

**EMPOWERED YET PASSIVE: UNDERSTANDING YOUTH'S ATTITUDE
TOWARDS ELECTORAL POLITICS**

Project Report

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Under the guidance of

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**In partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of
BACHELOR OF COMMERCE**



**ST. TERESA'S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), ERNAKULAM
COLLEGE WITH POTENTIAL FOR EXCELLENCE**

Nationally Re-Accredited with A++ Grade

Affiliated to

Mahatma Gandhi University

Kottayam-686560

March-2026

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the project titled "**EMPOWERED YET PASSIVE: UNDERSTANDING YOUTH'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS ELECTORAL POLITICS**" submitted to Mahatma Gandhi University in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Degree of Bachelor in Commerce is a record of the original work done by **Ms. Noorul Fidha G, Ms. Risana Niyas, Ms. Christlyene M. Alexiouse**, under my supervision and guidance during the academic year 2025-26.

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We, **Ms. Noorul Fidha G, Ms. Risana Niyas, Ms. Christlyene M. Alexiouse**, final year B.Com students(Taxation), Department of Commerce (SF), St. Teresa's College (Autonomous) do hereby declare that the project report entitled “**EMPOWERED YET PASSIVE: UNDERSTANDING YOUTH’S ATTITUDE TOWARDS ELECTORAL POLITICS**” submitted to Mahatma Gandhi University is a bonafide record of the work done under the supervision and guidance of Ms. Maya Menon, Assistant Professor of Department of Commerce (SF), St. Teresa's College (Autonomous) and this work has not previously formed the basis for the award of any academic qualification, fellowship, or other similar title of any other university or board.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First of all, we are grateful to God Almighty for his blessings showered upon us for the successful completion of our project.

It is our privilege to place a word of gratitude to all persons who have helped us in the successful completion of the project.

We are grateful to our guide **Ms. Maya Menon**, Department of Commerce (SF) of St. Teresa's College (Autonomous), Ernakulam for her valuable guidance and encouragement for completing this work.

We would like to acknowledge **Dr. Anu Joseph**, Principal of St. Teresa's College (Autonomous), Ernakulam for providing necessary encouragement and infrastructure facilities needed for us.

We would like to thank **Smt. Lekshmi C**, Head of the Department, for her assistance and support throughout the course of this study for the completion of the project.

We will remain always indebted to our family and friends who helped us in the completion of this project.

Last but not the least; we would like to thank the respondents of our questionnaire who gave their precious time from work to answer our questions.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction:

In recent years, many democratic societies across the world have experienced a growing concern regarding the declining participation of young people in the voting process. Although young voters constitute a significant proportion of the population, their voter turnout rates remain consistently lower than those of older generations. This pattern of disengagement has drawn the attention of policymakers, researchers, and civil society organizations, as it raises important questions about the future strength and sustainability of democratic systems. When young citizens choose not to participate in elections, their voices, concerns, and perspectives risk being underrepresented in political decision-making.

Several factors contribute to this lack of interest in voting among young people. Political disillusionment, limited political awareness, and a general lack of trust in political leaders and institutions play a major role in shaping youth attitudes toward elections. Many young voters believe that political systems fail to address their real-world challenges, such as unemployment, education quality, economic insecurity, and social inequality. Additionally, the perception that a single vote has little impact on election outcomes further discourages participation, leading to voter apathy and disengagement from civic duties.

The influence of modern communication and digital media has also reshaped how young people engage with politics. While social media provides easier access to political information and discussions, it can also contribute to misinformation, polarization, and superficial engagement, which may weaken genuine political involvement. As a result, many young individuals remain politically aware but electorally inactive.

Addressing the issue of youth disengagement is crucial for the health of democracy. Active participation of young voters is essential to ensure inclusive representation

and the development of policies that reflect the needs, aspirations, and expectations of future generations. Encouraging youth involvement in the electoral process can strengthen democratic values, promote accountability, and foster a more engaged and responsible citizenry.

1.2 Statement of the Problem:

Youth is a large and important segment of the population; however, they have consistently been on the lower end of electoral participation. A significant number of youth disengage from voting as many look down on politics as corrupt, irrelevant or impotent. This disengagement poses a threat to our democracy because youth voices are vastly underrepresented among our decision makers. Therefore, sustaining democracy hinges on understanding why youth do not engage in participatory action and how to motivate young voters to take action to participate in politics and voting.

1.3 Scope of the Study:

This study examines the typical demographic of individuals aged 18-25 and assesses the reasons that contribute to their disinterest in voting. It investigates their political awareness and trust level in the system, as well as the effect of social media and examines those who have made attempts to get our youth to vote during an election and provides recommendations on how to enhance more young voters engaging in the democratic process.

1.4 Objectives of the Study:

1. To investigate the awareness of urban youth towards politics.

In this objective, we will look at what young people know about the voting process, political parties, and political issues.

2. To explore the reasons for low youth participation in elections.

What contributes to feelings of apathy, disinterest, distrust in politicians, other pressing activities that occupy young people's time, or feelings that their vote doesn't matter?

3. To explore the role of social media and digital technology in youth participation in politics.

Does engagement through platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, or YouTube to talk of politics and voting; enhance or decrease interest in political engagement?

4. To explore the impact education has on civic responsibility.

Is civic responsibility being well taught within our schools or colleges, or are we failing again to educate our students on the importance of voting?

5. To investigate young people's views toward elections and political leaders.

Are young people feel represented or feel it is not relevant to them by the current political leaders we have?

6. To identify strategies and recommendations for youth participation in elections.

Using the previous sections findings, we will look to provide solutions and practical recommendations to improve and increase voter turnout amongst youth.

1.5 Research Methodology

This section describes the methodology that was followed for the conduct of research, including design, sample, data sources, and data analysis processes and tools. The objective of this study is to explore the level of political awareness and voter engagement of urban youth in a specific sample of the age cohort 18–25 years located in the city of Ernakulam.

1.5.1 Research Design

The overall methodology for the research is descriptive and analytical. The study is seeking to describe the barriers to current voting decisions and choices, attitudes, and reasons for apathy towards the political process among a sample of young Indian

voters and analyse the relationships between various contributing factors such as education, social media, peer, influence and level of awareness.

The study will utilise primary and secondary data:

- Primary data was provided through a structured survey questionnaire sent out online using Google Forms.
- Secondary data was provided from articles, reports and government websites (Election Commission of India) as well as from online resources (news portals, blogs, journals) to confirm and support the findings of the study.

1.5.2 Sample Design and Size

- Sampling Method: Convenience sampling was used to select respondents, mainly students from urban areas in Ernakulam city, as participants.
- Sample Size: 80 to 100 respondents aged 18-25 years.
- Sample Area: Colleges or higher educational institutions in and around Ernakulam city, Kerala.
- Sampling Unit: Individual students who are eligible to vote or will be eligible to vote in the upcoming elections.

1.5.3 Gathering of Data

Primary Data:

Data was collected from a structured questionnaire which was developed in Google Forms. This questionnaire had some close-ended and open-ended questions concerning:

- voter registration
- voting behavior
- political awareness
- usage of social media
- reasons for voting or not voting
- recommendations for engaging youth participation

Secondary Data:

From the following sources secondary data was collected:

- government sites (like eci.gov.in)
- report or survey conducted after the last elections
- news reports or random choices from internet polls
- research papers and articles on youth political behaviour yielded

1.5.4 Research Instruments Used in Data Collection and Analysis

Questionnaire:

The main research tool was an online questionnaire created on Google Forms to gather quantitative and qualitative data. It asked respondents to answer multiple-choice, Likert scale, and open-ended questions about voting behaviour and opinions.

Analysis Tools:

- Microsoft Excel and Google Sheets were utilized to tabulate and analyse responses.
- Visual representations of the data were pie charts, bar graphs, and percentages.
- Descriptive analysis was conducted to explain trends, patterns, and the insights generated from data collection.

1.6 Limitations:

1. Restricted Sample Size: The views of just a section or area of young people this study relies on may not provide the entire spectrum of young people's demographics.
2. Self-Reported Survey Responses: Respondents may not be entirely truthful in their response if not interested in the study or wanting to represent themselves in a positive manner.

3. Limited Timeframe of the Survey: This study's youth survey respondents may have their perspectives determined by current events.

4. Difficulty in Accessing Participants: Young people who are politically apathetic are not going to be easy to contact which is limiting the full spectrum of views readily accessed.

5. Other Circumstances: The amount of value assigned to voting interest may be shaped by social, economic, and culture issues outside the aims of this study.

1.7 Chapter Outline

This research study has been presented in five chapters. Each part of the study has a significant role in the completion of study. Here are the chapter segregation followed for the study.

1.7.1 Introduction

1.7.2 Literature Review

1.7.3 Theoretical Framework

1.7.4 Data Analysis and Interpretation

1.7.5 Findings, Recommendations and Conclusion

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 International Level

2.1.1 Youth Voting Behaviour - Insights from Pew Research Centre (2023)

Pew Research Centre research indicates youth political engagement with a tapestry of optimism, economic struggle, and generational change. Paul Taylor states that even while young adults vote fewer times historically than just about any cohort in US history, as affected by the post-2008 dip in citizen engagement, they clearly have normal political dispositions. The study demonstrates that while the extent of these potential midlife problems for youth could lead to some obvious generational conflict, in fact, youth today are relatively harmonious in their interactions with their parents.

Taylor's conclusions include potential future use of social and digital media concerning future voting behaviour, identifying whether online spaces will promote echo chambers or promote exposure to opposing viewpoints. While cynicism concerning local and national government positions is relatively high, and while distrust occurs within established government systems, the long-standing optimism and adaptive capabilities of future generations provide evidence to potentially suggest capacity for civic engagement along the same lines, barriers should not only be overcome communicatively, but also structurally.

2.1.2 Youth Voting Behaviour - The European Parliament IPOL Report (2019)

The IPOL report produced by the European Parliament provides an important critical intervention into youth political participation in Europe. The report acknowledges low participation rates in institutional forms of politics but asserts that this does not reflect a lack of interest, rather it highlights broader structural/ conceptual issues. In the report's view, a liberal democratic agenda and static forms of public political expression offers limited perspectives for youth. Young people's engagement with politics relies on increasingly complex networks, primarily driven by peer relationships and social media.

An assessment of participation for young people often draws on similar patterns of disillusionment/disengagement and lack of trust with political institutions. These observations confirm a lack of realization that multiple factors are blocking meaningful participation for youth participants in decision making processes.

They stress that definitions of political participation must reflect a young person's existence and lived experiences and reflect their multiple socio-economic realities. However an important point is they call for thoughtful consideration on how young people are included in decision/ policy making.

2.1.3 Youth Voting Behaviour in Canada – Findings from Elections Canada Report (2018)

The Elections Canada report on youth electoral engagement is a rigorous exposé of the declining voter turnout of younger Canadians, along with the many factors that contribute to this decline. The report states that younger Canadians are like older Canadians in most respect. Furthermore, the report details how turnout has declined substantially among newly eligible voters from over 60% turnout to just above 30%. This statistic suggests that there has been a generational change in the norm of political engagement for younger Canadians.

The report highlights that low youth turnout is not simply a function of youth apathy, but is tied to socio-demographic change, changes in values, and limited political interest and information. The report also emphasizes the limitations of survey data, which may point to problems with the representation of survey data for non-voters, and recommends the collection of more rigorous data that leans more heavily on administrative data and experimental studies. The report laid out suggestions for measures - test different types of digital contact and various forms of voting such as online voting. All in all, the report calls for much more timely, multi-modal research.

2.1.4 The Youth Voting Experience in Australia - Reflections on the AEC's YES Report (2002)

The Australian Electoral Commission's (AEC) YES ('Youth, Political Participation and Voting') project explored the reasons why many young Australians, with voting being compulsory, may not register or vote. The YES report points out that 17-25 year-olds have an enrolment rate of about 82% suggesting the onset of disengagement from the political process as the first stage of decision-making in these young people's electoral experience.

The YES report categorizes a range of demographic, educational, family and socio-psychological factors which influenced young people's enrolment and voting behaviour. The motivation to register and vote differs by personal context (family, school etc.), where civic knowledge and political norms are learnt.

In a useful methodological contribution to the debate and misunderstanding of young people returning an inaccurate self-report of turnout behaviour, the follow-up analysed administrative 'mark-off' data in the AEC records of young non-voters. This analysis indicates a pattern of high turnout (only after one's enrolment) in younger age groups, especially for the 18-19 year-olds, but turnout declines over the following decades, only to rise again in the 40 years plus age bracket. This is age

effect, because the broader generation effects membership shifts. That is, cohorts will tend to have similar turnout patterns and behaviours as they age.

2.1.5 Youth Voting Behaviour in South Africa – Perspectives from the EISA 2024 Report (2019)

The research prepared by EISA for the year 2024 looks critically at the complexities involved in understanding electoral behaviour among youth in South Africa, and suggests systemic disengagement, rather than apathy. While around 42% of registered voters are less than 40 years old, only 32% of political candidates come from that cohort, demonstrating a mismatch between youth representation in demographics and politics. In youth disengagement surveys, we now see institutional distrust, the perception that voting fails to create an impact, and unmet socio-economic needs of unemployment and inadequate service delivery are convincing youth to engage civically in other ways, namely protests and digital continent engagement, such as global climate action movements associated with Fridays for Future.

But youth are not deliberately disengaged – youth clearly want their vote to count and make sustainable changes based on survey responses to questions representing feelings of apathy, consider the increase in support for the EFF and other opposition parties among the youth cohort.

Ultimately, the evidence presents youth abstention as a rational response to disillusionment and socio-economic frustration rather than disengagement. Addressing youth turnout requires systemic changes: improving representational fairness, lowering registration barriers, enhancing accountability in governing, and directing youth political energy toward elections instead of protests.

2.1.6 Youth Involvement and Voting Age: Evidence from South Korea by Sungmin Cho (University of Michigan) (2024)

Research on youth voting practices and behaviour in South Korea identifies complications related to civic education; generational, regional, and demographic divides; and developing tensions in gender and income inequality. Regional divides in South Korea, historically divided between Honam and Yeongnam, have consistently framed electoral preferences, with generational divide further complicating the landscape. Younger generations typically have a different political orientation than seniors or mid-career generations influenced by the democratic transition (with the involvement of the IMF) and increasing media activity.

Recent articles have recorded a movement to increasing gender polarization, especially among youth voters in their 20s and 30s. Researchers have reflected by writing about an increase in anti-feminist tendencies among young males that encourage consistent support for conservative parties, while young females continue

to work towards progressive options. The structure of gender tension in South Korea emphasizes unresolved and embedded inequalities, along with uncertainty and competition for jobs that promote social justice advocacy. Furthermore, the conversational tone of income inequality and economic precarity discourages youth turnout from lower-income youth who tend not to be politically active because they feel excluded from politics or lost to disproportionate stress. Researchers state those concerns lead to political apathy or only participate through “protests.”

