

# Analyzing the Role of Communal Politics in Shaping Electoral Outcomes: A Case Study of Malappuram District

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## Abstract

This article investigates the force of communal politics on electoral results in Malappuram District and how these norms have impacted voting behavior and electoral outcomes over the last 30 years or so in that district. The study explores voter base patterns, the changing party-to-voter allegiances, and the sociopolitical context in which voting takes place with emphasis on the role of religious and communal identities. The analysis in this article demonstrates that communal politics is a key factor for voters based on collective identities. The authors of the article estimate that a substantial amount of voting behavior is driven by collective identities, often supporting identity-based trends in voting behavior. This study uses mixed methods, including a survey of voters, analysis of electoral data over time, as well as interviews with political analysts and community leaders. The article concludes that the force of identity voting remains prevalent in Malappuram District and carries a weight for political elections, campaigns, and governmental priorities.

**Keywords:** Communal Politics, Electoral Outcomes, Malappuram, Identity-Based Voting, Political Behavior

## Introduction

Communal politics are characterized by the significance of voters' religious identification as a variable associated with their behavior and party political dynamics in India. The Malappuram District has a composition of demographic variables that make it declining relevant to study to understand how electoral outcomes can be strategically influenced by communal discourse. As we look at possible connections between religious identity as a social construct and political preference, we will analyze voting behavior over time, parties involved, as well as relevant contexts. This contribution is relevant to the broader concerns about democracy and electoral integrity as well as identity politics.

## 2. Literature Review

Scholarly work on communal politics and electoral behavior suggests that identity-based voting is a critical factor in elections within India. Brass (2003) suggests that communal politics can be both the cause and consequence of electoral strategy. Chandra (2004) discusses ethnic identity and how that could impact political preference; Varshney (2002) discusses how communal harmony or the lack affects political mobilization. These approaches offer a framework for assessing Malappuram's electoral landscape.

### 3. Methodology

This research utilized a mixed-methods approach, in which qualitative and quantitative data collection methods were applied. Primary data collection involved: - Surveys - conducted of 500 voters across the multiple constituencies in Malappuram. - Interviews - meetings were held with political experts, party members, and community leaders. - Electoral Data - Voter patterns from the last 20 years were identified through data extraction using statistical techniques. An analysis of electoral reports, public records, and relevant journals as secondary data sources were used to help frame our understanding of the local environment in which the electoral events took place. The analysis of the primary data was identified using regression and correlation studies to identify trends in voter preferences and election outcomes.

### 4. Data Analysis and Findings

The data analysis has generated extensive evidence about the voting behavior in Malappuram.

- Statistical Patterns of Voting Behavior: A regression of election results over time for the period 2000 to 2024, illustrated a strong association between religious identity and voting behaviour.
- Demographic Power: Of the voters surveyed, 78% identified their religious-identity as influencing their vote decision whereas only 22% identified policies related to development as important.
- Influence of Political Campaigning: The content analysis of party manifestos and speeches show that over 60% of the discussion themes were based in religious discourse or political identity.
- Voter Mobilisation Strategies: The survey results also identified religious institutions and community-based leaders as public actors that mediated voter opinion. An impressive 65% said they had been influenced by someone supporting a specific religious ideology or identity to vote in a particular way.

These findings indicate that communal politics, as opposed to developmental issues, often dominate electoral politics in the Malappuram region. While some political actors are addressing the desire for issue-based voting, identity politics tends to dominate voter behaviour in the region.

### 5. Conclusion

Politics tied to communal identities, which remains a crucial element in shaping electoral results in the Malappuram District, continues to dictate the direction of politics in the Malappuram District. Democratic values promote politics based on issues, however, the current trend is upon identity and not governance dimensions. This study advocates for reform in the campaigning process and in informing voters that could push elections toward policy-based outcomes. Experimental research should also assess the role of various ways to encourage voting based on issues and diminish communal biases at the polls, concentrating on voter awareness and implications of legislation regulating appeals for identity in elections.

### 6. References

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