respondent. Thus, they were asked to ensure that contact with a female voter respondent was followed by one with a male voter respondent.
- d. They were also asked to contact voter-respondents across different age groups for making contact. Typically, interview of a male voter above 40 ought to be followed by interview of a younger female respondent.

## TIME OF THE SURVEY

The survey was conducted on the day of the polls i.e. on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2017 in Aurangabad and on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2017 in the other Zilla Parishads, from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

## SAMPLING ISSUES AND FIELD PROBLEMS

As has been mentioned earlier, polling days are extremely tricky days for conducting any survey. At some of the wards, the enumerators were met with suspicion. At times, they were questioned by police authorities, at times by the party workers belonging to different political parties and at times, by the voters themselves, about the issues they were studying. Some enumerators were forced to change the polling station halfway through the day. Many a voter would initially agree to being interviewed, but would walk away halfway through the survey, not willing to share too many details about voting behaviour. This caused multiple issues in terms of managing the field. The matter was more complicated by the fact that the survey had to be conducted only for one day and that there was no scope to correct the gap in sample size on the next day.

This caused some deviations between the final sample size that was fixed before the survey and the actual sample that was collected by enumerators on that day. In Amravati and Nashik Zilla Parishad, the required sample size could not be fully met, but in the other 3 ZPs, the collected sample size was in fact a bit higher than the required sample.

**Table 3.4: Required and Actual Sample Size**

| Zilla Parishads in which survey was conducted | Required Sample Size | Actual Sample Size |
|---|----------------------|--------------------|
| Amravati                                      | 507                  | 492                |
| Aurangabad                                    | 507                  | 559                |
| Nashik  | 744                  | 678                |
| Pune  | 1656                 | 1739               |
| Raigad  | 522                  | 590                |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                  | <b>3936</b>          | <b>4058</b>        |

The next chapter gives details regarding the demographic characteristics of the sample.

## CHAPTER 4

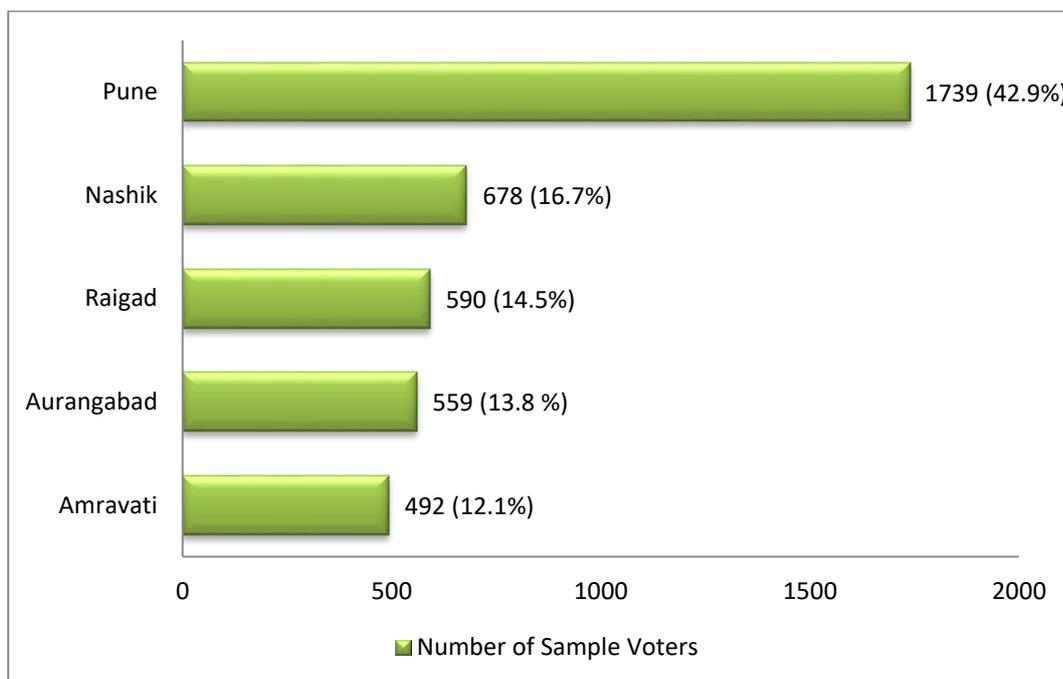
### SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

This chapter outlines the major characteristics of the sample. As has been mentioned earlier, enumerators were trained to maintain gender as well as age balance whilst interviewing voter respondents. A geographical spread of wards was maintained so as to get diversity in socio-economic classification of the voters. Further, enumerators were told to work from 7:30 to 5:30 at all polling stations since voters from specific socio-economic classifications are likely to visit the polling station at a particular time in the day. An examination of sample characteristics helps us to understand the coverage of male and female voters of different ages and from different socio-economic classifications.

#### 4.1 Sample size in different Zilla Parishads

The sample voters for selected Zilla Parishads are given in the following figure.

**Graph 1: Sample Size in Different Zilla Parishads**

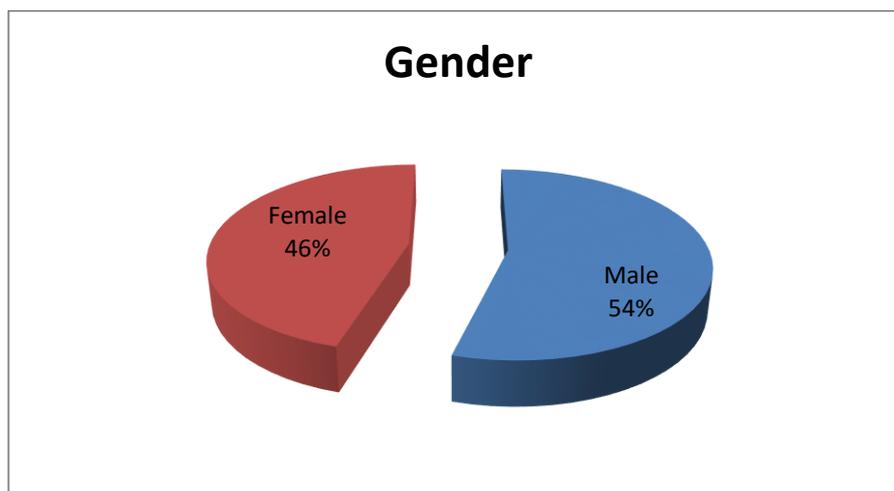


#### 4.2 Sample Distribution by Gender

55 per cent of the sample respondents are male voters and about 45 per cent of the sample respondents are female voters; there is thus, no major gender bias in the sample.

**Table 4.1: Sample Respondents by Gender**

| Respondents in the sample | Gender      | Percent    |
|---------------------------|-------------|------------|
| Male                      | 2209        | 54.4       |
| Female                    | 1848        | 45.5       |
| Other                     | 1           | .0         |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>4058</b> | <b>100</b> |

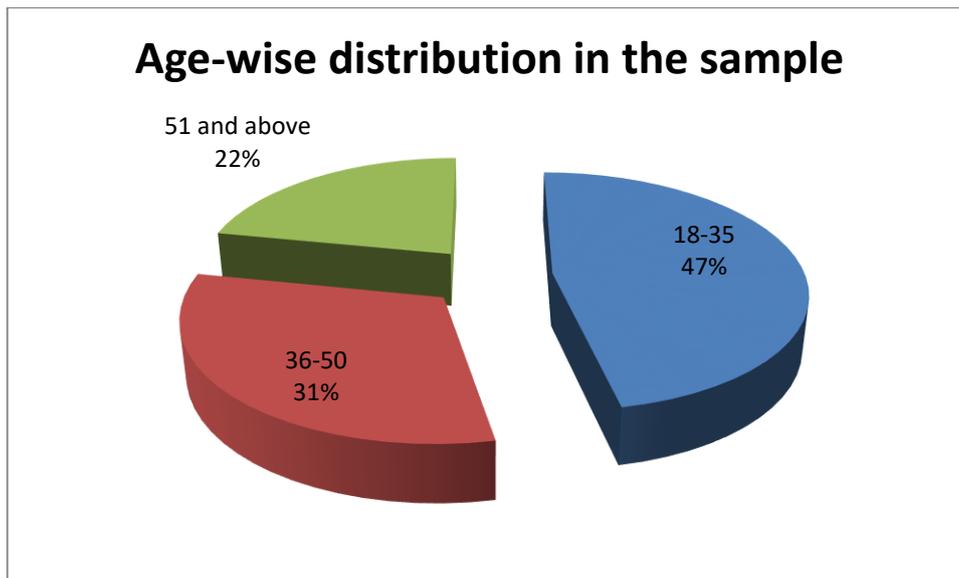
**Graph 4.2: Sample Respondents by Gender**

### 4.3 Sample Distribution by Age Group

47 per cent of the voters in the sample are in the young age group of 18-35, 31 per cent of the voters in the sample are in the middle aged group 36 – 50 years of age whereas 22 per cent of the sample covered consists of voters higher than 51 years of age. Thus, the sample is slightly biased towards coverage of younger voters.

**Table 4.2: Sample Respondents by Age**

|              | Respondents | Percent    |
|--------------|-------------|------------|
| 18-35        | 1902        | 46.9       |
| 36-50        | 1269        | 31.3       |
| 51 and above | 887         | 21.9       |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>4058</b> | <b>100</b> |

**Graph 4.3: Sample Respondents by Age**

#### 4.4 Sample distribution by Socio-Economic Classification (SEC)

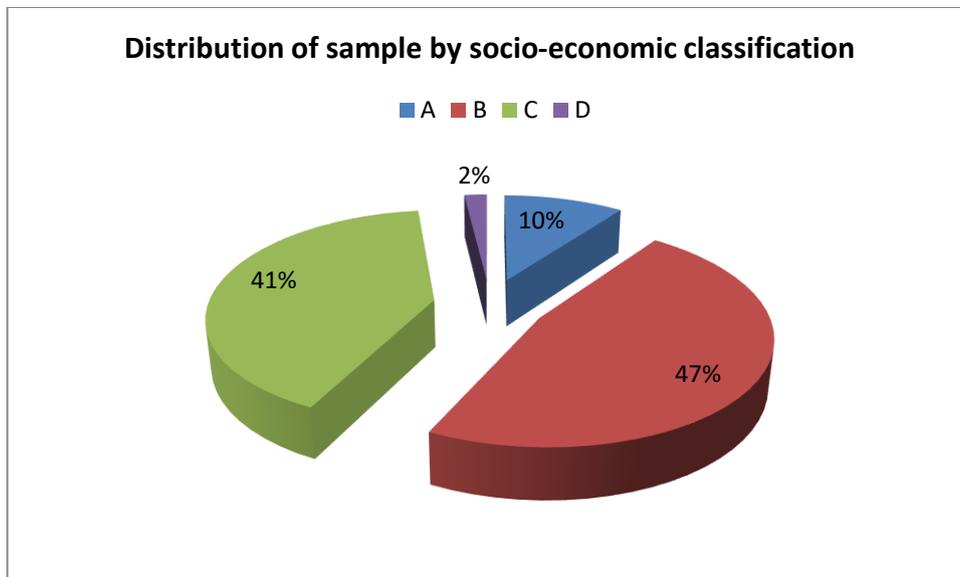
It is also important to understand the socio-economic classification of the voters covered in the sample. This study uses the “New Socio-Economic Classification (SEC) System” by the Media Research User’s Council (MRUC) to classify Indian households into different socio-economic groups. The new SEC model is heavily based on the Indian Readership Survey (IRS)’s model of using the education level of the main earner of the family together with the number of assets owned by the family to arrive at the socio-economic classification (SEC) of the respondent. The questionnaire contained questions to ascertain the number of assets held by the family of the respondent as well as to understand the education of the main earner of the family. Based on this information, the SEC system developed by MRUC was applied to create an understanding of the socio-economic classification of the voter.

The following table and graph show the distribution of socio-economic classes within the sample. Category A voters are those which belong to families in which the main earner is highly educated and a high number of (the standard 11) assets are held by the family. Category D voters are those which belong to families in which the main earner is not well-educated and a low number of (the standard 11) assets are held by the family.

**Table 4.3: Sample Respondents by Socio-Economic Classification**

|              |              | Socio-economic Status |         |               |                    |
|--------------|--------------|-----------------------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|              |              | Frequency             | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| <b>D1</b>    |              | 79                    | 1.9     | 1.9           | 1.9                |
| <b>C2</b>    |              | 624                   | 15.4    | 15.4          | 17.3               |
| <b>C3</b>    |              | 1031                  | 25.4    | 25.4          | 42.7               |
| <b>B2</b>    |              | 1131                  | 27.9    | 27.9          | 70.6               |
| <b>B1</b>    |              | 781                   | 19.2    | 19.2          | 89.8               |
| <b>A3</b>    |              | 314                   | 7.7     | 7.7           | 97.6               |
| <b>A2</b>    |              | 81                    | 2       | 2             | 99.6               |
| <b>A1</b>    |              | 17                    | 0.4     | 0.4           | 100                |
| <b>Valid</b> | <b>Total</b> | 4058                  | 100     | 100           |                    |

**Graph 4.4: Sample Respondents by Socio-Economic Classification**



**4.5 Sample Distribution by Time of casting the vote**

As has been mentioned in the chapter on sampling, enumerators were asked to conduct the survey throughout the day. One of the reasons for insisting on interviewing voters throughout the day was the logic that people belonging to different socio-economic classes would perhaps have specific preferred time for voting. We classify the time slot from 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. as “morning”, the slot from 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. as “afternoon” and 3:30 p.m. onwards as

“evening”. Following table shows the proportion of the sample collected in the morning, afternoon and evening sessions.

