Party organisation and Polity-wide parties in India

DISHIL SHRIMANKAR

Thesis submitted to The University of Nottingham

for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

April 2018

Abstract

Why do polity-wide parties in a multi-level context dominate in some sub-national units but not others? Existing scholarship in comparative politics has either focused on regionally-based social cleavages or on political and economic decentralisation to explain the variation in the dominance of polity-wide parties at the sub-national level. Deviating from this predominant approach in comparative politics, I argue that political and economic decentralisation and the presence of distinct regional cleavages are necessary, but not sufficient conditions to explain the dominance of polity-wide parties. In other words, polity-wide parties are able to maintain their dominance at the sub-national level in a politically and economically decentralised polity with distinct sub-national regional cleavages if their sub-national branches have autonomy from their central branches.

If intra-party autonomy is important in explaining the dominance of polity-wide parties at the sub-national level, then why do polity-wide parties have different levels of intra-party autonomy? Existing literature in comparative politics has focused on federalism, electoral systems, incumbency, the nature of regional party competition, the timing of regional elections, and internal party features in explaining the differing levels of intra-party autonomy. While these explanations are of particular importance in understanding cross-national party organisational variations, I evaluate their merit at the sub-national level within a federal country with similar electoral systems.

Empirically, this dissertation uses evidence from India, the world's largest democracy. It uses a multi method approach that combines statistical analysis of all major Indian states with a sub-national comparison of two Indian states to present the empirical findings. Building on previous work on the Congress Party and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) at the national level, it looks at the dynamics of these two polity-wide parties in two Indian states, namely Gujarat and Maharashtra. Both the states are selected based on the Most Similar Systems Design, which further helps rule out alternative explanations in a systematic manner. Furthermore, the findings from Gujarat and Maharashtra are based on a long period of field research with semi-structured interviews with sub-national and local level politicians in Ahmedabad, Gandhinagar, Mumbai and New Delhi, India. Finally, in the latter part of the thesis, I use statistical analysis to test the qualitative findings across all the major Indian states using Chhibber, Jensenius and Suryanarayan (2014) dataset on party organisation. The findings from the statistical analysis are consistent with the main findings from my qualitative study providing further confidence in support of the primary theoretical arguments put forward in the thesis.

Acknowledgements

My thesis was completed with the help and encouragement from a number of people. The most important among them were my supervisors. Katharine Adeney gave me complete freedom in exploring the topic from a number of different standpoints. She read multiple drafts of the thesis with care and patience, and asked tough questions that made me ever more enthusiastic about the work ahead. I thank Kyriaki Nanou for always pushing me harder to consider multiple approaches to answering the core research questions, and reconsider the broader implications of the many assumptions I make. Carole Spary taught me how to think differently about Indian politics, and indulged me in many conversations about India that proved to be important at various stages of my PhD. For their patience, comments, encouragement and mentoring my professional development over the years, I thank them deeply. Also, their easy, accessibility and friendly nature provided an excellent atmosphere to discuss important issues with ease and simplicity. I feel very lucky to have had inputs from such accomplished academics.

Importantly, this thesis would not have been completed without the supportive and encouraging company of my closest friends: Filippo Boni and Annabelle De Heus. They supported me through every obstacle and hurdle during the PhD journey. How can I thank them enough? Also, a very special thank you to Arianna

Tabegna, for her invaluable support in reading countless drafts and chapters.

The Political Science community at Nottingham is an extremely warm and a friendly place. Among the faculty, I particularly wish to thank Cees Van Der Eijk, Simon Toubeau, Adam Lindsay and Fernando Casal Bertoa for comments on different parts of my thesis. Among the postgraduate community, I wish to thank Aref Ebedi and Francesca Silvestri for being helpful colleagues and good friends during the final stretch of my thesis. I would also like to acknowledge people in India who, under no professional or personal obligation, helped me with my field research. Although it is impossible to name everyone here, I express my gratitude.

Over the course of my PhD, I accrued a number debts. The Vice Chancellor's Scholarship for Research Excellence and the Institute of Asia and Pacific Studies Tomlinson Scholarship funded the first three years of my PhD. I am also thankful for the financial support received by the Institute of Asia and Pacific Studies (IAPS), Methods and Data Institute, Nottingham Interdisciplinary Centre for Economic and Political Research, and the School of Politics and International Relations at the University of Nottingham.

Finally, I am very grateful to my parents, Bina and Vijay Shrimankar, for always supporting my interests and career choices. Despite my mom's little interest in political science, she was deeply involved in the entire cycle of my thesis, from inception to submission. I would say that we took the PhD journey together, and whatever this may have accomplished is in fact her accomplishment. Thank you, Bina, *Jay Shree Krishna!*.

Contents

1 Introduction **1**

1.1 Why study the state-level 4

1.2 How do state-level party systems differ? 10

1.3 Existing explanations for polity-wide party dominance at the sub-national level 16

1.4 The role of party organisations in shaping party systems 27

1.5 Thesis outline 30

2 Research Design **32**

2.1 Why Gujarat and Maharashtra 33

2.1.1 Method of difference 36

2.2 Possible Objections and counter-objections 41

3 Historical Background **44**

3.1 Why focus on caste as an important social cleavage 47

3.2 First electoral phase, 1952-1967 51

3.3 Second electoral phase, 1967-1989 56

3.3.1 Maharashtra 56

3.3.2 Gujarat 60

3.4 Discussion 64

4 Party organisation **69**

4.1 Necessary conditions for argument resting on intra-party autonomy 72

4.2 Intra-party organisation and dominance of polity-wide parties at the state-level 77

4.3 How my argument differs from previous work on party organisation in India 82

4.4 Operationalising autonomy within polity-wide parties 92

4.5 A note on data collection on intra-party autonomy in India 97

4.6 Conclusion 107

5 Gujarat **109**

5.1 Gujarat BJP 114

5.1.1 Gujarat BJP under Modi 120

5.2 Congress 124

5.3 Gujarat Party System 135

6 Maharashtra **139**

6.1 Maharashtra Congress 143

6.1.1 Maharashtra Congress After Sharad Pawar 151

6.2 Maharashtra BJP 157

6.3 Maharashtra Party system 168

7 Explaining party organisational variations **173**

7.1 Introduction 173

7.2 Incumbency Explanation 175

7.3 Alternative Explanations 179

7.4 Intra-party autonomy for the Congress Party and the BJP in Gujarat and Maharashtra 183

7.5 Endogeneity 191

7.6 Conclusion 193

8 Large N **196**

8.1 Introduction 196

8.2 Dataset 197

8.3 Section 1 201

8.3.1 Measuring the primary explanatory variable 201

8.3.2 Measuring the primary outcome variable 204

8.3.3 Controls 207

8.3.4 Bivariate analysis 212

8.3.5 Multivariate Analysis 213

8.4 Section 2 218

8.4.1 Measuring the primary outcome variable 219

8.4.2 Measuring the primary explanatory variable 221

8.4.3 Controls 221

8.4.4 Multivariate analysis 226

8.4.5 Endogeneity 234

8.5 Discussion 240

9 Conclusions **243**

9.1 Polity-wide partys dominance at the sub-national level 247

9.2 Explaining intra-party autonomy 249

9.3 Avenues for Future research 251

List of Tables

1.1 Agreement with the statement; we should be loyal to our region first and then to the country 22

1.2 Difference in means test for two groups of states 26

2.1 Support for national and/or regional parties in Gujarat and all-India (INES 2004) 33

3.1 Congress Party's performance in the Lok Sabha, 1952-67 45

3.2 Historical-territorial heterogeneity in Indian states 48

3.3 Index of Opposition Unity, 1962-67 54

3.4 Maharashtra state-assembly election, 1995 59

4.1 Themes measuring intra-party autonomy 95

5.1 Themes discussed to code the Level of autonomy for the Gujarat BJP unit 112

5.2 Themes discussed to code the Level of autonomy for the Gujarat Congress unit 113

5.3 Summarising the level of autonomy within the BJP and the Congress Party, Gujarat 1990-2012 136

6.1 Themes discussed to code the Level of autonomy for the Maharashtra Congress unit 141

6.2 Themes discussed to code the Level of autonomy for the Maharashtra BJP unit 142

6.3 Summarising the level of autonomy within the BJP and the Congress Party, Maharashtra 1990-2014 170

7.1 Combination matrix government and opposition for polity-wide parties 176

7.2 Intra-party autonomy across Gujarat and Maharashtra, 1990-2014 . 183

7.3 Summarising incumbency, intra-party autonomy and timing of elections in Gujarat (GJ) and Maharashtra (MH) 190

8.1 Summary Statistics 212

8.2 Party organisation and Polity-wide parties in India 215

8.3 Descriptive Statistics: Congress Party 225

8.4 Descriptive Statistics: BJP 226

8.5 Logistic Regressions with Congress Party organisation as dependent variable 229

8.6 Logistic Regressions with BJP organisation as dependent variable . 233

8.7 Intra-party autonomy and Congress Party seatshare (%) 237

8.8 Intra-party autonomy and BJP seatshare (%) 239

1 Types of parties 287

2 List of primary sources 290

3 British vs Princely districts, Gujarat and Maharashtra 292

4 Congress Party organisation as dependent variable 294

5 BJP organisation as dependent variable 295

6 Bayesian Logistic regression with BJP organisation as dependent variable 296

List of Figures

1.1 Total Number of Parties in the Lok Sabha, 1952-2014 6

1.2 Effective Number of Parties (by votes and seats) at the national level 7

1.3 Linguistic Map of India 20

1.4 *Tell me, to what extent do you agree with the statement; we should be loyal to our region first and then to the country - Hindi Heartland states* 23

1.5 *Tell me, to what extent do you agree with the statement; 'we should be loyal to our region first and then to the country- Non-Hindi Heartland states* 23

1.6 *Tell me, to what extent do you agree with the statement; 'we should be loyal to our region first and then to the country-Jammu and Kashmir and North-eastern states* 24

1.7 *Tell me, to what extent do you agree with the statement; 'compared to national parties, regional/local parties can provide better government in states' - States categorized depending upon the nature of party competitive space after the 2004 general election.* 25

2.1 Vote share of the Congress Party and the BJP in Gujarat and Maharashtra 39

2.2 Effective Number of Parties (Regional elections) 40

2.3 Average Effective Number of Parties (regional elections) 42

4.1 Clipping from Indian Express February 9th 1990, page 5 103

4.2 Clipping from Indian Express 25th February 1990, page 5 105

8.1 Level of autonomy for Polity-wide party organisation for all the major Indian states, 1967-2004 203

8.2 Combined seat share (%) of the Congress Party and the BJP across all the major Indian states. 206

8.3 Bivariate relationship between average polity-wide party organisation and average polity-wide party seat share (%) 212

8.4 Predictions for polity-wide parties seat share (%) with standard error bars 217

8.5 Predicted probability of Polity-wide party dominance 218

8.6 Histogram of Congress Party and the BJP organisation 220

8.7 Conditional effects for INC.Incumbency with standard error bars . . 230

1 Level of autonomy for Congress Party (solid) and BJP (dashed) for all the major Indian states, 1967-2004 293

Chapter 1

Introduction

Political parties play a major role in every democratic society. They are the intermediate organisations that provide links between the citizen and the state (Sridharan and deSouza, 2006: 1). But their role is particularly important in newly democratising societies. They contribute towards democratic consolidation by providing representation i.e. they help articulate and aggregate the interests of the public, contribute towards conflict resolution, especially in deeply divided societies, and finally offer policy alternatives to the electorate in an accountable fashion. The party label is a way for the electorate to associate candidates with past as well as future performance. However, as noted by Randall and Svasand (2001: 7), not all parties contribute equally to democratic consolidation. It is argued that parties that are national (hereafter polity-wide) in scope and build on a broad social base are more favourable for democratic consolidation as opposed to those representing specific regions. It is precisely this aspect of post-independence Indian democracy that partly explains its success.

In post-independence India, the Congress Party, a polity-wide party, won a legislative majority at the national level and was the single largest party at the state-level.[1] It remained the dominant party at the national level for the first 30 years after independence (1947-1977) (Ziegfeld and Tudor, 2015: 4). It briefly lost power at the centre in 1977 to coalition of opposition parties, but was able to return to power in the 1980 general elections. The party once again lost power in 1989 at the national level, ushering in a period of its electoral decline. Even when the party returned to power at the centre in the post-1989 period, it has never been able to achieve a simple majority at the national level again. Concurrently, since the late 1980s, India also witnessed the rise of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The BJP also relied on coalition partners to form national governments up until the 2014 general election. In the 2014 general elections the BJP won a simple majority in the Indian national parliament. For the first time in over 30 years, a polity-wide party was able to form a national government without the support of coalition partners in India.

However, the dominance of polity-wide parties at the national level ignores the uneven success of polity-wide parties at the state-level. Some states such as Karnataka, Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, West Bengal, Kerala and Tamil Nadu developed a distinct pattern of political competition with strong opposition to the Congress Party before the 1989 general election (Yadav and Palshikar, 2006: 79). Why was it challenged in some Indian states as opposed to others? Building on the sub-national variation of polity-wide dominance at the state-level, I seek to answer a specific research question: *why are polity-wide parties dominant in some Indian states as opposed to others?*

Existing literature on political parties has either emphasised electoral institu-

[1] In this thesis, I use state, regional and sub-national level interchangeably.

tions, political and economic centralisation, or the lack of regionally-based social cleavages to account for the dominance of polity-wide parties. However, an analysis of the dominance of polity-wide parties in India reveals that despite experiencing similar levels of political and economic centralisation, some Indian states are dominated by polity-wide parties while others are not. Importantly, the presence of a distinct sub-national regional identity is not sufficient to explain the variation in the dominance of polity-wide parties at the state-level in India.

One very important explanation in this regard is party organisation. This thesis builds upon existing scholarship (Weiner, 1967; Chandra, 2004: 99-115; Chhibber et al., 2014; Ziegfeld, 2016b: 155-170; Bohlken, 2016: 121-162) on party organisation in India to argue that polity-wide parties are able to dominate in those states or sub-national units where their regional branches have autonomy. Assuming sub-national politicians to be rational-minded candidates, lack of autonomy from the central branch of the party incentivises sub-national politicians to defect from polity-wide parties to form their own parties or join other non-polity-wide parties. However, if politicians are able to achieve autonomy at the sub-national level by joining an autonomous regional branch of an alternative polity-wide party, then they are more likely to join that as opposed to forming or joining non-polity-wide parties. I discuss this explanation in detail in chapter 4.

It is important to note that my explanation of why polity-wide parties dominate at the state-level is a system-level explanation and not an explanation of why individual polity-wide parties win or lose. In other words, it explains why effective competition in some states is between polity-wide parties where in others it is not. The central aim of this thesis is to provide an explanation for a state-level party system as a whole as opposed to individual parties. Even when research on party system is interrelated with studies on individual parties, the two fields are not

the same. As articulated by Ware (1996), a party system is more than just a sum of individual parties, it involves both more and less than a study of the individual parties. My research aims to understand the impact of individual party organisations on the entire regional party system. In doing so, it contributes to the growing literature of intra-party organisation in shaping party systems at the sub-national level in India.

I begin this chapter by underlining the importance of studying party politics at the state-level in India. Second, I describe how the Indian party systems differ at the sub-national level. Next, I examine and rule out a number of existing explanations that have looked at explaining the differences across the state-level party systems. Finally, I present my explanation of intra-party organisation, and underline why it is important to emphasise the role of party organisations in shaping the regional party system in India.

1.1 Why study the state-level

Party politics in India, and Indian party system more specifically, has often been theorized and studied from a national perspective. Prominent scholars working on party systems in India, such as Rajni Kothari (1970: 122), argued that "while looking at the Indian political system as a whole, I do not intend to get lost in the esoteric details of its many constituents" and further explains this in a footnote saying that he was looking at state politics from a national perspective. For the earlier generation of political scientists working on India, the national-level remained the predominant unit of analysis. As underlined by Yadav and Palshikar (2006), politics at the state-level was understood to be about power, personal

aggrandizement, and parochial interests. Gradually, as political developments unfolded differently in the states, the state emerged as an effective arena of political analysis.

Of course, this is not to overlook the efforts of some scholars of Indian politics for whom the state always remained the principal unit of analysis (Weiner, 1967; Narain et al., 1967). In the 1960s, India's population was (approximately) 500 million, almost three times as populous as any other democracy in the world.[2] For them, the state was the obvious unit of analysis, as it helped disaggregating the complex national picture.

Nevertheless, the 1990s emerged as the critical juncture in unleashing scholarly work on state politics in India (Kailash, 2011a). This is because since the early 1990s, states have emerged as the effective arena of political choice (Yadav and Palshikar, 2009b: 1). One reason for the growing importance of the state-level arena in the 1990s is the decline of the catch-all Congress Party at an all-India level and its fractionalization along regional, caste and religious lines (Chhibber, 1999: 2-5). It is true that even during its heyday, the Congress Party mobilized support at the state-level, where its support was heavily dependent on particular state-specific social cleavages (Chhibber and Petrocik, 1989: 60-64). In the 1990s, we see the growth of non-polity-wide parties come to severely challenge and weaken the Congress at an all-India level (Chhibber, 1999: 109-133; Palshikar, 2004). The fragmented national party system certainly exhibits the rise in political competition that is truly remarkable for a student of Indian politics. The rise in political competition is reflected in the number of parties represented in the parliament post-1989 (see Figure 1.1). The Effective Number of Parties (ENP-

[2]During the 1960s, the next populous democracy in the world was the United States (180 million, approximately). Currently, India's population is 1.2 billion people, almost four times as populous as the United States.

votes and seats)[3] scores pre-1989 and post-1989 also clearly echo this trend.[4] See Figure 1.2 below.

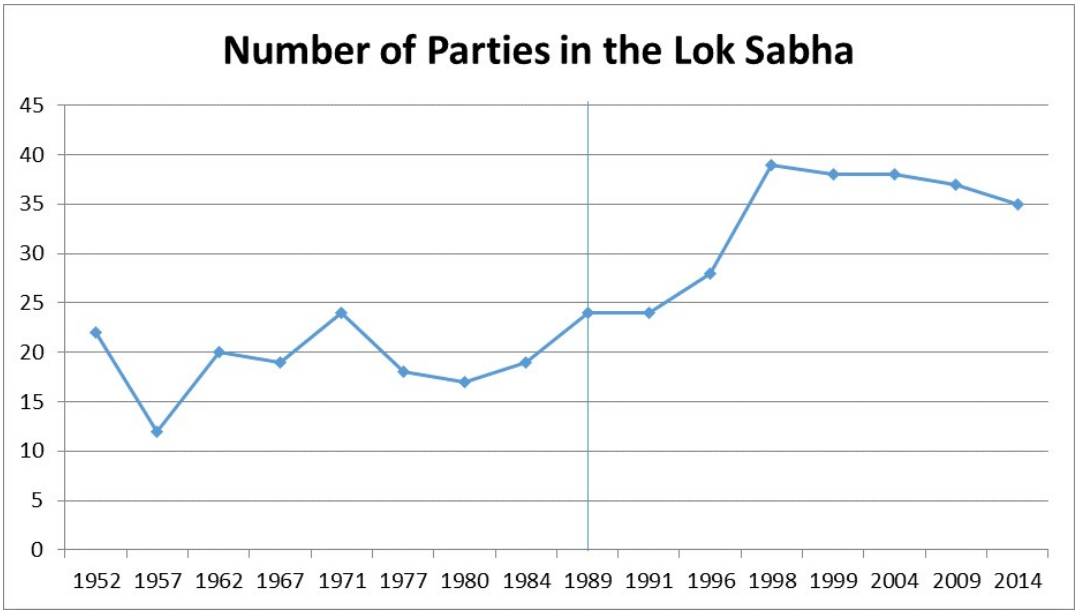


Figure 1.1: Total Number of Parties in the Lok Sabha, 1952-2014

[3]Effective Number of Parties calculated using the Laakso and Taagepara (1979) method. The basic formula is $N = \frac{1}{\sum_{i=1}^{n} p_i^2}$ where N is the effective number of parties and Pi is either the proportion of seats or votes. Although literature on Indian political parties have excluded independents, I have decided to include them as separate parties. Considering Indias party system to be weakly institutionalized, there are certain states in India where independents win significant vote share (and some times even seats). Therefore, by excluding independents, the ENP score are artificially deflated, and thereby reduces the level of party fragmentation (for more on the issue of excluding independents please see Wilkinson 2015).

[4]True, the ENP scores have dipped in the 2014 elections, as a result of the parliamentary majority won by the Modi-led Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), but this still places the ENP scores (both seat-wise and vote-wise) higher than the pre-1989 scores. Moreover, in the research design chapter I justify why I choose to study the period from 1989 up until 2014.

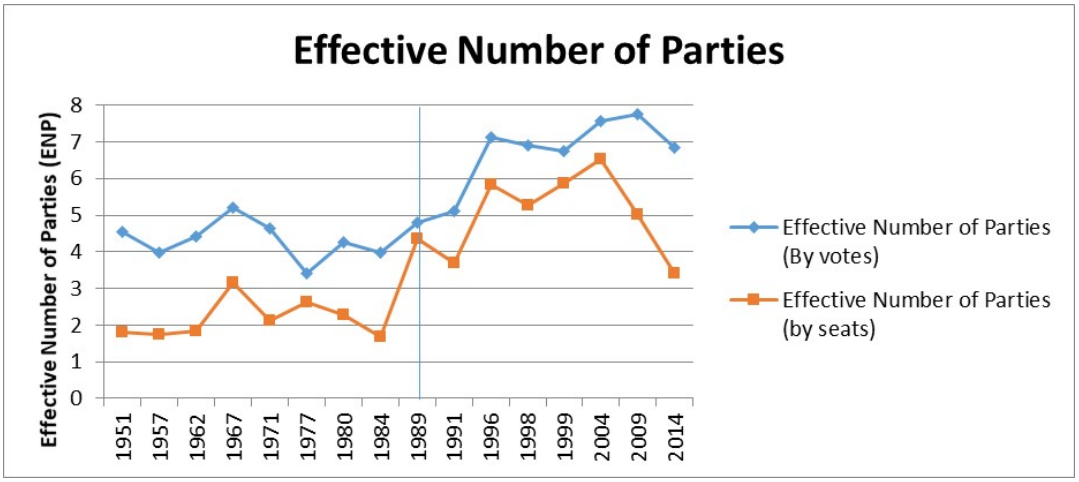


Figure 1.2: Effective Number of Parties (by votes and seats) at the national level

However, as underscored by Yadav and Palshikar (2006: 65), some states such as Karnataka, Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, West Bengal, Kerala and Tamil Nadu had developed a distinct pattern of political competition with strong opposition to the Congress Party before the 1990s. In contrast, the Congress Party's supremacy survived till the late 1980s in many states of North and West India: Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Orissa, and to a lesser extent Himachal Pradesh and Delhi. The demise of the Congress Party created space in these states for the entry of new political forces or for rearranging the format of party competition.

