CHAPTER VIII

APPRaisal

The study of voting behaviour originated in U.S.A. around 1950 and is associated with the name of J.B. Watson. Gradually it occupied an important place in the study of Social Sciences in developed countries. It is a scientific method of study. In the modern age, it has become a tendency to study every thing scientifically and this has been applied to the field of social sciences also. Behavioural study started in political sciences also though it was more difficult to apply the same techniques to this subject which were used in biological sciences or applied sciences. The study of behavioural science consists of a rational study.

Franchise suffered several setbacks in India during the British Rule. It was restricted to limited categories of people. barring exceptions, women as a class did not have the right to vote. Muslims and Sikhs had been given separate representation at the Centre and in the States. Representation was granted to landlords, Commerce and Industry in Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and Assam. Before the political awakening in the country between 1909 and 1947 the British recommended first, direct and then indirect systems for the popular House in India. The criteria which determined the voting behaviour were casteism, regionalism, social and economic divisions and conflicts and property qualifications which narrowed down the participation of the people, which is the very basis of democracy. The struggle for freedom brought about political awakening among the masses and when India became free in 1947, the framers of the new Constitution provided
adult franchise in the elections for the State Legislatures and the Lok Sabha. This ended communal voting behaviour totally. Separate provision was made for the scheduled castes and tribes. All barriers of caste, creed, religion and property were removed. Under the Representation of the People's Act 1951, Lok Sabha Elections were held in democratic atmosphere.

In the Lok Sabha Elections, the percentage of the voting has been quite high - 50 to 60%. Such a percentage of voting is characteristic of developed countries. The Ruling Congress Party dominated in the first three General Elections. After the death of Pt. Nehru, the 4th General Election was held in 1967. Although the Congress was in majority at the Centre, its position was weak. The change in voting behaviour reflected the change in the political climate of the country which was the result of the economic instability internal disturbances and natural calamities like droughts, floods etc.,

The reorganisation of the States had its impact upon the voting behaviour. The former rulers were unhappy and they contested elections. Their personal influence, over the people had its effect on the voting pattern. The former rulers also supported candidates and their influence helped the supported candidates.

The number of constituencies as well as the number of voters increased when Goa, Daman & Diu were included in the Indian Union. This had its impact upon the voting pattern in the IIIrd General Election in 1962.
During the 4th General Elections, there was a polarisation of political parties. New regional parties emerged and influenced the politics of different States.

In eight states the one party domination was broken down. This indicated a psychological change in the voters. In the 5th General Election, although there was a Grand-Alliance of Swantantra, B.K.U., Congress(O) and Jan Sangh parties, not much had been done to the Congress(R). The voters wanted to see if the division of the Congress Party could lead to country's progress. The voters were not sure about the Congress. The result was that the regional parties like DMK, BKD, Swantantra and Shiva Sena began to be popular. It was a transitional period for Congress. The Congress(R) changed its economic policies, gave the slogan of 'Green Revolution' and 'Garibi Hatao'. The Bank Nationalisation and the abolition of Privy-purses were effected and the voters felt that Smt. Indira Gandhi as Prime Minister was determined to transform the Indian Society into a prosperous and a socialistic one. They gave an opportunity to the Congress(R) for removing the problems of the people. Although majority of the Indian Voters are still illiterate, they nevertheless, have fully grown politically conscious. That explains as to why the grew stronger idea everywhere that a strong and stable Government at the Centre was essential and the Congress Party won the 5th Lok Sabha Elections with overwhelming majority.

Generally, it is thought that the masses in the country, living in villages are ignorant because they are illiterate. In fact, every village has its share of educated people who do not have mass media of propaganda at their command. But still they
are important shapers of public opinion because the villagers listen to them with respect. Teachers, Postmaster, lawyers, Government Officials at the lower rungs of administration and doctors, come in this category. There are always some families in every village, with young students studying in town and cities. They also play a role in shaping the public opinion in villages on vital matters. The election results which reflected the people's desire for a strong Central Government and voted the Congress Party to power, were the result of a long process of infectious thinking all over the country and the illiterate villagers did not behave in any ignorant manner.

