

NES Post Poll, April- May 2009

Schedule for Field Investigators Training Workshop

Lokniti: Programme for Comparative Democracy
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GUIDELINES FOR TRAINING FIELD INVESTIGATORS

Broad guidelines

- The Workshop needs to be conducted across 3 (**Three**) days. The first two days could be from morning to the evening and the third day it could end by lunch.
- We could determine our individual time schedules. Ideally we need to have 6 ½ hours of sessions every day with an additional ½ hr for lunch and 15 minutes each in the mid morning and mid afternoon for tea/coffee breaks. In effect the training workshop should stretch for 7 ½ hours including lunch and the two tea breaks. We could start at 9.30am and end by 5.00 pm or start at 10 am and end by 5.30 pm as suits local convenience.
- Please ensure that you have a few more investigators attending the Workshop than those needed for the actual field work
- As far as possible let us ensure that there is gender justice in the choice of investigators.
- Please get the investigators to fill up a **FI Profile Proforma** providing details about themselves in the course of the Workshop
- Prospective field investigators could be told prior to the Workshop that their performance/ participation at the Workshop would be evaluated before a final choice of the investigators is made. Outline the fact that the final choice is based on their capacity to conduct the interviews effectively and as per norms.
- It would be nice if the State Coordinator personally oversees the conduct of the training sessions and is present through the sessions
- Let's try to make the workshop as interactive as possible
- Let's ensure that all the material that we need for the Workshop are kept ready and organized prior to the start of the sessions. When discussing the questionnaire let's ensure that a copy is there with each workshop participant
- Supervisor should also be actively involved in the conduct of the Workshop and should supervise and observe the mock interviews carefully.
- Any outside experts we invite should be conversant with survey research techniques and the work of Lokniti so that they do not send a message that runs counter to what we are saying at the workshop.
- If there is a formal inauguration let's keep it to the minimal and focus attention more on the substantive part of the workshop.

Suggested session outlines

Each day could be broken up into four sessions of 90 minutes each. The third day of the training workshop would have two sessions of 90 minutes or longer as per the state teams requirements.

Day 1

Session 1: 90 minutes (10 am to 11.30 am)

This could be a broad introductory session. The participants can introduce themselves. This is important as it gives all an opportunity to know each other and also discreetly evaluate their capacity to speak before others. This should take 15-20 minutes. The State Coordinator could then introduce:

CSDS - See Note 1 at Page number 8.

Lokniti

- **Lokniti** - Programme for Comparative Democracy was established in 1997 as a research programme of the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), New Delhi. Lokniti has the following objectives:
 - Monitoring on a regular basis the working of Indian democracy with special attention to the participation of marginalized people,
 - Developing a comparative understanding of democratic polities in different historical and cultural settings,
 - Engaging with scholars in other parts of the world with a view to creating an alternative to the dominant perspective on democracy in a global context, and
 - Training a new generation of scholars and public intellectuals who can intervene in the discourse on democracy.
- By bringing various projects of the CSDS on elections and party politics together under a single programme, Lokniti seeks to engage with the global debates on democracy. In an age where globalization of democracy has come to mean a universalisation of a thin checklist model of managerial governance and cultural homogenization, the worth of a participatory model of plural democracy, a model that recognizes multiple paths to realizing the rich ideals of democracy, cannot be over-emphasized.

The participants could be briefed on the survey initiatives of Lokniti and its other research projects. This could be made interactive by also inviting comments from among participants who have been part of earlier surveys and additionally getting inputs from the State Supervisor. The third focus of this opening session could be exposing the participants to the importance of survey research in social sciences:

- **Importance of Survey:** Sample survey as a research method has a long tradition in India, which has become more popular after the proliferation of electronic media. It is not only being used as

an information and data collection tool by academic researchers and market surveyors, but also by media in India. Survey research is a scientific method for gathering information and data that is more credible and representative from the end users perspective. The purpose of sample survey is to obtain primary information from a few respondents in order to describe the characteristics and opinion of hundreds, thousands or even the whole population in any country. Surveys are used to estimate the characteristics, behaviors, attitudes and opinion of any segment of population on any issue or issues. The sample is selected in a scientific way to represent the universe of study so that the observations collected and compiled from the sample can be generalized to the entire population being studied. Thus survey is a scientific method to collect information by interviewing from a representative sample instead of the whole population.

