PUDUCHERRY SURVEY REPORT - 2018

(A Brief Analysis of Voters' Priorities and Performance of the Government on Governance Issues in Puducherry)

REPORT BY ADR

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INTRODUCTION & METHODOLOGY

The Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) and RA Asterisc Computing & Data Solutions Pvt. Ltd. (RAAC) conducted perhaps the largest ever voter survey in any one country. The All India Survey was conducted across 534 Lok Sabha constituencies with 2,73,487 voters participating in this exercise spread among various demographics. The three main objectives of this survey were to identify the following: (i) voters' priorities on specific governance issues, (ii) voters' ratings of the government's performance on those issues, and (iii) factors influencing voting behaviour. This survey was conducted between October 2018 and December 2018, prior to the General Elections to the Lok Sabha 2019.

Focusing on Puducherry, this report provides an analysis of 10 most important governance issues as rated by the voters of Puducherry (out of the 31 listed in the questionnaire). These voters' priorities are further examined in relation to the performance of the Government on those issues as perceived by the respondents. The survey covered 500 respondents across Puducherry.

The key objective of this perception assessment is to provide an improved understanding of the important expectations of voters from the Government and how they assess its performance. In addition, it seeks to fill a vital gap in contemporary times, namely, evidence-based research and action on governance. For far too long we have depended entirely on ideology or the opinions of various experts. Though that is important, we also need to reflect on the priorities of the voters. These priorities and assessments will change over time, and hence there is a need to repeat this survey periodically.

Research Design: A cross-sectional, representative sample of the population over 18 was selected using a partially purposive sample selection procedure to ensure representation from various segments of the population like rural-urban, gender, caste, religion, and income groups. Every care was taken to make the samples unbiased and fully representative of the population. The accuracy of the survey is 95%, i.e., the true values are within 5% of the survey predictions.

KEY FINDINGS

- The Puducherry Survey 2018 shows that Better Employment Opportunities (61.97%), Better Hospitals/Primary Healthcare Centres (54.02%), and Better Roads (38.33%) are the top three voters' priorities in overall Puducherry.

- The performance of the government on top-most voters' priority of Better Employment Opportunities (2.98 on a scale of 5) was rated as Below Average, while for Better Hospitals/Primary Healthcare Centres (3.02) and Better Roads (3.26), the performance was rated as Above Average.

- In rural Puducherry, top most voters' priorities were Drinking Water (43%), Agriculture Subsidy for Seeds/Fertilisers (42%), and Better Hospitals/Primary Healthcare Centres (38%).

- The performance of the government on rural voters' priorities of Drinking Water (2.84 on a scale of 5) and Better Hospitals/Primary Healthcare Centres (2.93) was rated as Below Average, while for Agriculture Subsidy for Seeds/Fertilisers (3.21) the performance was Above Average.

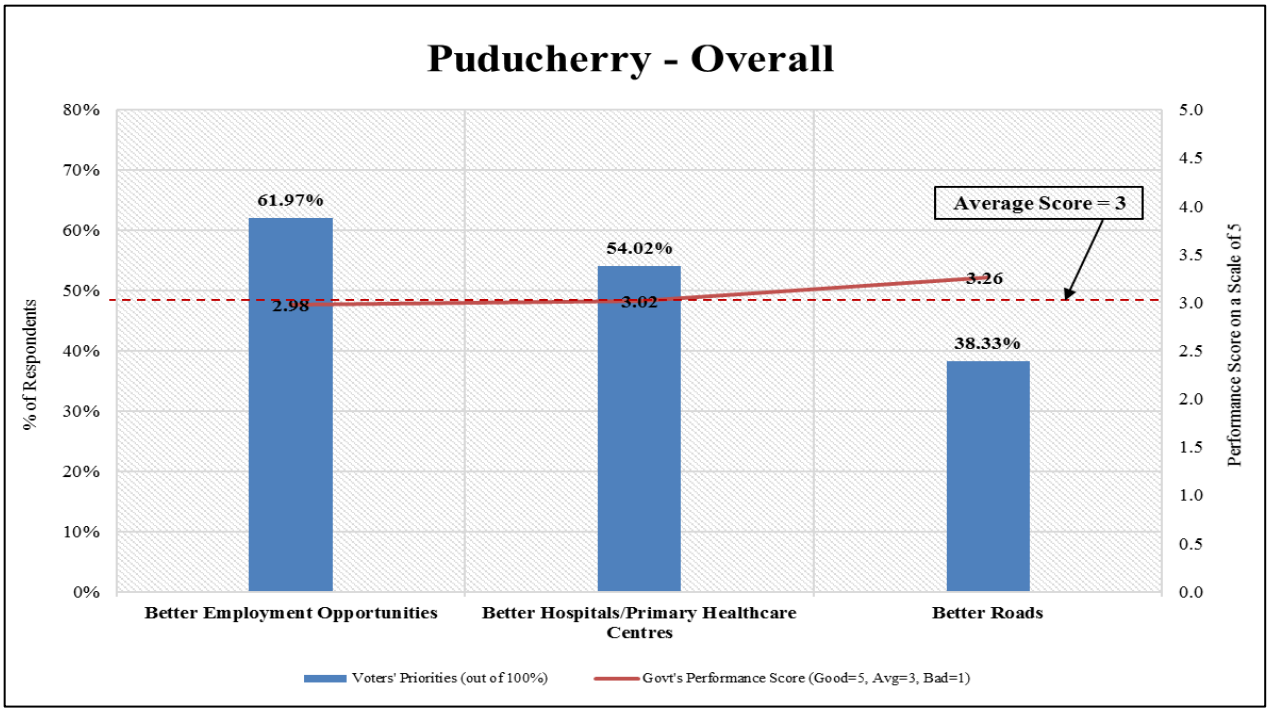
- In rural Puducherry, the government has performed poorly on Availability of Water for Agriculture (2.91) and Better Employment Opportunities (2.93).

