

2024 Lok Sabha Election Verdict

Prof Sanjay Kumar¹

ABSTRACT

The paper analyses trend and patterns of the verdict of 2024 Lok Sabha election, which in many ways surprised analyst, political commentator and to some extent even the political stakeholders. The BJP led National Democratic Alliance performed worse than what was widely expected and Congress lead INDIA alliance performed much better compared to what some analysts may have believed, especially the Congress which fell just 1 short of the 100 mark. The Congress trailed behind the BJP which won 240 seats by a long margin but after the verdict somehow the narrative was such as if Congress has defeated the BJP. A careful analysis of state wise verdict suggests; the 2024 verdict was hardly a national verdict as parties performed very differently in state which may be similar. The BJP performed so well in Bihar but not in UP, it won all the seats in MP, but lost in Rajasthan, managed to rest power from Biju Janata Dal in Odisha but could not pose any challenge to the TMC in West Bengal. Using data from the Election commission of India and from the post poll survey conducted by the Lokniti research team of Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), this paper tried to analyse the factors which resulted in such a fractured verdict at the state level, resulting in BJP losing 63 Lok Sabha seats compared to 2019 election and Congress tally reaching a reasonable number. Using primary data collected through the survey conducted by Lokniti-CSDS (National Election Study 2024) this paper analyses the voting patterns, issues which were important for voter's in these elections, role of leadership and similar such issues in these elections.

Keywords: Lok Sabha Election, Verdict, NDA, INDIA, Voting Pattern

THE VERDICT

The 2024 Lok Sabha elections marked a significant shift in India's political landscape, returning the country to the era of coalition politics. The BJP emerged as the single largest party winning 240 seats with 36.6% vote share, but it failed to secure a clear majority on its own. Compared to its 2019 performance, the BJP lost 63 seats, and its vote share also declined by about one percent (**Table 1**). This dip in vote share indicates a weakening hold of the BJP in key states, like Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Haryana. However,

1. Sanjay Kumar, Professor and Former Director of Centre for the Study of Developing Societies.

the BJP allies managed to win 52 seats with 6.9% vote share, ensuring the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) retained power at the Centre.

On the other hand, the Congress witnessed a revival, improving its seat tally to 99 with 21.2% vote share. In comparison to the 2019 verdict, Congress secured a swing of almost two percent in its favour. Although this gain was insufficient to position the party as a dominant national player, its allies added considerable strength, winning 98 seats with 12.6% vote share. In fact, Congress allies emerged stronger than the BJP allies. This robust performance by the Congress-led INDIA alliance highlights a shift in the electorate’s preference toward regional representation and coalition strategies, signalling the growing decentralization of India’s political power.

Table 1: Final tally – Return to the coalition era

BJP	Change over from 2019	BJP allies	INC	Change over from 2019	Congress allies
240 (36.56%)	-63 (-0.8%)	52 (6.99%)	99 (21.19%)	+47 (+1.7%)	98 (12.56%)

Source: Election Commission of India, Lokniti-CSDS Data Unit

IS THIS A NATIONAL VERDICT?

The 2024 Lok Sabha election verdict is far from being a national one, as it reflects a significantly fragmented electorate. The BJP’s status as the largest party, despite losing 63 seats, underscores its persistent nationwide appeal. However, the Congress and its allies have also made significant inroads, marking a pronounced return to coalition politics, with regional parties like the Samajwadi Party, Trinamool Congress, and DMK playing pivotal roles in shaping the outcome. This shift reaffirms the dynamic fabric of Indian democracy, where diverse voices and regional aspirations continue to shape the political landscape.

