

ANALYSIS STUDY OF STARTING OF THE TREND OF TWO CONSECUTIVE TERMS IN PUNJAB

Narinder Kumar

Research Scholar

Department of Political Science

Sunrise University.

narindersinghgrc@gmail.com

Abstract

Since Punjab's post-reorganization in 1966, the 2012 Punjab Vidhan Sabha election was the first time a political party has held onto power for two consecutive terms. By defeating the anti-incumbency tendency in the state, the 14th Punjab Vidhan elections, which were conducted in 2012, flipped the trend of the state's electoral politics history. For the second term in a row, the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), the state's primary regional political party, and the Bharatiya Janata Party (SAD-BJP) coalition defeated the Congress Party. The goal of the current research is to investigate the noteworthy phenomenon of the start of the second consecutive trend in Punjab politics.

Key Words: SAD-BJP, SGPC, PPP, PPCC

Introduction

The People's Party of Punjab (PPP), CPI, CPM, and Akali Dal coalition did poorly in the elections, resulting in a direct contest between the SAD-BJP alliance and the Congress, two of the most enduring political rivals. At first, it appeared that the 2012 Punjab Vidhan Sabha elections would feature a triangular fight in the state. The Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), which campaigned for power without creating an electoral alliance, failed to establish even its own account despite having the highest concentration of schedule caste citizens in the state, particularly in the Doaba region. Due to ideological differences with his uncle S. Parkash Singh Badal, the then Chief Minister of Punjab, Manpreet Singh Badal, the founder of the Sanjha Morcha and nephew of Parkash Singh Badal, resigned the SAD in October 2010 and started a new party named the People's Party of Punjab. In the assembly districts of Gidharbaha and Lambi, they were defeated with his father, S. Gurdas Singh Badal. He never had any successful partnerships with the CPI, CPM, or Akali Dal (Longowal).

Performance of Political Parties in 2012 Punjab Vidhan Sabha Elections

The following table displays the electoral performance of political parties in the 2012 Punjab Vidhan Sabha election in terms of seats gained and votes cast;

Party	2012	2012	2007	2007	Change (Seats)	Change (%)
Congress Party	46	40.11%	44	40.94%	+2	-0.83%
Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD)	56	34.75%	49	37.19%	+7	-2.44%
BJP	12	7.13%	19	8.21%	-7	-1.08%
PPP		5.17%		-		-
CPM		0.16%		0.28%		-0.12%
CPI		0.68%		0.75%		-0.07%

Shiromani Akali Dal (Maan)		0.28%		0.51%		-0.23%
BSP		4.30%		4.10%		+0.20%
Independents	03	7.28	05	8.02%	-2	-0.74%
	117	100.00 %	117	100.00%		

Tabl

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Source:- Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, Punjab, Chandigarh, 2007 & 2012 Punjab Vidhan Sabha Elections.

Table No. 1 demonstrates that in compared to the 2007 elections, all political parties' vote percentages have decreased in 2012, with the exception of a little gain in the BSP vote percentage. Even though they lost more votes than the SAD-BJP, the math of their alliance allowed them to retain their majority in the legislature. Instead, from 49 members in the parliament in 2007 to 56 seats after the 2012 elections, Akali Dal has grown in prominence. From 19 seats in 2007 to 12 seats in the 2012 elections, the BJP lost ground. As it mostly depended on the anti-incumbency historical formula and waited until the end of its term to create the next administration in the state, the Congress was unable to capitalize on the declining popularity of the governing coalition. The SAD-BJP coalition, on the other hand, managed to win 22 more seats than the Congress Party despite losing vote share by a slim margin of 1.77 percent votes. The Congress Party suffered a net loss as a result of the Left parties' coalition with Sanjha Morcha, although the PPP assisted SAD in eliminating any anti-incumbency that existed in the state. By keeping the Hindu Dalits of Doaba, who were once the Congress Party's support base, the BSP aided the SAD-BJP.

Region - Wise Electoral Performance of Political Parties

Three areas make up Punjab: Majha (Amritsar, Tarn Taran, Pathankot, and Gurdaspur Districts), Doaba (Jalandhar, Kapurthala, Nawanshar, and Hoshiarpur Districts), and Malwa (Districts of Patiala, Ludhiana, Fatehgarh Sahib, Faridkot, Ferozepur, Fazilka, Moga, Muktsar, Sangrur, Barnala, Ropar, Bathinda, Mansa and Mohali). In the state, there are 117 assembly districts. By adding four seats, two from Majha and one each from Majha and Doaba, the delimitation procedure of 2008 increased the number of constituencies in the regions, favoring the already dominating Malwa. Because this area had established itself as a strong support base for the Akali Dal since 1966, this development not only boosted the region's electoral significance but also benefited the SAD politically.

There are 25 assembly seats in the Majha area, which is located between the Indo-Pak border in the north and the river Beas in the south. Hindu, Sikh, and Dalit people make up the population. This area has always been a Congress party stronghold due to its demographic makeup.

Doaba, which literally translates to "the country between two rivers" and comprises 23 assembly seats in Punjab's north-east, has historically been a stronghold of the BSP and the Congress party due to the area's significant Dalit population.

