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## THEMES OF ELECTORAL GEOGRAPHY: PROMINENCE AND APPLICABILITY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO INDIA

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### ABSTRACT

*The emergence of electoral geography as a recognizable sub-discipline within political geography took place in the second decade of the twentieth century. It remained neglected for many years, but after 1959 onwards, the growth of interest in this field is reflected in the issues of south-eastern geographers, devoted exclusively to political geography. Moreover, the contributions of many geographers are directly or indirectly related to electoral research. However, in past few years some encouraging developments have been taken place in the field of electoral geography and the dimension of the research has been incorporated under the four most valuable and identified electoral themes.*



*India, even after being the largest democracy in the world, the Indian electoral patterns have not been adequately studied by the Indian geographers. Only a few Indian geographers have been encouraged to undertake research ventures in the field of electoral geography. Therefore, electoral geography in India has remained one of the most underdeveloped and undervalued branch of political geography.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Electoral geography, political geography, plurality system, voting behaviour, electoral bias, malapportionment, gerrymandering, consistency, delimitation order, neighbourhood effect.*

### INTRODUCTION

Electoral geography is very important branch of political geography. It has expanded its scope very fast in many parts of the World. The relationship of the electoral geography to political geography as a whole appears to be somewhat confused. To some it is an independent discipline of its own while other still would seem to imply that electoral geography is very core and substance of the political geography (Muir 1975, p.203). So within political geography, electoral geography has long and distinguished history, but in India, which is the largest democracy of the World, political geography as whole has remained a neglected field and had a very small number of followers in the last many decades. Due to this it remained unable to produce an effective body of literature (Thakur, 1994, pp.79-80).

Electoral geography is an area in which statesman political scientists, political geographers and politicians can work collaborately (Kilot, 1982, p.271). The geographers have found that elections are very fruitful areas for researchers and recently research efforts have been directed towards the spatial implication of electoral laws rather than electoral results (Busteed, 1975).

In English speaking World, most of the elections are conducted under the *first past the post system* or *plurality system*. As Taylor (1973) argued that elections' outcome are mostly influenced by their spatial organization. Electoral geography seeks to identify and explain spatial patterns of voting behaviour at particular elections. It has traditionally suffered from rampant empiricism and from long periods of neglect by intellectuals (Johnston et.al.1990).

On the basis of encouraging developments that took place in the geography of elections, it defined as a systematic study of electoral processes and outcome from geographical perspective. The topics of geographer remained connected are: elections outcome, political parties, system of representation and legislative voting and outcome (Shelley and Archer 1997, p.206). At present the elections studies extended beyond the UK and the USA. and finding its place in the South Africa (Lemon and Fox 2000) and the Russia (Hough, 1998; Gehlbach, 2000).

Geography of elections is essentially concerned with the study of the processes of making political decision, as the study of the spatial and environmental perceptions of such as decision maker (Dikshit 1982, p.1) Geographers interest in the study of elections can be traced as early as second decades of twentieth century, when an article on elections was published by Andrew Siegfried in 1913. He was recognized as the 'father of electoral geography' (Taylor and Johnston, 1979). He compared a number of physico-socio and economic patterns with electoral patterns in order to find out association between them and made a significant contribution to a better understanding of the complex phenomena of voting. Except few articles (e.g. Krehheil 1916 and Sauer 1918) this new field remained neglected till late sixties in the English-speaking World and the electoral geography could not become more popular (Forest, 2018). The pioneering work of Prescott's (1959) was the re-initiation of new era in the geography of elections. In his paper he tried to demonstrate a method for the delimitation of political regions with the help of electoral data. With the introduction of behaviouralism and quantification in political geography the electoral geography has become one of the most widely cultivated themes in geography (Dikshit 1980, p.253).

The study of Roberts and Rummage (1965) was the first in which sophisticated statistical techniques were used to analyse the group effects in the voting patterns. Many subsequent geographers have used more extensive and difficult statistical techniques like multiple regression and factor analysis in their works (e.g. Cox, 1968, Kirby and Taylor 1976, McPhail 1971, Taylor 1981, Taylor and Johnston 1979, Archer and Taylor 1981 Dikshit and Sharma 1982, Johnston 1983) which marked the beginning of new era in this field.

