



Original Article

Electoral Reforms and the Future of Indian Democracy

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Abstract

This paper examines the significance of electoral reforms in strengthening the democratic framework of India. Elections serve as the cornerstone of democratic governance by ensuring representation, accountability, and legitimacy. The study explores the historical evolution of India's electoral system, the role of the Election Commission of India, and key reform areas including electoral architecture, campaign finance transparency, voter accessibility, and institutional accountability. It further analyzes emerging challenges such as digital campaigning, data privacy concerns, political financing in the digital age, and regional variations within India's federal structure. Drawing comparative insights from other democracies, the paper highlights the need for transparency, accountability, and inclusiveness in electoral governance. The study proposes short-term, medium-term, and long-term reform strategies aimed at enhancing electoral integrity, strengthening democratic institutions, and improving public trust in the electoral process. It concludes that continuous electoral reforms are essential for safeguarding democratic resilience and ensuring the effective functioning of representative democracy in India.

Keywords: Electoral Reforms; Indian Democracy; Election Commission of India; Electoral Governance; Campaign Finance; Transparency; Accountability; Voter Participation; Digital Campaigning; Democratic Institutions; Political Financing; Electoral Integrity.

Introduction

Elections are a vital feature of democracy, providing legitimacy to governments and opportunity for the people to express their approval or to alter leadership. Free and fair elections, conducted at regular intervals, are essential for a thriving democracy. India, being one of the biggest democracies of the world with 28 states and 7 union territories, has conducted elections for the central legislature fifteen times since independence, starting with 489 Lok Sabha constituencies in 1951-52. Despite challenges like vast distances, inaccessible terrains, and security concerns, the Election Commission has successfully managed the election process, demonstrating the deep roots of democracy in India (Masliuddin & Sreenivasa Rao, 2012).

Historical Context of Electoral Governance in India

Elections are a crucial feature of democracy, granting legitimacy to government authority and allowing people to express their support or opposition. In India, with a population of around 22 billion in 2011, there are 28 states, 7 union territories, and over 5,200 constituencies for state legislatures and 545 for the central legislature. Since independence, elections to the Lok Sabha have been held 15 times, with the first in 1951-52. The election process involves millions of candidates and voters, demonstrating its gigantic scale. Despite challenges posed by rural terrain, literacy, and security issues, the Election Commission has successfully conducted elections since 1952, indicating that democracy has become deeply rooted in India (Masliuddin & Sreenivasa Rao, 2012).

Core Electoral Reforms: Deliberate Designs and Outcomes

The challenge for any society is to construct an appropriate electoral system after transitioning successfully to a democratic form of governance. The Indian Constitution was adopted in January 1950, and the first general election under Universal Adult Franchise was held in late 1951. To describe the timeline of electoral governance in India is to describe all major developments in India since 1934. Such developments are usually confined largely to a discussion of the question of the electoral system.

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The term electoral architecture refers, broadly, to a discussion of the structural arrangements to enable a political system to conduct elections in a stable manner. The architecture comprises i) electoral systems; ii) election laws; iii) election authorities; and iv) a set of procedures, rules, and practices that detail how elections are to be conducted (Masliuddin & Sreenivasa Rao, 2012).

1. Electoral System Architecture and Representation

Elections occupy a pivotal role in the democratic process, marking the moment when the ultimate source of authority in a democracy—the citizens—exercises sovereignty through the selection of representatives. Hence, the ‘rules of the game’ — the electoral architecture — are central to the mode of representation and influence the quality of democracy (Mitra, 2022). The governance of elections rests on three inter-related pillars: the electoral architecture; the supervisory role of the Election Commission of India (ECI); and the conduct of political parties and candidates vis-à-vis the regulations governing elections. An analysis of the former indicates that while the Indian electoral architecture is classically described as ‘first-past-the-post (FPTP),’ it is in fact an asymmetric, multi-tiered hybrid system that reflects the underlying notions of majoritarian and proportional representation (Nijzink & Piombo, 2016). Each of the three tiers of this architecture corresponds to a distinct set of elections for different offices: (a) national level elections to the Lok Sabha; (b) State level elections to the Vidhan Sabha; and (c) elections to urban and rural local bodies. Since the economy of party system and provision of governance varies across these levels, the design of the architecture has been sensitive to these underlying features.

