



A GEOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS OF THE ELECTORAL PERFORMANCE OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS PARTY IN 1991 TO 2004 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the present study was analyzing the electoral performance of the Indian National Congress for India as a whole in the parliamentary elections held between 1991 to 2004. The analysis was carried out at the level of parliamentary constituency for all the 543 constituencies. The electoral performance of the Indian National Congress has been carried out at the regional level. For the purpose, India has been divided into Hindi Speaking states (Bihar, Haryana, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Chandigarh and Delhi), North Indian states (Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Goa, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Orissa, Punjab, Sikkim, Tripura, West Bengal, Daman and Diu, and Dadra and Nagar Haveli and the above mentioned Hindi-Speaking states) and South Indian states (Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andaman and Nicobar Island, Lakshadweep and Pondicherry). This study shows the electoral performance of the Congress in terms of seats contested, percent vote polled and seats won in the above-mentioned elections.

INTRODUCTION

The Congress was founded by an Englishman, A.O. Hume, on 27th December, 1885. It is the mother institution of almost all the other national parties in the country. It spearheaded the freedom struggle for full 62 years by virtue of which the country had attained independence in 1947. Secondly, the party from its very beginning has adopted the centrist path, which helped the party in drawing vote across the different socio-economic cleavages. These factors explain its dominance over the other political parties till now.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study has been undertaken to find out: (1) what are the main areas of support of the Indian National Congress at all Indian level and regional level, (2) Is the support of the, Indian National Congress is concentrated in specific areas or evenly distributed.

DATA BASE

Electoral data of parliamentary elections held from 1991 to 2004 are used in this study. Data of parliamentary elections are taken from the various Election Commission reports.

METHODS



Various statistical methods have been used to answer various questions about the voting patterns of the Indian National Congress raised above. In statistical methods, we have used mean, for the calculation of average vote. The techniques of standard deviation, co-efficient of variation are used for measuring the level of heterogeneity in the party vote.

SEATS CONTESTED BY THE CONGRESS

The party had contested 492 seats in 1991, 529 seats in 1996, 477 seats in 1998, 453 seats in 1999 and 417 in 2004 parliamentary elections out of total 543 parliamentary seats. The number of seats contested by the party is decreasing after the parliamentary elections of 1996 due to its alliance with various regional parties (Table 1).

Table1: Seats Contested by the Indian National Congress in 1991 to 2004 Parliamentary Elections

Election Year	Seats Contested	Seats Contested as Percentage to Total Seats
1991	492	90.61
1996	529	97.42
1998	477	87.84
1999	453	83.42
2004	417	76.79

The region wise analysis of the pattern of the seats contested indicates that the party was always contested less percentage of seats in the South Indian states than the North-Indian states and the Hindi-Speaking states. The exception being the parliamentary election of 1998 (Table 2).

Table 2: Region-Wise Seats Contested by the Indian National Congress in 1991 to 2004 Parliamentary Elections

Region	Total Seats	Seats Contested				
		Election Year				
		1991	1996	1998	1999	2004
North Indian States	411	375	410	353	352	326
Hindi Speaking States	225	220	225	183	178	177
South Indian States	132	92	119	124	101	91
India	543	492	529	477	453	417

The states and union-territories wise analysis of in terms of seats contested in parliamentary elections held from 1991 to 2004 indicates that the number of seats contested by the party is decreasing in the states of Bihar, Maharashtra, and Tamil Nadu due to its alliance with various regional parties in these states (Table 3).

Table 3: State/ UT Wise Seats Contested by the Indian National Congress in

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1991 to 2004 Parliamentary Elections