In the early stages of development, the subject matter of electoral geography remained undefined and the purpose of using electoral data varied a great deal. During this particular time any use of the electoral data by the geographers was often given the name of electoral geography (Sharma 1980, p.2). Prior to 1960 more weightage was given to physical factors in explaining the voting behaviour, but socio-economic factors were considered more important independent variables to explain the spatial variations in the voting patterns in between 1960s and 1980s. Thereafter, geographical factors such as distance and locality exert a very important effect on the voting patterns. Electoral geography has a long and complex history (Warf and Leib (2011) and the research in electoral geography has been made more diverse and varied (Quinton, 2013).

In 1971, McPhail identified two major themes of electoral geography: one geographical analysis of electoral method and second geographical analysis of elections. After 1971, he modified his own work and identified three themes of electoral geography which are: geography of voting, geographical influences on voting and geographical influences of representation. Subsequently same themes were used by different scholars (e.g. Taylor and Johnston 1979; and Taylor 1985). Fourth theme came into existence with the work of Archer and Taylor in 1981. This theme named as 'electoral dynamics and historical change in geographies of elections' which was well taken up by the subsequent geographers of the developed countries.

The book *Geography of Elections* published by Taylor and Johnston in 1979 has provided new direction to this branch and the volume has served as an essential guide to geographer's interest in

quantitative electoral geography (Dikshit 1995, p.25). Since then the research in electoral geography has maintained its popularity in political geography.

### REVIEW OF GEOGRAPHICAL STUDIES OF ELECTIONS

After 1979, the review of electoral geography has been done by number of geographers (Johnston, 1983; Taylor and Gudgin, 1982; and Taylor et al., 1984). Since these four themes are the bases of all the electoral studies in geography (Chand, 2000, p.3) therefore, it is imperative to deal separately with each one of them.

### GEOGRAPHY OF VOTING:

Geography of voting was the foremost theme in the earlier stages of the development of electoral geography (Taylor 1985, p.224). This theme is mainly associated with the explanation of voting patterns. It involves the comparison of voting patterns with the patterns of large number of independent variables which exert influence on voting behaviour. The earlier studies of geography of voting compared voting patterns with patterns of independent variables by "eye balling" (Siegfried 1913, Krebheil, 1916). This method was subjective in nature because the choropleth method was used to convert aggregate data into spatial patterns. The major drawback of this method is that the strength of minor parties or dissenting groups in particular constituency is grossly under represented. Therefore, in the later studies this cartographic approach was superseded by statistical method of comparing distributions. Robert and Rummage (1965) used statistical methods like - regression and multiple regression to find out correspondence between the Left-Wing votes and socio-economic patterns. Cox (1968) felt that a large number of independent socio-economic variables can be grouped into a few meaningful contexts by using factor analysis. Further Das Gupta and Morris Jones (1975) inspired with the study of Cox and applied the same technique by using 24 independent variables which were compressed into four contexts to find out the major variations in the voting patterns of different political parties in Indian parliamentary elections held between 1952 to 1967. Subsequently, Sharma (1980) used 55 independent variables which were compressed into six contexts by using factor analysis method. With these six contexts the spatial variations in the voting patterns of Punjab during 1952 to 1977 were find out. Similarly, Chand (2000) used 18 independent variables and convert them into four meaningful contexts with the help of factor analysis and tried to find out spatial variations in the voting patterns of Himachal Pradesh during 1997 to 1998.

With these few studies this theme finds its place in the geographical studies initiated in India but it lost its eminence among the European electoral geographers. Martis et.al (1992) explores the significant geographical differences in both political parties support and voter participation in 1990 Hungarian parliamentary elections. Fieldhouse (1995) examined the changing geography of political attitudes in Britain in many elections. Pattie et.al (1997) and Knigge (1998) suggested that in British elections the prevailing local economic condition play a very important role in deciding voter's choice. Hinich et al. (1998) spatially analyses the Ukraine's 1998 Parliamentary Elections. MacAlister et.al. (2001) explores the main bases of Liberal democratic support in 1997 elections in Great Britain. Kavanahg et al. (2004) find out the urban-rural contrast in voter's turnout in 2002 Ireland general elections. The models envisaged by these authors revealed that the local contexts are found to be particularly successful in explaining the party support in these elections.

### GEOGRPAHICAL INFLUENCES ON VOTING:

The influence of distance and locality on voting patterns is the major area of concern for studying elections under the theme geographical influences on voting. For some electoral geographers this theme represents their unique contribution to voting studies because it involves particular spatial influences on voting which are distinct from the socio-economic explanations offered by political scientists and political sociologists (Chand, 2000, p.5). Three sub- themes of research are recognized under this category. These are: (i) structural effect upon voting behaviour or studies of Neighbourhood

effect (ii) studies of the effect of relocation upon the map of voting (iii) studies of friends-and-neighbours' voting phenomena (Cox 1969, p.96).

