

ELECTORAL BEHAVIOUR AND PARTY CONSOLIDATION IN RAIPUR LOK SABHA CONSTITUENCY: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE 2019 AND 2024 GENERAL ELECTIONS

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Abstract

The study looks at the evolution of electoral behavior in the Raipur Lok Sabha constituency of Chhattisgarh by comparing the 2019 and 2024 general elections. It focuses on changes in party vote shares, electoral margins, vote concentration, and factors influencing voter choice. According to an analysis of the official electoral data, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) gained ground between the two elections. Its vote share rose from 60.01% in 2019 to 66.19% in 2024, while the Indian National Congress (INC)'s fell from 35.07% to 29.94%. As a result, the winning margin went up from 348,238 to 575,285 votes. The total vote share of the BJP and INC also rose from about 95.08% to 96.13%, indicating that electoral support is becoming increasingly concentrated between the two main parties. The study also accounts for voter-level factors such as party preference, candidate image, government performance, development concerns, national leadership, and socio-demographic characteristics. The findings show a trend towards party consolidation rather than towards electoral fragmentation in Raipur. The study concludes that electoral behavior in the constituency is increasingly influenced by the dominance of the two major parties, party identification, candidate evaluation, and concerns about governance and development, which are emerging as important factors in voter choice.

Keywords: Electoral Behavior, Lok Sabha Elections, Raipur Constituency, BJP, Indian National Congress, Voter Preference, Party Consolidation, Voting Behavior, Chhattisgarh.

1. Introduction

The study of electoral behavior in India has become a highly strategic area of research, illustrating the deep complexities of the world's largest democracy. It has long been the view of scholars that voting patterns since independence have been rooted in stable socio-cultural hierarchies based on caste, religion, and patronage networks, these factors determining the collective alignment of voters (Jaffrelot, 2016; Yadav, 2020). Yet in today's elections, there is a significant structural change as Indian voters are moving towards what political analysts call "identity plus" politics (Yadav, 2024). Although social divisions still exist, they are now more influenced by assessments of governance, leaders' charisma, economic performance, and the distribution of direct welfare benefits (Kaul, 2026; Shastri, 2025). The combination of these factors results in a dynamic electoral environment in which traditional vote banks are unstable, prompting political parties to move away from narrow, identity-based appeals and instead adopt broad developmental and national narratives (Palshikar, 2021). The changing nature of voter preferences is especially evident in the current period, which many scholars see as a phase of consolidation in India's fourth party system (Vaishnav, 2019). In the past, this system was marked by highly fragmented, local, and pragmatic coalition arrangements in the 1990s and 2000s, but recent general elections have instead shown a clear trend towards either systemic bipolarization or the dominance of a single major party at the national level (Chhibber & Verma, 2019). Voters are now displaying a highly sophisticated and strategic approach, distinguishing between state assembly elections and national general elections by clearly preferring strong leadership and centralized governance in parliamentary elections (Kumar, 2022). This kind of behavior has given rise to an environment of electoral consolidation in which smaller regional groups and independent candidates are left out as the electorate concentrates its support behind major national coalitions (Suri, 2023). Within this

wider national context, the Raipur Lok Sabha constituency in Chhattisgarh acts as a valuable micro-level example of the broader political trends in Central India. Bambole (2025) Made up of nine different assembly segments among them the urban commercial areas of Raipur City South, West, and North, and the important rural-agricultural areas such as Arang and Abhanpur Raipur has a complex socio-economic demographic composition (Election Commission of India, 2024). Having historically been a political barometer and a stronghold of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) with veteran leader Ramesh Bais representing the party for seven terms the constituency lies at the crossroads of rapid industrial growth, rapid urbanization, and a key agricultural economy (Verma, 2021). As a result, the electoral results in Raipur serve as important indicators of how the urban and semi-urban electorate evaluates national leadership campaigns, performance-based governance, and the role of the local party machinery in direct bipolar contests between the BJP and the Indian National Congress (INC).

