

Methodology of NES 2014 Tracker-1

In the run up to the Lok Sabha elections scheduled for 2014, Lokniti-Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS) conducted a countrywide study Delhi between June 17 and July 5, 2013. The main aim of this exercise was to track the mood of the nation, regularly on key socio political and economic issues right up to the national parliamentary elections that were due in 2014. A total of 1120 locations were randomly selected for the survey - 4 Polling Stations each in 280 Assembly Constituencies which were spread across 267 Parliamentary Constituencies. For each of the 18 States where the survey was conducted, the selection of the Assembly Constituencies was done randomly using the Probability Proportionate to Size method. This was followed by the random selection of four Polling Stations in every selected Assembly Constituency using the Systematic Random Sampling Method. Finally, respondents were sampled randomly in each of the 1120 selected polling stations from among the updated electoral rolls. This was also done using the using the Systematic Random Method. Keeping in mind the low completion rate due to various reasons, the respondents were over-sampled (35 per Polling Station).

A total of 39,200 randomly selected electors were approached for interviews of which 19,062 interviews were successfully completed. Women comprise 44 per cent of the sample. 20 percent of the sample consists of Scheduled Caste respondents and 10 per cent is made up of Adivasis. Muslims constitute 11 per cent of the sample and respondents from rural areas are 76 per cent of the sample. These numbers, when compared with actual Census figures by and large reflect the representative nature of the sample, although there is an over representation of Dalits and rural respondents and a slight under representation of Women and Muslims. (*see Table*)

Table: Sample profile compared to the Census

Categories	Share in Survey sample (%)	Actual Share in country's population (%)
Rural	76	69
Women	44	48
Muslim	11	14
ST	10	9
SC	20	17

Figures for actual proportion in the total population of India are from Census 2011

The interview was conducted face to face at the place of residence of the respondent using a standard structured questionnaire in the language spoken and understood by the respondent. The voting question was asked using a dummy ballot paper and dummy ballot box to ensure secrecy. The estimate of vote shares for

different political parties are based on a careful analysis of the respondents' stated preference of voting for a party as marked on the ballot paper, which carried the elections symbols of all the major political parties in the State. Since all surveys suffer from the problem of over-estimation of votes for big parties and underestimation for smaller parties, the estimate of vote shares was made after carefully adjusting the vote share of smaller parties and independents as base. A comparison of the proportion of important social categories in the total survey sample of a State with their actual proportion in the population of that State was also made while deciding the state-wise estimate of vote shares.

The total of 19026 completed interviews is not uniformly spread in all the 18 states where the survey was conducted. The sample in big states like Uttar Pradesh (3284), Maharashtra (1514), Andhra Pradesh (1681), West Bengal (1397), Bihar (1735), Madhya Pradesh (1439) is bigger compared to some smaller states like Delhi (301), Haryana (246) Chhattisgarh (337), Jharkhand (631) and Assam (575). In Rajasthan the sample (1691) is bigger compared to the proportionality of the size of the state in terms of population. In Tamil Nadu (786) and Kerala (508), the sample is lesser compared to the proportionality of the size of the state in terms of population. While reading the table of vote shares, it may be appropriate to remind the reader that there is greater confidence on the vote share estimates for parties in States where the sample is bigger, compared to states where the sample is small.

The survey was designed and analysed by a team of researchers at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, Delhi. The team included Anuradha Singh, Dhananjai Kumar Singh, Himanshu Bhattacharya, K.A.Q.A Hilal, Kanchan Malhotra, Jyoti Mishra, Nitin Mehta, Shreyas Sardesai and Vibha Attri. Professor Suhas Palshikar and Professor Sandeep Shastri provided their suggestions during the entire exercise. The survey was directed at the national level by Sanjay Kumar.

The survey was coordinated by scholars from the Lokniti Network: E Venkatesu (Andhra Pradesh), Subhrajeet Konwar and Sandhya Goswami (Assam), Rakesh Ranjan (Bihar), Anupama Saxena and Shamshad Ansari (Chhattisgarh), Biswajeet Mohanty (Delhi), Bhanu Parmar and Mahashweta Jani (Gujarat), Kushal Pal (Haryana), Harishwar Dayal (Jharkhand), Sandeep Shastri, Veena Devi and Reetika Syal (Karnataka), Sajad Ibrahim (Kerala), Yatindra Singh Sisodia (Madhya Pradesh), Nitin Birmal (Maharashtra), Prabhat Mohanty (Orissa), Jagroop Singh Sekhon (Punjab), Sanjay Lodha (Rajasthan), Ramajayam (Tamil Nadu), A.K. Verma, Asmer Beg, and Sudhir Kumar (Uttar Pradesh), Suprio Basu (West Bengal) .

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