Electoral Politics in India: A Study of Knowledge, Attitude, and Practice among the Youth of Higher Education Institutions

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1. Introduction

Electoral politics form the cornerstone of democratic governance, shaping the political landscape and influencing the trajectory of national development. In a diverse and vibrant democracy like India, elections not only determine the leadership but also reflect the collective aspirations and concerns of its citizens. As the largest democracy in the world, India's political system is complex, with various layers of governance and a multitude of political parties vying for public support. The involvement of the youth, particularly those in higher education institutions, is critical in ensuring the dynamism and responsiveness of the democratic process. The youth represent a significant demographic segment with the potential to drive societal change and innovation. In India, students in higher education institutions are at a pivotal stage of their lives, transitioning from adolescence to adulthood. This period is marked by increased political awareness and the development of personal beliefs and values regarding governance and civic responsibility. However, the extent of their engagement with electoral politics—defined by their knowledge of political processes, their attitudes towards political institutions, and their actual voting practices—varies considerably. Despite the
increasing emphasis on civic education and youth engagement in political discourse, there is a notable gap in empirical research focusing specifically on the political knowledge, attitudes, and practices of higher education students in India. Previous studies have examined general voter behavior and political awareness, but there remains a need for targeted research that explores these dimensions in the context of young adults who are on the cusp of becoming full-fledged participants in the electoral process.
This study aims to fill this gap by providing a comprehensive analysis of the knowledge, attitudes, and practices related to electoral politics among students in higher education institutions. By investigating how well students understand electoral processes, their perceptions of the political system, and their engagement in voting and political activities, this research seeks to uncover the factors that influence their political behavior and identify potential areas for intervention. Understanding these dimensions is crucial for several reasons. Firstly, it offers insights into the effectiveness of current educational and outreach programs designed to enhance political literacy among youth. Secondly, it helps policymakers and educational institutions tailor strategies to better engage students and address their concerns. Finally, it contributes to the broader discourse on strengthening democratic participation by ensuring that young voters are informed, motivated, and actively involved in shaping their country's future.
In summary, this study endeavors to shed light on the intersection of education and electoral politics, providing valuable data that can inform both practice and policy. Through a detailed examination of the knowledge, attitudes, and practices of higher education students, this research aspires to contribute to a more engaged and informed electorate, crucial for the health and vitality of India's democracy.

1.1. Objectives of the Study
This study aims at the following objectives
Evaluate the level of understanding that students in higher education institutions have about electoral politics in India. This includes their awareness of electoral processes, political parties, candidates, and the significance of voting.
Explore the attitudes and perceptions of the youth towards electoral politics. This could involve examining their opinions on the political system, trust in institutions, political engagement, and the perceived impact of voting.
Investigate the actual involvement and participation of students in electoral politics. This includes their voter registration status, voting behavior, participation in political activities, and involvement in campaigns or discussions.
Identify the factors that influence the knowledge, attitudes, and practices of students regarding electoral politics. This could include educational background, family influence, social media, peer interactions, and political events.
Provide recommendations to improve political education and engagement among youth. This might involve suggesting strategies for educational institutions to enhance political awareness and participation or proposing policy changes to better engage young voters. Overall, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how young adults in higher education institutions engage with electoral politics and how their knowledge, attitudes, and practices can be influenced or improved.

2. Literature review

Electoral politics in India is a multifaceted and dynamic field that significantly influences the country's democratic process. The youth, particularly those in higher education institutions, play a critical role in shaping electoral outcomes and the broader political landscape. The literature on electoral politics among youth in higher education institutions in India reveals a complex interplay of knowledge, attitude and practices. Research indicates that knowledge about electoral processes among Indian youth varies widely. Studies such as Sharma et al. (2018) and Kumar (2020) highlight that while many students have basic knowledge of the electoral system, there are gaps in their understanding of more complex aspects such as electoral laws, party systems, and the implications of their votes.

A study by Anirban Chatterjee (2013) examines the role of Indian Youth in electoral politics. It analyses why Indian youth are aversive to political participation and what can be done to make them active partners in India's democratic system.

Research by Dishant Parekh (2020), examines the role of institutions in declining participation of youth in Indian electoral politics during 16th Lok Sabha Elections held in 2014. It throws light on the uneven proportion of young Member of Parliaments especially belonging to dynastic succession model. The research tries to find out leading causes to the aversion towards electoral politics by the youth which is detrimental for the vitality of democracy. It says the underrepresentation seems to emerge from decline in student led ideological movements, and prevalence of political nepotism.

