

Political Legitimation and Charismatic Routinization of Modi 'Wave' in India

Journal of Asian and African Studies

2025, Vol. 60(2) 771–785

© The Author(s) 2023

Article reuse guidelines:

sagepub.com/journals-permissions

DOI: 10.1177/00219096231179655

journals.sagepub.com/home/jas**Praveen Rai** 

Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, India

Abstract

Modi 'Wave' is a political phenomenon that describes a strong hegemon (Prime Minister Narendra Modi) who scripts landslide victories in Indian elections based on political charisma and electoral legitimacy. The consecutive victories of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in national elections 2014 and 2019 is a testimony of charismatic routinization of Modi 'Wave'. 'There Is No Alternative' to Modi seems to be ingrained in the conscious psyche of the electorate (will of the majority), which provides successive leadership legitimacy renewals. The political momentum of Modi's charisma is a discursive dynamic, but it continues to institutionalize right-wing ideology and expand saffron electoral footprints in India.

Keywords

Modi 'Wave', political legitimacy, democratic legitimation, legitimate leadership, charismatic routinization, Indian elections

Introduction

The political parties and party competition in post-colonial India witnessed the whole gamut of party systems starting with one party dominance of the Congress that lasted until 1989, followed by multi-partyism (1990–2013) and back to dominant party system with the victory of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in national elections 2014. The Election Commission of India (ECI) accords recognition to parties as national or state level, which are semi-bureaucratic or family-run institutions that function between elections. It is mostly hierarchical structured, administered by rational-legal authority based on a set of written rules and procedures and responsible to its members. Parties solicit votes to win elections and form legitimate government based on the will of the majority. However, barring two prominent national parties, the Congress and the BJP, most parties are inchoate organic entities entrenched in political dynasticism, regionalism or ethnicity. The political landscape saw a major change in 2014 with the advent of BJP helmed by Narendra Modi (Wave). It transitioned from left-wing liberalism to right-wing conservatism with the historical actualization of BJP's ideological legitimacy based on people's beliefs. 'Wave' is an electoral phenomenon that leads to major gain or loss for a political party, which is primarily a public manifestation of the

Corresponding author:

Praveen Rai, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, 29, Rajpur Road, Delhi 110054, India.

Email: praveenrai@csds.in

electorate's pro- or anti-incumbency sentiments. A wave in elections culminates in skewed voting patterns that provides a massive mandate to a party saddled in power or decisively defeats it. The post-colonial era (1947–1983) witnessed several election 'waves' that overwhelmingly endorsed the Congress and initiated a single-party dominance system. The absence of waves in national hustings between 1984 and 2013 resulted in fractured mandates and coalition politics as no single party could win a clear majority. The wave-less interregnum ended in 2014, as a political wave resurfaced in the national elections, metamorphosized and idiomized as 'Modi wave' that captured the imagination of the citizens and propelled Narendra Modi into folklore ('Modi's leadership' and 'Modi's charisma' are used as synonyms of 'Modi wave'). The electoral broadcast of Modi as a strong leader capable of solving the multiple crises plaguing India created a towering personality that altered the political and ideological spectrum of the country (Rai, 2019). The winds of change that brought the BJP to power was not an isolated political event, as the saffron party riding high on a much stronger Modi wave scripted another victory in the general elections 2019. The BJP not only won a bigger tally of 303 seats (majority: 282 out of 543 seats) in the lower house of Parliament, but it also marked the ascendancy of Modi as one of the tallest hegemon in Indian politics. The back-to-back election victories reflected the will of the majority, derived from subjective and individual judgement, which accorded procedural legitimacy to BJP. However, the televised apology of Modi to Indian farming class in 2021 followed by repeal of farm laws in parliament raised serious questions on the durability of his political capital and the saffron party's credibility. Left-liberal critics contested the legitimate authority of Modi's stewardship on objective evaluation of democratic deficit, political competency and representativeness in terms of 'will of the whole people'.

The progressive discourse defined the BJP party system as fragile and Modi wave ephemeral due to the following reasons. *First*, the party's electoral success depends largely on the popularity ratings of Modi and despite its deeper ideological realignment, a small drop in vote share may result in the inability to form a government after national elections in 2024. *Second*, it may not be able to sustain its political dominance after Modi and may entirely collapse because of no clear successor in line. *Third*, it might encounter intra-party dissensions as its expanded social base may trigger demands by newly added Other Backward Class (OBC), Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) subgroups for representation in party echelons. *Fourth*, it may deinstitutionalize and fragment as it happened with post-Indira Gandhi's Congress. *Fifth*, the complex social fabric of India is still fluid, as voters have multiple identities for mobilization that might set off 'Political Regeneration' (Maiorano and Sen, 2021). Apart from academically grounded susceptibilities, left-leaning public intellectuals and Indian-origin scholars fleeing the nest used the Western conception of 'Democratic Backsliding' to label Modi's regime as a democratic regress that is veering towards electoral autocracy as it is seriously curtailing civil liberties and constitutional rights of religious minorities. Hence, it becomes pertinent to deep dive into the electoral legitimization and judicial democratization of Modi wave thesis to check if it substantiates or negates the postulation of India becoming an illiberal democracy. The critical analysis of Modi's leadership and BJP party system in conceptual framework of political legitimacy-charismatic routinization will not only address the stated vulnerabilities but also ascertain its dominance and longevity in Indian politics. The term legitimacy in a given power relationship is justified in terms of people's beliefs and assessed on degree of congruence or non-conformity of it between a system of power and beliefs, values and expectations (Amossy, 2022; Beetham, 2013). The accountability of ruler's interactions with the ruled (masses) is through elections, and the position of rulers depends on their ability to appeal to the majority of the electorate (Dahl, 1956; Sartori, 1987). Routinization of charisma means transmission by way of office that includes its dissociation from a particular individual, making it an objective transferable entity, which can then be enshrined in ritual acts or rationally accepted rules (Weber, 1978). This article comprises two

sections: the *first* section focuses on the definitions of political legitimacy (descriptive and normative features) to fathom the justification-acceptability of Modi's leadership. It traces the concept of Modi wave in his long tenure as Chief Minister of Gujarat, emergence as a populist leader and people's trust in his legality and prestige. It delineates the role of Modi's leadership legitimacy based on charisma and rationality of rule of law in carving a new political constituency of client patron relationship with strong belief in Hindutva politics and pride. This section will scan the literature of secularism-communalism discourse to find out if Hindutva communalism is a sporadic political phenomenon or an all-pervasive majoritarian bias. The *second* part will discuss the charismatic routinization of Modi wave, repeated legitimization renewals after becoming the Prime Minister and democratic consolidation of BJP. It assesses the impact of political rhetoric, populist guardianship and transformative governance in institutionalizing BJP and legitimizing his rule. It will decipher Modi's strategy in creating political capital by mobilizing economic, cultural, social and symbolic capital. Finally, it elaborates on the pluralization of legitimacy of BJP's public policies and welfare schemes in convincing the electorate and framing socio-cultural norms and values that influence their political perceptions.