The propaganda machinery of various parties plays a definite role in influencing the voters. There are two aspects of the propaganda-criticism of other parties and publicity of one particular party. At State and interstate levels, the Congress and all other all India Political Parties organised their election propaganda machinery in all the general elections. In the 3rd General Election, special election units were formed at Bhopal, Chandigarh, Indore, Varanasi, Meerut etc., Adhoc arrangements were made at the Panchayat level. For the protection of the voters and maintenance of law and order, the Chief Election Commissioner of India is responsible. Door to door campaigning is an effective means of convincing the voters. A lot of propaganda literature is published and party offices in towns are changed into election offices. Symbols play an important role in attracting the voters, particularly the illiterate voters. In this connection it may be mentioned that the Congress Symbol—a pair of Bullocks has become a bone of contention between the Congress—Old and New-Regionalism, religion, clash of personalities have been common to all the
political parties. Although each party has been changing its manifesto from election to election, new slogans have been used for attracting the voters whenever, there has been a split within a party due to political reactions. Besides, the tendency towards the multi-party pattern is seen in other under-developed countries as well for example, Nepal, Ceylon, Burma, Pakistan, Bangladesh etc. Political culture is getting more importance now-a-days to study comparatively political tendencies, attitude etc. On the basis of political faith, values, pattern of life and society people cast their votes. In a developing country like India people have faith in different political parties according to their experience and the result is that multi-political-party system has been developed and this affects the voting behaviour. This practice began in 1951 with the result that in the 5th Lok Sabha Election the Indian National Congress could secure 371 seats and 47.78% of votes. In the different Lok Sabha Elections it has been realised that caste, class, tradition, relationship, regionalism etc., may benefit a few candidates in the country but on the whole they are harmful at the national level. In the Second General Election, when Shrikrishna Sinha and the Late Shatrughana Sinha contested election, casteism was made a tool for power politics but later on, it proved a failure. The fact cannot be denied that regionalism and casteism developed more or less in M.P. Rajasthan, Bihar, U.P., Punjab etc., in every election and also influenced the voting behaviour, but their effect have been changing from time to time.

During the 5th Lok Sabha Election the Congress(R) had to face opposition of the ex-rulers, specially in Rajasthan and the States where there had been princely States, formerly. The Congress(R)
was determined to abolish privy-purses and privileges. The programme also influenced the voting behaviour in these States. The Swatantra fared better in the 4th General Election but it lost its position in the 5th Election. During the 5th Lok Sabha Election, the College and University Students also took a leading part. The leading part was taken by the male students of Arts Faculty followed by Science and Engineering Faculties. They participated in the election programme with a view to get employment and to create a new political atmosphere. They played an eminent role in the 5th Lok Sabha Election in determining the voting behaviour.

Economic and social justice is very essential for the success of democracy. Bank Nationalisation, abolition of Privy-purses and privileges, 'Garibi-Hatao', Green Revolution were the factors which assisted to a great degree in determining the voting behaviour of the country during 5th Lok Sabha Poll. The society is composed of rich-poor, men-women, educated-uneducated, businessmen-peasants etc. They all participated in the election. The political parties which were inclined towards capitalism within twenty five years deserted in all the five elections. India is rapidly marching towards communism hence, the political parties aiming in the opposite direction could not get votes and were defeated.