2. Transparency, Accountability, and Campaign Finance

Most campaign finance regulations include transparency provisions that require public disclosure of contributions and expenditure, yet enforcement is often weak. Citizens frequently lack easy and timely access to credible financial information, significantly limiting accountability. Only Australia and the United States make all relevant data freely available online in machine-readable formats; many countries disclose only partial information or none at all. Recent research suggests that regulations in developing countries capture only a small part of members of parliament’s political costs, underscoring the need for comprehensive data on donations and spending. Transparency aims to prevent corruption and build trust, since public scrutiny and media oversight are essential for enforcing rules. Effective accountability nevertheless hinges on civil society and the press being able to utilize the disclosed data (Mills, 2017).

Relatively few governance areas are as salient in contemporary political debate as transparency, accountability, and campaign financing. Numerous observers regard transparency in election administration, voting rights, redistricting, and campaign financing as fundamental to fair elections. Disclosure of campaign finance and information about voting rights are widely deemed essential components of legitimacy- and good-government reform. In recent years, transparency has evolved into something more than a mere right to know; it

has become a prerequisite for more efficient and cooperative democratic processes (Halberstam, 2015). Reform efforts that fall under the banner of open government have emerged as particularly promising avenues for enhancing transparency and boosting democratic accountability.

3. Voter Access, Identification, and Inclusivity

Universal adult suffrage, enshrined in Article 326 of the Indian Constitution, is a cornerstone of Indian democracy that empowers eligible citizens to elect their representatives without discrimination. However, increased attention to electoral reforms has highlighted challenges related to reach and accessibility. Enhancing both access to the voting franchise and the process of voting itself—with special emphasis on the needs and participation of disadvantaged groups—is essential for an electoral process that meets the democratic ideal.

Maintenance of an accurate record of eligible voters is therefore crucial, yet no electoral mechanism is capable of guaranteeing pinpoint precision. Legislative Assembly elections held in 2021 provide a useful reference point for examining both trends in voter enrolment and turnout. The size of the electorate in five significant States that jointly account for over half of the Indian population can serve as a representative sample for a broader analysis of the integrity of democratic representation. While much of the country is experiencing mounting disenfranchisement, State-wide enrolment levels remained remarkably high in the four States contested by the principal Opposition party, underlining possible threats to electoral legitimacy in regions with opposition representation and more vigorous competitive pressures. These trends illustrate both the democratic ideals invoked in 1947 and the challenges confronting Indian democracy seven decades later.

Evidence suggests that the access advantage afforded by online voting registration is not sufficiently generalized through the electorate. Even where the overarching structure of conventional registration appears acceptable, as in many regions of India, disproportionate access to the process is likely to compensate for any universal advances. Such reforms must take account of the particular geographical, social, and technological features shaping each State’s electorate. Nonetheless, the introduction of on-line registration marks a significant advance in voting accessibility. Further amelioration of physical access to polling locations should accompany enhancement of registration accessibility to widen opportunities for participation—and therefore strengthen democratic legitimacy. Voter turnout is a critical determinant of access to the electoral process. Turnout figures published by the Election Commission of India reveal considerable regional variation across the nation. Inadequate representation of some segments of society within the electorate restricts the extent to which elections can reflect the preference of the population as a whole. Voter turnout within mature democracies significantly correlates with the equity of the overall electoral process and can serve as an instrument for evaluating access to the electoral system (S. James & Clark, 2020).