State/Union Territories	Total Seats	Seats Contested				
		Election Year				
		1991	1996	1998	1999	2004
Andhra Pradesh	42	42	42	42	42	34
Arunachal Pradesh	02	02	02	02	02	01
Assam	14	14	14	14	14	14
Bihar	54	54	54	21	16	13
Goa	02	03	02	02	02	01
Gujarat	26	16	26	25	26	25
Haryana	10	10	10	10	10	10
Himachal Pradesh	04	04	04	04	04	04
Jammu & Kashmir	06	-	06	06	05	03
Karnataka	28	28	28	28	28	28
Kerala	20	16	17	17	17	17
Madhya Pradesh	40	40	40	40	40	40
Maharashtra	48	48	48	41	43	26
Manipur	02	02	02	02	02	02
Meghalaya	02	02	02	02	02	02
Mizoram	01	01	01	01	-	-
Nagaland	01	01	01	01	01	01
Orissa	21	21	21	21	20	21
Punjab	13	-	13	08	11	11
Rajasthan	25	25	25	25	25	25
Sikkim	01	-	-	01	01	01
Tamil Nadu	39	28	29	35	11	10
Tripura	02	02	02	02	02	02
Uttar Pradesh	85	80	80	76	76	78
West Bengal	42	41	42	39	40	37
Andaman & Nicobar Island	01	01	01	01	01	01
Chandigarh	01	01	01	01	01	01
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	01	01	01	01	01	01
Daman & Diu	01	01	01	01	01	01
Delhi	07	07	07	07	07	07
Lakshadweep	01	01	01	01	01	01
Pondicherry	01	01	01	01	01	-
India	543	492	529	477	453	417

SPATIAL PATTERNS OF THE CONGRESS VOTE

The percent average vote share of the party from 1991 to 2004 parliamentary elections indicates that it was maximum in 1991 election. Thereafter, the party had recorded negative swing in the next two elections i.e., 1996 and 1998. However, the party had registered positive swing in last two elections of 1999 and 2004. It reflects that the party's average vote share took upward trend from 1999 to 2004 (Table 4).

Table 4: Region-Wise Spatial Patterns of the Congress Vote in 1991 to 2004 Parliamentary Elections



Regions	1991		Election Years												
	X (%)	S.D. (%)	C.V. (%)	1990			1998			1999			2004		
				X (%)	S.D. (%)	C.V. (%)	X (%)	S.D. (%)	C.V. (%)	X (%)	S.D. (%)	C.V. (%)	X (%)	S.D. (%)	C.V. (%)
North India States	37.04	15.42	41.63	26.63	16.33	61.32	29.90	18.99	63.51	31.54	16.01	50.77	31.61	16.70	52.83
Hindi Speaking States	32.55	14.74	45.28	19.22	16.32	84.91	23.83	18.89	79.27	30.83	16.31	52.90	29.31	17.15	58.15
South Indian States	48.92	10.19	20.83	35.07	10.4	29.65	29.80	16.89	56.68	45.78	6.14	14.04	45.21	9.70	21.45
India	39.86	15.44	38.73	29.25	16.41	56.10	29.84	18.43	61.76	33.98	15.35	45.16	34.43	16.37	47.54

The region-wise analysis indicates a high-degree of heterogeneity in the party voting. The average vote share of the party has always remained more than the national average in the South Indian states and less than in North Indian states and Hindi-Speaking states. The exception being the parliamentary election of 1998. The party’s vote share from 1991 to 2004 elections was more uniform in the case of South Indian. The average percent vote pattern in different elections under consideration at the units of states and union-territories indicates inconsistency in the party voting. This is more pronounced in the cases of Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Nagaland, Tamil Nadu and Tripura. (Table 5).

Table 5: State/UT-Wise Spatial Patterns of the Indian National Congress Vote in 1991 to 2004 Parliamentary Elections

State/Union Territories	Average Vote Share				
	Election Year				
	1991	1996	1998	1999	2004
	X (%)	X (%)	X (%)	X (%)	X (%)
Andhra Pradesh	45.91	38.58	39.01	43.72	51.79
Arunachal Pradesh	68.60	28.73	28.73	57.04	23.47
Assam	29.12	31.91	43.37	40.13	35.07
Bihar	25.47	13.20	20.67	8.81	40.38
Goa	57.67	34.78	31.30	38.8	55.24
Gujarat	45.18	39.07	38.34	45.31	45.52
Haryana	37.24	22.56	25.71	34.81	42.13
Himachal Pradesh	46.15	53.23	41.54	39.88	51.89
Jammu & Kashmir	-	29.88	24.34	21.88	38.89
Karnataka	42.22	3.08	36.12	45.41	36.82