**Table 4.4: Sample no. of voters interviewed in the morning, afternoon and evening**

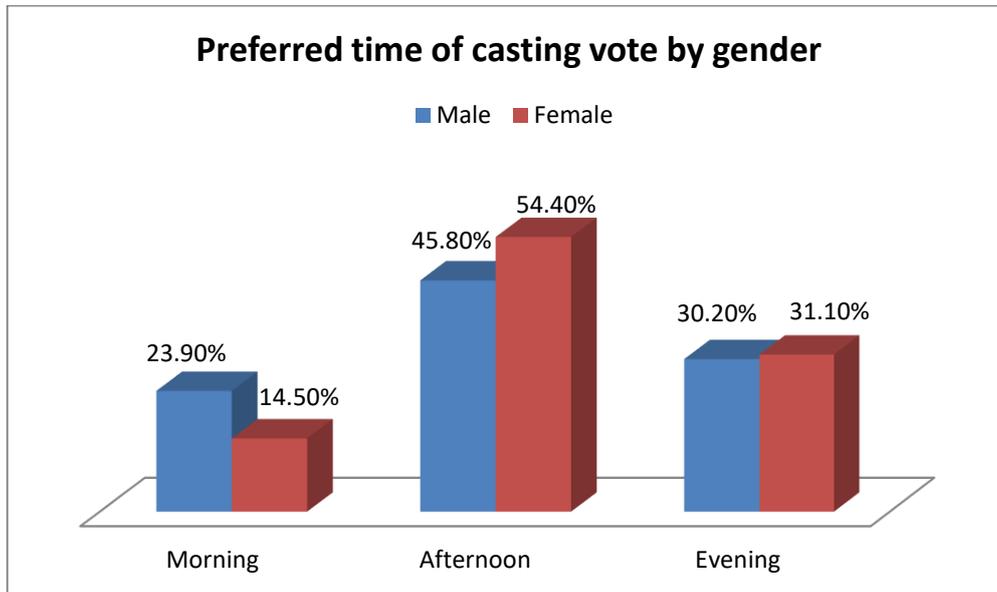
| Voting time  | No. of voters interviewed | Percent      |
|--------------|---------------------------|--------------|
| Morning      | 797                       | 19.6         |
| Afternoon    | 2018                      | 49.7         |
| Evening      | 1243                      | 30.6         |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>4058</b>               | <b>100.0</b> |

The following table shows the gender-wise distribution of voters within the sample collected in the morning, afternoon and evening sessions.

**Table 4.5: Gender Distribution of Voters interviewed at different times of the day**

| Preferred time to cast votes by Gender |                 |                 |                     |           |         |        |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------|-----------|---------|--------|
|  |                 |                 | Duration of the day |           |         | Total  |
|  |                 |                 | Morning             | Afternoon | Evening |        |
| Gender                                 | Male            | Count           | 529                 | 1012      | 668     | 2209   |
|  |                 | % within Gender | 23.9%               | 45.8%     | 30.2%   | 100.0% |
|  | Female          | Count           | 268                 | 1005      | 575     | 1848   |
|  |                 | % within Gender | 14.5%               | 54.4%     | 31.1%   | 100.0% |
|  | Other           | Count           | 0                   | 1         | 0       | 1      |
|  |                 | % within Gender | 0.0%                | 100.0%    | 0.0%    | 100.0% |
| Total                                  | Count           | 797             | 2018                | 1243      | 4058    |        |
|  | % within Gender | 19.6%           | 49.7%               | 30.6%     | 100.0%  |        |

**Graph 4.5: No. of voter-respondents in the sample by gender, in the morning, afternoon and evening sessions**



It is interesting to note that the morning session is dominated by the women voters whereas the afternoon session is dominated by male voters.

**Table 4.6: Age Distribution of Voters interviewed at different times of the day**

| Age Group * Duration of the day Crosstabulation |       |                     |           |         |       |        |
|---|-------|---------------------|-----------|---------|-------|--------|
|   |       | Duration of the day |           |         | Total |        |
|   |       | Morning             | Afternoon | Evening |       |        |
| Age Group                                       | 18-35 | Count               | 347       | 970     | 585   | 1902   |
|   |       | % within Age Group  | 18.2%     | 51.0%   | 30.8% | 100.0% |
|   | 36-50 | Count               | 209       | 643     | 417   | 1269   |
|   |       | % within Age Group  | 16.5%     | 50.7%   | 32.9% | 100.0% |
|   | 51-60 | Count               | 119       | 191     | 124   | 434    |
|   |       | % within Age Group  | 27.4%     | 44.0%   | 28.6% | 100.0% |
|   | 60+   | Count               | 122       | 214     | 117   | 453    |
|   |       | % within Age Group  | 26.9%     | 47.2%   | 25.8% | 100.0% |
| Total   |       | Count               | 797       | 2018    | 1243  | 4058   |
|   |       | % within Age Group  | 19.6%     | 49.7%   | 30.6% | 100.0% |

The above table shows that amongst all voters, the highest percentage of senior voters is observed in the mornings. The afternoon session is dominated by the young voters whereas the evenings are dominated by middle-aged voters. Within each age group, afternoon sessions seem to be the most preferred time to cast the votes.

It is now examined whether voters from different socio-economic classes prefer to vote at different times of the day.

**Table 4.7: Distribution of Voters by Socio-economic Class interviewed at different times of the day**

| Socio economics status * Duration of the day Crosstabulation |                                 |                                 |           |         |        |        |
|--|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------|---------|--------|--------|
|  |                                 | Duration of the day             |           |         | Total  |        |
|  |                                 | Morning                         | Afternoon | Evening |        |        |
| Socio<br>economics<br>status                                 | A                               | Count                           | 62        | 237     | 113    | 412    |
|  |                                 | % within Socio economics status | 15.0%     | 57.5%   | 27.4%  | 100.0% |
|  | B                               | Count                           | 397       | 966     | 549    | 1912   |
|  |                                 | % within Socio economics status | 20.8%     | 50.5%   | 28.7%  | 100.0% |
|  | C                               | Count                           | 338       | 815     | 581    | 1734   |
|  |                                 | % within Socio economics status | 19.5%     | 47.0%   | 33.5%  | 100.0% |
| Total  | Count                           | 797                             | 2018      | 1243    | 4058   |        |
|  | % within Socio economics status | 19.6%                           | 49.7%     | 30.6%   | 100.0% |        |

The above table shows that amongst all voters, the highest percentage of voters from socio-economic classification “B” is observed in the mornings, “A” in the afternoon and “C” in the evening. Within each socio-economic classification, afternoon sessions seem to be the most preferred time to cast the votes.

Thus, the sample size collected on the day of the voting exceeded the planned sample size in the Zilla Parishads; it is only in Nashik and Amravati that the sample was slightly smaller than expected. The sample does not show a major bias in terms of gender, though there does seem to be a slight bias in that young voters have been covered more than the older voters. The sample has been collected in the morning, afternoon as well as evening sessions. A deeper look into the gender, age and socio-economic classification of voters who cast their votes during different times of the day has been presented in the chapter.

The next chapter now goes on to discuss the main findings of the study.

## CHAPTER 5

### MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE POST POLL SURVEY

This chapter outlines the major findings of the post-poll survey conducted in five Zilla Parishads on the 16<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> February 2017. As has been mentioned earlier, the objectives of the survey can be divided into three major components.

- I. Voter perceptions regarding the polling process
- II. Voter perceptions regarding the Affidavits displayed outside the polling stations
- III. Voter perceptions regarding other issues faced on the day of polling

The first objective is to understand the perception of the rural voters in Maharashtra regarding the polling process and regarding the experience of voting. The second is to assess voter reaction to the display of candidate information outside the polling stations. The third objective is to document other issues faced by the voters on the day of polling.

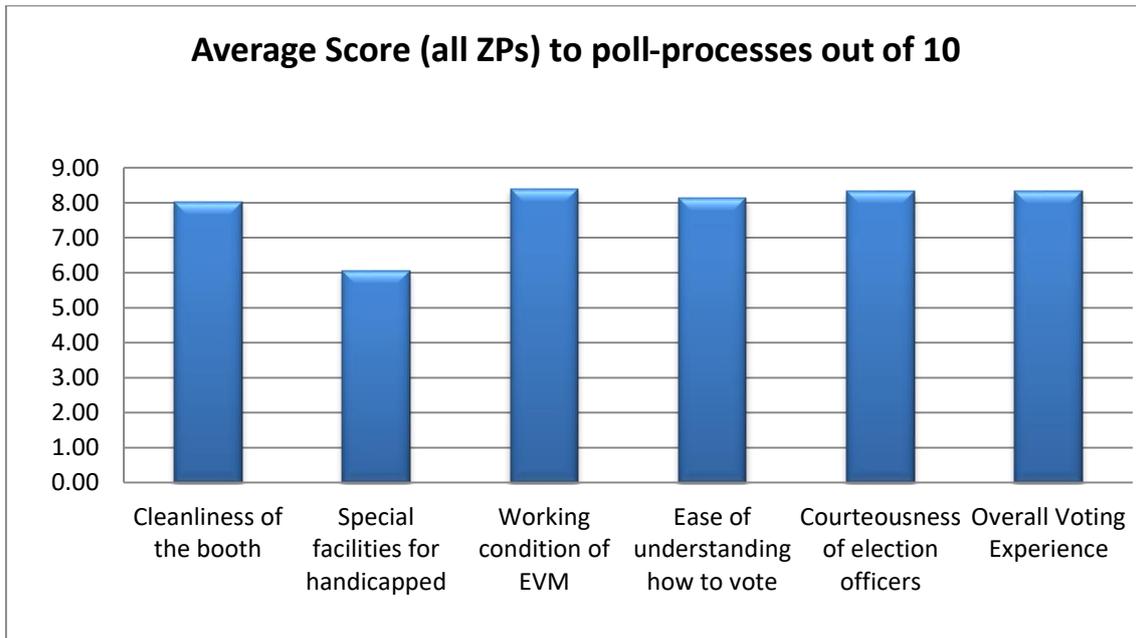
The results of the survey are shown below.

#### 5.1 VOTER PERCEPTION REGARDING POLLING PROCESS

- Voter perceptions regarding different aspects of the polling process show encouraging results. The overall voting experience gets an average score of 8.34 out of 10 from urban voters in 5 Zilla Parishads of Maharashtra.
- Voters were asked to give scores out of 10 on different criteria. Voters give a score of 8.02 to cleanliness of the booth; the best scores on this parameter are given by the Raigad voters (9.3), whereas the worst scores are given by Aurangabad (7.42).
- However, in terms of facilities for the handicapped, the overall score across Maharashtra is seen to be low at 6.06 out of 10. It is interesting to note that the Municipal Corporation voters too have given low ranking to the same parameter. However, the score given within Municipal Corporation to facilities for handicapped voters is slightly higher at 6.12 as compared to the scores given by rural voters.
- Again, in terms of scores given for facilities for handicapped voters, one finds the best scores to come from Raigad Zilla Parishad (8.12), whereas the worst scores are from the voters in the Aurangabad ZP (3.84).
- It is also observed that young voters have expressed higher dissatisfaction with facilities for the handicapped as compared to the voters more than 36 years of age. See graph 5.3.
- After the results were declared, there were some complaints from the candidates and/or political parties who lost the elections that the Electronic Voting Machines were not in

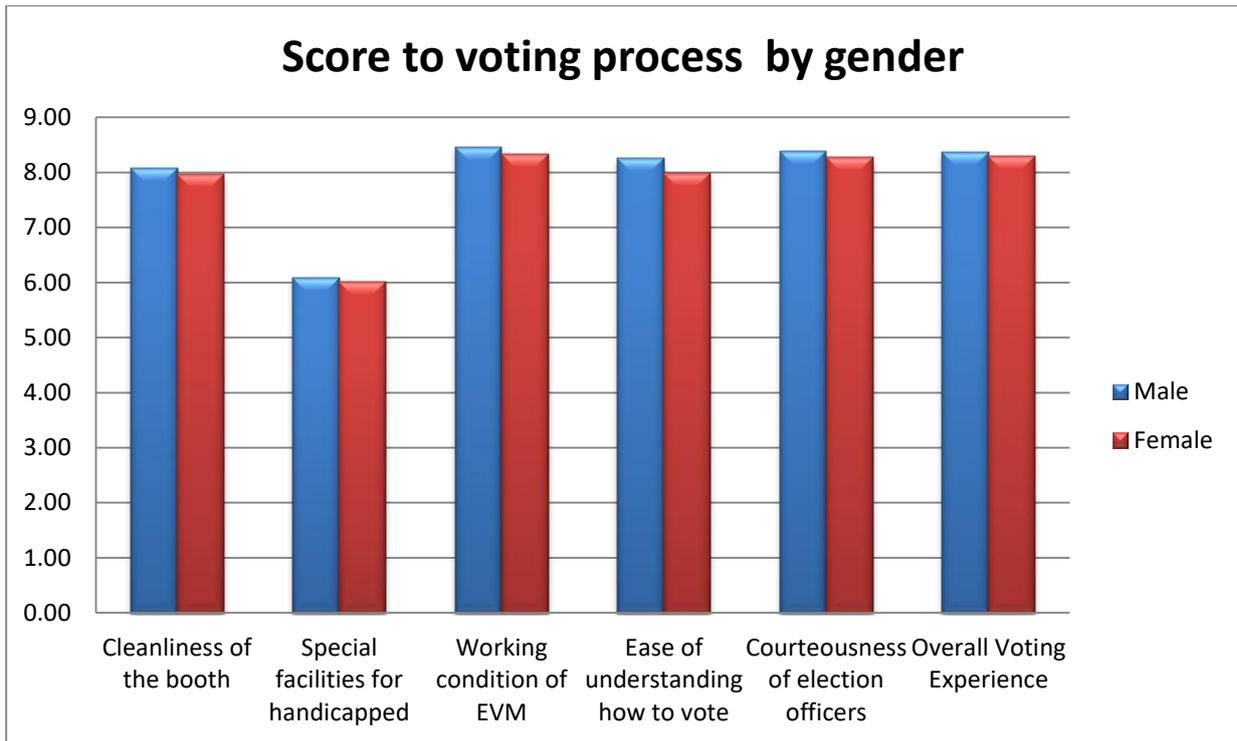
good working condition. However, rural voters seem satisfied with the working condition of the EVMs and give it an overall score of 8.41 out of 10.

- Rural voters are required to vote for the Zilla Parishad representative as well as for the Panchayat Samiti representative at the same time. Thus, the process of voting would be complete when the voter would cast votes for two representatives. Were the voters aware of the process? Did they understand that they were required to press 2 separate buttons on the EVM? This answer was elicited under “Ease of Voting.” However, it does look like the voter in rural Maharashtra has understood the process of voting for two representatives at the same time; the ease of voting has received a score of 8.13 out of 10.
- It is very interesting to note that the ease of voting is seen to increase with education and decrease with age. Thus, the highest scores for ease of voting come from the young and the educated voters. See graph 5.3 and graph 5.4.
- Since the education level enters the calculation of the socio-economic classification, it is observed that the ease of voting also increases as we move from socio-economic classification C to B to A.
- Election officers manning the polling booths were helpful and courteous, say the rural voters of Maharashtra. The courteousness of officers gets a score of 8.34 out of 10. The best scores on courteousness of election officers are in Raigad (9.36), whereas the worst are in Nashik (7.7).
- Thus, the overall voting experience was a positive one for most voters across rural Maharashtra.
- There does not seem to be any major difference in terms of the scores given by male and female voters. Following info-graphics are self-explanatory.