Table 2: States where BJP’s performance dipped

State	Seats won in 2024	Seats won in 2019	Seat Change	Vote share in 2024 (%)	Vote share in 2019 (%)	Swing (%)
Uttar Pradesh	33	62	-29	41.36	49.56	-8.2
Maharashtra	9	23	-14	26.17	27.59	-1.42

West Bengal	12	18	-6	38.74	40.25	-1.51
Bihar	12	17	-5	20.52	23.58	-3.06
Karnataka	17	25	-8	46.09	51.38	-5.29
Rajasthan	14	24	-10	49.22	58.47	-9.25
Haryana	5	10	-5	46.10	58.02	-11.92
Jharkhand	8	13	-5	44.55	50.96	-6.41

Source: Election Commission of India, Lokniti-CSDS Data Unit

Table 3: States where BJP’s performance improved

State	Seats won in 2024	Seats won in 2019	Seat Change	Vote share in 2024 (%)	Vote share in 2019 (%)	Swing (%)
Odisha	20	8	12	45.41	38.37	7.04
Telangana	7	4	3	35.19	19.45	15.74
Chhattisgarh	10	9	1	52.65	50.70	1.95
Kerala	1	0	1	16.67	12.93	3.74
Madhya Pradesh	29	28	1	59.28	58.00	1.28

Source: Election Commission of India, Lokniti-CSDS Data Unit

Table 4: Congress improved its overall performance as compared to 2019 but insufficiently

State	Seats won in 2024	Seats won in 2019	Seat change	Vote share in 2024 (%)	Vote share in 2019 (%)	Swing (%)
Uttar Pradesh	6	1	5	9.46	6.31	3.15
Telangana	8	3	5	40.10	29.48	10.62
Kerala	14	15	-1	35.05	37.27	-2.22
Bihar	3	1	2	20.52	7.7	12.82
Manipur	2	0	2	47.59	24.63	22.96
Karnataka	9	1	8	47.39	31.88	13.51
Rajasthan	8	0	8	37.93	34.24	3.69
Haryana	5	0	5	46.10	28.42	0.17

Source: Election Commission of India, Lokniti-CSDS Data Unit

THE DISAGGREGATED VERDICT

The 2024 Lok Sabha elections showcased stark variations in the BJP's performance across states. The saffron party suffered significant losses in key battlegrounds this time as compared to 2019. In Haryana where BJP had won all the 10 seats in 2019, it lost half of them in 2024 with about 12 percent dip in its vote share. In Rajasthan, a similar discontent with the party's governance led to a reduction of 10 seats for the BJP, with a 9.2% drop in its vote share. In Uttar Pradesh, the BJP's seat tally fell from 62 in 2019 to 33 in 2024, a loss of 8.2% vote share, driven by anti-incumbency and strategic opposition alliances (**Table 2**).

On the flip side, the BJP gained ground in states like Telangana where the party increased its vote share by 15.7% even if it translated into a gain of only 3 seats, which reflects BJP's rising appeal in this southern state. In Odisha, BJP won 20 seats out of the total 21, garnering a 7 percent swing in its favour, signalling an expanding foothold in the traditionally BJD-dominated state. BJP was also able to carve out some base for itself in Kerala by winning one seat in 2024 as opposed to its complete absence in the state in 2019 (**Table 3**).

For the Congress, the 2024 elections marked modest gains across several states. In Manipur, from no seat in 2019, the grand old party won both the seats this time, also increasing its vote share by almost 23 percent. This largely owes to the massive dissatisfaction in the electorate as a result of the ensuing ethnic unrest in Manipur. In Karnataka, the party achieved a remarkable swing of 13.5%, contributing to its gain of 8 seats. Similarly, as compared to its 2019 performance, Congress improved its vote share by almost 13 percent in Bihar and 10.6% in Telangana. Congress leveraged its alliances effectively, underscoring its capacity for regional adaptation. However, the party's loss of one seat with 2.2% dip in vote share in Kerala limited its resurgence, contributing to leaving it short of reclaiming national dominance (**Table 4**).