Strengthening Democratic Processes: Institutions and Mechanisms

Elections constitute a vital dimension of democracy, embodying its sovereignty and legitimizing governmental authority. Free and fair elections are critical for the success of democracy everywhere, as without them, a free choice of representatives through competitive political processes fails to materialize. In the case of India, a nation of over 1.2 billion people, this is no simple task. The complexities of the electoral system are compounded by the presence of 28 states, 7 union territories, and even more constituencies. Nevertheless, elections have been regularly held since 1951–52, testifying to the robust roots of democracy despite formidable obstacles that include vast distances, poor logistics, and security concerns. The abundant experience of the Election Commission has fostered steady advancements in conducting free and fair elections, thereby reinforcing democratic processes (Masliuddin & Sreenivasa Rao, 2012).

With more than 800 million eligible voters casting their ballot in the most recent general election, the task of administering such large-scale electoral processes is undeniably challenging. A rich body of literature has accumulated on electoral reform in India, addressing the legislative and constitutional amendments often proposed to the democratic structure of the state (Sinha, 2007).

Much less attention has been directed towards the processes, mechanisms, and institutions within which electoral democracy operates. Freedom of choice by voters, accountability of elected representatives, and the environment in which electoral contests are carried out are all essential to the legitimacy of Indian democracy and the effectiveness of the electoral process. The rich and varied diversity that characterizes India creates both unevenness and inequities in the political process. Regions experience different types of representation—in terms of the nature of disputes, modalities, forms, and levels of participation—even when the same constitutional and legislative arrangements are present. A compressed pane of focus necessarily runs the risk of neglecting variation, and hence it is crucial to analyze how democracy operates in different strata and at different velocities.

1. Election Commission's Roles and Powers

The Constitution's Article 324 establishes the Election Commission of India as a body with "supervisory, directions and advisory" functions and is empowered to make regulations under Article 327. After the 73rd and 74th amendments, the Commission for the Panchayati Raj elections was also constituted. The Supreme Court has asserted the Election Commission's powers in several landmark judgments. However, the Commission has authority only over parliamentary and assembly elections; elections to the Rajya Sabha and the Legislative Council are within the jurisdiction of the Chairman of the Council of States and the Governor, respectively. The Constitution does not define the term "election," and consequently the subject is not included in the Union List, Concurrent List, or State List. The Election Commission has the authority to supervise, direct, and control the entire process of elections to the Panchayati Raj and also the elections to the offices of

Chairpersons of Panchayati Raj Institutions under the provision of an Amended Act. The Commission has also imparted training to the Lower Courts to conduct free and fair elections to the local bodies (Masliuddin & Sreenivasa Rao, 2012).

2. Conflict of Interest, Code of Conduct, and Enforcement

Enforceable codes of conduct and transparent disclosure requirements are expected to reduce corruption among agents of public institutions. However, this can only happen if the norms are credible, the enforcement machinery is independent, capable, and sufficiently empowered, and the culture is conducive to compliance. In India, while the guidelines for the conduct of elections and the model code of conduct for political parties and candidates have developed over a period of time, and violations have attracted penalties under various provisions of law, compliance remains a significant challenge. The Election Commission of India (ECI), the agency entrusted with the task of enforcing a code of conduct, lacks the necessary authority; therefore, only a modicum of compliance is expected even for the most widely reported violations. Disciplinary action against members of the Indian administrative service and other groups has become a routine exercise, rarely receiving public attention.

The regulation of gifts offered to members of the legislature and other senior public officials also shows meagre success. Disclosures made under the code of conduct—and the asset declarations made under the Representation of the People Act—are scarcely thorough. Consequently, irregularities are detected long after these assets have been amassed or transferred, and the resources necessary for the conduct of investigations and for making the information actionable are rarely allocated. Penalty and bar provisions have been evaded in the past, and monitoring agencies operate under serious constraints. All these factors contribute to the culture of impunity that characterizes public life in India. The persistence of serious Electoral Commission of India electoral offences, despite the associated risk, is indicative of the declining deterrents in the Indian system. Institutions and mechanisms to promote and enforce adherence to norms need, therefore, to be strengthened.