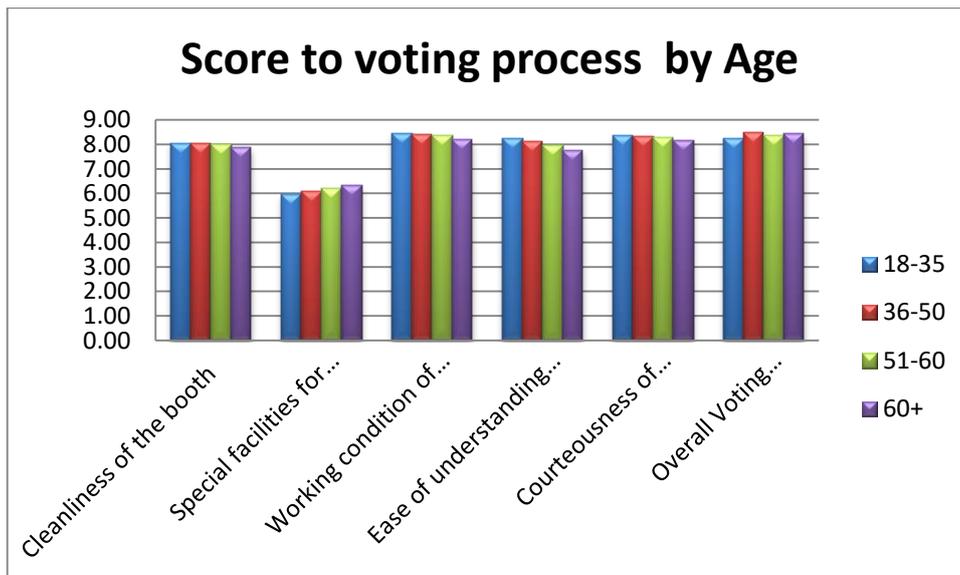
**Graph 5.1: Average Score (all Corporations) to poll processes out of 10****Table 5.1: ZP-wise Score to Poll-Processes out of 10**

|                   | Cleanliness of the booth | Special facilities for handicapped | Working condition of EVM | Ease of understanding how to vote | Courteousness of election officers | Overall Voting Experience |
|-------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Amravati</b>   | 7.67                     | 6.71                               | 8.05                     | 8.17                              | 8.2                                | 8.36                      |
| <b>Aurangabad</b> | 7.42                     | 3.84                               | 7.85                     | 7.6                               | 7.99                               | 7.36                      |
| <b>Nashik</b>     | 7.57                     | 6.18                               | 7.89                     | 7.71                              | 7.7                                | 7.96                      |
| <b>Pune</b>       | 8.06                     | 5.84                               | 8.55                     | 8.06                              | 8.39                               | 8.45                      |
| <b>Raigad</b>     | 9.3                      | 8.12                               | 9.4                      | 9.31                              | 9.36                               | 9.37                      |
| <b>Total</b>      | 8.02                     | 6.06                               | 8.41                     | 8.13                              | 8.34                               | 8.34                      |

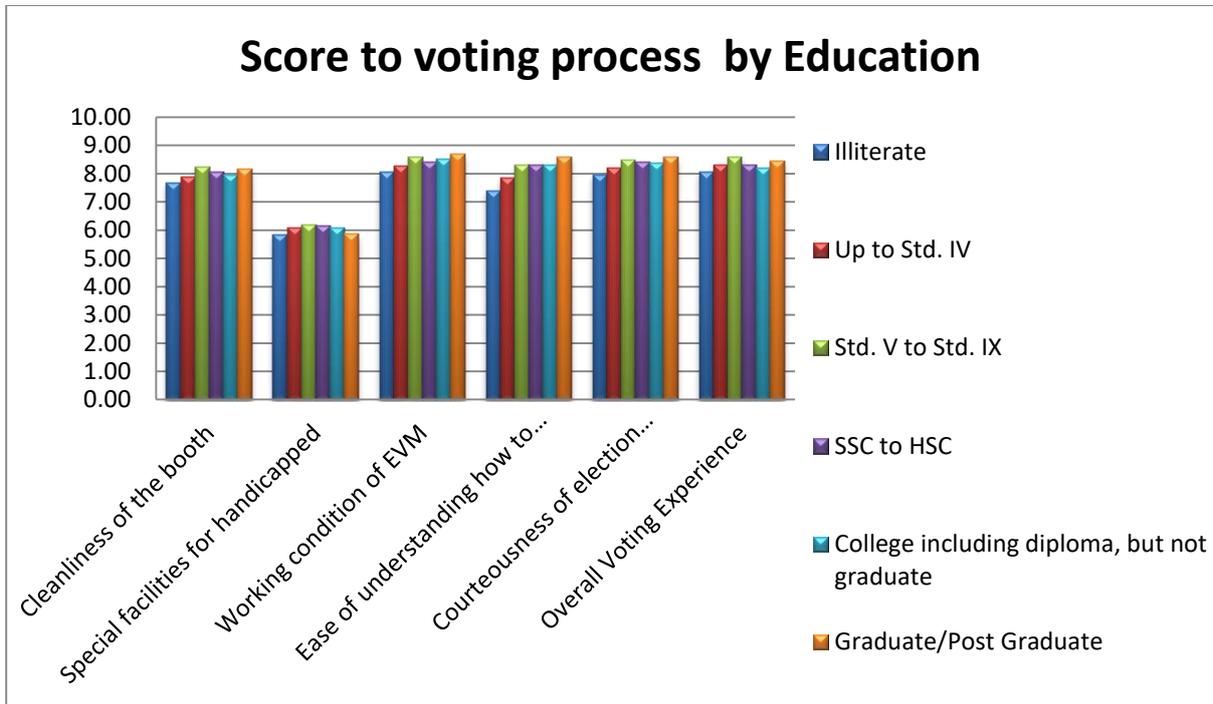
**Graph 5.2: Score to polling process by gender**



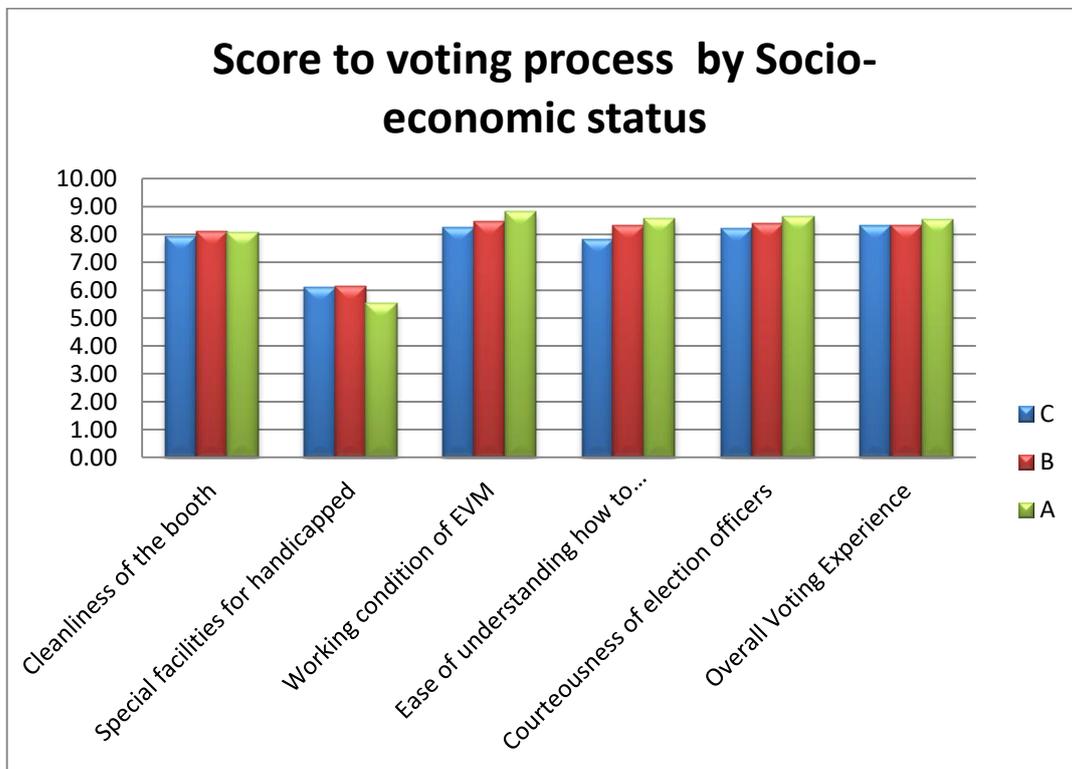
**Graph 5.3: Score to polling process by Age of Voters**



**Graph 5.4: Score to voting process by education level of voters**



**Graph 5.5: Score to voting process by socio-economic classification of voters**



- The survey also documented the total time in minutes taken by the voter to cast her vote, right from her entry into the polling station to the exit. On an average, it takes around 10 minutes for the voter from entry point into the polling station to exiting the station in ZP elections in Maharashtra. This is in contrast to the average time of 16 minutes that it takes for the urban voter to cast a vote in the Municipal Corporation elections in Maharashtra. The highest time needed is recorded in Aurangabad (15 minutes) whereas the lowest time needed in the polling station is recorded in Pune (6 minutes).

**Table 5.2: Time in minutes taken from entry into the polling station to exit (including queue)**

|              | Minimum | Mean   | Maximum | Std. Deviation |
|--------------|---------|--------|---------|----------------|
| Amravati     | 2.0     | 9.878  | 50.0    | 6.6716         |
| Aurangabad   | 1.0     | 15.377 | 60.0    | 10.2464        |
| Nashik       | 1.0     | 13.379 | 110.0   | 11.2292        |
| Pune         | 1.0     | 6.668  | 120.0   | 7.2687         |
| Raigad       | 1.0     | 14.619 | 120.0   | 21.9934        |
| <b>Total</b> | 1.0     | 10.534 | 120.0   | 12.1325        |

- The time taken from entry to exit in the polling station also depends significantly on the time of the day at which the voter visits the polling station.

**Table 5.3: Time taken in the polling station in the morning, afternoon and evening session**

| Duration of the day | Mean   | Std. Deviation | N    |
|---------------------|--------|----------------|------|
| Morning             | 9.61   | 9.6242         | 797  |
| Afternoon           | 9.27   | 8.1342         | 2018 |
| Evening             | 13.18  | 17.4313        | 1243 |
| <b>Total</b>        | 10.534 | 12.1325        | 4058 |

- The above table indicates that the time taken in the polling station is minimum in the afternoon session (around 9 minutes), whereas it is highest in the evening session (about 13 minutes)

## 5.2 VOTER PERCEPTION REGARDING DISPLAY OF CANDIDATE INFORMATION OUTSIDE THE POLLING STATION

The other main objective of the survey was to gauge whether voters support the SECM move of displaying candidate information outside the polling stations. This move was created in order to enable the voters to have a more informed opinion about the candidates before casting their votes. Has this move really empowered the voters? If yes, to what extent? The following research questions were the second focus area of the survey.

- Did the voter read the candidate information displayed outside the polling station?
- Was the information displayed in a language understood by most voters?
- Did the voters perceive this move to be a good move?
- Had display of the information pertaining to the candidate changed their decision about whom to vote for? How?

The answers to the above 4 questions are given below in a tabular format.

**Table 5.4: Voter Perceptions Regarding Display of Candidate Information**

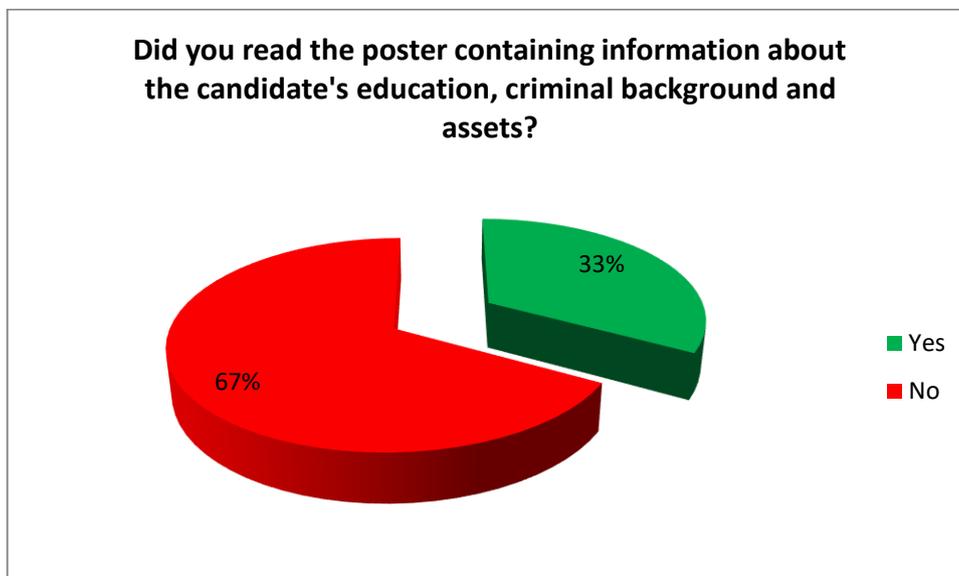
| About Display of Candidate Information outside the polling station   | Number of Voters | Percent Voters (% of total voters interviewed) |
|--|------------------|--|
| The poster containing information about the candidate's education, criminal background and assets was read | 1340             | 33%  |
| The language of the poster was understood  | 1260             | 31%  |
| The voter felt this is a good move for generating voter awareness  | 1174             | 28.9%  |
| The poster affected the decision of voting   | 473              | 11.7%  |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>4058</b>      | <b>100%</b>                                    |

- The above table indicates that out of the 4058 voters interviewed, only 1340 voters i.e. 33 per cent of the voters had actually read the poster. Why is it that nearly 67 per cent of the voters did not read the poster at all? The answer given below is mostly based on the actual field observation of the polling day.
- The SECM had given guidelines to all Corporations that posters containing candidate information were to be displayed outside polling stations. The size of the poster was also prescribed by the guidelines. The main problem was that the posters were displayed mostly along the corridors of the schools serving as polling stations. The display was done so that anyone entering the school grounds should be able to spot the poster at

