

# POLITICAL ISOLATION

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## ABSTRACT

*This is a common tendency that ‘Democracy is good but Politics is bad.’ While everybody known that democracy never survived without politics especially in representative system. It becomes very hypertensive when it related with voting process. When a people says their vote has no effect how things are run in this country, it is serious not because it is related with voting turnout but because it is the reflection of their psychological , cultural, and evolutionary orientation about their political system. In this paper we have tried to seek out the reasons why the people have this type of attitudes.*

India is a largest democracy in the world. A person who has been completed 18 year of his age , has the right to take active part in Indian democracy.(Universal adult franchisees assures that every person have right to vote and a very simple process have been adopted to getting voting right ). An unique thing of this democracy that no V.I.P. line in voting process President is as equal as Phulmatia. All is well, so called good traditional democratic values, well settled political process, matured voters , modern technique of vote casting (E.V.M.), it means everything is going on the way of betterment .Every center of power ( member of village panchayat to President of India ) have directly or indirectly elected by voters through well settled political process established by our constitution. In every year many types of elections have been conducted in our democratic setup. We have practiced all these things since last six decades. Many-many milestones have been settled by our democracy in these years, on which we can proud. This is the reason because maximum Indians think that democracy is better to rule in India and there are no alternate of this popular system.

But another face of our democracy is also seeing. This is a common tendency that ‘Democracy is good but Politics is bad.’ While everybody known that democracy never survived without politics especially in representative system. This is a problem for our glorious democratic system when a normal people think that they have no role in their political system and it becomes very hypertensive when it related with voting process. When a people says their vote has no effect how things are run in this country, it is serious not because it is related with voting turnout but because it is the reflection of their

psychological , cultural, and evolutionary orientation about their political system. In conceptual terms this is called ‘Political Isolation’ which is a dimension of political alienation.

The concept of political alienation refers to a set of attitudes or opinions that reflect a negative view of the political system. Political alienation represents a less-than-positive view of the political world; it indicates displeasure with political leaders and institutions. Robert Lane defined the concept of alienation as “an individual’s disapproval of the way political decisions are made” (Lane,1962, p162). In a similar vein, Franz Neuman describes alienation as a “conscious rejection of the whole political system which expresses itself in apathy” (Neuman,1957,p.290). Political alienation, as Neuman suggests, can include a sense that one is powerless to influence the political system. Such individuals often feel incapable of having any meaningful impact on political events or developments. Although political alienation represents a general disillusionment and disenchantment with the political system, Alienation implies the lack of these allegiant set of beliefs, and are also referred to by their more negative counterparts: “powerlessness,” “meaninglessness,” and “cynicism,” respectively.

Political Isolation refers to a rejection of political norms and goals that are widely held and shared by other member of society.(Finifter, 1970, p390) Political isolation can be illustrated by a belief that voting are other socially defined political obligation are merely conformist formalities. Or indeed that public participation is appropriate in the formulation of public policy. This type of alienation is consistent with Lane’s

description of alienated individuals as feeling that the rules of the game are unfair, loaded, and illegitimate. The constitution is in same sense fraudulent' (Lane,1962, p 162)

Why do some people become politically isolated? Why a people have made this type of orientation or attitude about their political system, which have glorious record, which have many changes but stable, which have changed their nature (changed in multy party system from one party dominant) peacefully and constitutionally without any resolution, and in which a new pattern of ruling (Coalition Government) were also practiced successfully? Why? This is my research question in this study. In this paper we have tried to seek out the reasons why the people have this type of attitudes. I can't say that there were no previous work have done on this field of political science but I can say that political participation is much popular than political alienation in political studies. This particular area of alienation in which I want to study of the reasons of that type of attitudes, I think this is completely new and not previously done.