3. Judicial Remedies and Administrative Redress

Electoral laws in many nations seek to regulate processes related to the electoral cycle and outline the manner in which elections are to be conducted. The aim of these laws, in its purest form, is to establish rights, duties, and limitations in the holding of elections. Courts in India have been available for the enforcement of various legal provisions concerning the electoral process. This has sometimes contributed to a more informed society that remains vigilant concerning the conduct of the elections. Election Litigation in the high courts, while still present, is witnessed in fewer number compared to the period prior to the last phase of the general elections in 2019. In the past, the drawing of concurrent electoral boundaries in the State Legislatures and the Parliament sporadically attracted damages or prayers to set aside the elections. Such cases were filed in the respective High Courts, under Article 226 of the Constitution. Controversies involving elections of a

different type were also dealt with in High Courts. Prominent among these was the election of the Speaker of the House of the People and of the Deputy Speaker of the House of the People. Recurrent litigations concerning the Speaker's election, however, came before the apex Court for enforcement of Fundamental Rights under Art. 32 of the Constitution. Post the 1990 elections, the contestation abruptly declined for reasons such as the availability of sufficient constitutional mechanism for redress of grievances. The Constitution itself, the Law of the Land and the prevailing electoral laws provide for remedies related to the presence, absence or defect of qualifications or disqualifications of candidate(s), non-compliance with the provisions of the Election Laws Administrative Grants, conduct of free and fair elections and related procedural irregularities. As Courts approached such litigations and other citizen-oriented Public Interest Litigations with greater caution, the State of Kerala became the initial test ground for the First Appellate System of State-based, State-Sponsored, State-promoted, State-administered, State-only, State-cum-State Appellate, State-Wise Appellate, State-bound and State-only Appellate. Declarations were subsequently compiled off-line across the State and transmitted through inter-connecting Pats to the Returning Officers, including Prime Minister and Chief Ministers. As such public litigations started to pervade across an overwhelming majority of States, a distinction was made between Public Interest Litigations on the one hand and Public Interest Litigations with Serious Applicant Appeal on the other. The first type enrolled itself under the apex public interest litigator, whereas the second was initiated afresh from below and the apex retained a supervising and guiding role. Yet, forthwith, it made little difference; the apex Court curtailed the typology and rules followed were universally recognised and openly admitted to defeat Public Interest Litigations by constructing them as High-Courttable (Zipkin, 2011).

Emerging Challenges and Opportunities

Digital campaigning, data privacy, and security are critical challenges for Indian democracy during the Covid-19 pandemic. Political parties and candidates have substantially increased their engagement on social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, while networked campaigning has gained salience through virtual rallies and digital forums (Masliuddin & Sreenivasa Rao, 2012). Electronic media have developed national reach, dramatically impacting political outreach and appeal. Accordingly, the Election Commission of India has issued a set of guidelines regulating political advertisements and campaign materials, seeking to maintain a level playing field across various communication platforms. While the election of 2019 saw political parties substantially increase the budget allocated for online campaigning, current disclosure norms nevertheless permit parties to shield public accounts of digital expenditure.

The rise of the digital economy, online transaction modes, smart technologies, and smartphones has facilitated political financing through social networking platforms, allowing parties and candidates to attract micro-donations.

Virtual payments enable the routing of money across multiple channels that do not require disclosing the identity of donors, with the system being further convoluted through the use of cloud payments or financial instruments such as bitcoin. This financial environment thus introduces opportunities for circumventing limits on political funding. Online micro-donations also allow gathering funds from a large number of individuals with minor contributions that may or may not be declared, enlarging the funding base while restricting social scrutiny. Due to its extensive reach, the digital platform gathers those funds that the normal funding system does not attract. Political financing thus remains a central concern, with the trend toward electronic payments further complicating scrutiny and necessitating stronger regulation.