2.2 National Level

2.2.1 The Observer Research Foundation (ORF) article : Enhancing Urban Youth Participation in Indian Democracy (2020)

The report discusses the ongoing disconnect between India's young population and its largely aging political leadership. Even though it is one of the youngest nations in the world, with a median age of about 28 years, only 12% of Members of Parliament in the 17th Lok Sabha had an age below 40. The article points out that political parties tend to heighten their contact with young people as voters only during election campaigns and with limited sustained activity after that. Consequently, critical youth concerns like work, quality education, mental health, and housing affordability are often relegated to the background in policymaking.

According to the article, the absence of continuous conversation is responsible for youth disillusionment and lack of confidence in mainstream political mechanisms, especially in cities. To bridge this gap, the ORF advises sustained, issue-oriented interaction with the youth, empowering young party leaders, and establishing forums where young citizens may contribute substantively to democratic decision-making. Enhancing representation of young citizens and resolutions of issues affecting them outside the confines of electoral cycles is seen as the key to a more representative and inclusive Indian democracy.

2.2.2 Centre for Public Policy Research (CPPR) report: Do Young Indians Participate in Elections? (2019)

The report examines trends in Indian youth voter turnout from 2009 to 2019. The research points to an encouraging jump in youth voter turnout from 58% in 2009 to 68% in 2014, but then remaining stuck at nearly 67% in 2019. This stagnation is explained by a range of factors such as internal migration, procedural issues in the voter registration process—especially among the first-time voters aged 18–19—and weak implementation of Electoral Literacy Clubs (ELCs) at colleges and educational institutions." The report highlights that even with increasing awareness, structural and logistical challenges remain in preventing complete youth involvement in the electoral process. CPPR suggests addressing these by institutionalizing ELCs in

educational institutions and making voter awareness campaigns, particularly targeting new voters, more robust. The study highlights the need for continued civic education and systemic changes to better engage India's youth electorate.

2.2.3 The India Today piece entitled: Why the Youth Vote Matters (2017)

The report analyses the increasing political attention on youth concerns, especially unemployment, during recent election campaigns. The article brings to light how prominent parties are increasingly framing their manifestos to address young voters' concerns, with Congress's "Yuva Nyay" initiative being cited as a prime example of this trend. The initiative seeks to create opportunities for jobs, training of skills, and provision of funds to youth who are unemployed, representing an effort to reach an important demographic.

Still, even with such focused efforts, the article states that close to 60% of unemployed youth blame both state and central governments for not offering them adequate opportunities. The perception reflects a broader disillusionment with governance and questioning of the capability of political institutions to honour commitments. The sense of gap between what is promised during campaign speeches and what is implemented creates political cynicism among the youth, resulting in decreased voting turnout and disengagement from democratic processes. India Today posits that if political parties go beyond tokenism and make significant, sustained change, the increasing disillusionment among young voters could go on to undermine India's democratic engagement.

2.2.4 ResearchGate: Part of Media in Political Participation of the Youth in India (2023)

This scholarly composition discusses the vital part of media, particularly online spots, in India's youth political participation. It highlights how youthful choosers' involvement with popular processes is told by political communication strategies employing buzzwords, crusade taglines, and picky messaging. The study points out the Aam Aadmi Party's 2020 Delhi election crusade as a good case of using media to engage and rally youthful pickers. In well-drafted content, the crusade was successful in speaking to youth issues, especially on education, jobs, and megacity-state governance, and hence inspiring active participation. The study points out that digital media's capability to raise youth political engagement is high but subject to conditions. It makes the case that issue-grounded messaging, whereby authentic and critical problems of youthful citizens are dealt with, is more effective than shallow or sensational content that doesn't have substantial depth. The authors advise against the abuse of catchy taglines or viral trends with little substance, as they risk not being suitable to maintain long-term engagement. Overall, the study emphasizes the significance of political actors and agents coming up with genuine,

meaningful narratives on the Internet to produce a more active and informed youth name base in India.

2.3 State level

2.3.1 Youth Voter Disengagement in Kerala compliances from Kerala Kaumudi and Global Patterns (2012)

In an composition from Kerala Kaumudi(January 6, 2025) Chief Electoral Officer, Rathan U. Kelkar indicates that a stunning 70 of youth who turned 18 between January 2024 and January 2025 didn't register on the electoral roll; about 296,552 of nearly 1 million eligible youth enrolled. The report cites political disaffection, out of state migratory youth, and dropped visibility in original crusade enterprise as considerations. It also indicates a dwindling interest in registering to bounce overall; especially, after espousing process reliant on Aadhaar identification systems. In response, Kerala's Election Commission plans to bring in an agency to study the causes and to make recommendations — the plan is to start this process as an action of National Voter's Day with the end of maybe attracting youth through accessible and engaged outreach.

2.3.2 Survey-Driven Electoral Interventions: The Hindu on Kerala's Youth Voter Apathy (2018)

In an article by The Hindu (May 29, 2025), Kerala's Chief Electoral Officer Rathan U. Kelkar writes about a Youth Voter Participation and Electoral Awareness Survey that is currently ongoing to understand voter apathy among 18–30-year-olds. The responses received so far indicate a lack of interest and awareness of the voting process; thus, there are recommendations to engage more through social media and reach out to colleges. The survey, which is part of the States' Systematic Voter's Education & Electoral Participation programme (SVEEP), will also improve enrolment engagement with minority groups, including Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs), scheduled caste (SC) communities, persons with disabilities, senior citizens (85+), and transgender voters. The goal is to improve voter turnout participation, promote democratic engagement, and improve representation for all of Kerala.

2.3.3 Mathrubhumi Covers Youth Voter Reluctance: Examining Participation Gaps in Kerala. (2021)

In an article published in Mathrubhumi (January 7, 2025), Kerala's Chief Electoral Officer Dr. Rathan U. Kelkar explains a state effort to explore the reasons young people as is determined to register and vote. The survey, which targets citizens aged 18-30 years, will examine reasons for reluctance including low interest and electoral registration and logistics challenges, with students and those working outside Kerala being especially regarded. There are currently about 44 lakh youth eligible to vote,

but registered for voting is about 1.07% in the 18-19 year period. The current plan will involve increasing awareness through campus outreach initiatives, offering opportunities for electoral literacy, and using their platforms in social media. The information received from the survey will help inform approaches to improve youth enrolment and voter participation measured against the upcoming assembly elections.

2.3.4 Migration and Demographic Change: New Indian Express on Kerala's Declining Young Voter Base. (2020)

An analysis in the April 20, 2024 New Indian Express outlines how migration trends are eroding Kerala's young voter base substantially. According to the data presented in the article, between 2019 and 2024, the number of voters aged 18-19 declined slightly, while voters aged 20-29 and 30-39 groups declined by approximately 2.5 lakh and 3 lakh voters respectively. According to experts, this decline is attributed not only to migration, but also population decline, reduction in family size and reduction of grassroots engagement by some political parties with young people. Migration scholar S. Irudaya Rajan explains that many youth relocate abroad after their plus two, resulting in deletions from the voters lists. Meanwhile, analyst J. Prabhash mentions shrinking local-level recruiting effort to register and mobilise younger voters, indicating a general disengagement and institutional neglect.

2.3.5 Kerala experiences low voter turnout in 2024: CPPR report on youth disengagement, electoral trends. (2015)

In an article published by the Centre for Public Policy Research (CPPR) on April 27, 2024 D. Dhanuraj comments on the uncharacteristically low voter turnout in Kerala for the 2024 general elections. The state mounted an aggressive electoral campaign, but ultimately voter turnout was around 72% turnout compared to 77.84% in 2019. CPPR attributes the voter turnout decline to a number of factors, including post-COVID demographic shifts, student emigration abroad, shifts in political attitudes, diminishing outreach by organizations, and no “Modi wave.” Low turnout appeared to hurt the United Democratic Front (UDF) more than the Left Democratic Front (LDF), and low turnout worked in the LDF's favour in traditional UDF strongholds.

2.4. Summing up

Research in global, national, and Kerala contexts indicates that low youth voter turnout reflects structural obstacles, a distrust of institutions, unmet socio-economic expectations, and broken political promises, rather than apathy. Young people continue to engage through alternative forms of activism—such as protests, peer relationships, and online participation— however, their participation in the electoral

process in formal ways faces barriers of process, migration, an absence of civic education, and superficial outreach. Research of youth political engagement in the recent past shows that converting youth political interests into habitual voting requires authentic sustained involvement, straightforward registration, inclusive representation, and issue-based political messaging.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Young Political Apathy in Urban India

- Low priority for politics – For many young people in India’s urban areas, politics does not occupy a central place in their daily lives. Their main concerns often revolve around education, career-building, and personal development, leaving limited space for civic duties like voting. As a result, participation in elections is seen as less urgent compared to securing internships, clearing competitive exams, or gaining work experience. This shift in priorities reflects how individual aspirations outweigh collective responsibilities in modern urban life.
- Disillusionment with leaders – A recurring reason behind apathy is the widespread disillusionment with politicians and governance. Many urban youth believe that leaders are more concerned with personal gain, wealth accumulation, and power politics rather than genuine public service. This belief weakens their motivation to participate, as they question the value of casting a vote in a system they feel is inherently flawed. Such scepticism reduces both political engagement and trust in democratic institutions.
- Preference for activism over voting – Interestingly, political apathy does not always mean complete disengagement. Instead of engaging with formal institutions, many young people prefer alternative forms of activism such as online petitions, social media campaigns, or issue-based protests. They believe these methods are quicker, more visible, and more effective in influencing change compared to the slow processes of elections and governance. This indicates a redirection of political energy rather than its absence.
- Time and convenience issues – Another factor driving apathy is the lack of convenience in the voting process. Young urban citizens, particularly students and early-career professionals, often have packed schedules that leave little room for travel to polling stations. If they live or work in a different city than their registered constituency, the effort required to return and vote becomes a significant obstacle. Consequently, voting day is often sacrificed in favour of personal or academic commitments.
- Focus on global issues – Urban youth today are more globally connected than ever before, consuming news and ideas from across the world. This exposure makes them more engaged with international issues such as climate change, gender equality, or social justice movements. While these issues are important, they often divert attention away from local politics and electoral participation. As a result, young voters may feel disconnected from the immediate political environment of their constituencies.

- Cultural shift in engagement – Finally, there has been a broader cultural change in how youth perceive politics. In many urban circles, politics is seen as “dirty,” “boring,” or overly complicated, leading to disengagement. Social media, entertainment, and digital culture occupy a greater share of their interests and conversations, reducing the role of traditional politics in their lives. This cultural shift makes apathy not just a matter of convenience, but also one of perception and identity.

3.2 Barriers to Youth Voting

- Lack of awareness about registration – One of the most basic barriers is that many eligible young people do not know how to register to vote. Despite being educated and digitally active, a surprising number of first-time voters remain unaware of voter ID procedures, enrolment deadlines, and electoral roll verification. This lack of knowledge results in low enrolment rates, particularly among 18–19-year-olds, who often miss their first opportunity to vote. Without proper awareness campaigns, this trend continues across election cycles.
- Migration and mobility challenges – India’s urban youth are highly mobile, frequently moving to different states for higher education, jobs, or competitive exams. This mobility makes it difficult for them to cast their vote in their home constituencies, as voting still requires physical presence. Many are unwilling or unable to spend money and time traveling long distances just to vote, leading to a significant drop in participation. Migration, both within India and abroad, thus creates a structural gap in youth voting.
- Cumbersome administrative processes – Even when young people want to participate, they are often discouraged by complicated administrative hurdles. Errors in voter ID cards, misspelled names, or missing entries in electoral rolls create frustration. While online services exist, they are not always user-friendly or error-free, and rectifying mistakes may require repeated visits to government offices. This bureaucratic inefficiency discourages many young people from pursuing their voting rights.
- Distrust in institutions – Beyond logistical challenges, there is a deeper psychological barrier in the form of institutional distrust. Young voters often believe that their single vote will not bring meaningful change, especially in a system perceived as corrupt or biased. This feeling of powerlessness reduces motivation to register or participate. Over time, this distrust reinforces political apathy, creating a cycle that is difficult to break.
- Limited political outreach to youth – Political parties in India have historically focused more on older, reliable voter bases such as rural communities, women’s groups, and senior citizens. Youth-specific issues like employment,

education quality, and mental health often receive less attention during campaigns. As a result, young voters feel overlooked and undervalued, which further discourages them from participating in elections. A lack of targeted outreach reduces both trust and engagement.

- **Social media distractions** – Social media has emerged as both a source of political information and a barrier. While it increases awareness, it also spreads misinformation, half-truths, and polarized narratives. Many young people consume political content online but fail to translate this into real-world action like voting. In fact, online debates and reposts often replace actual participation, creating the illusion of political engagement without any tangible outcome.
- **Economic and academic pressures** – For students and young professionals, daily pressures often overshadow civic responsibilities. College exams, job deadlines, and financial constraints make voting seem less important compared to immediate survival and success. Many youths view politics as a long-term issue, while their present concerns demand immediate attention. This mindset delays their political participation until much later in life, if at all.
- **Absence of convenient voting options** – Unlike some countries that allow postal or online voting, Indian elections require physical presence at polling booths. This lack of flexibility disadvantages students, migrants, and working professionals who cannot travel back home during elections. With no alternative mechanisms, many willing young voters are effectively excluded from the process. This structural gap continues to be one of the most significant barriers to youth participation.

3.3 Trust in Political Institutions and Leadership

- **Perception of corruption** – A central factor influencing youth disengagement is the belief that politics in India is dominated by corruption and nepotism. From vote-buying scandals to misuse of public funds, these issues create a negative perception among the younger generation. When politics is equated with dishonesty, many youths conclude that participating in elections only legitimizes a flawed system. This erodes both motivation and faith in democratic institutions.
- **Lack of representation** – Another key issue is that political leadership often fails to reflect the demographics of young India. Most elected representatives are significantly older, with limited understanding of the challenges faced by today's youth. This generational gap creates the impression that young people are not adequately represented in decision-making processes. The absence of relatable leaders makes it harder for youth to trust the system.
- **Unmet promises** – Political campaigns frequently make promises targeted at young voters, particularly on issues like employment, education reforms, and digital infrastructure. However, the repeated failure to deliver on these promises creates

frustration and cynicism. Youth begin to see manifestos as empty words rather than actionable commitments. This weakens the trust needed to sustain consistent participation.

- **Partisan polarization** – Aggressive party politics and divisive rhetoric have also alienated many young voters. Youth in urban areas often value inclusivity, diversity, and issue-based solutions, but political discourse is increasingly marked by polarization and hostility. This mismatch makes the younger generation reluctant to engage with parties that seem more interested in attacking opponents than addressing real problems.
- **Weak local governance** – Local-level governance has a direct impact on urban youth, particularly in areas such as transport, waste management, and city infrastructure. However, poor municipal services and weak accountability discourage trust in the political system. When even small, everyday governance issues remain unresolved, young voters doubt whether higher-level politics can be effective.
- **Declining credibility of institutions** – Institutions such as legislative assemblies, election commissions, and even courts have faced criticism for inefficiency or political bias. Such controversies diminish their credibility in the eyes of youth, who are already skeptical about traditional politics. As trust in institutions weakens, so does the motivation to participate in electoral processes.
- **Contrast with activism** – Interestingly, young people tend to trust non-political organizations like NGOs, social movements, and online communities more than political parties. This indicates that they are not disengaged from public life, but rather redirecting their trust toward alternative channels. The contrast between mistrust in formal institutions and faith in grassroots activism highlights the need for reforms in political leadership.
- **Need for relatable leaders** – Finally, youth engagement could improve significantly if more relatable, tech-savvy, and empathetic leaders emerged. Leaders who communicate directly through platforms young people use, and who genuinely address their issues, are more likely to gain trust. The current scarcity of such figures reinforces disengagement but also presents an opportunity for renewal in Indian politics.