**DATA AND METHODS**

The data used in this study has been derived from interviews collected from a nationwide probability sample in India in early 2004 conducted by LOKNITI, CSDS (National Election Studies 2004) Used sample derived through 'Systematic Random Probability Sampling Method' by LOKNITI previously . It means this is the sampled data so I have not done any other sampling in this study. In NES2004 a big questionnaire have been used but in this study I have selected only those ten questions whose are relevant in this study.Q21 (Do you think your vote has effect on how things are run in this country are you think your vote makes no difference) has been taken as a D.V. and other nine questions Q12,13a, 13b, 13c, 13d, 32, 42,b2, and b3 have been selected as possible probable reasons, these were treated as Independent Variables. Some questions were combined into an index. Firstly I have prepared a 'Satisfaction index' of q12 and 32 , because both questions are related with satisfaction of person and in India a person seems to government for their personal financial betterment because India is a welfare state .Q13a, 13b, 13c, 13d were also cauterized as a 'Party faith index'. For conceptual clarity the independent variables are arranged in three groups, first is 'human

satisfaction' (Q12 &Q32), which is main independent variable, Second is 'people faith and belief' (Q13a, 13b, 13c, 13d & Q42) and third is 'demographic' (Qb2 & b3).

**DISCUSSION AND RESULTS**

**Satisfaction of a Person (their personal and about government performance)**

Within the cluster of status measure used in the present study Dissatisfaction is by far the single most important predictor of political isolation. **Table 1** show that the respondents who thinks their vote has no effect only 15% are satisfied and 23% dissatisfied with government performance and their personal finance situation.

**Table 1**

**Voting Effect and Satisfaction Index N=27189**

Ser. No.	Measures	Values
1	Crosstab Satisfied Dissatisfied	15% 23%
2	Chi-Sq ( $\sigma^2$ )	0.000
3	Correlation coefficient(r)	0.093
4	Regression Coefficient (B)	0.74
5	Significance	Yes

Source – CSDS , Data Unit (NES2004)

The tendency of vote has no effect (Political Isolation) is 8% more in dissatisfied respondents than satisfied respondents. This is statistically significant difference (p-value =0.000<0.05) and here is positive correlation (r=0.093), the regression coefficient is 0.7 indicating that as a person becomes more dis-satisfied. They are more likely to say their vote doesn't matter. On behalf of these analysis I can say that Political Isolation attitude and satisfaction of a people strongly correlated. The reason for this correlation is normal human psychological phenomenon that if a person dissatisfied in their own life he dissatisfied with all other things. This fact also established in this study. A distrustful individual, who nonetheless feels that voting is an effective way to influence the political system, may be motivated to vote in order to oust the current administration or party in power (Note 3). In contrast, another similarly distrustful individual but who feels inefficacious as well, is likely to stay home on election day.

**Faith in Political Parties :**

Lack of faith in major political parties is another reason found of Political Isolation Attitude in this study. Those respondents who have not faith in major political parties are more politically isolated than the respondents who have faith in major political parties.

**Table 2**

**Voting Effect and Party Faith Index N=27189**

S n	Measures	Values
1	Crosstab Faith No faith	17% 23%
2	Chi-Sq ( $\sigma^2$ )	0.000
3	Correlation coefficient(r)	0.078
4	Regression Coefficient (B)	0.06
5	Significance	Yes

Source – CSDS , Data Unit (NES2004)

**Table 2** Shows that 17% respondents who have faith in political parties they are isolated while 23% respondents who have no faith in political parties have Isolation attitude. This difference is also statistically significant ( $\sigma^2 =0.000<0.05$ ) and here is positive correlation ( $r=0.078$ ), and regression coefficient ( $B=0.06$ ) shows 6% variance. On behalf of this analysis I can say that people’ isolation attitude is directly proportional to lack of faith in political parties. In fact parties are the life blood of any democracy people have expectations to parties to build a political system in which every citizen shall posses’ liberty, property, and security and none shall be enslaved by poverty, ignorance, or unemployment. But when it becoming false, and there were not fulfill people’s expectations then they become isolated. This picture is clearly shown in this study also.