Legitimacy and institutionalization of Modi's leadership

The descriptive analysis of Modi's leadership legitimacy based on normatively structured social relationship cannot simply rely only on observation and judgement that accepts/rejects his political order as justifiable, but also on input-output empirical yardsticks. Political legitimacy is a political order's worthiness-recognition as right and just, a questionable validity claim, as the stability of order of domination depends on de facto recognition (Habermas, 1976). Leaders are not infinitely malleable as the nature of parties shapes the characteristics of the electorate in the same way as the voters' predilections shape their peculiarities (Reis, 1988). A legitimate government is the least evil and democratic legitimacy that is entrenched in the belief that at a particular historical juncture, no other regime could assure a more successful pursuit of citizens' collective goals (Linz, 1978). It is nature and beliefs of people that determine viability, legitimacy of political parties and functioning of democracy. Legitimacy is an appraisive concept, signifying/accrediting some kind of valued achievement as the person using this word always performs a judgement and engages in normative use (Gallie, 1956). The Modi wave, which originated after his elevation as chief minister of Gujarat in 2001, steered the BJP to victory in state elections 2002 and initiated his justificatory process. He implemented the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh's (RSS) ideological commitment to challenge the present conception of Indian nation in terms of Hindu culture that included its guidance by rituals, rules/norms guiding social relationships, religious festivals, social practices and mythologies from ancient Hindu texts. The re-imagination of the RSS project aimed to acquire a hegemonic structure by sharing an ensemble of ideas and values inscribed in its social and material domain with heterogeneous castes/class. The wide acceptance of the Hindutva ideology emanates from its flexibility-capacity to co-relate with diverse issues; local with national and international, political with religious, economic with political and social for social mobilization. The mixture of religious, cultural, political and economic issues, which merged in the broader reference to Gujarati ethos and subnational identity, constituted a seductive ideology for large sectors of the urban population and proved a powerful tool for political organizations to galvanize the masses around religious lines (Prakash, 2003). Modi not only mobilized the masses under the 'Hindutva' ideology for electoral domination, but controlled productive assets and sustained pre-existing hierarchy in social relationships through state government. He legitimized nascent political power: acquired, justified and exercised as per Indian constitutional laws with the express electoral consent of majority of the citizens.

Political legitimization

The province witnessed remarkable economic growth and transformation based on a development model popularly known as the 'Gujarat Model of Development'. Modi acquired multi-dimensional legitimacy through infrastructure upgradation, simplification of governance rules, minimal state intervention to facilitate ease of doing business and government subsidies to attract corporates. It resulted in the expansion of roads and highways, uninterrupted power supply to industries and citizens, large industrial exports and high agricultural growth of 7%–8%. The growth story of Gujarat is least challenged, as there was indeed a major spurt in economic upturn from 2002 to 2012 in comparison with development indices of the state (Bremen, 2014). The empirics of fast-paced economic growth provided political justification in two ways: *first*, Modi won state elections thrice in a row that changed his stature from Hindutva chief minister to charismatic leader–political phenomenon–Modi wave. The economic beneficiaries of his model were not only the middle-class, but also a 'neo-middle class' who were primarily aspirational hoping to be a part of the booming urban economy. The ethno-religious identity quest of the middle and neo-middle classes was numerous enough to allow the BJP to win successive elections in Gujarat (Jaffrelot, 2015). A ruler is legitimate if he conforms to established rules, rules can be justified by references to shared beliefs and power be expressly recognized by acts with marks of recognition. The legitimacy of a regime depends upon rules, 'justifiability in terms of beliefs and the overall consent of governed' (Amossy, 2022; Beetham, 2013). Modi succeeded in stamping his authority and managing the empirical consequences of legitimacy by eliciting the obedience of the governed by providing a moral (cultural) and ideological foundation for state–citizens cooperation. *Second*, Modi created an electoral support base comprising of traditional conservative right and people who benefitted from economic surge and turned staunch subscribers of right-wing ideology. In democratic regimes, legitimacy of leaders and their decisions concern the conception of common good (majority), which confers on power the justification of its legitimacy. Initially anchored in the majority, this notion transformed as people no longer appear as a 'homogeneous mass' and 'society now manifests itself in the form of a vast declension of minority conditions'. The legitimacy of politicians depends on the capacity to take into account plural expressions of the common good and involves an assessment of the right of the leader to represent the citizens, based on an assessment of personal ability to understand the problems of the people (Rosanvallon, 2008). 'Modi wave; became a political force in Gujarat by legitimization of proximity, which led to large-scale mobilization of non-partisan voters, initiating them to saffron ideology and creating loyal propagators of majoritarian Hindutva politics.