- For urban voters in Puducherry, the top most priorities were Better Employment Opportunities (77%), Better Hospitals/Primary Healthcare Centres (64%), and Noise Pollution (52%).

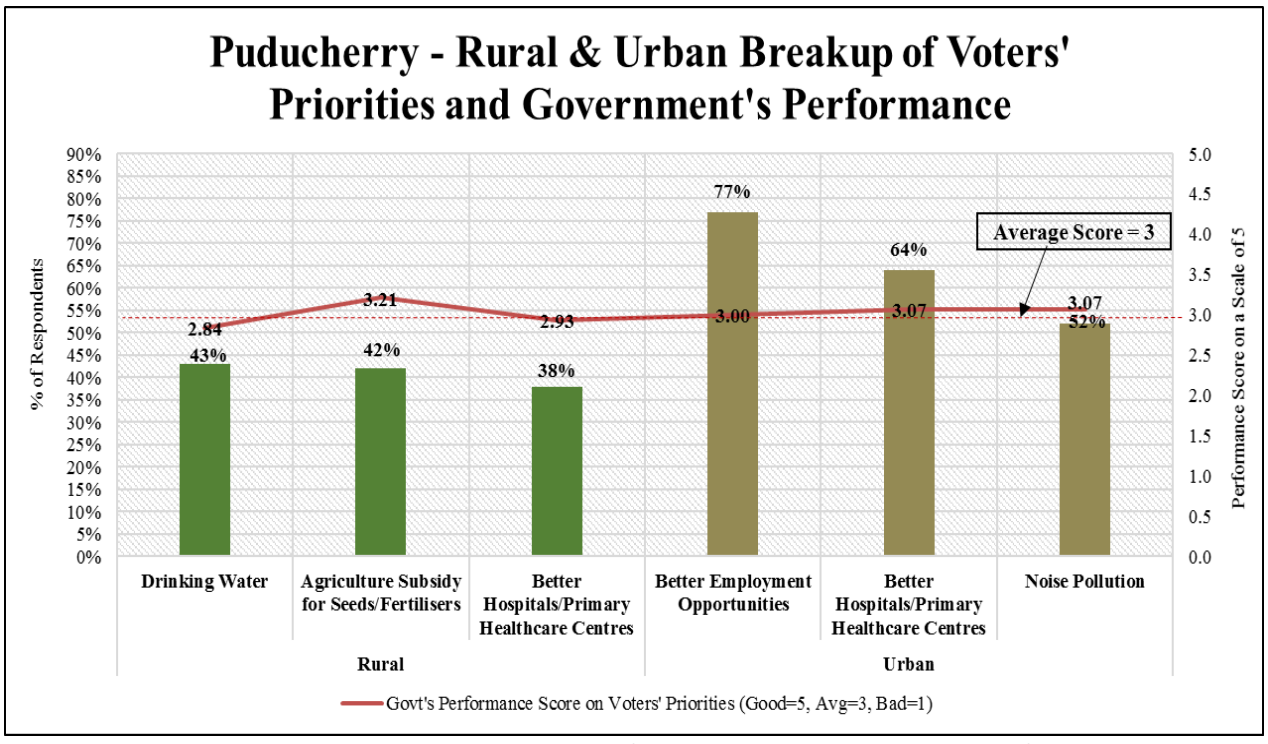
- The performance of the government on urban voters' priorities of Better Employment Opportunities (3.00 on a scale of 5), Better Hospitals/Primary Healthcare Centres (3.07), and Noise Pollution (3.07) was rated as Average and Above Average, respectively.

- It is encouraging to see that on most urban voters' priorities in Puducherry, government's performance was rated as Above Average.