3.4 Role of education and awareness:

In order to combat the growing disengagement of youth from voting, we must engage in educational and awareness campaigns. There are far too many youth who feel disengaged from politics due to a lack of understanding about how their political system works and how government can and will affect them. The failure is not on the youth, it is on the educational system's lack of attention to civic education, and

when they offer classes, they do not often provide engagement that resonates with youth. Moreover, there needs to be civic education offered that is directly related to their lives such as registering to vote, what different political offices do, and how policy-related decisions impact education, climate change, jobs, healthcare and other issues. Awareness has to be developed outside the classroom, and social media campaigns, youth-led forums, and public conversations should attempt to make politics engaging and easier to understand and digest for youth. Using influencers, activists and public figures who are recognizable and trusted by the audience explaining the message of power in one vote and to encourage youth to consider their call to vote would also help build a civic culture with youth.

Raising political consciousness through participation and engagement is just as important as education. We want young people to be inquisitive, think critically, and problem-solve, rather than just passively accept political narratives and numbly receiving information. Media literacy is particularly important at a time when misinformation can spread so quickly online. But if we prepare them to distinguish between factual information and propaganda, and to assess evidence, they are less likely to be manipulated or discouraged in participating. Schools and colleges can offer additional ways to promote engagement through simulated elections, debates, model parliaments, and by facilitating interactions between young voters and local political leaders or elected officials. These experiences allow students, pre-election and pre-voting, to understand the democratic process and affirm that their opinions matter.

Numerous young people feel that their vote does not count, and believe the political system is corrupt or not meeting their needs. This feeling of disillusionment can be difficult to address, but it can only be alleviated through transparent work to rebuild trust. Providing transparency in administration, involving youth voices in the decision making process, and highlighting positive youth movements to restore faith in the system are all helpful. Proof of concept - Providing a safe space that brings young people together to share their thoughts and opinions without judgment and to demonstrate that young people's views are being taken seriously is also very important in making young people feel part of the process. Overall, education, awareness and the next steps can help transition young people from being passive observers into active participants. Educated, engaged, and feeling that their voice truly matters means young people will be far more likely to engage in elections and contribute to building their societies future.

3.5 Impact of Media and Technology:

Media and technology have a complicated, yet impactful influence on young people's attitudes toward voting. In this electronic age, young people are more connected than at any time in history, constantly engaging with political content

from smartphones, social media, online news, and video choreography. Although this connectedness can serve as a tremendous opportunity for young people to be informed or involved in the political process, it can also contribute to rising complacency, disorganization, and disillusion with the electoral system. As a result, both media and technology can engage young people politically, while also discouraging participation based on their affordances and how young people choose to interact with them.

On the plus side, media and technology give young people twice the access to information as past generations. Young people, in contrast to previous generations who read the newspaper or watched the nightly news, can engage with updates as they happen, watch debates, seek out differing viewpoints, and communicate with politicians themselves via social media—Instagram, YouTube, X (formerly Twitter), TikTok and etcetera. Because of social media, it is easier for young people to learn and engage with issues that matter to them, climate change, LGBTQ+ rights, mental health, and education, and in that engagement become activists encouraging voting as a way to improve those problems.

Influencers and celebrities with large followings often use their platforms to promote voter registration drives and raise awareness about elections, helping to normalize political participation among younger demographics.

Moreover, technology has made the voting process more accessible in many countries. Online voter registration, election reminder apps, and digital platforms that explain political issues in simple, engaging formats have all helped reduce barriers to participation. Young voters who might have previously found politics overwhelming or irrelevant can now learn about candidates, party positions, and election procedures at their own pace and in ways that suit their digital habits. In this sense, media and technology have the power to transform passive observers into active citizens—if used effectively.

However, despite these benefits, there are significant downsides that contribute to youth disengagement from voting. One of the biggest challenges is the spread of misinformation and fake news, which is rampant across social media platforms. Young people who rely heavily on these platforms may struggle to distinguish credible sources from biased or false information. This confusion can lead to frustration, cynicism, and ultimately, political disengagement. Many young individuals report feeling overwhelmed by the volume of contradictory political content they encounter online, which makes it difficult for them to form clear opinions or make informed voting decisions.

Another concern is the way algorithms on social media create “echo chambers,” where users are mostly exposed to content that aligns with their existing beliefs. This limits exposure to diverse perspectives and can reinforce political polarization,

reducing the likelihood of meaningful dialogue or critical thinking. Furthermore, the constant barrage of negative news—ranging from political scandals to government failures—can foster a sense of hopelessness among young people. They may begin to view the political system as corrupt, inefficient, or disconnected from their needs, leading to a belief that their vote won't make a difference.

In addition, many political parties and candidates fail to effectively use media and technology to engage youth. Traditional campaign strategies often overlook the preferences and concerns of young voters, relying on outdated messaging styles or ignoring digital platforms altogether. When political content feels out of touch or irrelevant, youth are less likely to pay attention or feel motivated to participate in elections.

In conclusion, media and technology have a dual impact on youth interest in voting. While they offer powerful tools for political education and engagement, they also pose serious risks when misused or poorly managed. To encourage greater youth participation in elections, it is essential to promote digital literacy, create accurate and engaging political content, and build online spaces where young people can explore political issues openly and responsibly. Only then can media and technology serve as a force for democratic empowerment rather than disconnection.

3.6 Factors influencing Youth Voting Behaviour:

Voting behaviour among youth is shaped by a complex mix of social, psychological, political, and technological factors. Understanding these influences is essential in addressing why many young people are disinterested or disengaged from the electoral process. One of the most significant factors is political socialization, which refers to how individuals form political opinions based on their family, education, peers, and media exposure. If a young person grows up in an environment where political discussion is rare or viewed negatively, they are less likely to develop a habit of political engagement, including voting. Conversely, when parents and teachers actively discuss political issues, or when schools prioritize civic education, young people are more likely to understand the importance of participating in democracy.

Another major influence is education level. Studies consistently show that youth with higher levels of education are more likely to vote. This is not just because they may better understand the system, but also because education fosters critical thinking, awareness of rights, and a stronger sense of responsibility toward society. Unfortunately, many young people—especially in underprivileged communities—lack access to quality civic education or are not taught the practical importance of voting. As a result, they may view elections as irrelevant or inaccessible.

Socioeconomic status also plays a key role. Youth from lower-income backgrounds often face challenges that make voting less of a priority. They may be more focused on immediate concerns such as employment, housing, or financial stability, and may not see how voting will impact these struggles in a meaningful way. In some cases, young people may feel that politicians do not represent their interests, which reinforces the belief that voting is pointless. This perception is worsened when political campaigns focus on older voters or ignore issues that directly affect youth, such as student debt, mental health, climate change, and job opportunities.

Trust in government and political institutions is another critical factor. Many young people are sceptical of politicians and view the system as corrupt, inefficient, or out of touch with reality. This lack of trust discourages them from participating in elections, as they feel their vote will not lead to meaningful change. Negative media coverage of politics, constant political scandals, and partisan conflict can contribute to this disillusionment. When young people repeatedly see politicians making promises but failing to deliver, their belief in the system erodes.

Peer influence and social identity also shape voting behaviour. If a young person is part of a friend group or community where political participation is common, they are more likely to engage as well. On the other hand, if their peers are indifferent or cynical about voting, they may adopt the same attitude. Social media can both help and harm in this area—it can spread awareness and motivate youth to vote, but it can also promote apathy or misinformation, depending on the content consumed.

Additionally, accessibility and convenience affect youth turnout. Complicated registration processes, lack of information about where or how to vote, or not knowing who the candidates are can all discourage participation. First-time voters, in particular, may find the process confusing or intimidating, and without proper guidance, they may choose to avoid it altogether. This is especially true for students or young workers who may be living away from home or moving frequently.

In conclusion, youth voting behaviour is shaped by a wide range of interrelated factors including education, family influence, trust in politics, socioeconomic conditions, peer pressure, media exposure, and accessibility to voting mechanisms. To address youth disinterest in voting, it is crucial to not only improve civic education and political communication but also to create a system that feels inclusive, transparent, and responsive to the real needs of young people. Only then can voting become a meaningful and empowering act for the youth population. Trust in government and political institutions is another critical factor. Many young people are sceptical of politicians and view the system as corrupt, inefficient, or out of touch with reality. This lack of trust discourages them from participating in elections, as they feel their vote will not lead to meaningful change. Negative media coverage of politics, constant political scandals, and partisan conflict can contribute

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3.7 Concept of Political Efficacy

Political efficacy refers to the belief that political participation, activity and action actually have connection with government, and that government is responsive to the political will of citizens. This belief is crucial in understanding voter decision-making, citizen engagement in political processes, and the health of democracy in India.

Types of Political Efficacy

Political efficacy is often conceptualized as taking two forms:

- **Internal Efficacy:** A person's belief in their ability to understand and engage in political activity. It is the perception that a person has the capacity to be a competent political actor. There are several factors (e.g. education, social class, and information accessibility) that can help to shape whether or not a person believes they have internal efficacy in India. For example, a professionally educated person residing in an urban city, may feel comfortable relying on their level of political understanding compared to a less educated person living in a rural village in terms of engaging politically.
- **External Efficacy:** On the other hand, external efficacy refers to the person's belief the political system is responsive, or that the government will attend and respond to the demands, will of the citizenry. External efficacy is concerned with the feeling of whether subjects or people feel the government is responsive and whether their vote matters. External efficacy can be equally shaped by factors; one could argue governors' seemingly corrupt nature, interests of local governing agents, and the overall capacity of the political or governing structure to perform will all impact external efficacy.

Political Efficacy in India's Democracy

India's democratic environment is rife with contradictions regarding political efficacy.

- **Voter Turnout:** Across the world, India consistently records high voter turnout, above global averages, despite ongoing issues such as poverty, illiteracy, and inequality, as well as partisan motivations. This outcome points to an internally high sense of efficacy, especially as people believe they can contribute to meaningful change through their vote in national and state elections.
- **Exercising Efficacy through Voting:** The actual act of voting is portrayed as an important exercise of power on the part of voters, particularly for historically marginalized communities. The vote is justified as a means of holding political figures accountable and demanding better services and representation for the community. Hence, even if external efficacy is limited to short or localized circumstances, it can be achieved through voting.
- **Declines in Efficacy:** However, underlying declines in trust in political parties and political leaders, along with the purported rise in corrupt acts in politicians, can lead to greater perceptions of external low efficacy. Many citizens may feel that regardless of who they vote for, it will not change the political climate of governance and corruption. This sense of low external efficacy among certain population groups can lead to general political apathy.
- **New Shared Engagement:** The emergence of social media and digital platforms has implored new shared engagement, particularly for younger, digitally savvy citizens in India. A shared engagement over social media platforms may invite a more shared sense of internal efficacy through transparency in political discourse.

3.8 Voting System of India

The Indian electoral system is rooted in the parliamentary democracy that depends on a "First Past the Post" (FPTP) system for electing members to the Lok Sabha (lower house of Parliament) and state legislative assemblies. This system has its own assets and liabilities.

Advantages of the Existing Indian Voting System

- **Stability and Clear Mandate :** The FPTP system of voting often yields a single party or stable coalition securing a clear majority in the legislature, enabling the formation of a strong single-party government which is generally not beholden to multiple, smaller coalition partners, and is subsequently able to govern and set policy with greater certainty.
- **Simplicity and Direct Accountability :** It is simple for both voters and candidates to understand. The candidate with the most votes in the constituency

is the winner. This also makes the representative directly accountable to their constituency since they were elected by the people of that constituency.

- Prevents Political Fragmentation : Fish-in-a-barrel nature of FPTP make proliferation of multiple small parties difficult to sustain politically without unity among the small parties, which can yield a significant amount of political instability, and can create difficulty in creating a government. The system generally parties that not only are larger parties, but larger based parties.
- Effective opposition: The system can support a coherent and effective opposition. The "seat bonuses" for the largest party usually are mimicked by the second-largest party, which receives enough seats to provide a legitimate checking function and engage as an alternative government.

Disadvantages of India's Current Voting System

- Disproportionate representation: The most significant issue is that the number of seats won (allocated) to a party is generally not commensurate with its share of the vote. A party can obtain a large share of seats with a small plurality of votes while another party with a large national popular vote does not obtain any seats. Consequently, the party selected to govern may not secure a majority of the national popular vote.
- Minority and smaller-party exclusion: The system can create challenges for smaller parties and minority populations to achieve representation. Parties with enough support to gain meaningfully political result but whose support is widely dispersed geographically can lose representation altogether because the party's support is not concentrated in a locality sufficient to secure a seat. Essentially, the representation of diverse views and interests can disappear entirely.
- Wasted Votes: When someone votes for a candidate that loses, their vote is considered "wasted" in the FPTP system, because it was lost while ultimately electing no representative. This experience can be frustrating for voters who feel like their vote does not matter.
- Swing Constituencies are the Focus: Political parties routinely prioritize electoral resources and attention on a small number of "swing", or competitive, constituencies. They forget to focus on constituencies where they hold advantage and / or where they are at a disadvantage.
- Strategic Voting is Possible: A voter may feel compelled to vote for a candidate that they do not support in order to prevent another candidate they do

not support from winning. This kind of "strategic voting" diminishes the electorate's true revealed preferences.

In addition to FPTP, other parts of the electoral process in India have their own advantages or disadvantages:

1. Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs):

Pros: EVMs generate less paper, allow for easier counting, and are generally faster. They are often regarded as less prone to fraud by voters, such as booth capturing.

Disadvantages: Some have raised issues around their reliability and tampering despite the Election Commission of India maintaining they are reliable.

2. Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT):

Advantages: VVPATs create a paper you can review and ensure your vote was cast as you intended with the possibility of recount in audit for EVM, which increases verifiability and trust.

3. None of the Above (NOTA) Option:

Advantages: NOTA permits a voter to indicate that they do not like any of the candidates and encourages political parties to nominate an honest candidate with capable candidates to take part.

Disadvantages: Even if a majority of candidates have received NOTA votes, the winning nominee is declared the winner because there is not an option for ballot without a NOTA vote.

India's voting system, despite the complexity and criticism has successfully elected free and fair elections for decades, demonstrating resilience as a method for the largest democracy in the world.

3.9 Rational choice theory of voting

The Cost-Benefit Formula The core of this theory is a simple formula, first proposed by Anthony Downs in his 1957 book, *An Economic Theory of Democracy*: $R = (P \times B) - C + D$

- R is the net reward a voter receives.
- P is the probability that a single vote will be decisive in an election.
- B is the benefit an individual receives if their preferred candidate or party wins.
- C represents the costs of voting, including the time, effort, and money spent to register, research candidates, and get to the polls.
- D is a term for civic duty or other expressive benefits.