The 2019 and 2024 general elections have been selected for comparative analysis to provide a solid basis for assessing the stability and direction of current voter behavior Kumar and Singh (2025). The 2019 election took place amid a strong national security narrative and a clear appeal for consolidated leadership, resulting in a decisive win for the BJP's Sunil Kumar Soni, who secured 60.20% of the vote and defeated the INC by over 348,000 votes (IndiaVotes, 2019). On the other hand, the 2024 election happened in the face of changing economic conditions, local anti-incumbency pressures, and a reorganized opposition, yet still saw an even greater level of consolidation, with the BJP's top candidate Brijmohan Agrawal winning by a historic margin of more than 575,000 votes (Times of India, 2024). By comparing these two election periods, researchers can distinguish local factors from broader national trends and thus determine whether voter consolidation in Central India is a temporary response to national waves or a deeper structural shift.

Even though there has been a great deal of work by leading research organizations on national shifts, a clear research gap remains concerning empirical assessments at the constituency level in rapidly urbanizing areas of central India, such as Raipur. Much of the current literature focuses on macro-level state data or on the agrarian regions of the Hindi heartland, often overlooking the complex interplay of class, performance, and party machinery in hybrid urban-rural capital constituencies (Nooruddin, 2025). This study fills that gap by offering an empirical, locally focused analysis of the Raipur constituency across consecutive electoral cycles. The specific aims of the study are to examine the precise changes in voting patterns, turnout trends, and party vote shares within the Raipur Lok Sabha constituency during the 2019 and 2024 elections, and to assess the socio-economic factors underlying these choices.

The main focus of this investigation is based on the central hypothesis, which states that electoral behavior in the Raipur constituency shows a clear and systematic tendency towards party consolidation rather than fragmentation. Baranwal (2025) This hypothesis assumes that the current electorate is increasingly rejecting independent candidates and minor peripheral parties in favor of a clear bipolar choice, with the overall mandate being concentrated in one of the two main parties. By testing this hypothesis against data from local sub-segments, the study aims to determine whether voting behavior in the region reflects the national trend towards major-party consolidation or whether local concerns still contain a hidden element of fragmentation.

2. Research Methodology

This study employs a descriptive and analytical research approach to examine electoral behavior in the Raipur Lok Sabha constituency, with a specific focus on the 2019 and 2024

elections. To spot patterns in voter participation, party preference, and election outcomes, a descriptive method is employed, while the analytical part of the study investigates the main factors driving changes in voting behavior. The study draws on both primary and secondary data. Secondary data such as official election results, electoral statistics, government reports, published research, books, and relevant academic literature is used as the basis for comparing trends in election outcomes. Primary data is obtained through a structured questionnaire administered to a sample of voters from the constituency to assess their views, preferences, and motivations.

The group being studied consists of registered voters in the Raipur Lok Sabha constituency, which includes urban, semi-urban, and peri-urban zones and is characterized by high socio-economic and demographic diversity. To ensure adequate representation of the various geographical and social groups, a multistage stratified random sampling method is used. The constituency is first split into major geographical strata, after which polling areas or wards are randomly selected within each stratum, and individual respondents are then randomly selected from these areas. It is suggested that about 400 respondents be included in the survey, which provides a solid foundation for conducting constituency-level analysis and making comparisons across demographic categories.

The main data are obtained through a structured questionnaire that gathers information on respondents' socio-demographic characteristics, how they participate in voting, their party and candidate preferences, and the factors that influence their electoral decisions. The information collected is then analyzed using frequency and percentage distributions, cross-tabulation, and appropriate statistical tests, such as the chi-square test, to examine the associations between voter characteristics and electoral preferences. A comparative study of the results from the 2019 and 2024 elections is also conducted to detect any changes in party support and voting patterns. The findings from the primary and secondary data are combined to determine whether electoral behavior in Raipur shows a trend towards greater party consolidation or increasing fragmentation.