### **Neighbourhood Effect:**

It is a spatial structural process of voting in which voters' decisions are influenced by the partisan nature of a person's home district. The geographical pattern of voting is related to the spatial distribution of various classes or income groups in a given society. Cox (1969) tried to explain that due to neighbourhood effect minority partisan were converted in to majority partisan views. This happened because bulk of the information which a supporter of minority receives is that of the majority party due to higher proportion of its supporter in that locality. This information is highly biased in favour of majority party and automatically the supporters of minority party get converted into majority view point. The neighbourhood effect is of interest to many social scientists because it is a particular case of a general process of socialization (Taylor and Johnston 1979, p.267).

With the introduction of spatially biased information hypothesis to the voting behaviour, electoral geography has received new dimension in the recent years (Johnston, 1974, p.418). The voting decision of individual are not affected by the own social characteristics but also the social structure in which he is located (Cox 1968, p.60).

Basically, the concept of neighbourhood effect is constructed on the assumption that social interactions within locales, particularly residential communities, affect people's political and voting behaviour. Despite the doubts expressed by some scholars regarding the contextual effect (King, 1997), voluminous empirical literature seem to offer credible evidence to support the existence of neighbourhood/contextual effects in national elections using a combination of survey and aggregate elections data (Pattie and Johnston 2000; Johnston et.al. 2000; and Johnston 2001).

Sui and Hugill (2002) examine individual voter turnout and its putative relationship with voting outcome at voting precinct level via GIS based address matching procedure in Texas which were based on Geo-references of individual voters and non voters. They concluded that voter turnout is clustered at intermediate and large scale, voting result tend to be clustered and also exhibit a sharp polarization between high and low values. If voter turnout tends to be uniform at intermediate scale but randomly distributed at both small and large scale there appear to be less clustering in voting result and thus lack of neighbourhood effect. If voter turnout patterns is mixed uniform/regular at small scale, random at intermediate scale, but clustered at large scale the voting result show strong neighbourhood effect.

### **Relocation Effect:**

Residential relocation or the migration of voters involves alteration in voting behavior of immigrant voters. Cox (1970) analysed the fact that if the number of migrant voters in the constituency is small the political ideas and loyalties of such voters start changing owing to the contextual influence of that area.

### **Friend's and Neighbourhood Effect:**

The effect of the friend's-and neighbours voting is seen much in favour of the candidates in his/her home area or workplace due to his/her personal relationships with the people (Reynolds, 1969, 1974). In the later case the principle of distance-decay is operative, and as one moves away from a candidate's home or workplace the proportion of his/her votes decreases (Sharma 1980, p.9). A friend's-and- neighbourhood voting is alive and well flourishing in Ireland, where the single transferable voting system operates (Parker, 1982). In Ireland, owing to this effect constituencies are divided into zones and local party candidates are provided for each zone, so their votes can be enhanced by way of friend's and-neighbours effect (Taylor, 1985).

### **GEOGRPAHICAL INFLUENCES ON REPRESENTATION:**

Plurality system of voting which is used mostly in English-speaking countries including India results in mismatches in per cent votes polled and per cent seats won by political parties. This



mismatch is known as electoral bias, which is caused by the twin abuses of *malapportionment* and *gerrymandering* (Sharma and Chand, 2005). The electoral bias is basically of two types - positive or negative. The bias is positive when per cent seats won are higher than the per cent votes polled and negative when per cent seats won are lower than the per cent votes polled. This bias resulted because of spatial organization of elections and through the partisan strategies of these abuses, but in addition similar results can emerge when the procedure for defining constituencies is non-partisan (Johnston, 2002; Gudgin and Taylor, 1974; and Johnston and Taylor 1979).

### Malapportionment:

Malapportionment is defined as spatial variations in the sizes of electorate from one constituency to other. It is a practice of structuring constituencies in such a manner that prevents large sections of a population from having equitable representation in a legislative body. This system produces biased result when (i) there is a substantial variation in constituency in terms of population or electorate; or (ii) one party is strongest in smaller constituencies and other in larger constituencies. If a particular party wins smaller seats in terms of registered voters, the party would experience positive electoral bias. Reverse is the case if a party's constituencies which are relatively larger. This can come about either through deliberate intention of one party's control over the process of creating large constituencies in areas where one's opponent is strong or through creeping malapportionment whereby making changes in constituency size by creating smaller seats where the party is strong.