Once again, the rearranging of the format of political competition during the 1990s differed across the Indian federation. Some states experienced a proliferation of non-polity-wide parties providing effective challenge to polity-wide parties whereas in others political competition was between polity-wide parties. Despite sharing identical institutional features, the states of the Indian federation display remarkable diversity in the pattern of political competition.

It is the interplay of these aspects that makes India a unique case study.

Methodologically speaking, the high-level of variation within a single country with very different sub-national party systems makes it a very interesting case study to test the explanatory power of the theoretical approaches on comparative party systems developed elsewhere. This is the core purpose of my thesis. It aims to contribute both theoretically and methodologically to the broad literature on comparative party systems by explaining the sub-national variation in India.

Institutionally speaking, India follows the single-member district simple plurality (SMSP) electoral system. The polity is not only parliamentary, but also federal. As underlined by Sridharan (2003: 1), it is the federation that has come to define the structure of political competition. It has created distinct state-level party systems that aggregately define the national party system. More importantly, the social diversity of India in terms of caste, religion and language is not only present at the national-level, but is also present at the state-level.

It is also necessary to highlight the difference between general elections (also referred to as Lok Sabha) and regional elections (also referred to as Vidhan Sabha) in India. Importantly, since the early 1970s, the general and regional elections have not been held concurrently across the Indian polity. Consequently, the party system at the state-level has increasingly become differentiated from the national-level. Yet, the real structural change came about in the late 1980s. Since the late 1980s and early 1990s, significant power (agricultural, job reservations, and most importantly land reform policy) has been delegated to state governments. State governments are also the vehicles through which central government funds are channelled to the people (Chhibber and Nooruddin, 2004: 164). As noted by Yadav and Palshikar (2009b: 1)

..if the people voted in state assembly elections held in 1970s and 1980s

> as if they were choosing the prime minister, they now [beginning from the 1990s] vote in the parliamentary elections as if they are choosing their chief minister. In their eyes an individual constituency is too small and the country too big it is at the level of the state that the voters make their choice.[5]

This increasing importance of the state-level has certainly been reflected in the plethora of state specific studies on India (Chhibber and Nooruddin, 2004; Jenkins, 2004; Bhandari, 2012; Heller, 2011; Jaffrelot and Kumar, 2009). One such study stands out, not just because of the theoretical and methodological sophistication, but also because of the normative importance it attaches to the state-specific enterprise. Steven Wilkinson in his book- *Votes and Violence* establishes a causal relationship between party competition at the state-level and the levels of ethnic violence experienced by the state.[6] His central argument is that states with higher-levels of party competition and fragmentation are less likely to experience religious violence. This is because minorities in highly competitive party systems can extract promises of greater security from politicians in return for their votes (Wilkinson, 2004: 137). His book is a novel interpretation of the mechanism through which state-level competitive politics open (and close) possibilities of deepening democratic governance. If state-level party competition and fragmentation opens up the possibility of deepening democratic governance, then

[5]Obviously, some might find a state-level enterprise foolhardy, especially with comfortable majority by a polity-wide party-the BJP-at the centre. Nevertheless, I would argue that the state still remains a very important unit of analysis, despite the comfortable majority in the parliament. This is because the current Prime Minister of India-Narendra Modi-was a chief minister of a state for over a decade, and has advocated more decentralisation in India. This is reflected in his speeches (Modi 2015), and also by the allocation of more funds to the states during the 2015 union budget (Hindustan Times 2015).

[6]However, it is important to note that his argument at the constituency-level is different. As underlined by Heath (2014), multiparty contests at the constituency-level exacerbate ethnic rivalry between different groups, both directly and indirectly. This is because multiparty contests at the constituency-level encourage parties to make narrow social appeals, which increases security fears indirectly.

it is important to explain why some states are indeed more competitive and fragmented. My thesis explores state-level party system fragmentation by looking at why polity-wide parties dominate some Indian states as opposed to others.

Once we establish the importance of studying state-level party systems, an obvious question follows; how do we differentiate state-level party systems in order to make analytical sense of them. The next section picks this analytical burden.

1.2 How do state-level party systems differ?

As briefly mentioned above, the format of political competition differed across the Indian federation. Some states were dominated by polity-wide parties whereas in others non-polity-wide parties challenged the dominance of polity-wide parties. In my thesis, a state dominated by a polity-wide party would be a state where polity-wide parties can form a government with simple majority. Effective competition[7] in such a state is between polity-wide parties. This conceptualisation of dominance of polity-wide parties comes closest to the concept of party system nationalisation, but one which is conceptualised at the sub-national level as opposed to the national level.[8] Therefore, a highly nationalised sub-national unit would be one with a presence of only polity-wide parties. In contrast, de-nationalised sub-national

[7]Effective competition is measured using Laakso and Taagapera method.

[8]In Chapter 8, I show that my empirical operationalization of polity-wide party dominance at the sub-national level is highly correlated with party system nationalization measure at the sub-national level. One objection is that if my measure is highly correlated with the party system nationalization measure at the sub-national level then why do I prefer calling it polity-wide party dominance as opposed to party system nationalization. I prefer calling it polity-wide party dominance because in the comparative politics literature party system nationalization is often used for party systems at the national level. Even when some scholars have used this concept at the sub-national level, they are more often interested in the aggregate results of individual states for the whole party system as opposed to understand the disaggregate nature of the party systems.

units are those where both polity-wide parties and non-polity-wide parties would be present. While it is true that even in nationalised sub-national units, non-polity-wide parties will win some share of votes, they would only challenge the dominance of polity-wide parties if the non-polity-wide parties meet two conditions identified by Sartori (1976), (1) coalition potential, the non-polity-wide party must be required, at least on some occasions, for a feasible coalition that can form a government; (2) blackmail potential, the party's existence affects the tactics of party competition of those parties that do have coalition potential i.e. polity-wide parties are significantly constrained by the presence of non-polity-wide parties.

Now that we have established what I mean by dominance, it is important to define polity-wide parties. Broadly speaking, I follow the typology created by Ziegfeld (2009: 87-93). Parties will be categorised as polity-wide or non-polity-wide based on the electoral performance of the parties across the Indian polity. I do not draw a conceptual distinction between non-polity-wide parties. Certainly, non-polity-wide parties could be further distinguished based on their political goals (Kailash, 2014), but since my main aim is to explain the dominance of polity-wide parties through whether or not their sub-national units have autonomy, it does not matter which type of non-polity-wide party challenges the dominance of polity-wide parties at the sub-national level.

Even the Election Commission of India (ECI) follows a combination of the seat and vote criteria at the state-level in order to recognise a party as a national or state party. Although the ECI's criteria is important for the political parties per se - as fulfilling the ECI's criteria allows the party to reserve a symbol[9] at

[9]Party symbols are very important in India, as many voters associate the party through their symbol. Interestingly, during my fieldwork in Uttar Pradesh before the 2014 general election, I found that many voters referred to major parties not by their name, but by their symbols. When probed further, many did not know the name of the party, but only knew the party symbol. The importance given to party symbols in India is also confirmed by other scholars (see Butler et al 1991: 21).

the national or the state-level - it is not important in light of the main questions pursued in this thesis. This is because by ECI's definition, many parties with an effective political importance only in one state can be classified as a national party. For instance, the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) is classified as a national party by the ECI, but despite fielding candidates throughout the country, the BSP is in effective competition only in the state of Uttar Pradesh (and arguably Punjab and Madhya Pradesh). Additionally, the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) is also classified as a national party according to the ECI. Once again, this party only has strong presence in one state, namely Maharashtra (Palshikar, 2013: 92). The two examples clearly underline the weakness in using the classification provided by the ECI. Therefore, in my thesis, I will instead use my own classification, adapted from the one provided by Ziegfeld (2016b: 24-26), Kailash (2014: 65) and Palshikar (2013: 91-93).

1 Polity-wide parties: parties that are dominant players or effective players in all the six zones[10] (PW). The two national parties, the BJP and the Congress Party are perfect examples. The BJP and the Congress Party not only put up candidates in a majority of Indian states, but also win significant seats and votes across the Indian polity. It is true that their support base significantly varies across the country, but in comparison to all the other political parties, they certainly qualify as natural examples to fit the criterion. Their polity-wide characteristics is confirmed by Ziegfeld's (2016b: 24) use of Herfindalh-Hirschmann index of concentration, similar to the one conceptualised by Golosov (2016), and party nationalisation scores conceptualised by Bochsler

[10]Geographically speaking, the country can be divided into six zones; North (Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi, Rajasthan), North-East (Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura), Central (Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Uttarkhand, and Uttar Pradesh), East (Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha, West Bengal), West (Gujarat and Maharashtra), and South (Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu)

(2010) cited in Schakel and Swenden (2016) work. In addition to the BJP and the Congress Party, the Janata Party also qualified as a polity-wide party for a brief interregnum between 1977 and 1980, and the former Janata Dal (JD) also qualifies as a polity-wide party in the late 1980s.

2 Non-polity-wide parties (NPW): parties that are significant players only in one (or at the most two) states. The BSP is a perfect example. The BSP is a regionally-based political party, as it wins the majority of its votes in the state of Uttar Pradesh. The NCP also qualifies as a non-polity-wide party because the party is in effective competition in the state of Maharashtra. While some non-polity-wide parties make specific demands for the region, this is not a necessary condition to classify parties as non-polity-wide. I combine non-polity-wide parties that are regional because of their geographic concentration and those that are regional because of the regionally-based demands they make. This is because the primary aim of this thesis is to explain the variations in the dominance of polity-wide parties at the state-level, and since both types of non-polity-wide parties can challenge the dominance of polity-wide parties, I consider the two types of non-polity-wide parties together.[11] For example, Shiv Sena is a good example of a non-polity-wide party that makes specific state-based demands, but its classification is based on its presence in one state, and not because of the region-based demands it makes. Other examples of non-polity-wide parties are the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) in the South and the Shrimoni Akali Dal (SAD) in the North. The DMK has pushed forward the Tamil regionalist agenda whereas the SAD represents Sikh sub-nationalism located in Punjab. Once again, I classify them as non-polity-wide parties alongside the BSP and the NCP.

[11] In this thesis, I use non-polity-wide parties and regional parties interchangeably where regional parties would include non-polity-wide parties that are regional due to geographic concentration of its votes or seats and also those that are regional because they make specific regionally specific demands.

Having clarified the definition of polity-wide parties and non-polity-wide parties, I wish to reiterate the primary research question of this thesis; *why are some states dominated by polity-wide parties where in others non-polity-wide parties come to challenge the dominance*[12] *of polity-wide parties.* Whether or not polity-wide parties are dominant at the sub-national level has important consequences for the polity as a whole. The dominance of polity-wide parties across sub-national units contributes to party system nationalisation (Schakel and Swenden, 2016). Party system nationalisation refers to the extent of convergence between the number of parties at the national and sub-national levels (Hicken, 2009). Jones and Mainwaring (2003) argue that a party system is highly nationalised when polity-wide parties respective vote shares do not differ much from one province to the next. They also argue that in weakly nationalised systems, polity-wide parties vote shares vary widely across provinces. In turn, party system nationalisation has important consequences for the whole polity. While some argue that nationalised party systems have a positive effect on outcomes: improving political accountability, better coordination of economic policies (Rodden and Wibbels, 2011), and maintain political stability, especially in a socially diverse society like India (Brancati, 2011). Others suggest that the dominance of polity-wide parties can weaken democratic accountability if regional interests are not accommodated within the parties (Glineau and Blanger, 2005). Notwithstanding the debate on whether the dominance of polity-wide parties is desirable or not, the causes and the consequences of polity-wide party dominance at the state-level represent an important area of research for scholars.

Moreover, polity-wide parties find it particularly hard to organise in multi-level contexts.[13] They have to accommodate inter-territorial tensions over the

[12]I understand non-polity-wide parties to challenge the dominance of polity-wide parties if they satisfy the two conditions (coalition potential and blackmail potential) identified by Sartori.

[13]I define multi-level contexts later in the latter part of this chapter

distribution of resources, manage the relationships between party officials and representatives at various tiers of government, and speak for the general interest whilst simultaneously representing potentially contradictory particularistic interests (Van Biezen and Hopkin, 2006: 15; Fabre, 2008: 309). Put differently, polity-wide parties will have to manage interactions horizontally across different sub-national units and also vertically between each sub-national unit with the party's central branch (Deschouwer, 2003: 215). The scale of the interactions will further depend on the degree to which the sub-national units are formed on specific regional identities.

Furthermore, it is in sub-national elections as opposed to general elections that polity-wide parties find it the hardest to organise. In sub-national elections, sub-national elites of the polity-wide party will be tempted to speak for the specific interests of the region, and sometimes even attempt to assert independence from the party's central branch. More often these specific regional interests might contradict the profile a polity-wide party is trying to sell at the central level or to the electorates of other sub-national units (Fabre, 2008: 310-312). This is especially the case when sub-national units have greater political and economic authority and are carved out on a regionalist identity (Hopkin, 2003: 229). A presence of a strong regional party at the sub-national level can increase the difficulty for a polity-wide party. Sub-national elites of polity-wide parties will often wish to assert their independence from the party's central branch in order to counter the regional party's claim of monopoly over the regions interests (Van Biezen and Hopkin, 2006: 16).

Polity-wide parties have resolved these tensions elsewhere by having autonomous sub-national units (Harmel and Janda, 1982: 63). Nevertheless, as I will empirically show in this thesis, polity-wide parties in India do not consistently have

autonomous sub-national units even after controlling for internal party features, political and economic decentralisation, the presence of a strong sub-national identity in the unit and strong regional parties. While the first part of this dissertation deals with the consequences of having different levels of autonomy within polity-wide parties at the sub-national level, chapter 7 explains why polity-wide parties have different levels of intra-party autonomy at the sub-national level. I explain this empirical puzzle by answering three main sub-research questions; (1) why do certain polity-wide parties have autonomous sub-national units in comparison to other polity-wide parties in the same state?; (2) why do certain regional branches of the same polity-wide party have more autonomy in one state compared to the other?; and (3) why do certain regional branches of polity-wide parties have more autonomy from their central branch at one point of time over other?

1.3 Existing explanations for polity-wide party dominance at the sub-national level

In the literature in comparative politics, political and fiscal decentralization is primarily held responsible for the declining dominance of polity-wide parties (Brancati, 2008b: 135-159; Chhibber and Kollman, 1998). The key argument put forward by advocates of the decentralization thesis is that devolving decision-making powers to sub-national governments and legislatures encourages politicians to form non-polity-wide parties and voters to vote for them. This is because decentralization increases the opportunity to govern at the sub-national level.

In the Indian context, Pradeep Chhibber and Ken Kollman (1998) argue that during periods of fiscal decentralization, the Indian party system was relatively

less aggregated. Here, aggregation is referred to as the linkage[14] between the sub-national (state or constituency level) levels with the national level. During periods of fiscal decentralization, regional political elites are not compelled to form or join polity-wide parties in order to reap the benefits or fruits of being in government. Forming or joining regional political parties, with access to state or provincial level, suffices their goal of attaining substantial political power. This is because in fiscally decentralised political systems, financial and political power is decentralised below the central level. In sum, the process of fiscal decentralisation helps non-polity-wide parties.

Although the decentralization thesis is important in explaining the temporal variation in India, it does not account for the cross-sectional variation found across the Indian polity.[15] Put differently, keeping the levels of fiscal decentralization/centralization constant, states in India differ in the extent of aggregation.

Augmenting the decentralization/centralization thesis, Rekha Diwakar (2010: 486) argues that in addition to the devolution of political and fiscal powers, the states dependency on the centre for funds also affects the states level of aggregation. In other words, those states that have a higher dependence on the centre for grants, resources and support are less likely to have successful non-polity-wide parties in contrast to states that are less dependent on the centre for the same. Although Diwakar's argument does account for the cross-sectional aspect, her argument is not convincing in light of the empirical evidence from different Indian states. Rich states like Gujarat, which have considerable fiscal and monetary discretion, are dominated by polity-wide parties. Contrastingly, poor states like

[14]Linkage is another way of saying convergence i.e. same parties competing at the state (or constituency) and the national level.

[15]I have cross-checked my classification with one proposed by Kailash (2014) and Schakel and Swenden (2016), and have calculated party nationalisation scores to justify my classification of the Congress Party and the BJS/BJP as polity-wide parties for all national elections years since 1962.

Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, which intuitively should be more dependent on the centre for grants, resources, and support, have experienced success of non-polity-wide parties over the last two decades.

Second, Ziegfeld (2012) argues that the advent of coalition politics has contributed to the success of non-polity-wide parties, which eventually came to challenge the dominance of polity-wide parties. His argument also follows the logic advocated by the decentralization/centralization thesis. He argues that the rise of coalition politics at the centre incentivized local elites and politicians to form and join regional parties. Coalition politics made it easier for regional elites to have a share in the national political domain. In contrast, during the single-majority era, party elites had little incentives to join and form non-polity-wide parties, as they did not get representation at the centre. He argues that coalition politics explains the growth of non-polity-wide parties in India. Until now, the literature on Indian politics understood coalition politics as the consequence of the growth of non-polity-wide parties. Ziegfeld convincingly reverses the causal arrow in the opposite direction. Taking Ziegfeld's argument to be a necessary condition in explaining the rise of non-polity-wide parties across India, it still does not sufficiently explain why some states experienced the success of non-polity-wide parties where some did not during the same time period. In other words, the impact of coalition politics is not uniformly felt across India.

Third, and finally, the declining dominance of polity-wide parties in India would seem intuitive to many political commentators. The comparative politics literature has often associated the success of non-polity-wide parties to originate from regionally-based social cleavages (Fearon and Van Houten, 2002; Brancati, 2011). Considering Indias ethnic diversity, it is perfectly understandable for the Indian party system to have successful non-polity-wide parties. Many Indian po-

litical commentators have also argued the same (Pai, 1998; Arora, 2002: 510-512). The success of non-polity-wide parties only represents the linguistic-cultural cleavage present across the Indian polity. Those states in India that were carved out on the basis of a linguistic agitation (or even a linguistic-cultural principle) gradually experienced the success of regional political parties, which came to challenge polity-wide parties dominance (Sarangi, 2013).

Below is the map[16] of India underlining the linguistic-cultural cleavage present throughout the country.

[16]The map was plotted in R using Global Administrative Data with function 'Library(maps)'.

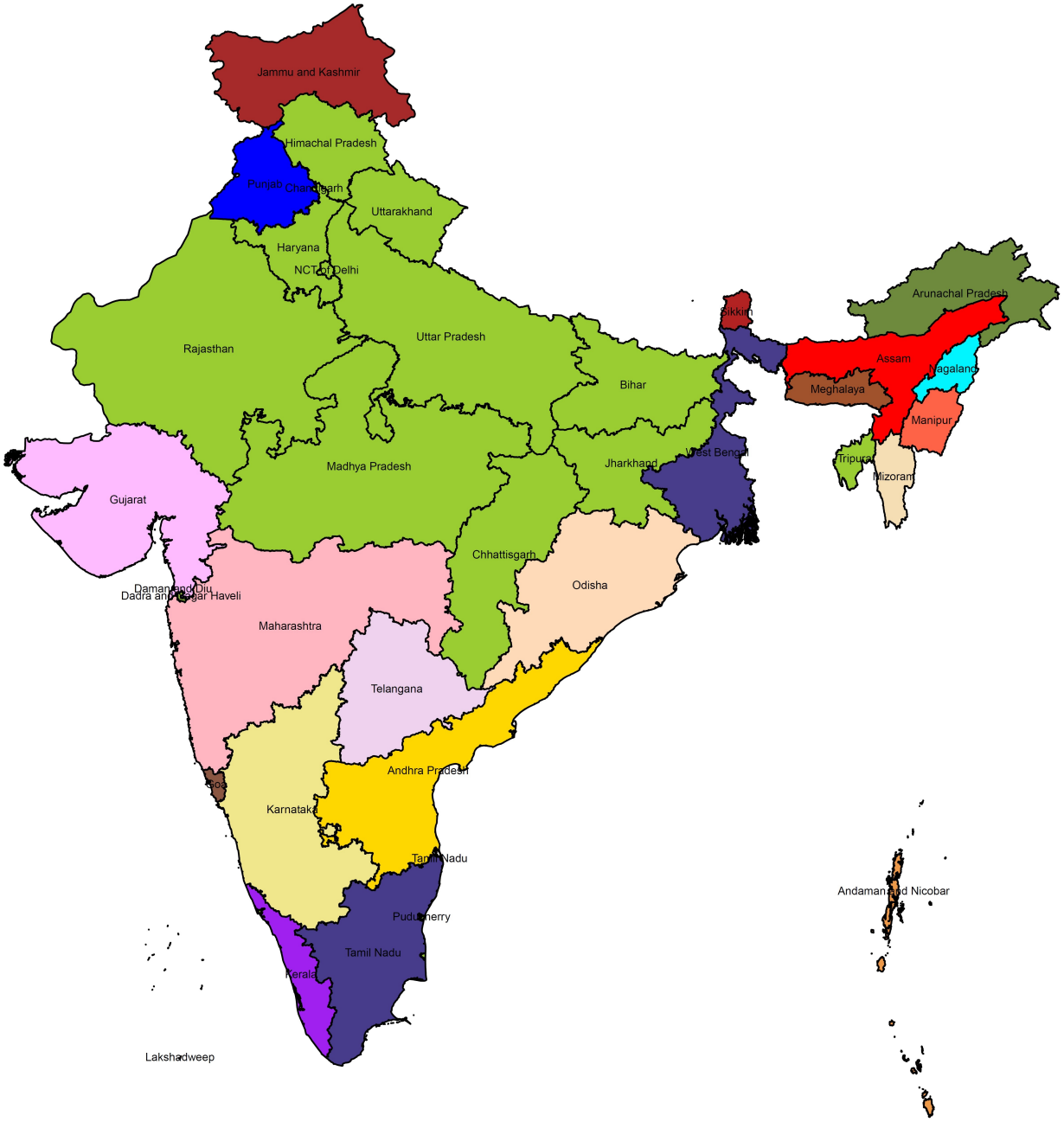


Figure 1.3: Linguistic Map of India

Broadly speaking, on the linguistic-cultural dimension, the country can be classified into two categories.[17] One category consists of all the Hindi-speaking states and the other category consists of those states that have been formed due to different ethno-linguistic or tribal mobilization. The presence of a dominant regional language distinct from the national language (Hindi) is the key criterion for classifying the country into the two types.