I. Top 3 Voters' Priorities and the Performance of Government in Puducherry – Overall and Rural & Urban

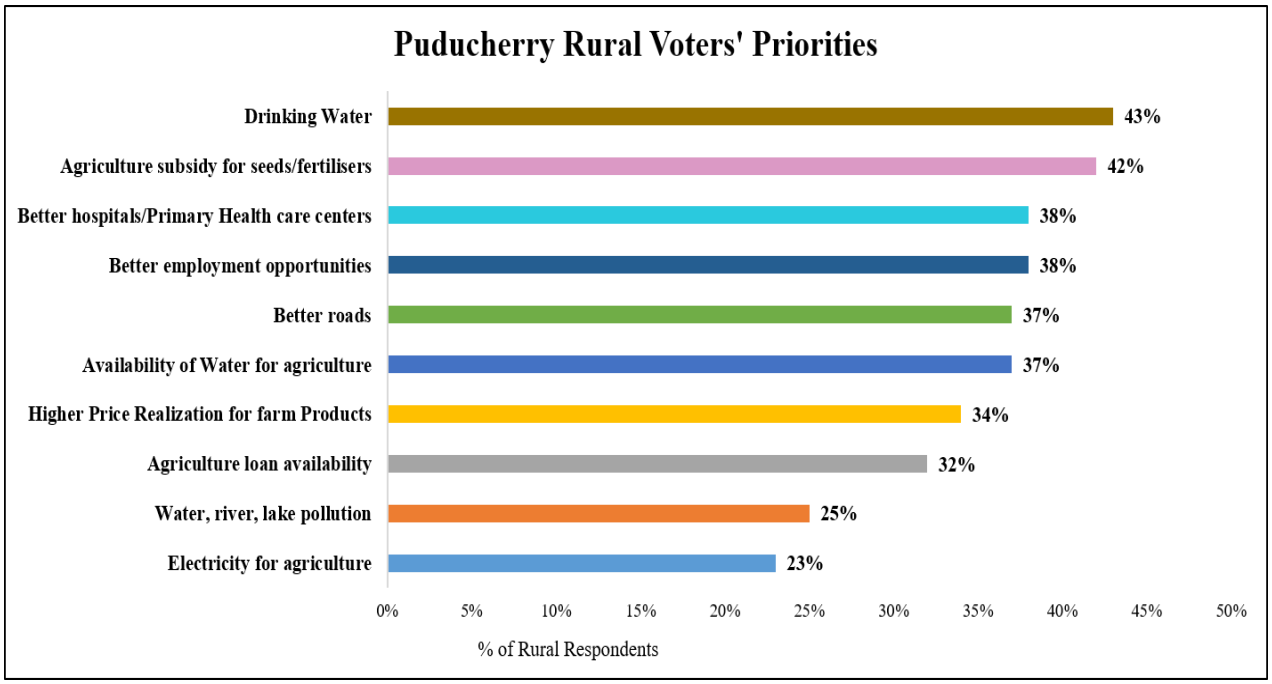


Graph 1: Puducherry - Top 3 overall Voters' Priorities and Government's Performance Ranking

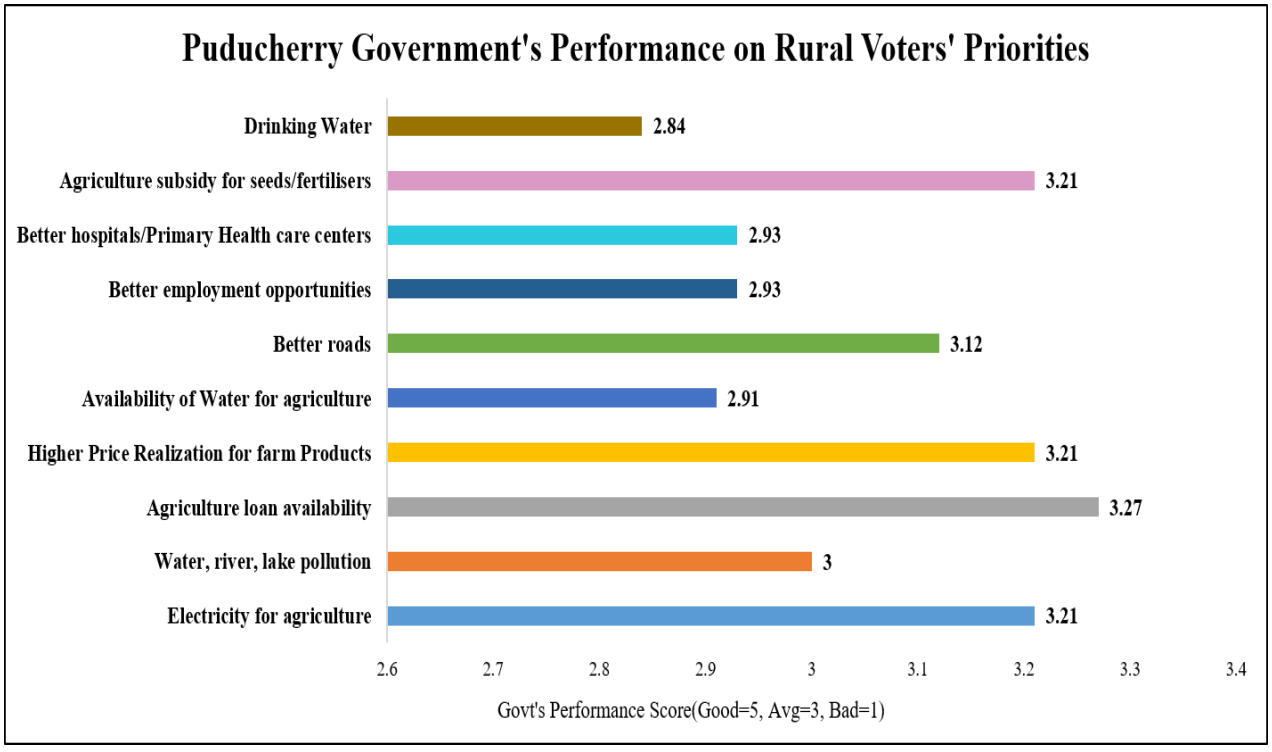


Graph 2: Puducherry - Rural & Urban Breakup of Voters' Priorities and Government's Performance