In USA malapportionment became major issue during 1960s and it resulted in '*reapportionment revolution*'. The studies of Osborne (1979) in Northern Ireland and Knowles (1981) in Norwegian proportional representation systems reveals that on three different occasions malapportionment directly affect the party's control over the parliament and formation of the government as well. The two important democracies of the World - USA and United Kingdom are suffered from this problem. In USA, the problem of malapportionment can be solved through the series of Court Judgments, wherein clear directions were given by the Court, to make the electorate district as equitable as possible. But this could not happen in UK. Johnston (1983) used the term of reapportionment revolution that failed and described a court case in Britain, in which the delimitation of constituencies was challenged on the ground of inequality of electorate. So the history of partisan bias in the USA districting was remained a major point of attention to the political scientists during the redistricting revolution of 1960s and the focus of considerable political science debate further passed through the 1970s and the 1980s. Interest has lapsed since then, but define signs of revival of malapportionment was seen on the one source of renewed interest in the unusual closeness of the partisan split in contemporary US house elections, which makes every little increment of bias matter more than before (Cox and Katz, 1998).

### Gerrymandering:

Gerrymandering is defined as a device of drawing constituency boundaries in such a manner that one particular party get benefits in terms of seats won at the cost of other political party/parties. The word *gerrymander* was coined by a newspaper editor in reaction to a redrawing of *Massachusetts* electoral boundaries under the then governor Elbridge Gerry that included one sprawling supposedly salamander-shaped constituency. In 1812, Governor Gerry signed a bill into law that redistricted his state to benefit his Democratic-Republican Party. One of the resulting contorted districts was said to resemble a salamander. The term first appeared in the *Boston Centinel* on March 26, 1812. The governor's name has been immortalized as the first 'gerrymanderer' and in subsequent election, member of his party won 29 of the 49 seats although they won less votes than their opponents. Now this practice is an accepted feature of the American Political Scene (Taylor and Johnston, 1979, p.30).

Many parliamentary democracies of the World such as India and UK constitute neutral Boundary Commission to delimit constituency boundaries. Since these commissions do not use the electoral data, they are to be expected non-partisan in their approach. The effects of these 'non-partisan neutral boundary commissions' however are invariably partisan and result in large mismatches in votes polled and seats won by a party. This type of gerrymandering is known as un-

intentional gerrymandering (Taylor 1973, p.128). The reason for such un-intentional gerrymandering is the heterogeneous distribution of voters of different persuasions (Sharma, 1980, p.15). The existence of non-partisan gerrymanders was clearly demonstrated by many geographers like Gudgin and Taylor (1979), Johnston and Rossiter (1981), O'loughlin (1982), O'loughlin and Taylor (1982) and suggested solutions to remove this abuse. The innovative simulation work of Cirincione et al. (2000) has provided a mechanism for identifying the likelihood of particular result occurring by change. The authors applied the Brooks method of political system to measure the un-intentional gerrymandering in the case of US and UK (Johnston et al., 1999; 2001). Johnston (2002) published a very important paper on 'Manipulating maps and wining elections' in which the author measures the impact of malapportionment and gerrymandering in UK elections over the period 1950-1997, which was well appreciated by many scholars like- Moore (2002), Altman (2002) and Erikson (2002).