Regional parties have also developed in India. They were quite successful in the 4th General Elections in different states but could not be successful in establishing themselves in the 5th General Elections and in some states they were rooted out D.K. was an exception to this. After the 1969 Mid-term-Polls Akali - Jan - sengh coalition was formed in the Punjab at the state level.
In Bengal the Bengal Congress could get place only at the state level, and not in the Lok Sabha Elections. As a matter of fact these parties could not contribute much in Lok Sabha and voting behaviour could not be affected much. No doubt Shiv Sena was powerful but it could be limited to the elections of Bombay and its Corporation. In the same way BKD could do little before 1971-'72 in U.P. State elections. Hence, it is very difficult to establish facts about regional parties in India. In 1971 General Election DMK in Tamil Nadu, having entered into a local electoral alliance with the Congress(R), almost held its position. In the same way Muslim League in Kerala also did well while BKD and Akali Dal both lost their position in Lok Sabha Election in 1971.

In democratic India, there had remained domination of only one Congress Party upto 1971. The Congress Party could recognise the ideology, psychology, social and political understanding of the voters that was helpful in determining the voting behaviour of the people in the country. Neville Maxwell, rashly predicted, that "India's Fourth General Election would be her last" ...... He also believed that the great experiment of developing India within a democratic frame work had failed in the country". The predictions of Maxwell did not come true and later on the voting behaviour during mid-term-Lok Sabha poll was changed. It was so because anti-Congress atmosphere, which was created in 1966-'67, was changed. Secondly, there was an improvement in the conditions of harvest due to timely rain. The main reason for the victory of the Congress(R) was its economic policy.

In regard to privy-purse a large number of leaders were displeased with the Congress(R) and consequently they formed Swatantra Party. Definitely they tried to change the atmosphere but they could not be successful in their efforts. The programme of 'Garibi Hatao', development of employment, employment conditions and the attempts to protect the rights of Harijans all helped Mrs. Indira Gandhi to determine the voting behaviour during mid-term-poll 1971. Assurance for industrial development was also given to the public and uncertainty as well as instability in the state governments was also removed.

During the Lok Sabha Election of 1971 after the decision of the Supreme Court regarding party symbol, a new symbol i.e. Cow with a Calf was allotted to the Congress(R). This also helped the Congress(R) in the campaign. The policies of Secularism, Socialism, progressive objectives contributed much in respect of creating a good impression upon electorate in favour of the Congress(R). The party also emphasised its concern for the minorities by devoting a section of the manifesto to them and promised to protect their rights and interests in future. There are many more variables of voting behaviour such as socio-economic factors, casteism, regionalism, education, election policies psychological factors. Since communal riots started in Punjab, Gwalior, Allahabad before the mid-term-poll, the electorate decided once more to establish a strong government of one party at the centre. But one thing notable in the election of 1971 is that there was a deterioration in the votes of various parties share from 9.3% to 7.5% as explained in the Chapter No. VI of the Thesis.
Indian voters by and large are not highly educated. Illiteracy could not be removed from the country. The Indian voter is not very particular and sincere about exercising his vote due to poverty. It may be said that the poor have neither bread nor vote. SVD Governments were established in various states after the Fourth Lok Sabha Elections but not at the Centre, because a federal Government might not function successfully at the Centre. Afterwards the SVD Governments in the states failed to deliver the goods and were dissolved and one party Government was established in their place. Such experiments have not been made at the Centre. Since Smt. Indira Gandhi did not have a strong majority at the Centre, she had to seek cooperation from the Communist party. The 1971 Lok Sabha Election established the most powerful Central Government of the Congress because the people understood the difficulties of a weak Central Government because of slender majority. Thus, Indian voters have always shown an awareness of the issues involved, inspite of widespread illiteracy.

It is felt that India remains hopelessly divided because of religion, caste, language and a variety of other geographical and cultural variations but the mistake of the IVth General Election was not repeated by the voters in the 5th Lok Sabha Elections. One more chance was given to Smt. Indira Gandhi by establishing a solid majority of their Congress party which she could not do in 1967 Lok Sabha Elections.

