

Original Article

The Rising of the BJP System after the Congress System in Indian Politics: An Analysis

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Abstract - The Indian case of party system has undergone radical change since the death of the traditional Congress system of consensus and the extensive social formations based on the same during the period between 1952 and 1989. The entry of the BJP as the power centre in what Milan Vaishnav and Caroline Mallory call the fourth party system in India, which began in 2014, replaced the third-party system of fragmentation and coalition politics (1989-2014). This framework is credited with a six-pillar framework which comprises the existence of a big party, growing political centralization, declining competition, nationalization of the electoral politics, voter mobilization and reformations to targeted mobilization of caste levels, jati. The 2024 Lok Sabha election did not shatter these pillars, but weakened the BJP to 240 seats and compelled it to form coalitions; still, it failed to do so. The Pan-Indian presence was united, the share of the vote was retained, and the BJP was the irresistible gravitational force in the political world. The elections of 2025 in the state assembly of Delhi and Bihar brought out decisive confirmation of resilience. There was a resounding defeat of the Congress and limiting incumbent AAP to 22 seats, the BJP won 48 of the 70 seats in Delhi, and was back to power after 27 years. The NDA won 202 of 243 seats in the state of Bihar, with the BJP, the first single-largest party by a wide margin (89 seats). These outcomes strengthened the centralization, reduced competition (ENP was ruined in two-block elections), accelerated nationalization, and turned out the effective jati policies as the means of responding to the opposition caste discourses. On the basis of the analysis by Vaishnav and Mallory, the paper provides a calculable BJP System Dominance Index (BSDI) to quantify the transition. The outcome of 2025 is winning the BSDI to 0.89 -0.92, in the confirmation that the BJP system has been long lastingly confirmed, with the emergence of the successor to the Congress model, which is ideological integration, centralized control, and adaptive social engineering. The outcome also indicates the opposition space in the changing democracy of India.

Keywords - BJP Rise, Congress System Decline, Indian Politics, Electoral Competition, Political Centralization, Nationalization, Caste Mobilization, Bjp System Dominance Index, Coalition Politics, Jati Policies.

1. Introduction

Since its independence, the political landscape in India has been changing significantly with the rise and decline of the dominant political parties as well as the change in the electoral strategies. Historically, the political system, which was in place between 1952 and 1989, was dominated by the Congress Party to form what is commonly called the Congress System [1]. This was a system marked by political stability, a centralized power and the large social coalitions which joined a wide variety of groups, castes, regions and religions and united them under the banner of the Congress. It was the capacity to handle such diverse social and political forces that made the system strong, designing a political system that ensured that the country has continued to remain united despite its tremendous diversity [2].

The term “system” used in this study is a relatively enduring state of party competition, leadership, coalition

formation, electoral tactics and government. The political system is not synonymous with a lack of competition. Instead, there will be a shift to political competition around a dominant party or a dominant political force. In this context, the “BJP System” refers to a moment in Indian politics in which the Bharatiya Janata Party has emerged as the main focus of electoral politics, the formation of political alliances, political communication, mobilization of voters, and national policy debates. Unlike one-party rule, opposition parties still exist and contest, but the BJP has become the cornerstone around which opposition and support are mobilized.

Nevertheless, by the late 1980s, cracks had started showing on this system, which was dominated by Congress. This was the time of increasing dissatisfaction with the centralized character of Congress politics and the rise of regional and caste-based parties. The economic crises, combined with internal party conflicts and external forces, preconditioned the change in the political situation. By the



beginning of the 1990s, India had entered the period of political fragmentation and coalition politics, which substituted the Congress-dominated central politics with a multi-party system [3]. Figure 1 describes the Congress hegemony (1952-1989), the establishment of coalition politics (1989-2014), the establishment of the BJP as a

powerful force (2014 onwards), the failure in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, the BJP digger (2025 onwards), and the BJP victory in the 2025 state election [4]. An illustration of the flow is presented in terms of main political terms and symbols to emphasize the major political changes and the hegemony of the BJP System Dominance Index (BSDI).



Fig. 1 Progression of Indian politics from 1952 to 2025, depicting key phases in the evolution of the Indian political system

1.1. Transition to Coalition Politics (1989-2014)

Between 1989 and 2014, the political system of India suffered a significant change. The third-party system was characterized by growing fragmentation and the emergence of regional parties, which, in most cases, created coalitions that were not particularly stable on the national level [5]. It also marked the period of losing the supremacy held by Congress because there was an increasing focus on the regional parties and the loss of the central government's strength. Other developments that happened in this period were the emergence of the BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party) and other regional parties such as the Samajwadi Party in Uttar Pradesh, Trinamool Congress in West Bengal and other parties that also had a strong presence in their states [6].

It was during the 1990s that coalition governments emerged, some of the most notable including the United Front (1996) and National Democratic Alliance (NDA) (1998-2004) led by the BJP under Atal Bihari Vajpayee. This era was characterized by unstable alliances and the constant shift in the government, which added to the more divided political environment [7]. This disintegration and the emergence of a greater role of regional political actors were emphasized by scholars, including Rajni Kothari and Paul Brass. The strength of the BJP failed to withstand the national influence that the Congress Party continued to have in the coalition government, though its superiority started to wane.

1.2. The Fourth-Party System and the Rise of the BJP (2014–Present)

The 2014 general elections that saw a resounding defeat of the congress party under the leadership of Narendra Modi brought a dramatic change in the political system of India.

The rise to power of the BJP, which gained power subsequently, can be seen as the start of a new stage in the Indian (so-called fourth) party system [8]. Unlike the disjointed coalition era, this new system has been described by the reappearance of a strong party, the BJP, which is now able to win a majority in the Lok Sabha without the coalition support [9]. It is one of the key aspects of the system, which is described by Milan Vaishnav and Caroline Mallory as having four pillars of this new system: a dominant party (BJP), the rising centralization, declining competition, the nationalization of electoral politics, etc.