The Paradox of Voting The rational choice model (in its simplest form) results in a major problem known as the paradox of voting. With a given large election, the

likelihood (P) of one vote being the deciding vote is quite close to zero, rendering the instrumental benefit of voting negligible. The costs (C) of voting will always be greater than zero, resulting in a negative judgment for nearly all rational individuals. Therefore, it would not make sense for a rational self-interested person to vote. Obviously, this runs counter to the reality of high voter turnouts in various elections.

Solutions to the Paradox

To resolve this paradox, scholars have focused on item D, which reflects a broader, non-instrumental set of benefits. In particular, it is often called "expressive benefits" because these benefits accrue from the act of voting, rather than its outcome.

- **Civic Duty:** This is probably the most common explanation. Many people feel some moral obligation or civic duty to participate in a democracy. This provides a psychological benefit large enough to outweigh the political costs.
- **Expressive Voting:** Voters may derive gratification just from expressing their support for a candidate or party, where the act of voting resembles an expressive political behaviour like wearing a t-shirt of one's favourite sports team. Voting is an extension of political expression that fulfils this function.
- **Social Pressure:** Voting, or the decision to vote or not vote, may be influenced by social norms. Perhaps individuals vote because they feel they must meet the expectations of their peers, family members, or their community.
- **Efficacy:** Voters may irrationally, but with conviction, believe their vote has a greater impact than reality would suggest. The overestimation of their "P" encourages an optimistic cost-benefit assessment in their own minds.

Engaging the "D" term enables the rational gains model a better explanation for voting behaviour, because it refocuses attention on voting as a decision from a purely instrumental, and outcome oriented, decision.

3.10 Introduction to the Theoretical Framework

Theoretical frameworks are vital for a better understanding of youth voting behaviour since they provide a systematic way of explaining and predicting a complicated social phenomenon. Theories outline a causal framework that explains how and why factors like age and education shape a young person's voting decision, rather than just listing them as contributing factors. Without theory, we would merely have a list of discrete facts with little insight on the motivations and social circumstances of voting.

Theories can also aid us in advancing beyond simple correlation to causal relationships. For instance, we suspect that young people have lower turnout rates

than older generations of voters. This is more than just a function of age, as a theory would explain that young people often vote less due to other factors that stem from lack of political socialization, lower political efficacy (to believe that a person's vote counts), and socialization into a non-voting habit in early adulthood.

Key Theoretical Frameworks

Youth-voting behaviour is examined using a variety of theoretical frameworks from political science, sociology, and psychology. Each framework provides a new perspective for analysing the topic, and when combined with others, offers a more comprehensive understanding.

1. The Social-Psychological Model

The Social-Psychological Model, also known as the Michigan Model, emphasizes the psychological engagement of the individual to politics. The model asserts that an individual's voting decision is guided, or influenced, by three principal factors:

Party Identification: The long-term, psychological attachment one has to a political party. Party identification tends to be the strongest predictor of voting behaviour. With respect to young people, the attachment may be weak or non-existent, which may make their voting behaviour inconsistent.

Candidate Image: The image a voter has of a candidate's personality, background, and character. Candidate image may be especially important with young voters who may not identify strongly to a party.

Issue Positions: The voter's opinion on the key political issues to them. While important, issue position or opinions may also be clouded by the influence of party identification and candidate image.

2. The Rational Choice Model

This framework, derived from economics, views voters as rational, self-interested actors who vote after weighing the costs and benefits of their actions. For example, a young person will participate in the election process when the benefits of voting (i.e., electing a candidate they prefer or fulfilling a "civic obligation") outweigh the costs (i.e., gathering information, spending time, effort). This model explains the "paradox of not voting," as a rational choice may lead to the conclusion that an individual's vote will not matter in the outcome of the election. This is particularly true for young voters who may already feel voiceless or feel that the political system is not responsive.

3. The Generational and Life-Cycle Models

These models specify the influences of their age or time in history. The Life-Cycle Model indicates that a person's political participation naturally increases with age.

As a young person ages, the individual will have more resources, knowledge, and social capital and, therefore, become more political active. They may also become increasingly engaged with political events as they establish a family, purchase property, or pay taxes.

The Generational Model maintains that some particular cohort's political attitudes and behaviours are affected by the behaviour and major events which they experienced and/or observed during their formative years. For example, a generation that came of age during a time of war or economic downturn may develop political habits that differ from a cohort that came of age during times of stability. This framework helps explain the differences that distinct generations of young people show in their voting behaviour.

Why These Theories are Indispensable?

Theories are crucial for several reasons:

- **Prediction and Intervention:** Once we understand the causal factors a theory provides, we can predict which young people are likely to vote and develop a targeted intervention to encourage them to vote. For example, if efficacy comes from how the theory conceptualizes youth voting then a possible intervention might focus on civic education and community organizing to empower young people.
- **Simplifying Complexity:** Various determinants, including family, school, media, and peers contribute to whether young people will vote or not. Theories organize these variables into a relatable logical framework and model that can be tested. This makes the phenomenon easier to study and understand.
- **Research Guidance:** Theories are the basis for empirical research. They create hypotheses that can be evaluated through surveys, experiments, and qualitative inquiry. Without a theory, research would be random, collecting data without any predictability, or coherent purpose.
- **Cross-Cultural Comparison:** Theories provide common language and concepts that enable scholars to compare youth electoral behaviour in different countries and political systems. For example, they can compare youth voting under a multi-party parliamentary system and a two-party presidential system using a rational choice framework and identify similarities and differences regardless of the context.

3.11 Democracy and the Role of Citizens

Voting as the Foundation of Democracy

Voting is the most basic action of any citizen in a democracy, and it is the means to derive political power from the consent of the governed. When a citizen casts a vote, they are free to select individuals to represent them, they are free to hold elected officials to account for their actions, and they are free to influence and steer public policy. If a democracy does not have an effective and inclusive electoral process, then it cannot truly represent the will of its people.

Legitimacy and Accountability: When citizens are given the opportunity to vote in a free and fair election, they create legitimacy for the government. This means that those functioning in power are there as a result of public support rather than force. Additionally, free and fair elections create a significant incentive for politicians to act in the best interests of their constituents, as they require re-election.

Political Equality: Voting reinforces the concept of "one person, one vote," meaning that every citizen's voice has equal importance regardless of their socioeconomic status, race, or background. This adds to the pursuit of a fair and equitable society.

Impact on Policies: The candidates and parties people elect fundamentally shape the laws, regulations, and policies that govern people's daily lives—everything from taxes to health care to education to environmental protections. Voting is how people can directly express their voices and influence the type of society they want to live in.

Youth as Active Stakeholders in Governance

Often one of the most underrepresented groups in elections, youth are not only the leaders of tomorrow, they are also stakeholders in governance today. Their participation is necessary for a healthy, representative, and forward-looking democracy.

Innovative Ideas: Youth bring energy, new perspectives, and innovative ideas to public, political discussion. Youth are often at the forefront of social movements and technological transformation, leading advocacy for climate action, social justice, and digital rights. Youth's experience of the world changing faster than adults can comprehend means their voices and direct engagement in building future-looking policies and programs will be essential to the discussions of the future.

Future Considerations: Decisions made today by leaders will disproportionately impact youth for decades to come. National debt, climate change, and policies with long-term economic implications will directly be passed on to the younger generations. Therefore, their involvement in shaping their future is critical.

Strengthening Democracy: When youth engage in civic life, they help to lend legitimacy and vitality to democratic institutions. Their involvement helps ensure that the political system remains representative of the population as a whole, and does not displace a large, vibrant, and valuable portion of society. Alternatively, when youth are disengaged, it creates a culture of distrust in government and ultimately weakens the democratic process.

CHAPTER 4
DATA ANALYSIS AND
INTERPRETATION

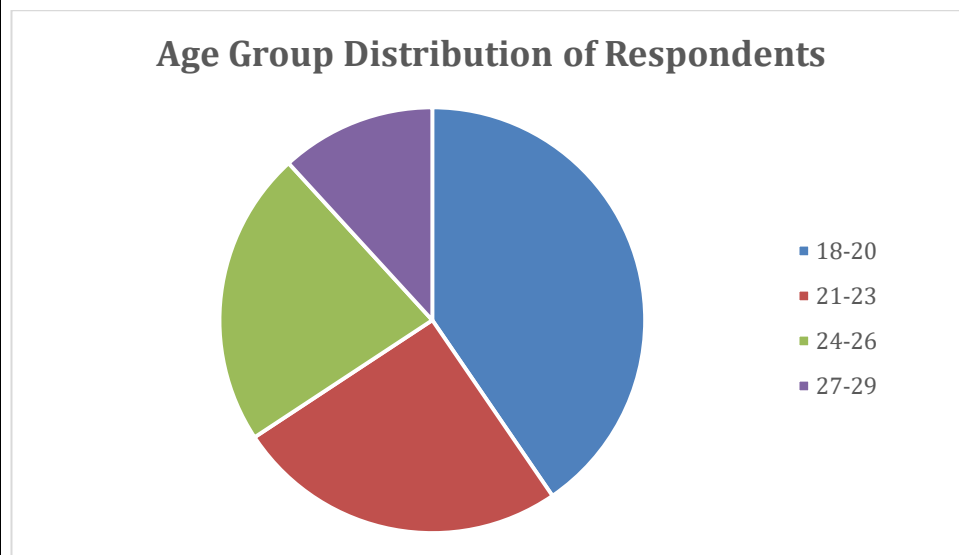
4.1: ANALYSIS ON THE BASIS OF AGE GROUP OF RESPONDENTS

Table 4.1: Age group of the respondents

Response	Number of Response	Percentage
18-20	72	40%
21-23	45	25%
24-26	40	22%
27-29	21	12%

(SOURCE– Primary Data)

Figure 4.1: Age group of the respondents.



(SOURCE– Primary Data)

INTERPRETATION

The above figure shows that **40%** of respondents belong to the 18-20 age group, followed by **25%** in the 21-23 range and **22%** in the 24-26 range. The smallest represented group is those aged 27-29, which accounts for **12%** of the total.

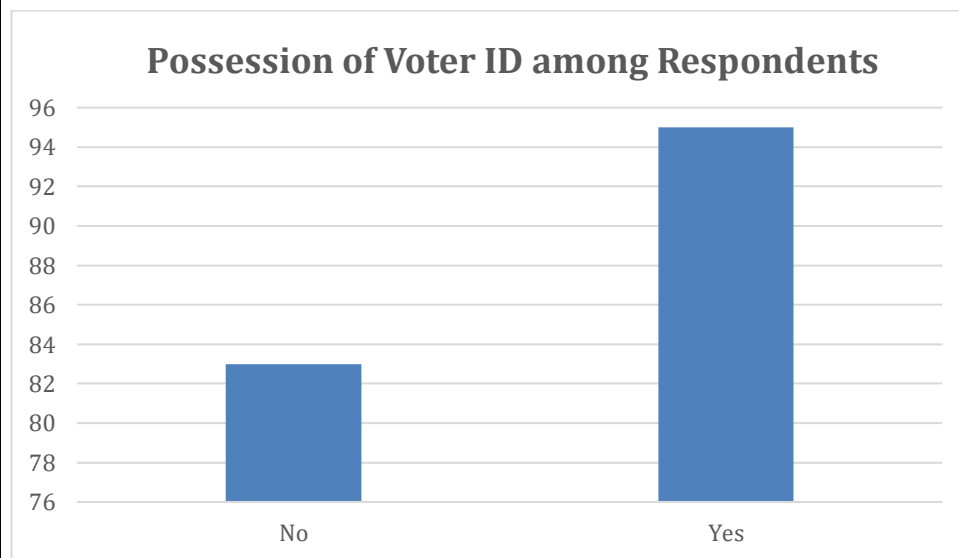
4.2: ANALYSIS ON THE BASIS OF POSSESSION OF VOTER ID

Table 4.2: Possession of Voter ID among Respondents.

Response	Number of Response	Percentage
No	83	47%
Yes	95	53%

(SOURCE– Primary Data)

Figure 4.2: Possession of Voter ID among Respondents.



(SOURCE– Primary Data)

INTERPRETATION

The above figure shows that **53%** of the participants currently possess a voter ID. In contrast, **47%** of the respondents do not have a voter ID, highlighting a significant portion of the population that may be ineligible to cast a ballot.

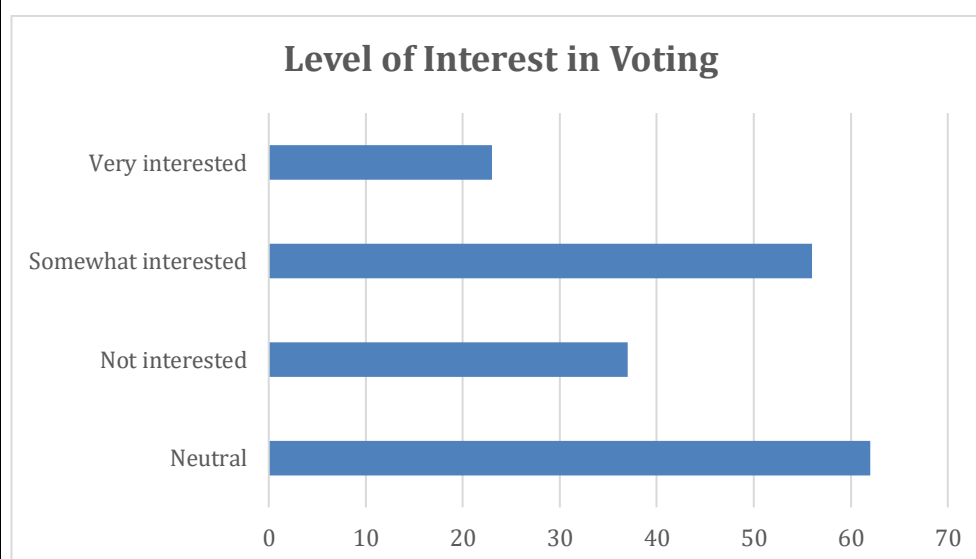
4.3: ANALYSIS ON THE BASIS OF LEVEL OF INTEREST IN VOTING

Table 4.3: Level of interest of respondents in voting

Response	Number of Response	Percentage
Neutral	62	35%
Not interested	37	21%
Somewhat interested	56	31%
Very interested	23	13%

(SOURCE– Primary Data)

Figure 4.3: Level of Interest in Voting.



(SOURCE– Primary Data)

INTERPRETATION

The above figure shows that **35%** of respondents are neutral about voting, while **31%** are somewhat interested and **13%** are very interested. Conversely, **21%** of the participants state they are not interested at all in the voting process.