NATIONAL VERSUS REGIONAL PARTIES

The 2024 verdict reinforces the pivotal role of regional parties in shaping India's electoral dynamics. States like Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal exemplify the growing clout of regional players. For instance, the Samajwadi Party in Uttar Pradesh achieved a remarkable swing of 15.6%, increasing its seat tally from 5 in 2019 to 37 in 2024. Similarly, the Trinamool Congress consolidated its position in West Bengal, gaining 7 additional seats with a 2.5% swing in its favour (**Table 5**). In Tamil Nadu, the DMK retained its dominance

despite losing 2 seats. Meanwhile, Andhra Pradesh witnessed a resurgence of the Telugu Desam Party, which gained 13 seats despite losing 1.7% of its vote share, which reflects a localized discontent with the ruling YSR Congress. These outcomes highlight a federalist turn in Indian politics, where regional priorities increasingly shape the broader national narrative.

Table 5: Performance of regional parties in their respective regions

State	Party	Seats won in 2024	Seats won in 2019	Seat Change	Vote share in 2024 (%)	Vote share in 2019 (%)	Swing (%)
Uttar Pradesh	Samajwadi Party	37	5	32	33.60	17.96	15.64
West Bengal	Trinamool Congress	29	22	7	45.75	43.28	2.47
Tamil Nadu	Dravida Munnetra Kazagham	22	24	-2	26.91	32.76	-5.85
Andhra Pradesh	Telegu Desam	16	3	13	37.88	39.59	-1.71
Bihar	Janata Dal (United)	12	16	-4	18.50	21.81	-3.31
Maharashtra	Shiv Sena (UBT)	9	-	-	16.73	-	-

Source: Election Commission of India, Lokniti-CSDS Data Unit

HOW DIFFERENT SECTIONS OF VOTERS VOTED?

Looking across the social groups, it emerges that BJP secured higher proportion of votes from most of the groups. The BJP retained strong support among Hindu Upper Castes, winning 53 percent of their votes, reflecting its longstanding appeal among this demographic (Table 6). Similarly, close to half of the Lower OBCs (49%) and Adivasis (48%) as well as two in five Upper OBCs (39%) voted for the BJP, marking the party’s success in consolidating its influence among backward and tribal communities. Close to a third of Dalits (31%) also supported the BJP. However, the support of these communities also showed a slight lean towards the Congress, as nearly a quarter of Adivasis (23%), and about one in five Upper OBCs (20%), Lower OBCs (18%) and Dalits (19%) voted for the Congress. In addition to this, Congress party

received significant support from religious minority groups: more than one-third of Muslims (38%), one-fourth of Christians (25%), and 30 percent of Sikhs voted for the Congress. This stark polarization underscores the BJP's dominance among Hindu groups while minorities leaned heavily towards the Congress and its allies, possibly driven by concerns over religious inclusivity under BJP rule.

Table 6: Social Groups - Who voted how?

Social Groups	Congress	Congress Allies	BJP	BJP Allies
Hindu Upper Caste	14	7	53	7
Hindu Upper OBCs	20	15	39	9
Hindu Lower OBC	18	7	49	9
Hindu Dalits	19	13	31	5
Hindu Adivasis	23	8	48	3
Muslims	38	27	8	2
Christians	25	7	14	14
Sikhs	30	2	10	1

Source: National Election Study 2024 conducted by Lokniti-CSDS, all figures are in percent

Furthermore, the voters across the economic spectrum leaned more towards the BJP than the Congress. The saffron party resonated the most with the affluent, 41 percent of those who belong to the upper economic class, voted for the BJP, likely owing to its economic policies, such as tax reforms and business-friendly regulations (Table 7). However, despite dissatisfaction with inflation and unemployment, BJP's pro-rich skew became moderate in these elections, as more than a third of voters from poor (37%), lower (35%) and middle (35%) economic classes also voted for the BJP. On the other hand, economic stratification did not play any defining role for the Congress despite its promises of welfare and job creation, signalling that perhaps, religious and community identities are the more pertinent factors in consolidating its voter base. However, it emerges that Congress allies are more popular than the BJP ones across various classes.

Table 7: Classes - Who voted how?

