

# Emerging Pattern of Urban Elite in Haryana – A Study of Karnal Municipal Corporation

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## 1. Introduction

This research paper is a modest attempt to describe and analyze the emerging pattern of urban elite in Haryana on the basis of comparative study of the 2013 and 2018 elections of the Municipal Corporation of Karnal.

The choice has been limited to Karnal Municipal Corporation because the election of the Mayor had assumed great significance on the eve of the 2018 Municipal Corporation elections in Haryana, because Karnal Assembly Constituency is presently being represented by the Chief Minister of Haryana, Manohar Lal Khattar. Besides, the assumption behind the selection of Karnal for this study was that it will enable us to assess the impact of the performance of Manohar Lal Khattar who had become the Chief Minister of BJP Government in the State after the 2014 elections for the Haryana Legislative Assembly in which the party had so far remained a minor player. It was able for the first time to form government of its own by obtaining a clear majority. Earlier it could become only a junior partner in the Coalition Governments headed by Devi Lal from 1987 to 1989 and Bansi Lal from 1996 to 1998.

A major consideration behind this study was the fact that the Haryana Government had laid condition of the having been educated up to the high school for men and middle pass for the women and primary pass for SCs women for the first time. This study, therefore, could enable us to find out the impact of these educational conditions on the emerging pattern of urban leadership in Haryana. Besides the election for the post of Mayor had been made direct whereas earlier he/she was elected by the Municipal Councilors, this had enhanced the

importance of the election for this post. Another factor that prompted us to select Karnal Municipal Corporation further was the fact that the BJP candidate for the post of Mayor, who had been elected as an Independent candidate in 2013, was contesting this election as a candidate of that party. Hence our study could help us in finding out as to how have the voters rated her performance.

## 2. Objective of the study

To describe and analyze the emerging pattern of urban elite in Haryana on the basis of comparative study of the 2013 and 2018 elections of the Municipal Corporation of Karnal.

## 3. Locate of the study

The present study covers the election of the Municipal Corporation of Karnal.

## 4. Methodology

The primary data was collected personally by the researcher by administering an interview schedule to the candidates elected in 2013 and 2018 elections. Besides, information was gathered through informal discussion with the experts on Haryana politics. The secondary data was gathered from the reports in the English and Hindi Newspapers.

## 5. Social profile of Karnal

At the outset, it will be essential to describe the social profile of Karnal Municipal Corporation because this is, perhaps, the most important determinant of voting behaviour in these elections. It is being given in the table 1 that follows.

Table: 1  
Social Profile of Karnal

(A) General Castes	No. of Voters	(B) Backward Castes	No. of Voters	(C) Scheduled Castes	No. of Voters	(D) Others (Migrants)	No. of Voters
Punjabi Arora Khatri	52453 (37.90%)	Jhiwar	8011 (12.87%)	Harijan	13152 (34.62%)	Migrants From Bihar	4630 (63.95%)
Aggarwal	21480 (15.52%)	Pal	7937 (12.75%)	Balmiki	10787 (28.40%)	Migrants From Nepal	1315 (18.16%)
Brahmin	17561 (12.69%)	Saini	5719 (9.18%)	Pasi	3275 (8.62%)	Migrants From Chennai	904 (12.48%)
Jat	12423 (8.97%)	Sunar	5008 (8.04%)	Majbi Sikh	848 (2.23%)	Migrants From West Bangal	390 (5.38%)
Jat Skih	8845 (6.39%)	Kamboj	3736 (6%)	Khatik	2172 (5.71%)	<b>Total</b>	<b>7239</b>
Ror	13918 (10.05%)	Sain	3762 (6.04%)	Doom	649 (1.70%)		
Rajput	8615	Lohar	3570	Deha	1701		