As regards the common voter of the country, we have been repeatedly accused of being soft, indecisive, immature, docile, practiseable, emotional, selfish, superstitious, mystic-minded etc.
not only by foreign oracles but also by many amongst us. These are disproved by a study of the voting behaviour. The Indian Voter has fully acknowledged the need of the hour and responded to it. In this way it is proved that the Indian voters have put forth an example of political maturity while exercising their franchise. In short, it is clear that the Indian voter is fully aware of when and what should be done to make democracy successful. At present when Emergency has been imposed and the fundamental rights have been challenged it may be expected that at an appropriate moment the poor Indian voter will express his opinion.

The Congress(R) could secure more than two-third seats in the 1971, Lok Sabha Election in the name of secularism and socialism. There was a Grand-Alliance of four political parties Congress(O); Jansangh, B.L.D., ; Swantantra in 1971 but the voters did not approve them because they were not essentially merged. It was not expected that they would be in a position to protect the interests of the voters. The chief problem was to establish peace and prosperity in the country and to solve the economic problems of the country. Hence, the Congress(R) slogan "Garibi Hatao" greatly influenced the voters. In a nut-shell it may be mentioned that there was much similarity in the voting behaviour of the Lok Sabha General Elections since 1952-62 and in 1967 there was a big change in it. During Lok Sabha Elections of 1971 the Congress(O) could get 68% seats, Communist Party(M) 4.83%, Communist Party of India 4.4% and Jan Sangh 3.09% seats in the Lok Sabha Elections.¹

It is worthwhile to mention that as regards the voting behaviour in the Lok Sabha Elections, generally voters did not care much for the opposition party while casting their votes. This thing was particularly observed in 1971. For the success of democracy, a strong opposition is essential. The Congress(R) in the fifth Lok Sabha Election is in great majority and it is in a position to take any decision when the opposition is very weak. In this way it can be commented while studying voting behaviour that Indian voters could not think about the importance of opposition party and its undue advantages have been taken by the ruling party since 1952.

In the Lok Sabha, men and women both had always occupied seats but more representation had always been given to men rather than to women. Comparatively, more representation was given to women in the 4th General Election. But in the 5th Lok Sabha, men have been given 95.76% seats and women only 4.23%. This is not a proper ratio to represent the community in Lok Sabha when they have an equal place in the Indian Constitution and also in the society.

India is a secular State and due importance has been given in every election to every caste and creed. The people have faith and believe in different religions and all citizens have an equal right to cast their vote and also occupy seats in Lok Sabha, if qualified. On this ground it can be said that in all the fifth...

Lok Sabha Elections minority groups have also been given proper place and seats have been reserved for Scheduled Castes and Tribes in every state of the country in order to protect their interests.

1 - Ibid. P. 34
Looking towards the pattern of voting behaviour, it may be said that in India voting had been for a particular party, not for individuals. During the Fourth General Elections, Smt. Indira Gandhi could not secure much confidence of the voters but acknowledging ideology of work and socialistic pattern of thinking of Mrs. Gandhi, the same voters allowed the Congress(R) in the Fifth General Election to form her two-third majority in the Lok Sabha. But nothing can be said at this political juncture when the emergency has been imposed and new amendments have been made in the Indian Constitution as to what will be the reaction of the voters in the Sixth Lok Sabha Election.

Among Indian electorates it is not the main question as to who rules in Delhi or in the States and there are questions which are as relevant in the rural areas as they are in the urban; for the acts of those in office seem to lead to results that are just as palpable in the former as in the latter. This traditional isolation and the autonomy of their economy and society have experienced considerable decline in the last 25 years, reducing the once sharp dichotomy between urban and rural India. But as regards voting behaviour of the electorate they have been confined to one motive of social welfare of the community. This was the reason that the parties which were based upon regionalism, castéism, and selfish interest could not prolong in future barring only one D.M.K. at the Centre level. In Lok Sabha Elections electorate have provided opportunity only to those political parties which have broad outlook for the community in the Lok Sabha Elections.
In respect of rural areas, electorate to day is not the politically innocent and gullible entity it perhaps was once. Through their presence and continued efforts at support mobilization over the years, the parties have increased the electorates awareness of the relevance of the party competition process for handling personal, local and intra-local problems, produced a heightened consciousness of its own power to reward and punish parties. It has acquired considerable political sophistication in dealing with parties and politicians on its own terms to influence the processes of allocations of power and resources in the larger system. As a matter of fact the number of voters in each community varies considerably. But every community is now having such persons who have the potentiality to action. With the growth of democracy in the country they now have a considerable degree of political acumen which the farmers electorate among them did not have.