### **ELECTORAL DYNAMICS AND HISTORICAL CHANGE IN GEOGRAPHIES OF ELECTIONS:**

After the publication of book-*Section and Party: Political Geography of American Presidential Elections from Andrew Jackson to Ronald Regan* by Archer and Taylor in 1981, a new trend was put forward in the literature of electoral geography. In this book the authors measured the territorial consistency in the distribution of Democratic Party vote. Subsequently a quantum of research articles published in the western countries, which falls under this theme. All the studies done under this category have used factor analysis technique to explain the spatial bases of consistency in the various democracies of the World. The purpose of these studies, however have varied a great deal. Taylor (1981) measured normal vote in U.S. Presidential Elections from 1828 to 1930, while Johnston, (1982) and Webster, (1989) compared electoral patterns of presidential senatorial, Gubernatorial elections held in USA. during 1956-1984. Pattie and Johnston (1993) measured the continuity and change in Great Britain from 1979-1992. Dikshit and Sharma (1982) used factor analysis to analyse level of consistency in the voting pattern of INC in Punjab from 1952 to 1977. Osei-Kwame and Taylor (1984) observed that the level of consistency in the voting patterns in the developing democracy of Ghana was much less as compared to the developed democracies of the World. The importance of this theme can be underlined from the fact that the editor of Professional Geographer invited J.C. Archer and P.J. Taylor to write an article on this theme covering 1984 Presidential election of US (Archer et al., 1985). The popularity of this theme immediately increased in western democracies with the publication of article by Archer et.al, (1988) in the Scientific American, a journal of International repute. Webster (1992) also used this theme to show the decline in the fortune of Democratic Party during 1920 to 1964. Sharma and Chand (2004) measured levels of consistency in electoral patterns of the Congress and the Bharatiya Janata Party in Assembly Elections of Himachal Pradesh during 1977 to 1998.

### **GEOGRAPHICAL STUDIES OF ELECTIONS IN INDIA**

In the mid 1970s, some manageable topics in the quantitative mode had appeared in the form of the geography of elections, focused on quantitative manipulation and mapping of published data on party performance (Dikshit 1995). The study of elections initiated in India with the work of Amani (1970). This paper was concerned with the voting patterns of Haryana in the general elections of 1967 and the mid term poll of 1968. Subsequently, Amani (1972) published paper on the elections of Uttar Pradesh and tried to explain the trend and patterns of voting behaviour. Amani (1973, 1974) further published two more articles on India's elections. Sukhwal (1971) tried to explain the patterns of political parties in his book - "*India-A Political Geography*" which proved to be a strong base to the Indian Geographers. Srivastava's (1982) monograph on "*Electoral Geography of an Indian State*" is a pioneering work in this field. A very sophisticated statistical techniques and methodology was used in this work, which shall be useful not only for the Indian geographers but also provide a guide to the scholars of the other social sciences wishing to study elections. Dikshit (1995, p.29) has made an observation that electoral geography in India is of a late origin and gained some popularity as a research theme in Indian university over one and half decades ago.

Dikshit (1982) outlined the conceptual framework of integrating electoral geography within political geography. Mehta and Sekhon (1980), and Chand (1996) used the areal structural approach to elaborate the voting participation in Himachal Pradesh Assembly elections.

The study of Adhikari (1997) deals with the viability of coalition polity in politico-geographical scenario of Indian union. It reveals that present scenario of federation in which the states' interests and sentiments have considerably increased at the expense of national interests and sentiments. So the paradigm of coalition polity is not geographically suitable at national level. It will lead to centrifugalism and widen the core-periphery conflict to some extent and caused a greater degree of instability in political geography of federation.

Dikshit and Sharma (1980) attempt an ecological analysis of areal patterns of political party support in the 1980 Assembly Elections in Punjab. The study based on aggregate data and was ecological in nature. In the ecological study of elections one of the problem faced by the researcher is dissimilarly exist in the unit employed by the elections department and the census department. Voting statistics are reported and published either on assembly or parliamentary constituencies while statistics on population are collected and tabulated for village/ward/Taluka, tehsil or districts level. These scholars tried to remove this problem. They suggested that for smaller state assembly constituency is the ideal unit for which the socio-economic data should be aggregated from village/ward/Taluka. They used very sophisticated statistical techniques like factor analysis, regression and multiple regression to gauge the effects of socio-economic variables on voting patterns. Sharma (1980) studied the electoral behaviour of assembly elections in Punjab from 1952-1977. This study drew the conclusion that voting patterns are mostly unstable to the Indian National Congress because of its catch all character. The studies of Dikshit and Sharma (1982, 1983) were ecological in nature. The former dealt with the performance of Congress party (1957-1977) and later studied the trend and patterns of voter's turnout in Punjab assembly elections.

India is the largest democracy of the World where most of the studies conducted by the geographers are ecological in nature and based on the theme 'geography of voting'. The studies done by Singh (1994) and Chand (1995a, 1995b) are on the assembly elections of Himachal Pradesh. The two studies explained the electoral performance of Indian National Congress and third provide the historical background about the emerging political and electoral preferences. Chand and Sharma (2005) made a geographical inquiry of voting behaviour in respect of the Bharatiya Janata Party in Himachal Pradesh. Sharma and Chand (2009) attempt to describe and explain the electoral performance and the spatial patterns of the Congress Party support in Assembly elections of Himachal Pradesh in eight elections held between 1977 to 2007, on similar delimitation order.