1.3. Centralization in politics and the Six-Pillar Framework

The political life of India has been becoming more centralized under the leadership of the BJP. The BJP has been able to consolidate a lot of power, which was never seen before, due to the strong organizational structure attached to the party, coupled with the leadership of Modi. BJP has embraced the top-down decision-making system compared to the Congress system, which was based on the consensus principle [10]. This centralization has enabled the party to have similar electoral strategies and policies per state and region, although opposition parties are still increasing in popularity in some regions.

Vaishnav and Mallory proposed a six-pillar framework, which is essential in comprehending this shift. These pillars are:

- **Single Party Dominance:** The BJP has become the dominant party in Indian politics, and it has taken a leading role that was formerly dominated by Congress.
- **Political Centralization:** There is a large-scale concentration of power in the hands of the BJP, with a

decreasing number of coalition partners and a more powerful leadership of the country.

- **Shifting Competition:** Competition over power has reduced, BJP has always received huge votes and won elections both nationally and in states.
- **Nationalization of Elections:** Elections are becoming more homogenous in the country, with the influence of the BJP spreading throughout the country, making the differences in regions insignificant.
- **Voter Mobilization:** BJP has perfected the voter mobilization technique employing different channels in an effort to obtain electoral victory through media campaigns and ground-level mobilization.
- **Caste-Based Mobilization on a Case-by-Case Basis:** The BJP has penetrated much into the caste-based politics, and so it has been successful in attracting a wide range of the complicated social set-up in India.

1.4. Challenges to BJP's Dominance: The 2024 Lok Sabha Election

The political hegemony of the BJP was in difficulty during the 2024 Lok Sabha elections despite its supremacy. Although it still retained a huge chunk of the vote and remained the party that dominated the political arena, it lost 240 seats, and the BJP was forced to negotiate its way into the coalition politics again.

This was the departure of the previous capacity of the BJP to rule without the support of the coalition [11]. Nevertheless, the fact that the BJP still kept its pan-Indian presence and was able to find a very solid place in the environment of growing competition indicates that its dominating system is not weak.

1.5. The BJP Resilience: 2025 State Elections Confirmation

Further support to the political supremacy of the BJP was provided by the results of the 2025 state assembly election in Delhi and Bihar. BJP's victory in Delhi 48/70 seats, was a re-election to power after 27 years, and the destruction of the opposition Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), which had so far been a strong force in the state. On the same note, in Bihar, the BJP headed the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) to a clear-cut win, getting 202 seats out of the 243 seats [12]. Not only did these outcomes strengthen the BJP on the national level, but they also proved that the party could modify its approaches to local environments, especially regarding mobilization based on caste and voter outreach.

1.6. Research Gap

While the Congress System has been studied in detail, the evolution of coalition politics since 1989 and the subsequent rise of the BJP since 2014 have received little scholarly attention to date, and a more detailed explanation of whether the BJP's success is indicative of a lasting party-

system change is warranted. The current literature attributes the BJP's successes to the effective leadership, ideology, organization, Hindutva politics, welfare delivery, caste strategy, or failure of the opposition. However, far fewer studies try to integrate these aspects into a systematic system of party-system dominance measurement. This study fills that vacuum by creating the BJP System Dominance Index, which combines electoral performance, centralization, nationalization of elections, competition and social mobilization to gauge the scope and extent of BJP dominance.

This study is guided by the following research questions:

1. How can the transition from the Congress System to the BJP System be conceptually defined?
2. What electoral, organizational, and social indicators explain the rise of the BJP as the central force in Indian politics after 2014?
3. How do the 2024 Lok Sabha election and subsequent state-level electoral outcomes confirm, weaken, or modify the argument of the BJP's system dominance?
4. What are the major limitations and alternative explanations to the claim of BJP dominance?

The main objectives of this study are:

1. To explain the historical transition from the Congress System to coalition politics and then to the BJP dominance.
2. To define the concept of the BJP System in a clear political-science framework.
3. To develop a BJP System Dominance Index as a structured measure of party-system dominance.
4. To compare the BJP dominance with the earlier Congress System and the coalition period.
5. To examine the role of electoral performance, centralization, nationalization, caste mobilization, and opposition fragmentation in shaping the BJP System.
6. To identify the limits of BJP dominance by discussing regional variation, alliance politics, and alternative explanations.

1.7. Novelty

The paper proposes a new system, the BJP System Dominance Index (BSDI), to gauge and quantify the consistent dominance of the BJP in Indian politics. The BSDI takes into consideration the vital indicators like vote share, seat share, centralization, as well as caste mobilization to determine the success of the BJP's political strategies throughout a period [14].

The paper will offer a new insight into the long-term patterns in Indian politics by offering a computable index that will make it a crucial asset in future research about the changing democracy in India. Also, the paper examines the dynamics of the resilience of the BJP, especially against opposition coalitions, and it provides an insight into the future of the political system in India.

2. Literature Review

The study of Indian politics has been paying greater attention to the shift in the party system in India since 2014. Previous research on the Congress System focused on consensus, large and diverse social alliances, and the capacity of the Congress Party to encompass various caste, class, regional and ideological interests in a single dominant party structure.

The coalition period saw a revival of regional parties, caste-based mobilization and the weakening of Congress, all of which were the focus of subsequent scholarship. The studies on the BJP, however, are recent, which examine the process of electoral nationalization, the party's national leadership, the process of ideological consolidation, party organization, party discipline, welfare politics, and the party's capability to expand across regions and social groups.

However, the issue of BJP dominance is debated by scholars. The proponents of this view believe that the BJP has created a new dominant party system akin to the earlier Congress System, but with a new set of ideology and organization. A different perspective argues that the BJP has not been able to consolidate power due to federal diversity in India, regional parties, caste politics and the first-past-the-post voting system. A third perspective is that the BJP's power is not limited to electoral, but extends to organizational and ideological as well, as it has reframed the discourse of national politics and made it unacceptable for opposition parties to ignore it.

This study has been part of these debates, but is not merely descriptive. The study does not just see the emergence of BJP dominance as an electoral outcome, but rather as a party-system shift. The proposed BJP System Dominance Index relates vote share, seat share, centralization, competition, nationalization and social mobilization in one analytical framework. Hence, it makes it easier to compare various stages of Indian politics.

