

Criminalisation of Politics in India: Causes, Consequences, and Reforms

Shraddha N. Patil

shraddhaapatil13@gmail.com

Mukesh R. Patel English Medium Secondary School & Jr. College, Shirpur,
Dist. Dhule

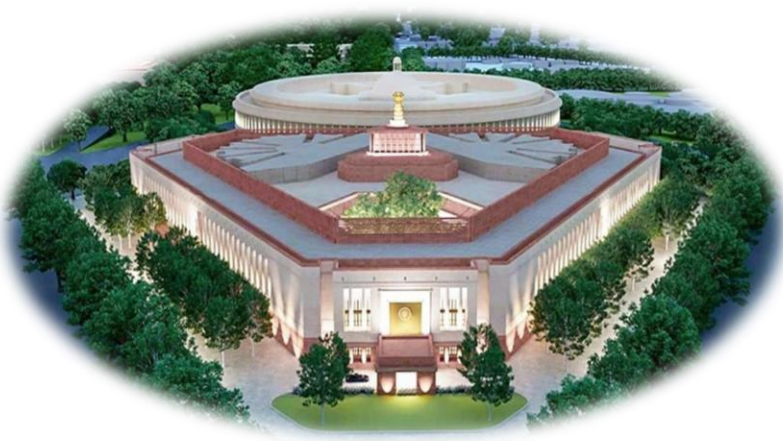
Abstract:

This paper discusses the increasing criminalisation of Indian politics, with serious criminal charges more likely to be held by legislators. The study uses data from the Association for Democratic Reforms and judicial interventions by the Supreme Court of India to examine structural causes such as electoral incentives, delay in the justice system and voter behaviour. It also looks at the impact on governance and democratic institutions and proposes reforms such as legal disqualification measures, electoral transparency and fast track courts.

Introduction:

Criminalisation of politics means the increasing involvement of people with criminal backgrounds in the political system. In India, this issue started becoming more visible from the 1980s and 1990s and has continued to grow over time. Many elected representatives today face serious criminal charges, which raises concerns about the quality of leadership and governance in a democratic country. This is a major problem because democracy is based on fairness, rule of law, and public trust. When individuals with criminal records enter politics, it weakens these values and affects decision-making. This study tries to understand why such candidates are able to win elections, what failures in the system allow this to happen, and what changes are needed to reduce the criminalisation of politics in India.

- What is criminalisation of politics
- Brief history background (appearance since 1980s-1990s)
- Why it is a major problem in a democracy
- Research questions:
- Why are criminals elected ?
- What institutional failures make this possible?
- What changes are needed?



Objectives:

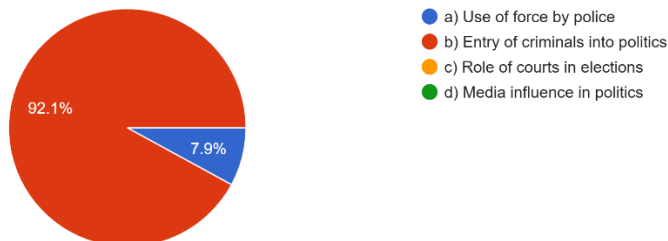
- To evaluate how criminals getting involved in India's political system is both getting worse (like The Association for Democratic Reforms).
- To identify what social, political, or economic factors cause criminally convicted individuals
- To assess whether or not existing laws (like The Representation of People Act, 1951) as well as court cases from the Supreme Court of India have helped to address the problem of having too many criminals within our political system.
- To analyze the effects of crime on government, trust, and the operations of the various forms of democracies throughout India.
- To investigate how political parties and voting behaviors either promote or decrease the amount of crime in our political system.
- To propose viable policy reforms to stop or at least limit criminal activity within our political systems.