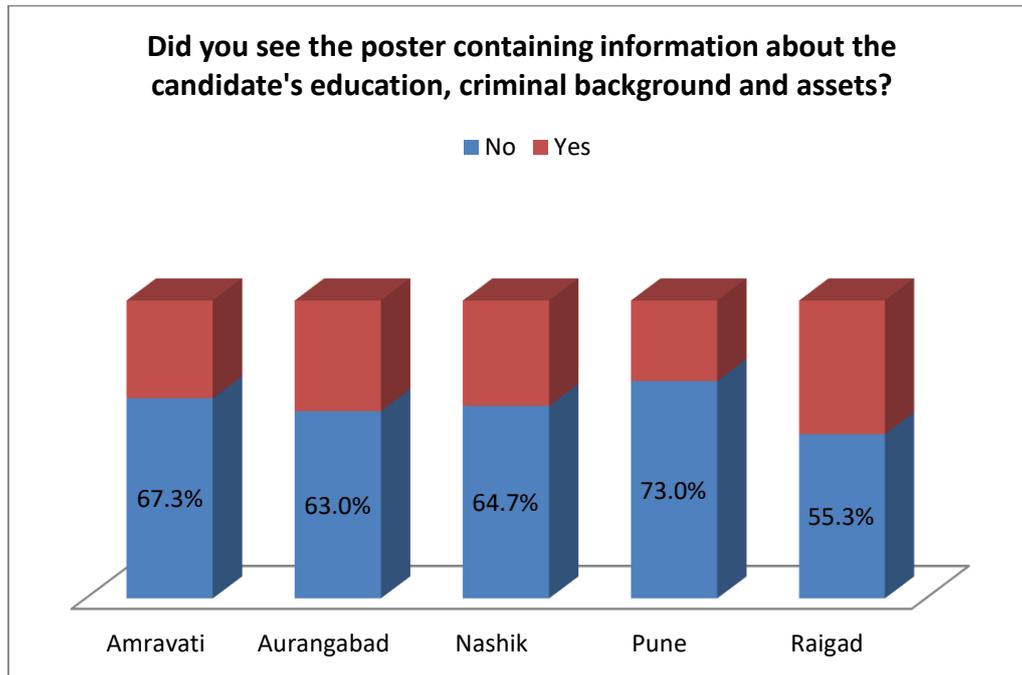
once. Thus, the side of the poster on which the information was displayed was facing the school gate. Anyone standing in the corridors along which the posters were displayed would not be able to read the poster.

- Now, the observation on the polling day was that all voters were generally seen to be in a hurry to identify their booths within the polling station. Hence, most people did not stop in the school premises where the affidavit was displayed but hurried inside quickly to identify their relevant booth and stand in the queue.
- The queues were along the corridors of the schools, where the display of the poster was not visible at all!
- Hence, the actual number of voters who stopped outside the polling station to read the particulars of the candidates was considerably less.
- Thus, only 33 per cent of the voters actually read the candidate information on the poster outside the polling station. It is interesting to note that the maximum percentage of voters who read this information came from Raigad ZP. The minimum percentage was in Pune ZP.

**Graph 5.6: Number of voters who read the candidate information outside the polling station**



**Graph 5.7: Number of voters who read the candidate information outside the polling station by ZP**



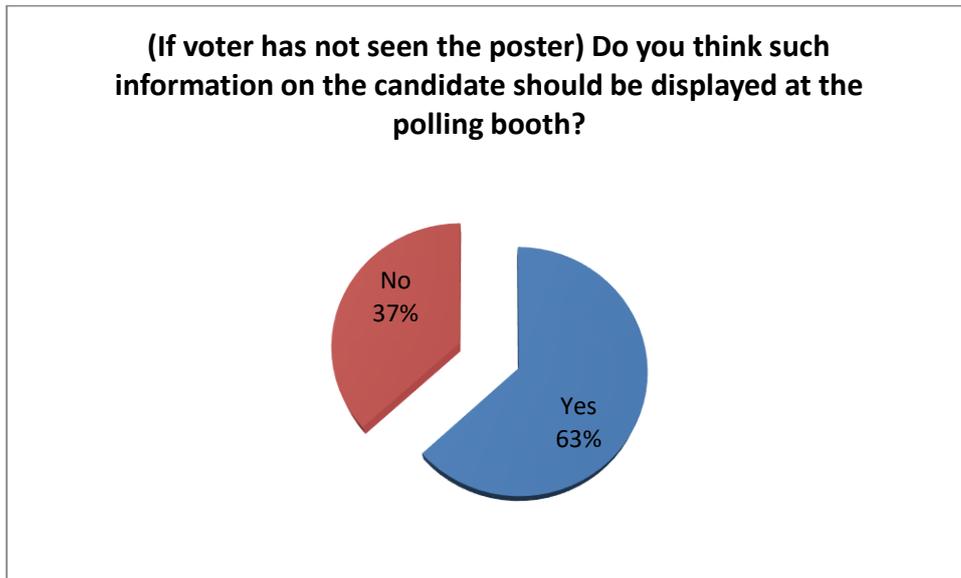
- However, amongst the voters who did read the poster, the survey finds that they could properly understand the language (Marathi) in which the information was given. Thus, language does not come across as an issue at all. Of those 1340 voters who read the information, 1260 voters i.e. 94 per cent of the voters did not feel that language was a barrier to understanding the information.
- Of the voters who read the poster, 1174 voters i.e. 87.6 per cent of the voters supported the fact that this was a good move by the State Election Commission of Maharashtra. 35 per cent of the voters who read the poster said that the information affected their decision of whom to vote for.
- 12 per cent of all voters within the sample said that the move by the State Election Commission of Maharashtra to display candidate affidavits outside the polling station affected their decision regarding whom to vote for.
- How exactly did the move affect the voters' decisions? Most voters were vocal about the move enabling them to "identify the correct candidate". Most voters heralded the move of the SECM to be a "good move in terms of creating voter awareness."
- The following table shows that the maximum impact of the move seems to be on the voters in Aurangabad, whereas the minimum impact has happened in Pune.

**Table 5.5: Voter Perceptions regarding Display of Candidate Information by Zilla Parishads**

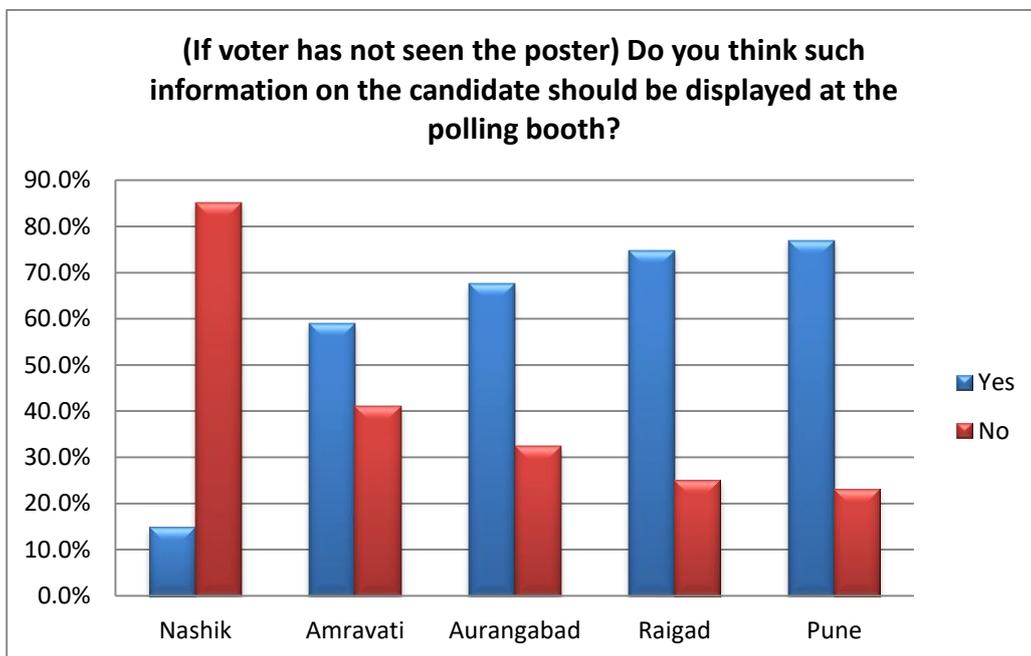
| About Poster   | Percent of Total Voters |            |        |        |        |
|--|-------------------------|------------|--------|--------|--------|
|  | Amravati                | Aurangabad | Nashik | Pune   | Raigad |
| The poster containing information about the candidate's education, criminal background and assets was seen | 32.7%                   | 37.0%      | 35.3%  | 27.0%  | 44.7%  |
| The language in the poster was understood  | 31.5%                   | 36.7%      | 28.8%  | 26.0%  | 42.7%  |
| Voters felt that this was a good move for generating voter awareness                                       | 29.3%                   | 33.6%      | 26.5%  | 24.3%  | 40.5%  |
| The poster affected the decision of whom to vote for   | 15.4%                   | 22.4%      | 13.0%  | 6.2%   | 12.9%  |
| <b>Total</b>   | 100.0%                  | 100.0%     | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |

- Since the focus of the survey was on gauging the impact of the move on the rural voters, it was also important to assess the perceptions of the voters who had not read the poster. They might not have read the information, but would they have liked to? Do they perceive this move by the State Election Commission to be a good one? Should this policy continue in the future too?
- 63 per cent of those voters who had not read the poster also feel that the move by the SECM is a good one and that such information on the candidate should be displayed outside the polling station
- There is more response to the move from the voters in Pune and Raigad than from other ZPs. The following graphs are self-explanatory.

**Graph 5.8: Should candidate information be displayed outside the polling station?  
(Response from voters who had not read the poster)**



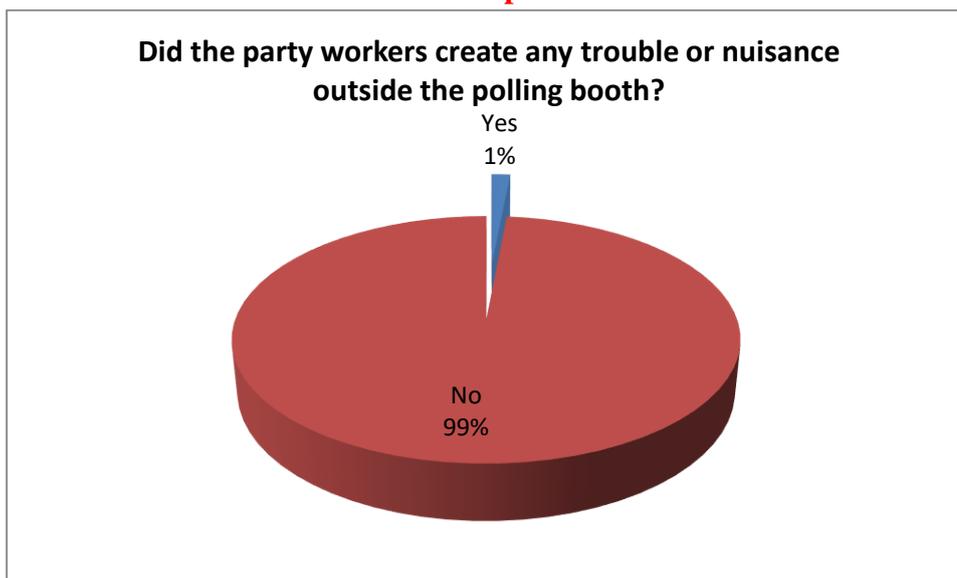
**Graph 5.9: Should candidate information be displayed outside the polling station? (ZP-wise response from voters who had not read the poster)**



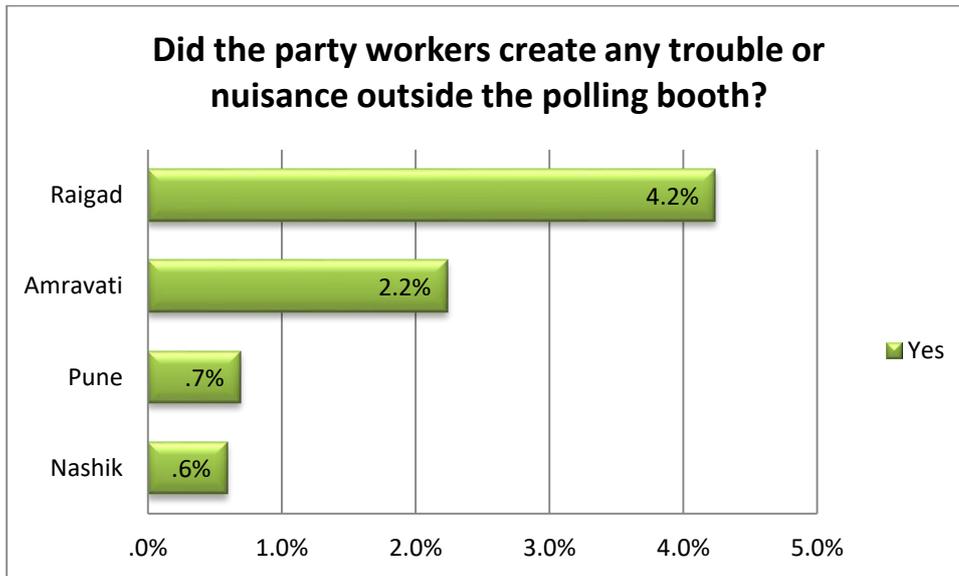
### 5.3 VOTER PERCEPTIONS REGARDING OTHER ISSUES FACED ON THE DAY OF POLLING

- As has been mentioned earlier, the day of elections invites a lot of excitement, and tension too. Party workers of different political parties set up temporary, make-shift offices at critical polling stations; they guide the voters and help them to find their polling stations. It is of course hoped that the goodwill gesture will invite reciprocation and the voter would vote for the party which is helping out at the venue.
- The problem is that since multiple parties are present at the venue, it sometimes causes frictions and fracas between the karyakartas. Some workers belonging to a political party may feel that other workers are trying to unduly influence the voters.
- This causes brawls to break out outside polling stations, creating trouble for voters. Voters also may feel intimidated by the presence of the party karyakartas near the polling station; else, they may feel irritated by too many good Samaritans wanting to help them find their names in the voting lists on the day of polls.
- It is important to document how voters perceive the behaviour of the party karyakartas on the day of voting. Did they feel that the party workers were causing nuisance outside the polling stations?
- It is heartening to note that only 1 per cent of the voters interviewed said that party workers created trouble outside polling stations.