**Fairness of Election Process:**

Elections provide an effective way for citizens to influence the political system, and whether elected bodies are representative of the general public . Political trust is an evaluation of whether the government is producing policies according to expectations. Politically trustful individuals are generally satisfied with the procedures and products of government (Erikson, Luttbeg, & Tedin, 1980). But another side of the coin if person feel the election process is not fare he become

distrustful about their system. In this study this fact also established.

**Table 3**

**Voting Effect and Belief About Fairness Of Elections N=22373**

S n	Measures	Values
1	Crosstab Fair Not Fair	16% 25%
2	Chi-Sq ( $\sigma^2$ )	0.000
3	Correlation coefficient(r)	0.079
4	Regression Coefficient (B)	0.08
5	Significance	Yes

Source – CSDS , Data Unit (NES2004)

Another possible reason correlated with perceived isolation is respondent’s belief about fairness of elections. Those who think elections are conducted not fair in India more likely to say their vote has no effect than the respondents who think inversely. **Table 3** Shows this fact also. The respondents who think their vote has no effect among them 17% have belief of the fairness of the elections while 25% appositely. ( $\sigma^2=0.000<0.05$ ) shows significant positive correlation ( $r=0.079$ ), and regression coefficient ( $B= 0.08$ ) shows 8% variance. This is established fact that elections provide a convenient means for legitimizing authority and it is the only way by which a person involves in democracy and avail democratic norms. When a people feel elections are not fair than their belief have established that there are no existence of democratic values and become isolated.

**Gender Effect:**

This is traditionally established fact that isolation attitude in women is higher than men. In present study this fact is also found. Another positive correlation ( $r=0.052$ ) found between isolation attitude and Sex. **Table 4** shows 18% male have isolated attitude while this attitude in 22% female respondents. .This difference is significant ( $\sigma^2=0.000<0.05$ ) which shows the sex is a probable reason of political isolation.

**Table 4**

**Voting Effect and Gender N=27189**

S.n	Measures	Values
1	Crosstab Male Female	18% 22%

2	Chi-Sq ( $\sigma^2$ )	0.000
3	Correlation coefficient(r)	0.052
4	Regression Coefficient (B)	0.04
5	Significance	Yes

Source – CSDS , Data Unit (NES2004)

It also shows that women empowerment process have not achieved their goal and a traditional thinking in women is present now time also.

**Age Effect:**

There is a weak correlation between Political isolation and age group. Whereas older think they are more isolated than youths. In this study (Table 5) shows that 21% older are politically isolated while in youths this attitude is only 18%. This is also statistically significant ( $\sigma^2=0.000<0.05$ ) and a low positive correlation, ( B= 0.02) shows a slight variance of 2% . The reason for the correlation between isolation and age group may then lie in the fact that youths are entering in political system and process with their expectations and they think their expectations could be fulfilled by the system.

**Table 5**

**Voting effect and Age Group N=27185**

S n	Measures		Values
1	Crosstab	Youth Older	18% 21%
2	Chi-Sq ( $\sigma^2$ )		0.000
3	Correlation coefficient(r)		0.034
4	Regression Coefficient (B)		0.02
5	Significance		Yes

Source – CSDS , Data Unit (NES2004)

This is the age in which a person has extra energy, but after some years people feel bad about their

expectations and he came to the conclusion that their expectation can't fulfill by this system . Therefore in older age group a person become isolated.

**CONCLUSION**

In last we can say that, there could be many factors and reasons are responsible for political isolation, some reasons have checked by me in this study, every factor has no similar effect. The most adhesive thing is satisfaction of a people in their political system. In fact isolation is an attitude which made by people's perception belief, circumstances, If these things are not satisfactory to people than they have made a bad idea about their political party system, election process, and finely about whole political system. Political Isolation is at least partially a function of social experience.

It is obviously imperative to consider the kinds of experience. People have with the political system and the responses they have received to their own or their peers. In last, I want to say that in a research paper researcher has limitations. All things can't consider in this paper about reasons of political isolation. I suggest further detailed study on this particular area of political Alienation. Present study will give a broad support for further study, this is my own belief.

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