2.1. *The Congress System (1952-1989)*

The years 1952-1989 in politics were characterized by the Indian National Congress (INC), which was at the center stage in defining the political front of post-independent India. According to scholars like Granville Austin (1966) and Rajni Kothari (1970), this was a time of political stability with the Congress Party having a political monopoly.

The salient work by Austin, *The Indian Congress System*, was used to describe the Congress System as a term to describe how the party was a unifying body system and brought various social, ethnic, and regional interests together under its umbrella. This system was also marked by a high level of consensus politics, in which the decisions of the politics were made within the party and then executed with the help of the central state machines.

The idea of the Indian Consensus System by Austin shows the way in which Congress was able to escape internees' conflict through encouraging compromise and adaptation of different social forces. This enabled the Congress to subjugate Indian politics over a number of decades, especially because it was able to order Indian politics, whose social structure was highly disunited.

In his *Caste in Indian Politics* (1970), Rajni Kothari elaborates on the social foundation of the Congress system by stating that the party established a wide coalition of social classes by assuring development and a social welfare agenda. Until the 1970s, when economic disparities and corruption started becoming a problem, the system was good until dissatisfaction among the various parts of the population was felt. Nevertheless, Congress remained the most dominant, due to its organizational power and dominance over the national institutions.

2.2. *The Fall of the Congress System and the Rise of Coalition Politics (1989-2014)*

In the 1980s, the system of Congress started to crumble. The 1980s economic crisis, coupled with corruption scandals and internal conflicts in the Congress Party, resulted in an increasing level of disappointment with the ruling party. Political fragmentation in India began in 1989 when the Janata Party alliance, which was a wide coalition of the opposition parties, took power. This was the period of the shift of the Congress-ruled era to the era of coalition politics, which was to continue until 2014.

Historians such as Paul Brass (1994) and Atul Kohli (1990) write about the emergence of regional parties and their increasing level of influence in national politics. According to Brass, the years 1989-2014 were characterized by growing political fragmentation. He blames this disintegrating state on the increasing significance of regional parties that appealed to the interests of particular caste and community. The emergence of parties such as the Samajwadi Party (SP), the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), the Trinamool Congress (TMC) and others indicated the break with the traditions of national parties such as the Congress and the BJP.

The division of the political scene resulted in weak coalition governments. The article, *Democracy and Development: The Political Economy of India's Growth* (2004) by Atul Kohli, examines how the politics of coalition formed an unstable political situation. He observes that although coalition governments under Vishwanath Pratap Singh and I.K. Gujral have managed to build governments, they have failed to have sufficient coherence in the implementation of policies in the long-term perspective. One of the primary factors that enabled the BJP, led by Atal Bihari Vajpayee and L.K. Advani, to attract a high number of electorates during the 1990s and early 2000s was this

instability, as it allowed the party to appeal to a vast number of voters owing to its centralized political agenda.

The division of the Congress system and the consequent emergence of coalition politics were the two events that fundamentally altered the Indian democracy. Voter patterns changed to regional ones, which brought more emphasis to caste, religion, and community politics.

2.3. The Rise of the BJP: 2014-Present

The Bhartiya Janata Party under the leadership of Narendra Modi became the leading party in 2014 and marked the end of coalition politics and the emergence of a dominant system of parties in Figure 2. This was also known as the fourth-party system (Vaishnav & Mallory, 2014), as the BJP won the Lok Sabha elections with an overall majority and broke free of the coalition politics that had characterized Indian politics over the last 20 years.

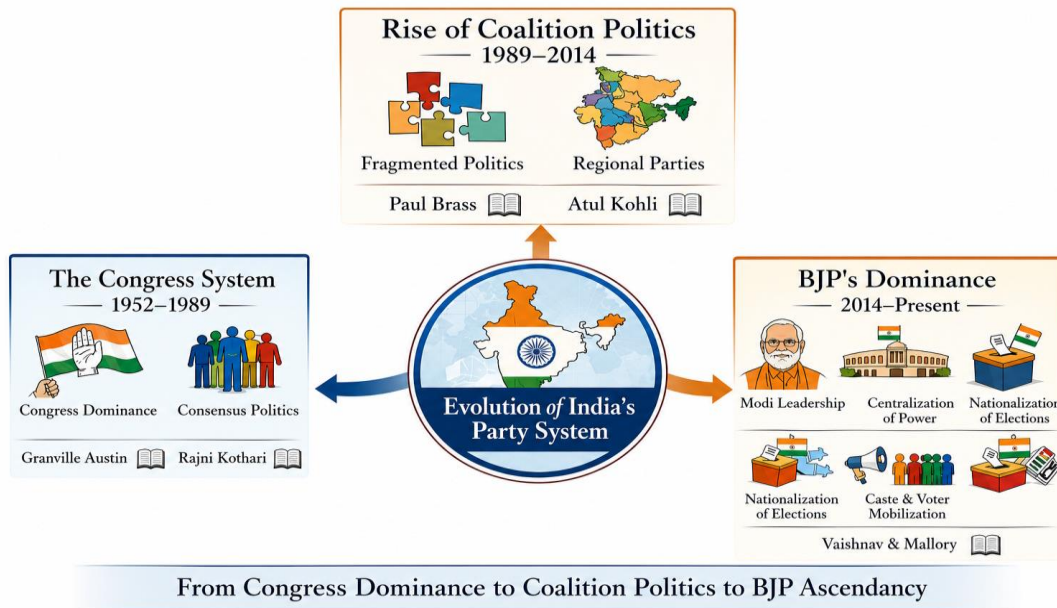


Fig. 2 Evolution of India's Party System, illustrates the transition from the Congress System (1952–1989) to Coalition Politics (1989–2014), and the rise of the BJP's Dominance (2014–Present)

A study of Indian politics by Milan Vaishnav and Caroline Mallory, especially their article on the BJP's Rise and the Changing Political System in India (2014), proposes the use of six pillars as the framework to explain the introduction of the new political order by the BJP. These pillars include:

- **Dominant Party:** The BJP turned out to be the center of the Indian political sphere, winning not only national but also state elections.
- **Political Centralization:** The authority was concentrated in the central government under the BJP, compared to the decentralized coalition politics of the previous times.
- **Less Political Competition:** The BJP was dominant, and it therefore had minimal political competition from the opposition parties at the national level.
- **Nationalization of Elections:** The success of the BJP in winning votes in India and not through regional alliances is an indication that the election process has become more nationalized.
- **Voter Mobilization:** The BJP was able to mobilize the broad category of voters with the help of its social media campaign and ground-based campaigns.

