

# MADHYA PRADESH MOOD REPORT - 2023



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# MADHYA PRADESH 2023

## THE CRUCIBLE OF POWER

*A Comprehensive Analysis of Electoral Dynamics*

*by*

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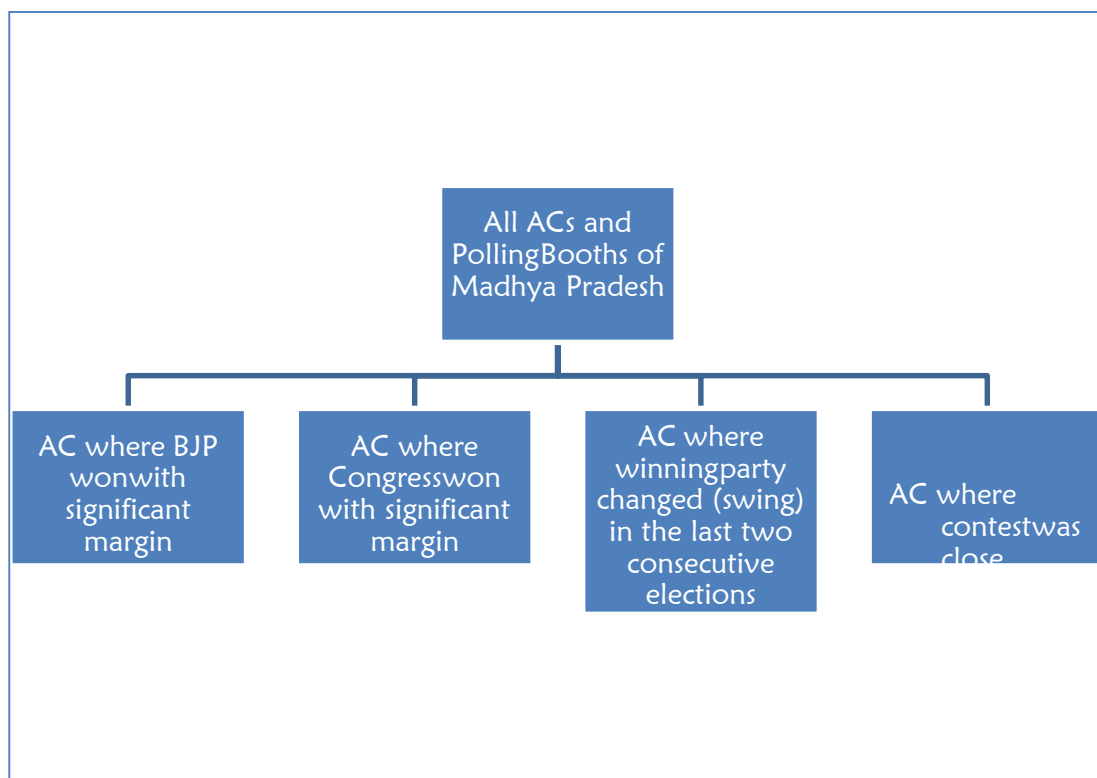
## Methodology

This research aims to unravel the electoral dynamics of the Madhya Pradesh assembly elections of 2023 through a mixed method lens. We employed a case study approach, selecting assembly constituencies that represent four distinct political contexts:

To study the electoral prospect of Madhya Pradesh assembly in 2023, we planned to go to the four types of different assembly constituency (five constituencies in each of the groups):

- A BJP stronghold assembly constituency where BJP has been winning the seat three or more assembly elections.
- A Congress stronghold assembly constituency where Congress has been winning the seat three or more assembly elections.
- An assembly constituency which has been swing in one election to another election, i.e., incumbent party lost the election.
- An assembly constituency which has a narrow margin of victory in the last assembly election 2018.

**The following flow diagram describes the contours of the sampling.**



In each of these chosen constituencies, we intended to visit three types of polling stations:

- a. The station with the closest victory margin in the 2018 elections.
- b. A station where BJP had a lead.
- c. A station where Congress was ahead both in proximity to the closest margin station.

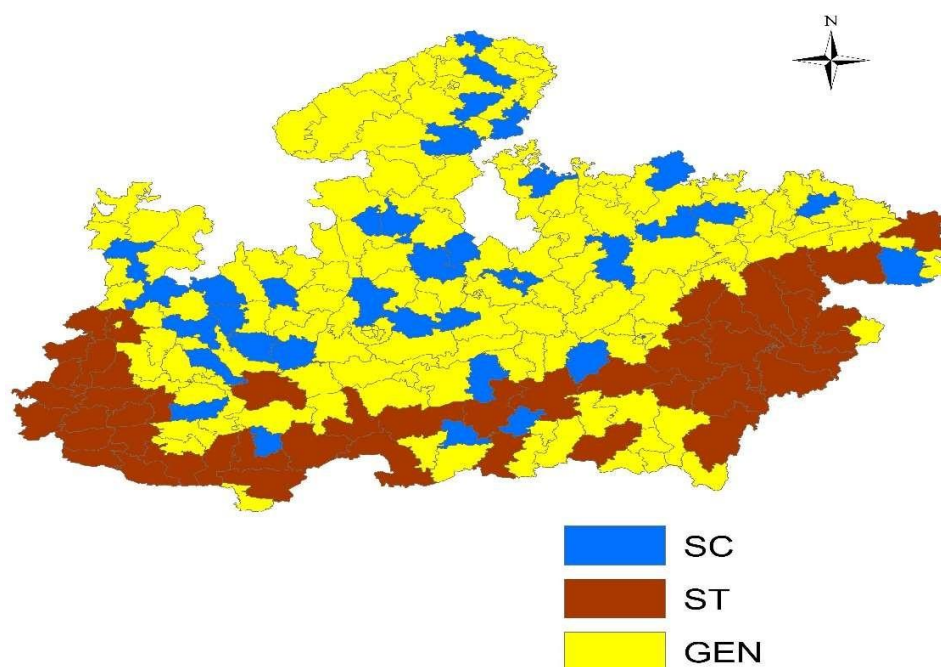
However, it must be acknowledged that due to time constraints. It was not feasible to visit all three types of polling stations in each sampled constituency.

This qualitative inquiry focuses on in-depth analysis rather than generalizability, seeking to provide nuanced understandings of voter sentiments, party strategies, and the socio-political undercurrents that shape electoral behaviors in these diverse constituencies. The case selection offers a balanced representation of the political landscape in Madhya Pradesh, enabling an exploration of both entrenched party loyalties and the dynamics of electoral volatility.