Geographically the largest and politically the most crucial section of the state is Malwa,

which has 69 of the 117 assembly seats in Punjab. Even if there are small pockets of Hindus there, the Akalis have long held sway there. With the exception of Darbara Singh, all of the state's Chief Ministers since 1966 have been from the Malwa area.

The following table lists the political parties' results in the 2012 Punjab Vidhan Sabha election by region;

Table-2

Sr. No.	Party	Majha			Doaba			Malwa		
		2007	2012	Change	2007	2012	Change	2007	2012	Change
1.	Congress	03	8	+5	04	06	+2	37	32	-5
2.	SAD	17	12	-5	13	11	-2	19	33	+14
3.	BJP	07	5	-2	07	05	-2	05	02	-3
4.	Independent	0	0	0	01	01	0	04	02	-2
	Total	27	25		25	23		65	69	

Source:- Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, Punjab, Chandigarh, 2007 & 2012 Punjab Vidhan Sabha Elections.

According to Table No. 2, the Congress party won 8 seats in the Majha area in the 2012 elections, compared to only 3 seats in the 2007 elections. In contrast to the 17 seats it obtained in the 2007 election, SAD only got 12 seats in the 2012 election. In comparison to the 2007 election, when it won 7 seats, the BJP won 5 seats from this area in 2012.

The Congress party gained six seats in the Doaba area in the 2012 election, compared to only four in the 2007 election. In contrast to the 13 seats it gained in the 2007 election, SAD won 11 seats in the 2012 election. In 2012, the BJP gained 5 seats from this area, up from the 7 it had in the previous election. In both the 2012 and the 2007 elections, the independents won 1 seat from this area.

In the Malwa area, the Congress party won 32 seats in the 2012 election, compared to its ability to win 37 members from this region in the previous election. SAD managed to gain 19 seats from this area in the 2007 election but won 33 seats in the 2012 election. In the 2012 election, the BJP gained 2 seats, while in the 2007 election, it received 5. In the 2012 and 2007 elections from this area, the independents won 2 and 4 seats, respectively. In these elections, neither the BSP nor the other parties won even one seat from any of the regions. It is important to note that the SAD did well in the 2012 elections relative to the 2007 elections in its own stronghold area, the Malwa region.

Reasons for the Performance of Political Parties in these elections

Even though Dera Sacha Sauda supported the Congress Party, the SAD gained more seats than the Congress in the polls, making the win of the SAD-BJP alliance all the more important. Due to a number of factors, the Congress was unable to make up for its losses in Majha and Doaba. As it awaited its chance to lead the state, the Congress Party remained complacent. The party's failure was attributed to a number of factors, including poor

coordination at the state level, the coterie culture, rebellious candidates, and the feudal and haughty demeanor of the state leadership. Following is a detailed summary of factors that affected the parties' victories and defeats:

1. **Too much expectation from incumbency factor by Congress party :-** One of the primary causes of the Congress party's loss in these elections was the too optimistic expectations placed on the incumbency factor and Capt. Amrinder Singh, the head of the PPCC, about a certain win..
2. **Autocratic style of functioning of PPCC Chief Capt. Amrinder Singh :-** The Congress party leadership had not taken the issuance of party tickets, the campaign, or Capt. Amrinder Singh's spiteful and unconstitutional phrasing used in response to the Congress candidates' loss seriously.
3. **Policies of SAD-BJP Government :-** The Akali Dal government's populist initiatives, like as free electricity, social security programs, the atta-dal program, and bicycles for female students, among others, helped it win these elections.
4. **Congress Factionalism: -** The Congress remained a divided chamber during the elections and failed poorly to convey its future agenda. To prevent their own party candidates from serving as ministers in the next Congress administration, certain candidates for the party turned against them.
5. **Religious support to SAD :-** Although the government's development and secular program was successful, Babas and Deras continued to play a significant part in the SAD-BJP alliance's success. In order to avoid bringing up "Panthic" or religious concerns, the SAD effectively handled the backing of several religious groups, notably Dam Dami Taksal of Bhindranwale. It also won the endorsement of several Dera chiefs and Babas for this election. Additionally, SAD was able to win one-third of the votes cast by Dera Sacha Sauda supporters and almost half of those cast by Radha Soami sect supporters.
6. It should be noted that the devotees of these Deras are dispersed across Punjab and have historically been important Congress voting bases. The success of the alliance candidates in the area was also significantly influenced by the support that the BSP received from the Dera Sachkhand Ballan in Doaba, which served as a spoiler for the Congress by garnering 21% of the total votes cast by its adherents.
7. **Victory of SAD in SGPC Election :-** The landslide victory of SAD in Shiromani Gurudwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) elections a few months prior this election proved to be a successful semi-final which helped its victory in the final i.e. 2012 Assembly Elections. The party's gearing up to reach the public and garner support at the grassroots level was started by the leadership. Second, the SAD strengthened its support base among the Sikh people by joining up with different Panthic and religious organizations during the SGPC elections.
8. **Popularity of Badals:-** Throughout these elections, Parkash Singh Badal's popularity as a populist politician remained strong. In comparison to his primary challenger Amrinder Singh (33%), he received the highest number of votes for Chief Minister (38%) Women voters also preferred the former more. According to our post-election study, 43% of women voters favoured SAD over the Congress (39%).

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