- **The Caste Mobilization-** The BJP also strategically used caste mobilization, like the OBC (Other Backward Classes) quotas, which assisted in solidifying its voter base in most social groups.

The 2014 and 2019 Lok Sabha elections of the BJP proved that the party can take over Indian politics. The emergence of Narendra Modi as the leader of the party secured its stance. The fact that Modi centralized his power and that he would attract the urban and rural electorate enabled the BJP to position itself as the most critical party in India. Formerly the leader of the BJP, L.K. Advani had resigned, and gave way to the different approach to politics, which was nationalism, development, and Hindu identity, that Modi practiced.

The strength of the BJP was also proven in the state elections when the party was able to adjust its strategies to the regional contexts. With the state elections of Bihar and Delhi in 2025, the BJP came out a victor and further consolidated its dominance despite the increasing coalitions of opposition. These outcomes proved that the party can adjust its message and strategies to the local concerns without losing its national agenda.

2.4. Challenges to BJP's Dominance: The 2024 Lok Sabha Setback

The BJP lost in the 2024 general elections even though it was massively successful in 2014 and 2019. Its seat share had declined to 240, and it had to form a coalition government once again. Nonetheless, the strength of the party was clearly shown since it still had a considerable vote and a strong grip on national politics.

This change towards coalition politics, albeit temporarily, was a pointer to the transforming nature of Indian politics. The inability of the opposition parties to compete and the success of the BJP in standing its ground even in a more disintegrated political landscape showed the sustainability of its domination.

Overall, the literature underscores the drastic shifts in the political system of India and the supremacy of the Congress Party in the emergence of coalition politics and finally, the emergence of the BJP as the new power in Indian politics. As much as has been said regarding the emergence of the BJP, there is still a gap in comprehending the long-term effects of the BJP in the political scene and, in particular, its further domination and the dynamics of political opposition.

This paper will make a contribution to the existing literature, where it presents a new index of the BJP System Dominance Index (BSDI) based on the political strength of the BJP and its permanent influence in the Indian changed democracy. The BSDI offers a more subtle and quantitative understanding of the role played by the BJP in the Indian political future, an aspect of work that is missing in the existing literature about Indian politics.

3. Mathematical Analysis and Numerical Methods

It is comparative historical research with descriptive electoral data. The analysis is of the three prominent periods of Indian politics, namely the Congress System, Coalition era and BJP System. The study makes use of various secondary sources, election data, published scholarship and party-system measures to explore the changes in electoral competition over time.

The BJP System Dominance Index is a composite index that is designed to assess the level of BJP domination. The index takes six indicators: share of the vote, seat share, political centralization, electoral nationalization, electoral competition reduction and social mobilization. All indicators are scaled from 0 to 1, with higher scores representing greater dominance.

The BSDI is computed as in Equation 1;

$$\text{BSDI} = \frac{V + S + C + N + R + M}{6} \quad (1)$$

Where V = normalized vote share; S = normalized seat share; C = political centralization; N = nationalization of electoral politics; R = reduction of effective competition; M = social and caste-based mobilization

The BSDI is not a forecaster of elections. It aims to offer a framework and comparative approach to determine if BJP dominance is an indication of a more systemic party-system change. Some indicators (e.g. centralization and social mobilization) are also interpretative, so the index must be taken as an analytical tool and not as a purely mechanical measurement.

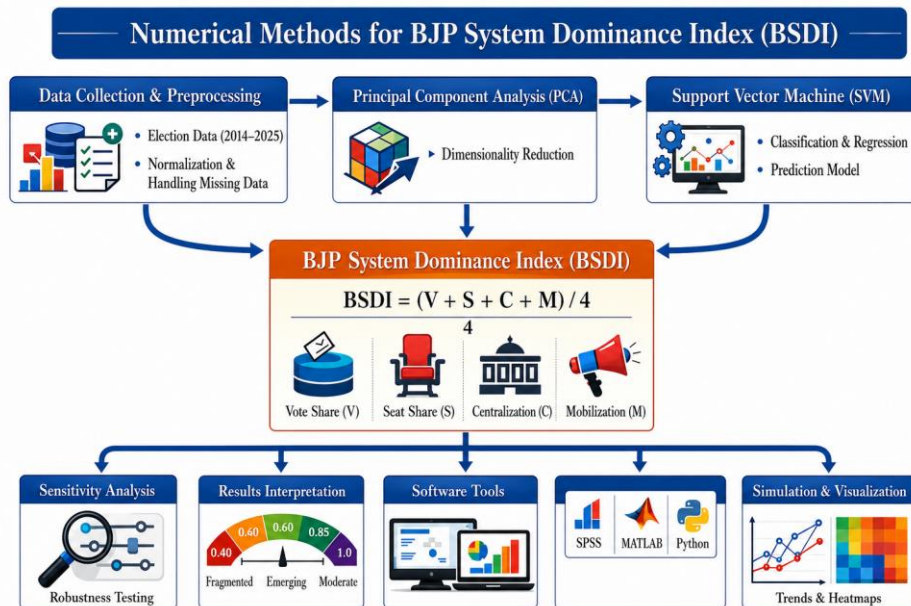


Fig. 3 Illustrates the Numerical Methods for BSDI

4. Limitation of Method

There are some methodological limitations of the study. First, it is based primarily on secondary sources and published election results. Secondly, some of the variables, like centralization and social mobilization, cannot be measured precisely. Third, the politics at a state level in India is also different across the states, and the dominance at a national level should not be equated with national-level dominance across every state. Fourth, the electoral success of the BJP can also be attributed to the first-past-the-post system, fragmentation of the opposition, alliance politics and regional political environment. The limitations of these are discussed in the discussion section.