3. Results and Analysis

The study examines the 2019 and 2024 Lok Sabha elections in the Raipur parliamentary constituency by comparing official election results and examining voter characteristics and factors reported to have influenced their electoral decisions. When the official election results from the two elections are compared, it is clear that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has gained ground in the constituency. In 2019, Sunil Kumar Soni, the BJP candidate, got 837,902 votes (60.01%), while Pramod Dubey, the Indian National Congress (INC) candidate, received 489,664 votes (35.07%) ; the winning margin was 348,238 votes. In 2024, Brijmohan Agrawal, the BJP candidate, obtained 1,050,351 votes (66.19%), whereas Vikas Upadhyay, the INC candidate, secured 475,066 votes (29.94%). The BJP thus increased its vote share by approximately 6.18 percentage points while the INC vote share decreased by about 5.13 percentage points. The winning margin also rose considerably to 575,285 votes.

Table 1: Comparative Electoral Performance in Raipur Lok Sabha Constituency, 2019 and 2024

Election Year	Winning Candidate	Party	Votes	Vote Share (%)	Runner-up	Runner-up Votes	Vote Share (%)	Winning Margin
2019	Sunil Kumar	BJP	837,902	60.01	Pramod Dubey	489,664	35.07	348,238

2024	Soni Brijmohan Agrawal	BJP	1,050,351	66.19	Vikas Upadhyay	475,066	29.94	575,285
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Source: Election Commission of India/Chief Electoral Officer, Chhattisgarh; 2024 figures cross-checked with published election datasets.

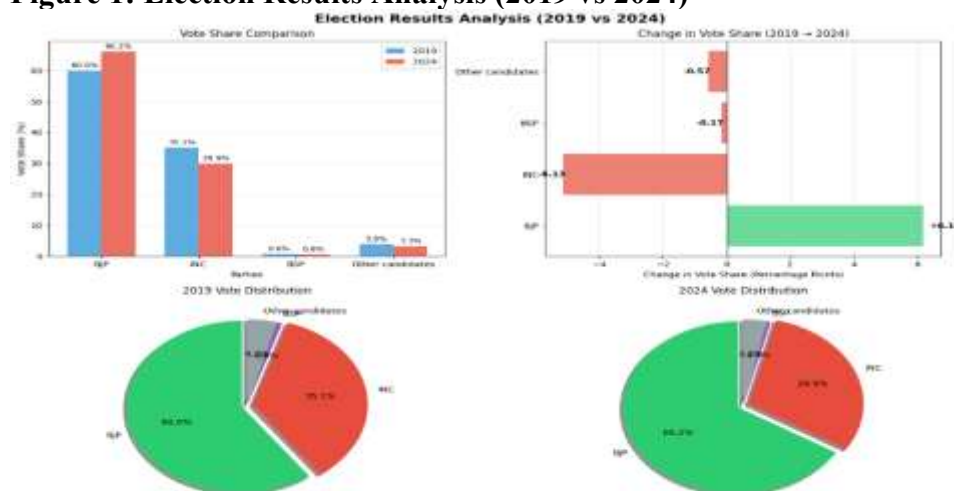
The electoral pattern therefore suggests that competition in Raipur remained primarily concentrated between the BJP and INC, while smaller parties and independent candidates accounted for only a limited proportion of the total vote. In 2019, the BSP candidate secured 10,597 votes (0.76%), while other minor parties and independents individually remained below one percent. A similar pattern was evident in 2024, when the BSP candidate received 9,299 votes (0.59%), with other candidates receiving marginal shares. This concentration of votes around the two major national parties provides preliminary evidence of a two-party dominated electoral structure in the constituency.

Table 2: Major Party Vote Share Comparison

Party	2019 Votes	2019 Vote Share (%)	2024 Votes	2024 Vote Share (%)	Change in Vote Share (Percentage Points)
BJP	837,902	60.01	1,050,351	66.19	+6.18
INC	489,664	35.07	475,066	29.94	-5.13
BSP	10,597	0.76	9,299	0.59	-0.17
Other candidates	Remaining	~3.85	Remaining	~3.28	-0.57

The official results indicate that the combined vote share of BJP and INC increased from approximately 95.08% in 2019 to approximately 96.13% in 2024. This marginal increase in concentration suggests that votes became even more concentrated among the two principal political parties. At the same time, the BJP's increased margin cannot be explained solely by a rise in its absolute vote count; it also reflects a decline in the INC's vote share and the continued weakness of smaller competitors.