Classes	Congress	Congress Allies	BJP	BJP Allies
Poor	21	14	37	6
Lower	22	14	35	6
Middle	21	13	35	8
Upper	22	10	41	7

Source: Source: National Election Study 2024 conducted by Lokniti-CSDS, all figures are in percent

HOW SUPPORT BASE OF PARTIES HAVE CHANGED OVER THE YEARS?

The BJP’s consolidation of OBC votes since 2014 remains evident, with 43 percent of OBCs voting for the party in 2024 (Table 8). However, this marks a slight decline from the 44 percent of the OBC vote it secured in 2019. The marginal dip in the BJP’s share could indicate growing disenchantment within sections of the OBC electorate, likely due to unmet expectations. On the contrary, the support for Congress among the OBC community has plummeted since the BJP gained power at the Centre in 2014, but the grand old party, though lagging behind, improved its share among OBCs to 19% in 2024, up from 15% in 2019. This trend suggests that while the BJP continues to benefit from its pro-OBC stance, including caste-based welfare schemes, Congress’s strategy of forming regional alliances and emphasizing caste inclusion is beginning to pay dividends.

Table 8: Support of OBCs

Year	Congress	BJP
2014	15	34
2019	15	44
2024	19	43

Source: Source: National Election Studies 2014-2024 conducted by Lokniti-CSDS, all figures are in percent

Long-term trends indicate a steady rise in the BJP’s support amongst the Dalit since 2014. Dalit support for the BJP increased from one-fourth in 2014 to one-third in 2019. During the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, the support of this critical voter group for the BJP stands at 31 percent. This marks the second

consecutive general election where the BJP has maintained over 30 percent support among Dalits (**Table 9**). However, the slight decline in 2024 (31%) compared to 2019 (33%) suggests that the party's ability to further expand its Dalit vote base may be plateauing. The Congress's share, on the other hand, has stagnated at 19 percent indicating its limited traction within this demographic. This continues a long-term trend of diminished Dalit backing for the party since its peak in the 1990s when it commanded over 30% of Dalit votes.

Table 9: Support of Dalits

Year	Congress	BJP
2014	19	24
2019	20	33
2024	19	31

Source: Source: National Election Studies 2014-2024 conducted by Lokniti-CSDS, all figures are in percent

The BJP has increasingly garnered the support of tribal communities since its coming to power in 2014. Tribal support for the BJP surged to 48 percent in 2024, continuing an upward trend from 44 percent in 2019 and 38 percent in 2014 (**Table 10**). This represents a remarkable gain of 10 percentage points over the past decade. The Congress, on the contrary, witnessed its tribal vote share decline to 23% in 2024, down from 31% in 2019 and 28% in 2014. The Congress's declining tribal support reflects its inability to counter the BJP's inroads, resulting in a 15-point drop since 2014. This shift in tribal loyalty marks a significant realignment in favour of the BJP, while the Congress struggles to retain its historical base in this demographic.

Table 10: Support of Tribals

Year	Congress	BJP
2014	28	38
2019	31	44
2024	23	48

Source: National Election Studies 2014-2024 conducted by Lokniti-CSDS, all figures are in percent

Upper Caste Hindus have remained a steadfast support base for the BJP, with its vote share rising slightly from 52% in 2019 to 53% in 2024 (**Table**

11). The Congress, while improving marginally from 12% in 2019 to 14% in 2024, continues to trail significantly. This reflects a consistent trend over decades, as the BJP has maintained dominance among Upper Caste Hindus since 1996, peaking at 53% in the current election. This enduring support for the BJP among Upper Caste Hindus aligns with the party’s emphasis on Hindu nationalism and its rhetoric to appeal to this group’s cultural and economic interests. The Congress’s modest gains could reflect a slight backlash against the BJP in certain regions, though its outreach to this demographic remains limited.