Data Analytics:

Response 1:

1. What does criminalisation of politics imply?

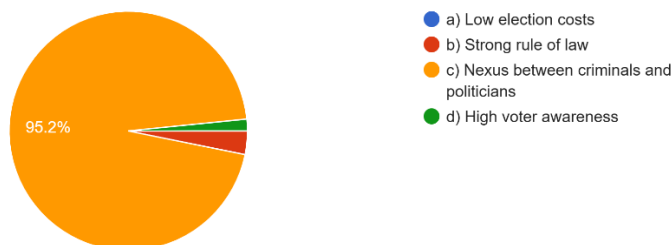
63 responses



Response 2:

2. Which of the following is a key reason for criminalisation of politics?

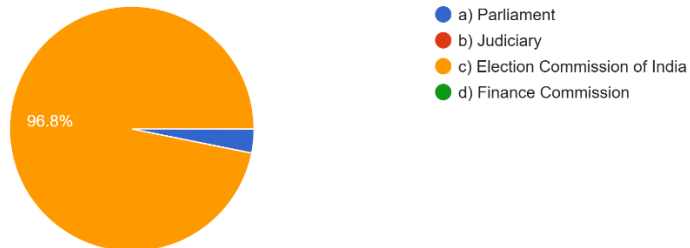
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Response 3:

3. Which body conducts elections in India?

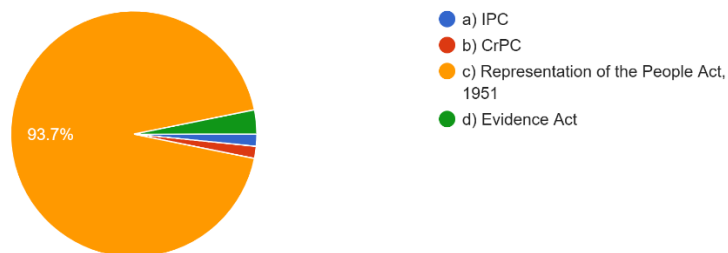
63 responses



Response 4:

4. Which law governs disqualification of convicted candidates?

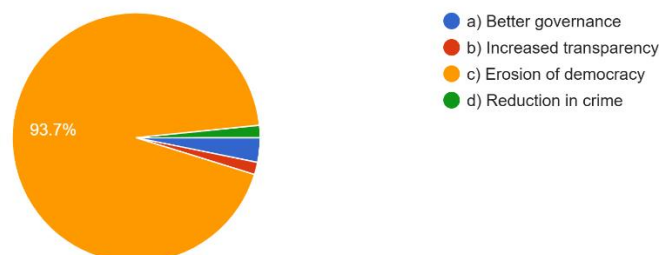
63 responses



Response 5:

5. A major consequence of criminalisation of politics is:

63 responses



Hypothesis:

1) What does criminalisation of politics imply?

Sr.no	Options	O _i	E _i	O _i -E _i	(O _i -E _i) ²	(O _i -E _i) ² /E _i
1	Use of force by police	8	25	-17	289	11.56
2	Entry of criminals into politics	92	25	67	4489	179.56
3	Role of courts in elections	0	25	-25	625	25
4	Media influence in politics	0	25	-25	625	25
Total		100				241.12

$241.12 > 7.815$

2) Which of the following is a key reason for criminalisation of politics?

Sr.no	Options	O _i	E _i	O _i -E _i	(O _i -E _i) ²	(O _i -E _i) ² /E _i
1	Low election costs	0	25	-25	625	25
2	Strong rule of law	5	25	-20	400	16
3	Nexus between criminals and politicians	95	25	70	4900	196
4	High voter awareness	5	25	-20	400	16
Total		100				253

$253 > 7.815$

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the problem of criminalisation in Indian politics is serious and keeps increasing over time. Even though laws like the Representation of the People Act and decisions by the Supreme Court exist, they have not been fully effective in stopping candidates with criminal backgrounds from getting elected. This happens because of slow court processes, weak enforcement of rules, and the tendency of political parties to give tickets to candidates who can win, even if they have criminal cases. Sometimes voters also support such candidates due to local influence or lack of awareness. This situation affects governance, reduces public trust, and weakens democracy. To solve this issue, stronger laws, faster court decisions, better transparency, and increased awareness among voters are necessary. Only when political parties, the legal system, and citizens work together can this problem be reduced.

References:

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2. Supreme Court of India – Judgments on electoral reforms
3. Representation of the People Act, 1951
4. Election Commission of India – Election data and reports
5. Milan Vaishnav – *When Crime Pays: Money and Muscle in Indian Politics*
6. Bibek Debroy & Laveesh Bhandari – *Anatomy of Corruption in India*