II. Rural Voters' Priorities and the Performance of Government in Puducherry

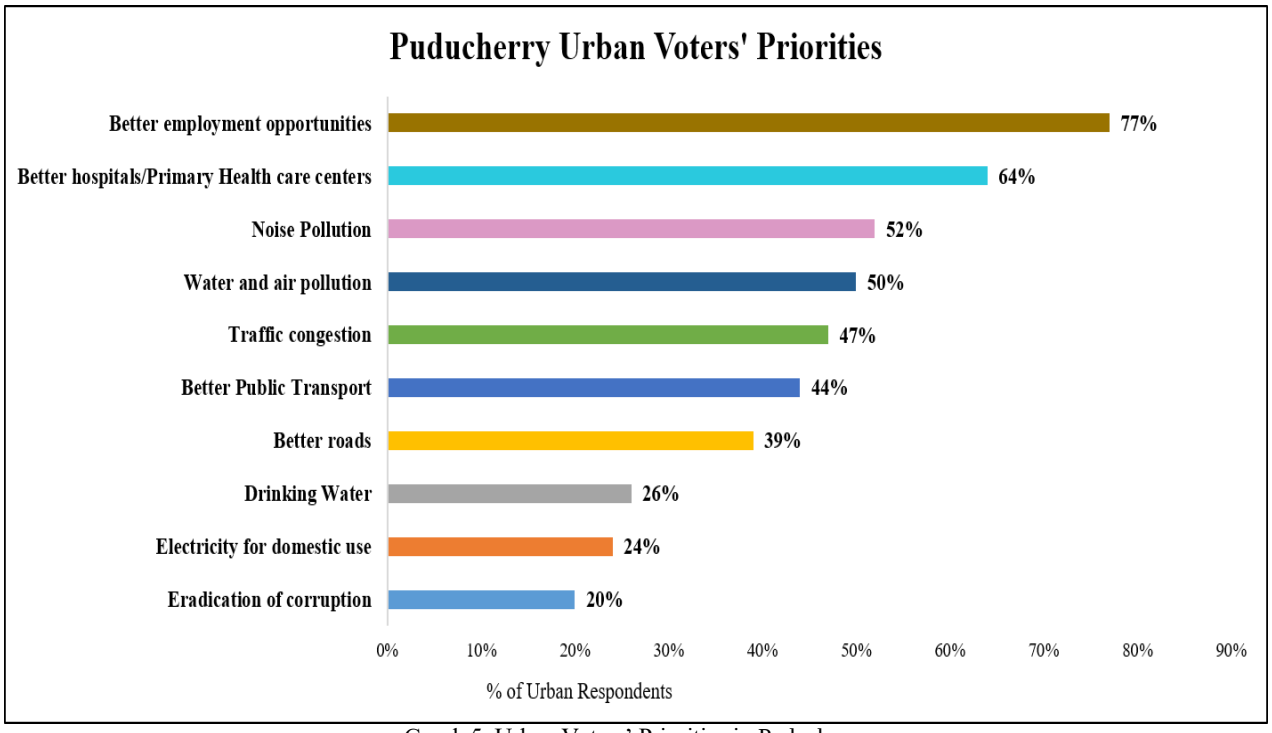


Graph 3: Rural Voters' Priorities in Puducherry

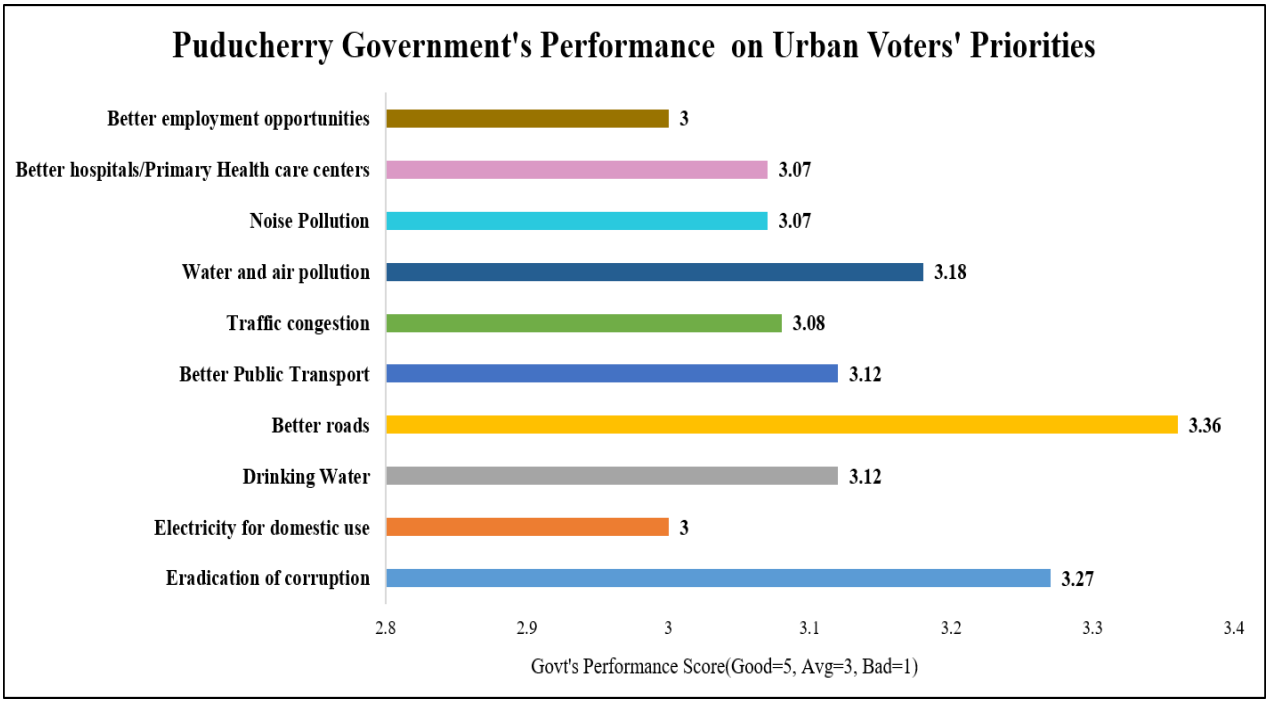


Graph 4: Performance of Government on Rural Voters' Priorities in Puducherry

III. Urban Voters' Priorities and the Performance of Government in Puducherry



Graph 5: Urban Voters' Priorities in Puducherry



Graph 6: Performance of the Government on Urban Voters' Priorities in Puducherry

VOTING BEHAVIOUR

The survey tried to analyse the following aspects with respect to voting behaviour – (i) factors influencing voting behaviour, (ii) opinion regarding criminal candidates contesting in elections, and (iii) voter awareness regarding the role of crime and money.

To identify the factors that influence voting behaviour following queries were posed – "What are the reasons you vote for a candidate?" and "In an election, whose opinion mattered the most while deciding which candidate to vote for?".

In order to comprehend voters' opinion regarding criminal candidates contesting in elections, the two questions that were posed were – "Should someone with a criminal case be in Parliament or State Assembly?" and "Why do people vote for those with criminal records?".

To assess voter awareness regarding the role of crime and money, the following questions were asked – "Do you know that distribution of cash/money/gifts etc. are illegal?", "Are you aware of instances of distribution of cash/money/gifts/liquor in your constituency during the last election?", and "Do you know that you can get information on criminal records of the candidates?".