**Graph 5.10: Voter Perception about Party Karyakartas creating nuisance on the day of the polls**



**Graph 5.11: District-Wise Voter Perception about Party Karyakartas creating nuisance on the day of the polls**



\*No response on this question was recorded in Aurangabad due to a technical issue in the software

Thus, the main findings of the survey are encouraging; the rural voters seem to be fairly satisfied about the polling process, want to have candidate information posted outside the polling stations and do not seem to have encountered major issues in terms of nuisance from party karyakartas on the day of the polls. The next chapter gives quick analysis for every individual ZP through info-graphics only.

## CHAPTER 6

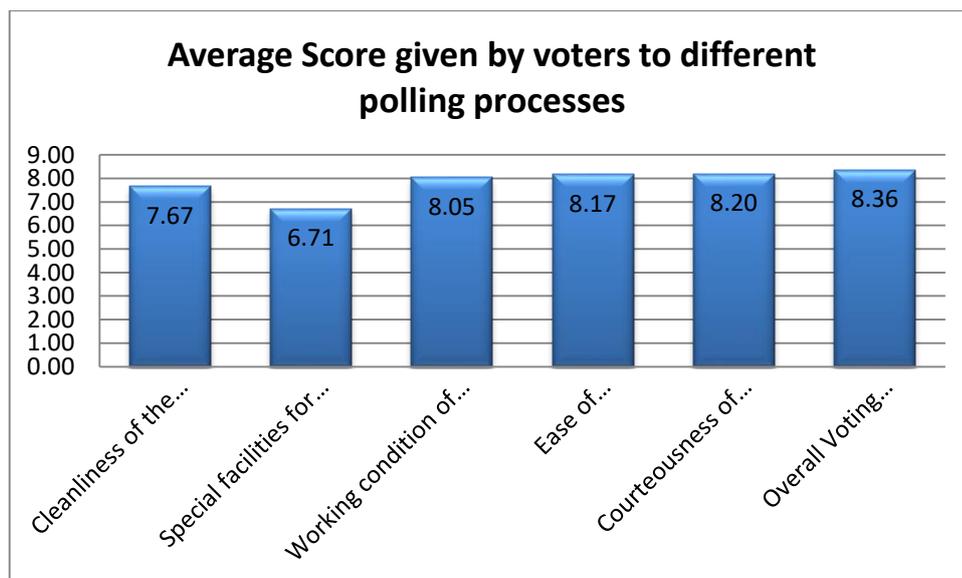
### POST POLL ANALYSIS POINTS FOR EACH ZILLA PARISHAD

The main findings of the post poll survey have been discussed in detail in Chapter 5. This chapter presents the findings of the survey for each ZP separately. The findings are presented only through info-graphics.

#### 6.1 AMRAVATI ZILLA PARISHAD ELECTIONS

1. Sample responses collected and analyzed in 6 wards of Amravati: 492 voters
2. Scoring (0-10) given by voters on various aspects of the voting process; 0 indicates the worst rating and 10 indicates the best rating

**Graph 6.1.1: Score given by voters to different polling processes in Amravati ZP**



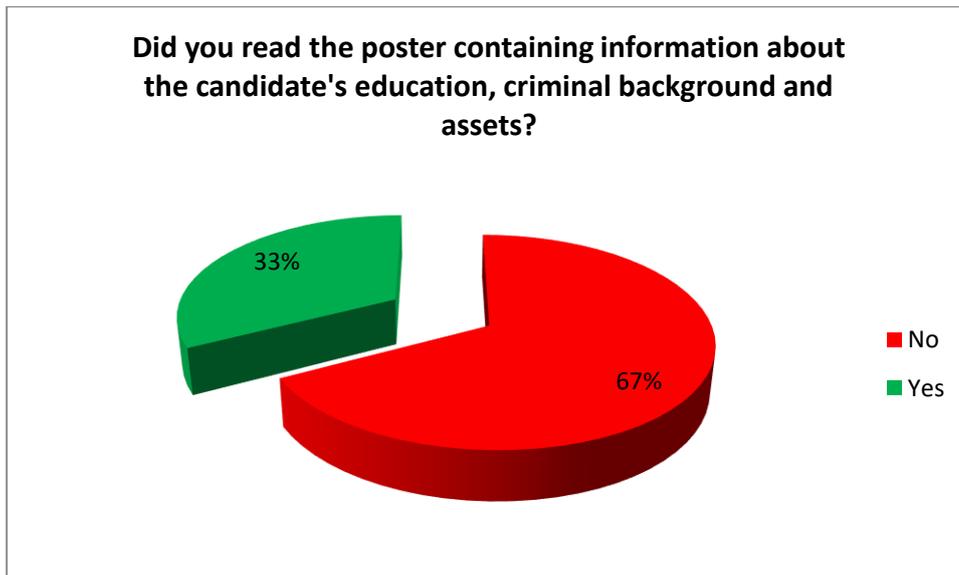
3. Average time taken from entry into the polling station to exit: **9.87 minutes**

**Table 6.1.1: Time taken in polling station from Entry to Exit in Amravati ZP**

| Descriptive Statistics of Time taken from entry in polling booth till voting for Amravati ZP |       |
|--|-------|
| Minimum  | 2     |
| Mean   | 9.87  |
| Maximum  | 50    |
| Std. Deviation   | 6.672 |

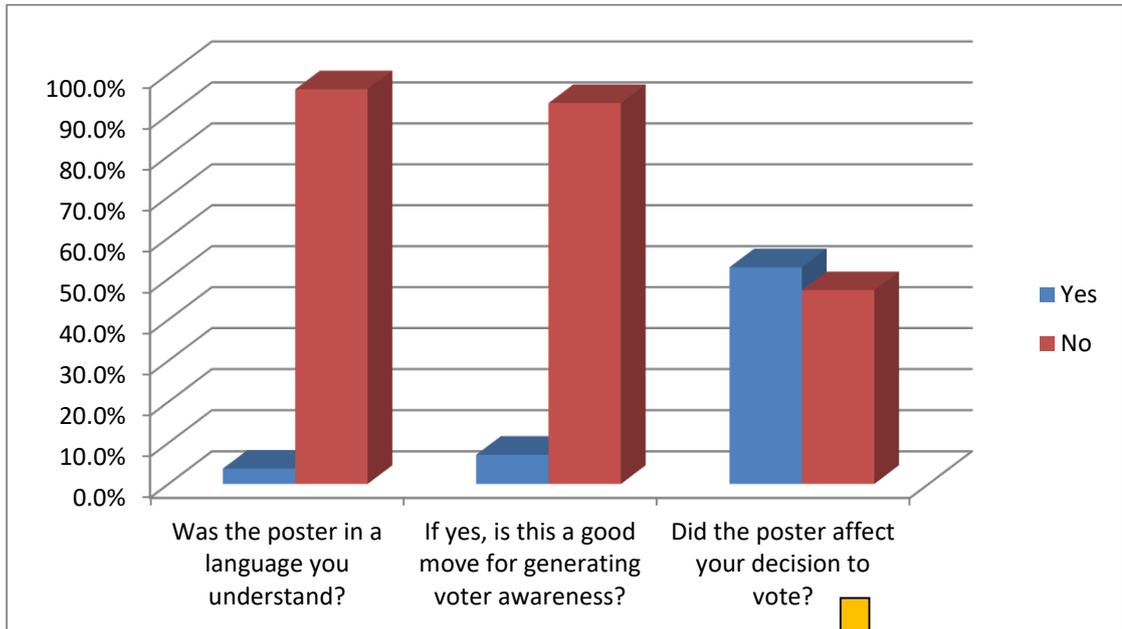
- Did you read the poster containing information on the candidate’s education, criminal background (if any), and assets?

**Graph 6.1.2: Percentage of voters who read candidate information outside the polling station in Amravati ZP**



- ONLY FOR THOSE VOTERS WHO HAD READ THE POSTER

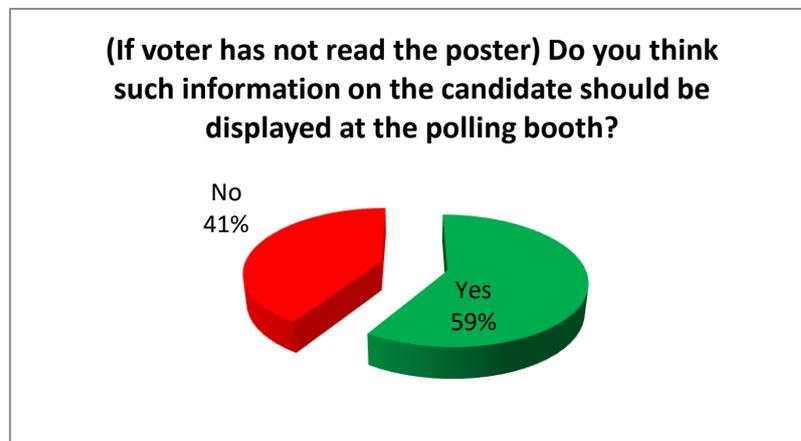
**Graph 6.1.3: Did candidate information affect the voting decision of voters who read the information in Amravati ZP?**



- If yes, how?**
- a. My vote will support village development
  - b. It created voter awareness
  - c. We got good information about the candidate

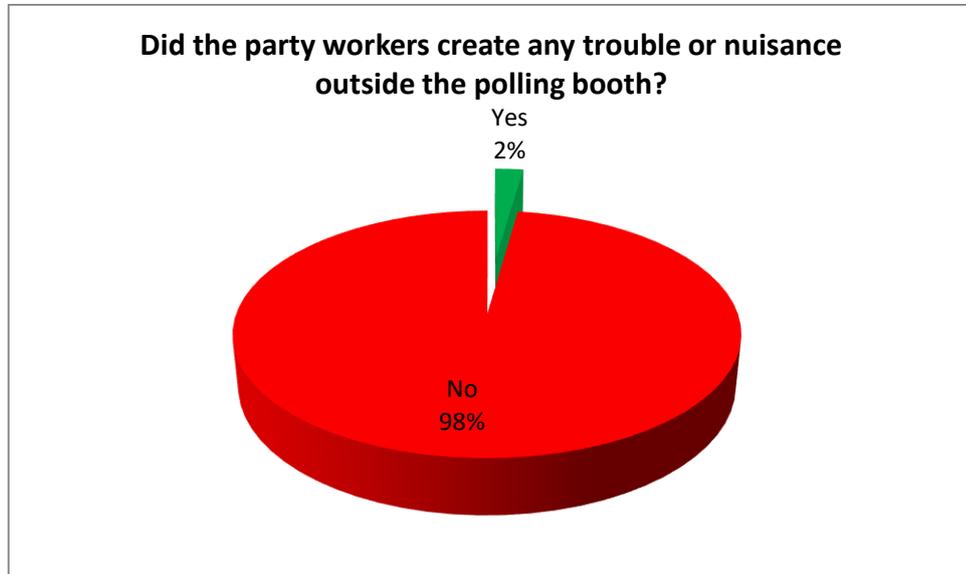
**6. ONLY FOR THOSE WHO HAD NOT SEEN THE POSTER**

**Graph 6.1.4: Opinion about display of candidate information from voters who had not read the poster in Amravati ZP**



## 7. FOR ALL VOTER-RESPONDENTS

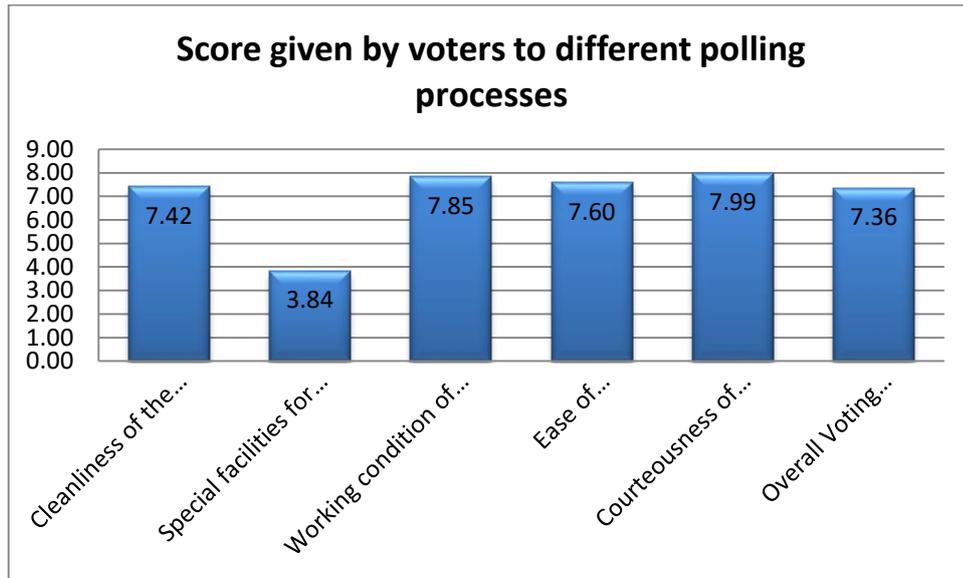
**Graph 6.1.5: Did party karyakartas create nuisance outside the polling station in Amravati ZP**



**6.2 AURANGABAD ZILLA PARISHAD ELECTIONS**

1. Sample responses collected and analyzed in 6 talukas in Aurangabad: 559 voters
2. Scoring (0-10) given by voters on various aspects of the voting process; 0 indicates the worst rating and 10 indicates the best rating

**Graph 6.2.1: Score given by voters to different polling processes in Aurangabad ZP**



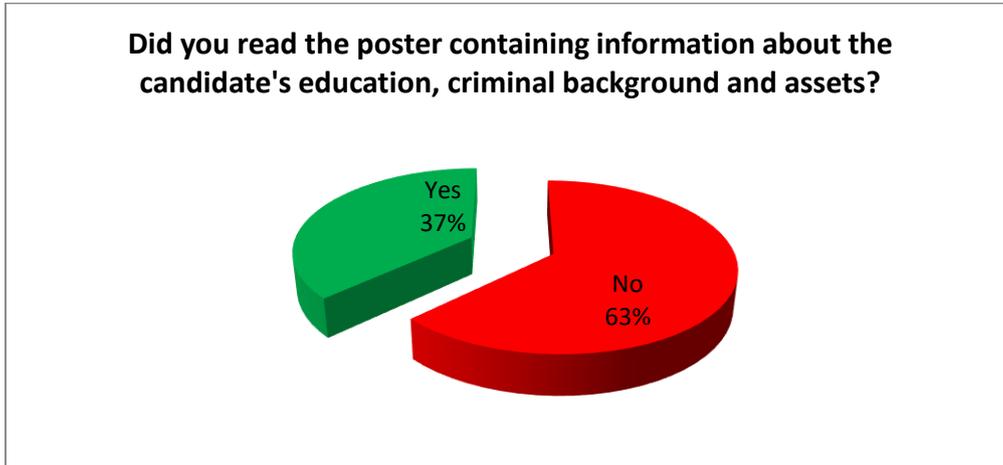
3. Average time taken from entry into the polling station to exit: **15.37 minutes**