### List of selected Assembly constituency

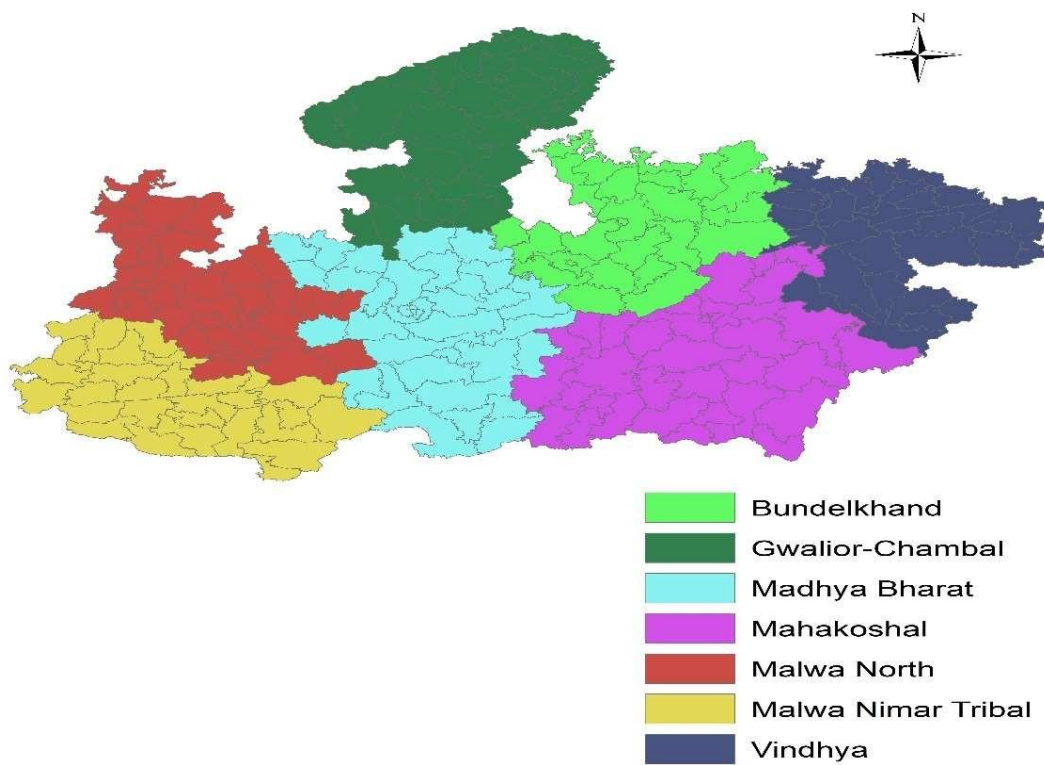
Types of AC's	Name of AC's
BJP Stronghold	Amla, Indore 2, Mundwara, Pandhana, Jaisingh, Nagar
Congress Stronghold	Bhopal Uttar, Rau, Dindori, raj Nagar, Kukshi, Sihawal
Swing	Multai, Sanwer, Anuppur, Jobat, Nagod
Narrow Margin	Suwarsha, Jabalpur North, Rajpur (ST), Deotalab, Damoh

## Different types of assembly constituencies of Madhya Pradesh





## Political regions of Madhya Pradesh





## Madhya Pradesh 2023: The Crucible of Power - A Comprehensive Analysis of Electoral Dynamics

As Madhya Pradesh approaches its 2023 electoral verdict, the question looms: will the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) maintain its stronghold, or will the Congress party orchestrate a breakthrough? The political terrain, long swayed by the BJP since 2003, felt the tremors of change in 2018 when the Congress emerged as the single largest party, albeit shy of a clear majority. Their brief stint in power was curtailed as internal dissensions led by Jyotiraditya Scindia resulted in the loss of their ruling majority in 2020.

In the lead-up to the next assembly elections, extensive travels across Madhya Pradesh from October 5th to November 5th, 2023, covering some 2500 kilometers, have provided insights into the public mood. Under Chief Minister Shivraj Singh's leadership, the BJP is encountering palpable anti-incumbency sentiments. Voters across various regions express discontent with the government's performance on key issues such as inflation, unemployment, and the management of the stray cattle crisis, all of which contribute to the state's rural distress. This brewing discontent raises the stakes for the BJP and poses the critical question: is Madhya Pradesh poised for change in the 2023 elections?

## Ripples in BJP's stronghold

In a village in Nagod assembly constituency which comes under Satna district, we met a bunch of men and women from Lodhi community, a major sub-caste among OBCs. Among them few women were beneficiaries of “Ladli Behna” scheme which was launched a few months back by the incumbent BJP Government. They all have been voting for the BJP for many elections, but this time they want change. This change is not only because they are exhausted from the two decades of BJP government (except 15 months where Congress was in power with the leadership of Sri Kamal Nath), but they think this government is unable to address the issue of inflation, unemployment and stray cattle.



*Nagod, Satna District*

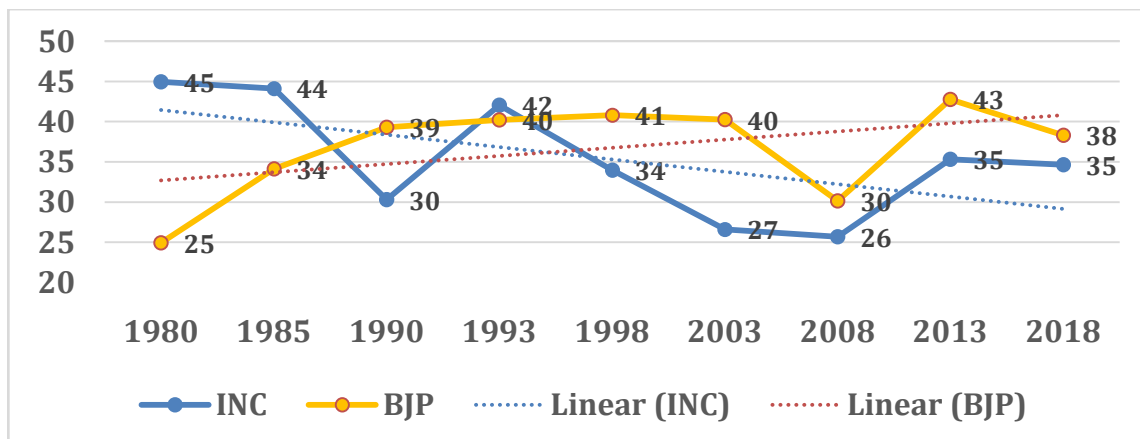
Lodhi community is around four percent of the total population of Madhya Pradesh, however, their numbers are high in Bundelkhand, Gwalior-Chambal, Mahakaushal and Vindhya regions. They are present in significant numbers in many constituencies and have been a traditional BJP support. Uma Bharti, the former and the lone woman chief minister of the state is from Lodhi community and this is also a reason that the community remained a committed voter base for the BJP in Madhya Pradesh, for about two decades. Another firebrand BJP leader and chief minister of adjacent state Uttar Pradesh, Kalyan Singh was also from the same community.



**Nagod, Satna District**

The Lodhi community is pivotal to election outcomes in Bundelkhand, historically a BJP bastion with a decisive edge over the Congress since 1998. Since its foundation in 1980, the BJP's influence has steadily grown, except in 2008. The party has outpaced the Congress in Bundelkhand since 1990, barring 1993 when the Congress momentarily surged ahead with a nearly two percent higher vote share than the BJP. The year 2008 saw a 10 percent dip in BJP's support in the region, coinciding with Uma Bharti's departure from the party to establish the Bhartiya Janshakti Party (BJSP). However, with Bharti's return to the BJP fold in 2013, the Lodhi electorate rallied once again behind the party, leading to a record 43 percent vote share for the BJP in Bundelkhand, as illustrated by the subsequent graphs.

### Support base for BJP and Congress in Bundelkhand since 1980



**Note:** All figures are in percent and rounded off. Data Source: Computed by Datalok team from the ECI data.

In the last assembly election in 2018, BJP lost around 4.5 percent vote share in Bundelkhand region, even though the party had around 4 percent lead over the Congress party. Out of the 26 assembly seats in this region BJP had won 14, Congress had won 10 and Bahujan Samaj Party(BSP) won one seat.