Salient Observations on Voting Behaviour in Puducherry

- According to the Puducherry Survey Report 2018, highest percentage of voters reported that CM Candidate (Important: 46% and Very Important: 33%) and the Candidate himself/herself (Important: 67% and Very Important: 12%) were the most significant reasons in voting for a particular candidate in an election. This was followed by the Candidate's Party (Important: 46% and Very Important: 21%).

- For 43% voters, distribution of cash, liquor, gifts etc. was an important (33%) and very important (10%) factor in voting a particular candidate in an election.

- While deciding which candidate to vote for in an election, 82% of Puducherry voters stated

that their own opinion mattered the most, followed by voters for whom opinion of their Spouse (9%) and Local Political Leader (3%) mattered the most.

- A large number of voters (65%) knew that distribution of cash, gifts etc. are illegal.

- 39% voters said that they were aware of instances where such inducements were offered to the voters in return for their votes.

- 99% of voters felt that candidates with criminal background should not be in Parliament or State Assembly.

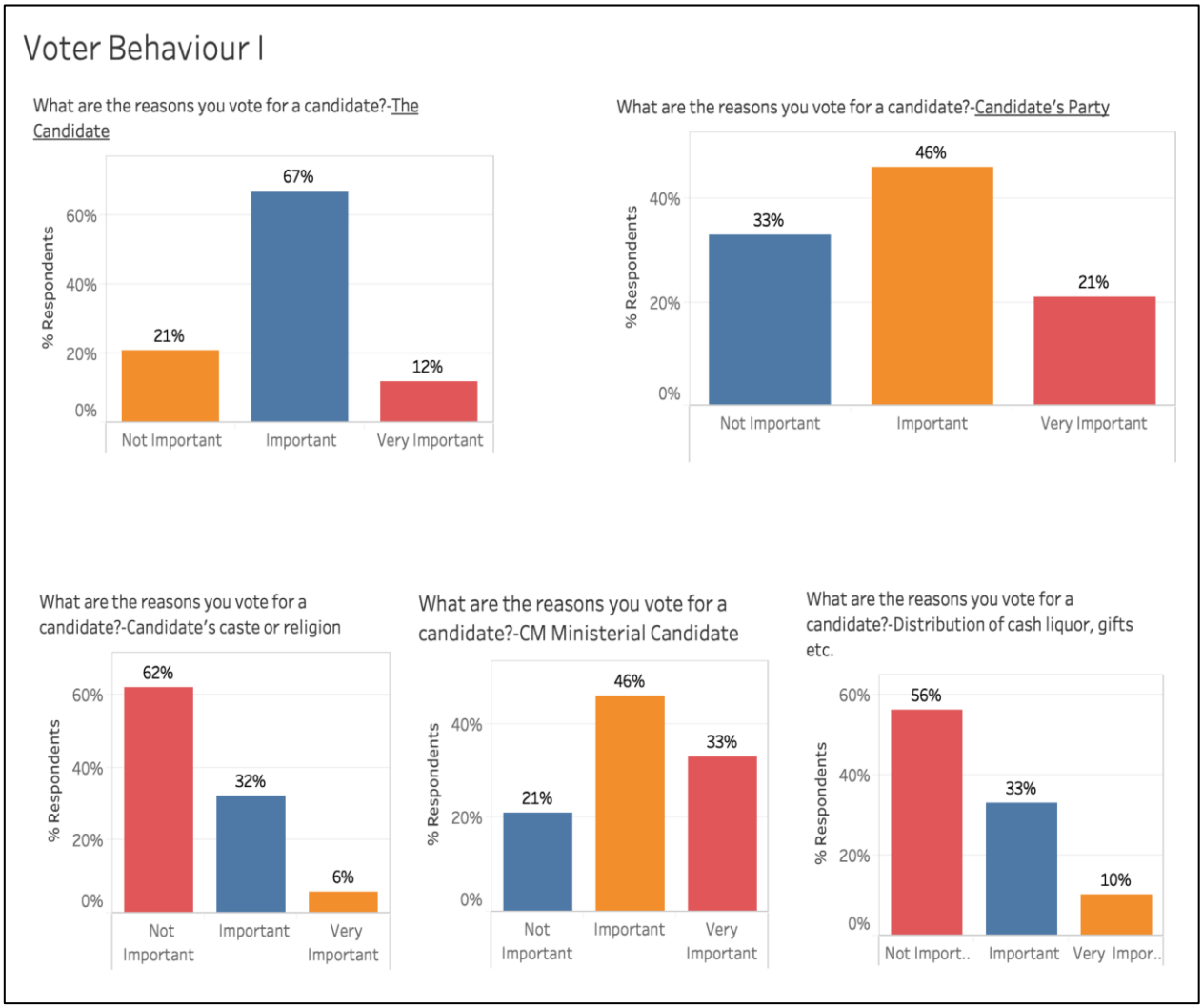
- Only 32% voters knew that they could get information on criminal records of the candidates.