In the context of a nation-state with federal characteristics, uneven patterns persist across many dimensions. Geographic topography, availability of public education, financial openness of the state, and the depth of society influence the political lifecycle of ideas and citizens' attitudes toward political participation. Political parties operate with contextually grounded logics and challenges, spanning large variations across state, regional, and district levels. Central control over state machinery and the party-system configuration conditions the implementation of reforms, with abiding legislative structures—parliamentary, state legislative, or panchayat level—determining remaining slots for participation. Legislative chambers and tenure limits further effect procedures and parallel assembly-type discussions.

1. Digital Campaigning, Data Privacy, and Security

In the digital domain, the Indian political party system has acquired a new digital dimension, expanding from the realm of the analogue to the digital domain. In the process, the party system has acquired multifaceted networks formed of multiple parties at the state, regional, and national levels. The digital space has opened up fresh opportunities for parties to sensitively and creatively engage citizens and also has the potential to broaden the political space in a society that has historically been plagued by complex identities and narrow political choices (Jaipuria, 2020). Digital campaigning, however, raises genuine concerns about privacy, data protection, and security. Campaigning through the digital domain leaves a digital footprint of citizens that political parties can readily access and exploit in new forms of micro-targeting and messaging. Political ads, messages, and content are produced based on constantly evolving information that gets churned out during social media surfacing and online activities. The data can go well beyond just basic demographics and can include details about lifestyle, interests, views on politics, religion, sexual orientation, social networks, and much more (Shiner, 2019). Such intimate data deliver insights into information seeking types (Harker, 2020) and help shape sophisticated campaigns that promote topics and issues that are of personal significance to each electorate. These emerging practices have opened a Pandora's box, which is becoming increasingly difficult to tackle due to the immense risk it poses to democratic processes, administrative governance, and cybersecurity (Jaipuria, 2020).

2. Political Financing in the Digital Age

Political parties pursue numerous fundraising channels to sustain organisation operations, including administrative overheads, political campaigns, and party events (Serdült, 2019). Fundraising strategies vary across financial sectors, attracting larger donations from wealthier backers, with small online donations generally rejected due to their transaction fees. Most donations are confidential, with parties declaring only aggregated totals.

Digital fundraising allows for smaller donations through online payment systems, circumventing the formal financial sector, complete with remnants. In addition, money transfers occur via email and digital currencies. Rent payments and accounts payable through money and receivers of the person can allegedly remain outside the formal financial sector without detection.

Growing use of social media creates a twisted environment between politics and business (T. Aluaigba, 2019). Fund-raisers can efficiently send unsolicited messages to computer holdings. Spammers target rich prospects for purchasable email addresses. Online selling, advertising, and income-generating commercials can serve as money.

3. Regional Variations and Federal Considerations

Historically, electoral processes in India have displayed remarkable homogeneity across diverse states and Union territories. A common electoral system—the first-past-the-post principle, accompanied by a uniform configuration of parliamentary and assembly constituencies—governs independent India's elections at both state and Union levels. Standardized protocols for managing elections, enshrined in the Constitution of India, provide for a centrally-administered Election Commission with sweeping powers, including the authority to fix the date of elections. Much of the country's electoral apparatus operates under a uniform model, although many provisions have the latitude to accommodate local characteristics (Krushna Varma Varma, 2013). In recent decades, Indian federalism has evolved to embrace greater asymmetry and differentiation in various spheres, particularly when allowing for variation in fiscal federalism and legislative considerations. Alongside substantial advances in regional autonomy, election procedures have remained more or less pivoted to the central playing field. Consequently, electoral reform and institutional engagement in India must contend with foundational structures and features laid down or accentuated within the early phase of independence.