## **Evolution of Electoral Dynamics in Madhya Pradesh: The Ascendancy of BJP and the Decline of Congress**

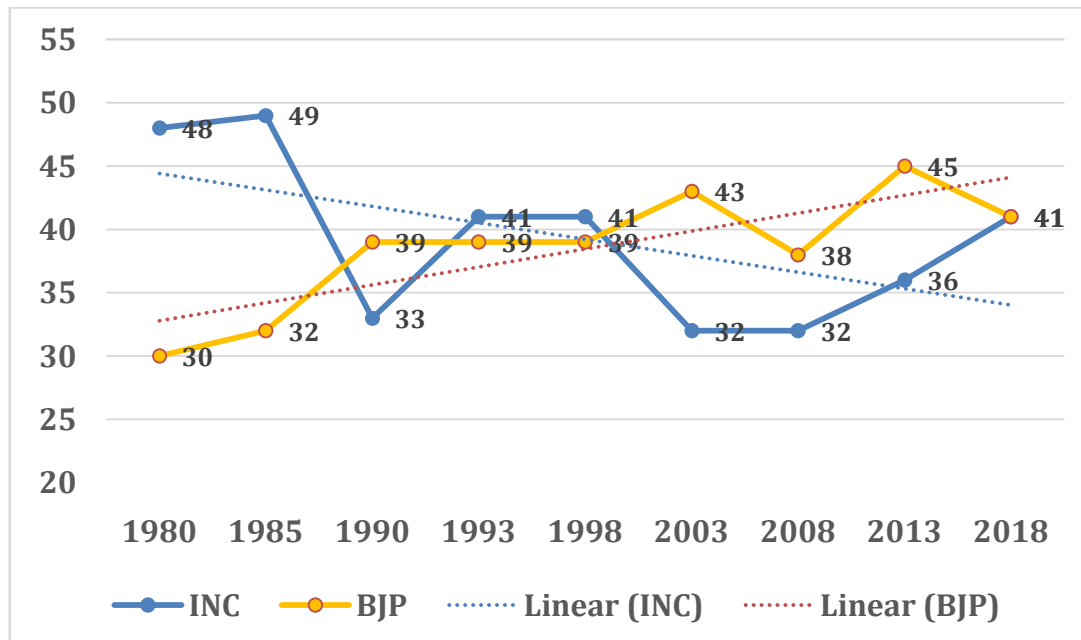
Since its inception, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has consistently presented a formidable challenge to the Congress in Madhya Pradesh. The BJP made a strong debut in the 1980 assembly elections with a 30 percent vote share. During the same period, Congress peaked, securing 48 and 49 percent of the votes in the 1980 and 1985 elections, respectively, and capturing over 75 percent of the assembly seats. However, this high mark was fleeting for Congress, with its support dwindling thereafter; it has not surpassed a 41 percent vote share since.

The political landscape of Madhya Pradesh gradually transitioned to a two-party contest, with the waning influence of Congress paralleling the rise of the BJP. The 1993 and 1998 elections were particularly competitive, with the Congress clinging to a slim majority and only a narrow vote share margin over the BJP — a mere two percent difference.

From 2003 onwards, the BJP surpassed Congress in vote share in every assembly election. Notably, even in the 2018 assembly elections where Congress managed to win more seats, it was the BJP that secured a larger portion of the overall votes. Post-1998, Congress has been unable to reclaim a vote share of 40 percent or higher, signaling a significant weakening of its electoral base.

Over the past 15 years, marked by three assembly and two parliamentary elections, the BJP's dominance, barring the 2018 assembly, has been pronounced. In these elections, the BJP not only won more votes but also more seats than the Congress. The Modi era has particularly fortified the BJP's stronghold in Madhya Pradesh. The party led in an overwhelming majority of assembly constituencies during the 2014 and 2019 Lok Sabha elections, capturing votes exceeding 50 percent. The 2019 Lok Sabha election was a watershed moment for the BJP, as it garnered an unprecedented 58 percent of the vote — the highest for any party in the state's electoral history.

### Vote support for the BJP and Congress since 1980



**Note:** All figures are in percent and rounded off. Data Source: Computed by Datalok team from ECI data.



## The BJP's Entrenched Legacy in Madhya Pradesh

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has an extensive and ideologically rich history in Madhya Pradesh, making the state a cornerstone of its national narrative. Prior to the official establishment of the BJP in 1980, its precursor, the Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS), had already laid a robust foundation of support. The Jana Sangh's inaugural electoral endeavor in 1951 saw them contesting 76 seats; despite not securing a victory, they did manage to garner around four percent of the vote.

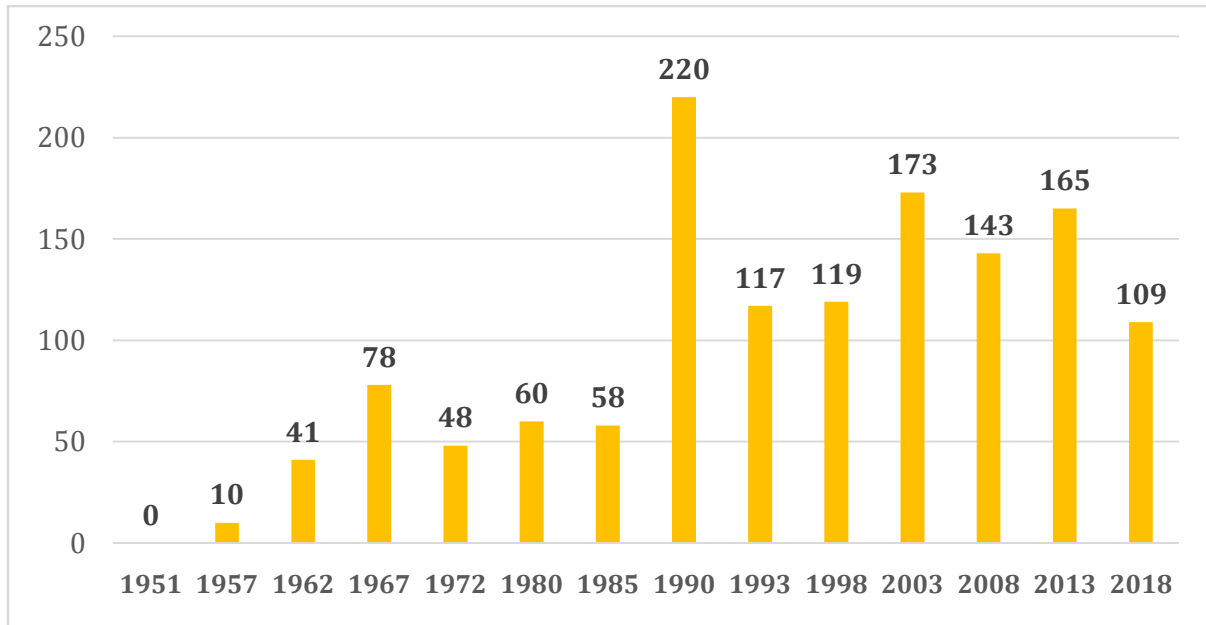
By the 1957 elections, the BJS had made significant strides, claiming ten assembly seats and ten percent of the vote, marking a substantial increase to one-fifth of voter support in the contested constituencies. The 1962 elections further solidified the party's position as the principal opposition to Congress, capturing 41 seats and increasing its vote share to 17 percent. The party's ascendancy continued, witnessing a steady expansion of its electoral base with each successive election.

The BJP's inaugural election in 1980 was nothing short of remarkable. It contested 310 of the 320 seats available and secured 60 seats, earning a 30 percent share of the votes. Despite a slight reduction in seats in 1985, down to 58, the party's vote share saw an incremental increase of 2 percent.

The pivotal moment came in 1990 when the BJP clinched a resounding victory, establishing its first government in the state with a commanding majority of 220 seats out of 320, and a 39 percent vote share. Although this administration did not serve a full term, the election marked a defining point in the party's trajectory. It wasn't until 1993 that the Congress regained power, which it held until 2003.