- In relation to voting candidates with criminal antecedents, 40% voter felt people choose such candidates because he/she belongs to similar caste/religion.

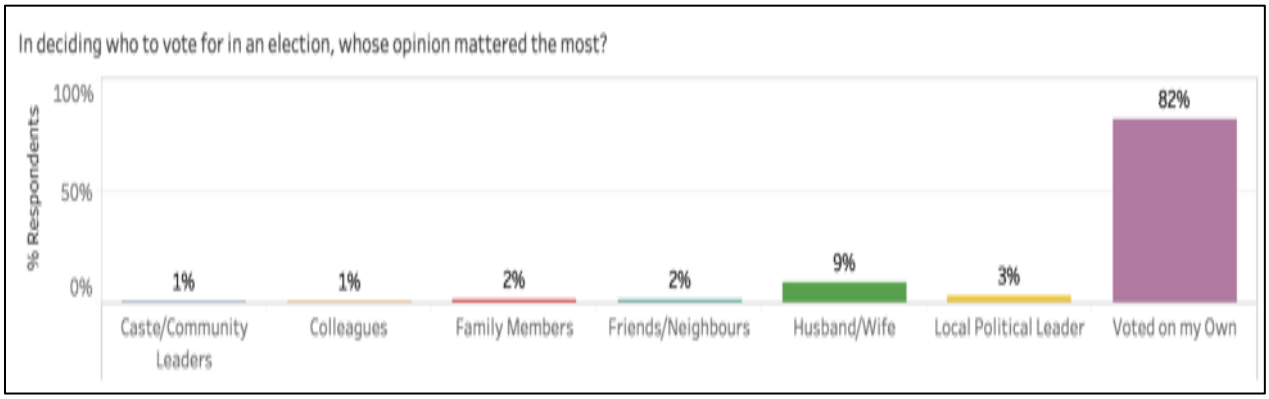
- For 36% voters, people vote for candidates with criminal background because the candidate is powerful.

- 34% voters felt that people vote for such candidates because candidate otherwise does good work.

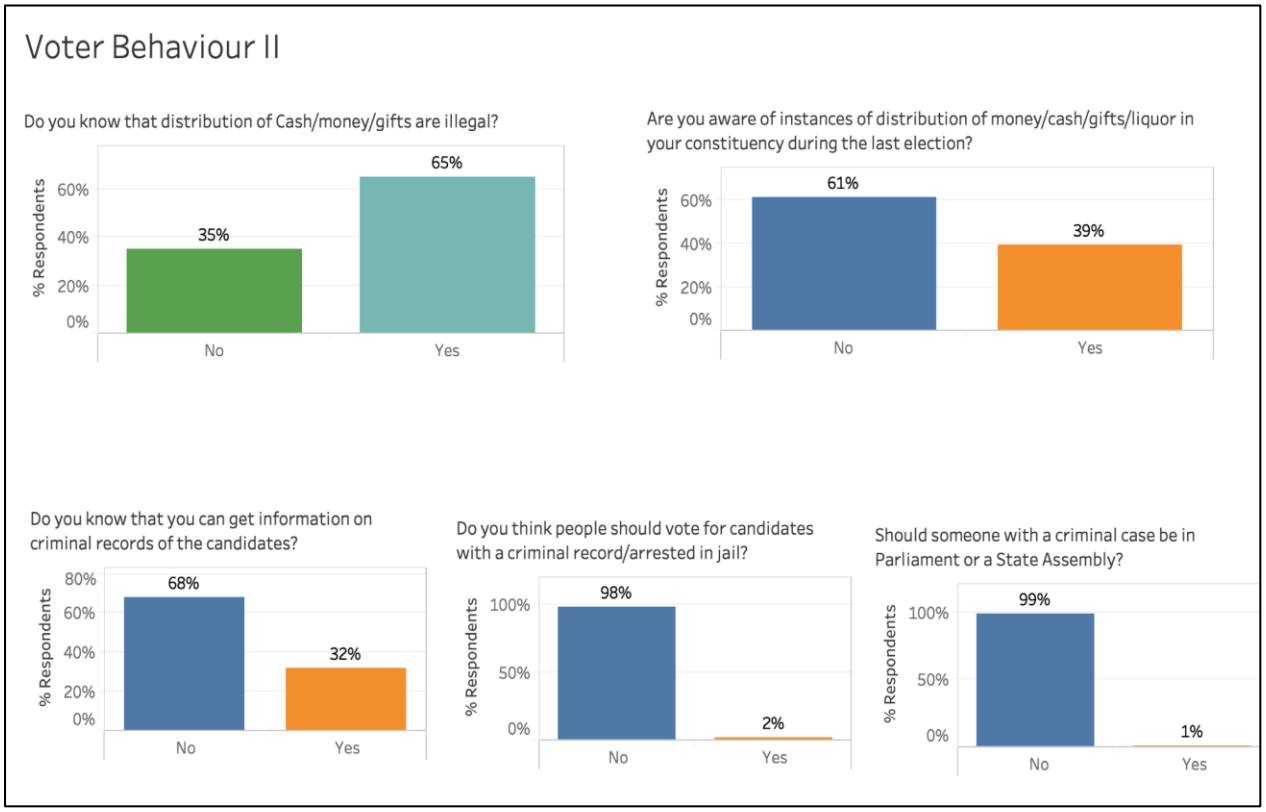
- Other important factors in voting for criminal candidates were that people were unaware about their criminal records of such candidates (34%), cases against these candidates were not of serious nature (32%) and because these candidates spend generously on elections (27%).