	(6.22%)		(5.73%)		(4.47%)		
Muslim	1932 (1.39%)	Gurjar	2137 (3.43%)	Julaha	1015 (2.67%)		
Chirstian	1009 (0.72%)	Khati	3003 (4.82%)	Sansi	860 (2.26%)		
Bishnoi	137 (0.09%)	Kumhar	3652 (5.86%)	Kabirpanthi	855 (2.25%)		
<b>Total</b>	<b>138373</b>	Dhobi	2136 (3.43%)	Bajigar	300 (0.78%)		
		Darji	2258 (3.62%)	Dhanak	916 (2.41%)		
		Rai Sikh	613 (0.98%)	Od	866 (2.28%)		
		Labana Shikh	1142 (1.83%)	Sikligar	81 (0.21%)		
		Jogi	2790 (4.48%)	Nut	462 (1.21%)		
		Bhatt	750 (1.20%)	Spera	42 (0.11%)		
		Teli	308 (0.49%)	<b>total</b>	<b>37981</b>		
		Dakaut	1085 (1.74%)				
		Ahir	1191 (1.91%)				
		Goswami	812 (1.30%)				
		Sorgir	137 (0.22%)				
		Banjara	470 (0.75%)				
		Ramgarhia Sikh	562 (0.90%)				
		Beragi	963 (1.54%)	<b>Total no. of Voters in 2018</b>	<b>245836</b>		
		Bhabhuja	491 (0.78%)	<b>Total no. of Voters in 2013</b>	<b>208794</b>		
		<b>Total</b>	<b>62243</b>	<b>New Voters</b>	<b>37042</b>		

Source: Haryana Tribune, December 8, 2018, p - 4 \* figures in brackets represent percentage

As already been mentioned caste factor plays an important role in Haryana’s politics and Karnal’s Municipal Corporation elections are in no exception from it. Therefore the political parties allocated tickets by keeping the caste composition of various wards. But the BJP was the only political party which contested the election held on December 16, 2018 on the party symbol. Other parties like the INLD-BSP alliance and the Congress did not field their candidates on party symbols.

The election was the toughest for the Mayor’s post because the BJP’s candidate for the post of Mayor, Renu Bala Gupta had earlier been the Mayor of Karnal Municipal Corporation in the previous term, as an independent candidate. Pitted against the united opposition of the Congress and INLD-BSP alliance, Renu Bala Gupta, a Bania, had to face virtually a straight fight from Indian National Lok Dal-Bahujan Samajwadi Party’s alliance candidate Asha Wadhwa, a Punjabi, though there were eight candidates in the field, Renu Bala was able to secure 69960 votes and won with a margin of 9348 votes in a keenly contested election. Caste politics seems to have taken precedence over the local issues in this election. The saffron party released a full page advertisement in major Hindi dailies of the city on the day of voting December 16, 2018, pleading

with the Punjabi community to vote for the party because the Chief Minister of the State, Manohar Lal Khattar is a Punjabi.<sup>1</sup>

**6. Finding of the study**

As is evident from the Table 2, the numbers of males and females elected to the Municipal Corporation as Councilors have remained the same because the numbers of seats reserved for the women have remained seven. This shows that no woman could be elected from an unreserved seat. This underscores the fact that reservations are essential for the empowerment of women in Urban Local Bodies.

**Table: 2**  
**Sex**

Sex	2013	2018
Males	13	13
Females	7	7

Source: Field Survey

An overview of the Table 3 shows that there was a significant change in the age profile of the Councilors elected in

<sup>1</sup> The Hindu (Noida/Delhi), December 20, 2018, Thursday, p - 3

2018 from that of those who had been elected in 2013 elections for the Karnal Municipal Corporation. The number of the young women (21-30 years) multiplied by five times but the number of the middle aged women (31-40 years) and of the upper middle aged women (41-50years) remained unchanged.

However the representation of the elderly women (51-60 years) was reduced drastically from five to one, primarily because of the educational qualifications that had been prescribed for contesting the 2018 elections.

**Table: 3**  
**Age**

Age	2013	2018
21-30	1	5
31-40	9	9
41-50	5	5
51-60	5	1
Above	None	None

Source: Field Survey

The data in the table 4 show that only a marginal change had taken place in a marital status of the women councilors, who had been elected in 2018 from those who elected in 2013. All the 13 men Councilors elected in the two elections are

married. Only one of them (a woman) is single. This shows that marital status of the candidate is one of the important factors for achieving leadership role in the urban power structure.

**Table: 4**  
**Marital Status**

Marital Status	2013	2018
Married	20 (13 men & 7women)	19 (13men & 6women)
Unmarried/ Single	0	1 women

Source: Field Survey

As is reflected by table 5, there was little difference in the educational qualifications of those elected in two elections. The number of under-matric was, however, reduced from five to two but that of the matriculates increased from five to six and of those having 10+2 qualification has increased from three to

four. However the number of the graduates declined from five to one but number of the post-graduates has increased from one to four. Likewise, the number of Councilors having professional degrees too has increased from one to three.