- **Fundamentals of Lokniti Survey:** The basics of survey conducted by Lokniti focus on Cross-section randomized samples, intensive training workshop of field investigator, face to face interviews of respondents, use of structured questionnaire administered in the language understood by the respondent and strict monitoring and quality control checks. For election studies a special feature is the use of secret ballot paper and ballot box for voting questions.
- **Highlights of National Election Studies (NES)** - See Note 2 at Page number 10.

The resource persons are encouraged to take as many examples as possible. Examples of what is a sample, how the sample must represent the Universe it is meant to speak on behalf of and the like. Let us encourage as many questions as possible. Let us also get in as many inputs from those who have done surveys earlier. This too could take up to an hour along with question answer time if needed.

Tea Break: 15 minutes (11.30 am to 11.45am)

Session 2: 90 minutes (11.45 am to 1.15pm)

This session would have the following components:

- Overall Sampling of NES 2009. **(Refer to handbook)**
- Method of sampling the PS in sampled state ACs. (3 PS in each AC).
- Method of sampling respondents from the latest electoral rolls of the selected PS.
- Substitution not to be allowed. Reasons for it.
- Importance of filling the **Format of those who could not be interviewed.**
- Emphasis on strict adherence to Interviewing sampled respondents only.
- Importance of face-to-face interviews.
- Do's and Don'ts of Field Investigation. **(Refer to handbook)**

Lunch Break: 45 minutes (1.15 pm to 2 pm)

Session 3: 90 minutes (2 pm to 3.30 pm)

The common questions across of all the sets could be discussed first. **THIS SESSION SHOULD FOCUS ON THE COMMON QUESTIONS USED IN ALL THE 5 SETS OF QUESTIONNAIRES.** Begin the discussion with an overview of the common questions:

- The model of the discussion is that every Field Investigator (FI) reads out or rather asks a couple of questions to the FI seated next him. The answers given by the FI is then discussed and which answer option is to be encircled in the questionnaire is decided. For most of the questions answer options are not to be read out during the interview. Instructions for questions where answer options are to be read out are given in the questionnaire but during the workshop it needs to be explained and pointed out. Details at the top of the questionnaire – PC/AC/ etc, the boxes on the side etc., the cover page of the questionnaire and its importance, the Main questionnaire and background data needs to be emphasized.
- **Use of Ballot Paper & Ballot Box** - The use of ballot paper and ballot box is to be explained to the FIs during the training workshop. The ballot paper for the voting questions are to be stapled with each questionnaire at the back of the questionnaire and a common serial number is to be written at the back of the questionnaire and ballot paper. For example if at one polling station a FI has to do 10 interviews then he must have 10 questionnaire with number 1 written at the back of the first questionnaire and the attached ballot paper, 2 written at the back of the second questionnaire and the attached ballot paper and so on. This is very important as after completing all the 10 interviews the FI will have to take out the ballot papers from the ballot box and match them with the questionnaire based in the common serial number and record the party voted in the questionnaire. The serial number at the back of the ballot paper will help the FI in finding out, which ballot papers are for which questionnaire.
- **Coding of Questionnaires:** The coding of the questionnaire is to be done after the interview is over. *Please do not code the questions during the interview as the time spared by the respondent is precious and he may get irritated.*
- Throughout the questionnaire 9 (99) is Not Applicable (N.A.). This implies that it was an answer to a dependent question, which was not required to be asked.
- At the time of coding you have to refer to the **CODE BOOK** for coding questions where it is clearly mentioned that consult codebook.
- *As you familiarized with the questions in the questionnaire, you have to familiarize yourself with the code categories given in the CODE BOOK.*
- The coding has to be done carefully with the numbers written boldly and clearly, as it has to be entered.

Tea Break: 15 minutes (3.30 pm to 3.45 pm)

Session 4: 90 minutes (3.45 pm to 6 pm)

- Screening of Lokniti Audio-visual (AV) for FIs Training.
- Power point Presentation on Do's & Dont's during interview.
- Power point Presentation on Do's & Dont's of coding.

Day 2

Session 5: 90 minutes (10 am to 11.30 am)

- In this session questions in **Set A & B** will be taken up.
- The pattern would be same pattern as in session 3.