Political ideology plays a crucial role in shaping students' attitudes. Studies such as those by Kumar and Bhardwaj (2022) reveal that students' political leanings influence their perceptions of different parties and candidates, impacting their enthusiasm and trust in the electoral process. It measures their degree of political participation and studies their attitude regarding political participation.

Study by Sukhvinder Singh (2012), aims at analyzing the impact of political socialization of University students. Five components of political socialization such as Political Knowledge, Political Interest, Political Participation, Political Values and Political Efficacy/cynicism are discussed in this book. This literature argues that the process of making good citizens is linked with political socialization. The factors implied in the process of political socialization demand a change in education system, curriculum designs, teaching strategies and political acculturation if the educational institutions can make such changes in their system; a good politically socialized individual will be produced in the colleges and universities in India.

A research study by Upali Bhattacharya (2024), delves into the intricate interplay between student perceptions and patterns of engagement in student in electoral politics within the context of Delhi University. The study, using a qualitative approach, investigates the nature of engagement, encompassing activities such as voting, attendance at political events, social media participation, and mobilization efforts. Simultaneously, the study explores students' subjective perceptions of the electoral process and the role of elected student leaders within the university ecosystem.

2.1. Key Features of Indian Electoral Politics

Federal Structure and Parliamentary System: India's political system is characterized by a federal structure with a strong parliamentary system. Elections are held at multiple levels—central, state, and local—reflecting the country's diverse and decentralized nature.

Universal Adult Franchise:

One of the defining features of Indian democracy is universal adult suffrage, which allows every citizen aged 18 and above to vote, ensuring broad-based political participation.

Political Parties and Alliances: The political landscape is marked by the presence of multiple parties, including national parties (such as the BJP and INC) and numerous regional parties. Coalition politics has become a significant aspect of governance, particularly at the national level.

 Electoral Reforms: Over the years, various reforms have been introduced to enhance the transparency, fairness, and efficiency of the electoral process, including the introduction of the Electronic Voting Machine (EVM), the establishment of the Election Commission of India, and legislative measures to curb electoral malpractices.

2.2. Research Methodology

This study on the electoral process in India employed a structured questionnaire comprising both open and closed-ended questions to gather comprehensive data on voter experiences, perceptions, and opinions regarding the electoral process. The questionnaire was meticulously designed to cover key areas such as voting process, voting behavior, satisfaction with the electoral system, and attitudes toward election management bodies.

A Purposive Sampling technique was used to ensure a representative sample of the higher education student youth. The sample included participants from different educational institution comprising of universities and colleges of diverse educational streams, varying age groups, and both genders, ensuring the inclusion of voices from across urban and rural settings.

The closed-ended questions provided a structured format for respondents to express their views on specific aspects of the electoral process, such as the understanding of the electoral process in India and the level of trust in the electoral process. These responses were easily quantifiable, facilitating statistical analysis. The open-ended questions, on the other hand, allowed respondents to share their experiences and concerns in their own words, providing richer, qualitative insights into the challenges and strengths of the electoral process in India. The questionnaire was administered online.

Data collection spanned approximately two weeks, during which ethical guidelines were strictly adhered to, including informed consent and the assurance of respondents' confidentiality.

The quantitative responses and content analysis for qualitative data. Understanding the dynamics of electoral politics in India requires a closer look at the numbers that shape our democracy. The data examined below aims not only at uncovering insights into the electoral process but also to reflects on what these patterns reveal about the evolving priorities and challenges in Indian democracy.
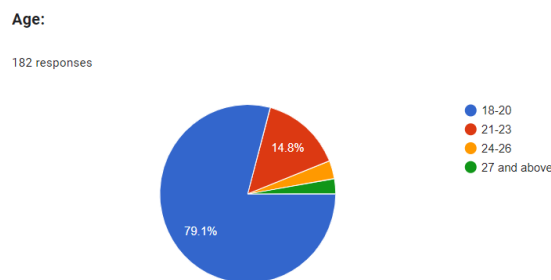
Age:

182 responses

Figure - 1.1- (Represents the Age distribution of Students)

The pie chart provides information about the age distribution of 182 respondents, which can be interpreted in the context of voter participation in the Indian electoral process.