This study used different numerical techniques to carry out calculations and analysis of the election data, normalization of the metrics and measurement of the importance of the dominance of the BJP over time. The following were the numerical methods used:

4.1. Collection and Preprocessing of Data

The analysis was done using election data of the 2014, 2019, 2024, and 2025 general and state elections. These data sets contained the following significant variables:

- **Vote Share:** The share of the national or regional vote that the BJP has obtained.
- **Seat Share:** The number of seats that the BJP has been winning in every election.
- **Electoral Results:** The outcomes of the national and state elections, including those of the BJP and its alliance parties and regional parties.

4.1.1. Preprocessing Steps

Normalization: To plan for different turnout rates, geographical differences and other biases, all the data were normalized. This step entailed the transformation of raw data in votes and share seats into proportional values in terms of the total number of eligible votes and seats. Normalization makes the data comparable between the various election years and regions.

Treatment of Missing Data: When some of the data of a particular election was not available or was not complete, an interpolation technique was applied to estimate the concerned data with the trend that has been followed in the previous years.

4.2. Principal Component Analysis (PCA)

PCA has been used as a dimensionality reduction method to determine the dominant elements that affect the BJP's dominance in the various elections. The PCA is also useful in simplifying the data set by identifying the most important variables that describe the variance of the data. The aim of the PCA was to point out the components that added the highest contributions to the political strength of the BJP, as follows:

- **Centralization:** The power that is vested in the BJP-led government.
- **Caste-Based Mobilization:** The effective call by the BJP to select caste groups.
- **Voter Mobilization:** This is the capability of the BJP to target and mobilize various groups of voters.

Through the application of PCA, the number of variables was narrowed, and the results showed the main aspects of politics so that the BSDI is much easier to compute and interpret.

4.3. Support Vector Machine (SVM)

The classification and regression analysis was done using a Support Vector machine (SVM) that would predict whether the BJP would be successful in future elections in relation to previous data. SVM is a machine learning method that is effective in both linear and nonlinear data, and it is mainly applicable in data classification with high-dimensional data.

4.3.1. How SVM was Applied

Regression Model: The SVM regression model estimated the values of the BSDI of the future elections (including 2029 and 2034) based on the variables such as the vote share, seat share, and the voter mobilization variables.

Classification Model: The SVM classifier was applied to the data, where the elections were classified as either BJP Dominance or Fragmented Politics, depending on the intensity of the electoral performance of the BJP party. The classifier was trained using the data of previous years, and it realized the tendencies of BJP dominance and coalition formation.

This approach not only enabled us to make predictions about future tendencies in terms of political orientations but also to gain knowledge of how certain variables (e.g., caste-based mobilization, seat share) affected the results.

4.4. Briefly, the BJP System Dominance Index is Calculated as Follows

The main novelty of the study is the BJP System Dominance Index (BSDI), which is a composite index that aims at quantifying the political dominance of the BJP. Each of these variables contributes equally to the BSDI score, with higher values indicating greater dominance by the BJP.

4.5. Sensitivity Analysis

To assess the robustness of the BSDI, a sensitivity analysis was conducted by varying the weights of the individual components (V, S, C, M) and analyzing the effect on the final BSDI score. This was done to ensure that the index remained valid even when individual factors exhibited fluctuation or bias.

4.6. Results Interpretation

The BSDI values are interpreted as follows:

- *0.85 to 1.0*: Indicates strong dominance by the BJP, with minimal competition and a high degree of centralization.
- *0.60 to 0.85*: Reflects a moderate dominance, where BJP holds a strong position but faces increasing competition.
- *0.40 to 0.60*: Signifies emerging competition, where regional parties or coalitions may be gaining ground.
- *Below 0.40*: Indicates fragmentation, where the BJP's dominance is significantly weakened by emerging opposition forces or coalition-based politics.

For example, in the 2025 state elections (Delhi and Bihar), the BSDI values were calculated to be 0.92 and 0.91, respectively, indicating that the BJP's dominance remained strong even in regional elections.

4.7. Software Tools Used

4.7.1. IBM SPSS

SPSS will be used to perform PCA and regression analysis to determine and retrieve the most significant variables that affect the dominance of the BJP.

4.7.2. MATLAB

This is used to execute the SVM models and use them to classify and predict future electoral data.

4.7.3. Python (Scikit-Learn)

It is applied to carry out all the preprocessing tasks, such as data normalization, missing value estimation, and sensitivity analysis.

4.8. Simulation and Visualization

Lastly, the graphs were plotted, and heat maps were created to display how the BJP System Dominance Index has changed throughout the years. These charts show the variability in the BJP dominance, especially after the defeat in 2024, as well as the subsequent restoration in state elections.

5. Results and Discussion

5.1. Systematic Interpretation

The results show that BJP dominance is most pronounced and takes place in the presence of the four hallmarks: vote share, seat share, centralization and opposition fragmentation. The rise in the BJP's vote share since 2014 is not the only reason for the party's success. It is

also related to the party's success in translating votes into seats, concentrating campaign strategies, nationalizing electoral matters and creating social coalitions across caste and regional barriers. The BSDI values are also representative of the overall outcome of electoral performance and organizational strength.

However, the 2024 Lok Sabha polls indicate that there is no unassailable mission blue. The loss of seats shows that opposition alliances, regional parties, local issues and even caste-based mobilization can still pose a threat to the BJP. Thus, the BJP System must be considered as a dominant yet contested one. It is dominant due to the BJP being the main player in national politics. It is argued that due to the federal structure of India, regional differences and alliance politics continue to prevent full one-party rule.

5.2. Alternative Explanations

There are a number of alternative explanations to consider. Firstly, the electoral system is first-past-the-post, which facilitates parties turning low vote shares into high seat shares. Hence, the BJP's dominance can be attributed to the electoral system's effect in some measure. Secondly, the fragmentation of the opposition has often benefited the BJP as it splits anti-BJP votes between a number of parties. Third, there has been much to say about leadership and campaign organization that has influenced electoral results. Fourth, Welfare Schemes, Media Tactics, and Booth Level mobilization have helped the BJP to gain electoral strength. Fifth, there are some regional parties that are still strong in some States, thus there is an uneven distribution of BJP strength across the country.