**Table 6.2.1: Time taken in polling station from Entry to Exit in Aurangabad ZP**

| Descriptive Statistics of Time taken from entry in polling booth till voting for Aurangabad ZP |       |
|--|-------|
| Minimum  | 1     |
| Mean   | 15.37 |
| Maximum  | 60    |
| Std. Deviation   | 10.25 |

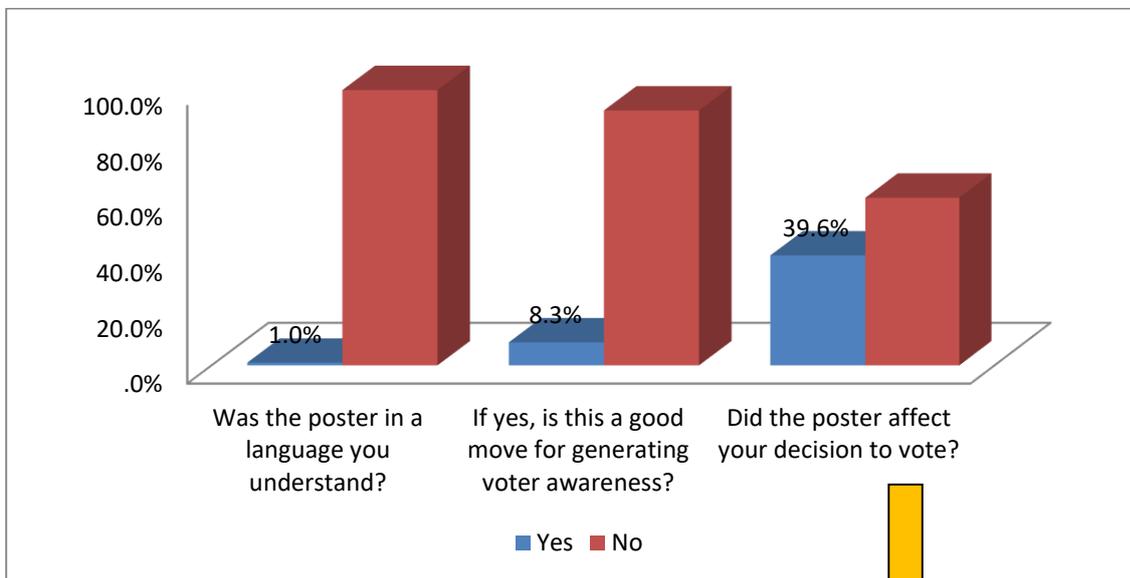
4. Did you read the poster containing information on the candidate’s education, criminal background (if any), and assets?

**Graph 6.2.2: Percentage of voters who read candidate information outside the polling station in Aurangabad ZP**



5. ONLY FOR THOSE WHO HAD READ THE POSTER:

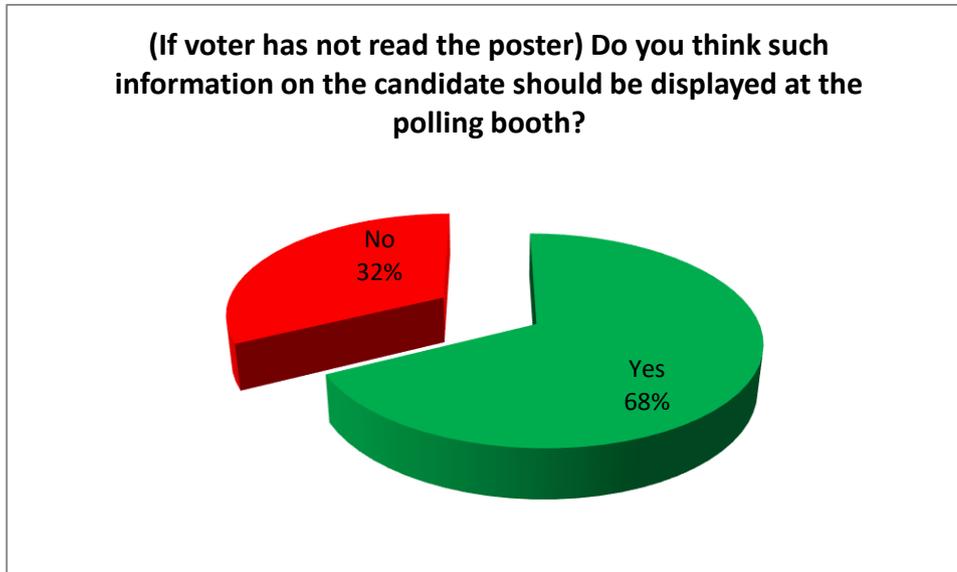
**Graph 6.2.3: Did candidate information affect the voting decision of voters who read the information in Aurangabad?**



- If yes, how?**
- a. I voted for the correct candidate
  - b. I came to know about the education of the candidate
  - c. I got good and relevant information

## 6. ONLY FOR THOSE WHO HAD NOT READ THE POSTER

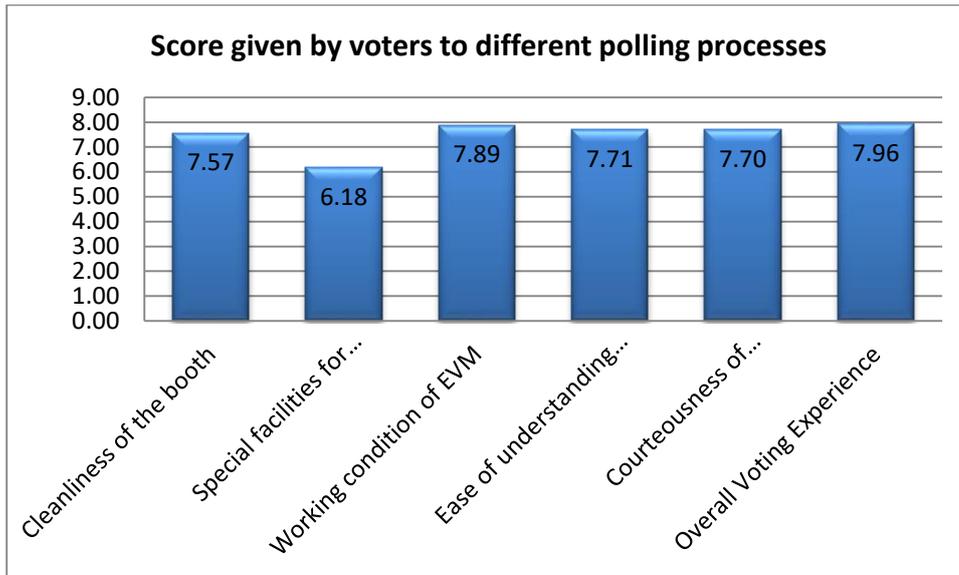
**Graph 6.2.4: Opinion about display of candidate information from voters who had not read the poster in Aurangabad**



**6.3 NASHIK ZILLA PARISHAD ELECTIONS**

1. Sample responses collected and analyzed in 7 talukas in Nashik: 678 voters
2. Scoring (0-10) given by voters on various aspects of the voting process; 0 indicates the worst rating and 10 indicates the best rating

**Graph 6.3.1: Score given by voters to different polling processes in Nashik ZP**



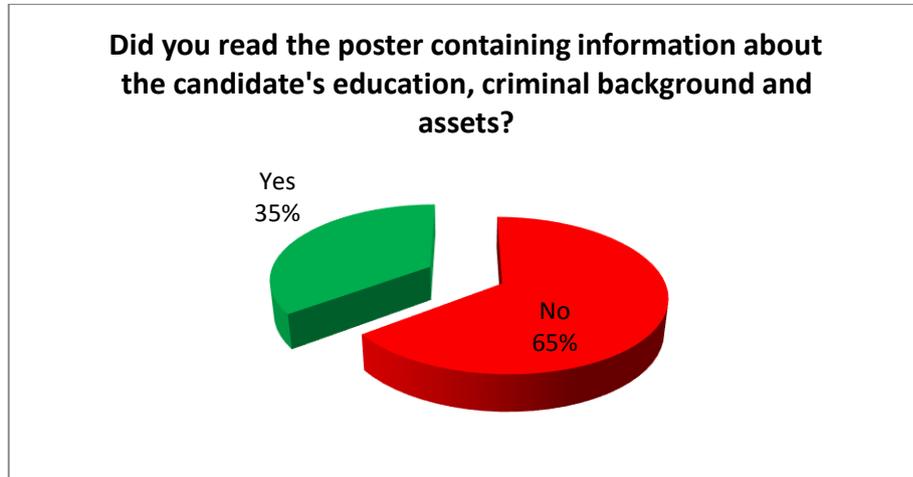
3. Average time taken from entry into the polling station to exit: **13.37 minutes**

**Table 6.3.1: Time taken in polling station from Entry to Exit in Nashik ZP**

| Descriptive Statistics of Time taken from entry in polling booth till voting for Nashik Zilla Parishad |         |
|--|---------|
| Minimum  | 1.0     |
| Mean   | 13.379  |
| Maximum  | 110.0   |
| Std. Deviation   | 11.2292 |

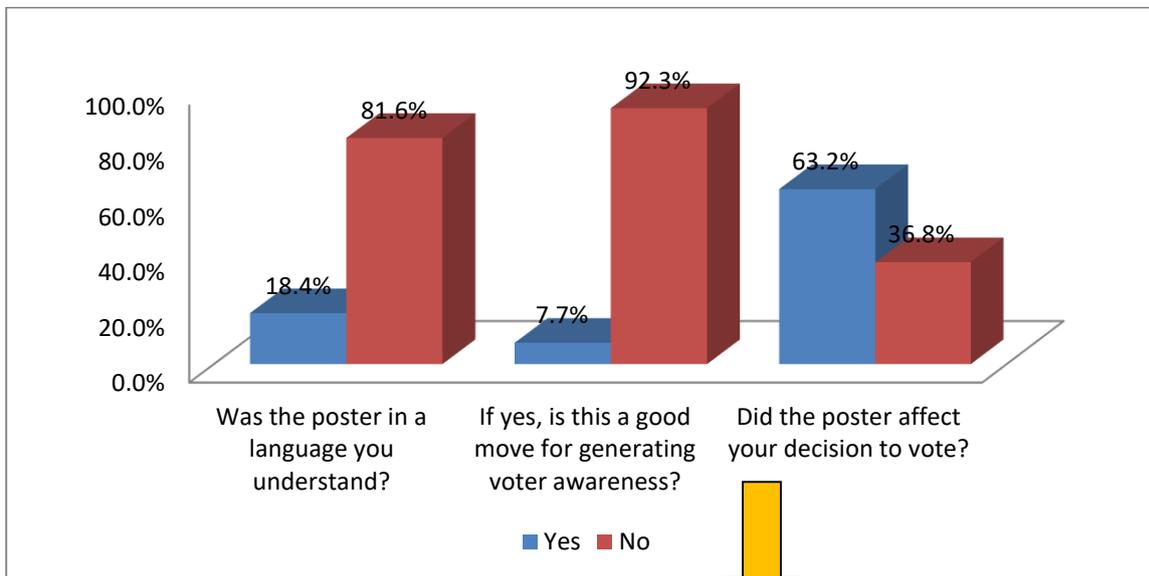
- Did you read the poster containing information on the candidate’s education, criminal background (if any), and assets?

**Graph 6.3.2: Percentage of voters who read candidate information outside the polling station in Nashik ZP**



- ONLY FOR THOSE WHO HAD READ THE POSTER:

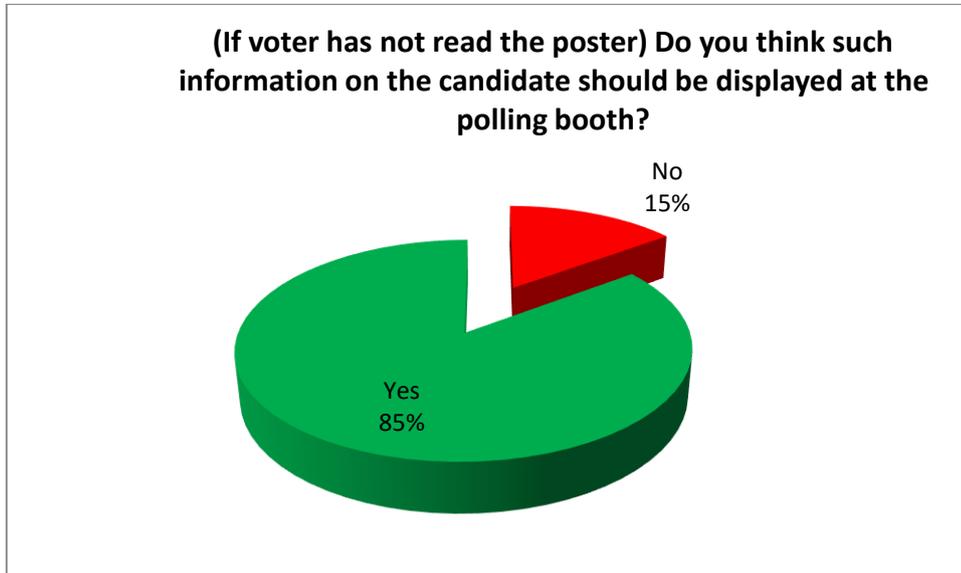
**Graph 6.3.3: Did candidate information affect the voting decision of voters who read the information in Nashik ZP**



- If yes, how?**
- I came to know about the education of the candidate
  - I didn't vote for those with criminal records
  - I got good and relevant information

