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From Bharatiya Jana Sangh to Bharatiya Janata party: A study of evolution and growth of Bharatiya Janata party in contemporary Indian politics

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ABSTRACT

Democracy is one of the most popular form of government that is follow in most of the country of our world in contemporary age because of its flexible nature, it respects political equality of all citizen through right to vote without any type of discrimination. On the other hand, to facilitate voting free and fair form of election is the basic essence of democracy, India which is presently considered as one of the largest democracy of the world follow the multiparty system which allow Multiparty to compete in election to acquire power through constitutional means. This paper going to analyze how BJP evolve as a political party in Indian politics. This paper aims to explain the historical root and its ideological basis and with the passage of time how the party has emerged in so many states of India by replacing their regional party and developing itself as a popular party in the government there by this paper argue in context of one-party dominance system which was earlier coined by Rajani Kothari to show the congress hegemony in the country. This paper basically follow qualitative research approach through existing literature like books, articles, research paperes, media coverage and the descriptive analysis will be applied to show the result by following the data from the election result.

KEYWORDS: *Political Party, Indian Politics, One Party Dominance, BJP*

INTRODUCTION

In the 21st century most of the countries of the world has followed the democratic form of government. As it is one of most popular form of government which respects individual's individuality. It upholds the idea of political equality of all in terms of right to vote.

As democracy prioritize right to vote is the fundamental things of all individual here the question arises who vote to whom and on what basis the voting will be ensure.

Therefore, the political party comes in picture. Political party is the backbone of society it acts as a problem-solving tool by governing the citizens by respecting constitution, on the other hand it addressed the demands

of the people in front of the government as well as check the government monopoly by acting as an opposition.

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If we try to understand the notion of political party which is one of the essential tool for the working of an successful democracy according to the words of Gilchrist a political party is “An organized group of citizens sharing views, acting as a unit to control government”.

As per this definition we can simply understand that a political party is basically a organization of like minded people who are organized on the basis of a common ideology and have one primary aim and it is to contest in election and achieve more and more political power in order to form the government through constitutional mean which is a smooth, stable and peaceful way for power transfer in the current age. One of the famous statologist Maurice Duverger have divided the political party into 4 types on the basis of their organization such as “Branch party” it’s one of the most common type of political party seen in democratic setup, “Cell party” the structure is based on the organization of communist party, “Militia party” this type of party is organized along military lines and finally the “Caucus Party” an elite-based or cadre party.

2.OBJECTIVE

Some of the objective of this paper are

- 2.1** To examine the historical evolution of Bharatiya Jana Sangh and how it has emerged as Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)
- 2.2** To analyse the factor which are responsible to made BJP as a dominant party.
- 2.3** To evaluate how the growth of BJP has revived the one-party dominant system in Indian politics.

3. RESEARCH QUESTION

And on the basis of above research objective this paper critically tries to answer some of the major Research question as like

1. How a Bharatiya Jana Sangh converted to Bharatiya Janata Party(BJP)?
2. What are the factor made Bharatiya Janata Party(BJP) as a dominant party in Indian politics?
3. Whether the one-party dominant system has revived in Indian politics in contemporary time?

4.EVOLUTION OF BHARATIYA JANATA PARTY:

From Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS) to of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)

The growth of presently one of the largest political party BJP can be directly seen and traced from the rise of Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS), which is founded by Dr. Syama Prasad Mukherjee in 21 Oct 1951. Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS) basically develop as a response a reaction against the idea of Nehruvian secularism, as ideologically we basically can witness Bharatiya Jana Sangh was right-of-centrewing nationalist political party which completely rejected the idea of Nehruvian secularism and gave a greater emphasis to the idea of Positive secularism.

However, with the rise of several unavoidable situation in the regime of Indra Gandhi where we can witness the use of national emergency as an tool to safeguard her own government in 1975-1977 era this event ultimately let the suspension civil liberty, press freedom and democratic institutions and there was huge need felt for a united democratic front against authoritarian rule of current governance as a result as per situational demand to provide an alternative to the Indra one party authoritarian rule a grand anti congress alliance was formed where multiple party including Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS), Indian National Congress (Organisation) – Congress (O), Bharatiya Lok Dal (BLD), Socialist Party and so on which ultimately let this massive alliance defeat the Congress and with this for the very first time an non congress government was formed in national level and Morarji Desai became the first non-congress Prime minister of India.