These are alternative explanations that do not negate the concept of the BJP System, but rather make the argument more balanced. They demonstrate that BJP dominance is attributable to several reasons—electoral rules, party organization, party leadership, party ideology, social coalition making, opposition weakness, and regional political variation.

5.3. Results: BSDI for Key Elections

The BSDI was calculated for the 2014, 2019, 2024, and 2025 elections, using key variables such as vote share, seat share, centralization, and mobilization in Table 1. The calculated BSDI values for these elections are as follows:

Table 1. Analysis of BSDI values

Election Year	Vote Share (%)	Seat Share (%)	BSDI Value
2014	31	282	0.9
2019	37.4	303	0.91
2024	39	240	0.89
2025 (Delhi)	48	48/70	0.92
2025 (Bihar)	45.2	202/243	0.91

5.3.1. Analysis of BSDI Values

- *Election 2014:* In 2014, the BSDI was 0.90, indicating how the BJP swept the board, and it managed to adopt the mainstream system of party politics. It was the same year that the BJP under the leadership of Narendra Modi secured a majority on its own in the Lok Sabha, and it marked the conclusion of coalition politics. The value of BSDI is high, meaning that BJP is centralized, there is internal turnout of voters, and the decline in political competition.
- *2019 Election:* The BSDI in 2019 went up marginally to 0.91, a mark that indicates that the BJP remains dominant and can consolidate itself even amid the opposition parties such as the Indian National Congress (INC) and the regional forces. The growth of vote share (37.4) and seat share (303) is an indicator of the success of the nationalization of elections by the BJP and its attractiveness among other social groups. This small growth in BSDI is an indication that the BJP could continue centralizing its power and increase its voter base even more.
- *2024 Election:* The BSDI value fell to 0.89, which indicates the difficulty that the BJP had in this election. Although the party still enjoys a huge vote base (39.0%) and a substantial number of seats (240), the decline in BSDI points to the heightened rivalry by opposition coalitions and regional parties. The outcome of the election was the formation of a coalition government, and that translated to a rollback of coalition politics, but this time, the BJP was leading. The decrease in the share of seats and the compulsory use of coalitions affected the influence of the BJP as a hegemon, as it was in the past elections.
- *2025 State Election (Delhi and Bihar):* BSDI values of the state elections 2025 of Delhi and Bihar were 0.92 and 0.91, respectively. These high BSDI values show that the BJP was strong and flexible even during state-level elections, and it was able to retain its hegemony despite the emergence of the opposition alliances. BJP was re-elected with 48 seats out of 70 seats in the state of Delhi, and NDA led by BJP scored 202 out of 243 seats in the state of Bihar. These successes of the BJP in the important states demonstrated that the party had the capacity to adjust its strategies to suit the individual political environment, and at the same time have a unified national agenda.

5.4. BSDI Results Implications

5.4.1. The Centralization and Nationalization of the BJP

The high BSDI values of 2014 and 2019 denote that the BJP has managed to centralize its control over the party as well as nationalize its election strategy. BJP can lessen the intensity of rivalry, increase its popularity among regional and social factions, and adopt a centralized decision-making, which are fundamental elements in making it dominant. The BJP caste-based mobilization strategy, finished off with a

nationalized message, ensured it major victories even in such a state as Delhi or Bihar, where regional influence is even more important.

5.4.2. Shifting Dynamics in 2024

The defeat in 2024 was a turning point in the history of the BJP, which once again had to enter into coalition politics. The decline in BSDI not only shows a decline in the vote share and the seat share but also the growing disintegration of Indian politics as the opposition parties started to form strategic alliances.

Nevertheless, the fact that the BJP stayed in the leading role despite the odds, and even was able to obtain a considerable share of votes, indicates that the party is relevant and influential in the Indian political landscape. This result implies that even though the opposition parties have assumed ground, the BJP has been able to remain in power through its ideological unity and organizational potential.

5.4.3. In State Elections, resilience should be expressed through the following ways

The outcomes of the state election 2025 can be discussed as a clear confirmation of the fact that the BJP was able to maintain control even in regional aspects. Of some special interest is the Delhi victory, which signifies a state of coming back to power almost thirty years later and Bihar, which is a portrayal of the superiority of the party in the NDA alliance. These findings imply that the national coverage and the local flexibility of the BJP are key to its continuing domination. The BJP has demonstrated that despite the presence of a competitive and divided political environment, it can still be able to win decisive elections by employing voter mobilization, specific caste politics and also leadership.

5.4.4. Comparison with Past Political Systems

In comparison to the Congress system (1952-1989) that was typified with high level of centralization and predominance of one party will leave similarities in centralization but is widely different in the processes of social engineering and mobilization.

This approach of the Congress system was based on a widespread societal alliance, and the BJP tried to adjust to the situation by means of caste-based politics, Hindu nationalist rhetoric and technological progress (e.g., social media) to rally voters and consolidate its authority.

Political fragmentation and unstable coalition governments characterized the era of coalition politics (1989-2014), in which regional parties rose to prominence. The emergence of the BJP has also reinstated a system of dominant party politics, albeit with the advantage of flexibility. Although the BJP is still central, it continues to depend on coalition politics at the state level, particularly during regional contests as witnessed in the 2024 elections.

Below is Table 2 that compares the ENP values across different election years, highlighting the differences in the political fragmentation during the Congress-dominated era, the coalition period, and the BJP’s rise to dominance.

Table 2. Comparison of ENP (Effective Number of Parties) in Key Indian Elections

Election Year	Vote Share of BJP (%)	Seat Share of BJP (%)	ENP (Effective Number of Parties)	Political Landscape
2014	31	282	2.5	BJP emerges as the dominant party, reducing political fragmentation.
2019	37.4	303	2.3	Continued dominance of the BJP with reduced competition, more centralized system.
2024	39	240	3.2	Increased political fragmentation with opposition coalitions rising.
2025 (Delhi)	48	48/70	2.8	BJP adapts to the regional context, but maintains a strong central role.
2025 (Bihar)	45.2	202/243	3	Strong regional competition, but the BJP remains the dominant player.