Kerala	48.59	44.94	42.26	45.92	38.18
Madhya Pradesh	45.85	29.87	39.46	43.75	37.11
Maharashtra	48.55	35.46	51.23	32.53	44.15
Manipur	38.61	38.77	17.42	25.34	37.00
Meghalaya	58.53	56.80	51.18	31.84	45.55
Mizoram	38.08	42.50	34.86	-	-
Nagaland	44.34	62.31	26.70	71.18	25.78
Orissa	44.27	44.82	41.17	38.32	40.43
Punjab	-	35.39	40.71	45.49	39.71
Rajasthan	43.42	40.13	44.33	44.72	41.42
Sikkim	-	-	33.11	4.76	27.43
Tamil Nadu	60.07	28.79	5.33	11.10	59.17
Tripura	82.76	33.82	41.90	13.88	14.28
Uttar Pradesh	25.37	8.17	6.90	14.72	25.74
West Bengal	37.07	40.06	16.68	13.29	16.30
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	50.39	58.22	35.91	43.17	55.77
Chandigarh	35.86	29.79	38.70	47.00	52.06
Dadra & Nagar Haven	61.74	55.62	4.13	14.14	25.70
Daman & Diu	22.75	50.62	1.98	49.48	49.51
Delhi	40.02	40.06	41.54	42.51	54.81
Lakshadweep	50.55	51.71	51.55	53.96	48.79
Pondicherry	53.07	39.97	32.12	37.17	-
India	39.86	29.25	29.84	33.98	34.43

SPATIAL PATTERNS OF THE CONGRESS VICTORIES

This study indicates that the number of seats won by the party is on the down word trend. The party had won 232 seats in 1991 parliamentary election which came down to as low as 114 seats in 1999 election. The election of 2004, however, has registered slight positive change for the party (Table 6).

Table 6: Region-Wise Indian National Congress Victories in 1991 to 2004 Parliamentary Elections

Regions	Election Years									
	1991		1996		1998		1999		2004	
	Seats Won	Victories as % age to the seats contested	Seats won	Victories as %age to the seats contested	Seats won	Victories as %age to the scats contested	Seats won	Victories as %age to the seats contested	Seats won	Victories as %age to the seats contested
North Indian States	140	37.33	103	25.12	100	28.41	79	22.44	97	29.75



Hindi Speaking States	59	26.82	35	15.30	38	20.76	34	19.10	46	25.99
South Indian States	92	78.63	37	31.09	41	32.81	35	34.65	48	52.75
India	232	47.15	140	26.46	141	29.56	114	25.16	145	34.77

The regional analysis of the seats won by the Congress indicates that the party's electoral victories were more from the South-Indian states than the North-Indian states and the Hindi-Speaking states. The states and union-territories wise number of seats won by the party indicates that excepting a slight positive in 2004 election, the winning tally for the party came down heavily in states like Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujrat, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Tamil Nadu and Utter Pradesh. The concluding remarks of the study is that the party has strong electoral base in the South India states than the North Indian states and the Hindi Speaking states in terms of average percent vote and seats won (Table 7).

Table 7: State/ UT Wise Indian National Congress Victories in 1991 to 2004 Parliamentary Elections

State/Union Territories	Total Seats	Seats Won				
		Election Year				
		1991	1996	1998	1999	2004
Andhra Pradesh	42	25	22	22	5	29
Arunachal Pradesh	02	2	0	0	2	0
Assam	14	8	5	10	10	0
Bihar	54	1	2	5	4	9
Goa	2	2	0	2	0	1
Gujarat	26	5	10	7	6	12
Haryana	10	9	2	3	0	9
Himachal Pradesh	4	2	4	1	0	3
Jammu & Kashmir	6	-	4	1	0	2
Karnataka	28	23	5	9	18	8
Kerala	20	13	7	8	8	0
Madhya Pradesh	40	27	8	10	11	4
Maharashtra -	48	38	15	33	10	13
Manipur	2	1	2	0	0	1
Meghalaya	2	2	1	2	1	1
Mizoram	1	1	1	0	-	-
Nagaland	1	0	1	1	1	0
Orissa	21	13	16	5	2	2
Punjab	13	-	2	0	8	2
Rajasthan	25	13	12	18	9	4



Sikkim	1	-	-	0	0	0
Tamil Nadu	39	28	0	0	2	10
Tripura	2	2	0	0	0	0
Uttar Pradesh	85	5	5	0	10	10
West Bengal	42	5	9	1	3	6
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	1	1	1	1	0	1
Chandigarh	1	1	0	0	1	1
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	1	1	1	0	0	0
Daman & Diu	1	0	1	0	1	1
Delhi	7	2	2	1	0	6
Lakshadweep	1	1	1	1	1	0
Pondicherry	1	1	1	0	1	-
India	543	232	140	141	114	145

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