79.1% of respondents are between the ages of 18-20 (blue segment): This suggests a significant portion of the respondents are newly eligible voters, possibly first-time voters, reflecting the younger demographics' involvement in the electoral process 14.8% of respondents are between the ages of 21-23 (red segment): These individuals might have already participated in previous elections, but are still relatively young voters. Their engagement could indicate ongoing interest in the political process after their initial voting experiences. A small percentage of respondents fall into the 24-26 age range (orange segment): This group might be less represented in this particular sample but still plays a crucial role in contributing to electoral turnout. A very small percentage of respondents are aged 27 and above (green segment): This indicates that older individuals were less represented in the sample, which might reflect lower participation from more mature age groups.
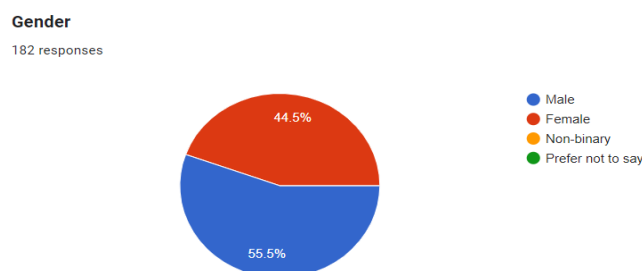
Gender

182 responses

Figure - 1.2 ((Represents the Gender distribution of Students)

The Pie chart represents the gender distribution of 182 respondents in the context of voter participation in the Indian electoral process.

55.5% of respondents are male (blue segment): This indicates that more than half of the respondents identify as male, suggesting that men might be slightly more represented in this sample when it comes to electoral participation or interest in political surveys. 44.5% of respondents are female (red segment): Nearly half of the respondents are women, indicating a strong representation of female voters or respondents. This highlights significant female participation, though still slightly lower compared to male respondents. No data is presented for non-binary (orange segment) or "prefer not to say" (green segment): The absence of these categories suggests that either no respondents identified as non-binary or chose not to disclose their gender, or their representation is too small to appear in the chart.

In the context of the Indian electoral process, this chart reflects a fairly balanced gender participation in the survey or electoral activities, with a slight male majority. It could provide insights into the gender dynamics of voting patterns, indicating that both men and women are engaged in the political process.
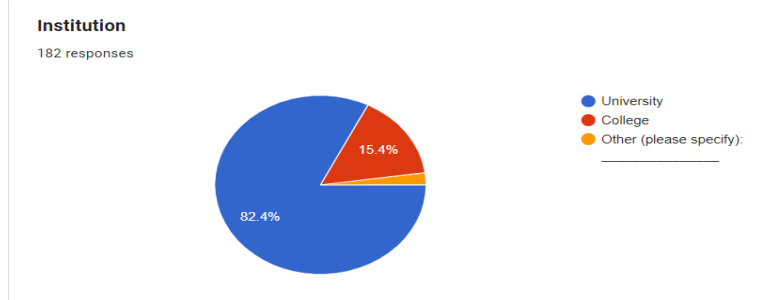
Institution

182 responses

Figure − 1.3- (Represents the distribution of respondents based on the type of institution)
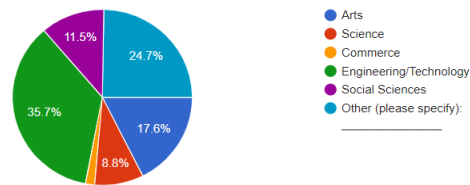
The pie chart illustrates the distribution of respondents based on their type of institution (university, college, or other) in the context of electoral participation in India.

82.4% of respondents are from universities (blue segment: This indicates that the majority of the survey participants are university students. University students may be more involved in political discussions, campaigns, or voter drives due to their greater exposure to diverse ideas, social activism, and access to resources like political forums or debates. 15.4% of respondents are from colleges (red segment): A smaller but still significant portion of respondents are college students, who also represent an important demographic in the electoral process. While they may have fewer resources

or platforms compared to university students, they still form a key part of the youth electorate. A very small percentage (represented by the orange segment) falls under "Other" institutions: This could represent respondents from vocational institutions, professional training centers, or other non-traditional educational backgrounds. Their representation is minimal, suggesting limited participation from such groups in this survey.

Overall, this chart shows that students from universities are the dominant group in this sample, which could reflect higher levels of political awareness or engagement.

Field of Study

182 responses

Figure- 1.4 – (Distribution of respondents based on the field of study)

The pie chart represents the distribution of fields of study based on 182 responses.

Engineering/Technology (Green) – 35.7%: This is the largest field of study among the respondents, making up over a third of the total.

Arts (Blue) – 24.7%: The second-largest group, nearly a quarter of the respondents, are studying arts.

Social Sciences (Purple) – 11.5%: A smaller portion of respondents, about one in ten, are in social sciences.