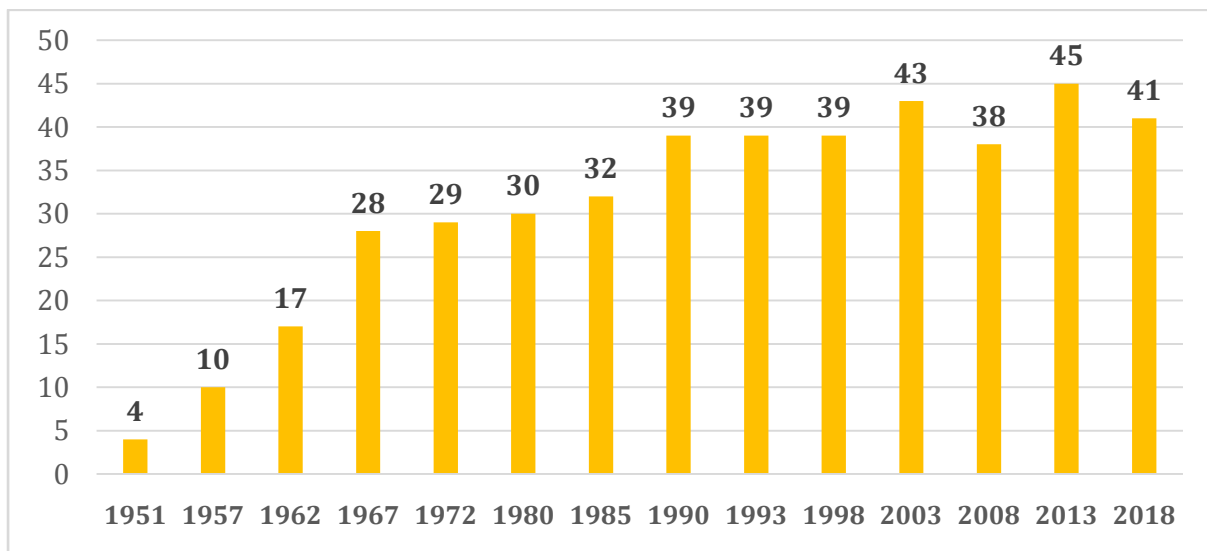


### BJP and their lineage party vote share since 1951



**Note:** Data Source: ECI

### BJP and their lineage party vote share since 1951

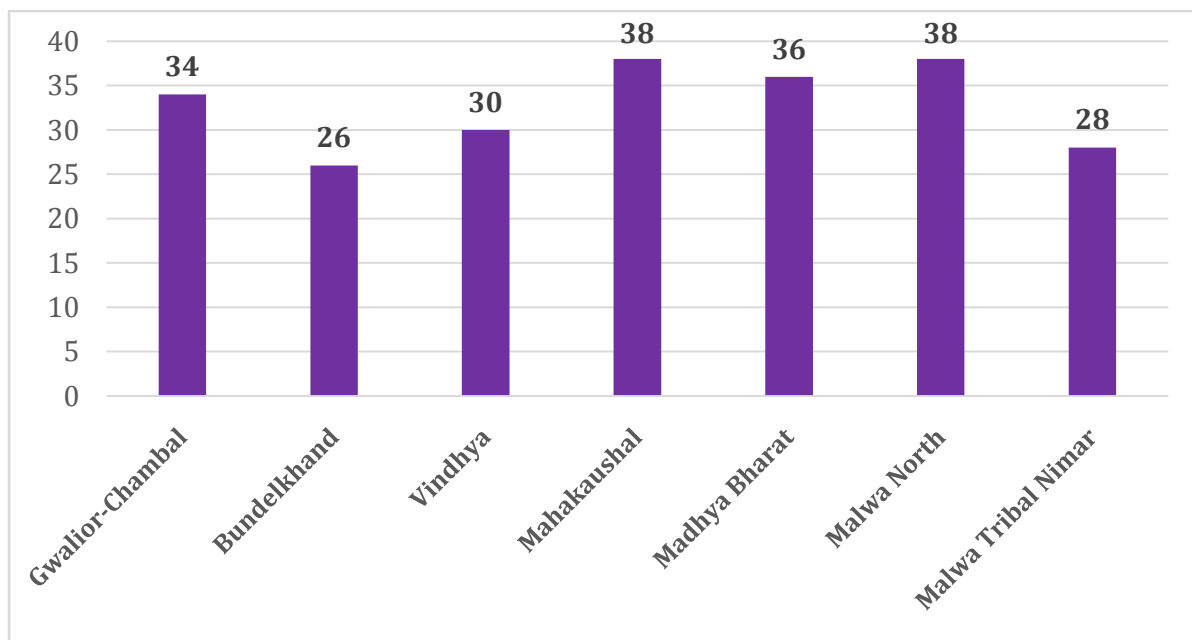


**Note:** All figures are in percent and rounded off. Data Source: ECI

## Geopolitical Divides and Shifting Allegiances in Madhya Pradesh

Madhya Pradesh, carved into seven diverse geographical regions, has witnessed the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) dominance since 2003, yet this influence is not uniformly distributed across its varied landscape. While the BJP has historically led in most regions, the Gwalior-Chambal area stands out as an exception. Here, the Congress occasionally surged ahead, notably in 2008 with a 1.5 percent lead in vote share, as detailed in the Gwalior-Chambal regional analysis graph.

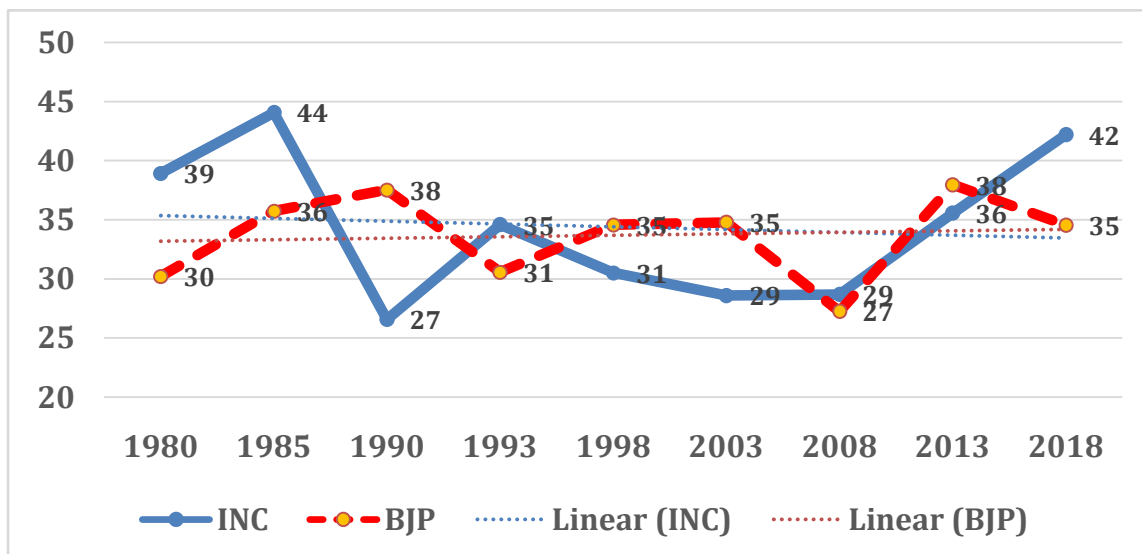
### Region wise total number of assembly seats distribution



**Source:** Computed by the Datalok team using ECI data

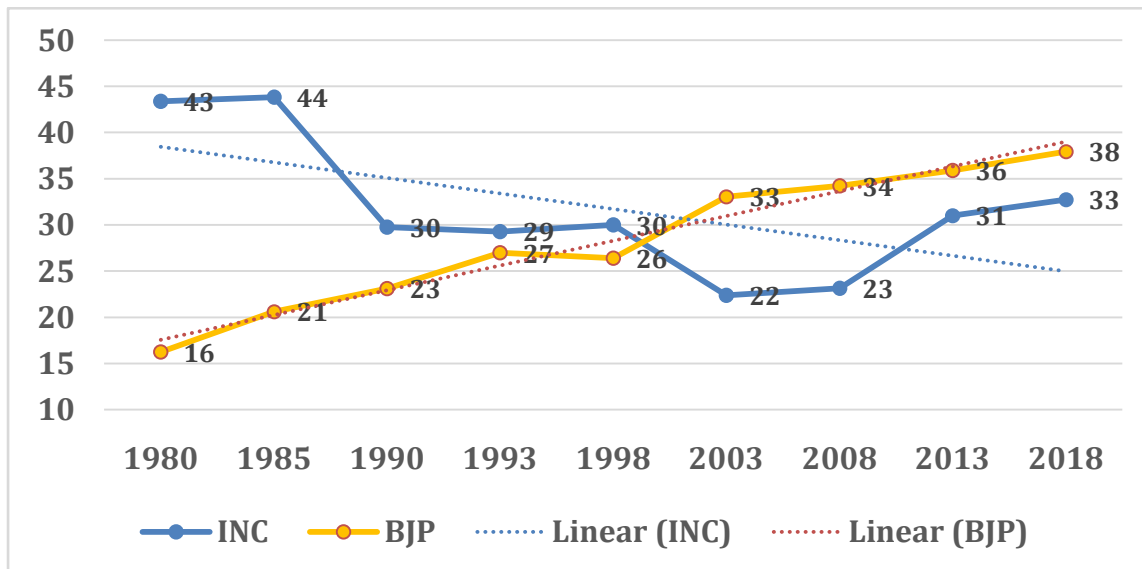
The political competition in Gwalior-Chambal has been particularly intense, with an almost equal average vote share for both parties hovering around 35 percent since 1980. The personal influence of Jyotiraditya Scindia, hailing from this region, significantly bolstered the Congress's performance in the 2013 and 2018 elections. Conversely, the BJP has struggled to breach the 40 percent vote share ceiling in both the Gwalior-Chambal and Vindhya regions.