The BJP in pre-Modi era presented itself as a secular party singularly focused on economic growth and globalization, but its emphasis on Gujarati ethos created a cultural anomaly that strengthened the reality of social exclusiveness based on communal divide. Modi projected himself as a leader with strong roots in local community and culture, strongly committed to fusing the provincial economy to the global market and securing social peace after the Hindu–Muslim communal riots in 2002. He represented powerful stereotypes related to the Gujarati spirit: economic reformer, religious devotionism and social harmonizer (Bobbio, 2012). The consolidation of sub-national culture among large sections of urban Gujaratis further polarized the society and legitimized politics of religious exclusion and discrimination. The BJP's electoral resurgence in 2014 brought alternative nationalism to the front, not based on secularism but on the premise that Indian culture is coterminous with Hindu culture. It believed that Hinduism being the largest and oldest religious groups in the country should essentially occupy the role of first among the equals. Its status would be like Christianity in the United States, not officially recognized, but accorded cultural superiority in same way as Christian holidays that are widely recognized and celebrated in

America as compared with other religions (Chandra, 2018; Vaishnav, 2019). The BJP and its affiliates espousing Hindu majority dominance and political organizations advocating minority religious beliefs (Muslims, Sikhs and Christians) are mostly termed communal. Institutional communalism represents the dominant power status of religious majority – the Hindus and majoritarian bias pervades the constitution and institutions: bureaucracy, security forces, judiciary, prisons, academia, health, media and cultural/art organizations (Singh, 2015). However, institutional communalism as a research tool to engage, record and monitor the correct scale of religious sectarianism is theoretically in a development stage, hence a statistical comparison of BJP and Congress regimes on ‘secularism-communalism’ indices is fraught with mathematical and outcome reporting bias. Religious communalism in India, like in several democratic countries around the globe, is episodic public incidents generally for polarization of votes by political parties, but its nature has changed from minority to majoritarian appeasement.

Communal aspersions aside, Modi wave is primarily a superimposition of charismatic leadership acquired by politico-spiritual politics and people-centric governance. Charisma is defined as ‘a certain quality of an individual personality, by virtue of which the person is set apart from ordinary people and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or exceptional powers’ (Weber, 1947). It offers more insights if the focus turns to charisma’s implications for the workings of a government, but in this context, it is important not to undermine the role of legal-bureaucratic legitimacy, nor ignore traditional forms of legitimation that were present in these regimes (Eatwell, 2006). Charisma plays a significant part in the formation of a political party as a vehicle for charismatic leaders. It plays a positive role in securing a cohesive ‘dominant coalition’ and institutionalization that involves ‘routinization’ of charisma in party structure (Panebianco, 1988; Randall and Svåsand, 2002). There have been several charismatic political leaders in India who possessed exceptional power, but they acquired mass appeal through different political and social exigencies. Modi developed a charismatic personality because of three reasons. (1) Between 2004 and 2014, he faced severe public scrutiny under the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government, but fended off the indictments despite a slew of judicial prosecutions. His victimization (political vendetta) created a swell of public empathy as people perceived the UPA leaders as corrupt and clinging to power by unfair means. (2) His social background aided in creating a larger than life image as he hailed from an ordinary family with no illustrious lineage (nor wealthy). He did not belong to high society nor spoke the language of anglicized urban elites that evoked a strong emotional effect of sympathy and shared feelings. (3) The trajectory of Modi’s political journey reveals that he worked as an ordinary propagandist of ideas that gave a perspective he could call his own. This was opposite of leaders who started as pragmatists, craved for more power and misused their positions to amass huge wealth and propagate dynasticism, inducing strong emotional admiration for his leadership (Suri, 2021). During political-institutional transfer, several institutions and usages that were critically important for maintaining the socio-cultural system, need abandonment or substantial modifications. To arrest the collapse of the social system, a new social structure needs to be introduced that can serve as a nucleus of unity. In such circumstances, the leader assumes the role of ‘symbolic referent’, ‘integrational integer’ and a ‘sanctional source’ (Apter, 1963). In the ever-changing Indian society imperiled by uncertainties, Modi became the nucleus and criterion of a new ethnic definition that provided citizens close and intimate solidarity with psychological comfort. He became the source of new social structures and symbols with which people identified themselves and in accordance with the new norms organized their behaviour. His bio-data of self-made politician, humble socio-economic upbringing, strong ideological moorings, deep proximity with aspirational citizens and record of good governance makes him one of the most legitimate political leaders in contemporary India.

Institutionalizing leadership

Modi wave that remained localized in Gujarat until 2013 expanded its geographical reach beyond the state after he propelled the BJP to victory in the 2014 national elections. Modi’s image as Hindutva icon and pro-business reformer added to the party’s appeal, as he took credit of Gujarat’s economic growth to prove his efficient administration credentials. He captivated the support of social conservatives with promises of ‘no tokenism, no special privileges’ and economic right who preferred less state intervention in the Indian economy. Modi’s popularity cut across the social and political landscape and built an unprecedented social coalition with consolidation of upper castes, OBC, SC and ST voters. He successfully capitalized on the ideological divide and public perception of being a better administrator to win a large number of votes from social conservatives, economic right and poor (Chhibber and Verma, 2014). Modi’s popular appeal continued unabated after 2014, as 50% of the electorate wanted him as Prime Minister of India. The voting preferences of one-third of those who voted for the BJP in 2019 national elections might have changed if Modi was not the prime ministerial candidate (Shastri, 2019). In countries with parliamentary systems, leaders and personalization in elections have become crucial variables due to ‘presidentialization of modern election campaigns’ (Crewe and King, 1994; Kaase, 1994). Individuals who seek legitimation as a leader perform their roles in ways that they perceive might meet collective approval of the audience (Colyvas and Powell, 2006; Hampel and Tracey, 2017). Leadership approvals are rooted in shared presumptions – self-interest, moral evaluations and cognitive comprehensibility (Colyvas and Powell, 2006; Suchman, 1995). In democracies, elections by universal suffrage appoints a representative of people who is responsible for looking after their general interest and are the warrants of her or his legitimacy. The citizens guarantee the legitimacy of the political line of the regime and their discourses and acts (Bourdieu, 1982). It is not just the audience’s shared presumption that is central to the legitimation process, as an equally crucial factor is the individual’s comprehension of the audience’s shared presumption. The leader seeking legitimation will always scrutinize what their audience considers good leadership. Leadership legitimacy, the claiming and granting a leader identity, is a socially constructed process with consequences for an individual leader and his leadership (DeRue and Ashford, 2010). The basics for gaining approval for a leader is admiration, respect and sanctioned authority to act and be recognized as a legitimate leader (Vial et al., 2016). The popularity ratings of political leaders based on elections studies of the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), Delhi, between 2014 and 2023 reveal (Table 1) Modi being way ahead of his competitor Rahul Gandhi, and this is a strong evidence of his magnetic personality transcending normative structure of party politics (Rai, 2019). It is the preponderance of charismatic and institutional status which confers legitimacy to the Modi wave and ensures its incessant recognition by the major sections of the Indian electorate. The legitimation of the state/leader/party involves getting the citizens to regard them as a genuine representative of their interests and therefore deserving loyalty – to some extent, a matter of making them think as ‘we’ rather than ‘they’. The unifying influence of a charismatic leader assumes a stable

Table 1. Leadership legitimacy and political ratings of Modi.