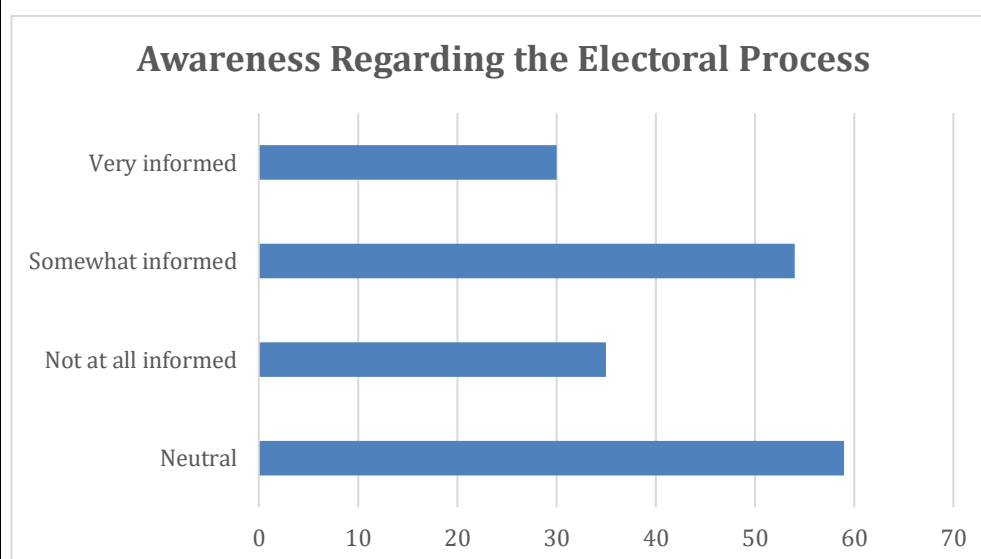
4.4: ANALYSIS ON THE BASIS OF AWARENESS ABOUT THE ELECTORAL PROCESS

Table 4.4: Awareness Regarding the Electoral Process.

Response	Number of Response	Percentage
Neutral	59	33%
Not at all informed	35	20%
Somewhat informed	54	30%
Very informed	30	17%

(SOURCE– Primary Data)

Figure 4.4: Awareness Regarding the Electoral Process.



(SOURCE– Primary Data)

INTERPRETATION

The above figure shows that **33%** of respondents feel neutral about their knowledge level, while **30%** feel somewhat informed and **17%** feel very informed. Meanwhile, **20%** of respondents feel not at all informed about how the electoral process works.

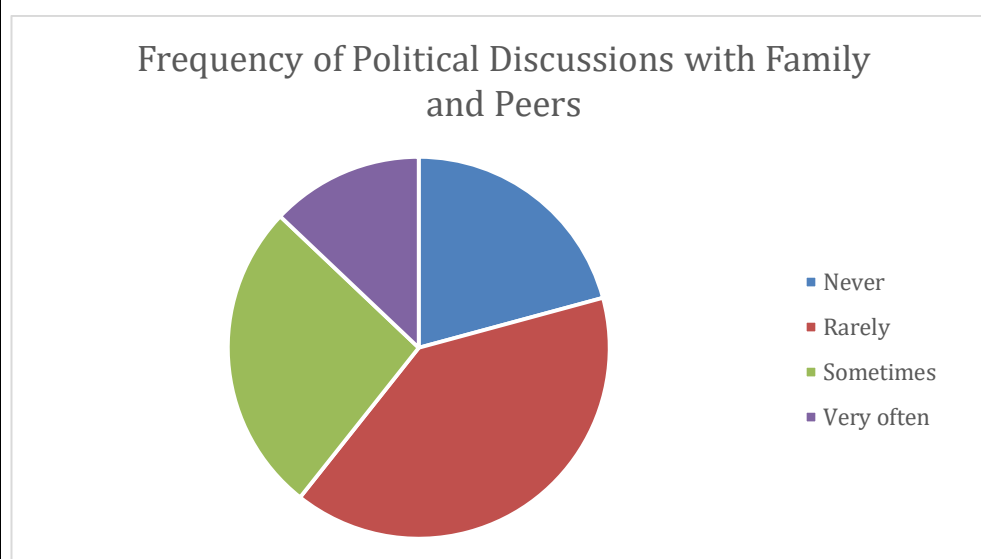
4.5: ANALYSIS ON THE BASIS OF FREQUENCY OF POLITICAL DISCUSSIONS

Table 4.5: Frequency of Political Discussions with Family and Peers.

Response	Number of Response	Percentage
Never	37	21%
Rarely	71	40%
Sometimes	47	26%
Very often	23	13%

(SOURCE– Primary Data)

Figure 4.5: Frequency of Political Discussions with Family and Peers



(SOURCE– Primary Data)

INTERPRETATION

The above figure shows that **40%** of respondents rarely discuss politics, and **21%** never engage in such discussions. On the more active side, **26%** discuss politics sometimes, while only **13%** do so very often.

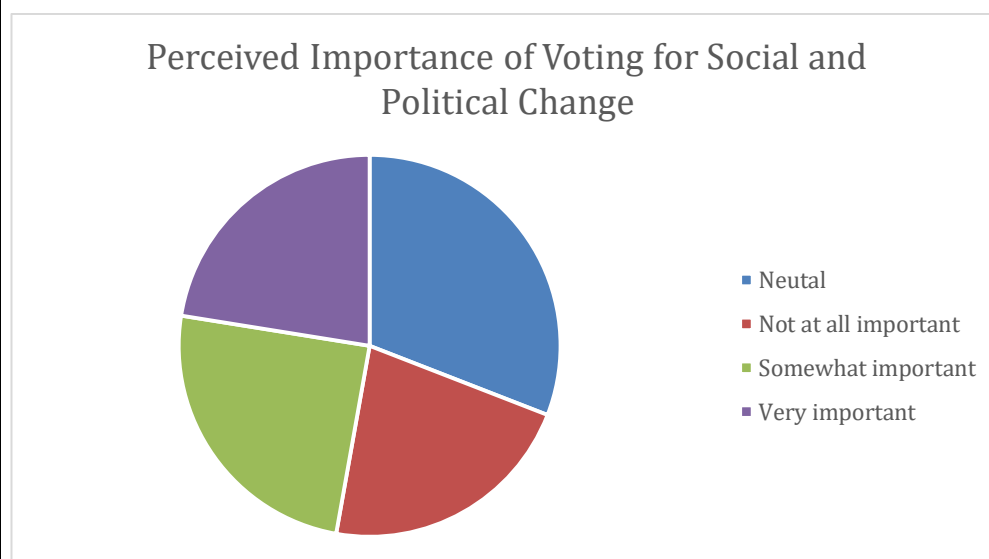
4.6: ANALYSIS ON THE BASIS OF PERCEIVED IMPORTANCE OF VOTING

Table 4.6: Perceived Importance of Voting for Social and Political Change.

Response	Number of Response	Percentage
Neutal	55	31%
Not at all important	39	22%
Somewhat important	44	25%
Very important	40	22%

(SOURCE– Primary Data)

Figure 4.6: Perceived Importance of Voting for Social and Political Change.



(SOURCE– Primary Data)

INTERPRETATION

The above figure shows that **44%** of respondents believe voting is important to some extent, and **18%** believe it is very important. However, **19%** are neutral on the matter, and another **19%** do not believe it is important at all for creating change.

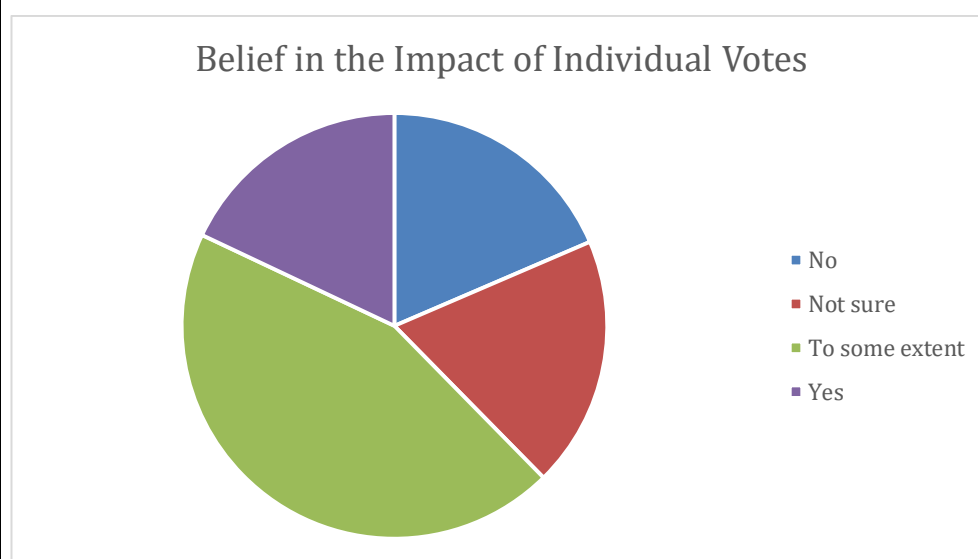
4.7: ANALYSIS ON THE BASIS OF BELIEF THAT VOTE MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Table 4.7: Belief in the Impact of Individual Votes.

Response	Number of Response	Percentage
No	33	19%
Not sure	34	19%
To some extent	79	44%
Yes	32	18%

(SOURCE– Primary Data)

Figure 4.7: Belief in the Impact of Individual Votes.



(SOURCE– Primary Data)

INTERPRETATION

The above figure shows that **44%** of respondents believe their vote makes a difference to some extent, and **18%** believe it definitely does. An equal split of **19%** each either do not believe their vote makes a difference or are not sure.

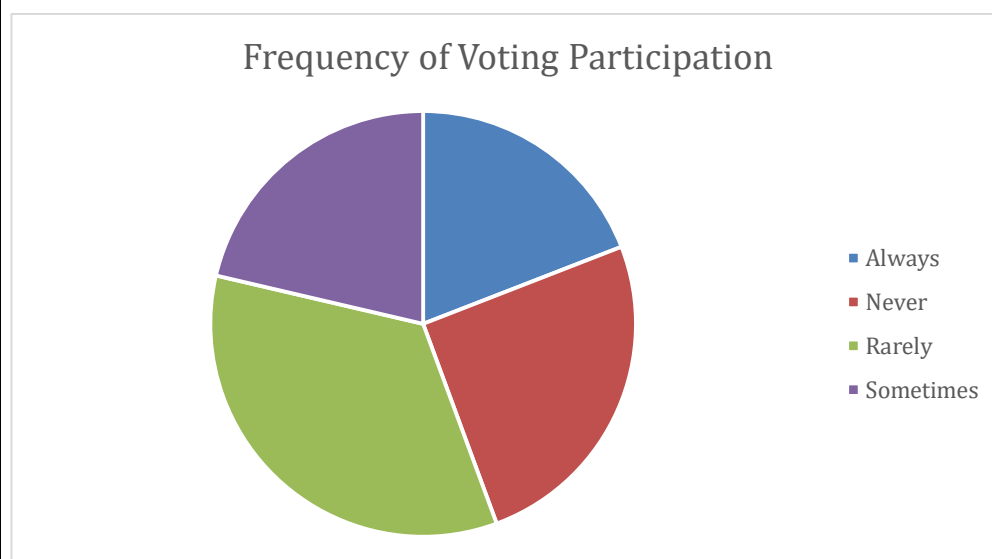
4.8: ANALYSIS ON THE BASIS OF FREQUENCY OF VOTING IN ELECTIONS

Table 4.8: Frequency of Voting Participation.

Response	Number of Response	Percentage
Always	34	19%
Never	45	25%
Rarely	61	34%
Sometimes	38	21%

(SOURCE– Primary Data)

Figure 4.8: Frequency of Voting Participation.



(SOURCE– Primary Data)

INTERPRETATION

The above figure shows that **34%** of respondents rarely vote and **25%** never vote, indicating low participation. Only **19%** of participants always vote, while **21%** manage to vote sometimes.

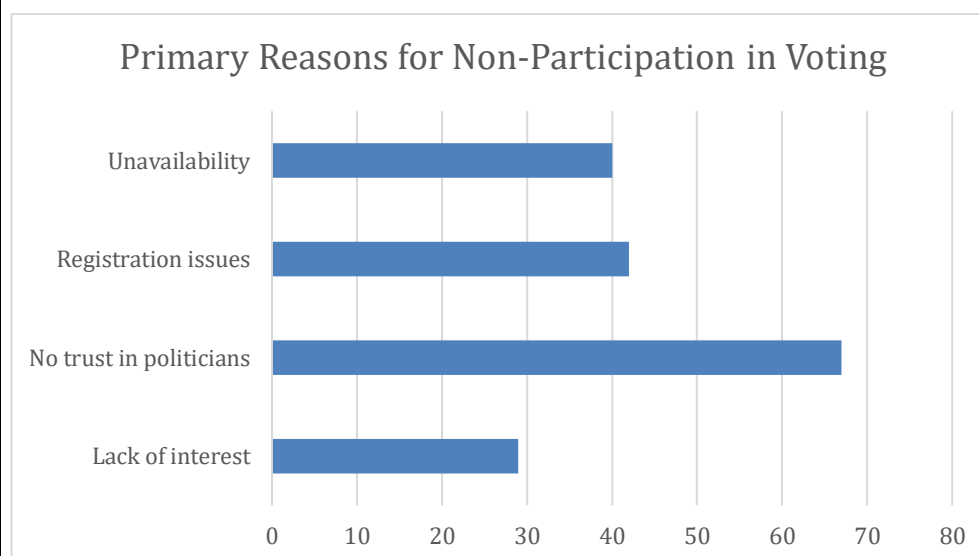
4.9: ANALYSIS ON THE BASIS OF REASONS FOR NOT VOTING

Table 4.9: Primary Reasons for Non-Participation in Voting.

Response	Number of Response	Percentage
Lack of interest	29	16%
No trust in politicians	67	38%
Registration issues	42	24%
Unavailability	40	22%

(SOURCE– Primary Data)

Figure 4.9: Primary Reasons for Non-Participation in Voting.



(SOURCE– Primary Data)

INTERPRETATION

The above figure shows that **38%** of non-voters cite a lack of trust in politicians as their main reason, followed by **24%** citing registration issues. Additionally, **22%** attribute their lack of participation to unavailability, and **16%** mention a general lack of interest.

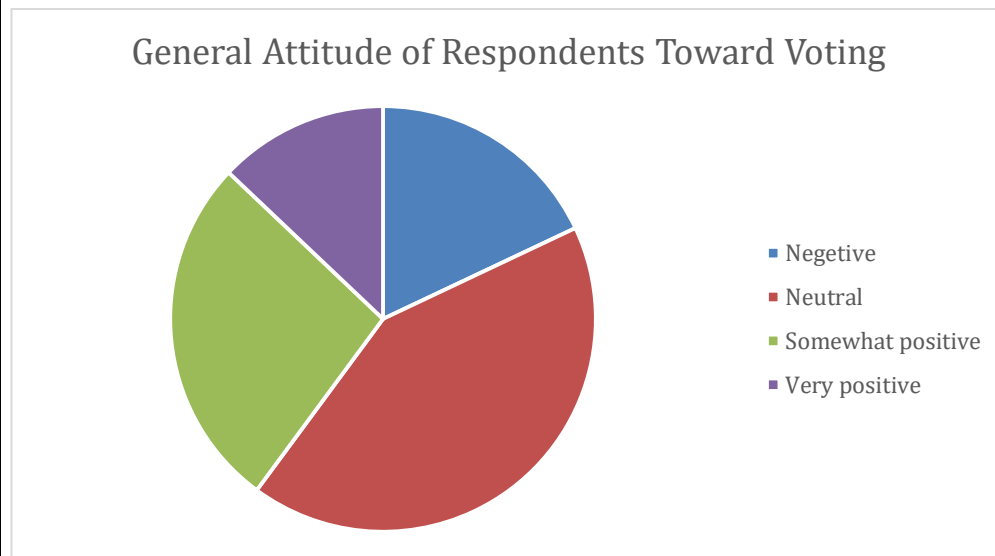
4.10: ANALYSIS ON THE BASIS OF ATTITUDE TOWARDS VOTING

Table 4.10: General Attitude of Respondents Toward Voting.