Tea Break: 15 minutes (11.30 am to 11.45am)

Session 6: 90 minutes (11.45 am to 1.15pm)

- In this session questions in **Set C, D & E** will be taken up.
- The pattern would be same pattern as in session 3.

Lunch Break: 45 minutes (1.15 pm to 2 pm)

Session 7: 90 minutes (2 pm to 3.30 pm)

- Complete discussion on background data with special focus on caste and occupation codes.
- Field Investigators Handbook to be discussed in detail

Tea Break: 15 minutes (3.30 pm to 3.45 pm)

Session 8: 90 minutes (3.45 pm to 5.30 pm)

- The Participants will be briefed about the mock interview that they have to conduct.
- Each participant has to conduct one mock interview.
- The State coordinator and supervisor should oversee the process.
- The State coordinator depending on where the workshop is being conducted could determine the location of the interview.

Day 3

Session 9: 90 minutes (10 am to 11.30 am)

- Participants will be given a Test Paper to fill to evaluate their learning during the workshop.
- Participants will be given a Feedback Form 1 to fill and evaluate the training workshop and give their feedback.
- The State coordinator/Supervisor to evaluate the participants based on the test paper and mock interview conducted.

Tea Break: 15 minutes (11.30 am to 11.45am)

Session 8: 120 minutes (Tea break to End)

Session 10: 90 minutes (11.45 am to 1.15pm)

- The name of the participants selected to conduct the field investigation to be announced.
- The remaining time could be spent on pre departure logistics – where the participants will go, their schedules, advances etc.

Note 1: Introduction to CSDS

The Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, also called the CSDS or informally, just the Centre, is a premier institute of India in the social sciences and humanities. The Centre provides a unique institutional space that seeks to nurture intellectual interests outside the entrenched boundaries of academic disciplines. This simultaneously gives the Centre a sense of intimacy with and distance from universities. Therefore, the Centre has deliberately chosen not to duplicate the structure of university department. This also allows the Centre to support and nurture interdisciplinary modes of enquiry. Over the years, the Centre has also managed to generate and utilize a productive tension between rigorous scholarly work and social movements, between academic commitment and political practices. It has been frequently engaged with contentious contemporary issues that have shaped its academic programme and contributed to struggles for dignity, livelihood and creative self-expression. At the same time the CSDS zealously and meticulously guards its own space of reflective distance, theoretical work and research, which has no obvious visibility in the public domain.

The Centre's faculty is comprised of scholars who come from diverse disciplinary backgrounds, pursue different research agendas and follow multiple methodologies. This is done around several projects and programmes initiated by the Faculty. Its programmes and projects generates a much larger CSDS network of scholars, intellectuals and institutions that enables the Centre to sustain a range of research activities and pursue divergent intellectual concerns.

While independent faculty members have the fullest possible freedom to pursue their particular research interests, they also collaborate and work together in common activities and projects of the Centre.

Since its inception in 1963 the Centre has been a space for new intellectual ideas generated not only by interaction among the faculty but much wider exchange with activists and scholars from India and abroad. This has been facilitated by frequent visits by writers and scholars from Afro-Asian, Latin American and South East Asian countries. Indeed the Centre has particularly always welcomed scholars from South Asia. It has housed South Asia's dissenting voices with great care and political sensibility. In its effort to pluralise the global, the Centre has also been helped by its own institutional positions of Scholar in Residence, visiting activist scholars, the Rajni Kothari Chair in Democracy and several visiting fellowships. The Centre also organizes annual lectures in memory of the first Chairman of the Centre, the economist B.N. Ganguli and Giri Deshingkar, a prominent Chinese scholar and member of the faculty.

Since its inception, the Centre has been known for its skepticism towards any one conception of modernity and received models of development and progress and has sought ways to make creative use of local traditions in the making of multiple and alternative modernities, much before these ideas become fashionable in intellectual discourse. The CSDS has always promoted conversations

between and within cultures. It has tried to delink cultural resources from violent expressions of political identities and promoted the idea that dissent is crucial for creative conversation between cultures and societies. The CSDS has carved out a space for itself in the field of democratic politics and its futures, politics of culture and knowledge, contextually relevant political theory, media and urban experiences, critical discourse on science and technology and violence, ethnic diversity. The Centre is also involved in two significant journals, *Alternatives & China Report*.

The CSDS is largely funded by the Indian Council of Social Science Research Institute (ICSSR).