In the map above, the states in light green represent the Hindi-heartland. The predominant language in these states is Hindi[18] (broadly defined). Contrastingly, states that are not in green represent states that were formed as part of a linguistic-cultural mobilization or agitation, and have a distinct regional language or languages other than Hindi.

The pattern of declining dominance of polity-wide parties does not reflect the linguistic-cultural diversity. Hindi-heartland states such as Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and Haryana have successful non-polity-wide parties competing alongside polity-wide parties. In contrast, non-Hindi heartland states like Gujarat are dominated by polity-wide parties. This shows that the presence of a distinct linguistic-cultural cleavage does not axiomatically lead to the declining dominance of polity-wide parties.

Finally, strong evidence to reject the linguistic-cultural explanation rests when inferences are drawn from the individual-level. The National Election Study (NES) 2004 survey conducted by the Centre for Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), a premier social science institution in India, asked respondents the following ques-

[17]Obviously, this dichotomy is a very simplistic typology to keep my argument and representation parsimonious. It is in no way employed to undermine the immense diversity of the country.

[18]Some scholars prefer using the word Hindustani instead of Hindi, as it better reflects the internal linguistic diversity of Hindi across the region (e.g. intermingling of Urdu and Hindi, and different Hindi dialects).

tion;*Tell me, to what extent do you agree with the statement; 'we should be loyal to our region first and then to the country - Do you fully agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or fully disagree with the statement?*

Table 1.1: Agreement with the statement; we should be loyal to our region first and then to the country

Respondents	Fully Agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Fully Disagree	No opinion	Total
All-India	53.40%	12%	5.20%	14.60%	14.80%	100%
Number of Respondents	14520	3272	1409	3964	4024	27189

Source: CSDS Data Unit (2004)

More respondents seem to have agreed (approximately 65 percent) with the above statement, than disagreed (20 percent) with it. This survey finding clearly shows that respondents across the Indian polity seem to have a strong sense of regional identity. Nonetheless, this sense of strong regional identity does not seem to translate well into an electoral reality for regional parties across India. Polity-wide parties still hold considerable sway in a majority of the states. Nevertheless, aggregate figures are not, however, very instructive in dealing with this question. Disaggregating the responses at the state-level will provide a more accurate picture of diverse sub-national opinions.[19]

[19]Data for Figures 1.4, 1.5, 1.6 are based on CSDS 2004 post-poll survey.

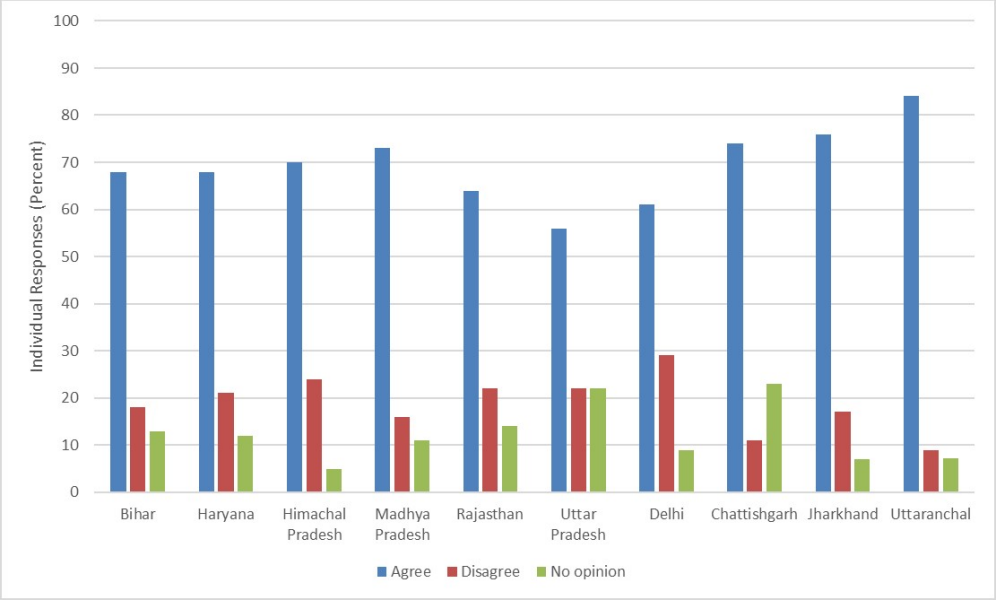


Figure 1.4: *Tell me, to what extent do you agree with the statement; we should be loyal to our region first and then to the country - Hindi Heartland states*

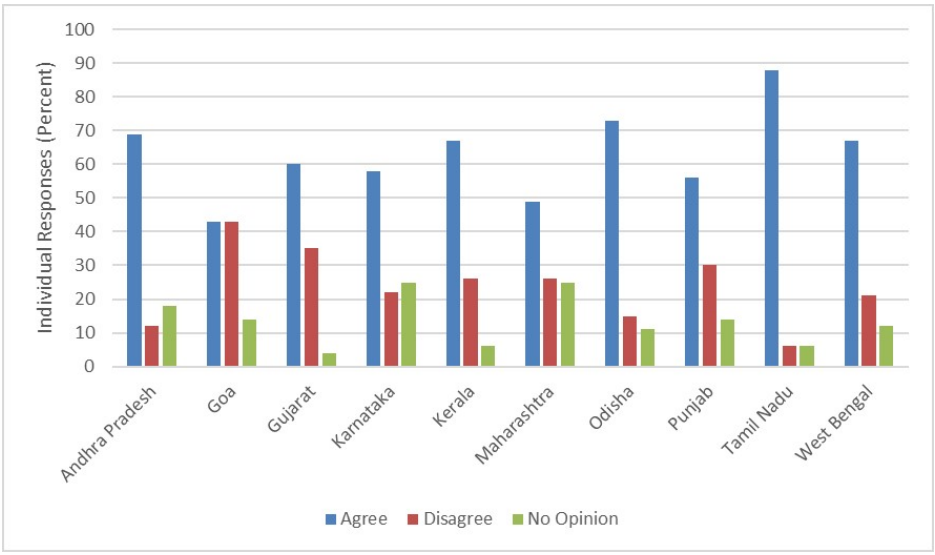


Figure 1.5: *Tell me, to what extent do you agree with the statement; 'we should be loyal to our region first and then to the country- Non-Hindi Heartland states*

Figures 1.4, 1.5 and 1.6 show that respondents from different categories (Hindi heartland versus non-Hindi heartland/Jammu and Kashmir and North-eastern states) do not display a particular pattern. More respondents from Hindi heartland states such as Bihar, Haryana, Chattishgarh, Jharkhand agree with statement than disagree with it. Similarly, there is no uniform pattern of responses emerging

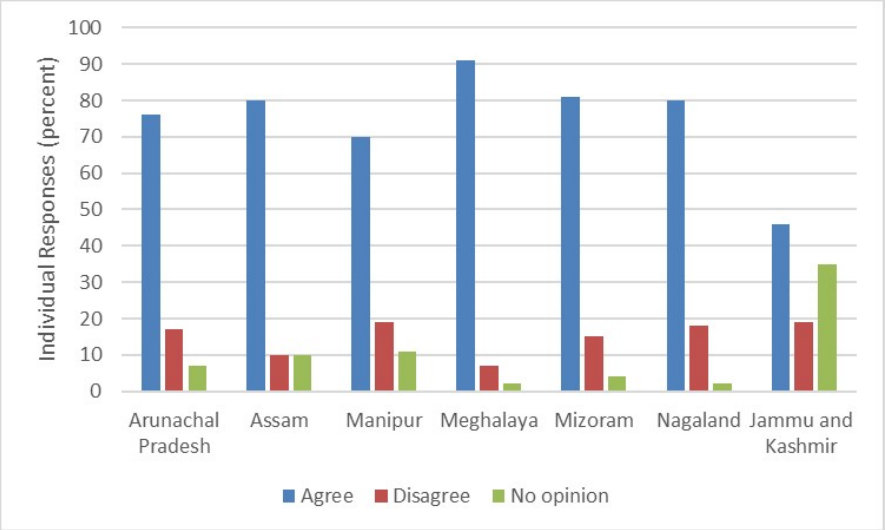


Figure 1.6: *Tell me, to what extent do you agree with the statement; 'we should be loyal to our region first and then to the country-Jammu and Kashmir and North-eastern states*

from states that were organized around the linguistic-cultural principle. This indicates that the presence (or the absence) of sub-nationalism in different Indian states is not correlated with support for regional parties.

In the same survey, CSDS also asked an alternative question that is particularly useful for us. Respondents were asked whether compared to national parties, regional/local parties can provide better government in states. Moreover, for the purpose of my thesis, I have compared the responses from those states that have a nationalised party system with those that do not have a nationalised party system.[20] Do we observe a significant difference then?

[20]Data aggregated for all states that have non-nationalised party system, where the coding of non-nationalised party system is classified based on my reading of the ECI data. I have included all the parties that receive more than 5 percent vote share. I have kept the benchmark low (especially in the simple plurality system) to give every party a chance to get represented. All those parties that receive a five percent vote share are then cross-checked with the classification provided by Kailash (2014)(Please see appendix Table 1 for complete list),and coded as Polity-wide (PW) or non-polity-wide parties (NPW). Similarly, this is repeated for nationalised party system states. I have condensed the responses of agree and somewhat agree and disagree and somewhat disagree, for parsimony.

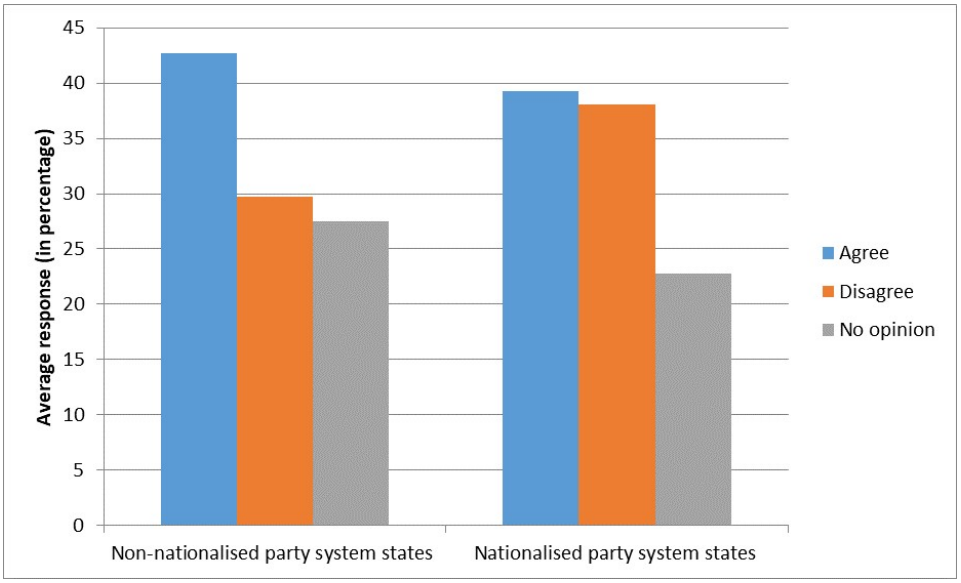


Figure 1.7: *Tell me, to what extent do you agree with the statement; 'compared to national parties, regional/local parties can provide better government in states' - States categorized depending upon the nature of party competitive space after the 2004 general election.*

In Figure 1.7 we see that respondents from non-nationalised party system are on average marginally more likely to agree that regional parties will provide better government in states (45 percent, see Table 1.2 below) in comparison to respondents from nationalised party system states (39 percent, see Table 1.2). However, and more important, is to note that this difference is not statistically significant (p-value=0.1494) at any conventional levels of significance. Put differently, the difference is not systematically distributed across the two groups of states, but is only present due to chance. This clearly shows that political churnings at the individual-level do not scale up to the aggregate (state)-level. Respondents generally agree that non-polity-wide parties are better at governance at the state-level, but this agreement does not translate into voting behaviour, especially in states where there are only polity-wide parties.

Table 1.2: Difference in means test for two groups of states

Support for Regional political parties	Mean response towards agreement (in percentage)	Number of states	Standard deviation	Number of respondents
States with non-polity-wide parties and polity-wide parties	45	21	10.35	10567
States with only polity-wide parties	39	10	10.8	1458
Total	43	31	10.7	12025

t statistic = 1.48

Nonetheless, before moving forward, it is important to highlight that the above data only provides a 'snapshot' of empirical evidence from the states. First, the data is based on national elections, and second, and more importantly, survey based evidence is often questioned by scholars of nationalist and cultural studies for having reliability issues (for more on the reliability of survey data, please see Singh (2015b: 513)). Therefore, I have corroborated the survey-based findings with data provided by Prerna Singh (2015).[21] Singh operationalizes the concept of sub-nationalism using indicators such as language, print capitalism, the presence of a sub-nationalist sentiment, subnational mobilization, and finally the presence and/or absence of regional parties. She operationalizes the concept of sub-nationalism at an aggregate (state)-level. Singh's sub-nationalism scores also confirm a lack of association between sub-nationalism and the decline of polity-wide parties.[22]

If existing explanations do not help understand the variation found at the state-level in India, then a new way to think about explaining dominance of polity-wide parties at the state-level is needed. This is important, especially in light of the evidence from the individual and the aggregate-level data where a strong feeling of regional identity or sub-nationalism does not axiomatically lead to a challenge for the polity-wide parties. As mentioned above, one very important explanation in

[21]Many thanks to Prerna Singh for sharing the data with me.

[22] See chapter 8 for deeper analysis of Singh's data in line with the main argument made in the thesis.

this respect is party organisation. This thesis builds upon existing scholarship on party organisation in India (Chandra, 2004; Chhibber et al., 2014; Ziegfeld, 2016b: 231-234) to argue that polity-wide parties dominance is challenged in those states or sub-national units where regional branches of polity-wide parties do not have autonomy. Assuming sub-national politicians to be rationale minded candidates, lack of autonomy from the central branch of the party incentivises sub-national politicians to defect from polity-wide parties to form their own parties or join non-polity-wide parties.

1.4 The role of party organisations in shaping party systems

Studying political parties as organizations is not a new approach in the field of comparative politics (Panebianco, 1988: xi-xviii). The importance of the organizational approach is particularly essential in a multi-level context. A multi-level context is defined as those contexts where genuine political authority is devolved to the sub-national level and/or moved upwards to the supra-national level. An example will help illustrate this. Since the 1980s, and especially since the late 1990s, significant authority in the European Union (EU) member states[23] have been transferred to the subnational (regional) level, and also to the supranational level in terms of transferring significant authority to the European Union (Swenden and Maddens, 2009: 1). Generally speaking, a key indicator of this process is the presence of sub-national (or supranational) legislatures that have the constitutional right to pass important laws. Although restricted to federal states, a number of devolved states also display many of the above characteristics, and

[23]For example, Belgium, Italy, United Kingdom and Spain

hence I will use the term multi-level instead of federal states.

Political parties that compete in countries that have gone through these processes often face a harder challenge of organizing. These difficulties are not restricted to parties that compete at multiple levels in a multi-level context. Parties that compete at a single level in a multi-level context have to decide whether they will restrict themselves to regional elections or also compete for the national elections in their particular region of dominance. Additionally, they often have to make choices on whether to go into coalition or form alliances with polity-wide parties in order to remain relevant political actors. These concerns are shared by non-polity-parties in India. For example, a senior politician from a non-polity-wide party-the Shiv Sena party-told me that the party leadership faces a dilemma in deciding whether to form an alliance with the BJP for every state and national elections in Maharashtra. He said that while the alliance benefits the party in allowing the party to focus its organisational resources in fewer seats, it also restricts the non-polity-wide party's ambition of expanding the organisational base throughout the state.[24]

Nevertheless, the organizational problems faced by polity-wide parties are more profound in contrast to parties that are restricted to specific regions. As mentioned above, polity-wide parties in decentralized states will have to accommodate inter-territorial tensions over the distribution of resources, manage the relationships between party officials and representatives at various tiers of government, and speak for the general interest whilst simultaneously represent potentially contradictory particularistic interests. These tensions are magnified in multi-national states, those that have deep cultural diversity, which is territorially based and politically articulated in the name of nationalism and self-determination (Stepan

[24]Interview with senior politician from Shiv Sena party, who requested anonymity. Interview held at the politicians residence in Mumbai, 18th December 2017.

et al., 2011). India offers an interesting case study in this respect for the following important reasons. While polity-wide parties in India, like polity-wide parties in other multi-level democracies, face a difficult task in managing and maintaining a coherent and unified organisation across the polity, they have not resolved these tensions in ways predicated by the existing literature in comparative politics. Existing scholarship (Harmel and Janda, 1982: 63) has argued that the polity-wide parties resolve inter-territorial tensions in multi-level setting by having autonomous sub-national units, but as I will empirically show in this thesis that polity-wide parties in India have not consistently done so. This has affected the polity-wide parties dominance at the sub-national level in India. In those sub-national units where at least a single regional branch of a polity-wide party has autonomy, non-polity-wide parties have found it hard to challenge the polity-wide parties dominance. In contrast, in those sub-national units where none of the polity wide parties regional branches have autonomy, non-polity-wide parties have found it easier to challenge the dominance of the polity-wide parties.

For example, in post-independent India, the Congress Party, a polity-wide party, was able to dominate both the national and the state level. A major explanation for this dominance is the Congress Party organisation. Under Nehru's leadership, Congress Party state units enjoyed relatively high levels of autonomy from the party central branch. Even when Nehru personally disagreed with many state-level leaders, he respected their autonomy over the state units (Weiner, 1967; Kashyap, 1970). However, after Nehru's death, Indira Gandhi took over the national leadership. She increasingly centralised the decision making authority within the party, and constrained state-level units' autonomy (Kochanek, 1968). Increasing centralisation prompted many regional political elites to form their own parties or join existing non-polity-wide parties. In this way, the challenge to Congress Party dominance is partly, and importantly, endogenous to its own party

organisation. However, it is important to note that the central branch of the Indira Gandhi-led Congress Party did not uniformly centralise autonomy away from its state-level units. Some state units, such as Kerala and Andhra Pradesh, had high levels of autonomy even during Indira Gandhi's central leadership tenure. This explains the Congress Party's success in avoiding defection of strong state-level leadership in these states during that time period (Verma et al., 2014).

The above example illustrates the core theoretical argument of this thesis where polity-wide parties are able to avoid losing their dominance at the state-level if their state units have autonomy. This pattern is not restricted to the Congress Party, but is also displayed in other polity-wide parties, like the BJP. This has a major impact on the regional party system in which they compete. This thesis is an attempt to systematically study the impact of the intra-party organisation of polity-wide parties in structuring the regional party system in different parts of India.

1.5 Thesis outline

The remainder of this dissertation is divided into nine chapters. Chapter 2 focuses on the research design where I elaborate on my mixed methods research design that combines qualitative and quantitative analysis to provide evidence in support of my main theoretical claims. In addition to the discussion on the mixed methods research design, I also justify my selection of Gujarat and Maharashtra based on the Most Similar Systems Design, and defend my temporal selection of studying Gujarat and Maharashtra in the post-1989 period. Even though the bulk of empirical evidence comes after 1989, it is important to evaluate the historical

background in both the states. In Chapter 3, I discuss the historical evolution of party systems in Gujarat and Maharashtra, but through the prism of caste politics. This chapter is important for showing why it is not sufficient to just look at caste politics in explaining why polity-wide parties dominate in some states but not others. Chapter 4 then elaborates on my main explanation of party organisation. In this chapter, I discuss one particular aspect of party organisation i.e. intra-party autonomy, and show how I operationalise it and gather empirical evidence to measure it. I also discuss the data collection strategy in this chapter. In chapter 5, I present the empirical evidence from Gujarat in support of my main theoretical argument. In chapter 6 I do the same for Maharashtra, which provides a negative case study. As I demonstrate intra-party autonomy as an important explanatory variable in explaining the differences in both their party systems, an obvious question follows: what explains the differing levels of intra-party autonomy across the two parties, and within the two parties but across the two Indian states? Building on evidence from these two states, I develop an argument in chapter 7 that explains the differing levels of intra-party autonomy across Gujarat and Maharashtra. In chapter 8, using Chhibber et al.'s (2014) dataset I provide quantitative evidence in support of my arguments. And, finally, Chapter 9 concludes by discussing the implications of the research and identifies avenues for future research.

Chapter 2

Research Design

This dissertation is based on a multi-method research design combining statistical analysis of all the major Indian states alongside an in-depth comparative case study of Gujarat and Maharashtra. Although Lieberman (2005: 438) recommends that a multi-method[25] research design should begin with a preliminary large-N analysis before complementing it with an in-depth case study, I first provide evidence from the case studies before moving onto the large-N analysis. It is important to acknowledge that it is not possible to identify a standard approach of whether an analysis should begin with a large-N or a small-N analysis. In the latter part of his article, even Lieberman acknowledges that a comparative case study can also form a valid basis for a large-N analysis.[26] Building on the method-

[25]He refers to it as a nested research design. Strictly speaking, my design is not nested because the comparative case study and the large-N analysis comes from two different sets of data. My comparative case study is based on my own data collection whereas the large-N analysis is based on Chhibber et al.'s data. Therefore, I prefer to call it as a multi-method approach as opposed to a nested research design. However, I do greatly borrow the structural aspects of Lieberman's study.

[26]Lieberman is not an isolated example that pursues an in-depth case study approach before pursuing a large-N analysis. A number of other scholarly studies have pursued an in-depth study before moving onto a large-N analysis.

ological insights of these studies, I also pursue a similar approach where I pursue an in-depth comparative study of Gujarat and Maharashtra before moving to a large-N analysis of all the major Indian states. The remainder of this chapter justifies (1) why I select Gujarat and Maharashtra for the comparative study, and (2) why I study the time period between 1989-2014. Section 2.1 discusses how my selection of Gujarat and Maharashtra is based on the Most Similar Systems Design where section 2.2 justifies my selection in light of potential counter-objections.

2.1 Why Gujarat and Maharashtra

My desire to pursue this research began as a result of a simple cross-tabulation (see Table 2.1 below). Once again, using the CSDS-INES 2004 post-poll question; *Tell me, to what extent do you agree with the statement; 'compared to national parties, regional/local parties can provide better government in states' - Do you fully agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or fully disagree with the statement?*

Table 2.1: Support for national and/or regional parties in Gujarat and all-India (INES 2004)

	Fully agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Fully disagree	No opinion	Total
Gujarat	51.4%	7.3%	5.7%	26%	9.60%	100%
Number of respondents	624	91	71	324	120	1248
All-India	18.5%	9.6%	13.6%	27.5%	30.80%	100%
Number of Respondents	5030	2621	3709	7465	8366	27191

Source: CSDS

The above cross-tabulation highlights an interesting puzzle where more than half the Gujarati respondents 'Fully Agree' with the statement that regional/local parties provide better government at the state-level, but still predominantly vote for polity-wide parties. Surely, such high level of support for regional parties should have incentivised regional political elites to form or join regional parties. In addition to the individual-level support for regional parties, the Gujarati party

system had many other favourable conditions to incentivise regional political elites into joining or forming regional parties. For instance, Gujarat is part of India's federal structure that experienced growing political and economic decentralisation in the post-1989 era. Also, as argued by Ziegfeld (2012), the advent of coalition politics in the post-1989 period incentivised Gujarati regional elites into forming or joining regional parties. Gujarat is also one of the most industrialised and developed states and has considerable economic leverage at the central level.[27] Finally, Gujarat has high-levels of sub-nationalism (Jaffrelot, 2016) with a distinct cultural identity vis-a-vis the polity as whole. Despite these conditions, polity-wide parties continue to dominate the Gujarati party system.[28] Why is this the case? This makes Gujarat a very interesting case study.