However, with passage of time there was a slow and sharp rise of power politics and internal rivalry within the alliance of Janata party and with this even question like dual membership was also raised to the member of Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS) because of there relation with Rastriya Swayam Sevak (RSS), and the member of Jana Sangh was left with a simple choice Either the people of the Jana Sangh should quit the Janata Party or they must end their relationship with the RSS. Hence, it was seen large number of leaders of Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS) have left the alliance with Janata party on 06 April 1980 and formed Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on the basis of “Panch Nishthas” (Five Commitments) which include Nationalism (Rashtravaad), Democracy, Positive Secularism (Sarva Dharma Sambhava), Gandhian Socialism, Value-based Politics. On the other hand, Atal Bihari Vajpayee was elected as the first founding president of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

5.ONE-PARTY DOMINANCE SYSTEM AND EMERGENCE OF BJP IN INDIAN POLITICS

Since, India's independence, one party dominance has been the characteristic of Indian political system. Although, the coalition politics came at center, however, dominance of one party in several state politics as well as national politics. The emergence of BJP in several states along with national politics highlights the emergence of BJP at the center and states like Odisha, Delhi, Maharashtra, and Bihar. As a theoretical discourse, Rajani Kothari has conceptualized the One-party dominance where INC was dominating in Indian politics from 1950s to 1960s. A similar trend can be seen in Indian Politics since 2014-2024 where Bharatiya Janata Party has been dominating in several states with majority of seats and key portfolio.

6. DATA ANALYSIS

In the following's states of India, BJP's dominance is seen;

1. BJP has secured 78 seats out of 147 seats in 2024 state legislative assembly election of Odisha. It has secured 105 seats out of contested 164 seats in state legislative assembly election of Maharashtra in 2019.
2. BJP has secured 105 seats out of contested 164 seats in state legislative assembly election of Maharashtra in 2019. BJP has secured 132 seats out of contested 149 seats in state legislative assembly election of Maharashtra 2024.
3. It has secured 74 seats out of contested 110 seats in state legislative assembly election of Bihar in 2020. It has secured 89 seats out of contested 101 seats state assembly election of Bihar in 2025.
4. It has secured 8 seats out of contested 67 seats state assembly election of Delhi in 2020. It has secured 48 seats out of contested 68 seats state assembly election of Delhi in 2025.

The reason to take these states as a case study to examine emergence of BJP in Indian politics whereas previously in these states like Odisha and Delhi BJP was invisible in regional politics, however, it has emerged as a dominating party in Indian politics in present times. To examine the trend how the BJP has emerged from merely a competitor to dominant party in Indian politics these above states are taken.

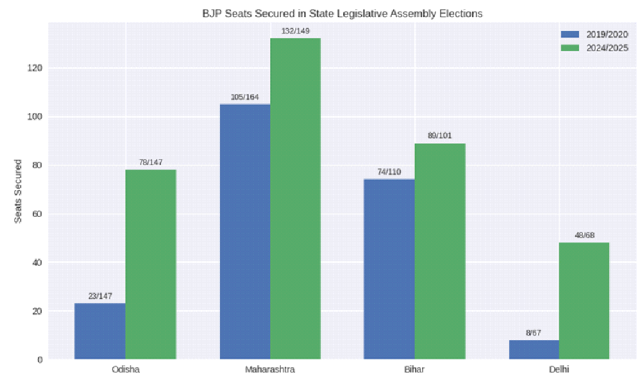


Figure 1: BJP seats secured in State Legislative Elections
Source: Election Commission of India, 2025

7. FACTORS RESPONSIBLE

Several factors are together contributing to One-party dominance in Indian politics for rise BJP like party of consensus, **charismatic leadership** and **women centric welfare policies**.