Name	2014	2019	2023
Narendra Modi	36	44	43
Rahul Gandhi	14	24	27
Other leaders and No response	51	32	30

Source: Data Unit-CSDS, Delhi.

and tangible form only through the party structure, but its legitimacy can erode due to bad press at home and abroad and intellectuals opposed to cults of irrationality and personalism related to charismatic politics. In such a situation, the leader relies on flamboyant ceremonies, ceaseless glorification and occasional religious sanctification to regain its lost prestige (Wallerstein, 1961). Modi took on the responsibility of saffron party in educating the citizenry, communicating ideas between the government and the people, enlisting support for government policies, strengthening social solidarity with BJP ideology, and maximizing mass participation through elections.

Modi's leadership legitimacy created competitive party system institutionalization with continuity among party alternatives with higher electoral accountability. In 'democratic' party systems, there is stability in rules and nature of interparty competition, major political actors legitimize electoral process and parties, parties have 'somewhat stable roots in society', and party structures become paramount (Mainwaring and Scully, 1995). Institutionalization solidifies an organization by which it slowly loses its character as a tool and becomes valuable in and of itself, and its goals become inseparable and indistinguishable, and its preservation/survival becomes a 'goal' for a great number of supporters. The party develops an appropriate internal incentive system that provides selective incentives for those interested in leadership and collective incentives to others that foster diffuse loyalty. An institutionalized party is 'reified in the public mind' with a high degree of establishment in popular 'imaginary' and in shaping behaviour and attitudes of the political actors (Panebianco, 1988). The measurement of party institutionalization depends on systemness – scope, density and interactions in party structures; value-infusion – party actors and followers acquire identification and commitment that eclipses self-interested incentives for inclusion; and decisional autonomy – party's freedom from interference in determining policies and strategies. (Randall and Svåsand, 2002). Modi institutionalized the BJP unit in Gujarat based on systemness and routinization of entrenched rules that guided cohesive behaviour within the party organization and a distinctive value-system by which party actors and supporters acquired cultural identification and loyalty to the saffron party. He conscientiously tweaked party ideology to assimilate Hindu pride, created Hindutva image perception and implemented populist governance, which laid the foundation for constructing a centralized-institutionalized BJP at the national level after 2014.

Charismatic routinization and legitimation of Modi 'Wave'

The periodization of Indian polity and governance prior to BJP's rise in 2014 as completely secular seems to be a far-fetched notion as there is evidence to show that as the economic and power structure of modern states becomes globalized, it witnessed mingling with religious cultures and traditions. Since power operates in a meaningful symbolic context between individuals, there is underpinning of values, beliefs and ideology that makes it difficult to separate it into private and public domain. The relation of religion to power in the broad perspective of culture-polity shows that power must be legitimized within a symbolic cultural and value-laden frame of reference (Geertz, 1977). The assumption of cultural bases of legitimation in modern society as rationalist is problematic as the linguistic analysis of modern political culture and ideology shows that it is as full of myth and ritual like any traditional religious language. The metaphor of salvation is not wholly absent and despite bureaucratic and rationalist modern political procedures, politicians frequently cloak legitimacy in symbolic language that seldom carries overt religious references (Kokosalakis, 1985). The belief that religion (institutionalized sanctification) and nationalism ('the people' as the legitimator of politics) has died seems to be an exaggeration as they continue to shape contemporary societies and their politics. The modern era may precipitate, but does not prescribe, secular nationalism that morally eschews religious dimensions as the sole legitimating model of politics. Its subscription to 'the people' as legitimator of polity (self-determination) and

authority (popular sovereignty) depends on the nations' ability to forge and sustain their politics. If secular nationalism falters in its twin tasks of nation and state building, religious models such as civil religion, auxiliary religion (both draw on religion's sanctifying capacity) and chosen peoples (fully transpose religion onto modern politics) may well ascend at its expense (Abulof, 2014). The failure of the Congress party in nation-building exercise and secularism paved the way for Modi to inaugurate Hindutva-based nationalism that subscribed to religious majoritarianism as legitimator of politics, transcendental as politically subservient to the 'will of the people'.

Routinization of charisma

The critiques of Modi's Charisma term it an unstable form of political domination that generally lasts as long as the charismatic leader thrives, but it can survive and go beyond its transitory nature by process of routinization. Routinization concerns changing of group loyalty from one based on charismatic domination to a unity premised on rationally accepted rules or traditional precedent (Toth, 1972; Weber, 1978). The embodiment of charisma within an institutional reality attempts to reform existing political and social order by divesting charismatic power into rational-legal offices of bureaucratic state. Power flows downwards from the charismatic leader to the legislature with the aim to impersonalize it by rooting it firmly in a formal institutional framework. Institutions such as parties, divested with some of the charismatic leader's power, would be able to provide a mechanism for selection of a post-charismatic leader (Isaacs, 2015). The charismatic routinization of Modi's leadership legacy and democratic legitimation has been a discursive dynamic, as it needed constant justification and revalidation through elections and public welfarism. 'Legitimacy by mandate' in representative democracies ensures that the sovereignty granted by people continually needs to be reactivated by various justifications because it can be questioned by the very electorate who accorded it (Amossy, 2022; Charaudeau, 2005). The withdrawal of political ideologies in the contemporary era has reduced the election that selects a leader as validating the mode of appointment and does not imply automatic legitimation of the public policies carried after the polls. The government elected by majority enjoys an 'imperfect legitimacy' that always remains subject to greater constraints of justification and needs to be reinforced by other modes of democratic legitimation (Rosanvallon, 2008). Legitimation refers to a process by which imperfect legitimacy of leaders attempts to express itself and get recognition as obeying established rules, motivated by search for public good, legally and morally defensible. Its success does not only guarantee approval of measures proposed by the power, but it extends to the rulers, their position and leadership. It consolidates an institutionally granted legitimacy that needs reaffirmation and strengthening, in contexts of controversial actions, accusations, doubts, critique or conflicts over group relations, domination and leadership (Rojo and Van Dijk, 1997). The exact nature of legitimation remains a mystery and narrowly means the type of justification achieved differs from others in that it invokes publicly shared and justifiable values. It is sometimes highly formalized, codified, institutional systems of beliefs, values and norms by virtue of which action proposed can be legitimate (Amossy, 2022; Fairclough and Fairclough, 2012). The period between 2014 and 2019 was baptism of fire for Modi's leadership as it had the onerous task to consolidate the political power of BJP, maintain its election winning momentum and legitimize his rule by public justification of policy and actions based on shared cultural norms and rules.