In addition to Gujarat, I have complemented my analysis with an additional case study of Maharashtra. Both the states are selected based on the principles of the comparative method (Lijphart 1971). In the Indian context, my approach would be similar to Atul Kohli (1987), who was a pioneer in the methodologically minded tradition of comparative state politics in India. Kohli (1987) recognized the potential for sub-national comparisons within India, and argued that state-level comparisons could provide clues to unravelling puzzles about Indian politics. He argued that India constitutes a laboratory for comparative political analysis. The fact that the country has a number of states with diverse politics, but all within the framework of Indian federalism creates conditions for 'controlled experiments' (Harriss, 1999: 3367). Importantly, a comparative study of states also helps challenge the notion of 'false exceptionalism' or 'false universalism' of particular regions and states. It might be tempting for me to underline the uniqueness

[27]Out of the 15 major Indian states that comprise more than 90 percent of the population of India, Gujarat is ranked 3rd in terms of the Per capita Net State Domestic Product (NSPD). These figures are based on the socio-economic indicators released by Government of India Planning Commission (Niti Ayog) for a period between 2011 and 2014.

[28]Except a brief sixteen month interlude where Shankarsinh Vaghela formed an All India Rashtriya Janata Party-led government.

of Gujarati politics; however, a comparative framework helps put this uniqueness in the correct perspective. It will help identify not only factors that the case shares with other similar cases, but also highlight genuinely distinctive features of Gujarat relative to other Indian states (Tillin, 2013: 236-237).

The comparative method is predominantly informed by the logic set forth by John Stuart Mill. Colloquially, they are referred to as Mill's methods. Broadly speaking, there are two types; Mill's method of difference and Mill's method of agreement. In the social sciences, the logic was formalised by Adam Przeworski and Henry Teune (Przeworski and Teune, 1970). They are referred to as the Most Similar Systems Design (MSSD) and Most Different Systems Design (MDSD).[29] More importantly, in my thesis, I have used the Mill's method of difference or the MSSD in order to select my cases. Mill's method of difference consists of comparing instances in which the cases differ based on the study variable,[30] but are broadly similar on all other accounts.

This method of controlled comparison has often come under criticism (Lieberson, 1991; Van Evera, 1997). The particular criticism comes because of the near impossibility of controlling for antecedent conditions in the social sciences. It should also be pointed out that Mill himself thought that the methods of difference and agreement could not be applied in the social sciences. And for political science he argued that it was completely out of question! (John Stuart Mill cited in Lijphart, 1971: 688). Nonetheless, these methods are often employed in the social sciences with the goal of approximating the natural sciences as closely as possible (Lijphart 1971:.688-690). And, as argued by Snyder (2001) and echoed

[29]Even when others (Anckar 2008) have underlined the subtle differences between Mills methods and MSSD and MDSD, I use the two, Mill's Method of Difference with Most Similar Systems Design and Mills Method of Agreement with Most Different Systems Design, interchangeably.

[30]Study variable is a variable whose causes or effects we seek to discover with our research (Van Evera 1997: 11)

by Lijphart (1971), this method becomes a powerful tool for comparative analysis when used to compare subnational units within a single country. In other words, comparative intra-country analysis can take advantage of the many similar national characteristics serving as controls. The Indian federal structure provides institutional similarity within a single national unit thereby mimicking the laboratory-like setting found in the natural sciences.

2.1.1 Method of difference

In order to employ the method of difference, I select Gujarat and Maharashtra. First, both Gujarat and Maharashtra were carved out from the Bombay State[31] as a result of a linguistic agitation (Bobbio, 2012). More importantly, sub-nationalism is prevalent in both the states. In this thesis , I understand sub-nationalism similar to Singh's (2015a: 27-29) conceptualisation of sub-nationalism, which is identification with, or aspiration for, a self-governing homeland located within the boundaries of a sovereign country. It is different from secessionism, which involves political demands for a separate sovereign country. Both Gujarat and Maharashtra have high levels of sub-nationalism as confirmed by CSDS post-poll 2004. In Maharashtra 49 percent of the respondents agreed with the statement that 'we should loyal to the region first and then the country' and 26 percent disagreed with it whereas in Gujarat 60 percent of the respondents agreed with the above statement and 35 percent disagreed with it. It is true that more Gujarati respondents agreed with the statement as opposed to Maharashtrian respondents,

[31]Prior to independence, the British governed many important districts of Gujarat and Maharashtra as part of the Bombay Presidency (see appendix for the list of districts that were part of the Bombay Presidency). After independence when India became a republic, many princely states, which agreed to join India, were added to the newly formed Bombay State. Furthermore, in 1956 after reorganisation of Indian states, Saurashtra and Kutch states were added to the Bombay State and Marathwada (from Hyderabad) and Vidharbha (from Madhya Pradesh) were also added to the Bombay State.

but this then provides a more interesting puzzle worth pursuing. Despite high levels of support for sub-nationalism in Gujarat, non-polity-wide parties have found it harder to challenge polity-wide party dominance in the state. In contrast, Maharashtra with a comparatively lower level of support for sub-nationalism, has seen non-polity-wide parties challenge the dominance of polity-wide parties.

Second, both Gujarat and Maharashtra[32] have undergone high-levels of industrialisation and economic growth in comparison to other Indian states. More importantly, both the states reflect high levels of economic independence from the central level. This is confirmed by Sinha's (2004) study on federalism and political economy in India. Both Gujarat and Maharashtra feature as important case studies in her work, reflecting high regional autonomy even prior to the July 1991 economic reforms in India.

Third, with reference to the two main polity-wide parties-the Congress Party and the BJP-being analysed in this thesis, the Congress Party had a strong presence in both Gujarat and Maharashtra (See Figure 2.1). In Maharashtra, the Congress came to represent the middle-Maratha-caste at the expense of the upper caste Brahmins. Furthermore, the numerical predominance of the Marathas, which constituted 30 percent of the population, allowed Congress to dominate the electoral politics of Maharashtra (Deshpande and Palshikar, 2003: 97). The party formed all the state governments in Maharashtra until the early 1990s except between 1978 and 1980 when the Congress Party split due to the emergency called by Indira Gandhi.

[32]In an earlier footnote I mentioned that out of the 15 major Indian states that comprise more than 90 percent of the population of India, Gujarat is ranked 3rd in terms of the Per capita Net State Domestic Product (NSPD). During the same time period Maharashtra is ranked 2nd in comparison to all the major Indian states. Once again, these figures are on the socio-economic indicators released by Government of India Planning Commission (Niti Ayog) for a period between 2011 and 2014.

Similarly, in Gujarat, the Congress Party initially represented the middle-Patidar-caste at the expense of the other middle-Kshatriya-caste, as the principal cleavage in Gujarat was between the two middle castes. Fearing increasing competition from the Kshatriyas, Indira Gandhi mobilized the Kshatriyas along with the lower classes in order to consolidate her support base (Wood, 1984b: 206-210). This gave the lower classes and the marginalized elements an opportunity to assert their influence within the Congress Party in Gujarat. The politically marginalized Kshatriya-castes took advantage of this opportunity. Madhavsingh Solanki, a Kshatriya himself, came to lead this faction. Solanki, along with his supporters, forged a blatantly 'casteist' formula of the middle and lower caste groups, which they perceived to be synonymous with the lower classes. They even coined an acronym known as KHAM-Kshatriyas (K), Dalits or Harijans (H), Tribals or Adivasis (A) and Muslims (M)-for their electoral strategy (Wood, 1984b; Shah, 1991; Yagnik and Sheth, 2005). In a similar manner to the Maratha support base in Maharashtra, KHAM provided the necessary support structure for the Congress in Gujarat. The Congress Party formed all the state governments in Gujarat until the early 1990s (except in the mid-1970s when the party split as a result of the Emergency).

Unlike the Congress Party, the BJP did not have an all-India spread. It began its political journey from the Hindi-heartland, comprising of Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and Delhi. Prior to the 1989 general elections, it had a marginal presence in the rest of India, especially in south India, comprising of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, and east India, comprising of Odisha, West Bengal and Assam. However, the party did have a marginal presence in west India, comprising of Gujarat, Maharashtra and Goa (Heath, 1999; Sridharan, 2002b). The BJP began to increase its presence in west India by forming pre-electoral alliances with regional parties in the post-1989

period. In Gujarat, the BJP formed a pre-electoral alliance with the Janata Dal before the 1990 Gujarat regional elections whereas in Maharashtra it formed a pre-electoral alliance with Shiv Sena before the 1990 Maharashtra regional elections (Shah, 1996; Hansen, 1998a).

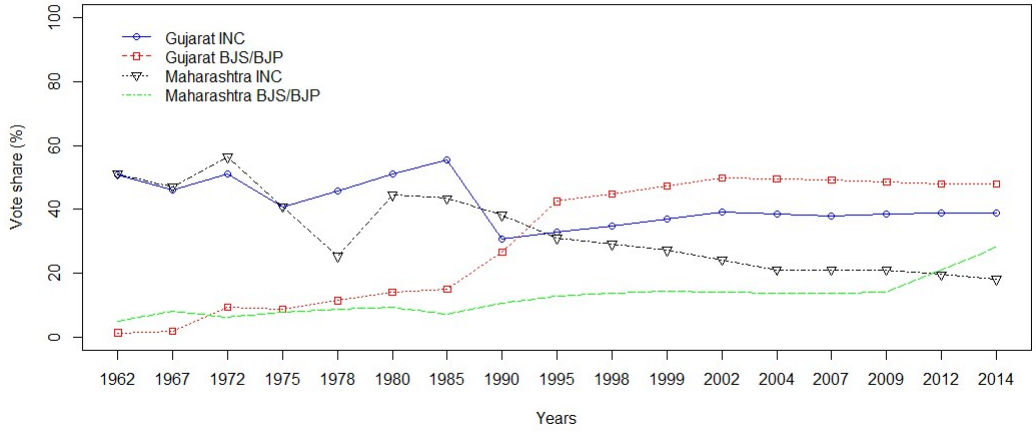


Figure 2.1: Vote share of the Congress Party and the BJP in Gujarat and Maharashtra

Until the early 1990s, the party systems of Gujarat and Maharashtra were similar. The Congress Party was the predominant polity-wide party, and formed most of the state governments, in both the states. The BJP was a minor player until the 1990s in both states (see Figure 2.1). As I will show in the remaining part of the chapter, the party systems of both the states diverged dramatically from the early 1990s. In Gujarat, polity-wide parties, in particular the BJP, came to dominate the electoral arena whereas in Maharashtra, the Congress Party and the BJP have faced stiff competition from regional parties like Shiv Sena and the NCP. The changes in their party systems are reflected in Figure 2.1 above. The decline of the Congress Party in Gujarat in the early 1990s is replaced by the BJP whereas in the post-1990s Maharashtra, the BJP is unable to fully occupy the space left

vacant by the Congress Party. The effective number of parties[33] (ENEP) (Figure 2.2) in the post-1990s period further echo the trends. Higher ENEP scores in Maharashtra highlight the presence of strong regional parties such as Shiv Sena and the NCP whereas a lower ENEP score in Gujarat reflects the fact that effective competition in Gujarat is restricted to two polity-wide parties; the BJP and the Congress Party. This is why I focus on the post-1990s[34] time frame to explain party system differences across Gujarat and Maharashtra.

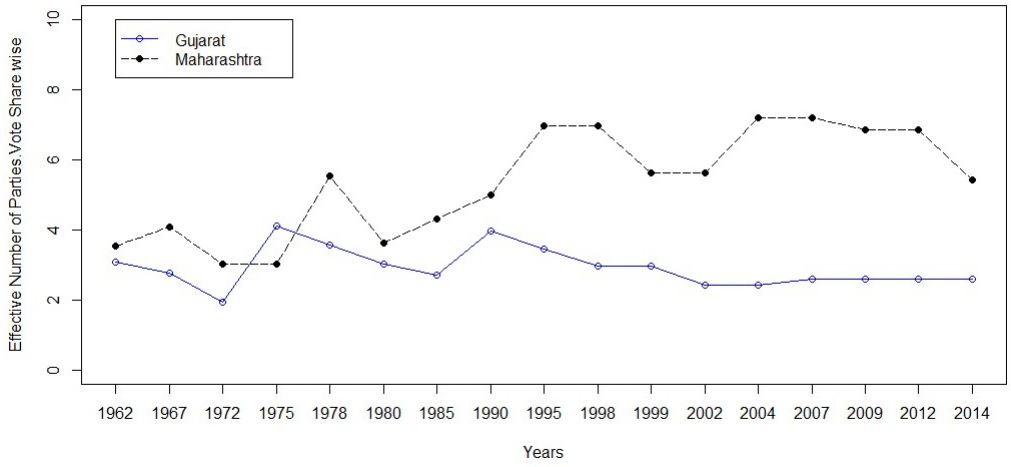


Figure 2.2: Effective Number of Parties (Regional elections)

[33]Effective Number of Parties calculated using the Laakso and Taagepara (1979) method. Finally, I have compared these results using the Effective Number of Parties (Seat Share) wise measurement. The results also reflect variation across the two states, and in some cases, further highlight the variance because of Indias single member simple plurality electoral system.

[34]My data collection stops in the aftermath of the 2014 Maharashtra regional elections. Although I include anecdotal evidence from the 2017 Gujarat elections in the latter chapters, the bulk of the analysis is carried out for the period from 1990 up until 2014.

2.2 Possible Objections and counter-objections

There are two possible objections to my case selection strategy, and I will address them in turn. First, for the purpose of theory-testing, selecting on extreme values of the dependent variable is problematic because of the potential bias introduced into estimates of the causal effects of an independent variable (King et al., 1994: 128-139; Geddes, 2003: 89-129). Indeed, as mentioned above, I have selected Gujarat because of its deviant and counter-intuitive party system. As argued by Collier and Mahoney (1996: 72), an important risk may lie in overestimating the importance of my explanations derived from the Gujarati case. I have avoided the pitfalls of the case study approach by using the comparative method. The comparative method does allow me to put Gujarati 'exceptionalism' in the right perspective. Also, by including Maharashtra as an additional case study, I am able to incorporate variation on the dependent variable, and address a major concern raised about qualitative work (Mahoney, 2007). Furthermore, for both the states, I conduct within-case analysis to offset the limitations of pursuing small-N research. Finally, external validity for my arguments is further provided by the statistical analysis in chapter 8 where my argument is tested on a larger set of Indian states.

Second, one could counter-argue against my case selection strategy by pointing out the constituency-level dynamics in the two states. Regional parties and polity-wide parties in Maharashtra were in pre-electoral seat-sharing alliance for over two-decades (the Congress Party with the NCP and the BJP with Shiv Sena party). Looking at these features, one could argue that the opportunities and alternatives available at the constituency level in Maharashtra are not very different from the Gujarat party system. Importantly, the ENP scores calculated at the state-level do not reflect the qualitative and substantive options available to the voters at the

constituency level.

The presence of regional parties in Maharashtra does increase the ENP (votes) scores of the state vis-a-vis Gujarat (see Figure 2.2 above). Nevertheless, the pre-electoral alliance between the regional parties and polity-wide parties in Maharashtra sustains the Duvegerian[35] equilibrium at the constituency-level. In other words, constituency-level competitions across the two states are not very different (see Figure 2.3).[36]

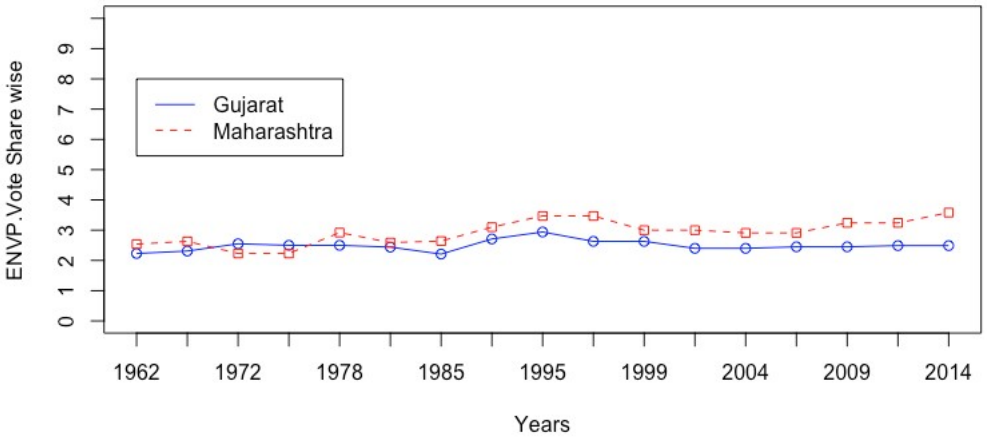


Figure 2.3: Average Effective Number of Parties (regional elections)

Therefore, both states reflect a Duvergerian outcome at the constituency-level. Having said that, the manner in which the Duvergerian outcome is sustained at the constituency-level in both the states is very different. As argued by Ziegfeld (2014) and echoed by Chhibber and Murali (2006), the dynamics sustaining the Duveg-

[35]Most scholars of Indian politics use ENP (votes) score of 2.5 as a cut-off for classifying Duvergerian or not. See Ziegfeld (2014) and Chhibber and Murali (2006). Chhibber and Murali (2006) consider ENP (votes) scores up to three as consistent with Duvergers law. They argue that it is only when the number of parties is greater than three that the vote share of the second loser is greater than the difference between votes received by the winner and the first loser. However, this is disputed by Ziegfeld (2014) who considers the threshold of three too high. For now, I will treat the upper-limit ENP score of 3 (or less) consistent with Duvegerian outcome for the sake of parsimony.

[36]The constituency-level ENP is calculated as the sum of all the ENP in each constituency and then divided by the number of constituencies N

erian outcome in Maharashtra (through pre-electoral alliances) are very different from the plain two-party contests at the constituency-level in Gujarat. Also, prior research (Vicziany, 2007; Sridharan, 2005; Hansen, 1998a) has shown the instability of coalition politics in Maharashtra. Therefore, although the constituency-level contests are similar in the two states, they are substantially achieved through very different electoral dynamics. Importantly, the obvious evidence of the unstable relationship between the two alliances is the 2014 regional elections in Maharashtra. Before the 2014 elections, both alliances broke and the four parties (Congress Party, BJP, NCP and Shiv Sena) competed against each other even when at the constituency-level. Finally, the aim and the purpose of this thesis is not to investigate the dynamics at the constituency-level, but rather focus at the state-level. Regardless of the pattern of political competition at the constituency-level, the presence of strong regional parties in Maharashtra makes its party system fundamentally different from the Gujarati one in the post-1990s period.

To conclude, in this chapter, I have discussed my research design and justified my case and temporal selection. I have also defended my case selection in light of potential objections and criticisms. In the latter part of chapter 4 (section 4.5), I discuss my data collection strategy and potential issues that came up during my fieldwork in India.[37]

[37]I have decided to discuss my data collection strategy at the end of chapter 4 because it follows on well after the section on operationalisation of intra-party autonomy.

Chapter 3

Historical Background

In this chapter, I explore whether the differences in the party systems between Gujarat and Maharashtra in the post-1989 period are the result of the differences in the way social cleavages played out in both the states in the pre-1989 period. I do this by tracing the historical political developments in both the states from 1947 up until the 1990s. In particular, I focus on caste as a major social cleavage to show that caste-based differences between the two states are unable to fully account for the differences between the two party systems. In order to demonstrate this I will compare and contrast the major caste-based alliances and federations formed in the two states. This chapter will also investigate the differences (or similarities) in the way these caste-based alliances have been associated with major political parties in both the states. The main research question driving this exercise is whether the differences in the party systems between Gujarat and Maharashtra are result of the differences in the caste-based alliances formed in these states.

In order to succinctly capture the major themes across the two states, the

chapter is organized chronologically into two distinct electoral phases. Since Yogendra Yadav's seminal work (Yadav, 1999), it has become a common place to categorize the political trajectory of India into three distinct phases. The first phase, beginning with India's first general election in 1952, lasted until the fourth general election in 1967. This phase was synonymous with Congress hegemony, both at the national and the state-level. As documented by Sridharan (2002a: 477), the Congress Party won over two-third majority of seats in the Lok Sabha during this period (see Table 3.1).

Table 3.1: Congress Party's performance in the Lok Sabha, 1952-67

Year	Vote Share (in %)	Seat Share (in %)
1952	45	74.43
1957	47.8	75.1
1962	44.7	73
1967	40.8	54.42
1971	43.68	67.95
1977	34.52	28.41
1980	42.7	65
1984	48.12	76.52
1989	39.53	37.24
1991	36.41	45.69
1996	28.81	25.78
1998	25.82	25.97
1999	28.3	20.99
2004	26.53	26.7
2009	28.55	37.94
2014	19.31	8.1

Source: ECI

The second phase begins from 1967, and lasted until the 1989 general election. Although the Congress Party maintained power at the national-level,[38] it lost power in many of the state-assemblies. This phase is referred to as the bi-polarization of the state party systems (Sridharan 2002: 481-485) where the Congress Party faced a consolidated opposition in many states. This affected the Congress Party's overall hegemony reducing the party's share of seats significantly when compared to the earlier era (see Table 3.1). The post-1967 period also saw a very important de-linking of parliamentary and state assembly elections (Sridharan 2002: 482). Finally, the 1989 general election saw the rise of regional parties at the national level. As summarized by Sridharan (2002: 485), the big story of 1989-99 is the relative decline of the Congress Party and the rise of the BJP and regional political parties.

