PREFACE

Studies of political alienation have been largely conducted in the political setting of western societies which are predominantly capitalistic. The political system of these societies is very much different from that of the socialistic or democratic societies. Again, western societies are largely developed, universalistic, advanced and open, societies. They differ drastically from developing, particularistic and traditionally closed societies. Alienation from politics is more frequent in Western capitalistic societies. In democratic societies like India when traditional outlook get mixed with politics and the political system abounds in confusion, the problem of political alienation has assumed a significant dimension. It has called for a thorough examination of valid empirical references that would adequately explain the political behaviour of the people, whether it is the time of elections or a period of political activity without elections.

In India, there has been a considerable drift in politics during the last more than fifteen years. The General elections of 1967 and 1971 marked a significant turning point in the politics of the country. The Emergency imposed in May 1975 was another significant event in the politics of the country. In 1977, the ruling party, the Congress, lost the elections in a big way to the Janata Party - a combine of some opposition
political parties. It happened throughout India, in most of the states and in most of the cities. Meerut city was also equally influenced by this sudden drift in Indian politics. The Congress, led by Smt. Indira Gandhi, lost all the eight Assembly and one Parliamentary seats to the Janata Party. In the 1980 General Election, this trend was again reversed and the Congress captured six of the eight Assembly seats from the Janata Party. It also recaptured the Parliamentary seat. This intense political activity accounted both for greater political assimilation and for political estrangement of important sections of the city population.

I am not aware of any noticeable study of the changing political behaviour of the citizens of the Meerut city, or for that matter in any important city of the state and in the country that would largely account for this frequent drift in the political behaviour of the people.

The present study, therefore, may be considered as a modest effort to analyse the political behaviour of the people in the post-1980 General and Assembly Elections. The data were collected during the period September 1980 to August 1981. The generalisations offered in the present study are based on the attitudes of three important professional groups - teachers, lawyers, and doctors. It is needless to point out that all these professional groups belong to the intellectual class
of any city and their attitudes may be considered as a
significant pointer in understanding the political behaviour
of other sections of the society.

A significant break-through in the present study has
been made in respect of the statistical techniques used
in the analysis of data and in relating our findings to some
of the known theories of political alienation. In most of
the studies more on account of the complications involved,
as also due to the lack of the knowledge of the use of computer
programming advanced statistical techniques are hardly used.
For example, in the analysis of a problem several variables
are taken and their individual influence on the phenomena of the
study is analysed. Hardly any endeavour has been made to
analyse the influence of each factor on the given phenomenon
when other factors are controlled. When a given variable
consists of several indicators, hardly any attempt is made to
investigate whether each of the indicator retains its independent
predictive power or the variable as a whole has an additive
power of prediction. As a consequence thereof, it is possible
in such studies, to develop a sociological theory that would
adequately explain the phenomenon.

For purposes of the present study, the theoretical back-
ground is provided by such theories of alienation as the
mass society theory, the social disadvantages theory, the personal
failure theory, and the political isolation theory. For an
analysis of our data, various indicators were first combined into separate variables that would adequately explain each of the four alienation theories. The empirical work of the present study has, therefore, been divided neatly into four chapters (IV to VII), each seeking to find confirmation of each of the given theories of alienation as applied to the phenomenon of political alienation. On the basis of our findings a unified theory of political alienation, named as "social disadvantages isolation theory" has been developed which is not only valid in the case of the chosen professional groups but also for the population in general.

It may be added that the entire data were subjected to MCA (Multiple Classification Analysis) programme on IBM 360, developed by a team of Researchers headed by Professor Frank M. Andrews of the University of Michigan, (U.S.A.) With the help of this programme the predictive power of each of the predictors as well as that of other variables have been computed for analysis. Besides, SPSS (Statistical Packages in Social Science) Programme has also been used. The data have been subjected to a thorough analysis to investigate the predictive power of each of the indicators and each of the variables, by applying different types of controls of other predictors and variables.

Thus, it is hoped that the present research work would not only add to the existing fund of knowledge of the Indian political system and of Indian political behaviourism but would
also help future research scholars in orienting their research studies in the like fashion and in pinpointing the specific factors that would account for an existing sociological phenomenon and for developing a sound sociological theory of the relationship between society and politics. If it does stimulate the future research scholar in the expected direction, I shall consider my modest effort as rewarding.

I shall be failing in my duty if I do not acknowledge the debt that I owe to all those institutions and individuals without whose help, guidance and assistance this work would not have seen the light of the day. The ICSSR has granted me a Short-Term-Fellowsnhip for six months which greatly helped me in the completion of the work single-mindedly. It has also extended to me financial assistance to meet contingency and computer expenses. My heartiest gratitude is not only for the ICSSR alone but also to such of its important functionaries as Dr. N.K. Adhawan, Dy. Director, Dr. (Miss) Bhushila Anan, Dy. Director (Research), Dr. N. Rajan, Asstt. Director (Research), Dr. R.N. Saxena and Dr. U.K. Roy of the Computer Section. My grateful thanks are also due to Delhi Computer Centre, its Director Dr. N.C. Khandekar, and one of its important functionaries, Smt. Usha, Computer Programmer. My thanks are also due to Sardar B.S. Nagi, Computer Coordinator of the Council for Social Development, New Delhi who painstakingly put my entire data on IBM cards. My thanks are also due to the Registrar, Meerut University, Meerut for providing me the
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