Science (Red) – 8.8%: A smaller percentage, less than 10%, are studying science.

Commerce (Orange) – 17.6%: Almost one-fifth of the respondents are in commerce.

Other (Cyan) – No percentage specified here, indicating there may have been responses under this category, but it's not a major group.

Subsequently, Engineering/Technology is the most common field, followed by Arts and Commerce. Science and Social Sciences have a smaller representation.

While the common perception has it that students with social science academic background are more intensely involved in the discussion revolving around electoral politics. However the above data reveals that students of engineering and technology have emerged as the largest group of respondents.

How well do you understand the electoral process in India?

182 responses
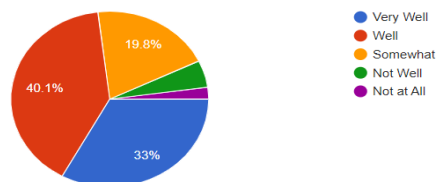
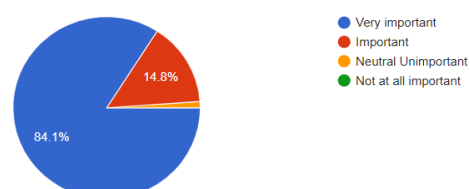**Figure- 1.5 –** (Distribution of respondents based on their understanding of electoral process)

The pie chart analyzes how well 182 respondents understand the electoral process in India.

Very Well (33%) A third of the respondents report having a very good understanding of the electoral process. This suggests a strong level of awareness and knowledge among a significant portion of the group. Well (40.1%) The largest share of respondents falls into this category, with 40.1% stating they understand the process well. While not as confident as the "very well" group, these individuals still have a solid grasp of the electoral system. Somewhat (19.8%) Nearly 20% of respondents say they understand the electoral process "somewhat." This reflects a basic or limited understanding, where individuals might know about key aspects but lack in-depth knowledge. Not Well (small green section) A very small percentage of respondents indicate that they do not understand the electoral process well, reflecting minimal knowledge. Not at All (tiny purple section) An even smaller number report having no understanding of the electoral process at all. A majority of respondents (73.1%) feel they understand the electoral process either well or very well, indicating overall good awareness. However, a combined 19.8% only have a partial understanding, and a small fraction of respondents are either unsure or completely unaware of the electoral process.

The above data shows that although most respondents are knowledgeable about elections in India, there is still room for improving electoral literacy, particularly among those with limited or no understanding.

How important do you think voting is for a functioning democracy?

182 responses

Figure- 1.6 – (Distribution of respondents based on their understanding of significance of voting)

The pie chart presents data from 182 responses to the question, "How important do you think voting is for a functioning democracy?" The chart is broken into four categories, each with a different color representing a response option:
Very Important (Blue): The largest segment, 84.1% of respondents (approximately 153 people), believe that voting is very important for a functioning democracy.
Important (Red): 14.8% (about 27 respondents) feel that voting is important.
Neutral Unimportant (Orange): No data is shown for this category, indicating that none of the respondents selected this option.
Not at all Important (Green): This category is also not represented, suggesting that no one responded with this opinion.
The overwhelming majority (84.1%) of the respondents think voting is crucial for a democracy, while a small minority (14.8%) sees it as important but not critical. No one viewed voting as neutral or unimportant. This demonstrates a strong consensus on the value of voting for the health of a democratic system.
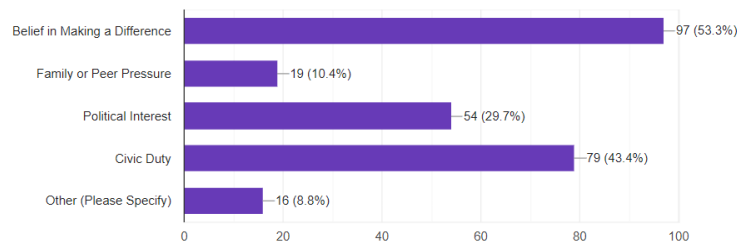

Figure- 1.7 – (Distribution of respondents ideating their motivation factor in elections)