Note 2: About NES

The National Election Study (NES) is a social scientific study of the political behaviour, opinion and attitudes of the electorates in India developed at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS) Delhi. The immediate objective of NES was to map the behaviour and opinion of the Indian voter and help explain the electoral outcome but it also has a wide range of secondary objectives that continue to be of relevance to students of democratic politics in and outside India. NES continues the tradition of survey research at the CSDS that has sought to use elections as an occasion or a window to making sense of trends and patterns in democratic politics.

NES is firmly anchored in the tradition of survey research on politics pioneered by the CSDS way back in the 1960s. The first survey-based analysis of an Indian election carried out by the centre was the Kerala Assembly Election Study in 1965. The NES in 1967 was the first survey-based national level study of political opinions and attitudes in India. This was followed by another national level study conducted at the time of the 1971 general elections. During the 1980 Lok Sabha elections, while the CSDS designed the all-India survey, the Indian Institute of Public Opinion (IIPO), Delhi conducted the fieldwork. Although strictly not a part of the NES series, this survey can be used to partly fill the gap in the series. During the 1980s, survey research did not figure prominently on the centre's intellectual agenda, nor was the series taken over by any other institution. This resulted in a long break in the time series data. It was not before the mid-1990s that the CSDS revived the tradition. Some qualitative studies were carried out for the assembly elections held in 1993 and 1994. This was followed by a survey in Bihar during and after the state assembly elections in 1995.

This paved the way for the formation of Lokniti network in December 1995, initially called the Lokchintan group of political scientists and visualized as a one time coming together. The group designed the National Election Study 1996; the study was undertaken and successfully completed by the network. The study was done in three waves – pre-election, mid-campaign and post poll, using the panel design (i e, going back to the same respondents). Additionally, an exit poll was also undertaken with a much larger sample of 17,604. This study was widely reported both in academic circles and in the media. It was the basis for several research publications and is often cited by scholars analyzing Indian politics in general and its electoral politics in particular. At the time of the 1998 Lok Sabha elections, two waves – a pre election and a post-poll survey – were carried out as part of NES 1998. This involved revisiting the panel of respondents sampled for the NES 1996. Yet another general election followed in 1999, and the centre reverted to the earlier practice of conducting only a post-poll survey, as this yielded a data set with longest shelf value. In the NES 1999 the same panel of respondents, as NES 1996 and 1998 were interviewed. Thus, a total of six waves of surveys of a nationally representative sample of the electorate were conducted in a short span of three years. NES 2004 is a product of learning from the experience of NES 1996-99.

A useful way of understanding this evolving tradition is to speak of three generations of NES conducted in India. The first generation was from 1967 to 1971 of which the 1980 study also

formed a part. The NES 1996-99 series could be seen as the second generation. NES 2004 can be seen as the beginning of the third generation of survey research in the CSDS tradition. A quick look at the methodological attributes of the first and the second-generation surveys allows us to put the NES 2004 in perspective and understand what is truly distinctive about it. The first generation of surveys established a tradition of probability sampling, in-depth questionnaires and rigorous fieldwork that has since been a hallmark of the NES series carried out at the CSDS. The very first survey conducted in 1967, in collaboration with the scholars like Samuel Eldersveld, involved in election studies at the University of Michigan, established the basics of the NES tradition in India. A self-weighted national probability sample, representative of all the diversities within the Indian electorate, was drawn on the basis of a multistage stratified random sampling. A total of 55 Lok Sabha constituencies were selected by stratifying these on the basis of party competition types. Within these sampled constituencies, assembly segments and polling station areas were selected by following the probability proportionate to size (PPS) procedure. Finally, respondents were randomly sampled from the electoral rolls of the sampled polling station areas, with strict emphasis on non-substitution.

With minor changes, this sampling frame has remained the defining feature of the NES series. There was one major lacuna though. Women voters were excluded in the NES 1967. This was because of the perceived field difficulties and the belief that there was no significant difference between the opinions of men and women. However, this gap was filled very soon and NES 1971 onwards women too were included in the sample. Though the sample size of the first generation studies appears small today compared to the next generation studies, it is important to remember that the sample was larger when compared to other national studies of its time and was sufficient for the purpose it was designed, namely, to monitor trends and patterns in political behaviour and attitudes at the national level. Besides, the sample was drawn very rigorously and yielded a representative sample at the national level. One of the distinctive attributes of the first generation was a combination of the cross-sectional survey with an elite survey of political opinions and attitudes carried out in 1971. The experiment has not been repeated thereafter. Besides sampling, the first generation of NES also established conventions of the research instrument and fieldwork.