### Vote share of BJP and Congress in Gwalior-Chambal region since 1980



**Note:** All figures are in percent and rounded off. Data Source: Computed by Datalok team from ECI data

### Vote share of BJP and Congress in Vindhya region since 1980



**Note:** All figures are in percent and rounded off. Data Source: Computed by Datalok team from ECI data.

The Vindhya region, shaped by the legacy of Congress stalwart Arjun Singh, saw the party's vote share peak at 44 percent in 1985. This figure stood as the highest in four decades, a testament to Singh's profound political impact. The demographic fabric of both Gwalior-Chambal and Vindhya is predominantly upper-caste, with Brahmins and Thakurs making up about 20 percent of the electorate, wielding substantial economic, political, and social influence historically.

The societal dynamics in these regions have evolved, especially with the advent of multi-party competition in the 1990s. The Bahujan Samaj Party's (BSP) victories in the Rewa seat during the 1991 and 1996 Lok Sabha elections exemplify this change, marking a departure from the erstwhile upper-caste dominance.

Personal testimonies from the OBC community reflect a history of social stratification and oppression. A middle-aged man from Rewa recounted the era of Thakur dominance, describing it as a time of exploitation and subjugation for Dalits and OBCs. The BJP's ascent to power in the state has, according to him, mitigated these historical injustices. However, there remains an undercurrent of apprehension among OBCs regarding a potential Congress resurgence, which they fear could herald the return of 'Thakur Raj'.

This sentiment is not isolated; it resonates with the experiences of others, such as a 35-year-old man from the Kurmi community in the Churhat assembly, who shared his father's migration story. The familial narrative included the receipt of land from a Thakur, which, despite being a gesture of goodwill, was marred by treatment akin to servitude and a lack of respect.

These narratives underscore a complex socio-political tapestry where caste dynamics, historical affiliations, and the changing fortunes of political parties intertwine to shape the electoral landscape of Madhya Pradesh.

### **OBCs in Madhya Pradesh: The Unconventional Kingmakers?**

Madhya Pradesh presents a unique case where the Other Backward Classes (OBCs), constituting about 45 percent of the state's population, have emerged as a decisive electoral force. Historically governed by the Congress, with upper-caste Chief Ministers at the helm until 2003, Madhya Pradesh experienced a political shift when the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) rose to power with leaders from various OBC communities. The BJP's unwavering support base, consistently above 39 percent since the 1990s, is credited to the robust backing from these OBC groups, including prominent sub-castes like the Yadavs, Kurmis, Lodhis, Kushwahas, and Kunbis.

This political landscape defies the typical North Indian trend, where regional parties often compete fiercely alongside national giants like the Congress and the BJP. In Madhya Pradesh, no regional party has managed to secure a significant foothold. The reasons are threefold: Firstly, no single OBC sub-caste has a vote share in double digits, leading to a fragmented OBC vote that does not coalesce around a third party.

Secondly, the geographical dispersion of OBCs across the state, with certain communities like the Lodhi concentrated in the north, prevents the formation of strong sub-regional identities. Lastly, the BJP has successfully navigated beyond social divisions, addressing the economic needs of the OBCs, particularly the farming majority, through initiatives like expanding Anaj Mandis and developing irrigation infrastructure, thereby consolidating the OBC vote.

Madhya Bharat and Malwa stand out as BJP strongholds, where the party's vote share has consistently exceeded 40 percent since its establishment. Notably, since 1990, the BJP has often garnered over 45 percent of the votes in these regions, occasionally surpassing the 50 percent mark. The last assembly election in 2018 saw the BJP leading the Congress by two to four percent in Madhya Bharat and Malwa North, respectively. Moreover, the vote share gap between the BJP and Congress in these regions is substantially wider than elsewhere, underscoring the BJP's entrenched regional dominance.