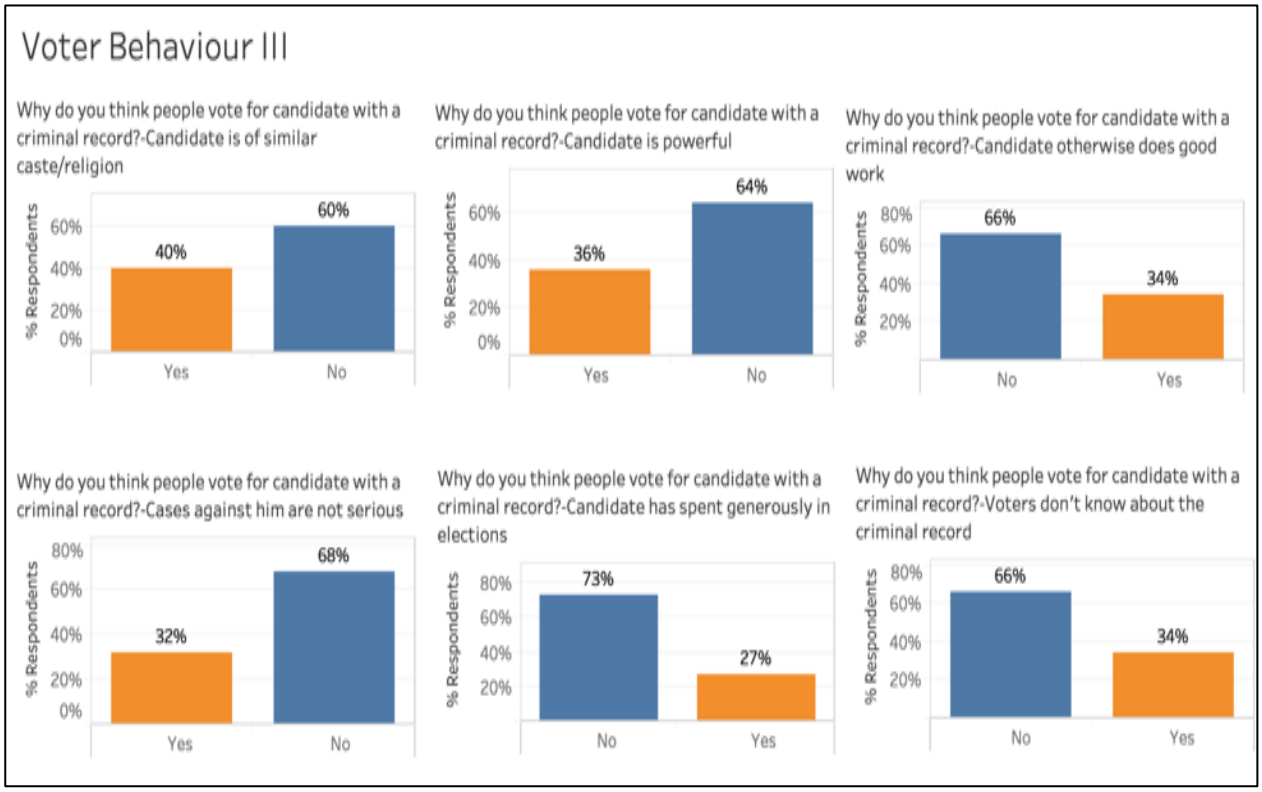
Graph 7: Factors Influencing Voting Behaviour



Graph 8: In an election, whose opinion mattered the most while deciding which candidate to vote