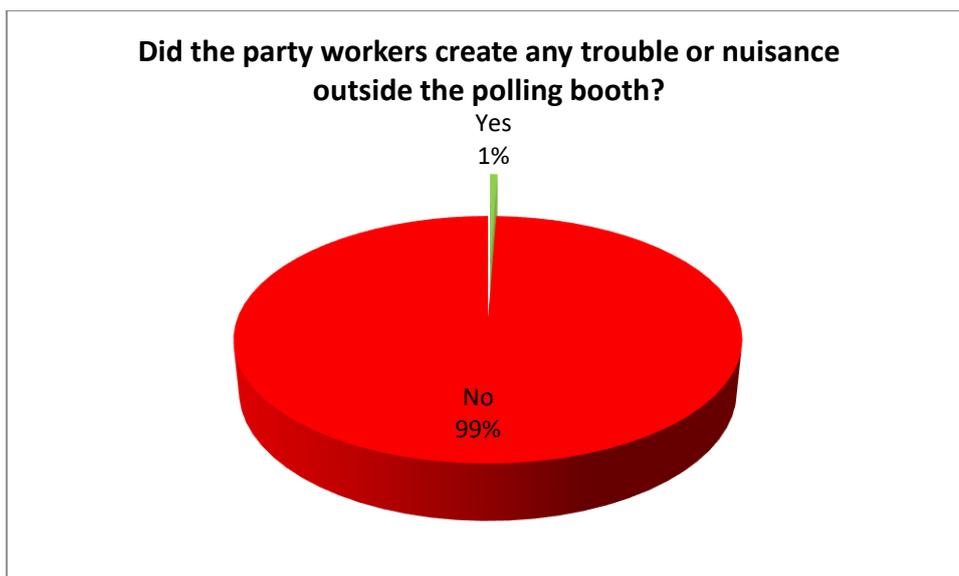
6. ONLY FOR THOSE WHO HAD NOT READ THE POSTER

**Graph 6.3.4: Opinion about display of candidate information from voters who had not read the poster in Nashik**



7. FOR ALL VOTER-RESPONDENTS

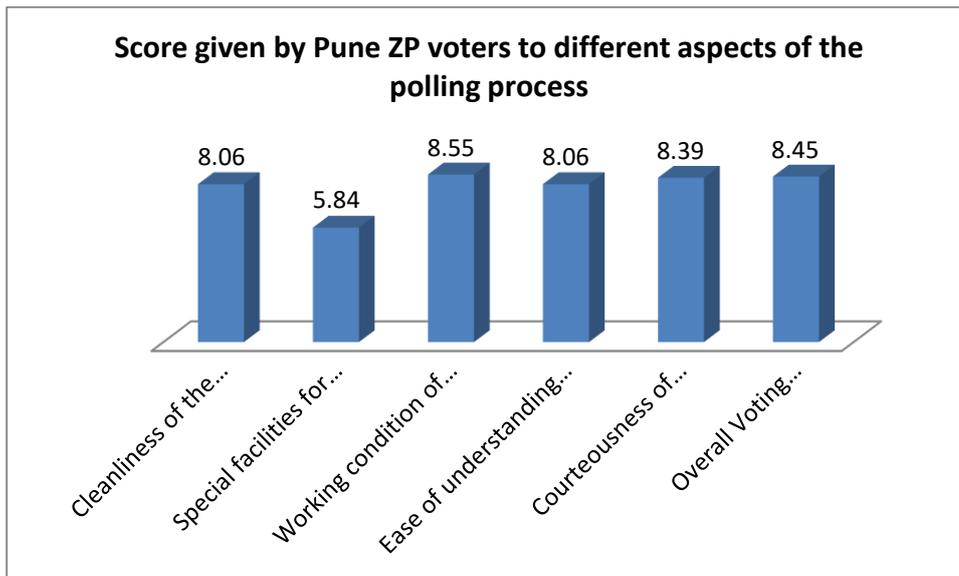
**Graph 6.3.5: Did party karyakartas create nuisance outside the polling station in Nashik?**



**6.4 PUNE ZILLA PARISHAD ELECTIONS**

1. Sample responses collected and analyzed in 7 talukas in Pune: 1739 voters
2. Scoring (0-10) given by voters on various aspects of the voting process; 0 indicates the worst rating and 10 indicates the best rating

**Graph 6.4.1: Score given by voters to different polling processes in Pune ZP**



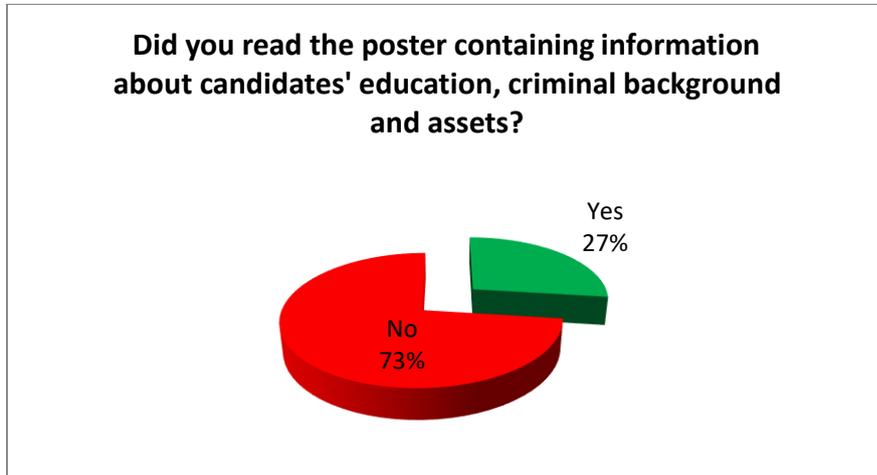
3. Average time taken from entry into the polling station to exit: **6.66 minutes**

**Table 6.4.1: Time taken in polling station from Entry to Exit in Pune ZP**

| Descriptive Statistics of Time taken from entry in polling booth to exit |        |
|--|--------|
| N  | 1739   |
| Minimum  | 1.0    |
| Maximum  | 120.0  |
| Mean   | 6.668  |
| Std. Deviation   | 7.2687 |

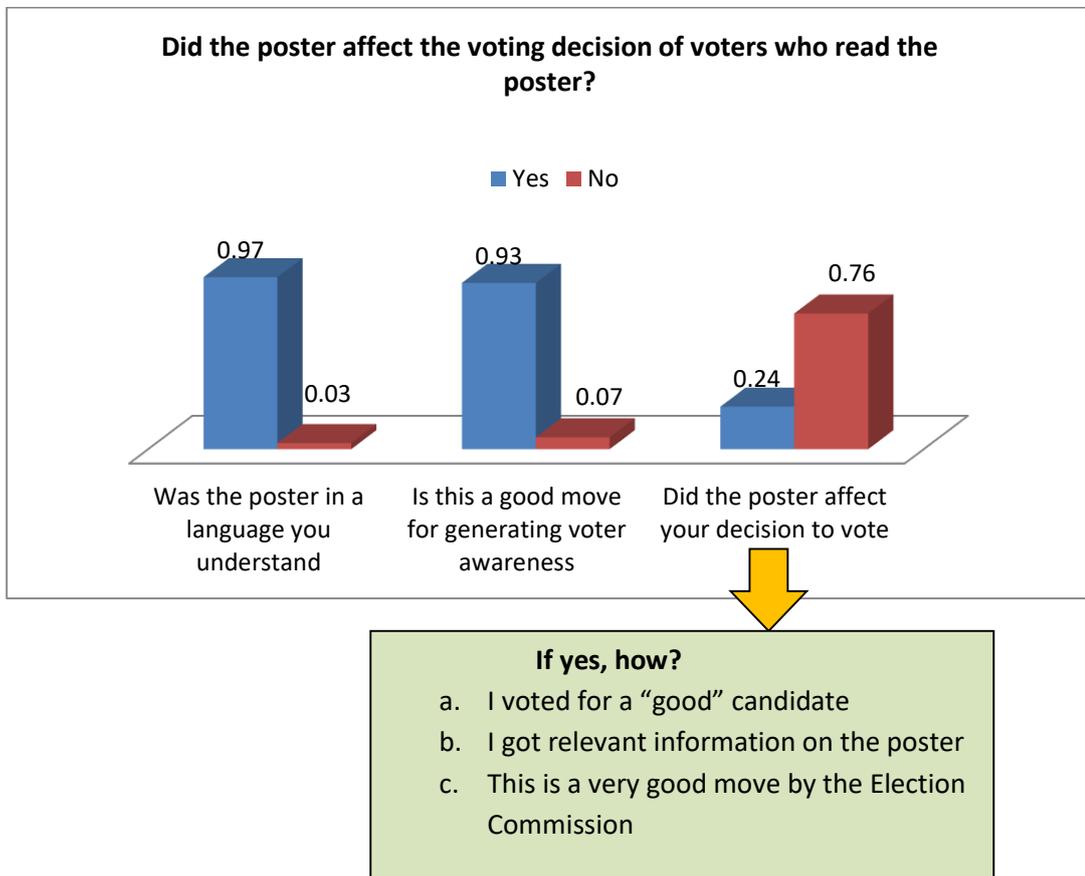
- Did you read the poster containing information on the candidate’s education, criminal background (if any), and assets?

**Graph 6.4.2: Percentage of voters who read candidate information outside the polling station in Pune ZP**



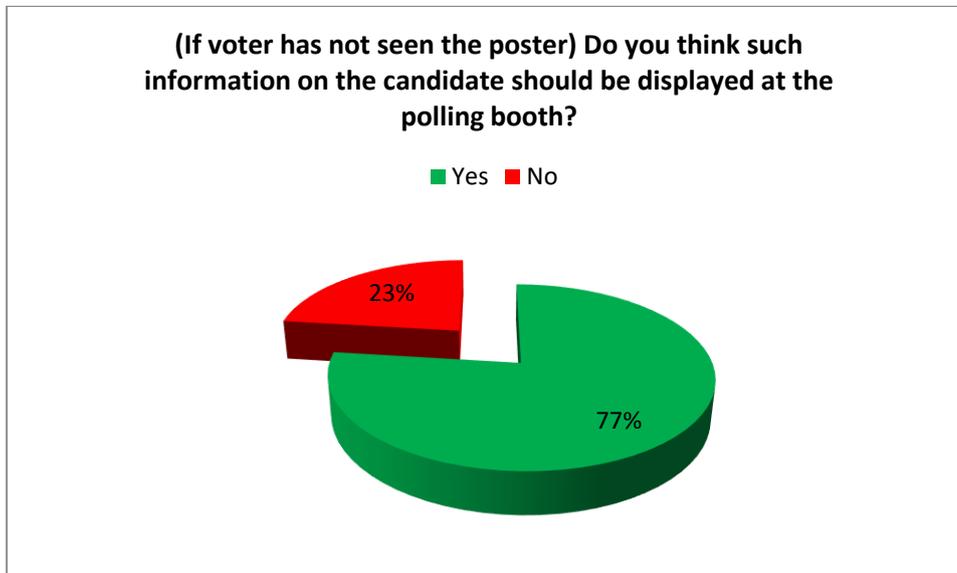
- ONLY FOR THOSE WHO HAD READ THE POSTER:

**Graph 6.4.3: Did candidate information affect the voting decision of voters who read the information in Pune ZP**



## 6. ONLY FOR THOSE WHO HAD NOT READ THE POSTER

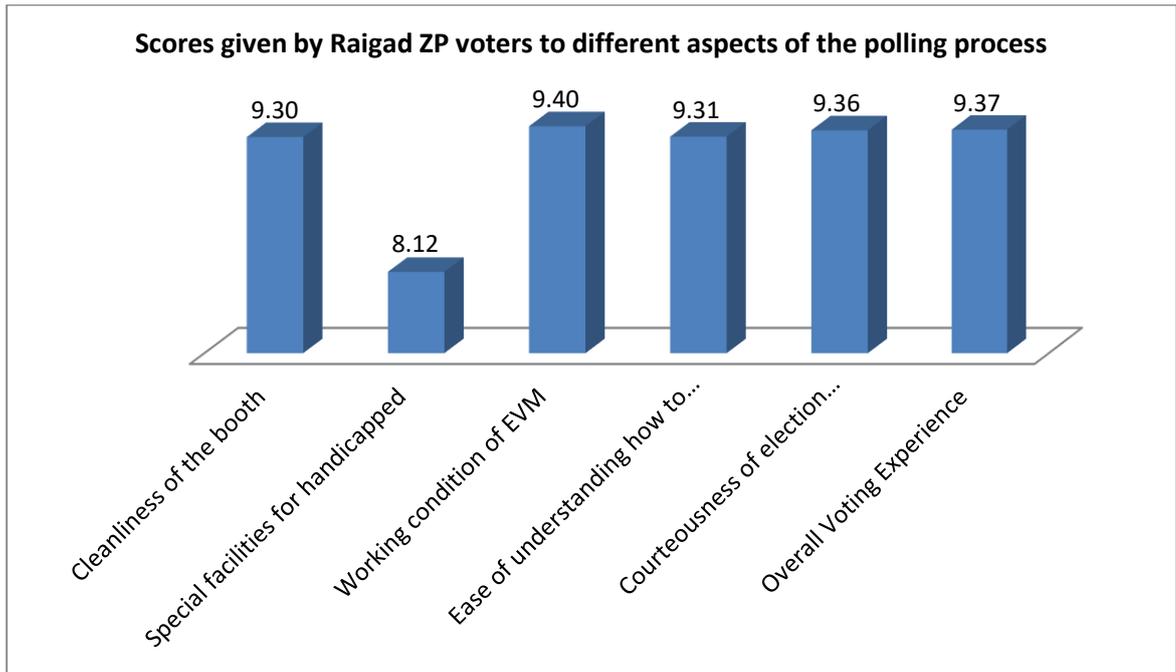
**Graph 6.3.4: Opinion about display of candidate information from voters who had not read the poster in Pune ZP**



**6.5 RAIGAD ZILLA PARISHAD ELECTIONS**

1. Sample responses collected and analyzed in 6 talukas in Raigad: 590 voters
2. Scoring (0-10) given by voters on various aspects of the voting process; 0 indicates the worst rating and 10 indicates the best rating