In the previous chapter, I have shown how the party systems of both Gujarat and Maharashtra diverged dramatically in the post-1990s period. In this chapter, I demonstrate that caste-based politics from the pre-1990s period only partially explain the differences between the two states in the post-1990s period. In this chapter, I will show how caste politics in both states differed, but despite these differences, the Congress Party was able to sustain its dominance in both the states. It did so by forming caste based alliances and coalitions. And, when these caste-based alliances and coalitions broke down, the opportunities created by them were monopolised by polity-wide party in one state (Gujarat), and a regional party in the other (Maharashtra). Based on this description, I will explore (1) why the caste-based alliances and coalitions broke down inside the Congress Party, and (2) the differences in the ability of the BJP to monopolise on the break down in both the states. Before moving onto the discussion in the two separate phases (Section 3.2 and Section 3.3), I will briefly touch upon why I focus on caste as an important

[38]Except 1977!

social cleavage in the Indian context.

3.1 Why focus on caste as an important social cleavage

On the eve of independence in 1947, the country's territory was divided between those that were directly under British rule and those that were governed by princely rulers. This distinction is important because of the nature of colonial rule in India. The British colonial government governed India either directly by establishing colonial institutions of governance or through princely rule, in which semi-sovereign rulers maintained their rights to govern under the ultimate authority of the British colonial government (Ziegfeld and Tudor, 2010: 4). As argued by Wood (1984a: 66), aspects of the British-princely distinction persisted in the political behaviour of a generation of post-independence Indian politicians and their constituents.

The distinction affected political behaviour in the post-independence era because those territories that were directly under the British rule were exposed to democratic (albeit in a very limited sense[39]) elections before 1947. The British colonial government held two sets of pre-independence elections within directly-ruled states, in 1936-37 and in 1945-46 (Ziegfeld and Tudor, 2010: 5). The Congress Party contested the colonially-sponsored. Although uncompetitive, these elections helped the party spread its organization within the rural masses. It also

[39]The political franchise was highly restrictive during the British era. For instance, the franchise in these elections collectively amounted to approximately 11 % of the adult population, excluding much of the women, Dalit and tribal population of the country (Ziegfeld and Tudor 2010, pp.1-10)

exposed the rural masses to electoral mobilisation and organization. In contrast, no elections were held in princely states. The elections held in 1952 would be the very first experience of competitive elections for much of the population that was under the princely rule[40] (Ziegfeld and Tudor 2010: 5-6).

In 1956, most of the states were reorganized along linguistic lines (Adeney, 2007). With linguistic re-organization, the distinctions between the old princely states versus those that were directly under British-rule ended, and a complex recombination of ex-princely and ex-British territory was carried out.[41] Although there were states whose boundaries coincided with their pre-1947[42] origins, most states contained territories from both British ruled and princely ruled India (Wood, 1984a: 66).

Table 3.2: Historical-territorial heterogeneity in Indian states

Predominantly Ex-British States	States with significant historical political heterogeneity	Predominantly ex-princely states
Assam	Andhra Pradesh	Himachal Pradesh
Bihar	Gujarat	Jammu and Kashmir
Haryana	Karnataka	Manipur
Nagaland	Kerala	Meghalaya
Tamil Nadu	Madhya Pradesh	Rajasthan
Uttar Pradesh	Maharashtra	Sikkim
West Bengal	Orissa	Tripura
	Punjab	

Source: Wood 1984a

[40] 28.81 % of Indias population (proportion based on total population of India from Census of India 2001) was under Princely rule. This figure is based on data collected by Verghese (2016).

[41] A combination of ex-princely and ex-British territory had already began in the 1950s when India became a republic, but the process of reorganisation accelerated post-1956.

[42] I have listed the districts of modern day Gujarat and Maharashtra that were governed directly the British or the princely states in the appendix (see Table **??**.

Table 3.2 shows both Gujarat and Maharashtra to contain territory and populations that were under contrasting jurisdictions - British or princely - before 1947. Since both the states contain directly-ruled and princely dominated territories, the distinction between British versus princely rule is unable to explain the differences in the party systems between these two states in the post-independence era. Nevertheless, the princely versus British rule distinction can certainly explain some of the intra-regional differences in the political behaviour within the two states.[43] But, since the main thrust of this thesis is to explain inter-state difference as opposed to intra-state differences, I focus instead on other explanations that are held responsible for explaining inter-state party system differences.

The creation of linguistic states also institutionalized linguistic divisions and removed language as a basis for political conflict (Chhibber, 1999: 56-57). This reorganization of the states along linguistic lines has increased the saliency of other social identities as the principal cleavage of conflict (Adeney, 2007: 126). Students of Indian politics have often focused on three interrelated identities that have become salient political cleavages: religion (Brass, 1974; Wilkinson, 2004), caste (Rudolph and Rudolph, 1960; Rudolph and Rudolph, 1987; Krishna, 2003; Chandra, 2004; Michelutti, 2008) and sub-caste or jati[44] (Huber and Suryanarayan, 2014). To give an example of how these three identities play out at the individual-level, think of an individual X who is of Chitpavan Brahmin jati, part of the upper caste category[45] and of Hindu religion. Although there are many identities

[43]For instance, the average vote share of Swatantra Party or Jan Sangh was 48.47 percent in Kutch (a former princely state) as opposed to 20.47 percent in South Gujarat (most constituencies in South Gujarat came from the Bombay Presidency) during the 1962 state assembly elections. This is just one example of how the British versus princely distinction affected post-independent politics within each state.

[44]Jati is usually referred to a hereditary, endogamous, usually localised group which reflect historical occupational categories and which to this day guide religious and marriage customs.

[45]The middle castes are the principal farming castes. According to the caste tradition, the term middle-caste is reserved for all those below the upper-castes and above the former-untouchables (Harriss 1999). They are part of the following umbrella caste categories: upper castes, middle castes, backward castes, Schedule Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Muslims. This is different to the varna system where caste groups are categorised into five broad categories, Brahmins (priests),

around which individuals can mobilize, previous studies have often focused on one group identity caste - when investigating the social bases of political support. As Rudolph and Rudolph (1960: 5) put it,

> within the new context of political democracy, caste remains a central element of Indian society even while adapting itself to the values and methods of democratic politics. Indeed, it has become one of the chief means by which the Indian mass electorate has been attached to the processes of democratic politics.

Moreover, scholars (Shah, 1975) have argued that caste is the only ethnicity that is linked at all levels where most of the social, economic and political stratification overlap. Nonetheless, caste, expressed as jati, is a local phenomenon, which has always provided a consistent basis for political parties to mobilize support. As argued by Brass (1990), at the local-level in rural areas, jati solidarity remains the most important factor determining voting behaviour. In their recent paper on ethnification of political parties in India, Huber and Suryanarayan (2014) also reach to similar conclusions that jati identity remains the strongest identity associated with ethnification of political parties in India. However, there are numerous jatis present at the local-level, which in itself cannot guarantee a party the required electoral majority to form a state government. Therefore, political entrepreneurs (Wyatt, 2009) have come to create jati-based alliances and federations to guarantee themselves safe access to political power. Here, it is important to note that these jati-based alliances could cut across caste lines but are almost invariably nested within religious categories. And, political entrepreneurs are only successful in forming these federations within the state boundaries. They have found

Kshatriyas (warrior), Vaishya (merchant), Shudras (backward castes) and the caste groups that lie outside the varna system known as Dalits (or former Untouchables).

it hard to coordinate with similar jatis across state boundaries. This is because jati groups are geographically specific and power is dispersed across states but rarely devolves to localities. This contains political mobilization along jati lines to territorially defined state units. Importantly, the Indian federal structure further restricts political mobilization of caste categories across states (Palshikar, 2013: 97-100), partly because most jatis do not include people of different linguistic-cultural backgrounds. As most Indian states are organized on a linguistic-cultural bases, it makes it very difficult for jati groups to form horizontal alliances cutting across state boundaries (Rudolph and Rudolph 1960: 11; Chhibber 1999 :53).

3.2 First electoral phase, 1952-1967

Post-independence, the principal conflict in the Bombay Presidency (which later became the Bombay State) was the linguistic one. Many of the local Marathi-speaking population demanded a separate state for Marathi-speaking people to be carved out from the Bombay Presidency. They argued that their interests were not articulated well enough within the Bombay Presidency. The cultural and economic dominance of the other ethnicities (especially the Gujaratis) in a multi-lingual Bombay made it difficult for Marathi-speaking people to gain a foothold in the power-structures of the state (Rosenthal, 1974: 413). Similarly, in Gujarat- the Mahagujarat Janata Parishad (Greater Gujarat Council) demanded a separate state for the Gujarati-speaking people to be carved out from the Bombay Presidency and various other princely states (Wood, 1984a). The reorganization of the states in 1956, which excluded this region, encouraged the growing demands for two separate linguistic states.

Fearing a backlash against the dominance of Congress Party in both the states, the party's central leadership gave into the demands of the creation of separate states in the early 1960s (Desai, 1967). With the realization of separate states of Maharashtra and Gujarat, linguistic conflict gave way to caste-based conflicts. The Congress Party came to represent the interests of the regionally dominant middle castes in both the states (Harriss, 1999: 3372-3373), but the nature of the party's support was considerably different between them.

In Maharashtra, the Congress state unit, and particularly the Maratha leadership within the Congress organisation, enjoyed autonomy from the party's central branch under Nehru's leadership. The Congress regional branch was controlled by the middle-Maratha[46]-caste at the expense of the upper caste Brahmins. Furthermore, the numerical predominance of the Marathas, which constituted 30 percent of the population, allowed for a successful transformation of political power from the upper caste Brahmins to the middle-Maratha-caste. Under the leadership of Y.B Chavan, a Maratha himself, the Maharashtra Congress successfully accommodated the numerically preponderant Maratha castes within the Congress organisation.[47] From his position as the first Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Y.B Chavan was able to persuade a number of leaders of the Peasants and Workers Party (PWP), Republican Party of India (RPI) and the Praja Socialist Party to join the Congress Party (Deshpande, 1984: 2153). As argued by Deshpande, he was able to do this because he had complete autonomy in running the Maharashtra

[46]The Marathas were a combination of Kshatriya Maratha jati and the peasantry jati of Kunbis, who were classified as an Other Backward Class (OBC) by the Backward Classes Commission (Vora, 2009: 215). This permitted the Congress to sustain the claim of being a party representing the interests of the masses-the Bahujan Samaj (A euphemism used for all those groups belonging to the middle and lower castes, excluding the upper castes/classes). Traditionally, the Kunbis were considered inferior to the Kshatriyas. However, the distinction between the two became un-important during the non-Brahmin movement of 1920s. Many of the Kunbis started identifying themselves as Marathas. This is an example of how jatis cut across caste lines (as Kunbis are traditionally part of the lower castes) to form a numerically stronger caste group (Deshpande and Palshikar, 2003: 97).

[47]Interview with Professor Ghanshyam Shah, 3rd April 2016, Ahmedabad, Gujarat. Ghanshyam Shah is a former Professor at Jawaharlal Nehru University.

Congress state unit (Deshpande, 1984).

Contrastingly, in Gujarat - the Congress was controlled by the middle-Patidar[48]-caste, which only constituted about 12 percent of the population. This did not guarantee the Congress Party safe access to political power (Desai and Shah, 2009: 188-194). This worked in favour of the upper castes in Gujarat, as the Congress had to rely on their support in order to consolidate its support base (Harriss 1999: 3372-3373).

These differences in the social bases of political support for the Congress Party were clearly reflected in the electoral outcomes during the 1960s. In Gujarat, the Congress Party was able to garner 52 percent of votes during the 1962 general elections, and win 16 of the 22 parliamentary seats or 72 percent of the seat share. The Congress Party was successful in winning a similar proportion of votes (52 percent) in Maharashtra during the 1962 general election. The real difference lay in the opposition to the Congress Party in both the states. In Maharashtra, the Congress Party faced a fragmented opposition. No single opposition party came close to winning more than 12 percent of the total votes in the state. This meant that Congress Party won 93 percent of the seat share in Maharashtra. In contrast, the Swatantra Party, a regional party[49], presented a consolidated opposition in Gujarat and won 25 percent of the votes.

This is clearly reflected in the Index of Opposition unity developed by David Butler, Ashok Lahiri and Prannoy Roy (Butler et al., 1991). The index captures the degree to which there is a coherent or a fractured opposition. The index is

[48]Patidars comprise of the Leuva patidars and Kadva patidars.

[49]In the literature, there is considerable confusion when it comes to classifying Swatantra Party as a regional party or not. Instead of following any particular side, I have calculated party nationalisation scores based on the Herfindalh-Hirschmann index of concentration to check whether the party is national or regional. Based on the criteria defined by Ziegfeld (2016), Swatantra Party is classified as a regional party.

calculated by dividing the vote of the largest opposition party by the sum of the votes of all opposition parties:

$$\frac{\text{Vote of the largest opposition party}}{\text{Sum of all opposition parties}} \times 100$$

If there is only one opposition party, then the index will be 100. As the share of the largest opposition party declines relative to all other opposition parties, the index declines correspondingly. Put differently, the index will be lower in the case of fragmented opposition and higher in the case of a consolidated opposition.

Table 3.3: Index of Opposition Unity, 1962-67

Election Year	Gujarat	Maharashtra
Lok Sabha 1962	64.8	35.5
Vidhan Sabha 1962	49.64	15.31
Lok Sabha 1967	91.6	31.7
Vidhan Sabha 1967	70.66	15.42
Mean Index Value	69.17	24.48

As Table 3.3 demonstrates, Maharashtra's mean index value for the elections held in the 1960s is considerably lower (approximately 45 percent lower) than the mean index value for Gujarat. This is clearly indicative of the fragmented opposition in Maharashtra in comparison to its neighbouring state.

The support of the Marathas helped the Congress Party dominate the electoral landscape in Maharashtra. In contrast, the dominance of the Congress Party in Gujarat was more fragile, as the party did not get support from a numerically dominant caste in the state. The opposition was able to use this opportunity to represent the interests of the other middle caste in the state. As noted by Shah (1976: 278), the Swatantra Party won over Kshatriyas who were looking to undermine the hold of the Patidars. The Swatantra Party openly allied itself with

the Gujarat Kshatriya Sabha (GKS), the caste organization of the Kshatriyas[50], and gave them party tickets generously (Desai and Shah 2009: 193).

All major regional parties in India have the support of a strong middle and/or lower caste groups (Palshikar, 2013: 99). In essence, the presence of strong middle and/or lower caste groups is necessary for the growth of regional parties (Jaffrelot, 2003; Chandra, 2004), but it is not sufficient to explain their success. Middle and/or lower caste groups are present in every Indian state, but we do not find successful regional parties in every Indian state. The Congress Party was able to dominate the electoral landscape in many Indian states despite the presence of strong middle and/or lower caste groups. In Maharashtra, we see that the middle Maratha castes had complete autonomy within the Congress regional branch whereas the fragmented demography of the middle castes in Gujarat meant that the Congress Party was initially not able to represent all the middle castes groups in Gujarat. This explains the subtle differences behind Congress dominance in both the states. In Maharashtra, the Congress had a hegemonic control of the electoral landscape, as no opposition was strong enough to counter the control of the Marathas within the Congress machinery. In Gujarat, the Congress Partys was a dominant party within what effectively was a two-party system with strong competition from a regional party. The major political and organisational upheavals created by Indira Gandhi provided an impetus for change. In the next sub-section, I explore and compare the changes that took place in the two states.

[50]The Kshatriyas in Gujarat comprise of the former princely (Rajput varna) jatis together with lower fishermen (Koli) jatis.

3.3 Second electoral phase, 1967-1989

3.3.1 Maharashtra

In the early 1970s, Indira Gandhi attempted to undermine the hold of the Maratha leadership over the Maharashtra regional Congress (Kochanek, 1968; Deshpande and Palshikar, 2003: 100). Such regional control of a particular social group did not help her in centralizing power at the national-level. She thought that by dismantling the control of the Marathas, it would be easy for her to centralize power at the national-level. However, in Maharashtra, her centralisation drives resulted in a number of important state level elites leaving the party (EPW, 1979). She was not fully successful in displacing the control of the Marathas over the Congress Party's sub-national unit, but was successful enough to widen the cracks and shake the confidence and complacency of the Maratha leadership (Deshpande and Palshikar, 2003: 99-101; Lele, 1984).

Indira's efforts contributed to increasing defections of the Maratha leadership. Even when some Maratha leaders were supportive of Indira's centralist tendencies, majority of the important state-level Maratha elites like Y.B. Chavan and Sharad Pawar were not (Palshikar and Birmal, 2004; Pawar, 2015: 33-36). The defections had a direct bearing on the electoral outcomes. The Congress performance in Maharashtra in the 1977 Lok Sabha election was poor. It won 20 seats out of the 48 parliamentary seats or 41.6 percent of the seat share. Certainly, the poor performance of the Congress Party was partly due to the Emergency and the post-Emergency collaboration of the opposition parties. However, it was also because of the rising defections of the state-level Maratha leadership of the Congress Party (Deshpande and Palshikar 2003: 100). This disintegration of the

Maratha leadership was also reflected in the state-assembly election in the late 1970s. For instance, during the 1978 state-assembly election, the Congress Party was split between Indira loyalists (Congress Party (I)) and the Maratha leaders (Congress Party). The Congress Party (I) received 62 seats whereas the Maratha-led Congress Party won 69 seats, with none winning an overall majority to form the state government. This forced them to form a formal coalition-led state government, which lasted until the 1980 general elections. After winning the general elections, Indira Gandhi dismissed the state government, and called for fresh state elections. Even when the Congress Party won the state elections, the infighting between the Maratha elites continued through the early 1980s. Congress Maratha leader Sharad Pawar formed his own regional party-Samantar Congress, and decided to fight the Congress Party. He would only merge his regional party with the Congress Party after Indira Gandhi's death, when Rajiv Gandhi promised him autonomy over the Maharashtra Congress.

Much of leadership struggle in the 1970s and 1980s alienated the masses of the Congress's traditional support structure: the Maratha social constituency. Consequently, these developments facilitated the growth of the neo-Hinduist forces, such as the Shetkari Sanghatana, which were able to successfully mobilize the Marathas. However, it is important to note that the neo-Hinduist forces were different from the BJP and the larger Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS)[51] in that they were active in the rural areas and small towns, and attracted youths from the non-upper castes (Deshpande and Palshikar 2003: 100). In spite of the rise of Hindu nationalism in the state, the BJP could not capitalize on this trend as it was confined to the urban upper castes, with the party's state leadership belonging specifically to the Brahmins (Vora, 2009). This dominance of the Brahmins within the BJP isolated it from the young Marathas. Although it relied

[51]A large Hindu nationalist cultural organisation that has close links with the BJP.

heavily on the RSS for organizational and ideological support (Thachil, 2014), their upper caste status made the party organizationally and ideologically weak in the state, especially amongst the socially mobilized, but politically marginalized young Marathas. It is here that the importance of the Shiv Sena party becomes relevant.

After the mid-1980s, the Shiv Sena entered the rural parts of Maharashtra. It took up an explicitly Hinduist position, similar to the one adopted by the neo-Hinduist forces. It cast its version of communalism with a distinctly vernacularized idiom of Maratha martiality with rustic values. Though similar to the larger Hindutva project, this version of communalism was subtly distinct from the RSS version of puritanic Hindutva. (Hansen, 1996: 179). Shiv Sena also combined its ideological appeal with a flexible and an innovative mode of organisation, similar to the Maharashtra Congress state unit during its early 1960s. It started opening up Sena shakhas (branches) in every village of Maharashtra, and floated a number of frontal organisations. These frontal organisations began with incorporating a number of Maratha elites. It particularly struck a chord with the young Maratha elite who were particularly unhappy with the Congress Party. As mentioned above, since the late 1970s, Maharashtra was witnessing increasing factionalism within the Maratha elites. Shiv Sena exploited this situation to the maximum. In this way it started wooing the young Marathas who were tired of the intra-leadership struggle of their elites within the Congress. The Shiv Sena was able to attract the young Marathas in urban as well as rural areas.

By the 1980s and early 1990s-the Shiv Sena was able to replicate the Congress Party in terms of the latter's social base. The Shiv Sena had a strong base among the Marathas, exactly what the Congress would have looked like in the 1960s and 1970s (Deshpande and Palshikar 2003, p.113). This strong support of the

Marathas for the Shiv Sena party forced the BJP central leadership to formally ally with the party in order to reap electoral benefits in Maharashtra (Palshikar, 1996). Many BJP state-level leaders, who came from a RSS background nevertheless disliked the association of the BJP with the Shiv Sena party. They felt that the politicization and the vernacularization of Hindutva in Maharashtra made the entire organization vulnerable to the 'Congress culture' (Hansen, 1996: 186). Despite this, in Maharashtra, the BJP was a *junior ally*[52] of the Shiv Sena. It was only with an alliance that both the parties could defeat the Congress Party during the mid-1990s. During the 1995 state assembly elections, the BJP-Shiv Sena alliance was able to secure 138 seats in the 288 member assembly (Deshpande and Palshikar, 2003).

Table 3.4: Maharashtra state-assembly election, 1995

Party	Vote Share (%)	Total Seats (288)
BJP	12.8	65
Shiv Sena	27.69	73
Congress Party	31.23	80

Source: ECI

[52]The BJP contested less seats than its alliance partner, Shiv Sena for the 1990 and 1995 regional elections.

3.3.2 Gujarat

The Congress Party faced severe electoral challenges during the initial decades in Gujarat (Desai, 1967: 431-444). Unlike Maharashtra, the Congress Party in Gujarat did not have support from a numerically dominant castes in the state. The Patidar social constituency only constituted about 12 percent of the population. The 1970s did not provide any solace to the Congress Party. Gujarat was one of the states' most politically disturbed by the Congress Party split of 1969. The home base of Moraji Desai, Indira Gandhi's chief opponent during 1969-71, Gujarat experienced considerable confusion as a result of Indira Gandhi's Congress (Indira) rise in the 1971 general elections while a Congress (Organization) majority government ruled in Gujarat. Nevertheless, pressure from the centre and defections away from Congress (Organization) brought the resignation of the Congress (Organization) state government in May 1971, the imposition of President's Rule for the rest of that year, and then a sweeping Congress (Indira) victory in the 1972 assembly elections (Wood, 1975: 316). This victory was masked in severe factional infighting, partly the result of Indira Gandhi's increasing intervention. Disregarding the state-level leadership, she choose her own man, Ghanshyam Oza-a Brahmin,-as the Chief Minister in 1972. This angered the Patidars who wanted to see another Patidar, Chimanbhai Patel, as their Chief Minister. Fearing a backlash from the Patidars, Mrs. Gandhi backed down and appointed Chimanbhai Patel as the Chief Minister on 18 July 1973 (Jones and Jones, 1976; Shah, 1976).