Response	Number of Response	Percentage
Negetive	32	18%
Neutral	75	42%
Somewhat positive	48	27%
Very positive	23	13%

(SOURCE– Primary Data)

Figure 4.10: General Attitude of Respondents Toward Voting.



(SOURCE– Primary Data)

INTERPRETATION

The above figure shows that **42%** of respondents feel neutral about voting, while **27%** feel somewhat positive and **13%** feel very positive, leaving **18%** of the participants with a negative sentiment toward the process. This indicates that while the majority are not actively hostile toward voting, there is a significant lack of strong enthusiasm.

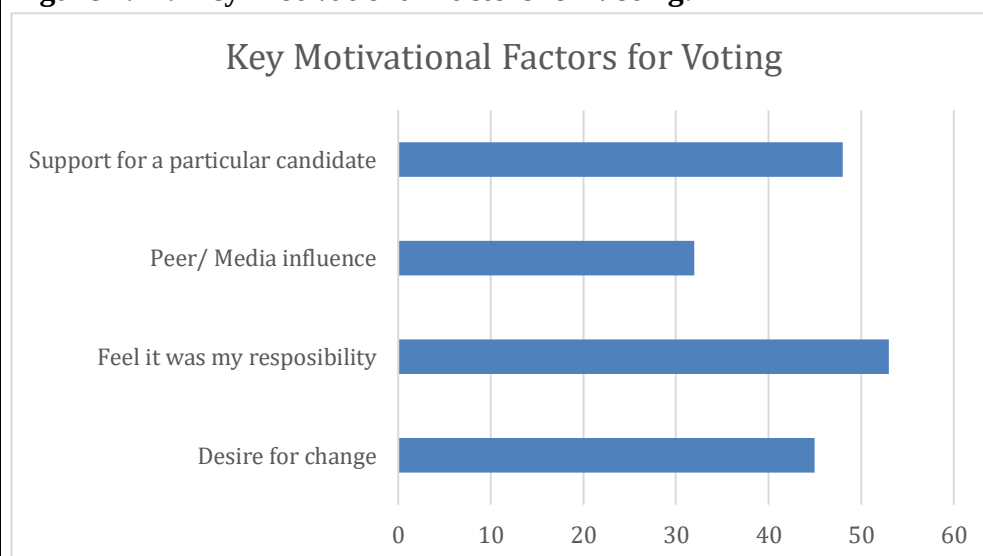
4.11: ANALYSIS ON THE BASIS OF FACTORS MOTIVATING RESPONDENTS TO VOTE

Table 4.11: Key Motivational Factors for Voting.

Response	Number of Response	Percentage
Desire for change	45	25%
Feel it was my responsibility	53	30%
Peer/ Media influence	32	18%
Support for a particular candidate	48	27%

(SOURCE– Primary Data)

Figure 4.11: Key Motivational Factors for Voting.



(SOURCE– Primary Data)

INTERPRETATION

The above figure shows that **30%** of voters are motivated by a sense of responsibility, **27%** by support for a particular candidate, **25%** by a desire for change, and **18%** by peer or media influence. These results suggest that internal values and specific candidates are much stronger drivers than external social pressure.

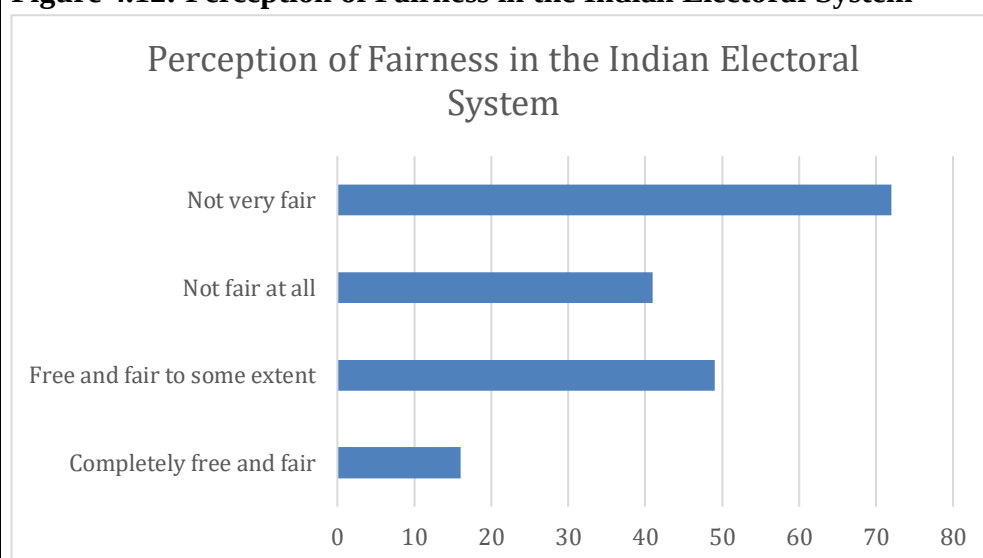
4.12: ANALYSIS ON THE BASIS OF PERCEPTION OF FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS

Table 4.12: Perception of Fairness in the Indian Electoral System

Response	Number of Response	Percentage
Completely free and fair	16	9%
Free and fair to some extent	49	28%
Not fair at all	41	23%
Not very fair	72	40%

(SOURCE– Primary Data)

Figure 4.12: Perception of Fairness in the Indian Electoral System



(SOURCE– Primary Data)

INTERPRETATION

The above figure shows that **40%** of respondents believe elections are not very fair and **23%** believe they are not fair at all, while **28%** feel they are free and fair to some extent and only **9%** view them as completely free and fair. This reveals a substantial lack of trust in the integrity of the electoral system among the majority of those surveyed.

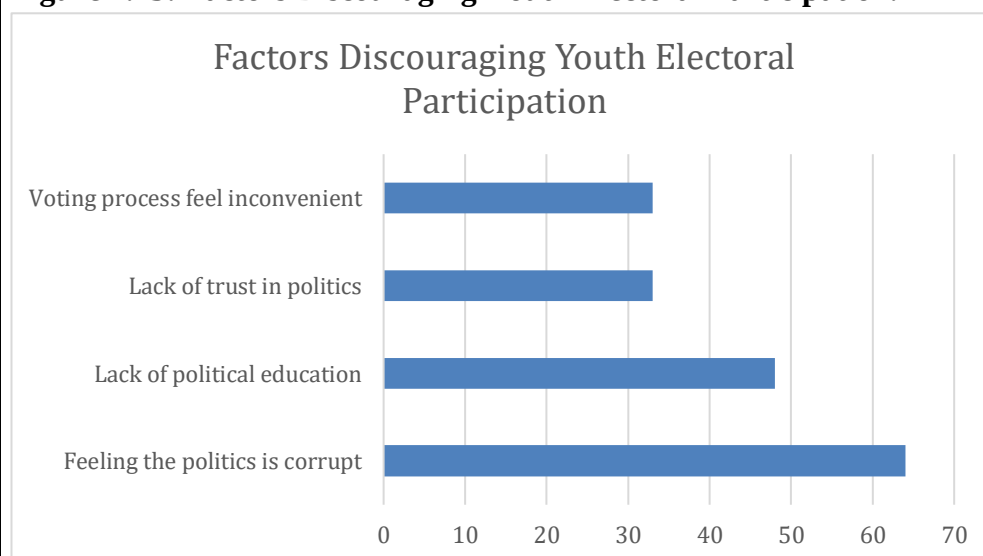
4.13: ANALYSIS ON THE BASIS OF FACTORS DISCOURAGING YOUTH FROM VOTING

Table 4.13: Factors Discouraging Youth Electoral Participation.

Response	Number of Response	Percentage
Feeling the politics is corrupt	64	36%
Lack of political education	48	27%
Lack of trust in politics	33	19%
Voting process feel inconvenient	33	19%

(SOURCE– Primary Data)

Figure 4.13: Factors Discouraging Youth Electoral Participation.



(SOURCE– Primary Data)

INTERPRETATION

The above figure shows that **36%** of youth are discouraged by the feeling that politics is corrupt, **27%** by a lack of political education, and **19%** each by a lack of trust in politics or the inconvenience of the voting process. Corruption stands out as the single largest barrier preventing young people from engaging in the democratic process.

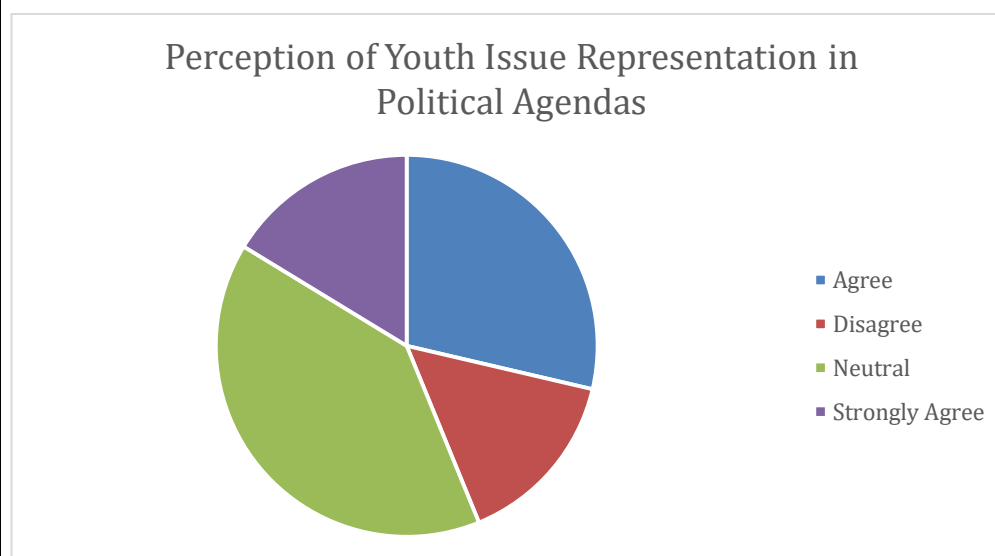
4.14: ANALYSIS ON THE BASIS OF YOUTH ISSUE REPRESENTATION IN POLITICS

Table 4.14: Perception of Youth Issue Representation in Political Agendas.

Response	Number of Response	Percentage
Agree	51	29%
Disagree	27	15%
Neutral	71	40%
Strongly Agree	29	16%

(SOURCE– Primary Data)

Figure 4.14: Perception of Youth Issue Representation in Political Agendas.



(SOURCE– Primary Data)

INTERPRETATION

The above figure shows that **40%** of respondents are neutral on this issue, while **29%** agree and **16%** strongly agree that politics ignores their needs, compared to only **15%** who disagree. This suggests a widespread feeling of being overlooked by the current political agenda.

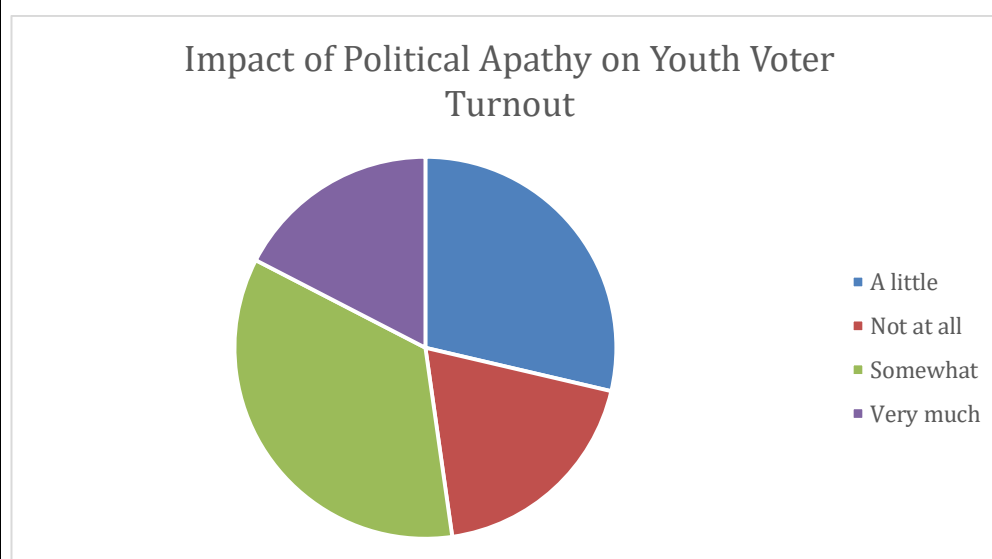
4.15: ANALYSIS ON THE BASIS OF IMPACT OF POLITICAL APATHY

Table 4.15: Impact of Political Apathy on Youth Voter Turnout.

Response	Number of Response	Percentage
A little	51	29%
Not at all	34	19%
Somewhat	62	35%
Very much	31	17%

(SOURCE– Primary Data)

Figure 4.15: Impact of Political Apathy on Youth Voter Turnout.



(SOURCE– Primary Data)

INTERPRETATION

The above figure shows that political apathy influences non-voting somewhat for 35% of respondents, a little for 29%, not at all for 19%, and very much for 17%. This highlights that lack of interest is a contributing factor for over half of the youth who choose not to participate.

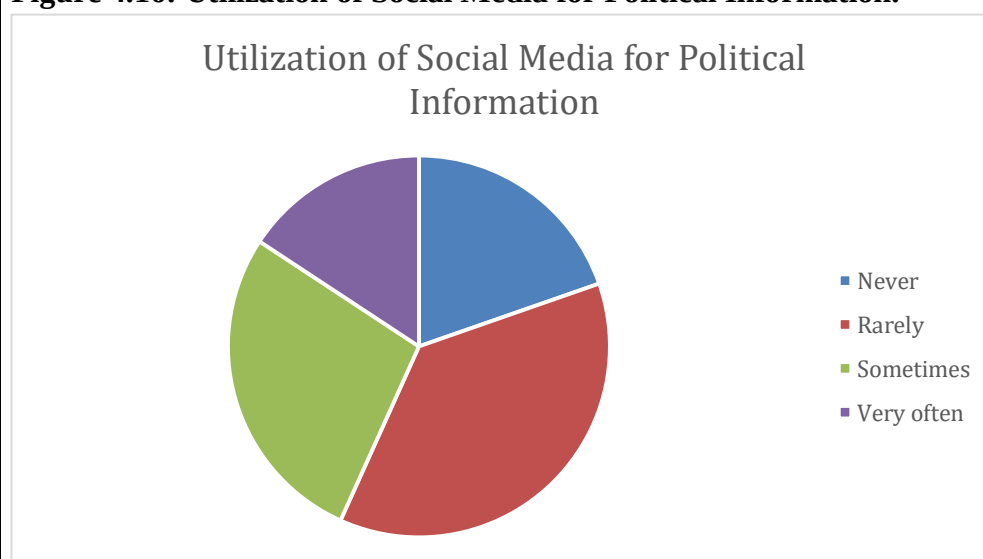
4.16: ANALYSIS ON THE BASIS OF USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA FOR POLITICAL INFORMATION

Table 4.16: Utilization of Social Media for Political Information.

