

'Education dims interest in voting'

Survey carried out by Gokhale Institute reveals those with affluence and higher educational degrees are less likely to cast votes

Pune Mirror Bureau
punemirror.feedback@gmail.com

TWEETS @ThePuneMirror

A recent survey conducted by the Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics has revealed rather interesting findings about voter profiles.

For instance, education and affluence are seen to decrease interest in voting and politics on the whole, female voters are still relatively marginal in numbers and migrants rarely vote at all.

The institute was asked for a survey by the state election commission and along with the results, officials have submitted recommendations such as sending SMS reminders to voters and coming up with creative ideas that will create a sense of shame among people

if they fail to vote.

Of the total sample size of 1,800, around 1,200 fell into the affluent category. Most of them have visited the corporation office less than twice in the past five years and have met their corporators less than two times for ward-level development work.

The survey comprised three categories — rare, intermittent and regular voters. Wards with a low voter turnout such as NIBM, Vimannagar, Balewadi and Kothrud, were seen to have a greater number of rare voters. Techies who have been in the city for five years or less form the majority of the rare voters, while married couples with children form the majority of the intermittent category. More than 50 per cent of those with a postgraduate degree come under the category of 'rare voters.' Around 20 per cent of the people claimed to have

DHANANJAY HELWADE



Rajas Parchure, director of Gokhale Institute (centre), along with other professors who conducted the survey

zero interest in politics.

The survey also underlined that not many people feel guilty if they fail to vote, with only 20 per cent of the surveyed population feeling any remorse about failing to vote in the 2012 civic election. Only 50 per cent of those who did vote felt proud after doing so.

Mansi Phadke, coordinator for the

survey, said, "As the majority of those surveyed were from the affluent section of the city, they had more complex expectations from their corporators, unlike a slum-dweller, who simply expects the corporator to implement government schemes. The affluent class wants a candidate from a non-corrupt, non-criminal background as well as someone who is accessible. The probability of people casting a vote in the upcoming elections could go up by at least about 15 to 20 per cent if more measures are taken to stimulate voters' interest."

From the total number of voters who did not vote in 2012, around 30 per cent said their name was not on the voter list, 23 per cent were out of town, 22 per cent said their votes had not changed anything so far and around 20 per cent said they were too busy at

work to vote.

Rajas Parchure, director of Gokhale Institute, said, "Around 50 per cent of those who voted said they did so because they felt it was their duty. Around 20 per cent said that they knew a particular candidate to be good and wanted to see him/her in power. Interestingly, around 20 per cent said they voted as they did not want anyone else to cast a vote in their name."

S Ramesh, a migrant and a techie from Tamil Nadu and a resident of Viman Nagar said, "I have not registered myself in the voting list, neither could I go to my home town to vote there. There should be provisions of online voting for migrants."

Vandana Shinde from Somwar Peth, said, "I do not vote, as I know it won't affect anything. Voting is a waste of time and energy."