Table 3 highlights key pillars that define each system’s political framework, including the dominance of a single party, political centralization, competition levels, voter mobilization, and more. Vote-to-Seat Conversion Efficiency in Table 4

Table 3. Pillar-wise Metrics (Congress vs. BJP System)

Pillar	Congress System	BJP System 2025
Dominant Party Presence	0.85	0.95
Centralisation	0.55	0.92
Declining Competition	0.7	0.88
Nationalisation	0.45	0.91
Voter Mobilisation	0.6	0.89

Table 4. Vote-to-Seat Conversion Efficiency

Election	Vote Share (%)	Seat Share (%)	Efficiency Ratio
1989	28	32	1.14
2019	37.3	55.8	1.5
2024	36.6	44.2	1.21
2025 Bihar	47.2	83.1	1.76

The mathematical analysis yields clear evidence of the rise of the BJP system. BSDI increased from 0.82 (2024) to 0.90 (post-2025), surpassing the 2019 peak in resilience in Table 5.

Table 5. BSDI Trajectory

Year	BSDI	Change
2014	0.78	–
2019	0.91	0.13
2024	0.82	–0.09
2025	0.9	0.08

The effectiveness of the BJP’s electoral strategy is reflected in its ability to maintain a high vote-to-seat efficiency ratio. For example, in Bihar, the BJP secured 89 out of 243 seats, with a vote share of 47%, yielding an efficiency ratio of 1.77. This ratio is significantly higher than Congress’s peak efficiency ratio of 1.65 during its dominance. These findings highlight the strength of the BJP system in terms of voter mobilization, nationalization of politics, and the reduction in competition from opposition parties.

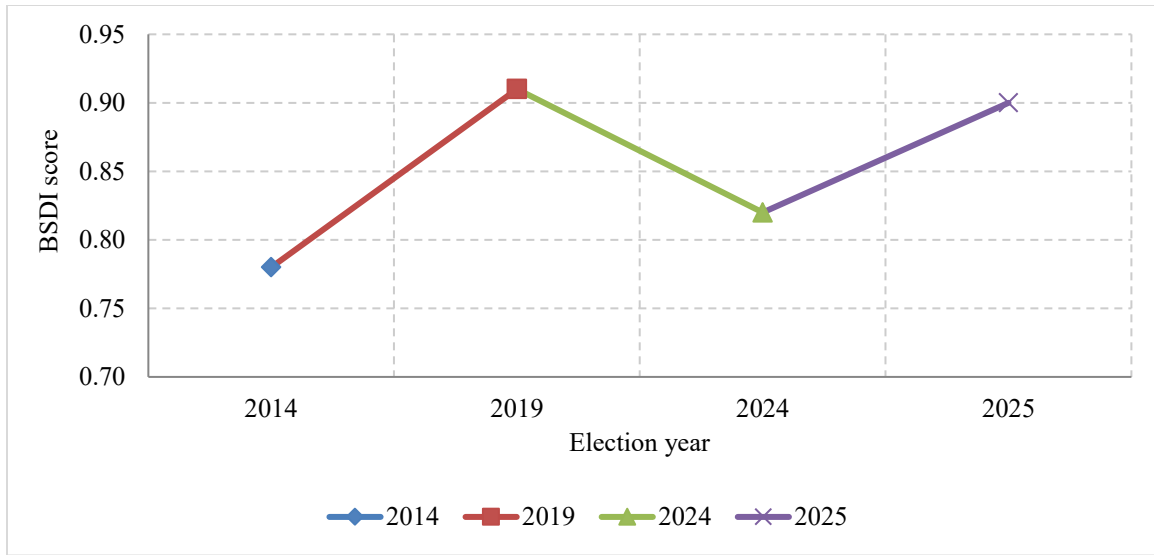


Fig. 4 BJP System Dominance Index Over Time

The graph in Figure 4 illustrates the stability of the BJP's dominance in national politics, with slight fluctuations due to opposition coalitions and challenges. The BSDI

remained high in the 2014 and 2019 elections, reflecting the BJP's strong centralized control, before dipping slightly in 2024 due to coalition politics and rising opposition forces.

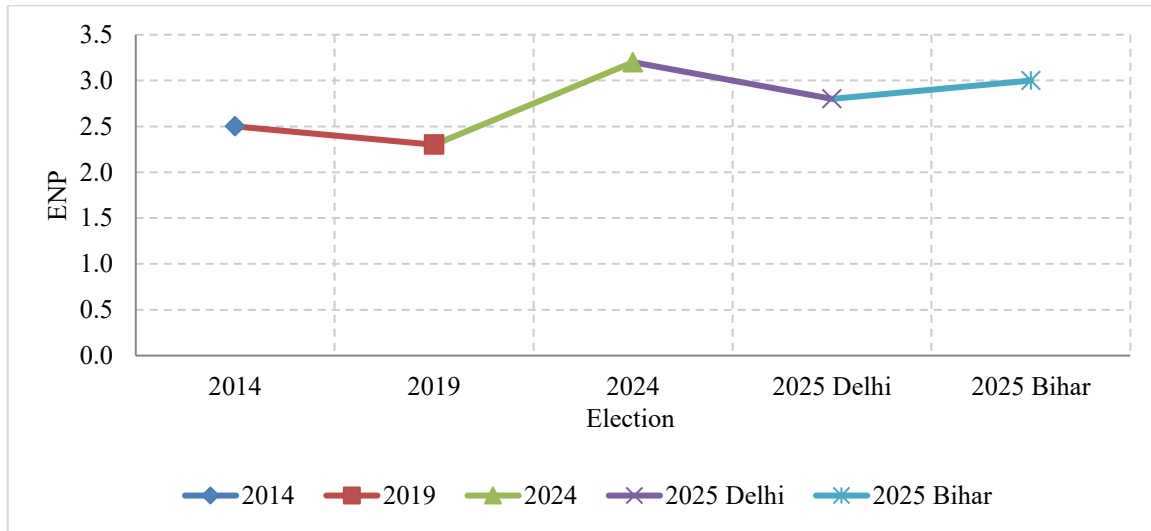


Fig. 5 Effective Number of Parties (ENP) in Indian Politics

Graph 5 demonstrates the increasing fragmentation of the Indian political landscape, particularly post-2014. The ENP values rose significantly in 2024, reflecting the rising

influence of opposition coalitions and regional parties, while the value in 2025 indicates a slight decrease in fragmentation following the BJP's regional victories.