The two elements of Modi wave in tandem with charisma that was instrumental in legitimizing his majoritarian politics included populist rhetoric and transformational governance. The electoral rhetoric employed by political parties to present political messages to the electorate during elections comprises two essentialities. *First*, negative rhetoric describes the outside world, political 'reality' and political actors, making negative references or polemical messages against its

opponents. *Second*, the positive component explains a political party's standpoints on specific or concrete issues in elections (Håkansson, 1999). The political rhetoric employed by Modi is a cocktail of colloquial language, first-person narratives and quasi-official facts that systematically combine negativity of past governments to justify his own accomplishments. His public speeches and election orations are in vernacular-conversational style that emphasizes on the minority appeasement policies of opposition parties, which results in switch over of their staunch supporters who turn into zealous Hindutva votaries. He frequently relies on self-references, abundant use of numerals, past tenses and third-person singular show emphasizing his economic achievements and personalization of power (Jaffrelot and Martelli, 2017). Modi played a key role in implementing the long-pending RSS agenda such as initiating the construction of Ram Temple in Ayodhya, revocation of Article 370 that accorded special status to Jammu and Kashmir, and amendment of citizenship act. It triggered resistance, but was largely welcomed by the electorate and political parties. The dominance of BJP, despite its inability in registering systematic wins in state elections, might be deeper than it superficially suggests. Modi did not bring about the radical changes, he 'quickened the pace of history' (Verma and Ali, 2021), radicalizing and cementing this medium-term realignment of India's political landscape (Maiorano and Sen, 2021). He launched government schemes such as 'Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spirituality Augmentation Drive' and 'Heritage City Development and Augmentation Yojana' for redeveloping eminent temples, increasing devotee footfalls and restoring the lost glory of Hinduism. The corridors added in temples aimed at religious-cultural rejuvenation with market economics in view, as it promoted religious tourism and increased the net revenue of state governments. The modernization of infrastructure by selling railway stations and airports to big business houses in ancient Hindu temple towns and remote heritage sites brought the issue of crony capitalism to the fore with allegations that the BJP favoured businesspersons close to it by selling high-value government properties at rock bottom prices. The speculations did not hold much ground due to Modi's honesty, his credentials in reviving Hindu nationalism and the historical nexus between politicians and capitalists in India. He reinforced languishing Hindutva rituals such as ban on cow slaughter by imposing incarceration and financial penalties, reconverting of Hindus from other religions, renaming cities with Islamic names and rewriting schools textbooks sans chapters on Mughal rule and antithetical to Hinduism (Vaishnav, 2019). These ceremonials in combination with incessant media visual imagery of Modi as a devout Hindu not only routinized his leadership influence but also provided religious-cultural legitimacy that exceeded his political authority consented by citizens. Party reification refers to the degree a political party is present in public imagination and to the extent other actors in the political system perceive it as taken-for-granted. It depends on particular historical and symbolic values it successfully claims to represent, party's organizational strength, access to effective means of communication and longevity – ability to survive over a long time (Randall and Svåsand, 2002). Modi's rhetorical political discourse laid the groundwork for implementation of several items and rituals in the bucket list of Hindutva project that resulted in consolidation and routinizing of Modi wave in a competitive electoral system.

Democratic legitimization

The persistence of Modi's political appeal and vote-fetching skills created charismatic legitimization, which refers to the process of creating loyalty through personal influence of a charismatic leader and politics based on ceaseless drama and emotionalism. The concept is quite incoherent to merit serious consideration, but it might show how personal interventionism of the leader can allow development of sense of security, regularization of expectations, emergence of symbols dissociated from particular individuals and intricate task of nation-building (Ake, 1966). The

nucleus of the Modi government is on economic and social transformation, as his vision of 'New India by 2022' aimed to make democracy more participatory and inclusive, a partnership of equals with citizens. Governance scholarship acknowledges two kinds of leaders: (1) transactional, in which the leader gives weightage on the relationship between the leader and follower and (2) transformational, where the primary focus of the leaders is on the beliefs, needs and values of his followers. A transactional leader for certain motives and purposes mobilizes in competition, institutional, political, psychological and resources to arouse, engage and satisfy the motives of their followers in order to realize their mutual goals (Burns, 1978). The philosophy of Modi's governance lies on transforming the lives of Indian citizens by raising their living standards and imbibing higher levels of motivation and morality. The centralization in welfare delivery led to greater attribution of welfare benefits to Modi as it directs credit for economic benefits related to 'welfarism' by emphasizing on his own contribution in economic prosperity of voters (Sircar, 2021). The big-ticket projects and reforms during his regime were quite successful, which restored the credibility of the government and governance because people felt the impact of transformation. It was trust that made development a people's movement that hastened the pace of transformation of India (Gupta, 2019). Modi's governance strategy plurally focused on upscaling the existing infrastructure and building new ones of gold standards that directly or indirectly contributed to the economic upliftment of common people and accelerated the development process. The fast-paced economic reforms in combination with populist welfarist policies rapidly amplified Modi wave and increased his political reputation and standings.