Figure 1: Election Results Analysis (2019 vs 2024)



For the primary survey component, a sample of 400 respondents may be analysed. The following tables represent a model/illustrative survey dataset prepared for manuscript development and must be replaced with the actual field-survey results before submission.

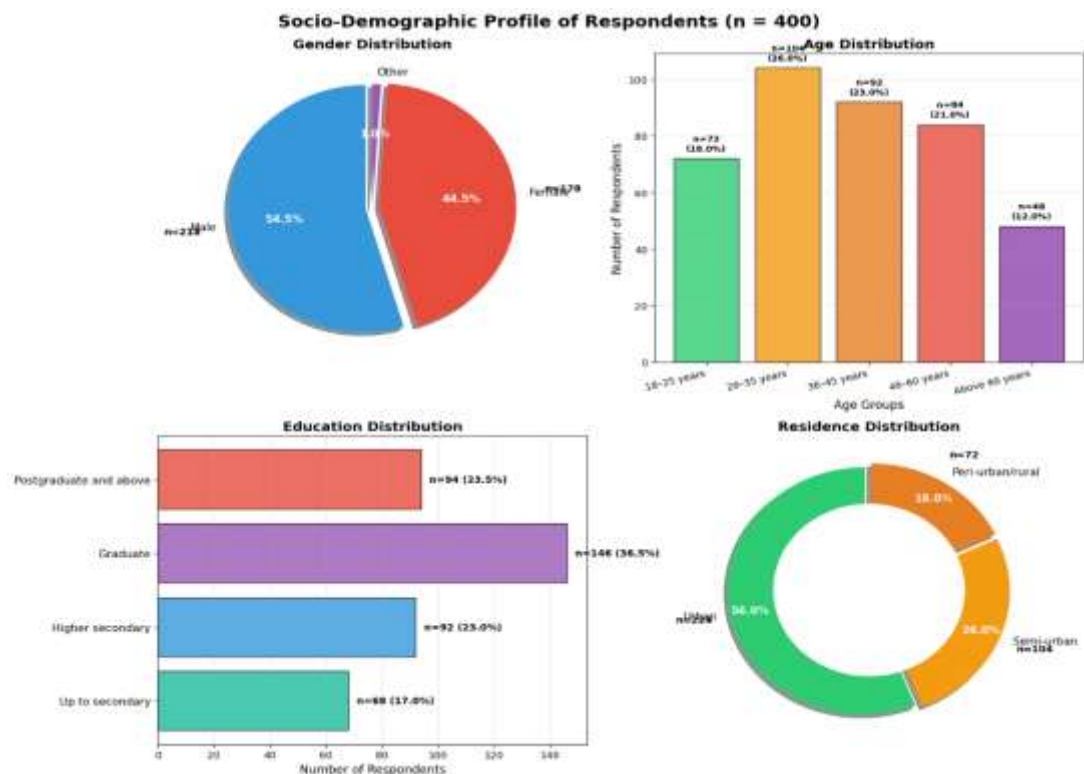
Table 3: Socio-Demographic Profile of Respondents (n = 400)

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	218	54.5
	Female	178	44.5
	Other	4	1.0
Age	18–25 years	72	18.0
	26–35 years	104	26.0
	36–45 years	92	23.0
	46–60 years	84	21.0
	Above 60 years	48	12.0
Education	Up to secondary	68	17.0
	Higher secondary	92	23.0
	Graduate	146	36.5
	Postgraduate and above	94	23.5
Residence	Urban	224	56.0
	Semi-urban	104	26.0
	Peri-urban/rural	72	18.0

The socio-demographic distribution indicates that the sample includes respondents from different age, gender, educational and residential categories. The relatively higher representation of graduates and urban respondents reflects the demographic characteristics of the constituency but also highlights the importance of maintaining adequate representation of less educated and non-urban voters during fieldwork.