However, Chimanbhai Patel could not sustain his hold over the state government for long. The Nav Nirman ('social reconstruction') movement put Gujarat in a state of emergency. The urban middle class spearheaded the movement in a revolt against high prices and the scarcity of commodities. A wave of riots and political agitation swept through the cities and towns in the state, causing over a

hundred reported deaths, and many more serious injuries, massive arrests and the destruction of huge amounts of public and private property. The agitation directly led to the resignation of the Chimanbhai Patel-led state government (Jones and Jones, 1976: 1014). However, as this movement began against the Chimanbhai-led state government, the Khedut Samaj (peasant's organization), along with rich peasants of Saurashtra and North Gujarat came to the defence of Chimanbhai Patel (Shah, 1976: 271). The Khedut Samaj was dominated by Patidars, and their opposition to the agitation clearly reflected the wedge between the two dominant middle castes - the Patidars and the Kshatriyas - in Gujarat. Unlike Maharashtra, where no other social group had the clout to challenge the Marathas, the Congress Party in Gujarat was supported by an economically dominant, but numerically smaller, caste.

Fearing increasing competition from various factions within the Congress that had come to form their own separate regional parties, Indira Gandhi mobilized the Kshatriyas along with the lower castes in order to consolidate her support base in Gujarat (Wood, 1984b: 206-210). This gave the lower castes and the marginalized elements an opportunity to assert their influence within the Congress Party in Gujarat. The politically marginalized Kshatriya-castes took advantage of this opportunity. Madhavsingh Solanki, a Kshatriya himself, forged a blatantly 'casteist' formula of the middle and lower caste groups within the Congress Party in Gujarat. He arrived at a decision that henceforth the Congress would outspokenly work as the spokesman and the guardian of deprived sections of society in Gujarat: the middle-caste Kshatriyas (K), Dalits or Harijans (H), Tribals or Adivasis (A) and Muslims (M). The Congress Party even coined an acronym known as KHAM (Wood, 1984b; Sanghavi, 2010).

In a similar manner to the Maratha support base in Maharashtra, the KHAM

alliance provided the necessary support structure for the Congress in Gujarat. In the numbers game, these four communities formed 56 percent of the state's population (Yagnik and Sheth, 2005: 254). This provided the state-level Congress with a guaranteed electoral majority. For instance, the Congress Party secured 51 percent of the total vote share and won 140 of the 182 assembly seats during the 1980 assembly elections. It also made history by being the first government in Gujarat to complete its five year mandate (1980-1985). The party repeated the electoral success in the 1985 state-assembly election, where the Congress Party ended up winning 149 out of the 182 assembly seats: this extraordinary victory represented the largest victory in the state's history and the best performance among all the Congress-ruled states in India at that time (Wood, 1987: 419).

However, unlike in Maharashtra, the Congress could not sustain the KHAM alliance. The alliance eventually resulted in widespread caste and communal violence. It ignited tensions between the Patidars and the Kshatriyas, as the Patidars experienced alienation and frustration due to their exclusion, or threat of exclusion, from political power at every level in the political system. Desperate to regain their dominance, the Patidars supported the opposition party, the BJP, during the 1980s. The BJP in Gujarat was waiting for an opportunity to improve its electoral share in the state. It saw an opportunity in the post-KHAM riots. By attracting the disgruntled Patidars, and other upper castes, the BJP improved its prospects in the state. The Gujarat BJP unit gave the Patidars complete autonomy to run the state-level BJP branch.[53] However, the Patidars knew that they alone would not be able to propel the BJP to power. As mentioned above, they constituted only 12 percent of the total state population, and were numerically weaker in comparison to the Marathas in Maharashtra. The Patidars in Gujarat

[53]Interview with Ghanshyam Shah, 3rd April 2016, Ahmedabad, Gujarat. Professor Ghashyam Shah is a former professor at Jawaharlal Nehru University and has written a number of books and commentaries on Gujarat.

also knew that the KHAM alliance in Gujarat was an elite-level pact restricted to candidate nomination and cabinet allocation. It was not a grass-root social alliance. Furthermore, the alliance was not restricted to the caste Hindus, but also included Muslims. In Gujarat, at a more grass-root level, the state's lower caste and tribal groups were always attracted to the Hindutva doctrine (Patel, 1999a). For instance, during the Ahmedabad riots of 1985, the Patidar-dominated BJP and the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) provided relief, money, food and legal aid to the Dalit communities. Gradually, the BJP and the VHP were able to win the sympathy of the Dalit communities, and were able to cultivate a strong 'Hindu' opinion amongst them. This made it relatively easy for the BJP along with the RSS to break the KHAM alliance (Shah, 1987; Shani, 2007).

The break-up of the KHAM alliance coincided with the rise of the BJP in the state. The BJP's politico-religious mobilisation in the form of agitational and yatra politics had a significant impact on the voters in Gujarat (Patel, 2003: 2426). This form of mobilisation is particularly successful in Gujarat because of the history of politico-religious processions in the state. Ironically, the state was first exposed to this form of agitational politics by the state's most powerful leader, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (Spodek, 1989). Gandhi has left behind a formidable legacy in the state. Gujarat was Gandhi's home state where he created and nurtured a large array of civic and political institutions, developing a mass following (Varshney, 2002: 221). Gandhi popularised religious imagery for popular mobilisations against the colonial British state. He went on to further politicize the concept of yatras or religious procession for mobilizing support for his nationalist movement. These yatras were considered to be more of a pilgrimage rather than a political gesture (Brown, 1977; Spodek, 1989). It also formed a perfect platform for the upper caste elites to spread the religious and nationalist discourse amongst the participating masses (Yagnik and Sheth, 2005: 257-261). These yatras have

attracted large masses, even from the lower caste and Adivasi communities. The large presence of the lower caste and Adivasi groups in the Salt Satyagraha Yatra held by Gandhi is indicative of this. In the post-independence period, these tactics have been consistently used by the RSS, and later the BJP, to further its Hindutva project.

In Gujarat, the BJP reaped the electoral benefits of the politico-religious mobilisation during the 1989 general election. The BJP secured thirty-percent of the total vote share and won all of the twelve seats it contested in the 1989 general election. This was an exponential rise when compared to the 1984 general election, where the BJP won eighteen percent of the total vote share and won two seats. The Gujarat state assembly elections also mirrored the rise of the BJP at the national level. For instance, during the 1990 state assembly election, the BJP won 46 percent seat share (calculated with baseline being seats contested as opposed to total number of seats) with a vote share of 27 percent. Once again, this is a remarkable achievement compared to the party's earlier performance at the state-level. During the state-assembly elections held in 1985, the party had won 6 percent seat share with a total vote share of 11 percent. In Gujarat, the BJP was able to single-handedly topple the Congress government during the mid-1990s. During the 1995 state assembly elections in Gujarat, the party won 121 66 percent seat share with an aggregate vote share of 42.5 percent.

3.4 Discussion

Caste is still the major prism through which Indian politics is studied and analysed. However, it is important to note that caste, as an important social cleav-

age, became increasingly politically relevant when it was confined to a specific geographical unit that was linguistically homogenous. In the 1950s, India did experience strong linguistic agitations across the country that threatened to break the union. However, the Congress Party's central leadership did give into the demands of its state level leaders. By accepting language as the basis of state formation, the party not only averted a major catastrophe, but also pre-empted the rise of many regional parties across the country (Adeney, 2007: 126). For example, in Gujarat and Maharashtra, the linguistic agitation was led by state level leaders of the Congress Party. The support for the linguistic movement could have easily translated into strong electoral support for breakaway regional parties had the party's central leadership not accepted the demand for bifurcation of the Bombay Presidency into two separate states. I interpret the support for linguistic re-organisation of the states by then Congress Party's central leadership as an acknowledgement of autonomy for its regional political elites. This interpretation shows how intra-party autonomy helped the Congress Party contain defection by important regional political elites, which in turn allowed the party to dominate the electoral landscape in the immediate post-independence era.

Like language, the Congress Party came to dominate the electoral scene by representing dominant caste groups at the state-level. It is important to note that the party's support structure was not identical across different states, but depended on the local power structures and dominant groups in each state. These differences were reflected in the scale of its dominance in different Indian states. In Maharashtra, the Congress Party was dominated by the Marathas, who effectively guaranteed the Congress Party unequivocal electoral support. No other national or regional party could gather enough electoral support to challenge the dominance of the Marathas, and in turn the Congress Party. In Gujarat, the Congress Party was initially dominated by the Patidars, who were not able to guarantee

the Congress Party the same level of dominance as Maharashtra because of their smaller numerical size. However, the differences lay in the scale of its dominance as opposed to dominance per say. In both Maharashtra and Gujarat, the Congress Party was safely able to form majority governments prior to Indira Gandhi's leadership of the Congress Party central branch.

Under Indira Gandhi, the party centralised leadership, and decreased the autonomy of its sub-national units. This decreased the autonomy given to the Marathas in Maharashtra. They soon drifted towards other parties. However, it is important to note that the other polity-wide party, the BJP, did not make the most of the opportunity. The BJP state unit was organisationally subservient to the RSS, and depended on it for cadre and leadership support.[54] In turn, the RSS was dominated by the upper castes who were not effectively able to mobilise support from the Marathas in Maharashtra. This helped other regional parties, such as the Shiv Sena, to improve its electoral standing in the state when these groups were unhappy within the Congress organisation.

Unlike Maharashtra, the BJP in Gujarat was able to accommodate and co-opt the demands of the disgruntled Patidars in the post-KHAM scenario.[55] This is one

[54]This feature of the BJP state organisation being subordinate to the RSS is best captured by the concept of autonomy of the regional branch from the external environment (external autonomy) as opposed to the party's central branch (internal autonomy). In chapter 4, I have discussed at length how this thesis focuses and measures intra-party autonomy as opposed to conceptualising external autonomy. It is true that a combination of internal and external autonomy is better able to explain polity-wide party dominance at the state-level, but due to limitations of time and resources, in this thesis I have measured intra-party autonomy. During my fieldwork, I did try speaking to a number of BJP members and party workers about their relationship with RSS functionaries. However, it proved very difficult to have them speak about the party's relationship with the RSS. Questions about the party's relationship with RSS further closed any rapport I had built up with the party workers. Future research should certainly look to measure external autonomy of the regional branch.

[55]It is true that the Gujarat BJP unit did not have more or less autonomy from the RSS in comparison to Maharashtra. The key difference between Gujarat and Maharashtra lay in the attractiveness of the politics put forward by RSS. As discussed above, in Maharashtra the Marathas were not attracted to the politics of RSS, and opted to join Shiv Sena whereas the Patidars were sympathetic to RSS politics, and decided to join the BJP. I acknowledge this difference. However, I would still argue that if the Maharashtra BJP unit had autonomy from

of the major reasons why no other major regional players in Gujarat succeeded in the state when support for the Congress Party declined. Paradoxically, unlike Maharashtra, Gujarati politics had a presence of a strong regional party, the Swatantra Party, in the 1960s, which represented those groups that were unhappy with the Congress Party supporting the Patidars. But, unlike Maharashtra, by attracting the Patidars in the late 1980s, the BJP in Gujarat left no other space for the third player.

The main story emerging from this chapter is that both the states display remarkable diversity in terms of the caste-based groups present between them. This diversity in turn affects the way polity-wide parties were able to form, accommodate and co-opt different castes. A number of studies analysing the decline of the Congress Party, and the inability of the BJP to replace the Congress Party as the dominant party in different states, have overemphasised the importance of caste as the key explanation. Then Narrative built up in this chapter suggests that when the dominant castes had autonomy within existing polity-wide party (the Congress Party) they had no reason to form or join other non-polity-wide parties.[56] It is only when their autonomy over the regional branch was taken away by Indira Gandhi that they looked for alternative options. In some states, the alternative was provided by the BJP, like the case of Gujarat, but in others, non-polity-wide parties were more attractive for these dominant castes. Even here, their decision to choose between a polity-wide or a non-polity-wide party was dictated by the nature of its organisation. When alternative polity-wide parties gave the incoming dominant castes autonomy, they preferred to join them as opposed to joining or forming non-polity-wide parties. In sum, this chapter has shown that instead of

the RSS, then the question of Marathas accepting RSS politics or not would not have risen. Moreover, lack of autonomy during Indira Gandhi's period was one of the major reasons for these groups to leave the party in the first place. In sum, intra-party autonomy supersedes those arguments that rest on group affinity towards RSS politics.

[56]I discuss this aspect of the argument in further detail in the following chapter 4.

looking at how the dominant castes fuel the growth of certain parties over others, we need to pay particular attention on why these dominant caste leave some organisations, and choose some, over others. Moreover, I have also shown that the reasons behind exit (and entry) of dominant castes is dictated by a particular aspect of party organisation i.e. the level of autonomy that these groups are able to have at the regional level. The next chapter conceptualises intra-party autonomy, and operationalises it in order to systematically capture the variation at the state-level in the empirical chapters 5 and 6.

Chapter 4

Party organisation

In the previous chapters, I have shown how existing explanations that rely on social cleavages, political and economic decentralisation, sub-nationalism and/or coalition politics are not sufficient to explain why polity-wide parties dominate in some states but not in others. In this chapter, I underline the role of party organisation in explaining the dominance of polity-wide parties at the sub-national level in multi-level states like India.

Since the publication of *Political Parties: Organisation and Power* (Panebianco, 1988), it is widely accepted that party organisation has a strong bearing on a party's success. The importance of the organisational approach is particularly essential in a multi-level context like India. Political parties that compete in multi-level states often face a challenge of organising. As mentioned above, these difficulties are greater for polity-wide parties because they will have to accommodate inter-territorial tensions over the distribution of resources, manage the relationships between party officials and representatives at various tiers of govern-

ment, and speak for the general interest while simultaneously represent potentially contradictory particularistic interests (Van Biezen and Hopkin, 2006: 15). These tensions are further magnified in multi-national states. Existing research in comparative politics has shown how strong territorially defined sub-nationalism makes it very difficult for polity-wide parties to maintain their dominance in those sub-national units (Len, 2014).

Despite these challenges, polity-wide parties have been able to retain their dominance at the state-level in multi-level settings. For instance, polity-wide parties dominate the US party system despite high levels of political and economic decentralisation. Even more interesting is how Spanish polity-wide parties like the Spanish Socialist Party (PSOE) have retained influence in sub-national units like Galicia and Andalusia despite the presence of sub-nationalism. Also, in the Indian case, the Congress Party, under Nehru's leadership, was able to dominate both at the national and the state level until his death in 1964. He achieved this by having autonomous regional branches. But Indira Gandhi's intra-party centralisation drives took away the autonomy enjoyed by the Congress regional elites. A number of Congress regional elites left the party either to join or form other parties. In some states, they joined autonomous regional branches of alternative polity-wide parties where in other states they joined or formed regional parties.

In this chapter, I put forward an explanation that accounts for the above variation. My arguments rests on the organisational differences within polity-wide parties to explain the variation in their dominance at the state-level. In the previous chapter, I argued that the changes in caste politics alone is not sufficient to explain why Gujarat is dominated by polity-wide parties wherein Maharashtra has strong regional parties that challenge polity-wide party dominance. As discussed in the previous chapter, the key impetus behind the changing nature of

caste dynamics was intra-party autonomy. So long as the dominant castes had (or were given) autonomy over the regional branches of polity-wide parties, they had little or no incentive to join or form non-polity-wide parties. The nature of analysis and evidence provided in the previous chapter was built on macro-level analysis that aimed to explain the major upheavals and changes that unfolded in both the states since independence up until the 1990s. In this chapter, I build on the autonomy argument mentioned in the previous chapter to first conceptualise, and, second to, operationalise, intra-party autonomy. The conceptualisation and operationalisation will be useful for the empirical chapters 5 and 6 that will follow this chapter.

To reiterate from chapter 1, in this thesis I have argued that polity-wide parties are able to retain their dominance when their sub-national units have autonomy. In contrast, polity-wide parties are unable to thwart a regional party challenge when they centralise power and constrain the autonomy of their sub-national branches. It is important to note that polity-wide parties could retain their dominance in some states but not in others, if there are autonomous sub-national branches in the former. It is important to note that my explanation of why polity-wide parties dominate at the state-level is a system-level explanation and not an explanation of why individual polity-wide parties succeed or decline. As mentioned above, this conceptualisation of dominance of polity-wide parties comes closest to the concept of party system nationalisation (Jones and Mainwaring, 2003), but one which is conceptualised at the sub-national level as opposed to the national level. Therefore, in this thesis, I explain why some states are nationalised while others are not. It does not explain why individual polity-wide parties are able to win (or lose) elections at the regional level.

For this argument to work, there are a several necessary conditions that need

to be satisfied. Section 4.1 discusses these conditions in detail and shows how India satisfies them. Section 4.2 builds upon the assumptions to put forward an argument of how intra-party autonomy can explain the dominance of polity-wide parties at the sub-national level. Section 4.3 discusses how my argument is different from existing work on party organisation in India. Section 4.4 operationalises the concept of intra-party autonomy in the Indian context and, finally, section 4.5 discusses the data collection strategy used to code the levels of intra-party autonomy within India.

4.1 Necessary conditions for argument resting on intra-party autonomy

An argument resting on the importance of intra-party autonomy to explain the dominance of polity-wide parties at the state-level works only under certain conditions.

The first condition is the presence of at least a single dominant polity-wide party at the time of country's transition into a democratic system. Unlike the formation of European party systems where the nationalisation was a gradual process coinciding with the development of representative democracies (Caramani, 2004), my argument explains why polity-wide parties were able to sustain their dominance in some states but not others. It is not about explaining the origins of polity-wide party dominance, but more about its *sustenance*. In the Indian case, the Congress Party was the dominant party at the time of independence. In most of India's states, the Congress Party governed from independence in 1947 through at least 1967. A number of reasons have been advanced to explain the party's initial

dominance in India. One particular explanation is that the party built a robust internal organisation as part of its nationalist mobilisation (Adeney and Wyatt, 2004). One interpretation of this explanation is that the party's central branch gave high levels of autonomy to its sub-national units in the initial years post-independence, particularly when the party was under Nehru's leadership (Kothari, 1964; Weiner, 1967). While it had equivalent starting points throughout India, the party was not able to sustain its dominance throughout the nation. In some states, Congress dominance was replaced with the rise of other polity-wide parties like the BJP wherein other states the Congress dominance was replaced with the growth of non-polity-wide parties. This thesis is an attempt to explain this variation across the country.

The second condition is the division of political authority among multiple levels of government where each level is democratically elected and has independent decision making power over at least one important issue area (Brancati, 2008a: 137-138). It is only in multi-level political settings that regional elites will have incentives to defect from polity-wide parties or join non-polity-wide parties when the central branch of the party constrains autonomy. In political settings where sub-national units are mere administrative units with no democratically elected governments and genuine political power, polity-wide parties will be able to maintain their dominance without having autonomous sub-national branches. For example, prior to the 1998 devolution of powers to Scotland and Wales, British polity-wide parties were under no political or strategic compulsion to have autonomous sub-national units. However, the 1998 Devolution Act compelled British polity-wise parties to have autonomous sub-national branches in order to stall the rise of regional parties like the Scottish Nationalist Party (SNP) and the Plaid Cymru at the regional level (Hopkin and Bradbury, 2006: 140-143; Hopkin, 2009). While existing literature (Hopkin and Van Houten, 2009; Fabre, 2008) speculates that po-

litical and economic decentralisation will eventually compel polity-wide parties to give autonomy to their sub-national units, my argument is more about discussing the consequences of not having autonomous regional branches in a politically and economically decentralised political setting. Also, deviating from existing literature on the electoral influence of political and economic decentralisation (Chhibber and Kollman, 2004), I argue that polity-wide parties can still retain their dominance in politically and economically decentralised settings if their sub-national branches have autonomy.

India is a federation with democratically elected sub-national governments which have powers enshrined in the constitution. Importantly, under the Indian constitution the primary responsibility for developmental policies has rested with states rather than the national government (Singh, 2015a: 17). The Indian constitution gives states responsibility for areas that influence the daily lives of citizens, such as law and order, police, agriculture, water supply, power supply, urban development, education, state public services, cooperatives and public health (Chandra, 2004: 132). But, the central level also has considerable powers. The constitution of India proclaims India is a union of states, rather than a federation. Article 356 of the Indian constitution empowers the central government to dismiss elected state governments and impose central rule in the states. Importantly, there is a large concurrent list of powers, and residuary powers lie with the central government. As highlighted by Bagchi (2003: 24-26), the centre established its early predominance through a number of measures. First, there was the Planning Commission, which was Jawaharlal Nehru's method for getting the states to adopt the strategy of planning led by the public sector. Another was the location of basic industries in the public sector, mostly under central control. A third measure, and the most important one, was the development of private industries through licensing and control. This was also followed by nationalisation of insurance, aviation, and in

1969, major banks.

However, since the early 1990s, with the liberalisation of the economy, and de-licensing of industries and devolution of the powers of the states over industrial policy, India is moving towards cooperative federalism. Also, since the 1990s, coalition politics came to dominate national politics which made it difficult for the central government to arbitrarily use Article 356 especially when some of the national coalition partners were incumbent at the sub-national level (Saez, 2002). This increased the leverage and influence of the sub-national level in India. States became equipped with the de facto power to provide public services which were enshrined in the Indian constitution and in exercising a decisive voice in setting central government policies (Jenkins, 2004; Sinha, 2004). This is also confirmed by Rodden (2004), who argues that India has moved towards a more decentralised polity based on sub-national governments' share of total government expenditures and revenues as well as the share of subnational revenue raised by these governments. In sum, India meets the second condition of the division of political authority among multiple levels of government where each level is democratically elected and has independent decision making power over at least one important issue area. Importantly, the Indian federation entered a phase of increasing decentralisation particularly since the early 1990s.

The third condition is the presence of an elite dominated approach to party systems (Ziegfeld, 2016b: 93). The bulk of the comparative politics research that explain why polity-wide parties dominate in some places but not others is built on an assumption of programmatic politics i.e. where voters preferences, interests and identities gain primacy (Downs, 1957; Lipset and Rokkan, 1967; Caramani, 2004). Polity-wide parties dominate in some states but not others because voters decide to change their preferences in some states but not others.

The literature then goes on to explain why voters change their preferences (Dalton, 1996; Whiteley, 1983). Even when the comparative research acknowledges that elites can shape voters preferences, interests and attitudes, the assumption of programmatic politics remain intact (Lenz, 2013). Elites are merely treated as intermediaries that shape voters attitudes and beliefs where the primary focus still remains with the voters. In contrast, as convincingly shown by Ziegfeld (2016), in a clientelistic democracy[57] voters are largely indifferent to the programmatic issue platform type of party for which they vote as long as the party is able to deliver clientelistic goods. From the voters perspective whichever party is most likely to provide the clientelistic benefits will be the voters preferred party. Both polity-wide and non-polity-wide parties can provide clientelistic benefits to the voters, and voters should have no reason to prefer one type of party to another. A large part of Ziegfeld's argument then goes on show how voters preferences for regional parties are not determined by its party type, but because of the party's ability to deliver clientelistic goods and services. The same voter would opt for a polity-wide party if the party is able to deliver the same goods and services. Such an indifference to party type allows elites to shape the party system with virtually no constraint imposed by the electorate. Therefore, in such a context, elites have tremendous leverage in determining which types of parties dominate the party system. If elites have a strong preference for establishing and joining non-polity-wide parties then non polity-wide parties will be successful so long as the elite is able to guarantee clientelistic benefit to the voters.