In the North, specially in U.P. and Bihar under the able leadership of Dr. Lohia efforts were made on the basis of economic disparities to bring a change in voting behaviour. Consequently, by the early sixties, S.P. support came heavily from the ranks of Kurmis, the Yadavs and the Pasis and other lower castes. Later, helped by the growing economic disparities and sharpening antagonisms produced by the 'Green Revolution' and by the breakdown in its wake of the relationship of reciprocity and difference between the patrons. The birth of B.K.D. was on the regional basis to pocket the votes of Jats, Kurmis, Ahira and Pasis. In this
respect sincere efforts were made by Chaudhri Charan Singh but he could be successful only at state assembly mid term poll in 1969.1 and upto 1971 in the Lok Sabha Poll his position remained almost nil.

It is an important thing to mention that the rural voters have been much influenced by local influence in respect of casting their vote in the three General elections of Lok Sabha but after 1970, a great landmark has been noticed.

In the last 25 years voting behaviour has been influenced by different factors throughout the country. From a docile and malleable collectivity whose response could be shaped by party bosses and middleman dominate castes leading families and local notables the electorate has become, since the late sixties, an assertive entry in showing a marked capacity for both reprisal and reward under appropriate circumstances. The results of 1967 General Elections provided the first intimation to the political parties of this fact, confirmed repeatedly by the outcomes of the three General Elections held in successive order.

While looking to the economic circumstances and conditions of the country the year of 1967 was extremely bad. It is because the country had to face three successive droughts, an industrial recession and a severe inflation, the electorate held the ruling party responsible for prevailing conditions and pushed it out of power in eight States while drastically reducing its impressive majority in Parliament from 73% to an all time low of 54 percent.

Fortunately, during the period of 4th and 5th General Elections, the economic conditions of the country improved. There was a chain of successful monsoons and Government initiated agricultural programmes which contributed to the 'Green Revolution'. This kind of efforts could be helpful to change the gloomy economic picture of the country into a considerable hope. The result of it was that the worst days and gone away and food problem was over, the high price level climbed down and industrial production picked up, ending the long period of recession. This was another important cause which diverted the mind of voters and consequently, in 1971 Lok Sabha Elections, there was a change in the voting pattern and Congress(R) could be benefitted.

As soon as economic condition improved in the country, conditions of party strife and instability of Governments at State level disappeared. It was observed that coalition governments miserably failed before 1971. But immediately, in the later sixties there was violence, disturbance, lawlessness and peace disappeared from quite a few States of India. All these social conditions provided one more opportunity to the voter to contemplate about the political parties' position and to cast his / her vote. This caused much discontentment among the voters of India before the fifth Lok Sabha Election and they were compelled to defeat SVD Governments. In place of the SVD Governments (at the State level) strong Governments were established and similarly a sound majority government was established at the Centre to maintain law and order.