What motivates you to participate in Elections?
    182 Responses
The bar graph shows the results from 182 responses to the question, "What motivates you to participate in elections?
Belief in Making a Difference (53.3%) - The majority of respondents, 97 out of 182 (53.3%), are motivated to participate in elections because they believe their vote makes a difference.
Civic Duty (43.4%) 79 respondents (43.4%) feel a sense of civic duty, which is a significant factor motivating them to vote.
Political Interest (29.7%) 4 people (29.7%) participate in elections due to their interest in politics.
Family or Peer Pressure (10.4%) 19 respondents (10.4%) cite family or peer pressure as their reason for voting.
Other (8.8%) - 16 respondents (8.8%) selected the "Other" option, indicating different motivations that were not listed in the predefined choices.
The primary motivations for voting among respondents are the belief in making a difference (53.3%) and civic duty (43.4%). Political interest also plays a role for nearly 30% of the group. However, family or peer pressure and other unspecified reasons have a comparatively smaller influence on electoral participation. This data suggests that intrinsic motivations like personal belief and duty are the strongest factors for voter turnout among this group.
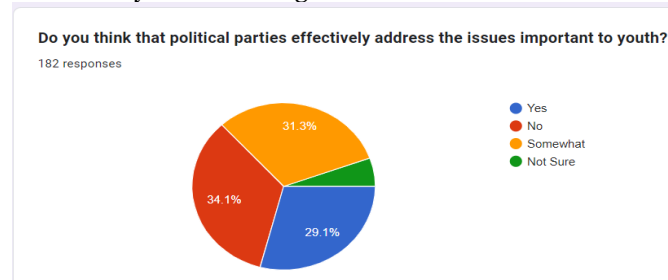

Figure- 1.8– (Distribution of respondents to find out their opinion on how well political parties address youth issues)

The figure shows a pie chart illustrating the results of a survey question: "Do you think that political parties effectively address the issues important to youth?" The survey has 182 total responses.
No (34.1%): Represented by the orange segment, this is the largest group, showing that a majority of respondents feel that political parties do not effectively address youth concerns.
Somewhat (31.3%): Represented by the yellow segment, this group suggests that a close percentage of respondents feel that political parties somewhat address youth issues, but not fully or satisfactorily.
Yes (29.1%): Represented by the blue segment, this group indicates that a smaller portion believes that political parties are effective in addressing youth concerns.
Not Sure (5.5%): Represented by the green segment, this is the smallest group, showing uncertainty or lack of strong opinion about the effectiveness of political parties in addressing youth concerns.
The majority of respondents are either dissatisfied or only partially satisfied with the political parties' efforts regarding youth issues.
A significant portion of the population (29.1%) thinks political parties are doing a good job, though it's smaller than the group that disagrees.
A small percentage is unsure, showing there might be a lack of awareness or engagement with the issue among some youth.
The chart reflects overall skepticism or mixed opinions about the effectiveness of political parties in addressing the priorities of young people.
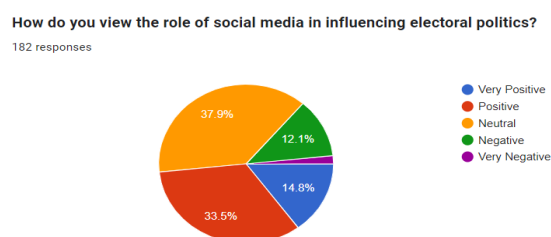
How do you view the role of social media in influencing electoral politics?
182 responses

- Very Positive
- Positive
- Neutral
- Negative
- Very Negative

37.9%

12.1%

14.8%

33.5%

Figure- 1.9 – (Distribution of respondents based on their understanding of the role of social media in influencing electoral

politics)

This chart represents the responses to the question: "How do you view the role of social media in influencing electoral politics?" with a total of 182 respondents.
Very Negative (37.9%): The orange segment is the largest, indicating that a significant portion of respondents view the role of social media in influencing electoral politics as very negative.
Negative (12.1%): Represented by the green segment, this group holds a negative view of social media's role, though it is smaller compared to the "very negative" group.
Neutral (33.5%): The yellow segment represents those who are neutral about the influence of social media in electoral politics. This suggests that a substantial portion neither views it as harmful nor beneficial.
Positive (14.8%): The red segment indicates those who view social media's influence as positive, though this is a relatively smaller group.
Very Positive (1.6%): The purple segment represents the smallest group, reflecting that only a few respondents see social media's influence as very positive.
The largest proportion of respondents (37.9%) view the role of social media in electoral politics as very negative, which suggests a widespread concern about its impact.
The next largest group is neutral (33.5%), indicating that a sizable segment of respondents remain impartial or uncertain about whether social media's influence is good or bad.
The positive and very positive views combined (16.4%) are held by a minority, implying that a smaller group believes social media contributes positively to electoral processes.
Overall, this data suggests that a significant number of respondents are skeptical or critical of the role social media plays in electoral politics, with fewer individuals seeing it in a positive light.
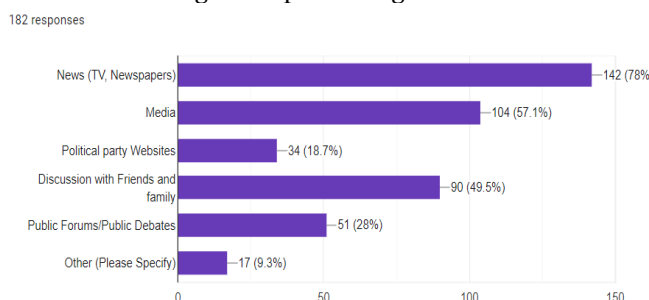
182 responses