Singh (1977) studied the voting patterns of party performance and mobilization of electorate. He also identified the party competition and party strength in the political region of India identified by him. He finds that 'Core' of the 'heartland' being the most politicised region of India which witness high voter turnout, low ineffective participation and high party competition. Another study of Singh (1981a) on party competition in two parliamentary elections of 1977 and 1980 workout a method to see the degree of competition among the parties in a constituency. He also analysed the spatial variation of party competition in context of political region. Dikshit (1983) also analysed the electoral performance of major national political parties and their participation in the 1977 and 1980 parliamentary elections. Nuna (1989) find out spatial fragmentation in political behaviour in parliamentary elections held in 1971, 1977 and 1980.

Singh (1981b) deals with the various problems faced by the Indian electoral geographers. Similarly, Sharma (1982) also tried to provide an outline of the methodology, which can be used by Indian electoral geographers, while conducting the electoral studies. Mehta (1994) in her article "Extending the Research Agenda in Political Geography" gave more emphasis on some basic methodological issues in political geography for the consideration of Indian scholars.

Dikshit and Sharma (1993); Singh and Chand (2001) and Jalan (2006) analyse voting preferences in State-vis-à-vis Parliamentary elections. The first is based on Haryana, the second is associated to Himachal Pradesh and the third is related to the North-East Rajasthan. The researchers

concluded that inferences drawn from electoral performance of the political parties at state level, in most of the cases do not apply to party performance at the national level. Guilmoto (2019) spatially analysed the 2019 General Elections held in India and the study shows the unique geographical footprint of the BJP vote which is a unique feature of the party's progress over the last three decades.

Dikshit and Giri (1984) outline the concept and purpose of electoral geography. Mir and Hussain (1984) analyse the voting behaviour in Jammu and Kashmir, with a view to bring out the nature of contest, electoral consciousness and performance of various parties in the state.

Dikshit (1988), and Kaswan and Verma (2002) made an attempt to study the temporal changes in voting turnout in Haryana and tried to find out the nature of relationship between socio-economic factors on one hand and voter turnout on the other. While Sinha and Ray (1995) explained the turnout in parliamentary elections in West Bengal and envisaged space time model for electoral studies. Singh (2008) analyses the electoral scene of 2005 Haryana assembly elections which gave thumping majority to the Congress party. Chand (2018) revealed that the politics of regionalism in Himachal Pradesh is associated with the outcome of voting preferences of the people living in the two distinct regions- *horticulture or agriculture / upper or lower areas* due to spatio-political organization of the state.

The study by Dikshit and Sharma (1993) is the only study which deals with the theme 'geographical influences on voting'. In this paper an attempt is made to analyse neighbourhood effect in Sonapat parliamentary constituency in Haryana. The study by Sharma and Chand (2005) is also the only study in India based on the theme 'geographical influences on representation'. The paper analyses the electoral bias in assembly elections of Himachal Pradesh from 1977 to 1998. The study reveals that in Himachal Pradesh assembly elections malapportionment does not contribute much towards electoral bias. The major cause of electoral bias in these elections, is however of unintentional gerrymandering.

Dikshit and Sharma (1982) analyse level of consistency in the voting pattern of INC in Punjab from 1952 to 1977. Sharma and Chand (2004) measure levels of consistency in the electoral patterns in assembly elections of Himachal Pradesh from 1977 to 1998. With the help of factor analysis, these authors tried to measure the level of consistency in the voting patterns of the Congress and the Bharatiya Janata Party. These two studies were based on the theme 'electoral dynamics and historical change in geographies of elections'.

## CONCLUSION

Most of the literatures pertaining to the geography of elections have been produced by geographers of Western countries. The theories propounded by these geographers are not conformal with the Indian electoral patterns. Methodologically Indian election studies are quite weak in comparison to similar studies in the Western Countries.

Brief review of Indian electoral studies clearly shows that even after being the largest democracy of the World, Indian elections have not been adequately studied by the Indian geographers. Secondly, except for geography of voting, the other three themes namely geographical influences on voting, geographical influences on representation and electoral dynamics and historical change in geographies of elections have been grossly neglected by the Indian geographers. This may be due to the handling of very large amount of data pertaining to election results and socio-economic information and applying of very sophisticated statistical techniques to get the results. That's why, the young geographers have shown no interest to this field, therefore, electoral geography has remained one of the most underdeveloped and undervalued branch of political geography in India.

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