**Table: 5**  
**Qualification**

Education	2013	2018
Below Matric	5	2
Matric	5	6
10+2	3	4
B.A.	5	1
M.A.	1	4
Other Professional Degree	1	3

Source: Field Survey

As is clear from the Table 6 the representation of the Councilors from General Category was reduced from 15 to 12 but that of BC Councilors has increased from three to four. However, as representation of the SCs has been doubled from

two to four. This shows that two BC candidates have been also to get themselves elected from Unreserved Wards. This is an encouraging sign and indicates a trend towards the empowerment of the Backward Castes.

**Table: 6**  
**Caste Category**

Caste Category	2013	2018
Gen	15	12
BC	3	4
SC	2	4

Source: Field Survey

As regards the Local/Punjabi divide, as is clear from Table 7, the number of the locals has been reduced from thirteen to eleven but that of the Punjabis has increased from seven to nine. This has happened because of the consolidation of

Punjabi voters in favour of the BJP candidates who had been fielded by the Punjabi Chief Minister of Haryana, Manohar Lal Khattar.

**Table: 7**  
**Local/Punjabi**

Local/Punjabi	2013	2018
Local	13	11
Punjabi	7	9

Source: Field Survey

An overview Table 8 shows significant differences in the occupational background of the Councilors elected in 2013 and 2018. The number of women engaged in house hold work has increased from five to seven. But of those men who are engaged in agriculture has come down from six to two and of those engaged in business has increased from nine to ten.

More over a labourer has been able to get elected the Municipal Corporation in the first times. These changes in the occupational background in 2018 could primarily be ascribed to the fact the BJP had given preference to the businessmen while allotting tickets because they had been traditional supporters of the party.

**Table: 8**  
**Occupation**

Occupation	2013	2018
Business	9	10
Agriculture	6	2
House wife	5	7
Other	0	1 (Laborer)

Source: Field Survey

As is clear from the Table 9, as many as thirteen councilors have been elected for the first time. Only four of among the councilors who had been elected in 2013 could be re-elected in 2018. However, three new faces have been able to get elected from the Councilors family. This indicates that

new leadership is emerging in the urban areas of Haryana. It is also evident from my personal observation of the electoral process that most of the representatives elected in the two elections are from the families having political background.

**Table: 9**  
**Status of Councilors**

Status of Councilors	2013	2018
Ist time elected	20	13
Re elected	-	4
New faces from Ex-Councilors family	-	3

Source: Field Survey

An overview of the Table 10 shows that the number of the independents has been reduced by almost the half, from fifteen to eight. But the number of those affiliated to the BJP has increased four times i.e. from three in 2013 to twelve in 2018. This has happened, perhaps, because the BJP is the party in power in the State at present and the tradition has been that voters favour candidates of the ruling party in local elections.

That is why none of the supporters of the INLD could be elected in 2018, whereas, two of them had won in 2013. Interestingly, none of those elected in 2013 and 2018 claimed any affiliation with Congress Party which was the ruling party at the time of 2013 elections because it is presently out of power. It is, however, pertinent to mention that only BJP has contested the 2013 and the 2018 elections on party symbols.

**Table: 10**  
**Party Affiliation**

Party Affiliation	2013	2018
IND	15	8
BJP	3	12
INLD	2	0
Others	0	0

Source: Field Survey

**7. Conclusion**

The above analysis leads us to a tentative conclusion that there has taken place a quantitative change from 2013 to 2018 in the socio-economic and political background of the urban elite in 2018 elections to Karnal Municipal Corporation. Three more inferences may be drawn from this study: Firstly, it was an approval of the development that has been brought about in karnal by the Chief Mnister Manohar Lal Khattar during his

tenure for 2014 to 2018. Secondly, it may also be interpreted as an approval of the performance of the sitting Mayor, Renu Bala Gupta. Thirdly, it was the consolidation of Punjabi votes in favour of the BJP and division of the local votes among other parties was perhaps the most important factor in deciding the outcome of the 2018 election, however, an indepth empirical study is needed for arriving at definite conclusions in the above context.

## References

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