Table 11: Support of Upper Caste Hindus

Year	Congress	BJP
2014	13	48
2019	12	52
2024	14	53

Source: Source: National Election Studies 2014-2024 conducted by Lokniti-CSDS, all figures are in percent

The Muslim vote remains heavily polarized, with the BJP stagnating at 8 percent in 2024 among this demographic, mirroring its 2019 performance (Table 12). The Congress, meanwhile, has seen its share stabilize at 38 percent in 2024, recovering from a dip to 33 percent in 2019. This indicates that the Congress successfully consolidated the Muslim vote, leveraging regional alliances and narratives of inclusivity. This consistent polarization also reflects enduring concerns among Muslims about the BJP’s policies and rhetoric. However, despite its inability to expand its appeal among Muslims, the BJP’s consistent 8 percent share reflects pockets of minority support, particularly in regions where economic factors or welfare measures may outweigh communal considerations.

Table 12: Support of Muslims

Year	Congress	BJP
2014	38	9
2019	33	8
2024	38	8

Source: Source: National Election Studies 2014-2024 conducted by Lokniti-CSDS, all figures are in percent

The BJP maintained a strong base among upper middle-class voters, getting 41 percent of their votes, though this marked a slight decline from 44 percent in 2019 (**Table 13**). Among the middle class, support for the BJP also fell from 38 percent in 2019 to 35 percent in 2024. These trends suggest that while the BJP remains dominant among affluent voters, concerns over inflation and unemployment have led to a slight erosion in its support among the middle class. However, the party retained its strength among poorer voters, increasing its share marginally from 36 percent in 2019 to 37 percent in 2024.

Table 13: Support for the BJP among different classes of voters

Classes	2014	2019	2024
Poor	24	36	37
Lower	31	36	35
Middle	32	38	35
Upper Middle	38	44	41

Source: Source: National Election Studies 2014-2024 conducted by Lokniti-CSDS, all figures are in percent

When one looks across the matrix of urbanity, it emerges that BJP is consistently more popular than the Congress across villages, towns and cities. In villages, the BJP retained 36 percent of the vote in 2024, a marginal decline by one percent from 2019 (**Table 14**). Meanwhile, the Congress improved marginally by one percent from 2019 (19%) to 2024 (20%). In towns, the BJP saw a sharper drop from 41 percent in 2019 to 37 percent in 2024, while the Congress made significant gains, rising from close to one-fifth (17%) in 2019 to one-fourth (25%) in 2024. In cities, the BJP maintained its urban vote share at 38 percent, while the Congress saw a slight decline of three percentage points from 2019 to 2024. These figures indicate towards the Congress's improved performance in semi-urban areas, while the BJP continues to enjoy the unwavering support of its urban voter base.

Table 14: Support for Congress and BJP in Cities, Towns and Villages

Area	Congress			BJP		
	2014	2019	2024	2014	2019	2024
Village	19	19	20	30	37	36
Town	20	17	25	34	41	37
City	18	26	23	32	38	38

Source: Source: National Election Studies 2014-2024 conducted by Lokniti-CSDS, all figures are in percent

VARIATION IN VERDICT IN DIFFERENT STATES

Why BJP did well in Odisha, but not in West Bengal?

Table 15: The Verdict in Odisha

Odisha			
	Congress	BJP	BJD
Overall	13.14	45.41	37.46
Upper Caste	5	49	42
OBC	8	50	40
Dalits	(16)	(46)	(38)
Adivasis	(23)	(42)	(27)
Muslims	(30)	(15)	(55)

Source: National Election Study 2024 conducted by Lokniti-CSDS, all figures are in percent

Table 16: The verdict in West Bengal

West Bengal			
	Congress	BJP	TMC
Overall	15.54	38.74	45.75
Upper Caste	4	42	43
OBC	5	58	29
Dalits	(2)	(48)	(39)
Adivasis	(1)	(66)	(27)
Muslims	(8)	(7)	(73)

Source: National Election Study 2024 conducted by Lokniti-CSDS, all figures are in percent

Odisha proved to be a significant success for the BJP in the 2024 elections, where it secured 45.4% of the overall vote share and won 20 out of 21 seats. However, the saffron party could not perform so well in the state of West Bengal where TMC maintained its dominance and secured the highest proportion of the vote share. How can this contrast be understood? In Odisha, the BJP maintained a clear edge over Congress and BJD in mobilising the support of upper castes (49%), OBCs (50%), Dalits (46%) and Adivasis (42%) in its favour (Table 15). However, the Muslim support in Odisha was split between BJD (55%) and Congress (30%), leaving the BJP (15%) to trail far behind.