Figure- 1.10 – (Distribution of respondents to find out their sources of information about political candidates and political

parties)

How do you usually get information about political candidates and political parties?
The graph represents the distribution of 182 responses to a question regarding the primary sources individuals use to receive information about political parties and electoral processes. Each bar represents the percentage and total count of respondents who rely on different sources for their political information.
News (TV, Newspapers) - 142 responses (78%) :This is the largest category, indicating that traditional media, including television and newspapers, is the most trusted or used source for political information among the respondents.
Social Media - 104 responses (57.1%) - This is the second most popular source, demonstrating the   significant role of social media platforms in shaping political opinions and disseminating information.
Discussion with Friends and Family - 90 responses (49.5%) - A considerable number of people rely on interpersonal discussions within their social circles for political information, indicating that word-of-mouth remains an important channel for political knowledge.
Public Forums/Public Debates - 51 responses (28%)- Around a quarter of respondents attend or engage with public forums or debates as a source of political information. This shows a smaller but notable interest in direct and open political discourse.
Political Party Websites - 34 responses (18.7%)- A smaller segment of the population directly engages with political party websites for information, suggesting that fewer people seek unfiltered data directly from party platforms.
Other - 17 responses (9.3%) - A minor group relies on alternative or unspecified sources for political information. These could include various niche platforms or offline resources.
Traditional media remains the most dominant source for political information, reflecting its sustained relevance despite the rise of digital and social media. Social media plays a crucial role, engaging more than half the respondents, which underscores its growing influence in political awareness and engagement. Discussions with friends and family suggest that social relationships still play a major role in shaping political views and decision-making. Public forums and debates

are less popular, which might indicate limited accessibility or interest in such engagements. The low engagement with political party websites suggests that most individuals prefer mediated or third-party channels for political information rather than direct engagement with party propaganda.

This data provides insights into how different media channels contribute to political knowledge, with a clear trend toward a combination of traditional media, social networks, and personal discussions.
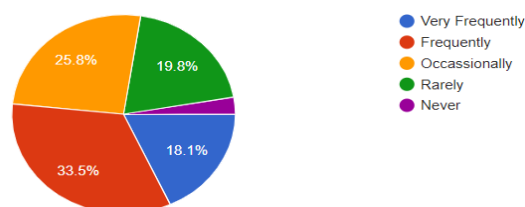

Figure- 1.11 – (Distribution of respondents based on their frequency of discussion of political issues with different sources)

This pie chart shows the frequency with which 182 respondents discuss political issues with their peers or family.
Frequently (33.5% - Red Section - The largest portion of respondents discuss political issues frequently. A third of the respondents, at 33.5%, feel comfortable engaging in political discussions regularly with their social or familial circles.
Occasionally (25.8% - Orange Section) - The second-largest group, at 25.8%, only discusses politics occasionally. This could indicate that while they may not actively avoid political discussions, they don't engage in them as consistently as those in the "Frequently" category.
Rarely (19.8% - Green Section) - A smaller but significant portion of respondents (19.8%) rarely talk about politics. They may avoid political conversations for various reasons, such as personal discomfort, lack of interest, or differing views.
Very Frequently (18.1% - Blue Section) - A minority (18.1%) of the participants discuss politics very frequently, showing a strong inclination towards engaging in political discourse with their peers or family.
Never (3.3% - Purple Section) - A small fraction (3.3%) never discuss political issues. These respondents might actively avoid political discussions entirely or simply have no interest in politics.

Observations:
A significant majority of respondents (33.5% frequently and 18.1% very frequently) engage in political discussions regularly. This indicates that politics is a common topic of conversation in these groups.
A smaller portion either rarely or never discusses political issues, which may reflect disengagement or hesitancy in engaging with political discourse.
This analysis highlights a general inclination towards discussing politics but also points to notable variance in the frequency of these conversations across different individuals.
Open ended Q.1: What Improvements would you suggest for increasing youth participation in   electoral politics?