In spite of the above findings, there are others emerging from Das Gupta and Morries-Jones' study which may be mentioned.
One, that there is a positive and statistically significant association between levels of development and voter turnout. States and districts having such indications of development as literacy, urbanization, roads, electricity, etc., are also high in terms of turnout, while those at lower levels of development register lower turnout rates. However, as their analysis also shows, the less development areas are catching up with the more developed areas. In other words, the socio-economic factors, though still very powerful and accounting for different degrees of participation (voting), are becoming less important over time.¹

Two, there is a more even spread voting participation across the districts within a developed State than within a backward State. In the latter, there often are wide disparities in the turnout rates between the districts. The trend in every State, however, is towards more uniformity, with the districtwise, intra-state variation in the distributions of participation decline over time.²

It cannot be denied that there is a difference in voting behaviour and turnout in the rural and urban areas of the country but with the development of education and social states, it has gone out to a very great limit. Still the difference which is marked is significant and of inter-state-level. During all the Fifth Lok Sabha elections it has been studied that voting behaviour is affects

¹ - Bashiruddin Ahmed; The Electorate; Seminar; Ramesh Thapar, (Ed.) Vol. No. 212, April 1977, P.22 New Delhi; Malhotra Building.
lesser with regionalism, casteism and other social vices in comparison to the rural area. Moreover, urban turnout remains substantially higher than the rural turnout particularly in the less developed Hindi speaking States of Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Utter Pradesh and Rajasthan. Owing to lack of education, social and political awakening the voting behaviour in the states is found more steady and monotonic growth than the urban turnout, eliminating the substantial differences that existed earlier between the two. Moreover, basic similarity of factors is found in rural and urban areas that concerns the voting behaviour of the country.

The village political system gradually has also lost its prestige. The configuration of power within it is now susceptible to change with changes in the fortunes of parties in larger areas of state and national elections and politics. In the political frame work rural areas may not remain aloof from the urban areas.

It is because the political parties influence more or less equally the voting behaviour which is an important part of the political community. There are various factors which have been discussed in this thesis regarding voting behaviour and they have brought a significant change in voter turnout also. From 45.7 % in 1952, voter turnout increased to 55.4 % in 1962 and to 60.3% in 1967. In the first delinked election to Parliament in 1971, the turnout registered a decline from the all time high of 1967 to 55.3 %, a level attained earlier in 1962.¹

Anti-Congress feelings were much reduced in the country after the split of Congress in 1969. In the minds of the voters it generated strong and positive sentiments in respect of the

¹ - Ibid P.21
Congress (R) Party in the country. The split provided an opportunity to Mrs. Gandhi and her supporters to play the role of counter elite standing for structural change; with the 'Syndicate' and its followers. Meanwhile, the scheme for nationalization of banks was also implemented in the interest of the public as well as the employees of the banks. As a result of the same the literate and illiterate, rural and urban, poor and rich voters were benefitted. Definitely it could bring a great change in the mind of the persons at the time of General Elections of Lok Sabha in 1971.

The whole range of radical Socio-Economic measures in the campaign reinforced these images, giving to the electoral battle strong undertones of conflict between the rich and the poor. This played a great role in changing the attitude and mind of electorate in 1971 elections.

The Left Political parties had always contributed a touch of class conflict to elections in India. It is a misfortune that they have little resources, and therefore, in none of the earlier elections did the class element attain the kind of prominence and geographical spread that it did in 1971. Such Leftist Parties function successfully only in the limited areas of the country and they have not been able to create an impression upon the voters so far.

At the time of election the electorate reacts to the condition and political atmosphere around him by expressing its approval in more or less a similar fashion in all places. It is sure to be noted that in a vast and varied country like India, the 'tide' or the 'wind' of popular support or anger does not move

1 - Ibid P. 29
with the same intensity everywhere. In the past the events and the conditions that preceded an election affected some part of the country more than others, as did the droughts and famines in 1967. Also the major parties have been able to build over the years significant constituencies with strong party loyalties among different social groups and in different parts of the country.  