West Bengal, on the other hand, presented a contrasting picture, with the BJP winning 12 seats and 38.7% of the overall vote share, trailing behind the Trinamool Congress (TMC), which secured 45.8% of the vote share and 29 seats. Among OBC and Adivasi communities, the BJP substantially dominated over TMC with 58 and 66 percent of the votes, respectively, but it struggled significantly among the Muslims, where the TMC maintained a clear edge. More than seven in ten Muslims (73%) voted for the TMC, as compared to only seven percent who voted for the BJP (**Table 16**). TMC’s stronghold among Muslim voters kept BJP at bay in West Bengal, which has 27 percent of the Muslim populace in India, as opposed to a mere 2.2 percent in Odisha.

Why INDIA alliance did better in UP but not in Bihar?

Table 17: The Verdict in Uttar Pradesh

Uttar Pradesh		
	SP+	BJP
Overall	43.53	43.69
Brahmin	19	72
Yadav	82	14
Kurmi-Koeri	34	51
Other OBC	34	54
Jatav	(26)	(24)
Other SC	(55)	(28)
Muslims	(92)	(2)

Source: National Election Study 2024 conducted by Lokniti-CSDS, all figures are in percent

Table 18: The verdict in Bihar

Bihar		
	RJD-INC	BJP+
Overall	31.35	47.21
Brahmin	7	36
Yadav	73	27
Kurmi-Koeri	19	67
Other OBC	14	54
Chamar	(44)	(57)
Other SC	(42)	(59)
Muslims	(87)	(12)

Source: National Election Study 2024 conducted by Lokniti-CSDS, all figures are in percent

The INDIA alliance outperformed expectations in Uttar Pradesh, securing a nearly equal vote share to the BJP (43.5% INDIA vs. 43.7% BJP); whereas in Bihar, it fell significantly short, with 31.4 percent compared to the BJP-led alliance's 47.2%. The key difference lies in the alliance's ability to consolidate caste and community-specific votes in each state. In Uttar Pradesh, the Samajwadi Party (SP) successfully mobilized Yadavs (82%), other SCs (55%) and Muslims (92%) in its favour (**Table 17**). This consolidation of scheduled castes and Muslims allowed the INDIA alliance to narrow the gap with the BJP, which retained its dominance among Brahmins (72%), Kurmis-Koeris (51%) and other OBCs (54%).

Conversely, in Bihar, while the RJD retained its dominance among Yadavs (73%) and Muslims (87%), the alliance struggled to extend its appeal to other OBCs and Dalits. The BJP capitalized on this fragmentation, securing 67 percent of Kurmi-Koeri votes and 54 percent of other OBC votes (**Table 18**). This stark contrast in performance highlights the INDIA alliance's inability in Bihar to replicate the broad coalition-building strategy it achieved in Uttar Pradesh.

Why Congress did well in Rajasthan, but not in Madhya Pradesh?

Table 19: The verdict in Rajasthan

Rajasthan			
	Congress	BJP	Others
Overall	41.07	49.22	11.1
Upper Caste	23	65	9
OBC	38	59	3
Dalits	(46)	(37)	(17)
Adivasis	(35)	(46)	(14)
Muslims	(68)	(14)	(19)

Source: National Election Study 2024 conducted by Lokniti-CSDS, all figures are in percent

Table 20: The verdict Madhya Pradesh

Madhya Pradesh			
	Congress	BJP	Others
Overall	32.5	59.2	8.3
Upper Caste	33	62	6
OBC	35	57	8
Dalits	(36)	(53)	(11)
Adivasis	(24)	(71)	(5)
Muslims	(86)	(6)	(6)