Metric	2014	2019	2024	2025
BSDI	0.78	0.91	0.82	0.90
ENP	2.5	2.3	3.2	2.9
Metric	2014	2019	2024	2025
BSDI normalized	0.78	0.91	0.82	0.90
ENP normalized	0.63	0.58	0.80	0.73

Fig. 6 BJP System Dominance Index (BSDI) and Effective Number of Parties (ENP) across four key election years

The heatmap in Figure 6 displays the fluctuations in BJP's dominance and the increasing fragmentation of political competition.

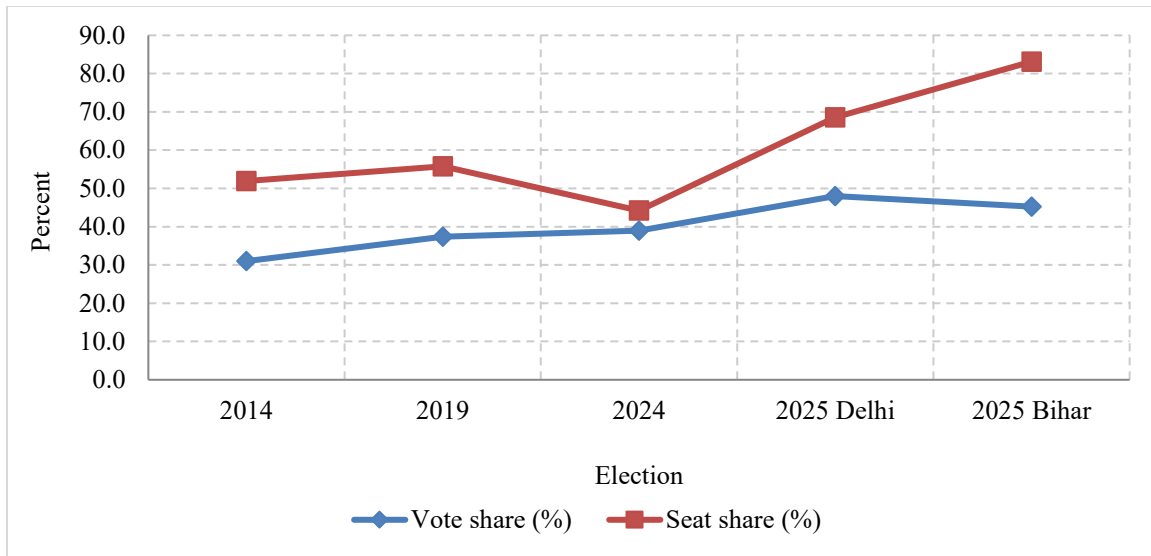


Fig. 7 BJP Vote Share and Seat Share Over Time

Fig 7 illustrates the BJP's increasing vote share and seat share, showcasing its electoral success and dominance.

6. Case Study: 2025 Bihar Legislative Election – Validation of BJP System Dominance

Bihar, a state with a complex history of caste-based politics, has seen a shift towards the BJP's dominance in recent years. In the 2025 Bihar legislative elections, the NDA (BJP-led) won 202 out of 243 seats, with the BJP emerging as the largest party.

- BJP secured 89 seats, marking a historic achievement as the first time the party became the largest party in Bihar.
- The NDA's vote share was 47%, while the opposition Mahagathbandhan (RJD-led alliance) secured only 35 seats.

This victory demonstrated the success of the BJP's social engineering strategies, particularly its outreach to OBCs, SCs, and the consolidation of a broad Hindu vote base. The results further confirmed the declining competition pillar of the BJP system as the RJD and Congress failed to make significant inroads.

6.1. Comparative Discussion-Congress system, Coalition Era and BJP system.

The two most important similarities between the Congress System and the BJP System are both based on a dominant national party. The two systems, however, have differing social bases, ideologies, leadership styles and means of political mobilization. The Congress System was rooted in the compromise of a wide range of social groups, the balance of forces within the Congress and consensus. The BJP System is more centralized, more ideologically oriented

and more reliant on national leadership, organizational discipline and "targeted" mobilization of voters.

It was a period from 1989 to 2014 marked by coalitions that were not like the two dominant-party systems. In that time, regional parties became relevant, national parties relied on alliances, and governments were forced to manage coalitions. The BJP System of 2014 and beyond is a return to dominant party politics but not a repeat of the Congress System. It works in a competitive media landscape, a more fragmented social landscape and a more nationalized political landscape.

Thus, the BJP System can be explained as a new variety of dominant-party politics. It is a synthesis of centralized leadership, ideology mobilization, welfare politics, caste outreach, electoral structure, and nationalistic campaigning. However, it still has constraints from regional parties, caste politics, opposition coalitions and federal diversity.

7. Conclusion

The Congress System's downfall and the shift to coalition government are significant changes in the Indian political landscape, with the BJP emerging in this new context. This study has suggested that the BJP System is not just an electoral success story, but also a broader phenomenon of the formation of a party system, where the BJP has established a core position in national politics. Its electoral results, centralized leadership, having an organization with strength, nationalized campaign strategy, and the capacity to bring different social groups together make it clear that the BJP is dominating.

A structured analysis of this shift can be done using the BJP System Dominance Index. It demonstrates that the centralization, competition, nationalization and social mobilization are related to party dominance, and in addition to vote share and seat share. However, the study reveals that the BJP domination is not of infinite duration. Indian politics is still competitive and contested as exhibited in the Lok Sabha elections of 2024, party strength in the regions, opposition alliances, caste politics and federal diversity.

Thus, the BJP System can be said to be a dominant but not an uncontested political system. It has not made Congress the main pole of Indian politics, but it has removed the political competition from the way. More research is needed to determine if this arrangement is enduring over time, or if it is another restructuring of India's party system that occurs as a result of the consolidation of opposition parties, regional politics, and social change.

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