The decision on the basis on which vote is exercised is a standing one. It is not changed from time to time. People tend to change their mind only when they have severe tension regarding a political party and their feelings and interest are killed. Simultaneously, they do not get continuing support as they have been expecting. In shaping electoral behaviour, it may be stated that Governmental power and patronage, political network and party machines and the support of local notables; castes and faction leaders, are no longer effective, or at least not to the same extent, as in the past. Contrary to this, the Congress, with its monopoly of Governmental power and its wide network of bosses and local intermediaries, could not get solid majority in 1967 Lok Sabha elections. In the same way New Congress should not have gained the dramatic victory in 1971, when the opposition parties were in power in five states.

Gradually, it has been observed that traditional mechanism of voting behaviour may not stand long. It becomes obsolete with the change of time, development of education, economic conditions.

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1 - D.L. Seth : Social Basis of Party Support; and Jasbir Singh
and party political awareness, wide understanding, feeling of co-operation, broad outlook toward life; faith and belief, principles of secularism, social pattern and affinity etc.

To a great extent it should be admitted that a common Indian voter, as everywhere, is helped and guided in his voting decisions by others his associates, family members, neighbours, castemen, blood-relations, fellow villagers, etc. It may not be concluded that his discretion and wisdom function effectively in voting behaviour. He cannot judge normally the future of the nation and may not evaluate the position of any political party. It is because it is not the common man's job. In addition to this there is a group of intermediaries and influentials, village panchayat leaders, richmen of the society and persons associated with the village co-operative society. It is a fact that local influences cannot be overlooked. In India a common voter has much sentiments. From the 1st General Election of Lok Sabha in 1952 the Fifth General Election of 1971 there had been a great change in the pattern of thinking of voters in regard to voting. Sentiments are gradually being reduced and reason is becoming predominant. Now it can be taken as one large political community which acts collectively as a rational entity. In this way voting behaviour moves collectively. It assigns punishment or reward collectively to the political parties. This is the cause that on the basis of quality of leadership in the four General Elections of Lok Sabha the parties had been gainers or losers and this is also presumed for future also. In short, it may be illustrated that there are several sociological phenomena that are characteristic of each of the two polar extremes. They play an important role
in giving shape to voting behaviour. The most significant of these is the fact that every traditional society is a 'religio-social system' whereas the other polar extreme is more 'secular'.

In the fifth Lok Sabha Election of 1971 there were eight national political parties which came to the election battle-field. No doubt there was grand-alliance among some political parties as already mentioned and due to polarisation changed beyond expectations of Indian and foreign scholars. It can be said the basis of previous record that voting behaviour always had gone in favour of the Congress party when the number of electorates was less and just contrary to this when the voters percentage has gone higher the Congress Ruling Party has suffered. For example, in the General Elections of 1952 only 45.7 voters cast their votes in 1967 the percentage was higher i.e. 61.3 and consequently the Congress(R) suffered to a great extent. In 1971 Lok Sabha mid-term poll 55.3% voters exercised their franchise and as a result the Congress(R) secured more than two - third majority. In the same way in 1962 there was a lesser number of electorates who expressed their opinion in the General Elections Lok Sabha. In a nut-shell it can be concluded that in all the five General Elections of India from 1952-1971 when voting percentage was low the Congress was benefitted and it secured seats 45.0%, 47.7%, 44.7%, 40.7% and 43.6% respectively.

In respect of women voters in India it is obvious that educational development has not yet reached the optimum level. Therefore, it is clear that the voting behaviour of women in various elections, depends much upon the political inclinations of husband or the eldest member of the family. They mostly cast
their vote in favour or against the party according to the advice by elders in the family or husband. But in the highly educated societies, among all castes they make use of their vote according to their own thinking. Comparatively, in Indian Society they are more traditional and psychologically they are guided by sentiments and emotions. It has been observed that political education, educational development, and change in the form of social structure have cleared their minds and now they are guided by reason and conviction.