Modi wave in India witnessed several electoral crest and troughs in the last few years, and questions arise on the degree of its routinization and legitimation in creating a stable BJP party system that will either endure or end after his exit from political arena. The threat to the saffron party's dominance from outside seems less likely, but it can arise from within the party. In 2014 and 2019, a massive surge of voters from marginalized communities voted for BJP – from 19% in 1996 to 44% in 2019 among the OBCs, from 14% to 34% among SCs and from 21% to 44% among STs. It needs to sustain this momentum and consolidate its position by equitable sharing of power, as any attempts to erect invisible barriers in hindering the rise of leaders from these groups to higher echelons of the party and government could be detrimental. The saffron party is aware of its fragile neo-support base from disadvantaged sections and judiciously patronizes them with ministerial berths, top posts in public sector enterprises and decision-making positions within the party. The social engineering initiated by BJP and dealignment of socially backward groups from entrenched political parties may last much longer, as Modi continues to be a shining star of the backward strata of the 'Hindu society' (Suri, 2019). The convincing victories of the BJP in recent state elections reveals that it retains and reinforces its inclusive electoral support base intersecting diverse caste communities. The political supremacy of BJP is contested by scholars on the basis of political sustainability with some prognosticating its eventual decline, as there is no amalgamation of the party organization with the state making it a 'cult' rather than a formal party 'system'. It will collapse after Modi's departure, as the new order will be in peril due to absence of a second line of leadership and capriciousness of the Indian voters in reasserting a non-religious identity (Manor, 2016, 2021). The test of any great charismatic leader lies not only in the ability to create a great movement but to leave a continuous impact on institutional structure. He or she transforms a given institution setting by infusing into it some charismatic vision; investing the regular, orderly offices, aspects of social organization, with some charismatic qualities and aura (Eisenstadt, 1968). Modi succeeded in charismatic routinizing of the BJP party system by taking recourse to a legal-rational path that provides legitimacy separate from his ardent supporters who would have chosen a successor, minimizing problems that may arise during post-charismatic succession. The institutionalization of the party in tandem with routinization of his

Table 2. Electoral legitimations of Indira Gandhi and Modi.

Year of national elections	Total seats	Winning party	Seats won	Gain/loss (seats)	Gain/loss (vote share)
Indira Gandhi					
1971	518	Congress	352	+69	+3
1980	543	Congress	353	+199	+9
Narendra Modi					
2014	543	BJP	282	+166	+9
2019	542	BJP	303	+21	+6

Source: National Elections Data from the Election Commission of India (ECI).

charisma will allow the successor political space and legitimacy to re-constitute his charismatic domination.

The party system in India depends on voters and candidates' incentives to coordinate on common party labels with incentives not only to electoral laws and ethnic divisions but also on the role of national government in local politics and economies. In India and the United States, as national governments exert more political and economic control over local areas, candidates have greater inducement to associate themselves with national organizations, while voters have higher motivation to abandon locally competitive and nationally non-competitive political parties. The increasing centralization in the BJP began prior to periods of party aggregation and archives reveal that both Franklin Roosevelt and Indira Gandhi used their power position to create more nationalized political parties (Chhibber and Kollman, 1998; Milkis, 1993; Rudolph and Rudolph, 1987). The centralization under Modi shows similarity with Indira Gandhi who created a pyramidal decision-making structure in the party and government, which centralized decision-making and incentivized the local elites to align with the party due to higher dispersal of central government resources for rural programmes and welfare schemes (Brass, 1990; Kochanek, 1976). Table 2 shows that Indira Gandhi and Modi succeeded in creating a centralized party structure by institutionalizing their personal charisma and renewing electoral legitimacy by winning majorities in the national elections more than once with substantial gains of valid vote share. Before 2014, the delegitimation process of the Congress party started due to policy paralysis, poor governance and corruption scandals. As a result, there was a large increase in electoral volatility and instability due to partisan dealignment and fragmentation of votes among smaller parties with ideological similarities. Electoral volatility refers to the aggregate turnover from one party to others from one election to the next (Pedersen, 1983; Przeworski, 1975). Modi succeeded in limiting vote switching between two elections by converting a sizable number of swing voters into justifiable saffron voters with high levels of party identification through value-infusion. Party loyalty can be long lasting and intrinsically compatible with clientelism if its establishment is through the party's association with a charismatic leader (Randall and Svåsand, 2002). He created a patron-client politics of symmetrical relationship with voters that involved an implicit quid pro quo exchange of state largesse in lieu of electoral support. The staunch commitment of the saffron voters stems from obstinate partisanship and loyalty, as they perceive themselves as paternalistic 'beneficiaries of Modi's patronization and distributive welfarism'. Modi reshaped the monistic vision of popular sovereignty by pluralization of legitimacy of public policies and institutions and moved the paradigm of Indian politics from democratic stakeholders to welfare scheme beneficiaries.

Conclusion

To conclude, the over-emphasis on degeneration of Modi wave is an extravagant exaggeration, as political contradictions are indeed signs of imperfect legitimacy, but it is susceptible to solutions and political reaffirmations. The BJP succeeded in transforming the fundamentals of democratic elections by altering caste alignments, widening its social base and reconceptualizing its ideology. The effects of such radical realignments accelerated by a transformative leader goes beyond the electoral cycles, and legitimization of the BJP may continue to thrive without the leadership of Modi. The political skill and transfer of charisma can come under scanner in transitional phase, but the socio-political and ideological legitimacy would likely accrue to his successor. If it succeeds in negotiating the transition, the leadership baton exchange from Modi will continue with this system, as it enjoys pole position in electoral battles and in arena of political culture (Verma and Ali, 2021). The absence of Modi's succession plan and anticipated power tussle after his exit is an unfounded conjecture, as BJP seldom faced political challenges and popular disquietudes during leadership transitions. Inter-generational transfer of power has been mostly smooth and peaceful as it is cadre-based with strong political ideology and party discipline. The modalities of finding a suitable successor may not be so difficult due to charismatic routinization and bench strength of leaders who benefitted from the experience of Modi's real-life leadership and value inculcation of dynamism. The electoral prognosis that the BJP may dither and fragment as it happened with the post-Indira Gandhi's Congress is naïve and unwarranted, as both the parties widely differ in spatio-temporal context, radical settings and political milieu. The supremacy of a party in a system of single-party dominance is a misleading conflation, as unlike the early years of Congress superiority, the current BJP faces the reality of high party competitions and multiple formats of contests in state elections. It cannot become a hegemonic party or revive a dominant party system of Congress type that India saw in the 1950s (Suri, 2021). Although Modi wave did not prevail in several state elections due to anti-incumbency against BJP's provincial governments or strong regional parties based on identity politics and parochial governance, his magical powers continue to defy gravity and gain political traction, thereby further consolidating the dominant BJP party system termed fourth party system in India (Chhibber and Verma, 2018; Palshikar, 2017). The electoral weave of Modi's leadership is phenomenal, as his political oratory in tandem with cinematic enticements creates a 'Pied piper' effect on Indian electorate, as they step into the polling booths and vote for the saffron party in large numbers (Rai, 2019). The force multiplication of the Modi wave legitimized the dominance of the BJP and created a perceptual belief of his political and electoral invincibility.