*Anuppur*





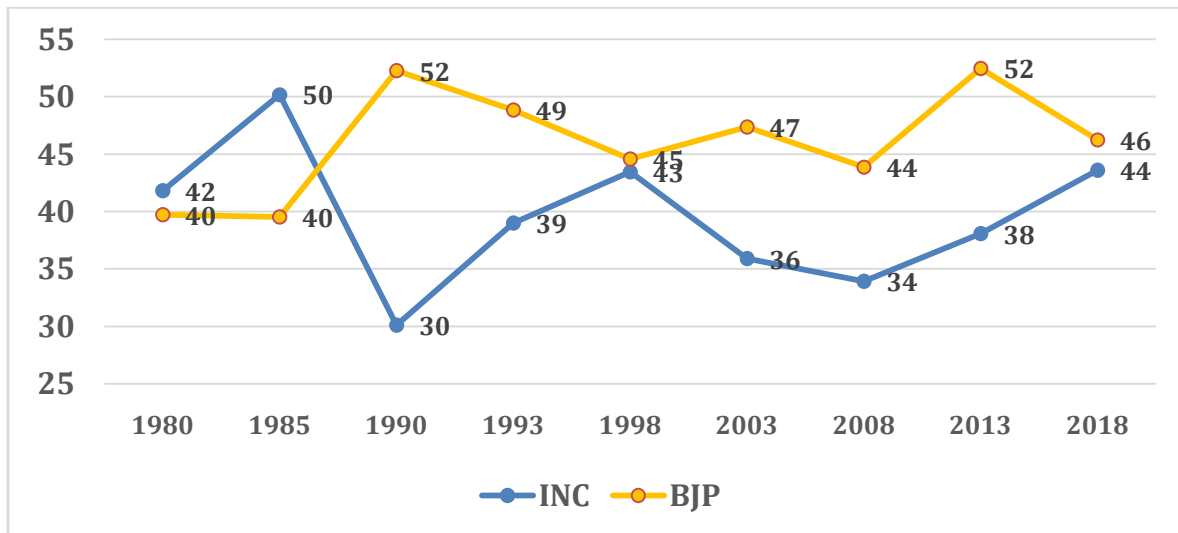
*Rou, Indore*



*Bhojpur, Raisen*

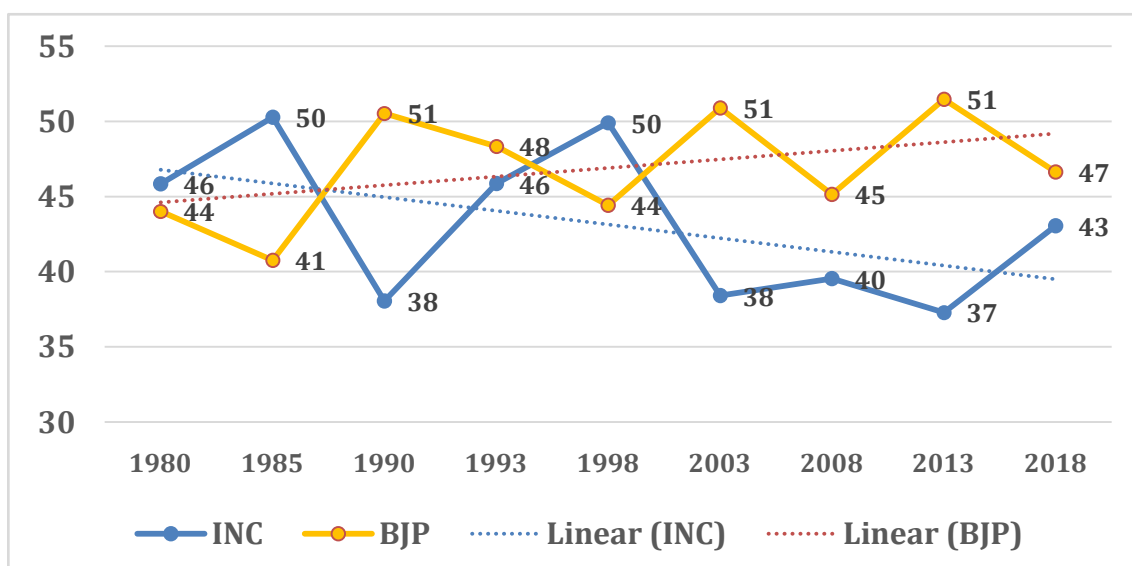


### Vote share of BJP and Congress in Madhya Bharat region since 1980



**Note:** All figures are in percent and rounded off. Data Source: Computed by Datalok team from ECI data

### Vote share of BJP and Congress in Malwa North region since 1980



**Note:** All figures are in percent and rounded off. Data Source: Computed by Datalok team from ECI data

## Congress's Inroads into the BJP's Strongholds

The 2018 assembly elections marked a notable shift in the political landscape of Madhya Pradesh. The Congress party emerged victorious with 114 seats, surpassing the BJP's count by five, despite the BJP having a slender lead in the overall vote share by 0.13 percent. Analyzing the regional breakdown, the BJP maintained its lead in four regions: Bundelkhand, Madhya Bharat, Malwa North, and Vindhya. Conversely, the Congress took the lead in Gwalior-Chambal, Mahakaushal, and Malwa Tribal Nimar regions.

A significant aspect of the 2018 elections was the Congress's six percent vote share increase in the BJP-favored territories of Madhya Bharat and Malwa North. These gains translated into 20 additional seats for Congress compared to the previous election, indicating a deep incision into the BJP's stronghold. In Madhya Bharat and Malwa North, which together account for 74 assembly seats, the BJP's dominance dwindled. From a sweeping victory of 65 seats in 2013, the BJP's control waned, allowing the Congress to elevate its presence from a mere 8 seats to an impressive 28 in 2018, while the BJP secured 45.

### Share of votes and differences in vote share by spatial structure of constituencies

Election Years	Urban			Semi Urban			Rural		
	INC	BJP	BJP-INC	INC	BJP	BJP-INC	INC	BJP	BJP-INC
2008	33.81	48.96	15.15	31.82	39.68	7.86	32.31	35.7	3.39
2013	35.82	54.54	18.72	35.21	49.51	14.3	36.7	42.52	5.82
2018	43	48.13	5.13	39.88	44.25	4.36	40.79	39.31	-1.48

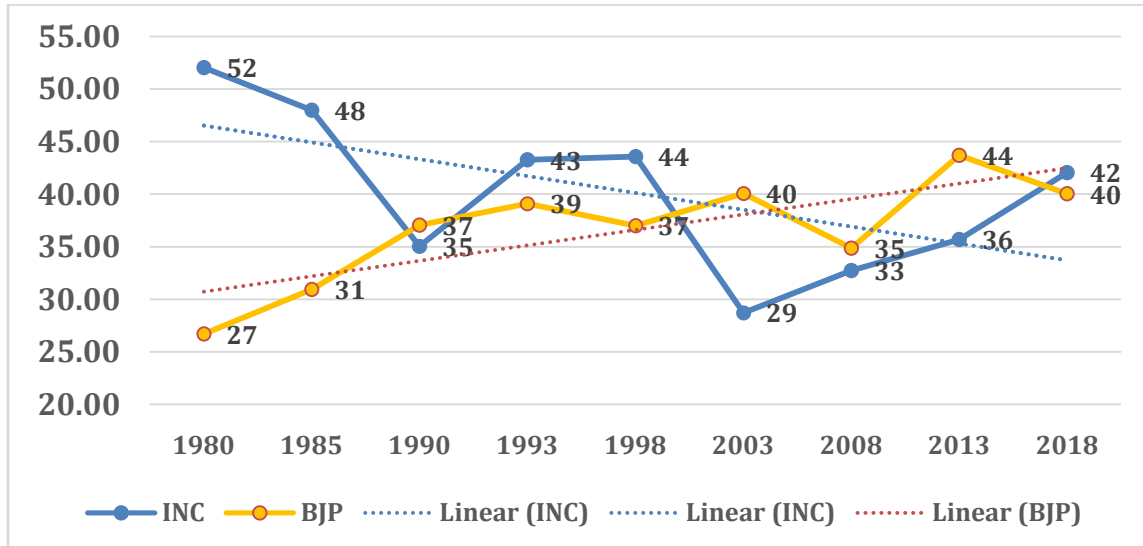
**Note:** All figures are in percent. Data Source: Computed by Datalok team from ECI data



*Niwas, Mandla*

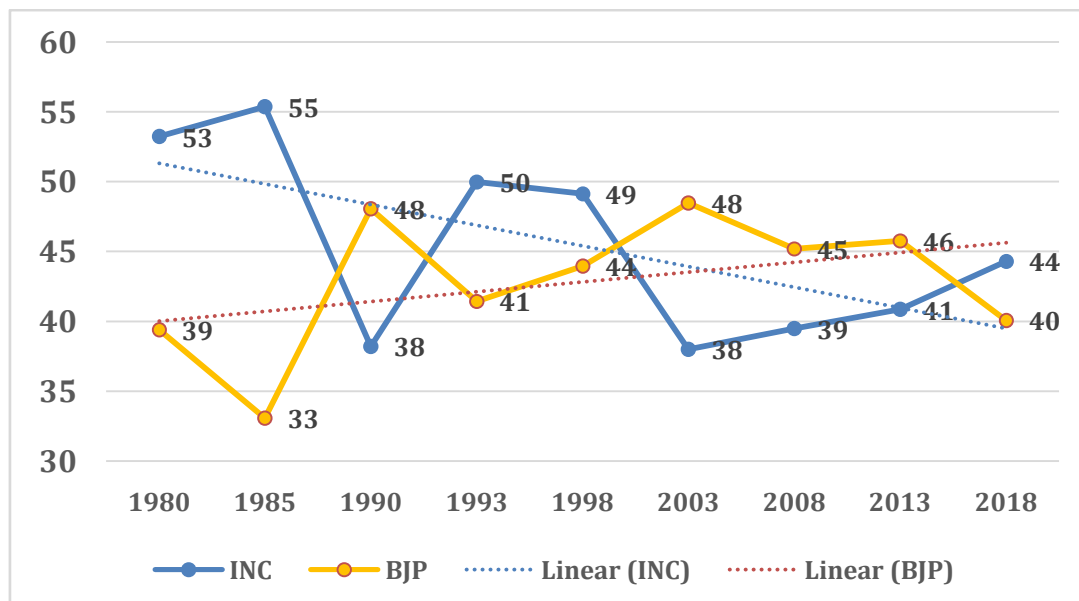
Political analyst Neelanjan Sircar attributed this shift primarily to rural distress, a claim borne out by the fact that the BJP's losses were predominantly in rural constituencies. While the BJP retained its urban strongholds, its rural vote share experienced a noticeable decrease. This trend underscores the Congress's strategic penetration into areas that were previously considered unassailable fortresses of the BJP.