Virtually, every major study has classified India as a clientelistic polity (Chandra, 2004; Kitschelt and Wilkinson, 2007; Auerbach and Sinha, 2013). In particular, studies have shown how political elites in India make use of political patronage

[57]In my thesis I define clientelism very broadly as occurring when political parties and political elites win electoral support through individualised and discretionary allocation of goods and services and access to states resources.

to attract voters (Manor, 2000; Krishna, 2007; Stokes et al., 2013; Thachil, 2014). While variation certainly exists in the degree of clientelism present within India (Auerbach, 2016), the primacy of political elites in using discretionary practices to secure votes is uniform across the country. In such a context, as convincingly argued by Ziegfeld (2016), a more pertinent question to ask is why elites prefer some types of parties over others. *Why do regional political elites in some states prefer to establish or join non-polity-wide parties where in others they remain within or join other polity-wide parties?* In the subsequent section, I argue that autonomy within polity-wide parties can shape elite preferences in favour of polity-wide parties as opposed to non-polity-wide parties.

4.2 Intra-party organisation and dominance of polity-wide parties at the state-level

In a clientelistic polity that is politically and economically decentralised, polity-wide parties are more likely to retain their dominance at the state-level when the state-unit has more autonomy. Put differently, if polity-wide parties are centralised, then regional political actors have more incentives to form their own party or join existing non-polity-wide parties. The assumption being that intra-party centralisation forces regional political elites to give up power and control over the patronage benefits at the sub-national level for central leaders. But, if the sub-national units of polity-wide parties have autonomy, then regional elites are more likely to stay within polity-wide parties. This is because they are able to have control over resources and power at the sub-national level. This control discourages regional elites from forming their own parties. Forming a political

party is a costly[58] endeavour which does not guarantee access to power and resources. Therefore, regional political elites are only going to form one when they are unable to gain autonomy and power at the state level within existing political parties (Chhibber et al., 2014).

Why is gaining intra-party autonomy at the sub-national level important in India? Since the early 1990s, it is at the sub-national level that political elites in India have the greatest leverage in collecting rents for political patronage. Furthermore, as highlighted by Chandra (2004), it is the sub-national level that has the power to transfer senior and junior bureaucrats within state boundaries. This gives enormous control over political patronage to political elites at the sub-national level. This dominance of the sub-national level is also highlighted by other studies which acknowledge that the sub-national level in India has the 'most powerful position' in the patronage network (Wilkinson, 2007: 123). Even when the central level has tried to fight back to regain control by increasing developmental funds for Member of Parliaments (MPs) in the form of Member of Parliament Local Area Developmental (MPLADS) funds, the sub-national level has come up with its own developmental schemes that allow politicians to monitor additional developmental projects in their constituencies (Manor, 2016).

While it is true that regional political elites could have control over the patronage network at the sub-national level by forming and joining non-polity-wide parties, this would then make it difficult for these elites to maintain influence at the central level. Even when the sub-national level has the most lucrative position in the patronage network in India, the central level in India still constitutionally holds more power (Chhibber, 2009; Kailash, 2011b). Regional political elites would not want to lose influence over the central level at the expense of gaining

[58]The costs of investing in building a party organisation. See Ziegfeld (2016: 163) for a further discussion on the costs of forming a political party in India.

autonomy at the sub-national level. Autonomy for their regional branches within existing polity-wide parties presents the best opportunity for regional political elites to have control over the patronage network at the sub-national level but at the same time also maintain influence over the central level through intra-party linkages.

One possible objection to the above explanation could be Ziegfeld's (2012) argument about coalition politics at the national level providing opportunities for regional elites to have influence at the national level without intra-party linkages. Ziegfeld shows how the advent of coalition government at the national level increased the benefits associated with establishing and joining a non-polity-wide party. He argues that

> whereas regional parties sat on the side-lines of national politics during the era of single party majority government, since the beginning of coalition government they have been critical to the formation of most national governments. Participation in national-level government has enhanced the payoffs to leaders of regional parties by offering them ministerial berths, increased discretionary funds from the central government, and more secure state governments (2012: 76).

Put differently, coalition politics at the national level made it possible for regional political elites to have a stake at the central level without losing dominance over the patronage network at the state-level. Acknowledging the importance of coalition governments at the national level in incentivising regional political elites to form and join non-polity-wide parties, I argue that regional political elites are only going to form or join non-polity-wide parties when they do not have

autonomy within their regional branch. Coalition politics at the national level alone is not going to encourage regional political elites who have autonomy over their regional branches. This is because autonomous regional political elites are going to enjoy all the benefits of being associated with a polity-wide party without necessarily incurring the costs of having to maintain a separate political party. Even Ziegfeld (2016b: 232) acknowledges that regional political elites are most likely to form non-polity-wide parties during a coalition era when existing polity-wide parties are "least organised". In other words, internal party organisation has a stronger influence on why regional political elites form or join non-polity-wide parties as opposed to opportunities opened by coalition politics at the national level. I discuss this empirically in the Maharashtra chapter where I show that the lack of intra-party autonomy was more important in triggering the movement of elites towards regional parties as opposed to the advent of coalition politics at the national level.

From a polity-wide party's perspective, autonomy for its sub-national units creates the opportunities to keep together diverse networks of regional political elites with contrasting political preferences within the same party. It allows sub-national units to present regionalist messages without necessarily following a regionalist message at the central level. In India, a number of scholars have pointed how polity-wide parties are known to have some sub-national units with strong regionalist messages (Sinha, 2003; Singh, 2015a).

While in theory, autonomy for regional branches might be beneficial for polity-wide parties, it is important to note that autonomy for sub-national units can come in many shapes and forms, and for this part of my argument, I do not conceptually distinguish between them. In this part of my argument, I focus on the existence of autonomy for regional branches of polity-wide parties, but not how

they obtain it. For instance, in some cases, central leaders of polity-wide parties pro-actively give autonomy to their sub-national units, as was the case with the Congress state units under Nehru (Weiner, 1967), but in some other cases, regional political elites challenge the authority of the central leader and maintain autonomy against the wishes of the central leader. For example, during Indira Gandhi's centralisation drive some state units were able to maintain their autonomy. In the early 1970s, Indira Gandhi attempted to undermine the hold of the Maratha leadership over the Maharashtra regional Congress. However, in Maharashtra, as mentioned in chapter 3, she was not successful in completely dismantling the dominance of the Maratha caste group over the Congress Party's sub-national unit (Deshpande and Palshikar 2003, pp.99-101; Lele 1984). Instead her consistent interventions widened the cracks within the Maratha Congress leadership. Without further delving into this, I wanted to bring forth this example to clarify that my argument does not draw a conceptual distinction between autonomy that was given to the regional branches by the centre from the one where the regional branches resist centralising efforts. How and why regional branches have differing levels of autonomy is a separate research question, addressed in the latter part of this thesis (see Chapter 7). For the purpose of this argument the important aspect is the existence of autonomy for sub-national units and not how and why they obtain it.

Finally, polity-wide parties can remain dominant at the state-level even when only one of the polity-wide party's regional branch has autonomy, even if there are many polity-wide parties competing in that state. This is because autonomy within a polity-wide party A at the state-level changes the structure of political competition, affecting the whole party system in that state (including Party B). The presence of an autonomous regional branch of a polity-wide party (Party A) will present an alternative to defecting political elites from Party B. Elites

from Party B could then join Party A - an autonomous polity-wide party - as opposed to forming a new party or joining existing regional parties. As mentioned above, forming a political party is a costly endeavour, and not always successful, so political elites are only likely to take this option if they have no alternatives left in terms of gaining autonomy at the regional level. Furthermore, regional political elites will have greater exposure to national politics by joining a polity-wide party as opposed to joining a non-polity-wide party. Therefore, I argue that regional political elites will opt to join an autonomous regional branch of a polity-wide party as opposed to joining a non-polity-wide party. Chhibber et al. (2014: 492) have also argued that when political elites decide "to exit a party or not, and what they decide to do once they exit, depends on alternatives that are available to them". Making use of their incentive structure, I argue that political elites are only going to form or join non-polity-wide parties when they have no options available in terms of having autonomy at the regional level within a polity-wide party. If they have an option of joining an autonomous regional party branch at the sub-national level, then they are more likely to join or switch parties rather than form new ones.

4.3 How my argument differs from previous work on party organisation in India

Myron Weiner (1967) was the first to systematically study the role of political organisations in explaining the success of the Congress Party. He placed great emphasis on intra-party autonomy under Nehru's leadership in explaining the Congress Party's success in the post-independence decades. The importance of intra-party autonomy is evident in the following quote;

> certainly, if the party [Congress Party] were more centralised-if, for example, all candidates for state assemblies and parliament were financed by the national organisation, so that tickets were not allocated simply because candidates had more money-the party would be able to overcome some of the limitations built into a federal system. A more centralised party could give the central government the authority to provide greater guidance in the critical areas of education and agriculture, both now in the hands of state governments. A centralised party might be able to overcome the deficiencies of a decentralised governmental structure. If, for example, the centralisation of the party for the purpose of increasing central government authority resulted in growing defection of support from the party at the state level and the emergence of either unstable state governments or state governments hostile to national policy, the results would not in fact be the centralisation of national authority but just the reverse. (Weiner, 1967: 486)

In sum, Weiner argues that autonomy for its local units helped the Congress Party maintain support at the state-level by limiting defections of regional political elites, even when this came at the expense of accommodating 'corrupt' regional elites. In this article, I build upon Weiner's understanding of intra-party autonomy to explain the dominance of polity-wide parties at the sub-national level as opposed to explaining the success (or decline) of individual polity-wide parties at the national level.

Other scholars have also built upon Weiner's thesis. Kanchan Chandra (2004) explains the decline of the Congress Party in some states but not in others (Chandra and Parmar, 1997). She argues that parties with competitive rules for intra-party advancement , other things being equal, are able to continually incorporate

new elites while avoiding the defection of the older ones. This because competitive rules for intra-party advancement create a stable set of rules that both new and old elites can expect when it comes to being awarded with leadership positions. In contrast, parties with centralised rules of intra-party advancement , other things being equal, are closed to entry of new elites, or unable to avoid the defection of older elites when there is entry of new elites. This is because there is arbitrariness when it comes to allocation of leadership position within the party. Incoming elites are unable to expect when they will be awarded leadership positions, and if they are awarded, the old elites will defect citing arbitrariness in the allocation of the leadership positions. According to her, this explains the decline of the Congress Party in Uttar Pradesh and Punjab, but not in Karnataka. She argues that when new elites were being mobilised in Karnataka, the Congress Party was able to accommodate them without displacing the older ones because the Karnataka Congress had competitive rules of intra-party advancement. In contrast, due to the centralised nature of intra-party organisation in Uttar Pradesh and Punjab, the Congress Party was unable to accommodate new elites without displacing the older ones.

Building on the party organisation argument, Ziegfeld (2016b: 160) argues that national parties can maintain their dominance through party organisation. He argues that organised national parties will be more durable and avoid splits and defections as opposed to unorganised national parties. To test his argument empirically, Ziegfeld relies on Chhibber et al. (2014) dataset to operationalise the concept of 'party organisation'. Chhibber et al (2014) argue that states with higher proportion of 'organised' political parties have experienced less party system fragmentation and electoral volatility in comparison to states with a lower proportion of organised parties.

While I agree with Chandra (2004), Ziegfeld (2016), Chhibber et al.'s. (2014) general theoretical view of the role of intra-party organisation in influencing the party system, my argument differs from theirs in multiple ways. First, Chandra's and Chhibber et al.'s understanding of intra-party organisation is more akin to intra-party institutionalisation. Chandra (2004) defines a party with competitive rules for intra-party advancement when there are (1) intra-party elections for all organisational posts by a majority rule and (2) there are open membership policies. In contrast, her understanding of a centralised party organisation is when all posts within the party are allocated through a centralised directive issued by a leader or by some collective. Similarly, Chhibber et al.'s conceptualisation of an 'organised party' is more akin to the literature on intra-party institutionalisation. They conceptualise party organisation as a

> collection of organisational characteristics that provide clarity to politicians about their role in the organisation, such as the qualifications required to fill certain positions, the process for upward mobility in the party, the rules of succession planning, the organisations tolerance for intra-party factionalism and finally, the extent to which party decisions are taken based on clearly understood institutional norms as opposed to whims of leaders. A less organised party is conceptualised as a party with an ad hoc, personalistic, leader-centric organisational structure. In such organisations, activists often find their career advancement prospects blocked by arbitrary decision making, nepotistic practices or the whims of a few leaders at a top (2014, p.492).

Unlike Chandra and Chhibber et al., my conceptualisation of party organisation is more focused. I focus on one aspect of party organisation i.e. autonomy

for sub-national units within polity-wide parties. My understanding of intra-party autonomy does not assume that an internally autonomous party is also internally institutionalised. A regional branch could have all the characteristics of a less institutionalised party but still have autonomy from the central branch. For example, the Congress Party's state unit in Maharashtra could have autonomy from the central branch, but could be highly centralised at the state-level. Despite the conceptual differences between intra-party autonomy and intra-party institutionalisation, there still exist a relationship between the two. Randall and Svasand (2002) in their discussion on party institutionalisation include autonomy as an important component of party institutionalisation. They do acknowledge that including autonomy has been "a subject of disagreement amongst party theorists". Yet, they include it in their schema of party institutionalisation by arguing that institutionalised parties need 'a significant degree of decisional autonomy, or freedom from interference in determining its own policies and strategies'(Randall and Svsand, 2002: 14). In my thesis, I do not take a stand on either side of the on-going debate on whether intra-party autonomy is an integral component of intra-party institutionalisation or no. Instead I have used Chhibber et al.'s data on intra-party institutionalisation as a proxy for intra-party autonomy in Chapter 8 but I have also directly measured intra-party autonomy, as discussed in the latter part of this chapter.

Here, it is further important to mention that Randall and Svasand's understanding of autonomy was akin to Panebianco's conceptualisation of autonomy i.e. a party's autonomy vis-a-vis the external environment. Therefore, their discussion on including autonomy as an integral component of party institutionalisation was related to how a party is dependent or independent from the sponsoring institution or group. I refer to this as 'external autonomy' as opposed to intra-party autonomy, which is the primary focus of this thesis. An example will help illustrate the

distinction. The Gujarat BJP unit could have autonomy from the party's central branch in conducting its affairs at the state-level, but still have interference from external bodies, such as the RSS at the state-level. In this way, it might be coded as internally autonomous but not externally autonomous. To reiterate, in this thesis, I measure autonomy of the sub-national unit from the central branch but not the level of autonomy of a party from its external environment.[59] Put differently, I am more concerned with measuring autonomy within a polity-wide party but across two levels. There exists no work in the Indian context that systematically seeks to do this.[60]

The distinction between intra-party institutionalization and intra-party autonomy opens up a deeper challenge to my explanation. It is true that a focus on intra-party institutionalization can explain why political elites are dis-incentivized to defect from existing political parties, but why would this be the case for high levels of autonomy. What motivates politicians and members to stick within existing polity-wide parties at the regional level especially when the regional branch

[59]As mentioned in Chapter 3, ideally I would like to measure both intra-party autonomy and external autonomy of the regional branch. But this requires manually coding the career trajectories of individual members of both the organisations-the BJP and Congress. Due to limitations of time and resources, I have not been able to pursue this task in my thesis, but future research should most certainly seek to capture this empirically.

[60]More recently, Bolken (2016) has operationalised party organisation at the sub-national level in India. However, Bohlken is more concerned with competition within a party at different levels whereas I am more concerned with measuring the competition between the different levels. To put it differently, she is more concerned with the horizontal autonomy within parties whereas I am primarily concerned with measuring vertical autonomy. And, finally, Bolken's (2016) understanding of 'strong' party organisational networks is similar to Chhibber et al.'s conceptualisation of intra-party institutionalisation. She uses Chhibber et al.'s measures of party organisation when it comes to operationalising her understanding of 'strong' party organisation. And, when it comes to her definition of intra-party competition, this is akin to operationalising intra-party competition at the same (state) level. She operationalises her key variables of intra-party competition, firstly by looking at whether the party has a formal division in the leadership of its governmental and organisational wings, and secondly, at the time period during which the organisational head of the government has been in power. And third, she measures the proportion of time in the history of the party organisation during which the chief minister has been the head of the organisational wing of the party. These measures capture factionalism at the same (state) level within a party as opposed to capturing autonomy across different levels. In other words, her goal is to capture whether there are multiple power centres in a party at a single level as opposed to how the power is distributed within the party across different levels.

is controlled by a dominant leader, who might have autonomy from the central branch, but is still nonetheless dominant? Similarly, what motivates political elites to stick within existing regional branches of polity-wide parties which do not have intra-party elections or any of the characteristics of an internally institutionalized party mentioned above?

I concede that intra-party autonomy alone will not prevent defections. However, it is important to distinguish between different types of defections. Not all defections affect existing party systems equally. It is only defections by a political elite who is also a factional leader that affects the dominance of polity-wide parties. A political elite is a factional leader when she commands a following among a section within the party. These political elites have an important independent support base within the party which could be built on similar ethnic backgrounds (Chandra, 2004), ideological reasons, or simply could be opportunistic factions built on shared material interests (Ziegfeld, 2016b: 205-208). I do not draw a distinction across these different types of factions so long as the political elite is the leader of one such faction. Defections by a political member of the party who might be an important politician but is not a factional leader will not have the same impact. Unlike Manikandan and Wyatt (2014) I do not understand all politicians to be equally important. In essence, I am more concerned with a core group of leaders within politicians more generally. This also differs from Ziegfeld (2016: 79) who uses the term elites and politicians interchangeably. My distinction does not treat all politicians as political elites, but only those who are factional leaders.

I argue that the dominance of polity-wide parties will only be weakened when the defecting political elites are also factional leaders. Thus, it is not defection by all regional political elites that affects the prospects of polity-wide parties, but defection of specific type of regional elites that affects its dominance at the re-

gional level. This has two important implications: 1) autonomy of the regional branch is important so long as the factional leader has autonomy, and 2) a single autonomous regional branch of a polity-wide party can sustain the dominance of other polity-wide parties as long as the autonomous regional branch can accommodate the defecting factional leader(s). It is only when a factional leader is not accommodated within existing polity-wide parties, and decides to form or join non-polity-wide parties, that dominance of polity-wide parties is challenged at the regional level.

If we establish the importance of factional leaders, the next question of importance is how to distinguish between factional versus non-factional leaders. One way of identifying whether a political elite is also a factional leader, is by using data collected by Bohlken (2016: 127-129).[61] She measures the degree to which the party head at the state-level has been able to consolidate her control over the party organisational networks. This is measured by the total number of years that the party head has served her position. A factional leader would have most certainly spent a long time[62] as the party head. The second variable of interest for classifying factional leaders is Bohlken's CMPartyDominance, which measures the proportion of time in the history of the state party organisation during which the Chief Minister has been the party head. Specifically, this variable is measured by dividing the years that the Chief Minister has spent as the party organisational head by the age of the party. Once again, factional leaders who are Chief Ministers will have invariably spent higher proportion of time as head of the party.

However, it is important to note that these measures do not identify all the available factional leaders. Many factional leaders in the party may never have

[61]I am awaiting Bolken's response to my data request. (first data request sent on the 4th October 2017).

[62]I understand 'long time' as at least two election years

served as the party president or Chief Ministers at the state-level. Therefore, in addition to Bohlken's data, I have developed an empirical strategy to classify whether politicians are factional leaders or no after a defection occurs. Generally speaking, when factional leaders defect from the party, they will be followed by a high number of candidates along with them. Once again, while it is difficult to predict the number of candidates, candidate renomination data can give us reasonable estimates of the scale of defection. If the defected politician is able to nominate large number of candidates who were previously associated with their former party in the new party (either a wholly new party or after joining an existing party), then s/he is a factional leader. First, this will be reflected in the number of defections that will follow him/her. Second, it will also be reflected in the former party unable to nominate its own candidates in successive elections. If the defecting leader is unable to convince a large number of candidates from the former party to leave then s/he is not a factional leader, and this will be reflected in the continued nomination of majority of candidates in the former party. It will also be reflected in the lower number of defections from the polity-wide party. We have to be cautious with this measure as there can be other reasons why the party leadership actively decides to drop sitting candidates. But if we are able to show that the dropped candidates were renominated by a defected leader in a new party or an existing different party, this will be strong evidence suggesting that the defected leader is a factional leader.

In a state party system where all the existing polity-wide parties lack autonomy at the regional level, defecting factional leaders have to decide whether to form new non-polity wide parties or join existing ones. In India, the state-level is often particularly important in the overall patronage network. This motivates the factional leader to keep their hold on their patronage network by means of joining or forming a non-polity-wide party. But, when factional leaders are competing in

a party system where at least a single regional branch of a polity-wide party has autonomy, it decreases the incentives available for these leaders to form their own party. The costs and the risks associated with forming a new party are not worth it if these factional leaders are able to have access to the state-level patronage network by joining an existing regional branch of a different polity-wide party.

Here, it is worth mentioning that in a non-programmatic context like India, party ideology does not constrain the behaviour of defecting factional leaders. Defections in India have been a political concern from the earliest decades of post-independent India. The result was the passing of the Anti-Defection Act in 1985, which disqualified elected members of the parliament or state assemblies who defected to other parties during their time in office. This reduced legislative cross-voting but did not reduce defections, as the Act had a loop-hole where a defection was deemed to be a split if more than one third of a party left an existing party. This allowed defecting factional leaders to circumvent the law (Jensenius and Suryanarayan, 2017). Furthermore, even when the defecting leader was not able to muster one third of candidates, she used the disqualifications to win nominations for her group in the rival party in the subsequent elections. In sum, the Anti-Defection Law of 1985 was able to restrict cross-voting in the parliament but was not able to stop defections outside the parliament. Defections are not restricted to a single political party. Politicians across political parties are known to switch parties in order to retain their access to vital state resources (DeSouza, 2006; Jaffrelot and Verniers, 2017). In the following empirical chapters 5 and 6, I provide examples to show how politicians from both the BJP and the Congress Party switched parties in order to gain or maintain their autonomy at the state-level.