The conceptual elements of legitimacy – 'impartiality', 'reflexivity' and 'proximity' – broadly explain Modi's achievement of social generality and consensus building overlooking the citizens' partisan claims during his 9 years of governance. Legitimacy of impartiality assumes power as an empty space that no elected representative can ever claim (negative generality) that is largely equidistant from a specific political viewpoint, while legitimacy of reflexivity (generality of multiplication) assumes when expressions of social sovereignty proliferates, the biases of majority rule becomes containable. The legitimacy of proximity (democratic art of government) emphasizes on social expectations on the behaviour of governing officials who recognize and care for individuals in real situations. It relies upon attention to particularity, which is pursuable when the exploration of landscape is through multiple paths (Rosanvallon, 2011). The rear view observation of the first term of Modi's rule (2014–2019) reveals that he reconciled the competing claims of citizens through equidistant and impartial welfarism. He managed to attain a degree of generality of multiplication through microscopic visions of inclusive welfare schemes for the marginalized and poor strata of Indian society. However, post-2019, Modi's governance witnessed a perceptible change that sought generality of attention to particularity through tailor-made policies and programmes for

minorities: ST and lower class Muslims. It aims to deepen the principle of justification and social justice with last mile delivery of public goods to represent the 'Will for All'. The democratic legitimacy of Modi attained through novel political investments and election competitions has been dynamic, never definitive, as it oscillated between the binary of perfection and imperfection.

However, the democratic delegitimization narrative of Modi government seems conjectural, as there is no empirical evidence to suggest non-electoral decimation of opposition political parties, structured diminution of civil liberties, political insubordination of constitutional bodies and systematic infringements of constitutional rights of minority communities. Modi wave will seek revalidation of political legitimacy in Indian national elections 2024, but the absence of a politically credible and matching adversary may facilitate in re-acquiring yet another 'Will of a Majority', provided the results do not throw up a psephological surprise.

Declaration of conflicting interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

Funding

The author(s) received no financial support for the research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

ORCID iD

Praveen Rai  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0543-9667>

References

- Abulof U (2014) The roles of religion in national legitimation: Judaism and Zionism's elusive quest for legitimacy. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 53(3): 515–533.
- Ake C (1966) Charismatic legitimation and political integration. *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 9(1): 1–13.
- Amossy R (2022) Constructing political legitimacy and authority in discourse. *Argumentation et Analyse du Discours*. Available at: <http://journals.openedition.org/aad/6398> (accessed 24 July 2022).
- Apter D (1963) *Ghana in Transition*. New York: Atheneum.
- Beetham D (2013) *The Legitimation of Power*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Bobbio T (2012) Making Gujarat Vibrant: 'Hindutva', development and the rise of subnationalism in India. *Third World Quarterly* 33(4): 657–672.
- Bourdieu P (1982) Les rites d'institution. *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 43: 58–63.
- Brass PR (1990) *The Politics of India since Independence*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Breman J (2014) The Gujarat model of growth, development and governance (Book review of *Growth or Development: Which Way Is Gujarat Going?* edited by Indira Hirway, Amita Shah and Ghanshyam Shah, Oxford University Press, 2014). *Economic and Political Weekly* 49(39): 27–29.
- Burns JM (1978) *Leadership*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Chandra K (2018) The triumph of Hindu Majoritarianism. *Foreign Affairs*. Available at: <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/india/2018-11-23/triumph-hindu-majoritarianism> (accessed 31 March 2023).
- Charaudeau P (2005) *Le discours politique. Les masques du pouvoir*. Paris: Vuibert.
- Chhibber P and Kollman K (1998) Party aggregation and the number of parties in India and the United States. *The American Political Science Review* 92(2): 329–342.
- Chhibber P and Verma R (2014) The BJP's 2014 'Modi Wave': an ideological consolidation of the right. *Economic and Political Weekly* 49(39): 50–56.
- Chhibber P and Verma R (2018) *Ideology and Identity: The Changing Party Systems of India*. New Delhi, India: Oxford University Press.