Response	Number of Response	Percentage
Never	35	20%
Rarely	66	37%
Sometimes	49	28%
Very often	28	16%

(SOURCE– Primary Data)

Figure 4.16: Utilization of Social Media for Political Information.



(SOURCE– Primary Data)

INTERPRETATION

The above figure shows that **37%** of respondents rarely use social media for political info and **20%** never use it, while **28%** use it sometimes and only **16%** use it very often. These figures indicate that social media is not the primary source of political news for the majority of this group.

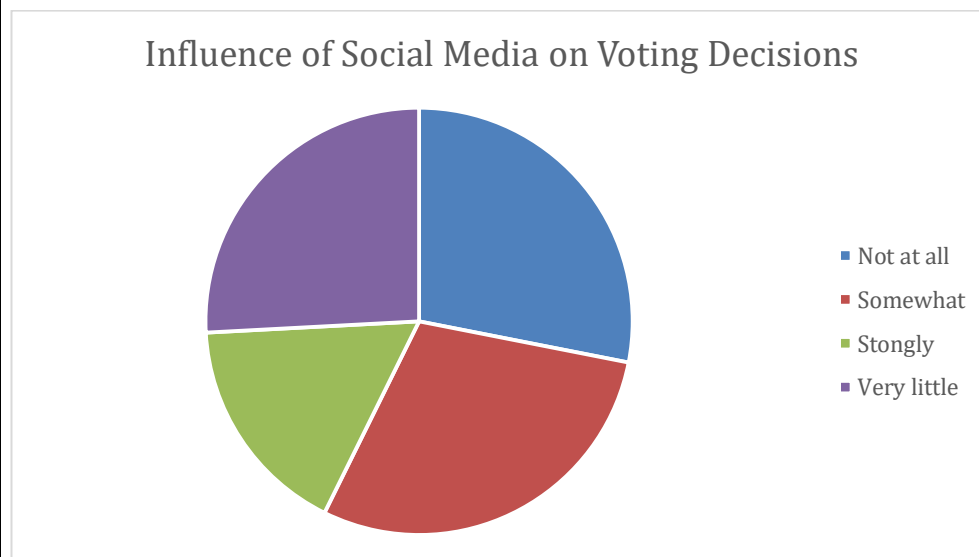
4.17: ANALYSIS ON THE BASIS OF SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCE ON VOTING DECISION

Table 4.17: Influence of Social Media on Voting Decisions.

Response	Number of Response	Percentage
Not at all	50	28%
Somewhat	52	29%
Stongly	30	17%
Very little	46	26%

(SOURCE– Primary Data)

Figure 4.17: Influence of Social Media on Voting Decisions.



(SOURCE– Primary Data)

INTERPRETATION

The results show that social media has a limited influence on voting decisions. While 29% of respondents feel it influences them somewhat, 28% say it does not influence them at all and 26% say it influences them very little. Only 17% feel strongly influenced by social media.

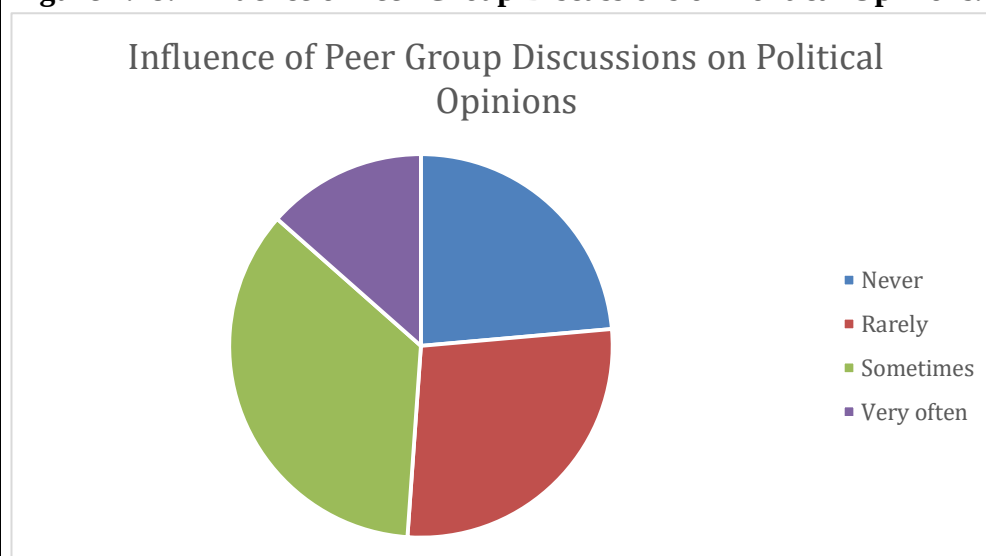
4.18: ANALYSIS ON THE BASIS OF PEER GROUP INFLUENCE ON POLITICAL OPINIONS

Table 4.18: Influence of Peer Group Discussions on Political Opinions.

Response	Number of Response	Percentage
Never	42	24%
Rarely	49	28%
Sometimes	63	35%
Very often	24	13%

(SOURCE– Primary Data)

Figure 4.18: Influence of Peer Group Discussions on Political Opinions.



(SOURCE– Primary Data)

INTERPRETATION

Peer group discussions shape political opinions only occasionally. The majority (35%) reported being influenced sometimes, while 28% said rarely and 24% said never. Only 13% felt that such discussions influence them very often.

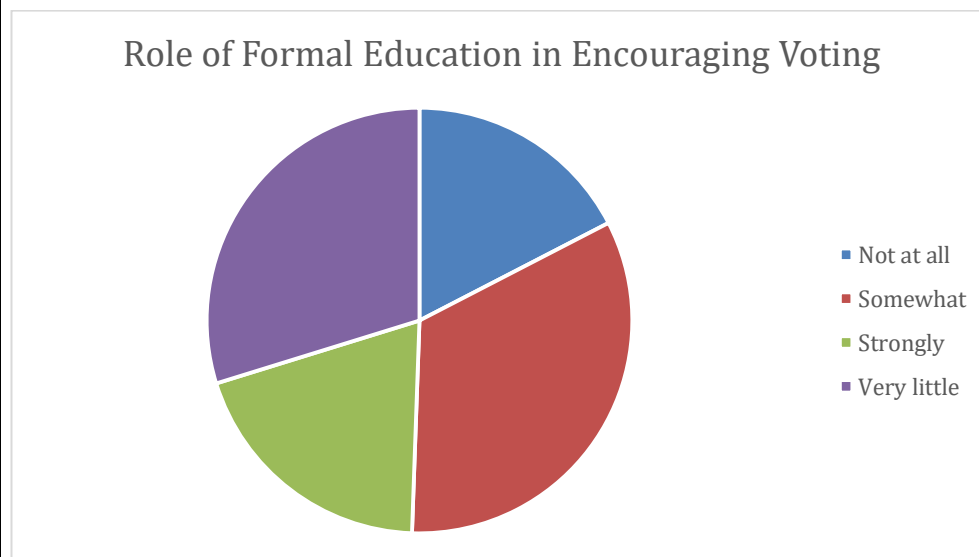
4.19: ANALYSIS ON THE BASIS OF ROLE OF EDUCATION IN ENCOURAGING VOTING

Table 4.19: Role of Formal Education in Encouraging Voting.

Response	Number of Response	Percentage
Not at all	31	17%
Somewhat	59	33%
Strongly	35	20%
Very little	53	30%

(SOURCE– Primary Data)

Figure 4.19: Role of Formal Education in Encouraging Voting.



(SOURCE– Primary Data)

INTERPRETATION

Education encourages voting to a moderate extent. 33% of respondents felt somewhat encouraged, while 30% felt very little encouragement. A smaller group (20%) felt strongly encouraged, and 17% felt no encouragement at all.

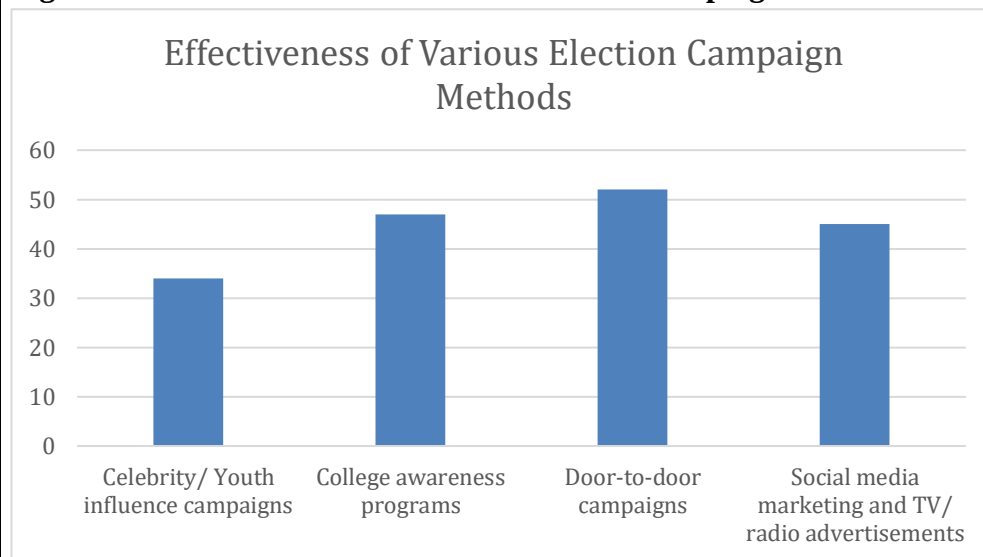
4.20: ANALYSIS ON THE BASIS OF MOST EFFECTIVE CAMPAIGN METHOD

Table 4.20: Effectiveness of Various Election Campaign Methods.

Response	Number of Response	Percentage
Celebrity/ Youth campaigns	34	19%
College awareness programs	47	26%
Door-to-door campaigns	52	29%
Social media and TV/ radio	45	25%

(SOURCE– Primary Data)

Figure 4.20: Effectiveness of Various Election Campaign Methods.



(SOURCE– Primary Data)

INTERPRETATION

Door-to-door campaigns were found to be the most motivating (29%). This was followed by college awareness programs (26%) and social media or TV/radio advertisements (25%). Celebrity or youth influence campaigns were least effective (19%).

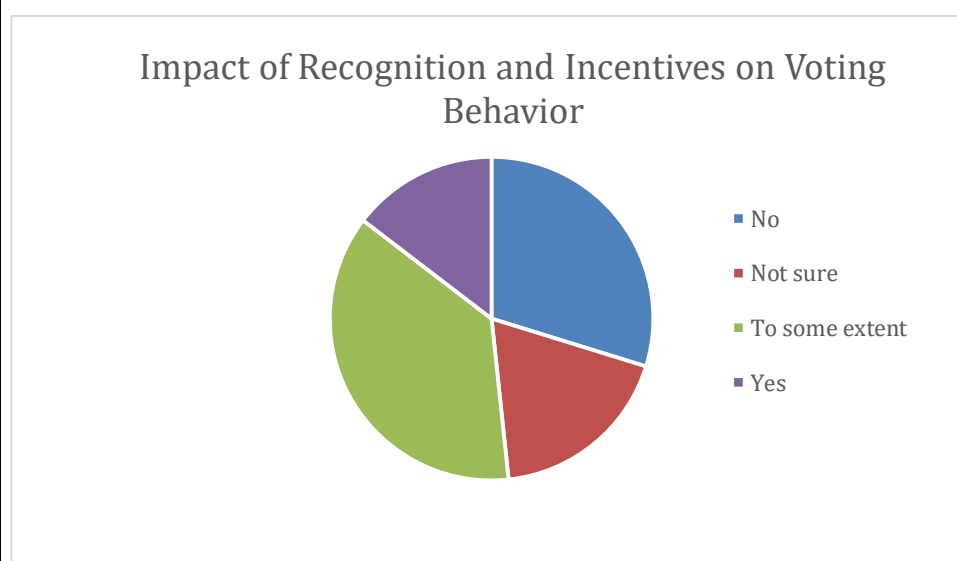
4.21: ANALYSIS ON THE BASIS OF IMPACT OF INCENTIVES ON VOTING

Table 4.21: Impact of Recognition and Incentives on Voting Behaviour.

Response	Number of Response	Percentage
No	53	30%
Not sure	33	19%
To some extent	66	37%
Yes	26	15%

(SOURCE– Primary Data)

Figure 4.21: Impact of Recognition and Incentives on Voting Behaviour.



(SOURCE– Primary Data)

INTERPRETATION

Recognition or incentives encourage voting only to a limited extent. The largest group (37%) felt it helps to some extent, while 30% said it does not help at all. Only 15% felt incentives would definitely encourage them to vote.

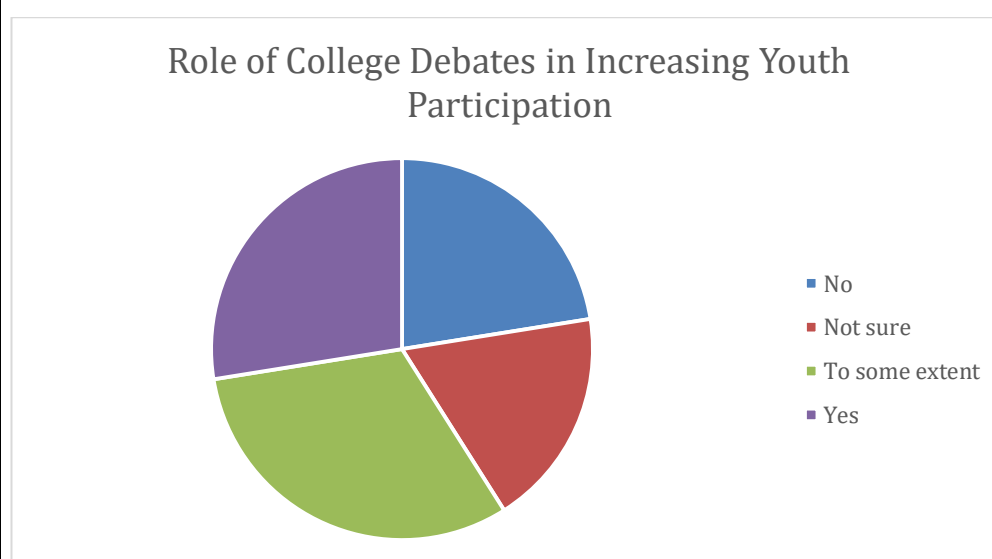
4.22: ANALYSIS ON THE BASIS OF ROLE OF COLLEGE DEBATES IN VOTING PARTICIPATION

Table 4.22: Role of College Debates in Increasing Youth Participation.