### Vote share of BJP and Congress in Mahakaushal region since 1980



**Note:** All figures are in percent and rounded off. Data Source: Computed by Datalok team from ECI data

### Vote share of BJP and Congress in Malwa Tribal Nimar region since 1980



**Note:** All figures are in percent and rounded off. Data Source: Computed by Datalok team from ECI data.

## Bridging the Urban-Rural Political Chasm in Madhya Pradesh

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), traditionally seen as an urban bastion across India, has witnessed a blurring of this urban-rural dichotomy over the past decade, particularly in Madhya Pradesh (MP). Despite perceptions, MP's urbanization, at less than 30 percent, trails behind the national average and stands comparable to states like Gujarat, Karnataka, or Maharashtra. This statistic is reflected in the composition of the state assembly, with 171 rural seats juxtaposed against 59 semi-urban and urban seats, as classified by the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS).

Historically, the BJP has enjoyed a considerable lead in urban constituencies, with a double-digit vote share advantage over Congress in the 2008 and 2013 elections. However, this urban stronghold witnessed a contraction in 2018, as the vote share gap narrowed to 5 percent. The 2018 elections also saw the Congress make inroads into urban areas, gaining 7 percent more votes than in the 2013 assembly—a more significant increase than in rural areas, where its gains were around 4 percent. This surge in rural support was pivotal, as Congress managed to outperform the BJP by nearly 1.5 percent in the overall vote tally.

The Congress's performance in rural constituencies proved to be a game-changer, allowing them to edge closer to the majority mark. The Malwa Tribal Nimar and Mahakaushal regions, predominantly rural and with a significant tribal population, were instrumental in bolstering Congress's seat count. These regions are not only heavily weighted with ST reserved seats but are also considered bellwether areas, often indicative of the overall electoral outcome. Historically, the party that leads in these regions stands a high chance of forming the state government.

This shift in electoral dynamics suggests a reconfiguration of political allegiances and a challenge to the BJP's urban-centric image. As tribal-dominated regions play a critical role in the state's politics, the 2018 assembly elections highlighted the potential for significant political change stemming from these areas.

### **The Pivotal Role of Adivasi Voters in Madhya Pradesh's Electoral Politics**

In Madhya Pradesh, Adivasis or Scheduled Tribes constitute a significant 21 percent of the state's population, with their presence being especially prominent in the Mahakaushal (29 percent) and Malwa Tribal Nimar (53 percent) regions. These areas account for 32 of the 47 ST-reserved assembly constituencies and have traditionally been a stronghold for the Congress. However, in recent years, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), with concerted efforts from the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and its affiliate Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram (VKA), has made substantial inroads into this demographic.

The VKA, established in 1952 with the support of Raja Vijay Singh, initially focused on education and healthcare in tribal areas. Over time, its influence expanded into cultural spheres, notably introducing the worship of Lord Ganesha. The multifaceted engagement by RSS and VKA has translated into increased Adivasi support for the BJP, a trend evident in constituencies with a substantial ST population during the BJP's ascent in the 1990s.

Despite this, the BJP's vote share among Adivasi voters has shown fluctuations, with the exception of 2013, which witnessed a nationwide surge in favor of the party during the 'Modi wave.' On the other hand, the Congress has seen a consistent improvement in its performance in Adivasi-majority seats since the 2008 assembly elections, often outperforming its state average in these areas.

The table provided illustrates a clear correlation: the higher the percentage of tribal voters, the greater the likelihood of Congress securing more votes, with the reverse being true for the BJP. This pattern has been reinforced by the Adivasi perception of increased inflation under BJP rule, alongside other localized grievances that have eroded the party's support.



*Rajpura, Barwani*



A poignant example of such discontent comes from a village in the Kukshi assembly of Dhar district, where Adivasis account for over 60 percent of the electorate. The villagers, having previously supported the BJP, expressed profound dissatisfaction due to the lack of government aid following flooding exacerbated by changes in Narmada Dam water levels. The absence of communication and displacement plans from the government has left the community feeling abandoned, prompting a reconsideration of their political loyalty.



*Kukshi, Dhar*

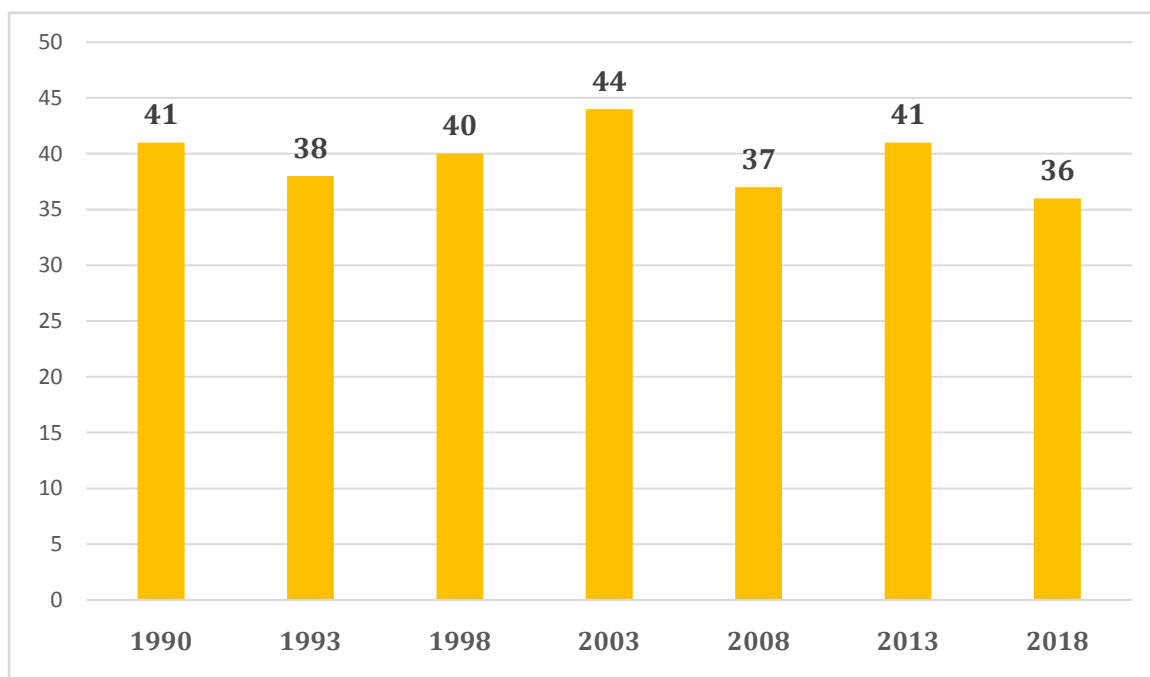


*Kukshi, Dhar*

The narrative "When we faced hardship, and they didn't assist us, why should we continue to vote for them?" as told by a woman, encapsulates the sentiment prevalent in the region and highlights the potential for a political shift.

For a deeper understanding of the impact of organizations like VKA on the political alignment of Adivasi voters, the work of Tariq Thachil is instructive. His study, "Elite Parties and Poor Voters: Theory and Evidence from India," provides a nuanced analysis of such dynamics, emphasizing the role of elite-led parties in mobilizing the poor.

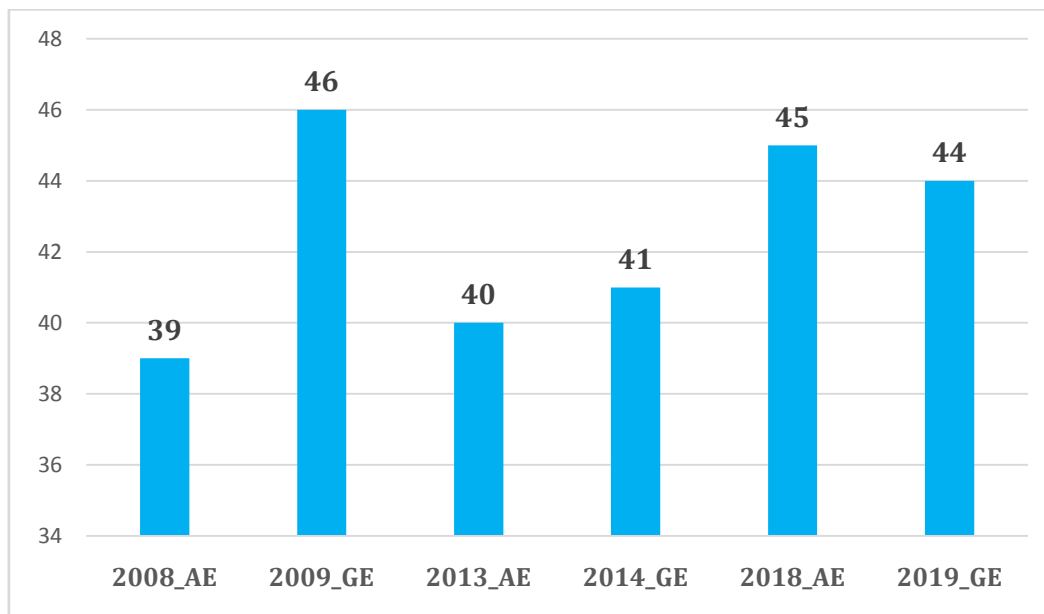
### BJP's vote share in the ACs where ST electorates are more than 50percent