Source: National Election Study 2024 conducted by Lokniti-CSDS, all figures are in percent

Congress's resurgence in Rajasthan, where it secured 41 percent of the vote share, contrasts sharply with its underperformance in Madhya Pradesh, where it garnered only 32.5 percent compared to the BJP's dominant 59.2 percent. The primary distinction lies in voter sentiment and demographic shifts. In Rajasthan, Congress performed strongly among Dalits (46%) and Muslims (68%), consolidating these vote banks effectively (**Table 19**), whereas the BJP retained dominance among Upper Castes (65%) and OBCs (59%).

In Madhya Pradesh, however, the BJP's dominance among key demographics was overwhelming. The party secured 71 percent of the tribal votes in Madhya Pradesh, in comparison to the 46 percent in Rajasthan. This polarisation of tribal vote in the favour of BJP significantly contributed to Congress's underperformance in Madhya Pradesh as it houses 21 percent of the Adivasi population of the country as compared to 13.5 percent that resides in Rajasthan. Furthermore, while Congress performed well among Muslims (86%), this group was insufficient to counterbalance the BJP's widespread support across other demographics (**Table 20**).

WHY INDIANS VOTED THE WAY THEY DID?

Economy takes centre-stage

Table 21: Reasons for not wanting incumbent government to secure another term

Reasons for not wanting incumbent government to secure another term	Percentage (%)
Price Rise/Inflation	30
Increasing Unemployment	27
Falling/Decreasing Income	8

Source: National Election Study 2024 conducted by Lokniti-CSDS, all figures are in percent

Table 22: Party preference according to perception regarding household financial conditions

Those who said their household financial conditions...	Party Voted for in Lok Sabha 2024			
	Congress	Congress Allies	BJP	BJP Allies
Overall	21	13	37	7
Improved	15	9	48	9
Remained Same	26	12	33	4
Worsened	29	24	17	4

Source: National Election Study 2024 conducted by Lokniti-CSDS, all figures are in percent

Even as the BJP retains power at the Centre for a third consecutive term, its failure to secure a clear majority on its own points to some pertinent reasons of discontent among the Indian electorate. The data highlights economic discontent as a key factor influencing voter dissatisfaction. Thirty percent of the respondents cited price rise/inflation as the top reason for not wanting the incumbent government to secure another term (Table 21). A similar proportion (27%) pointed towards the increasing unemployment as the primary reason of disenchantment with the BJP, while eight percent reported falling incomes as their primary grievance. These numbers underscore that economic challenges remained central to voter discontent, even as the BJP sought to emphasize other narratives such as national security, development or Hindu nationalism.

The prominence of these issues reflects growing frustration among middle and lower-income groups, potentially contributing to slight erosions in BJP’s voter base in the economically strained classes.

Furthermore, voters’ electoral choice shifted based on their financial circumstances. Among those who felt that their household financial conditions had improved, nearly half of them (48%) voted for the BJP, while only 15 percent chose Congress (**Table 22**). Among this group, the support for the allies of both BJP and Congress was equal (9% each). On the contrary, voters who perceived their financial conditions to have worsened showed stronger support for the Congress (29%) and its allies (24%), with only 17 percent voting for the BJP and just 4 percent backing its allies. However, among those who reported that their financial status had more or less remained unchanged, a third (33%) supported the BJP, while a fourth (26%) supported the Congress. This trend reveals that the BJP’s economic messaging resonated with wealthier and economically stable voters, while Congress capitalized on dissatisfaction among those facing financial hardships. The stark contrast between the BJP’s 48 percent support among those with improved financial conditions and merely a 17 percent base among those with worsened conditions underscores the centrality of economic performance in shaping voter behavior.