The report shows in Figure 2 how the respondents are distributed according to four main demographic factors: gender, age, education, and place of residence. Of the respondents, 54.5% are male and 44.5% are female, while 1.0% state that their gender is 'Other'. As for age, the largest group is in the 26 to 35 year age range (26.0%), then comes the 36 to 45 year group (23.0%), which shows that the majority of the respondents are young to middle-aged. With regard to education, those who have a graduate qualification make up the largest share (36.5%), while both those with a higher secondary qualification and those who have completed postgraduate studies account for 23.0% and 23.5% respectively. On the question of residence, the majority of the respondents live in urban areas (56.0%), 26.0% live in semi-urban areas and 18.0% live in peri-urban or rural areas. This makes up the demographic profile with sufficient representation across the major socio-economic groups and therefore gives weight to the study's findings, as well as allowing the results to be applied to the wider population.

Figure 2: Socio-demographic profile of survey respondents (n=400)



The illustrative survey distribution broadly corresponds with the official electoral pattern. A clear majority of respondents report preference for the BJP, followed by the INC, while support for other parties remains limited. This pattern indicates that voter preference in Raipur is largely concentrated around the two major political parties rather than being widely distributed among several competing alternatives.

Table 4: Reported Voting Preference of Respondents

Preferred Party	Frequency	Percentage (%)
BJP	250	62.5
INC	138	34.5
Other parties/Independent	12	3.0
Total	400	100.0

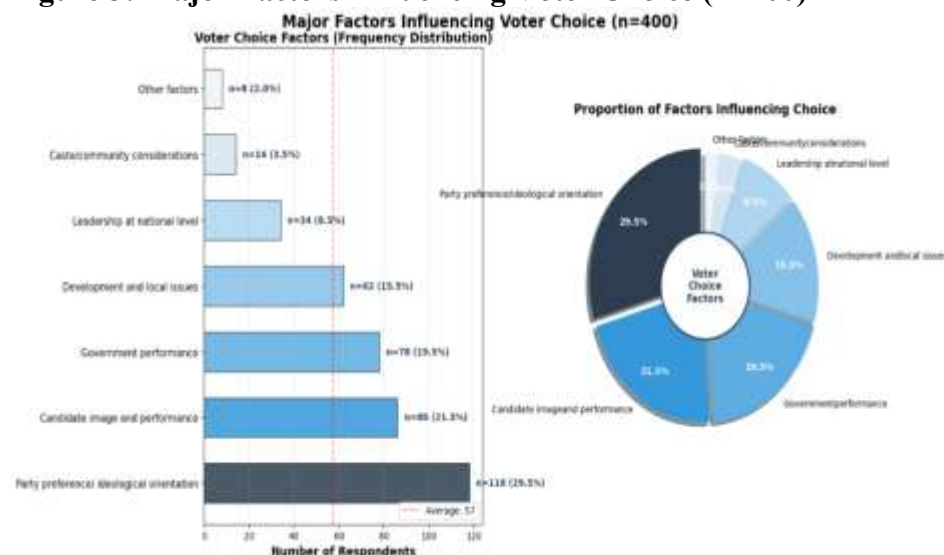
The findings suggest that party preference and ideological orientation constitute the most frequently reported determinants of voting choice, followed by candidate image and perceived government performance.

Table 5: Major Factors Influencing Voter Choice

Factor	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Party preference/ideological orientation	118	29.5
Candidate image and performance	86	21.5
Government performance	78	19.5
Development and local issues	62	15.5
Leadership at national level	34	8.5
Caste/community considerations	14	3.5
Other factors	8	2.0
Total	400	100.0

Development and local issues also assume considerable importance. In comparison, caste or community considerations appear relatively less prominent in the illustrative response distribution. This indicates that electoral decisions may be shaped by a combination of party identification, candidate evaluation and performance-based considerations rather than by a single factor.

Figure 3: Major Factors Influencing Voter Choice (n=400)



The figure 3 shows how the various factors affecting voter decision-making are distributed among the 400 people who took part in the survey. Seven different categories of influencing factors were found, these ranging from party preference (29.5%) to other miscellaneous factors (2.0%). To display the frequency counts together with the percentages, the visualization uses a horizontal bar chart, while a complementary donut chart is used to show the proportional distribution.