Comparative Perspectives: Lessons from Other Democracies

The promising prospects for reforms of electoral governance in India can be gleaned from diverse democratic experiences around the globe. Drawing on successful adaptations of democratic principles in other contexts offers a productive analytical framework with vital lessons for India's evolving democracy.

Global democratic governance has taken multiple forms, drawing from diverse social conditions and historical legacies. Comparative analysis identifies three models that merit consideration for the Indian context. First, electoral governance that promotes the neutrality of state institutions

in managing elections, establishing transparent yet flexible mechanisms for campaign financing, and mandating ideological and thematic coherence in party platforms. Second, mechanisms enhancing political transparency—public procurement, the judiciary, party financing, and lobbying; transparency complements representative accountability to foster public confidence in collective governance. Third, accountability measures to counter political decadence, incorporating effective bureaucratic oversight of elections, and mechanisms that strengthen citizen control over representatives, including participatory budgeting, legislative scrutiny, and public treatment of parliamentary queries.

The primary aim of such comparative analysis is not to replicate foreign institutions but to distil broader benchmarks of democracy—neutrality, transparency, and accountability—well aligned with democratic aspirations articulated in the Indian constitution, adapted to fit the local socio-political economy. Attempts to transplant foreign institutions offer less promise, since domestically conceived reforms absent such analysis may lack coherence, rendering them more vulnerable to interest-group obstruction. Meaningful electoral reform would establish stronger, more inclusive processes while enhancing public confidence in elected representatives. (Masliuddin & Sreenivasa Rao, 2012)

Policy Scenarios and Timelines for Reform

The long-term resilience and legitimacy of Indian democracy depend on correcting pathologies of democratic governance that have manifested as crises of transparency, accountability, and representation. A complete overhaul of the democratic foundation is impractical in the short term and institutional reform in a federal setting is both difficult and slow. Given the social, political, and economic pressures that any government in a medium-term horizon faces, a practical roadmap for political actors and institutions is an essential first step. Proposals for reform that can be swiftly enacted or which follow a coherent process of monitoring and gradual reconfiguration are of primary importance.

Three timing horizons guide thinking about reform. A series of relatively straightforward modifications can be developed and acted upon in the next few years. Institutional and statutory changes of structural consequence can then be addressed. From an even longer perspective, the nature of the relationship between politics, government, and the market requires reappraisal and institutional redesign. Transporting the timetable from debate and discussion to practice must also be carefully worked out. In every area of reform, increased transparency and an enabling environment for politics demand priority.

1. Short-Term Reforms and Practical Roadmaps

Democratic governance in India is facing a profound crisis of credibility and competence that raises questions about its resilience when subjected to stress and shocks. The urgent, important, and relevant nature of electoral reform and governance has never been more apparent (Masliuddin & Sreenivasa Rao, 2012). Institutionalized, legitimate political authority is essential for widely acceptable governance (Krushna Varma Varma, 2013). Electoral reform must be

approached from the perspective of legitimacy, and hence an analysis of the ground reality of electoral reforms since independence would be prudent. The evolving consensus on the desirable characteristics of electoral reforms would both underscore their relevance and provide a coherent framework (Ghosh, 2015). The suggestion is to undertake short, medium, and long-term reforms. The short-term reforms comprise steps that are actionable in nature, do not require formal institutional redesign, can be possibly implemented without legislative amendment, can be effectively undertaken by individuals and institutions other than the government, and can be monitored objectively.