Graph 9: Voter Awareness regarding the Role of Crime and Money in Elections

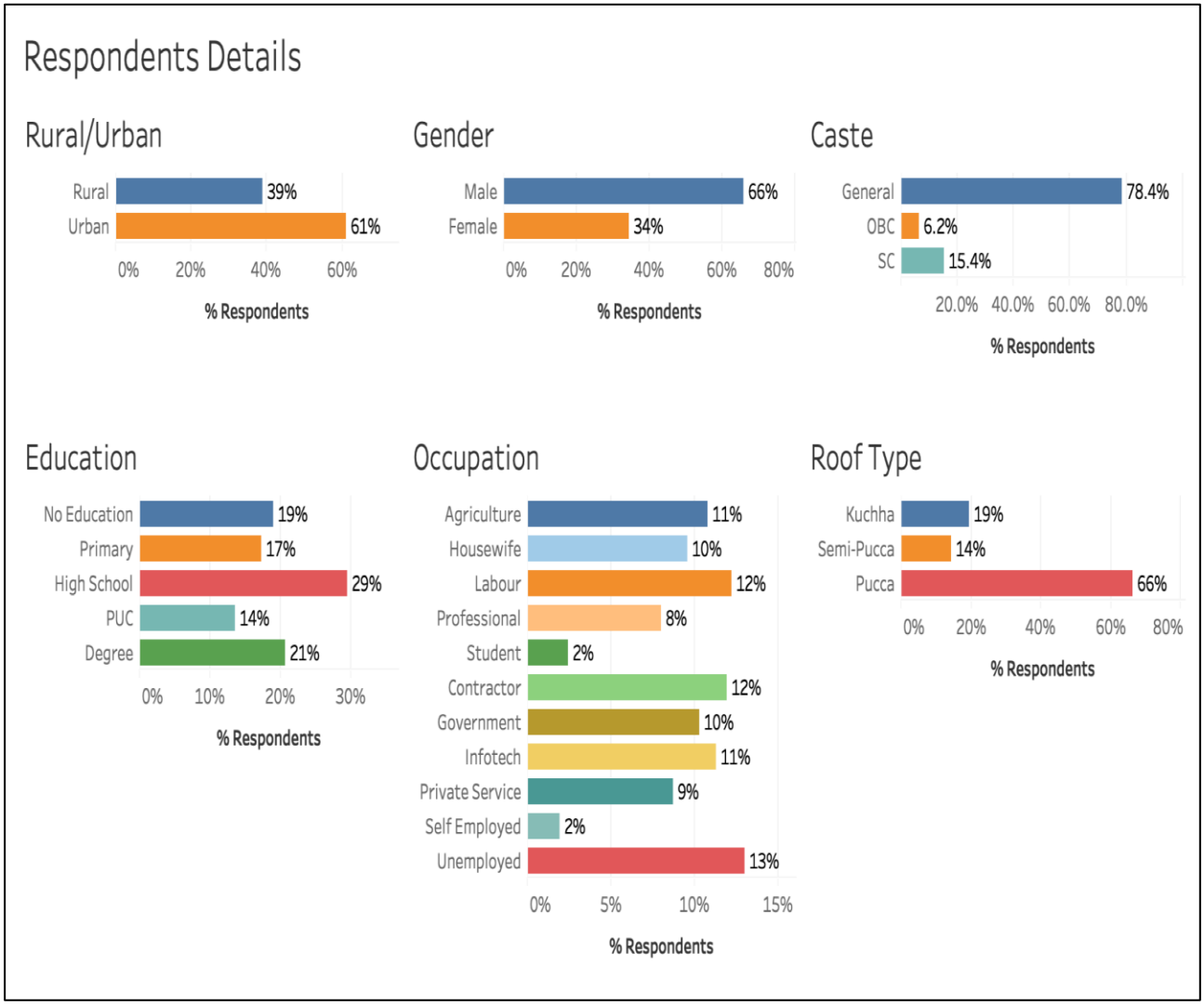


Graph 10: Voters' Opinion regarding Criminal Candidates Contesting in Elections

VOTERS' DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS

- 39% of the voters surveyed were from rural areas and 61% were from urban areas.
- 66% were Males and 34% were Females.
- 78.4% were from General category, 15.4% SC and 6.2% OBC.

The other respondent details can be observed from the graphs below.



Graph 11: Voters' Demographic Details

CONCLUSION

The Puducherry Survey Report 2018 points to the fact that even though the Puducherry government's performance has generally been rated as average or above average on most voters' priorities, there is still a lot of scope for improvement particularly on issues like Drinking Water, Better Employment Opportunities, and Availability of Water for Agriculture etc.

Political representation is about making constituents' preferences present in politics and governance. Behind these ratings is the daily reality that people living in our country face. The ratings try to capture this and help inform our Government what that number means and how the Government is perceived by the voters of this country.

ADR believes that the assessment report can be an important tool in engendering improvements within all institutions in refining their own institutional practices and developing better oversight of other bodies. We hope the report will be instrumental in starting a coordinated effort to work together to ensure the most efficient use of resources to serve the nation as a whole.

DISCLAIMER

This survey was conducted to ascertain the most pressing governance issues that voters of India perceive to be affecting their daily lives and also to investigate whether the voters are happy with their respective governments with regard to the addressing of those issues.

The survey was conducted using sound scientific techniques and the consequent findings and reports were prepared using recognized data analysis techniques. The inferences drawn in this report are based on the responses provided by the Indian voters.

This survey is a systematic and scientific attempt to study the gap between governance-demands of the voters of India and the delivery of the respective governments as perceived by the Indian voters. This survey is in no way an attempt to appreciate or denigrate any government(s) or political party or individual or any other organization or institution.

Every effort has been made by ADR to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the data contained in this report.

Anyone using or quoting from this report should acknowledge the source as 'Puducherry Survey Report - 2018'.

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