There are several political parties and their members also contribute much in determining the voting behaviour. India is a nation of multi-political parties. Apart from the Congress Party there were other 13 large parties in the fray with almost as many smaller regional parties emerging in different states. Five of these could be broadly described as the Rightist parties including the Jan Sangh; the Hindu Maha Sabha, the Ram Rajya Parishad and the Kisan Mazdoor Praja Party. The parties of the Left were much more fragmented. Apart from the Communist Party and the Socialists, there were the two forward block groups (Marxists and Ruikar; two groups of the Revolutionaries Socialists and the Communists) with the Bholesavika in addition. Thus, when the number of political parties is increased in an underdeveloped country like India it becomes very difficult, not for the common citizen but also for educated electorate as to who should be provided an opportunity to be elected. Decision making becomes much complicated on such occasions before, casting vote. It is definite that at such junctures there is great division of
votes. Some times the voter community is confused or it faces illusion while casting votes. In such a condition the votes are divided and some time even the candidates who contest the election, may not be the right ones but get elected and this goes against the interest of the nation. While at the national level where there are only a few parties the political behaviour is decided easily. From this political parties as well voters both are benefitted. It is expected under such condition that the opposition becomes weaker and consequently the ruling party takes dictatorial attitude (as happened in India specially between 1971-1976).

The election pattern has been changing in India from 1967 in different ways from state to state. Though it is quite natural with the development of education, political awakening, economic development, feelings of secularism, and new social values of life. However, apart from this the Congress(R) managed for 43.64% of votes and occupied 68% of seats in the Lok Sabha during Fifth General Elections. It was an occasion when most of the observers of the world expected the victory of Congress(O) to a certain limit. While we compare the Fifth Lok Sabha Election with the previous elections we have to face two types of great problems. First, the patterns of candidacy are different from election to election. Since the percentage of Jan Sangh candidates dropped from 10.5% in 1967 to 5.6% in 1971, we learn very little from the fact that the party's share of the votes declined from 9.3% to 7.3%.
The second problem of behavioural study and is that the political parties are many in number. Some of them only come in picture at the time of election, while in the next General Election, they disappear. Hence it cannot be said as to what percentage of votes they secured continuously in the last General Elections. In the same way voters' psychological tendencies change and nothing can be said about the parties which do not exist. As regards the position of Congress during Lok Sabha Election of 1971 it may be mentioned that the Congress was split, hence, the voting behaviour changed.

In a nutshell, it may be mentioned that during mid-term poll of 1971 there was an increase of about 63% of votes over the party's voting strength. The Communist Party of India Marxist (CPM) also increased its voting strength by about 15% and the Jan Sangh by about 3%. All other national parties which have contested in the previous elections and ran against Congress(R) in 1971 suffered decline between 32% and 41% in voting strength with the exception of P.S.P. The P.S.P. suffered a decline of about 62%.

In 1967-69 an average of about 30% voters supported the opposition parties. The percentage of voters who switched to Congress(R) in 1967 declined very consistently and markedly from State to State as the percentage of Jan Sangh and CPI supporters in the 1967-'69 opposition increased.

The four party alliance which appeared in 1971 had the aim that in U.P., Bihar, M.P., Rajasthan, Maharashtra etc., the alliance candidates be successful to get support from the voters.
In open contest constituencies, the aggregate strength of the parties dropped by about 34% but in constituencies where the alliance was in effect, it dropped by only about 17%.

The Congress(R) succeeded in Mysore, where it acquired 70.6% of voters, this far exceeded the party's performance in any other major state. The performance of the Congress(O) was unusually poor in 1971. Besides, 80% the voters who supported Congress in 1967 voted for the Congress(R) in 1971.

As indicated earlier in this Chapter the powerful government at the centre tends to adopt dictatorial pattern which cannot be acceptable to the people of a democratic country. This is what happened during the emergency in India. And the so-called illiterate and semi-conscious voters of the country expressed their rejection of this behaviour of the government with the result that there was a clean sweep of the Congress in U.P., M.P., Bihar, Punjab, Haryana etc., It will be a fascinating study for future scholars to analyse the electoral behaviour during the 1977 Lok Sabha Elections.