1. Form a committee to • identify questionable election expenses which can possibly be averted, • track their achievement in due course, and make the findings public.
2. Promptly enforce expenditure limits for all elections, monitor their observance, and make the results public.
3. Build consensus to have the Election Commission of India, instead of the state Chief Electoral Officers, administer parliamentary and state assembly elections. Once this is achieved, undertake the reform in phased manner; first implement it for parliamentary elections, subsequently for elections of state assemblies, and finally for the elections of municipal and panchayat bodies, ensuring that district-wise election for state assemblies, civic bodies, and panchayati raj institutions is simultaneous with parliamentary elections.
4. Build a consensus and a mass movement to prevent the disbursal of cash, liquor, foodstuff, and other items to voters ahead of elections at the parliamentary and assembly levels, and simultaneously at the civic and panchayati raj levels. Once a high degree of buy-in is achieved, the Election Commission should issue public statements as to the measures being adopted, details of the proposed code of conduct, and the consequences for any violation.
5. Develop an effective grievance-redressal mechanism to receive and address complaints pertaining to the conduct of the elections, particularly the non-observance of rules and code of conduct.
6. Improving the details of funding sources to the Election Commission of India and other institutions like the Enforcement Directorate, Central Bureau of Direct Taxes, Serious Frauds Investigation Office etc, along with follow-up and feedback on specific actions taken or reason for inaction, to the public.

2. Medium-Term Structural Changes

In India, election-bound politics is overwhelmingly driven by parliamentary representations instead of local government representatives. The objective of Swaminathan Committee of 2004, worked towards strengthening rural local government, is still awaited—Enactment of the 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments in 1992 is yet to be fully accomplished. To give momentum to local government elections, and continued discussions about devolution of powers, sharing of financial resources based on population, need of good governance through newly qualified local bodies, such as, Anganwadis, Baal Vikas, and other self-help groups. Need to evaluate on micro level (blood-group, primary mutual groups), institution of Rajiv Gandhi Prasasti for best functioning Gram Panchayats and Hamlets, to ensure maximum participation. Discussion on measuring performance of institutions based on public expenditure-target indicators, wise management of service deliveries, elimination of black-spot on public distribution system, 1.1 target (both rural & urban population) including

sanitation facilities, and maximum coverage on supply of electricity should find a place in parallel. Analysis towards submission of productivity performance in selected 20 agriculture sectors at the block-level, at all India basis, and identification of the rural areas which are lagging in implementing English illiteracy campaign, and various performance indicators should also be concerted around the local bodies (Sinha, 2007). Promoting the five Panchayati Raj laws with adequate financial support have been deposited into State Consolidated Fund on 30 and 31 March in some State Governments to facilitate for creating relevant infra-structure at the grass root level.

3. Long-Term Institutional Reforms

India's multidimensional reforms continue in pursuit of aspirations articulated historically—the goal of realizing the vision represented at independence, amidst emergent schisms corresponding to class and caste. Such aspirations underlie governance frameworks that, while steeply divergent in nature and ideology, are premised upon the general tenets and framework of representative parliamentary democracy, as embodied constitutionally and electorally. Generating concordant perspectives, the frameworks furnish the basis for democratic governance, namely the conduct of electoral processes that reflect the will of the electorate, and ensuring mechanisms of accountability consonant with the tenor of authentic representative parliamentary democracy.

Reiterations of erstwhile aspirations of institutional reform posit the establishment of a presidential model—pursued originally through an amendment, subsequent interpretations reconsidering the constitutional validity—wherein the evolving governance framework continues to encourage periodic consideration of alternatives, despite limited tributes paid by general behaviour emulating the specifications of a parliamentary model. Court consideration of preferred proportionality—specifying elements of parliamentary democracy remaining consistent nationally circa three decades—is one of many others proposed: notably, suggestions have also envisaged significant disaggregation—one framing finding favour, later time-currents promoting decentralisation of an altogether divergent nature and scale (Masliuddin & Sreenivasa Rao, 2012); notably, suggestions have also envisaged significant disaggregation—one framing finding favour, later time-currents promoting decentralisation of an altogether divergent nature and scale (Sinha, 2007).