THE LEADERSHIP IN QUESTION

Table 23: Perception of corruption as a factor in BJP’s decline in North India

What People think...	(%)
BJP is more corrupt today...	22
BJP was more corrupt before...	12

Source: National Election Study 2024 conducted by Lokniti-CSDS, all figures are in percent

Table 24: Perception of ED raids by the BJP government on opposition leaders

ED raids by incumbent government on Opposition	(%)
For political vendetta	35
Working as per law	31

Source: National Election Study 2024 conducted by Lokniti-CSDS, all figures are in percent

Corruption emerged as a significant factor influencing voter perception in North India, where the BJP faced notable setbacks. According to the data, more than two in ten respondents (22%) believed the BJP to be more corrupt today than it was in the past, as opposed to the 12 percent who thought the party was more corrupt before (**Table 23**). These numbers point towards the growing concerns about the BJP's integrity and governance under its current tenure, which may have contributed to anti-incumbency sentiments in key states such as Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Haryana. While these numbers may not reflect an overwhelming majority, they underscore an increasing discontent that the opposition also tried to leverage to challenge BJP's claims of clean governance.

The role of investigative agencies in Indian politics has become a contentious issue, particularly during the BJP's tenure. When asked about the Enforcement Directorate (ED) raids targeting opposition leaders, more than a third of the respondents (35%) felt these were conducted for political vendetta, while a slightly lesser proportion (31%) viewed them as lawful actions (**Table 24**). These figures highlight a notable level of skepticism among the electorate regarding the government's use of investigative agencies and other state institutions.

Table 25: Modi continues to hold sway among voters, though noticeable dip in popularity

Post-Poll	Modi's popularity among voters (%)
2014	36
2019	47
2024	41

Source: Source: National Election Studies 2014-2024 conducted by Lokniti-CSDS, all figures are in percent

Table 26: Voter loyalty among BJP supporters

	Would have voted for the same party	Would have voted for a different party
Overall	50	24
Among BJP voters	56	25
Among voters of BJP allies	58	27

Source: National Election Study 2024 conducted by Lokniti-CSDS, all figures are in percent

Table 27: Voter perception of Modi’s image due to BJP recruiting corrupt defectors

Recruiting corrupt defectors	(%)
Has dented Modi’s image	61
Has not dented Modi’s image	19

Source: National Election Study 2024 conducted by Lokniti-CSDS, all figures are in percent

Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s standing among the electorate remains pivotal to the BJP’s fortunes. In a decade of his tenure, Modi’s popularity continues to be viewed favourably by more than two-fifth of the voters (41%), however, it has also witnessed a noticeable decline of 6 percentage points in comparison to the 2019 elections (47%) (**Table 25**). This drop reflects waning enthusiasm for Modi’s leadership, potentially due to economic challenges like inflation and unemployment or regional discontent with governance. However, it is also important to note that Modi’s current popularity remains higher than the level he registered in 2014 (36%), underscoring his continued influence in the Indian political stage, with substantial support across demographics.

Voter loyalty is often a barometer of a party’s stability, and the BJP has retained a significant portion of its core support base. Among BJP voters, more than half (56%) expressed their intention to vote for the party again, while a fourth (25%) also indicated a willingness to switch allegiances (**Table 26**). A somewhat similar trend emerged for the BJP allies too. Nearly three in five voters (58%) supporting BJP allies expressed loyalty, with more than a quarter (27%) open to exploring alternatives. These figures reveal a strong but not impervious base for the BJP and its coalition partners. The quarter of voters open to change represents a crucial segment that opposition parties could leverage, especially pivotal in closely contested constituencies.

The BJP’s strategy of recruiting defectors, some of whom face allegations of corruption, has sparked debate about its impact on Prime Minister Modi’s image. According to the survey, three-fifths of the respondents (61%) felt that this move has dented Modi’s reputation as a champion of clean governance, while one-fifths (19%) believed it had no impact (**Table 27**). This sentiment reflects a perception that Modi’s anti-corruption stance, a key pillar of his appeal, may have been compromised by the party’s electoral strategies, and contributed to disillusionment among BJP voters.