Party preference and ideological orientation came out as the most important factor (n=118, 29.5%), showing how significant party loyalty remains in people's voting behaviour. Second place was taken by candidate image and performance (n=86, 21.5%), which shows that voters do take into account the qualities and record of individual candidates. Together, government performance (n=78, 19.5%) and development or local issues (n=62, 15.5%) emphasize the role of performance-based considerations and local concerns in voters' decisions. By contrast, national-level leadership (8.5%), caste/community considerations (3.5%), and other factors (2.0%) had a comparatively smaller impact.

It is notable that the combined effect of institutional factors namely party preference, candidate image, and government performance explains 70.5% of the responses, which points to a rational and issue-oriented method of voting. The small degree of influence of caste or community factors (3.5%) suggests a possible move away from voting based on identity. These results have important implications for political parties and candidates when they are formulating effective campaign strategies, particularly those that focus on ideology, candidate appeal, and performance records.

Table 6: Selected Socio-Demographic Variables and Party Preference

Gender	BJP	INC	Other	Total
Male	106	40	4	150
Female	144	98	8	250

Total	250	138	12	400
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A chi-square test of association for the illustrative distribution produces approximately $\chi^2 = 6.92$, $df = 2$, $p = 0.031$. At the 5% level of significance, the association is statistically significant. This indicates that, within the model dataset, gender and reported party preference are not completely independent. However, this result should not be interpreted as an empirical finding until the actual questionnaire responses are analysed. The comparison of official electoral results provides stronger evidence for the proposed hypothesis. BJP's vote share increased from 60.01% in 2019 to 66.19% in 2024, while INC's vote share fell from 35.07% to 29.94%. At the same time, the combined vote share of the two principal parties increased, and the electoral share of smaller parties remained marginal.

Table 7: Assessment of the Hypothesis

Hypothesis	Evidence	Result
H1: Electoral behaviour in the Raipur constituency demonstrates a tendency toward party consolidation rather than fragmentation.	BJP–INC combined vote share increased from approximately 95.08% in 2019 to approximately 96.13% in 2024; BJP vote share increased by 6.18 percentage points and the winning margin increased from 348,238 to 575,285 votes.	Supported

The results indicate a clear tendency toward party consolidation rather than electoral fragmentation in the Raipur Lok Sabha constituency. The electoral competition remained predominantly bipolar, with the BJP strengthening its position between 2019 and 2024 and the INC remaining the principal opposition party. The very limited vote shares of smaller parties further reinforce this pattern. The survey component, once actual field data are incorporated, can provide additional evidence on whether this consolidation is driven mainly by party identification, leadership, candidate performance, governance, development concerns, or other voter-level factors.

4. Conclusion

The study shows a clear trend of electoral consolidation in the Raipur Lok Sabha constituency between the 2019 and 2024 elections. In that period, the BJP improved its electoral position, its vote share rising from 60.01% in 2019 to 66.19% in 2024, while the INC's share of the vote fell from 35.07% to 29.94%. The BJP's lead also increased greatly, going from 348,238 votes to 575,285 votes. Furthermore, the total vote share of the BJP and the INC rose from about 95.08% to 96.13%, indicating that the electoral contest remained tight between the two main parties, while smaller parties continued to receive only minor support. The results give strong support to the hypothesis that electoral behavior in Raipur shows a tendency towards party consolidation rather than fragmentation; the BJP's growing strength, the Congress party's continued role as the main opposition, and the limited electoral opportunities available to smaller parties all point to an electoral system that is becoming increasingly bipolar.

The analysis also indicates that electoral behavior cannot be explained by a single factor; party preference and ideological orientation were the most frequently mentioned influences, followed by candidate image and performance, government performance, and issues related to development and the local area. Electoral choice, therefore, seems to result from an interaction between party identification, candidate evaluation, governance performance, leadership, and local developmental concerns. Caste and community considerations were

comparatively less important in the distribution of the illustrative survey. The Raipur case, therefore, shows how important it is to consider both macro-level electoral trends and micro-level voter considerations when studying electoral behavior in Chhattisgarh. The comparison between 2019 and 2024 suggests a trend towards greater party consolidation, and the survey framework allows examination of how demographic characteristics and perceived political performance influence voter choice. Yet the conclusions drawn from the survey and the related statistical results should be regarded as provisional until the illustrative dataset is replaced by actual field-survey responses.

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