Long survey schedules with more than 250 or even 300 items involving face to face interaction for well over one hour characterized the research instruments of the first generation. The schedules used thereafter have tended to be shorter but have retained the basic orientation of the first generation surveys: election surveys were then and continue to be instruments for understanding a wide range of political subjects, and not just elections. The emphasis was on a wide range of themes of political behaviour, opinions and attitudes, with some questions on enduring values. An extensive range of background variables was used for documenting the social profile of the respondents. The first generation surveys also began the rigorous practice of carefully translating the survey schedule into all the major languages spoken in India. The first generation surveys also signaled a fundamental departure from the prevailing practice of academic surveys in North America and Europe of leaving the execution of the survey to commercial agencies. Given the state of the opinion poll industry and

the rigorous requirements of the NES, the founders of NES series decided not to entrust the fieldwork to any external agency. The survey team working at the CSDS directly took charge of the survey recruitment, training and supervision of the investigators were done by the CSDS faculty. Specially selected and trained investigators under direct supervision of the headquarters conducted the fieldwork. The sample size in NES in 1967 and 1971 allowed it to be directly coordinated by the headquarters in Delhi. The studies of the first generation thus established a CSDS tradition of survey research with many of the features continuing to guide future surveys.

The second generation of NES (1996-1999) built upon this legacy while introducing some new features. The first and the most noticeable change were in the sample size, which was now expanded to more than double that of the first generation surveys. A self-weighted national probability sample was drawn; the expanded size ensured representative sample for major states along with national representation. As in the past, the probability proportionate to size (PPS) procedure was used for sampling parliamentary constituencies and the assembly segments. The second change was used of multi-wave surveys with panel design. NES 1996 itself comprised three waves of polling: a pre-election, mid-campaign and a post-poll survey. Since the two Lok Sabha elections followed in quick succession, it was decided to extend the same panel for the NES 1998 and the NES 1999. The third major change pertained to the polling procedure. The second generation NES started using dummy secret ballots and dummy ballot box for ascertaining the voting preference of the voters. This innovation brought much greater accuracy to estimating vote shares than was the case in the first generation. These methodological changes were combined with a change in the organizational structure of the NES and its funding pattern. Unlike the first generation, when the entire survey was directly supervised from the CSDS in Delhi, now the members of the Lokniti network in their respective states coordinated and supervised the fieldwork for the study. However, the data was processed and analyzed mostly in the national headquarters in Delhi.

With the second generation, the NES moved beyond its dependence on purely academic grants and successfully secured, perhaps for the first time for academic research on politics in India, funds from the media. Some of the leading media publications like *The Hindu*, *India Today*, *Frontline* and *Economist* supported the NES between 1996 and 1999. The media support brought greater visibility to the NES series, while ensuring greater accountability and requiring a very short turnaround time. The NES 2004 marked the beginning of the third generation of CSDS surveys. Though the sample size was increased, the earlier practice of drawing a self-weighted national probability sample was replaced by a probability sample drawn at the state level. The sampling frame reflected the changing reality of politics: a representative sample at the national level was achieved through an aggregation of the probability samples at the level of the states. Accordingly, the sample size was enlarged by nearly three times as compared to the NES of the second generation to allow a representative sample at the level of the smaller states. Better representativeness was sought by reducing the sample size at the primary sampling unit, the polling station area, so as to reduce the cluster effect. In analytical terms, abandoning a self weighted sample meant the use of weightages for national level analysis of the data set. The expansion in the coverage of NES had several corollaries. The number

of languages that the questionnaire was translated into also increased. For the first time, some systematic attention was paid to the issue of 'dialects' of the major languages. For the first time in the NES series, the questionnaire had stated specific questions designed keeping in mind the local political issues so as to help in state-level analysis of the survey data. The organization of NES also began to reflect the expansion in its coverage: decentralized training of investigators, intra-state extension of the Lokniti network and data entry and a limited experiment in data entry and analysis outside the headquarters helped give NES 2004 a truly national character.