Table: 1.1 (Total No. of Respondents: 182)

S. No	Major Categories	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Making voting mandatory for everyone.	50	27.5%
2.	Problems of youth to be addressed by government, example- Employment, Tax.	40	22%
3.	No nepotism in politics.	30	16.5%
4.	Awareness from school level	25	14%
5.	Value for vote, neutral political news.	20	11%
6.	Reducing muscle power in politics.	10	5.5%
7.	Introducing college& University students in politics.	07	4%

Analysis of Table 1.1: Youth Participation in Electoral Politics (Total No. of Respondents: 182)
The table presents insights into youth attitudes toward increasing participation in electoral politics, based on the percentage of respondents aligning with different categories of improvement.
Making voting mandatory (27.5%): This category received the highest percentage, indicating that a significant portion of respondents believes enforcing compulsory voting could drive higher engagement. The youth may feel that making voting an obligation would push them to be more responsible and involved.
Addressing youth-centric problems (22%): The second-highest response suggests that youths are looking for the government to prioritize issues like employment and tax reforms. This reflects a pragmatic view where young people are likely to participate if politics visibly responds to their challenges.
Eliminating nepotism in politics (16.5%): Nepotism is a notable concern, with many respondents believing it discourages fresh talent. This implies that young people are disillusioned with political dynasties and want a fairer, merit-based

system where opportunities are based on ability rather than connections.

Raising political awareness from the school level (14%): A significant number of respondents believe starting civic and political education early will lead to greater political involvement later in life. This reflects a belief in long-term, sustainable change, beginning with education.

Ensuring value for vote and neutral political news (11%): Respondents want a sense of trust and fairness in the electoral process, valuing impartial information. This suggests the need for depolarized, fact-based news to increase engagement and reduce skepticism toward politics.

Reducing muscle power in politics (5.5%): The low percentage here suggests that while it is an issue, the youth may see this as secondary to other concerns, or perhaps they feel this issue is less in their control compared to other points.

Involving college and university students (4%): This category is ranked lowest, which may indicate that while youth acknowledge the importance of student participation, it is not seen as an immediate or practical solution for increasing youth engagement at a larger scale.

2.3. Suggested Improvements to Increase Youth Participation

Prompting to vote Rather than Making it Mandatory: While making voting mandatory is seen as an effective measure by 27.5% of respondents, Encouraging voting through campaigns that highlight the power of individual votes and leveraging social media platforms popular with youth could also be effective.

Address Youth-Centric Issues in Policy: Since 22% of respondents feel youth-specific problems like unemployment and taxation should be prioritized, governments can increase engagement by actively addressing these concerns. This could include youth-targeted job schemes, tax benefits for young professionals, or creating dedicated forums where young people can raise their concerns and influence policy development.

Promote Meritocracy and Reduce Nepotism: To address the concerns of 16.5% of respondents regarding nepotism, political parties and institutions should promote a merit-based system. They could introduce transparency in candidate selection processes and create platforms for emerging young leaders without family ties in politics. Public campaigns showcasing young political leaders from non-political backgrounds could also inspire confidence in youth participation.

Integrate Political Education into School Curricula: As 14% of respondents support the idea of starting political awareness early, integrating civic education into school curricula is crucial. Schools can introduce programs focusing on democratic values, the electoral process, and political literacy, encouraging students to be more active citizens as they grow up. Mock elections, debates, and discussions about current political issues could foster early political engagement.

Promote Unbiased Political Information Platforms: To address the concerns of 11% of respondents who seek neutral political news, establishing or promoting media platforms that provide unbiased, fact-checked political information could reduce political disillusionment. Youth are more likely to engage when they trust the sources providing information, so transparency in media and accessible, digestible political content should be a priority.

Reduce the Influence of Muscle Power in Politics: Although only 5.5% of respondents emphasized reducing muscle power, addressing this issue is vital for creating a safer, more accessible political environment. Governments and electoral bodies can enforce strict laws against violence and intimidation in elections. Additionally, empowering youth-focused non-governmental organizations to monitor elections and report violence could encourage safer political participation.

Engage University Students in Politics: With only 4% of respondents favoring direct involvement of university students in politics, this area has untapped potential. Universities can create leadership programs that involve students in local governance or civic activities. Political parties can also target university campuses for recruitment drives, internships, and educational workshops that teach young people about political systems and leadership opportunities.