Response	Number of Response	Percentage
No	40	22%
Not sure	33	19%
To some extent	56	31%
Yes	49	28%

(SOURCE– Primary Data)

Figure 4.22: Role of College Debates in Increasing Youth Participation.



(SOURCE– Primary Data)

INTERPRETATION

Debates and discussions in colleges or schools have a moderate influence on youth voting participation. 31% felt they encourage participation to some extent, and 28% felt they do encourage it. However, 22% felt they do not help.

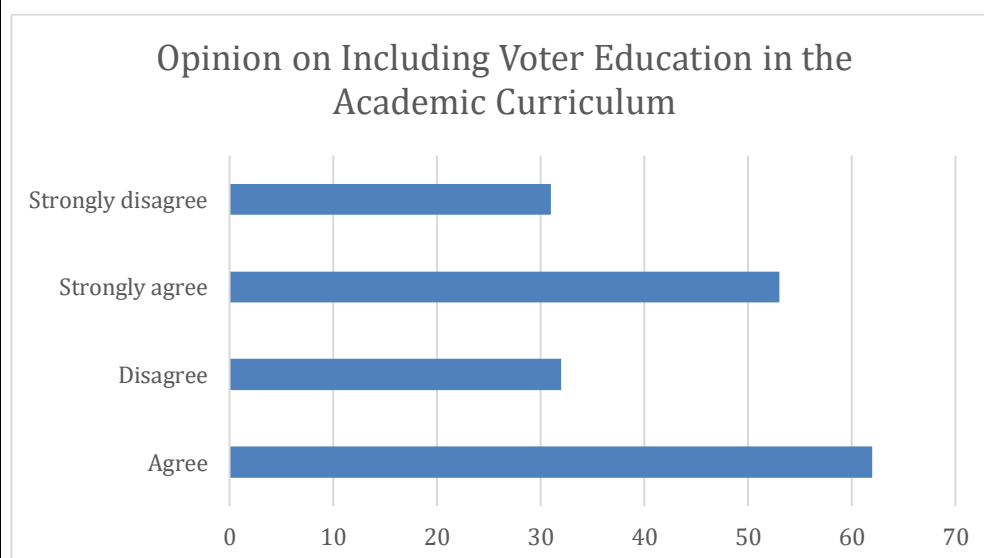
4.23: ANALYSIS ON THE BASIS OF INCLUSION OF VOTER EDUCATION IN CURRICULUM

Table 4.23: Opinion on Including Voter Education in the Academic Curriculum.

Response	Number of Response	Percentage
Agree	62	35%
Disagree	32	18%
Strongly agree	53	30%
Strongly disagree	31	17%

(SOURCE– Primary Data)

Figure 4.23: Opinion on Including Voter Education in the Academic Curriculum.



(SOURCE– Primary Data)

INTERPRETATION

Most respondents support the inclusion of voter education. A combined 65% either agree (35%) or strongly agree (30%) with this idea, while a smaller proportion disagree (18%) or strongly disagree (17%).

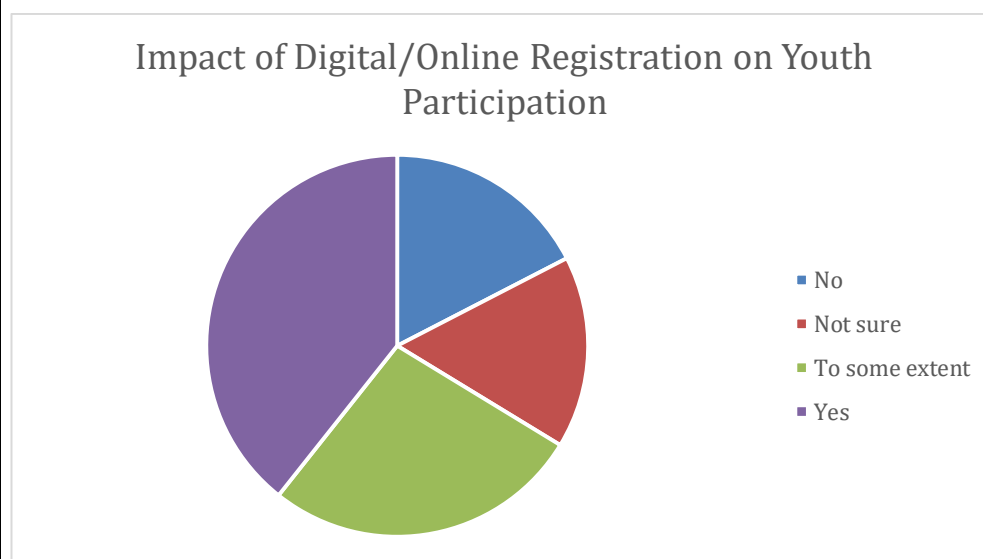
4.24: ANALYSIS ON THE BASIS OF DIGITAL/ONLINE REGISTRATION FACILITY

Table 4.24: Impact of Digital/Online Registration on Youth Participation.

Response	Number of Response	Percentage
No	31	17%
Not sure	29	16%
To some extent	48	27%
Yes	70	39%

(SOURCE– Primary Data)

Figure 4.24: Impact of Digital/Online Registration on Youth Participation.



(SOURCE– Primary Data)

INTERPRETATION

Digital or online registration is seen as helpful by most respondents. 39% believe it would make voting easier, while 27% feel it would help to some extent. Only 17% felt it would not help.

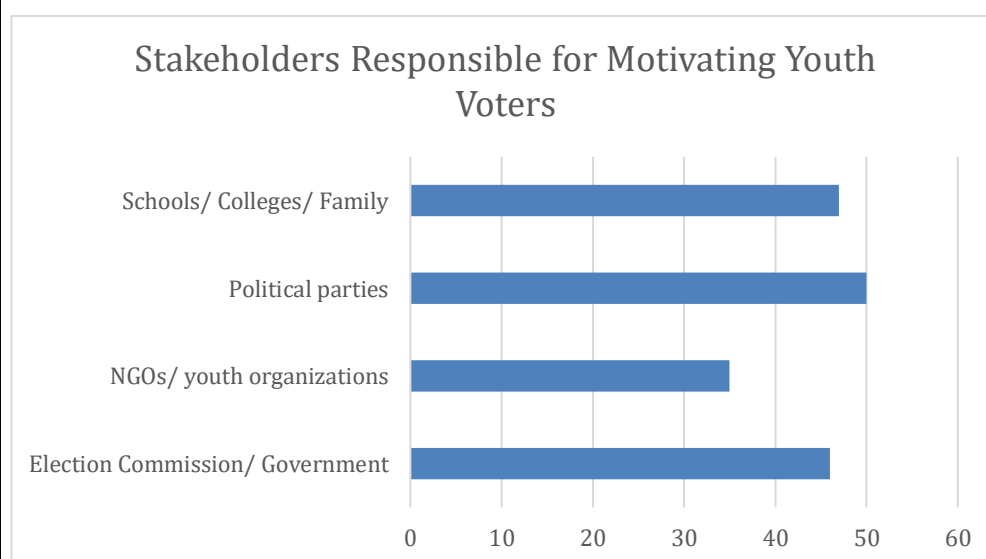
4.25: ANALYSIS ON THE BASIS OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR MOTIVATING YOUTH VOTERS

Table 4.25: Stakeholders Responsible for Motivating Youth Voters.

Response	Number of Response	Percentage
Election Commission/ Government	46	26%
NGOs/ youth organizations	35	20%
Political parties	50	28%
Schools/ Colleges/ Family	47	26%

(SOURCE– Primary Data)

Figure 4.25: Stakeholders Responsible for Motivating Youth Voters.



(SOURCE– Primary Data)

INTERPRETATION

Respondents believe responsibility is shared among different institutions. Political parties were chosen by 28%, while the Election Commission/Government and Schools/Colleges/Family were each chosen by 26%. NGOs and youth organizations were selected by 20%.

CHAPTER 5
FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS
& CONCLUSION

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

1. Youth interest in voting is mostly neutral or moderate, with only a small proportion showing strong interest.
2. A significant number of respondents do not possess a voter ID, limiting their ability to vote.
3. Political awareness among youth is inadequate, with many feeling only somewhat informed about the electoral process.
4. Political discussions are rare among family and peer groups, reducing political engagement.
5. There is a high level of distrust in politicians and political institutions among youth.
6. Lack of trust in politicians is the main reason for not voting, followed by registration issues and unavailability.
7. Political apathy influences youth non-participation to some extent.
8. Social media is not a major source of political information for most respondents.
9. Social media has limited influence on actual voting decisions.
10. Peer group influence on political opinions is occasional, not strong.
11. Education encourages voting only to a moderate extent.

12. Door-to-door campaigns are the most effective method to motivate youth voters.
13. Incentives and recognition motivate voting only to a limited extent.
14. Debates and discussions in colleges moderately encourage voting participation.
15. A majority support including voter education in schools and colleges.
16. Digital or online voter registration is viewed as a way to make voting easier
17. Responsibility for motivating youth voters is shared among political parties, educational institutions, families, and the government.
18. Overall, youth voter apathy is mainly due to distrust, low awareness, and procedural barriers, not complete disinterest in democracy.

SUGGESTIONS

1. Include voter education in schools and colleges—make it practical and relatable.
2. Simplify and digitalize voter registration—make it mobile-friendly and accessible on campus.
3. Political parties should focus on real youth issues—jobs, education, and climate—not just slogans.
4. Build trust—show accountability and involve youth in decision-making.
5. Promote debates and mock elections in colleges—make democracy hands-on.
6. Teach media literacy—help youth spot misinformation and think critically.
7. The Election Commission should engage youth continuously, not just during elections.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that low youth participation in voting is not a result of indifference, but a consequence of structural, institutional, and psychological barriers. Urban youth remain politically aware and socially active, but they lack trust in political institutions, feel underrepresented, and face procedural difficulties that discourage voting.

While social media and education play a role in shaping political opinions, they are currently insufficient to motivate consistent electoral participation. The findings emphasize that democracy cannot rely on awareness alone—it requires trust, accessibility, and meaningful engagement.

Youth participation is essential for a representative and future-oriented democracy. Addressing voter apathy among youth requires coordinated efforts by educational institutions, political parties, election authorities, families, and society at large. With proper reforms and inclusive engagement, young voters can transform from passive observers into active contributors to democratic governance.

WEBSITES

<https://www.pewresearch.org/2012/07/16/ask-the-expert-young-people-and-political-engagement/>

[https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2023/745820/IPOL_STU\(2023\)745820_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2023/745820/IPOL_STU(2023)745820_EN.pdf)

https://www.elections.ca/res/rec/part/youeng/youth_electoral_engagement_e.pdf

https://www.aec.gov.au/About_AEC/Publications/files/youth-study/youth_electoral_study_02.pdf

<https://www.eisa.org/storage/2024/12/2024-journal-of-african-elections-v23n2-youth-inclusivity-south-africa-eisa.pdf?x29006>

<https://keralakaumudi.com/en/news/news.php?id=1456940&u=youngsters-staying-away-from-voting-70-percent-youth-in-kerala-chose-not-to-enroll-as-voters-1456940>

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/kerala/survey-in-progress-to-identify-reasons-for-voter-apathy-among-youth/article69633495.ece>

https://english.mathrubhumi.com/news/kerala/young-generation-relectant-to-vote-kerala-to-study-situation-c29bfd5d?utm_source=chatgpt.com

https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/kerala/2024/Apr/20/migration-trend-takes-a-toll-on-keralas-young-votes?utm_source=chatgpt.com

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<https://www.cppr.in/articles/ylf-youth-vote>

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/372760652_Social_Media_and_Political_Participation_Among_the_Students_in_India_A_Survey_Analysis

<https://www.indiatoday.in/india-today-insight/story/why-the-youth-vote-matters-2542965-2024-05-23>

EMPOWERED YET PASSIVE: UNDERSTANDING THE YOUTH'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS ELECTORAL POLITICS

We are Noorul Fidha G ,Risana Niyas ,Christlyene M Alexious , final year B.Com(SF) students from St. Teresa's College, Ernakulam.

As part of our research project on youth political engagement, we are conducting a study to understand the factors influencing young people's lack of interest in voting.

We kindly request you to take a few moments of your valuable time to complete the attached questionnaire. Your responses will greatly contribute to our research and provide us with essential data for our project. Thank you for your participation and support.

Questionnaire:

1. Which age group do you belong to?
 - ☐ 18-20
 - ☐ 21-23
 - ☐ 24-26
 - ☐ 27-29

2. Do you have a voter ID?
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No

3. What is your level of interest in voting?
 - ☐ Very interested
 - ☐ Somewhat interested
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Not interested

4. How informed do you feel about the electoral process?
 - ☐ Very informed
 - ☐ Somewhat informed
 - ☐ Neutral
 - ☐ Not at all informed

5. How often do you discuss politics with your family or friends?
 - ☐ Very often
 - ☐ Sometimes
 - ☐ Rarely
 - ☐ Never

6. How important do you think voting is for creating social and political change?

- ☐ Very important
- ☐ Somewhat important
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Not at all important

7. Do you believe your vote can make a difference? *

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ To some extent
- ☐ Not sure

8. How often do you vote in elections?

- ☐ Always
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Never

9. If you have never voted, what is the main reason?

- ☐ Lack of interest
- ☐ Unavailability
- ☐ No trust in politicians
- ☐ Registration issues

10. How do you usually feel about voting?

- ☐ Very positive
- ☐ Somewhat positive
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Negative

11. If you have voted before, what motivated you to vote?

- ☐ Peer/ Media influence
- ☐ Desire for change
- ☐ Support for a particular candidate
- ☐ Feel it was my responsibility

12. Do you believe elections in India are free and fair?

- ☐ Completely free and fair
- ☐ Free and fair to some extent

- Not very fair
- Not fair at all

13. What discourages youth from participating in elections?

- Lack of trust in politics
- Feeling the politics is corrupt
- Lack of political education
- Voting process feels inconvenient

14. How strongly do you agree with the statement “politics does not address issues relevant to youth”?

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree

15. To what extent does political apathy (lack of interest in politics) influence youth not voting?

- Very much
- Somewhat
- A little
- Not at all

16. How often do you use social media for political information?

- Very often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

17. Does social media influence your voting decision?

- Strongly
- Somewhat
- Very little
- Not at all

18. Do discussions with friends/peer groups shape your political opinions?

- Very often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

19. Does your level of education encourage you to vote?

- ☐ Strongly
- ☐ Somewhat
- ☐ Very little
- ☐ Not at all

20. Which campaign method would motivate you most to vote?

- ☐ Social media marketing and TV/ radio advertisements
- ☐ College awareness programs
- ☐ Door-to-door campaigns
- ☐ Celebrity/ Youth influence campaigns

21. Would recognition or incentives encourage you to vote?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ To some extent
- ☐ Not sure

22. Do debates or discussions in colleges/schools encourage youth participation in voting?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ To some extent
- ☐ Not sure

23. Should voter education be included in schools/colleges?

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

24. Would digital/online registration make voting easier for youth? *

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ To some extent
- ☐ Not sure

25. Who should take the most responsibility for motivating youth voters?

- ☐ Election Commission/ Government
- ☐ Political parties

- NGOs/ youth organizations
- Schools/ Colleges/ Family