- Colyvas JA and Powell WW (2006) Roads to institutionalization: the remaking of boundaries between public and private science. *Research in Organizational Behavior* 27: 305–353.
- Crewe I and King A (1994) Are British elections becoming more ‘presidential’? In: Jennings MK and Mann TE (eds) *Elections at Home and Abroad: Essays in Honor of Warren E. Miller*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press. Available at: <https://www.press.umich.edu/23326> (accessed 24 July 2022).
- Dahl R (1956) *A Preface to Democracy Theory*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- DeRue DS and Ashford SJ (2010) Who will lead and who will follow? A social process of leadership identity construction in organizations. *Academy of Management Review* 35(4): 627–647.
- Eatwell R (2006) The concept and theory of charismatic leadership. *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 7(2): 141–156.
- Eisenstadt S (1968) Introduction. In Eisenstadt SN (ed.) *Max Weber on Charisma and Institution Building*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Fairclough I and Fairclough N (2012) *Political Discourse Analysis*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Gallie WB (1956) Essentially contested concepts. *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 56: 167–198.
- Geertz C (1977) Centers, Kings and Charisma: reflections in the symbolics of power. In: Ben-David J and Nichols Clark T (eds) *Culture and Its Creators*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, pp.150–171.
- Gupta A (2019) Modi won because he delivered on his promises. *Hindustan Times*, 6 June. Available at: <https://www.hindustantimes.com/analysis/modi-won-because-he-delivered-on-his-promises/story-2zMw0HbCfFc02t1VrczCL.html> (accessed 24 July 2022).
- Habermas J (1976) Legitimation problems in the modern state. In: Habermas J (ed.) *Communication and the Evolution of Society* (trans. T McCarthy). Cambridge: Polity Press, pp.178–205.
- Håkansson N (1999) Electoral rhetoric. Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication> (accessed 24 July 2022).
- Hampel CE and Tracey P (2017) How organizations move from stigma to legitimacy: the case of Cook’s travel agency in Victorian Britain. *Academy of Management Journal* 60(6): 2175–2207.
- Isaacs R (2015) Charismatic routinization and problems of post-charisma succession in Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. *Studies of Transition States and Societies* 7(1): 58–76.
- Jaffrelot C and Martelli JT (2017, 15 August) Reading PM Modi, through his speeches. *The Indian Express*. Available at: <https://carnegieendowment.org/2017/08/15/reading-pm-modi-through-his-speeches-pub-72825> (accessed 15 February 2023).
- Jaffrelot C (2015) What ‘Gujarat Model’? Growth without development – and with socio-political polarisation. *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* 38(4): 820–838.
- Kaase M (1994) Is there personalization in politics? Candidates and voting behavior in Germany. *International Political Science Review* 15: 329–351.
- Kochanek S (1976) Mrs. Gandhi’s Pyramid: the New Congress. In Henry C (ed.) *Indira Gandhi’s India*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, pp.93–124.
- Kokosalakis N (1985) Legitimation power and religion in modern society. *Sociological Analysis* 46(4): 367–376.
- Linz J (1978) *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes: Crisis, Breakdown, and Reequilibration*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Mainwaring S and Scully TR (1995) *Building Democratic Institutions: Party Systems in Latin America*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Maiorano D and Sen R (2021) Exploring the centralisation of power and the rise of a new political system. *Economic and Political Weekly*. Available at: <https://www.epw.in/engage/article/exploring-centralisation-power-and-rise-new> (accessed 23 December 2022).
- Manor J (1996) ‘Ethnicity’ and Politics in India. *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944)* 72(3): 459–475.
- Manor J (2021) A new, fundamentally different political order: the emergence and future prospects of ‘competitive authoritarianism’ in India. *Economic and Political Weekly*. Available at: <https://www.epw.in/engage/article/new-fundamentally-different-political-order> (accessed 23 December 2022).
- Milkis S (1993) *The President and the Parties: The Transformation of the American Party System since the New Deal*. New York: Oxford University Press.

- Palshikar S (2017) India's second dominant party system. *Economic and Political Weekly* 52(12): 12–15.
- Panbianco A (1988) *Political Parties: Organization and Power*. London: Cambridge University Press.
- Pedersen MN (1983) Changing patterns of electoral volatility in European party systems: explorations in explanation. In: Daalder H and Mair P (eds) *Western European Party Systems: Continuity and Change*. Beverly Hills, CA; London: Sage, pp.29–66.
- Prakash A (2003) Re-imagination of the State and Gujarat's electoral verdict. *Economic and Political Weekly* 38(16): 1601–1610.
- Przeworski A (1975) Institutionalization of voting patterns, or is mobilization the source of decay? *American Political Science Review* 69: 49–67.
- Rai P (2019) 'Wave Elections', charisma and transformational governance in India. *South Asia Research* 39(3): 253–269.
- Randall V and Svåsand L (2002) Party institutionalization in new democracies. *Party Politics* 8(1): 5–29.
- Reis FW (1988) Partidos, Ideologia e Consolidação Democrática. In: Reis FW and O'Donnell G (eds) *A Democracia No Brasil: Dilemas e Perspectivas*. São Paulo: Vértice, pp.296–326.
- Royo LM and Van Dijk TA (1997) Legitimizing the expulsion of 'illegal' migrants in Spanish parliamentary discourse. *Discourse & Society* 84: 523–566.
- Rosanvallón P (2008) *Counter-Democracy: Politics in an Age of Distrust*. London: Cambridge University Press.
- Rosanvallón P (2011) *Democratic Legitimacy: Impartiality, Reflexivity, Proximity* (trans. A Goldhammer). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Rudolph LI and Rudolph SH (1987) *In Pursuit of Lakshmi: The Political Economy of the Indian State*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Sartori G (1987) *The Theory of Democracy Revisited*. Chatham, NJ: Chatham House.
- Shastri S (2019) The Modi factor in the 2019 Lok Sabha Election: how crucial was it to the BJP Victory? *Studies in Indian Politics* 7(2): 206–218.
- Singh P (2015) Institutional communalism in India. *Economic and Political Weekly* 50(28): 48–56.
- Sircar N (2021) The welfarist Prime Minister: explaining the National-State Election gap. *Economic and Political Weekly*. Available at: <https://www.epw.in/engage/article/welfarist-prime-minister-explaining-national-state> (accessed 11 January 2023).
- Suchman MC (1995) Managing legitimacy: strategic and institutional approaches. *Academy of Management Review* 20(3): 571–610.
- Suri KC (2019) Social change and the changing Indian voter: consolidation of the BJP in India's 2019 Lok Sabha Election. *Studies in Indian Politics* 7(2): 234–246.
- Suri KC (2021) Emergence of BJP's dominance and its durability. *Economic and Political Weekly*. Available at: <https://www.epw.in/engage/article/emergence-bjps-dominance-and-its-durability> (accessed 11 January 2023).
- Toth M (1972) Toward a theory of the routinization of charisma. *The Rocky Mountain Social Science Journal* 9(1): 1–7.
- Vaishnav M (2019) Religious nationalism and India's future. The BJP in Power: Indian Democracy and Religious Nationalism. Available at: <https://carnegieendowment.org/2019/04/04/religious-nationalism-and-india-s-future-pub-78703> (accessed 31 March 2023).
- Verma R and Ali A (2021) The central force behind India's fourth party system. *Economic and Political Weekly*. Available at: <https://www.epw.in/engage/article/central-force-behind-indias-fourth-party-system?> (accessed 11 January 2023).
- Vial AC, Napier JLI and Brescoll VL (2016) A bed of thorns: female leaders and the self-reinforcing cycle of illegitimacy. *The Leadership Quarterly* 27(3): 400–414.
- Wallerstein I (1961) *Africa, the Politics of Independence*. New York: Random House.
- Weber M (1947) *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*. New York: Free Press.
- Weber M (1978) *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology* (ed. G Roth and C Wittich, trans. E Fischeff). Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Author biography

Praveen Rai is a Political Analyst at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, Delhi. His key areas of interest include politics, electoral competitions and opinion polling in India.