**Graph 6.5.1: Score given by voters to different polling processes in Raigad ZP**



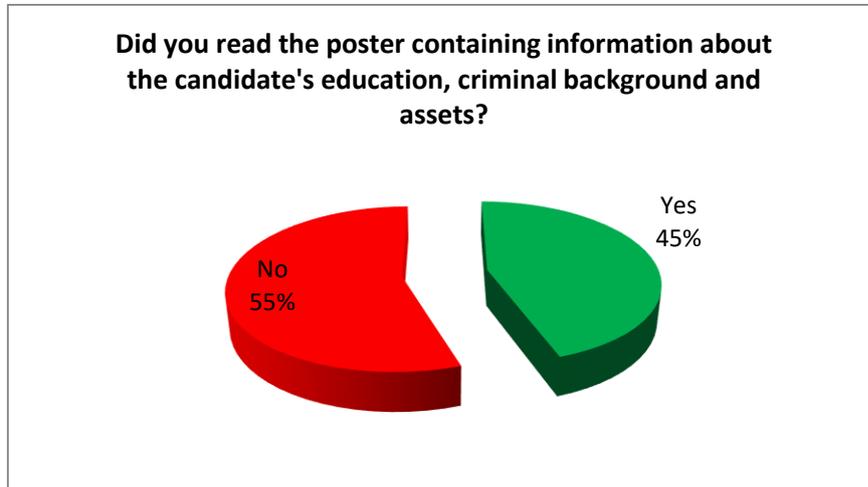
3. Average time taken from entry into the polling station to exit: **14.62 minutes**

**Table 6.5.1: Time taken in polling station from Entry to Exit in Raigad ZP**

| Descriptive Statistics on Time taken from entry in polling station to exit |       |
|--|-------|
| <b>N</b>   | 590   |
| <b>Minimum</b>   | 1.0   |
| <b>Maximum</b>   | 120.0 |
| <b>Mean</b>  | 14.62 |
| <b>Std. Deviation</b>  | 21.99 |

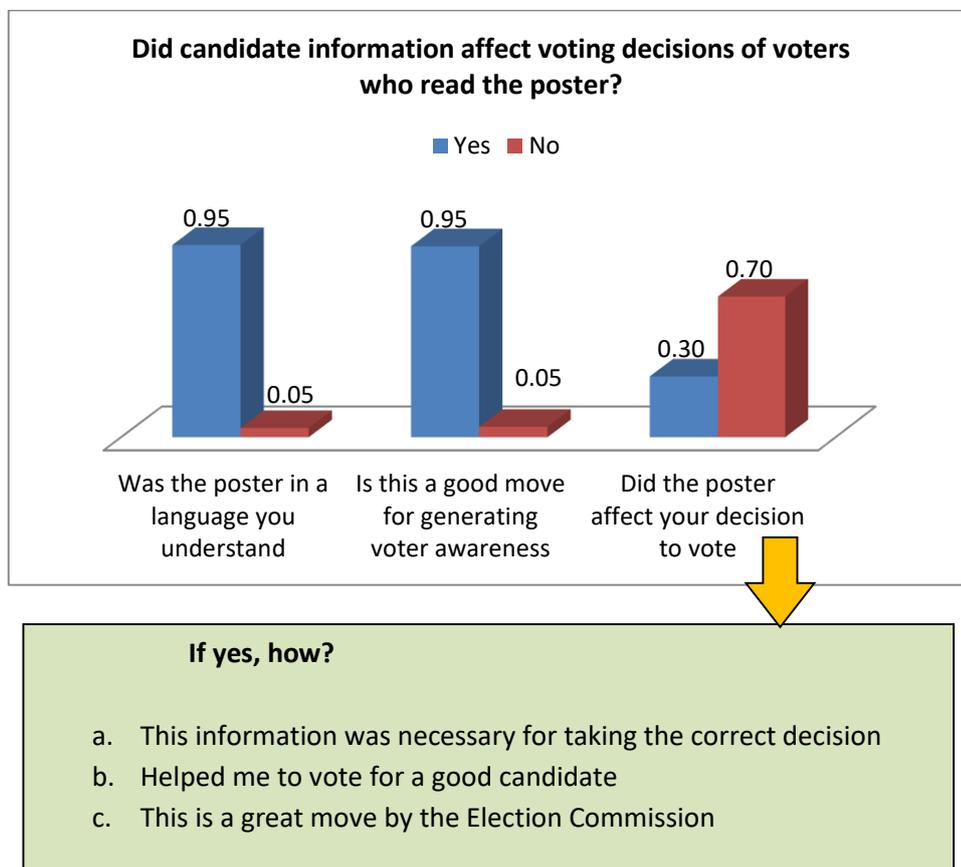
4. Did you read the poster containing information on the candidate’s education, criminal background (if any), and assets?

**Graph 6.5.2: Percentage of voters who read candidate information outside the polling station in Raigad ZP**



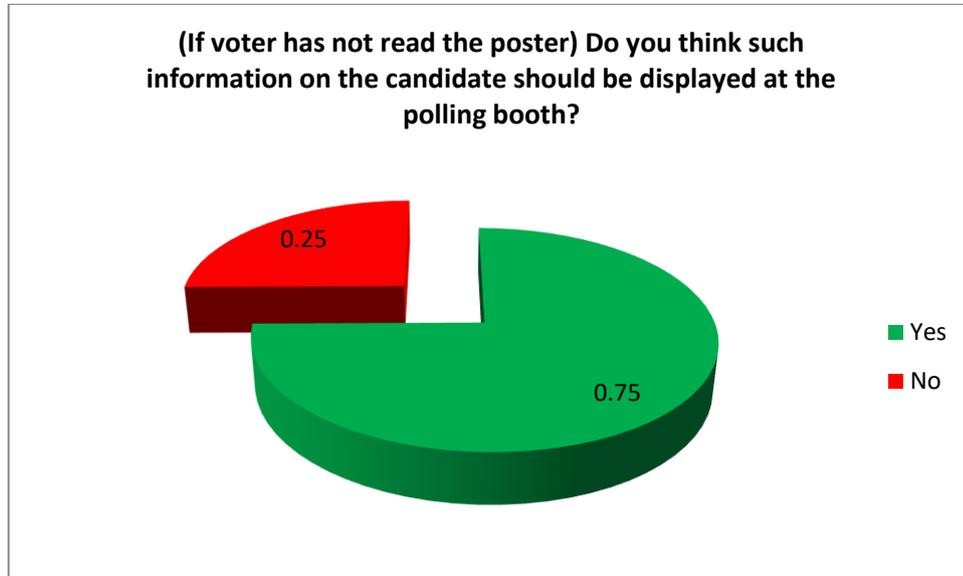
5. ONLY FOR THOSE WHO HAD READ THE POSTER:

**Graph 6.5.3: Did candidate information affect the voting decision of voters who saw the information in Raigad ZP?**



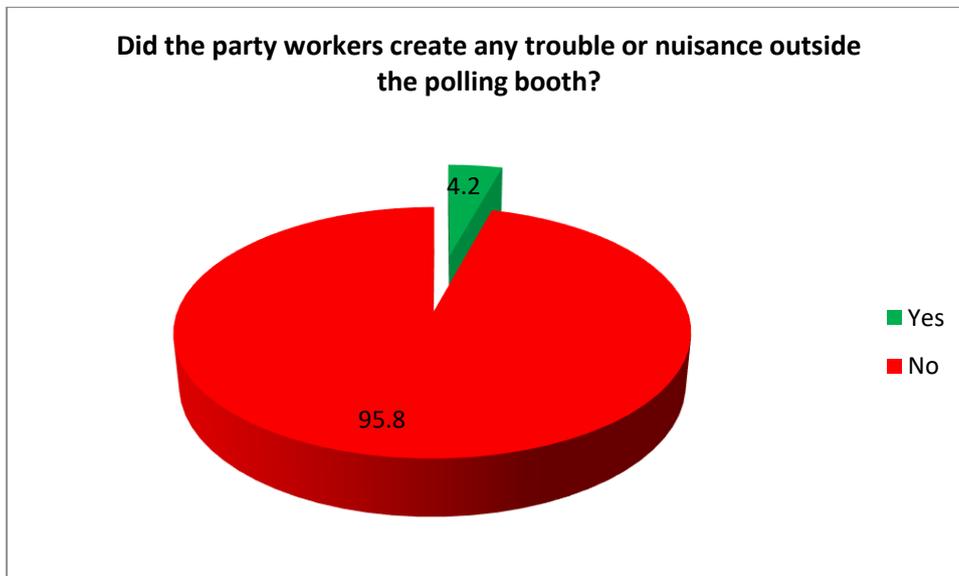
6. ONLY FOR THOSE WHO HAD NOT READ THE POSTER

**Graph 6.5.4: Opinion about display of candidate information from voters who had not read the poster in Raigad ZP**



7. FOR ALL VOTER-RESPONDENTS

**Graph 6.5.5: Did party workers create nuisance outside the polling station?**



## CHAPTER 7

### CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The post-poll survey of rural voters in Maharashtra is first-of-its-kind attempt in India to document formally voter perceptions regarding the polling process. The survey was carried out with three major objectives. These were, documentation and assessment of

- I. Voter perceptions regarding the polling process
- II. Voter perceptions regarding the Affidavits displayed outside the polling stations
- III. Voter perceptions regarding other issues faced on the day of polling

The main findings of the survey are encouraging; the rural voters seem to be fairly satisfied about the polling process and give a high score to the overall voting experience. They give high scores to the cleanliness of the polling booths, but are dissatisfied with facilities provided to the handicapped voters.

Rural voters are required to vote for the Zilla Parishad representative as well as for the Panchayat Samiti representative at the same time. Thus, the process of voting would be complete when the voter would cast votes for two representatives. Were the voters aware of the process? Did they understand that they were required to press 2 separate buttons on the EVM? This answer was elicited under “Ease of Voting.” However, it does look like the voter in rural Maharashtra has understood the process of voting for two representatives at the same time; the ease of voting has received a score of 8.13 out of 10.

It is very interesting to note that the ease of voting is seen to increase with education and decrease with age.

The study finds that only 33 per cent of the voters actually read the posters containing candidate information. Of those who did read the poster, most heralded the move to be a positive one for voter awareness. Around 11 per cent of the total voters surveyed said that the candidate information display influenced their decision on whom to vote for. Most voters said that it had helped them in choosing a “suitable” candidate as their representative.

A majority of those voters who had not read the poster prior to voting also supported this move by the State Election Commission. Thus, the overall voter sentiment regarding candidate information display is largely positive in Maharashtra.

The survey also finds that intimidation or nuisance by party workers on the day of voting is largely absent in all the Corporations surveyed in the State.

Based on the study, following are some suggestions for the State Election Commission as well as for the local administration authorities in charge of elections.

1. The main reason why most voters had not read the candidate information poster displayed at the polling station was that the posters were displayed mostly along the corridors of the schools serving as polling stations. The display was done so that anyone entering the school grounds should be able to spot the poster at once. Thus, the side of

the poster on which the information was displayed was facing the school gate. Anyone standing in the corridors along which the posters were displayed would not be able to read the poster.

Now, the observation on the polling day was that all voters were generally seen to be in a hurry to identify their booths within the polling station. Hence, most people did not stop in the school premises where the affidavit was displayed but hurried inside quickly to identify their relevant booth and stand in the queue.

The queues were along the corridors of the schools, where the display of the poster was not visible at all!

Hence, the actual number of voters who read the particulars of the candidates was considerably less.

**Picture 1: The information display was not visible in the corridors along which the voters were standing**



Based on this observation, it is suggested that the SECM specify the place in the polling station where the information will be clearly read by the voters. If it is permitted, then the display of candidate information should be on the door of the polling booth inside the polling station. Thus, while entering the booth, information will be read by the voters.

2. Even though the actual voting experience has received a good score, voters seem to be disappointed in terms of the facilities provided for the handicapped. Local authorities need to be sensitized in terms of creating ramps for handicapped voters and making the polling stations more disabled-friendly.

## APPENDIX A

## QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire used for the survey is given herewith. Please note that the questionnaire was administered on Android devices. Hence, the “If Yes” questions or “If No” questions were programmed into a loop and would get displayed if the voter were to say “Yes” or “No” to particular questions.

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Name of investigator</b>   |   |
| <b>District</b>   |   |
| <b>Taluka</b>   |   |
| <b>Village</b>  |   |
| <b>Booth no.</b>  |   |
| <b>Time of the Survey</b>   |   |
|   |   |
| <b>Name of Voter</b>  |   |
| <b>Election Card no.</b>  |   |
| <b>Mobile</b>   |   |
| <b>Gender (Please tick)</b>   | 1. Male<br>2. Female<br>3. Other  |
| <b>Age</b>  |   |
| <b>Education of the respondent (Tick the correct option)</b>        | 1. Illiterate<br>2. Schooling upto Std. IV<br>3. Std. V to Std. IX<br>4. SSC to HSC<br>5. College including diploma, but not graduate<br>6. Graduate/ Post Graduate |
| <b>Education of main earner in family (Tick the correct option)</b> | 1. Illiterate<br>2. Schooling upto Std. IV<br>3. Std. V to Std. IX<br>4. SSC to HSC<br>5. College including diploma, but not graduate<br>6. Graduate/ Post Graduate |
| <b>Which of these do you own? Please tick</b>                       |   |
| 1. Electricity connection   |   |
| 2. Ceiling fan  |   |
| 3. LPG stove  |   |
| 4. Two wheeler  |   |
| 5. Colour TV  |   |
| 6. Refrigerator   |   |
| 7. Washing Machine  |   |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| 8. Personal Computer/ Laptop   |   |
| 9. Car/ Jeep/ Van  |   |
| 10. Air Conditioner  |   |
| 11. Agricultural land owned  |   |
| 12. None of the Above  |   |
| <b>Mother tongue</b>   |   |
|  |   |
| <b>Give marks for the following</b>  | <b>0 to 10 (0 indicates very bad, 10 indicates very good)</b> |
| Cleanliness of the booth   |   |
| Special facilities for handicapped   |   |
| Working condition of EVM   |   |
| Ease of understanding how to vote  |   |
| Courteousness of election officers   |   |
| Overall Voting Experience  |   |
|  |   |
| Did you read the poster containing information about the candidate's education, criminal background and assets?                    | Y/ N  |
| <b>If Yes</b>  |   |
|  |   |
| Was the poster in a language you understand?   | Y/N   |
| Is this a good move for generating voter awareness?  | Y/N   |
| Did the poster affect your decision to vote?   | Y/N   |
| If so, how?  |   |
| <b>If No</b>   |   |
|  |   |
| Do you think such information on the candidate should be displayed at the polling booth?   | Y/N   |
| Did you notice any violation of Model Code of Conduct such as giving bribes, distributing gifts or liquor before the the election? |   |
| Did party workers create a nuisance outside the booth?   | Y/N   |
|  |   |
|  |   |
| Time taken from entry in polling booth to exit   | ..... minutes   |
| Any other observation  |   |