**Note:** All figures are in percent and rounded off. Data Source: Computed by Datalok team from ECI data

Contrary to BJP, Congress in the last few elections has been able to improve their performance in the Adivasi concentrated seats where their share is above 50 percent. The party has been getting more than 40 percent votes after 2008 assembly election. Also, to note that Congress received more votes in Adivasi concentrated seats than their state average.

### Congress' vote share in the ACs where ST electorates are more than 50 percent



**Note:** All figures are in percent and rounded off. Data Source: Computed by Datalok team from ECI data

### Proportional relation between Congress' vote share gains with higher STs Population in MP.

STs share in ACs	2008_AE	2009_GE	2013_AE	2014_GE	2018_AE	2019_GE
Up to 10 %	33	41	35	33	41	33
Between 10 to 20 %	29	36	34	37	39	33
Between 20 to 30 %	30	35	39	32	41	32
Between 30 to 50 %	31	42	38	36	39	33
Above 50 %	39	46	40	41	45	44
<b>Overall</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>35</b>

**Note:** All figures are in percent and rounded off. Data Source: Computed by Datalok team from ECI data



## The Rising Influence of Women in Madhya Pradesh's Electoral Politics

Women voters in Madhya Pradesh are reshaping the electoral landscape, now nearly half of the electorate. Their increased turnout has become a significant factor for political parties, which have been actively developing schemes to secure their votes. These efforts range from cash transfers to welfare programs, as seen in states like West Bengal, Karnataka, and Madhya Pradesh. While it's clear that such incentives have boosted women's electoral participation, the extent to which this reflects genuine political empowerment or merely a superficial engagement remains an area ripe for scholarly inquiry.

The trend is evident: the gap in voter turnout between men and women has dramatically narrowed over the years. In the 1990s, there was a 15 percent disparity in turnout against women, but by 2018, this gap shrank to less than 2 percent. In fact, from 1990 to 2018, women's turnout soared by 27 percent, a significant leap compared to men's 15 percent increase. Interestingly, regions like Malwa Nimar and Mahakaushal witnessed a near parity in turnout between genders, suggesting a correlation between higher female turnout and better performance for Congress over the BJP.

The focus is now on understanding women's party preferences. In our field work in states during the election hints that women often prioritize transactional benefits over ideological leanings when voting. However, they do not vote as a monolithic bloc; there are nuances in their choices, with some swayed by cash transfers and others by policies perceived as female-friendly. Given their substantial numbers, even minor shifts in preference can have a major electoral impact.

This dynamic is exemplified by the BJP's “Ladli Behna” scheme, offering monthly payments to women with family incomes under 2.5 lakh. The Congress countered with a higher offer, but it's uncertain if such schemes will be decisive in elections. The ongoing economic challenges of inflation and unemployment mean that while such honorariums provide short-term relief, they may not secure a majority.

The case of Kesla in Narmadapuram district is instructive, where tribal men and women, including beneficiaries of the Ladli Behna scheme, marched for action against illegal land encroachment. These women emphasized that beyond monetary aid, issues like land rights and water access are crucial, highlighting the enduring influence of social issues and rights-based demands in political decision-making.



*Kesla, Narmadapuram*

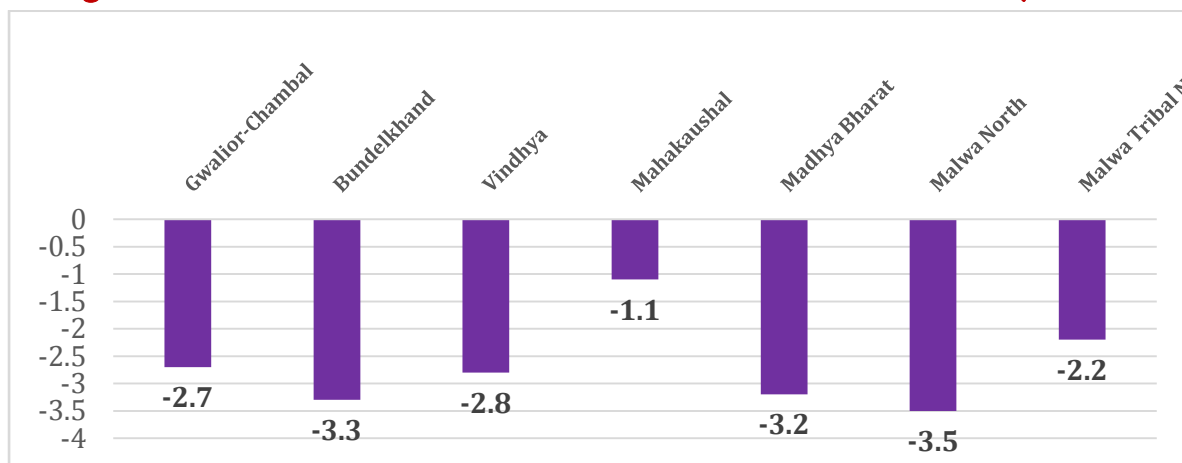
Ultimately, it remains to be seen if political strategies centered on transactional benefits can truly sway the women's vote in the long term, or if deeper social factors will drive their electoral choices. Only time will reveal the efficacy of these approaches in Madhya Pradesh's complex political tapestry.

### Male-Female turnout and their difference since 1990

Year	Female	Male	Female-Male
1990	46.55	61.44	-14.89
1993	52.48	68.74	-16.26
1998	53.05	66.65	-13.61
2003	62.14	71.94	-9.8
2008	65.91	72.3	-6.4
2013	70.09	73.86	-3.76
2018	74.01	75.84	-1.83

**Note:** All figures are in percent. Data Source: Computed by Datalok team from ECI data

### Region wise male-female turnout difference in 2018 assembly election



**Note:** All figures are in percent. Data Source: Computed by Datalok team from ECI data



## Madhya Pradesh Elections: A Close Contest with Uncertain Outcomes

The imminent electoral battle in Madhya Pradesh is poised on a knife-edge, with historical data from the 2018 elections showing the major political contenders, the BJP and Congress, locked in a near-even vote share. The narrow margins from the previous election underscore that even a marginal swing of one to two percent could be decisive in surpassing the majority threshold.

The BJP faces the challenge of needing a two percent swing in its favor to maintain its majority, while the Congress requires a mere one percent shift to potentially turn the tide in their direction. If Congress can elevate its vote share from 41 to 42 percent in the upcoming elections, while the BJP's share diminishes to 40 percent, projections indicate that Congress could secure approximately 130 seats, with more seats possible should their momentum increase.

However, the landscape is complicated by a discernible undercurrent of anti-incumbency, raising questions about its conversion into actual votes and the extent of such a shift. The stakes are undeniably high, and the political climate suggests that the electorate's sentiment could significantly influence the results.

The definitive answer to who will triumph in Madhya Pradesh rests on the choice of the voters, which will be locked on November 17<sup>th</sup>. The close contest, characterized by the narrow vote share gap and the potential for minor swings to have major implications, ensures that the outcome, while uncertain, will have a clear and lasting impact on the state's political future.





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