The data highlights key areas where improvements can be made to encourage youth participation in electoral politics. A combination of institutional reforms, educational initiatives, and better communication strategies can help foster greater political engagement among young people.

Open ended Q.2: Do you have any other comments or suggestions related to electoral politics and youth engagement?

Table 1.2: (Total No. of Respondents: 182)

S. NO.	Major Categories	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Focus on nation rather than Political parties.	55	3 30%
2	No corruption in EVM.	45	25%
	First past the post system must be changed.	30	16%
4	Engagement of youth in politics.	22	12%
5	Laws to curb the defamation of another party.	16	9%
6	Transparency and accountability In electoral process.	14	8%

This data captures youth opinions on how electoral politics and engagement could be improved, based on responses from 182 participants.

A significant portion of respondents (55, or 30%) believe the political discourse should prioritize national interests over individual party agendas. This suggests that young people may feel disillusioned by partisan politics and would rather see a unified, issue-centered approach focused on the nation's needs. This aligns with broader global trends where youth express a desire for practical solutions over ideological battles.

With 45 respondents (25%) raising concerns about EVM integrity, this category reflects the critical need for trust in the electoral process. Youth participants seem particularly sensitive to transparency, viewing EVM security as foundational for fair elections. This perception could stem from recurring narratives around EVM tampering, making it essential for electoral authorities to ensure and communicate EVM reliability to retain young voters' confidence.

Thirty respondents (16%) suggest the current electoral system is inadequate and call for reform. First-past-the-post (FPTP) often results in winner-takes-all outcomes, potentially marginalizing voices and reducing representation. These youth voices imply a preference for a more representative system, such as proportional representation, that could provide fairer outcomes and potentially enhance youth engagement by making every vote feel impactful.

Only 12% (22 respondents) directly advocate for youth engagement, yet it's notable that several other categories imply this indirectly. This relatively lower number suggests that while young people recognize the need for involvement, they might be uncertain about the means or specific areas in which to contribute. This data highlights the need for targeted programs or pathways to guide and encourage youth participation.

Sixteen respondents (9%) support laws against defamation among political parties, which reflects a concern for ethical discourse and perhaps the negative impact of mudslinging. This view highlights a desire for respectful dialogue and responsible communication, as constant inter-party defamation may reduce political credibility and alienate younger voters who may view it as unproductive.

Fourteen respondents (8%) prioritize transparency and accountability, underscoring the importance of an open electoral system. Transparency in campaigns, funding, and election management appears to be crucial to youth, who likely see it as a foundation for reducing corruption and increasing trust in governance. This viewpoint complements other categories like EVM integrity, signaling a broader interest in a clean electoral process.

These responses reflect a broad desire among youth for integrity, national focus, and meaningful representation in the political process. The focus on EVM security and system change suggests that young people may feel alienated from the current system, seeing reforms as necessary for building confidence. Political leaders could respond to these insights by fostering a more inclusive and transparent environment, ensuring that youth not only have the ability to participate but also feel their concerns are actively addressed.

3. Limitations of the study

The sample size is relatively small (182 respondents), yet through the method of purposive sampling it tries to justify its objective. Respondents were likely asked to self-assess their knowledge, which introduces potential bias. People might overestimate or underestimate their understanding, leading to inaccurate responses.

The study primarily focuses on quantitative data and to a very limited extent on the qualitative data. The data being quantitative captures percentages but not the nuances of why respondents feel motivated. Youth concerns and political issues can vary widely by region, especially in a diverse country. This study does not account for these potential regional differences, which may limit the applicability of the findings across different contexts.

The analysis suggests new measures but does not evaluate the impact of current policies or programs aimed at youth political participation. Understanding what is already working (or not) could offer a more targeted approach to improvements.

4. Conclusion

The study aims at comprehending The Electoral Process in India by researching on the Knowledge, Attitude and Practice among the youth of higher education institutions through structured questionnaire. It infers that the youth in higher education across varied educational backgrounds do possess knowledge of the electoral process in India and openly express their attitudes toward a more pragmatic approach of politics in nation building. It is further deciphered that the most looming concern of the student youth rest on the skepticism that is inherent in political practices pertaining to the issues of participation and involvement of youth. Second major concern expressed by them is about the lack of transparency and the dominance of nepotism in politics that deter the youth of humble background from actively participating in politics.

Thus, the study by taking into consideration the youth opinion tries to reflect that the participation of the student youth in the electoral process is not just desirable but necessary for the functionality and all round well-being of democracy. By empowering the youth to exercise their democratic rights, we can ensure a more inclusive, representative and responsive political system.

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