Implications for Democratic Resilience and Legitimacy

The success of democracy is closely related to the balance between the democratic institutions. It is a country like India with federalism, the basis of policies and political activities successes are meant to be formed at the state, ideally the process should be a cooperative one through the constitution and the parliamentary procedures. Although it is through the writ petition the Supreme Court of India is keeping an eye on whether these processes and activities are going according to the democratic spirit or the constitutional religious line, these issues are meant to be defined by the Commissioner of Election and Election Commission (Masliuddin & Sreenivasa Rao, 2012). Even since 1950-1952 when the age of voting was gradually

lowered from 21 to 18, these institutions have always been free from financial contribution from government and private parties. The financing was basically relied on receipts of form, items of which are settled by the process of court fixing and based on the pay of officer, even for the Agent that only has house at the doorstep, that is no proper guiding and instead from the authority (Sinha, 2007).

Methodology and Evidence Base

Electoral reforms have continued to be a topic of discussion as countries change politically, socially, economically, and technologically. Electoral reforms in various forms have been attempted in India, ranging from the much-debated electronic voting machines to policies like the model code of conduct. While the system cannot guarantee that elections will be free or fair, components such as integrity and responsiveness ensure vibrance in the democratic process.

The Constitution draws a distinction between free and fair elections. There is a wide disparity between the positions of electoral and appointment power. Election Commission of India (ECI) is the apex constitutional authority to supervise, direct, and control the entire process of elections to the Parliament, State legislatures, and the offices of the President and Vice-President. Critics across political spectrum believe ECI legislation is mandated in the Constitution to guarantee the agency's independence. A cohesive new approach is needed amidst the competing demands for political funding reform and the deliberate superseding of the voice of the people by a force illicitly. The theoretical perspectives that inform the research are both actor-centred and structure based, while government is treated as non-unitary. There are inherent mismatches between perceived political systems of budget allocations and the actual democratic systems of the machinery.

An extensive gap exists on social class differences and income parity with respect to budgets of political parties like the Congress, the BJP, and the regional parties. Data for opposition parties receive much investment and therefore a consideration of competitiveness both on smaller national budgets and the ever-increasing role of money in Indian politics. On non-capturable public goods, an inverse relationship between party prominence and state support diminishes as the level of opposition remuneration climbs, placing a distinct counter not on the mode of financing, but rather the types of party considered. Further analysis of Indian Politics primarily adheres to the functioning of a parliamentary system where political parties are quasi-central actors and the competitive aspect of dine models continues to hold true.

The data was collated from a range of sources, comparing legislative changes over a three-year period across both national elections and several state elections. The dimension of contestation was analysed across party families, with Congress data collated from several states. The two key sources of Regulatory Charging Power in the legal framework of secured credit DRT Paper seeks to bring forward the prevailing consciousness regarding the abuses of Law and Order apart from any organizational positive. Literature forming the basis of the conclusions are based on

the gaps that continue to widen revisited through the reactions to varying backdrop speeches. (Dawood, 2016) (Ibrahim ABUBAKAR & Muhammad YAHAYA, 2018)

Conclusion

Electoral reforms in India are critical to the consolidation of democracy and strengthening of the electoral process. Political parties and government have time and again proposed some reforms, to ensure that Indian democracy remains vibrant and continues on the path of growth. Alternative electoral systems have also been suggested, including the Alternative Vote, the Single Non-Transferable Vote and the Single Transferable Vote; however, no fundamental changes have been made to the framework of the First Past The Post electoral system. The first national election of 1952, when only 15.5% of the electorate cast their votes and only 439 contests were fought, was very different from the 1998 general elections, in which 5242 candidates were in the fray for the 543 Lok Sabha seats and the overall turnout was 62%; it thus appeared that India was approaching the consolidation stage of democratic development. The then prime minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, had even remarked that Indian democracy had proved its critics wrong, who doubted the Indian capacity for democratic governance (Sinha, 2007) , 50 years after independence, the nation's multiplicity of languages, religions, castes and cultures was seen as an impediment to national unity.

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