7.1 CHARISMATIC LEADERSHIP

Charismatic leadership of Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Narendra Modi are contributed in rising of BJP in Indian politics. Under the leadership of Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the Bharatiya Jana Sangh which is previously made its alliance with Janata Dal got a new identity as Bharatiya Janata Party under which we can see multiple members from Bharatiya Jana Sangh left the Janata Party and created a new political party named Bharatiya Janata Party. And it was under his leadership this newly emerged party got its prominent role and emerged as a nationally acceptable political party in Indian politics. On the other hand, we can also trace Vajpayee's visionary leadership in form of multiple initiative that is taken in international level to ensure world peace and growth during his tenure as we can witness to establish peace and mutual growth with Pakistan he have also let the Lahore bus yatra to let more flow of people to people communication which will further act as a symbolic as well as a systematic gesture to promote trust peace understanding among both nation and transform an hostile relation into a peaceful one. we can also trace his realistic leadership as in 1998 India tested its second series of nuclear in Pokhran- II in Pokhran test range Rajasthan under the name of Devi Sakti at the same time in domestic level although because of his dynamic leadership in 1996 general election

Bharatiya Janata Party emerged as the single largest party for the first time making Atal Bihari Vajpayee as the Prime Minister of India. However, this government was short lived as soon after the formation the Atal Bihari Vajpayee's government fall apart in 13 days hence in order to establish a stable government he also formed NDA alliance in 1998 which provided an alternative to the rule of congress in center as well as in state level and as a result again we can witness this alliance have successfully won the 12 Lok Sabha election for which first BJP led coalition government formed in center. However, this government was also fall within 13 months as party like AIADMK withdrawal its support but again in 13th Lok Sabha election NDA once again managed to gain popular support and finally this let the formation of first stable BJP led coalition government from 1999 to 2004 where Atal Bihari Vajpayee became the Prime Minister of India for the 4th time. In continuation of the BJP's charismatic leadership, Shri Narendra Damodar Dash Modi has become MLA for five times and two-time chief minister of Gujarat along with a three-time prime minister of India this show the weightage of his charismatic personality. He won from Maninagar constituency as MLA for three times along with one time from Rajkot II. From a chief minister to become Prime Minister of India this journey showcases the transforming leadership of Narendra Modi from regional politics to national politics landscape and dramatic shift of BJP in Indian politics.

7.2 Women centric welfare policies

In several states women centric welfare policies had played a vital role in enabling BJP to secure major seats in the states. As a result, **Subhadra Yojana** in Odisha played a great role for BJP's victory where the pre-poll promises attracted women voters towards BJP. This welfare scheme provides financial assistance Rs. 10,000 annually to eligible women from aged 21-60. **Ladki Behan Yojna** of Maharashtra provided the monthly financial assistance to its eligible women's voter this also resulted in a huge mass support of BJP in Maharashtra which ultimately led BJP to secure huge victory from a big margin where as in Bihar Mukhyamantri Mahila Rojgar Yojana as part of JEEVIKA Didi a women welfare flagship scheme had promised to provide Rs.

10,000 to its eligible women during pre-poll of Bihar legislative assembly election 2025.

8. KEY FINDINGS:

From the above contest we found that how Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) "BJP" has revived the one-party dominant system in Indian politics.

8.1 Replaced Regional Party:

In 2024 Odisha election, shows how BJP gained the power to form the government in the state by replacing Biju Janata Dal which considered one of the prominent regional political party of the state.

At the same time the Bihar election shows BJP got higher seats with compare to RJD.

This shows how BJP occupies a central position in many of the state by removing its regional parties there by it directly led to the revival of one-party dominant system.

8.2 Ideological Orientations:

BJP by introducing the inclusive idea of "Hindutva" BJP have successfully manage to avoid the fragmentation of Indian society on the basis of caste as a result people have moved beyond from their societal barriers such as caste, class and collectively engage them with the identity of Hindu. This further let BJP to gain mass support which ultimately revive the idea of one-party dominant system.

8.3 Populist Policy Agenda.

The welfare flagship scheme of BJP has attracted the numbers of population. Consequently, in several states schemes such as women centric policies as like Subhadra in Odisha, Ladki Behen in Maharashtra and Jeevika Didi in Bihar led to the successful victory of BJP with huge margin.

9. CONCLUSION

As Indian politics experience one party dominant system since its independent but the emergence of coalition politics not able to remove the one-party dominance in its political spectrum rather from 2014 the NDA government has been increasing the popularity of BJP there by strengthening the one-party dominant system as earlier propounded by Rajni Kothari. However, the term used by Kothari is not same in today's one-party dominant system in Indian politics due to the absence of party of pressure within BJP.

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