4.4 Operationalising autonomy within polity-wide parties

Autonomy measures the degree of freedom of the sub-national unit to conduct its affairs without interference from the central level (Thorlakson, 2009: 162). Consistent with Krister Lundell's (2004) work on intra-party candidate selection procedures, I am only concerned with territorial centralisation versus decentralisation, i.e. the question of where the authority is situated in the party candidate selection takes place in the party hierarchy. But unlike Lundell, who only looks at the degree of centralisation or decentralisation in candidate selection procedures, I include a number other indicators (Fabre, 2011). I have used multiple indicators covering a range of organisational activities to measure autonomy within the party. These include

1 Organisation of the regional branch

2 Selection of regional leader

3 Selection of candidates for regional elections

4 Financing of the regional branch

5 Campaigning and canvasing

6 Choice of coalition partner when forming/dealing with state government.

Below I briefly describe each indicator:

1 The organisation of the regional branch is an overarching indicator that

captures the distribution of authority within the party involving the day-to-day organisation of the regional branch. It captures the involvement of the central branch in staffing or bureaucratic assistance, fund-raising, membership recruitment, campaign seminars or other training for candidates (Thorlakson, 2011).

2 The selection of chief ministerial candidate or leader of opposition (LOP) captures the authority within the party when it comes to selecting the party leader at the regional level. In some cases, this could also be selecting the leader of regional branch, who may or may not be a member of the legislative wing of the party.

3 Selecting candidates for the regional elections measures the authority within the party in nominating candidates from the regional elections.

4 Financing the regional branch captures the manner in which the party funds not only its election campaign, but also its day to day activities.

5 Whether the central leader makes endorsements or public appearances during regional elections looks not only at the frequency of central leaders' campaigns during the regional elections, but also pays particular attention to the importance attached to the central leader's campaign during the particular regional election.[63]

[63]One potential objection to this theme is that state-level leaders could ask central level leaders (or leaders of different state units) to campaign in the state. In that case, the presence of central leaders in the regional election will not be capturing autonomy, as their presence is because of the demand made by the regional branch leaders. It is true that central (or different state unit leaders) often campaign for the party in regional elections. And, therefore, the focus of this theme is not to capture their mere presence, but rather qualitatively assess the nature of the central leaders presence. If a regional election campaign is focused on a central leader, then it would mean qualitatively something different from his/her mere presence. And this theme looks not only at the presence of the central leader in regional election campaign, but whether s/he is the focus on the campaign. For example, during the 2017 regional elections in Gujarat, the focus of the campaign was on Narendra Modi (now a central leader), which meant that according to this theme, Gujarat BJP unit would be awarded a low score on the autonomy scale. In addition, I would argue that a regional political elite would ideally want to project, and more often focus the campaign, on themselves. Their projection would be important showcase to their factional

6 The choice of coalition partner when forming a government at the state level looks at the authority within the party when it comes to choosing potential coalition partners. It also measures the authority within the party when it comes to taking decisions with the coalition partner.

To reiterate, in all of the six indicators mentioned above, my primary goal is to account for the distribution of authority within polity-wide parties. I use the following heuristic tool (Table 4.1 below) to assess the distribution of authority for each of the six themes mentioned above. The heuristic tool is based on the classification of centralisation or decentralisation within a polity-wide party inspired by Bille's (2001) work. It is important to note that Bille was more concerned with measuring intra-party democracy when it comes to candidate selection whereas I am concerned with measuring the level of autonomy of the regional branch for any or all of the major six themes discussed above. Keeping this mind, I have adapted Bille's indicators. I have also borrowed from Fabre's (2011) and Thorlakson's (2011) work to categorise the themes.

The six themes provide useful grouping of information in measuring the level of autonomy of a regional branch whereas the heuristic categories helps identify the level of autonomy for the regional branch for each of the six themes. As reminded by Farooqui and Sridharan (2014: 80) and Singh (2015c), India's political

base. But in some cases they know that their projection alone would not be able to help the party win elections. An important state-level BJP leader from South Gujarat, whom I met during my campaign trail of the 2017 regional elections, told me that convincing the party's central leadership over holding Modi's rally in the region comes with a number strings attached. He argued that on the one hand, Modi's campaign is critical in helping the party win in the region, but on the other hand, the BJP's central leadership, in particular party president Amit Shah, made sure to make use of the demand over Modi's campaign to intervene in local unit matters. He further went on to say that the demand over Modi's presence in the region worked as a sort of barter system where they would have to trade more patronage resources with the central branch in exchange of their demand over holding Modis rallies. He hoped that his victory in the elections (albeit with Modis help) will allow him to cultivate a strong base that would reduce his reliance on the central leadership for the next set of local and regional elections.

Table 4.1: Themes measuring intra-party autonomy

Themes	**Different heuristic categories**
1. Organisation of the regional branch	1. by the central level
	2. by the central level, but with necessary inputs from the regional branch
	3. by the regional branch, but with necessary approval from the central level
	4. by the regional branch, but with necessary inputs from the central level
	5.by the regional branch
2. Selection of regional party leader (Chief Minister, Leader of Opposition or state party unit chief)	1. by the central level
	2. by the central level, but with necessary inputs from the regional branch
	3. by the regional branch, but with necessary approval from the central level
	4. by the regional branch, but with necessary inputs from the central level
	5.by the regional branch
3. Selection of candidates for regional elections	1.by the central level
	2. by the central level, but with necessary inputs from the regional branch
	3. by the regional branch, but with necessary approval from the central level
	4. by the regional branch, but with necessary inputs from the central level
	5. by the regional branch
4. Financing the regional branch	1.by the central level
	2. by the central level, but with necessary regional inputs
	3. by the central and the regional branch
	4. by the regional branch, with central assistance
	5. by the regional branch
5. The central leader makes endorsements or public appearances during regional elections	1.highly important/sole focus of the regional campaign
	2. somewhat important/main focus of the regional campaign
	3. not very important/late appearances in the regional campaign
	4. not at all important/very rare appearances in the regional campaign
6. Choice of coalition partner when forming a state government at state level/Dealings with the coalition partner	1. the central level deals with the coalition partner
	2. the central level deals with the coalition partner, but with necessary inputs from the regional branch
	3. the regional branch deals with the coalition partner, but with necessary approval from the central level
	4. by the regional branch, but with necessary inputs from the central level
	5. the regional branch deals with the coalition partner

parties, and more specifically, the BJP and the Congress Party, are some of the most centralised political organisations in the world. A reading of their party constitutions reflects their centralist characteristics. For instance, the BJP's constitution (2012) clearly states that the State Election Committee (SEC) will 'propose names of Party candidates for Legislature and Parliamentary seats from the State to the Central Election Committee (CEC)'. But, 'the Central Election Committee (CEC) will make the final selection of candidates for the State Legislatures and Parliament.'

Similarly, the Congress Party has vested complete power in the All India Congress Committee (AICC). The Congress Party constitution (2010) states that 'A Central Election Committee (CEC) shall be set up consisting of members of the Parliamentary Board, and nine other members elected by the AICC for the purpose of making the final selection of candidates of the State and Central legislature.' It also states that the State (Pradesh) Election Committee shall recommend candidates for the Central and State Legislatures to the Central Election Committee.

Nevertheless, despite the high level of formal centralisation, there is considerable substantive variation in the level of autonomy within the two parties, especially across states and across different time periods. A mere reading of formal party constitutions is unable to reflect the variation in the distribution of authority within the parties in the country. Keeping this in mind, I have attempted to gather evidence on the actual operation of the sub-national units of both the parties in both states for all the regional elections in the post-1989 period. By focusing on every regional election, I also capture the change in the level of autonomy within a polity-wide party in a particular state.

The discussion and the narrative built in the subsequent empirical chapters is centred on these six indicators. I have tried to gather empirical evidence for all the indicators for the sub-national units of the Congress Party and the BJP in Gujarat and Maharashtra for every regional election since the 1989 general election until the last regional election in December 2014. But, due to limitations in the availability of reliable data, I was not able to gather evidence for every indicator for a regional branch in a particular election year. In this case, I have compensated the narrative with more evidence and a detailed analyses of the indicators I find evidence for. The next section describes the data collection process in greater detail.

4.5 A note on data collection on intra-party autonomy in India

Following in the likes of those scholars working on intra-party autonomy in the Western context (Deschouwer and Depauw, 2014), I attempted to gather information on the six themes mentioned above through an elite survey. I prepared an interview schedule similar to the one used by Thorlakson (2011: 726-732). For the purpose of my study, my sample consisted of local level politicians, state level politicians and representatives of the regional branches at the central level. Information about these politicians was assembled through party websites, media officials and local contacts. Prior to arriving in India, I emailed a number of them with a description of my research project and affiliation. I did not receive a single response! Hoping that I would receive a better response rate if I were to meet the politicians in person, I left for India in early January 2016. For logistical reasons, I started my trip from Mumbai, India. I contacted a number of sitting Member

of Legislative Assemblies (MLA) from Mumbai, who I had earlier emailed the questionaire. I started by contacting the incumbent MLAs and fomer MLAs who represented the constituency where my parents live in Mumbai, namely the Vile Parle (West) constituency. The sample of MLAs consisted of both BJP and the Congress Party members. Some were junior level party workers, meaning that this was their first incumbency, where others were senior state level party workers with years of experience. Once again, I received no response whatsoever. Tired of waiting, I decided to meet the politicians in person. Every MLA in Mumbai has an office space, similar to constituency-clinics in the UK. Unlike UK, the state level politician in Mumbai spends most of his time delivering constituency services as opposed to making laws or attending parliamentary sessions (Jensenius and Suryanarayan, 2015). This made it relatively easy to meet the politician. However, there was always a long line of people waiting to see the politician. This meant that I had to make several trips before I could speak to them. On hearing that I was pursuing a PhD in political science, they were eager to help me with my project. However, on hearing the topic (i.e. party organisation, and in particular intra-party autonomy), they were not keen on answering questions on the themes covering intra-party autonomy. Most of them were eager to discuss party ideology and their conviction behind joining party politics, but were not keen on answering very basic organisational questions. For instance, when I asked about the assistance they received from higher level party offices in terms of bureaucratic management, staff training, and stationary expenses, they were unwilling to answer any questions. After a couple of deeply interesting, but inadequate interviews, I realised that the politicians were not keen on sharing the organisational information due to the lack of trust. Despite assuring them that I would maintain anonymity, they were reluctant to share the information believing that I could pass the information to media officials or to their party superiors.

Taking a break from meeting party officials, I decided to consult a number of senior academics, who recommended that I speak to journalists. This proved to be very effective. Journalists provided me with a small set of politicians (with whom they had good 'connections'), ones who would be ready to talk to me about the themes I was most interested in. However, they recommended that I drop the idea of a survey, but approach the themes through a conversation or semi-structured interviews. Meeting the politicians with a reference from a local journalist proved to be very effective. All the semi-structured interviews with the politicians I cite in the empirical chapter of Maharashtra were conducted with help of journalists. Also, my command over conversational Marathi and Hindi made it easier for me to assess the themes via informal chats and discussions in Maharashtra.

For Gujarat it was a somewhat different story. Growing up in Mumbai, and pursuing education in Mumbai, meant that I had retained connection with senior academics from Mumbai University and Pune University. In Gujarat, I used the contacts developed by the Lokniti research centre of the CSDS. I met a number of senior Gujarati academics who were affiliated with the Lokniti centre. Once again, they recommended that I meet a number of senior journalists based in Ahmedabad, who would help me get in touch with state-level politicians in Gujarat. Fortunately, in Gujarat, during my fieldwork in Spring 2016, the assembly session was in place. This meant that politicians from all over Gujarat were assembled in Gandhinagar, the seat of the Gujarat legislative Assembly. However, even when I had appointments with the politicians, gaining access to the legislative assembly building in Gandhinagar proved to be very difficult. The legislative building in Gandhinagar, Gujarat was surrounded by a tall fence with intimidating gates and guards. When I first came to meet with the politicians, I was pointed to a small office by the entrance gate that issued entry passes. There was a long line of people waiting, and when I finally got to the head of the line, I was told that I

could not get entry pass unless my appointment had been registered by someone working inside the assembly building. This proved to be extremely frustrating and time consuming. Luckily, most politicians camped in the nearby MLA flats, and would return to the flats after the assembly session was over. The security around these MLA flats was less restrictive. This meant that I would wait for the politician near his/her flat. Sometimes I had to wait past dinner time wherein others I would meet the politician straight after assembly session. Despite the variability, conducting interviews in a residential space proved to be more effective in comparison to Maharastra, where most of the interviews were conducted in the MLAs' constituency offices. The residential flats offered a sense of privacy which the office space did not give. In the office space, my interview was often interrupted with other colleagues listening over the conversation.

Despite all the challenges involved in holding semi-structured interviews, they served four key purposes. First, it reassured my convictions about the importance of intra-party autonomy held by senior politicians. All the interviewees unanimously agreed that regional politicians found it increasingly hard to balance the demands of their central branch(s) on the one hand, and their freedom on the other. Second, they provided valuable insight into the informal norms and practices within political parties. Third, they proved to be a vital source of empirical evidence confirming widely held beliefs and intra-party 'gossips'. Fourth, they also acted as a guide for additional contacts and drew my attention towards important events that helped illustrate the changing levels of autonomy within a polity-wide party.

Even when semi-structured interviews proved to be very important, it is worth mentioning that access to large segments of the sub-national political elites and the central branch leadership of both the parties proved to be very difficult. I repeat-

edly tried to arrange interviews with a host of politicians from both the parties, but did not receive a favourable response. In an attempt to overcome this lack of interview access, I used an alternative strategy to gather empirical evidence. I reviewed multiple primary and secondary sources[64] of information to build the narrative. I have primarily relied on newspaper reports. Where possible I have triangulated newspaper reports with similar information published in political journals and weekly magazines. Online newspaper archives are not systematically available prior to 2000. Therefore, the latter part of my fieldwork consisted of locating newspaper archives between 1990 and 2000. Accessing archival data proved to be very difficult. Many major newspaper agencies did not systematically collect their own archives. Even when they did collect, the archival staff demanded huge sums of money in return of the clippings. Due to limited resources, I was not able to buy archival material from a number of different newspapers. However, the Indian Express Archives department in Chandigarh, India was kind enough to share images of the newspaper clippings between the period of 1990 and 2000. Majority of the primary evidence prior to 2000 is based on the clippings provided by the Indian Express Archive department. Here, one might object that the evidence might reflect a political bias of the newspaper. In order to avoid the evidence being a reflection of the position of the newspaper, I have limited my use of editorials and op-eds. Instead the focus is on factual political reportage.

The following are two examples of the types of evidence being used to build the narrative around the levels of intra-party autonomy within the two polity-wide parties.

1 For example, prior to the 1990s Maharashtra regional elections, I classify the Maharashtra Congress state unit as having high levels of autonomy.

[64]The lists of primary sources are included in the appendix. See Table 2

The following text from the Indian Express is one piece of evidence being used to classify the level of autonomy. This particular evidence is illustrative of the first theme i.e. organisation of the regional branch.



People lining up at Raj Bhavan in Srinagar to represent their problems to the Governor, Mr Jagmohan, who, ever since he took over, has adopted a direct access approach to restore public confidence. PTI.

Maharashtra poll

Rebels may erode Cong(I) votes

By PRAMOD PAGEDAR
Express News Service

BOMBAY, Feb 8

The faction-ridden state Congress-I is entering the assembly poll arena with a severe handicap vis-a-vis its principal rival, the BJP-Shiv Sena, and the other opposition parties, now that 175,000 of its rebels have thrown their hats in the ring. The rebels' presence became a cold reality for the ruling party with the expiry of the deadline for the nominations withdrawal on Wednesday.

How many of these rebels will finally win the elections is a moot point. What seems certain now is that they would reduce the Congress-I's electoral potential by eating into its traditional votebanks.

The revolt in the Congress(I) camp couldn't have come at a more opportune time for the opposition. The resentment in the ruling party rank and file is so bitter that in almost each of the 288 assembly segments, Congressmen, disgruntled over the selection of the party candidates, ought to sabotage the party nominees' prospects either by remaining neutral in the campaign or lending a covert support to the opposition candidates.

Hindu wave

This has come as a bonus for the BJP-Sena since the disenchantment in the Congress-I ranks could make up for the lack of any tangible wave in favour of the two-party alliance. The Hindu wave, unleashed by the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid row, helped the BJP-Sena combine wrest as many as 14 seats in the last Lok Sabha elections.

The Janata Dal and its allies too stand to benefit considerably by this split in the Congress-I votes.

Besides, the Congress-I high command's policy of giving the Muslims only a cosmetic representation in its list of candidates for the assembly will only hasten the process of alienation of the minority from the ruling party.

The half baked attempts made by the state Congress-I top brass for wooing the unified Republican Party of India (RPI) only boomeranged on them, and resulted in a pathetic fiasco of the Dalit voters, especially the neo-Budhists among them, belong to different like-minded factions led by Mr Prakash Ambedkar, Mr Ashok Godghate, Mr Jongendra Kawade and others, who got alienated from the Congress-I due to the split in the unified party. They are also expected to cast their lot with the Janata Dal and the PDF nominees.

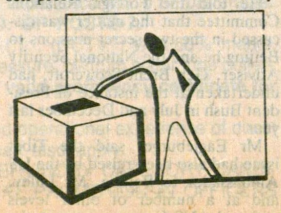
Rebel prospects

According to a preliminary assessment made by the political observers, of the 175 odd Congress-I rebel candidates, between 10 and 15 have good prospects of actually getting elected while in at least 60 other assembly segments the rebel contestants are likely to make serious dents in the ruling party nominees' votes.

If this happens, it could prove to be disastrous for the ruling party, and particularly for the Chief Minister, Mr Sharad Pawar, who has packed the party candidates' list with his hand-picked proteges.

It is a matter of speculations which way the winning rebels, if any, would go. The Congress-I has a tradition of accepting back in its fold the winning rebels because they often hold the key in the numbers game crucial for getting to power.

But the Congressmen are also well known for their highly tuned up self-preservation instinct. So they



may not put their weight behind the Congress-I if it looked like a loser in the post-election scene. The BJP-Sena in that case would be the undoubted beneficiary by default.

Short shift

The Congress-I high command has, however, given a short shift to the rebellion in the state party ranks. One reason for this, as the party sources point out, could be that the AICC(I) chief, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, and his coterie of advisers have apparently decided to let Mr Pawar play a calculated gamble. They probably foresaw that the party could not have avoided the rebellion in its ranks in the state whatever factional permutations and combinations it had made. Since Mr Pawar happens to be the only mass-based leader among the ontemporary leaders in the state party unit, the Congress-I high command had no choice other than going along Mr Pawar's strategy, the sources said.

On his part, Mr Pawar seems to be concentrating on the sugar-lobby dominated western Maharashtra where the ruling party could retain 11 of the 12 Lok Sabha seats in the last general election while took considerable battering in its traditional strongholds of Vidabhar and Marathwada. Of the total of 111 assembly segments in Maharashtra, the Congress-I had obtained a clear lead in as many as 85. So the expectation in the Pawar camp, is that he will pick up a large chunk of seats in the region, and then mop up a few more from the other regions. They seem to trust his Machiavillian talent to manipulate an uncertain political situation to his advantage as he did in 1978 when he toppled the Vasantadada Ministry and formed the multi-party PDF Government.

But observers believe that the coming election will test this legendary skill of Mr Pawar, on which the Congress-I's future hangs precariously on the eve of the poll.

No proof of

ID-DMK row over

'Low cholesterol

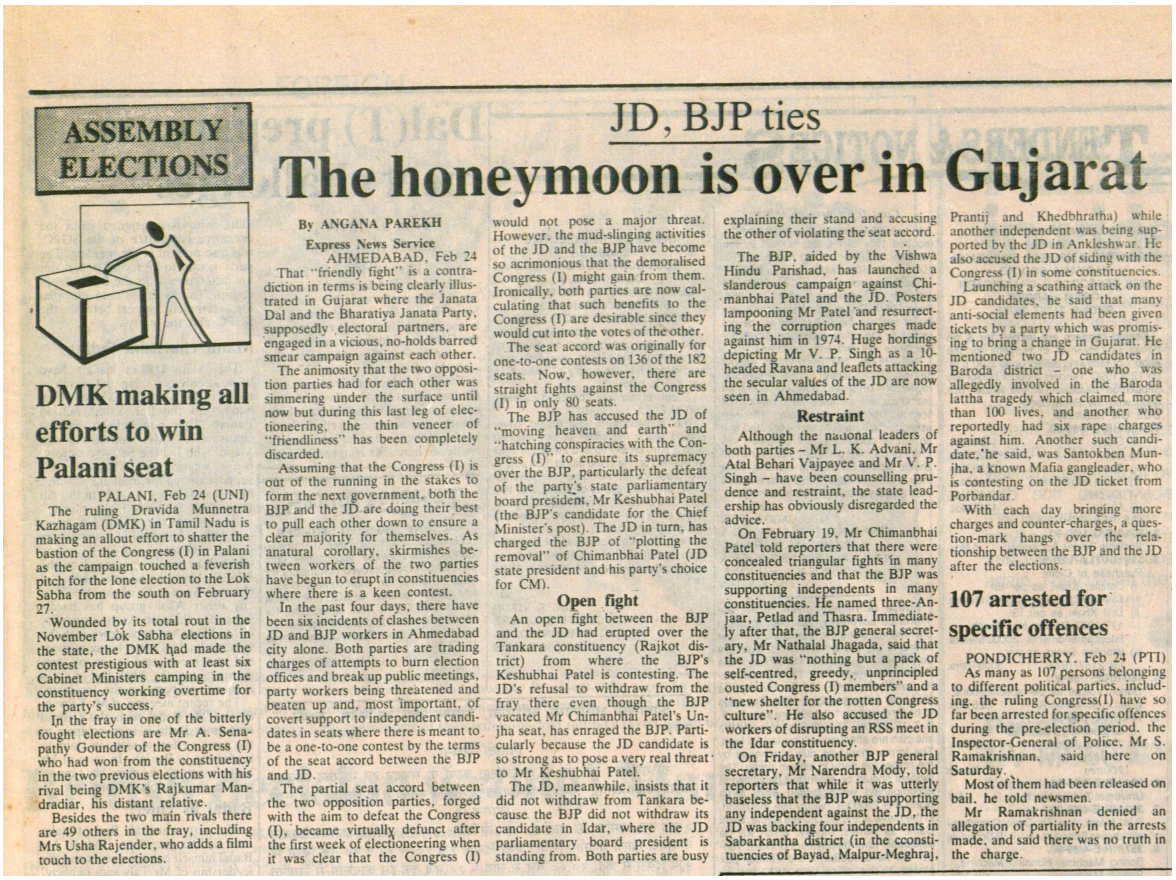
Figure 4.1: Clipping from Indian Express February 9th 1990, page 5

In the third column last paragraph of Picture 4.1 above, the text says the following

> The Congress-I high command has, however, given a short shift to the rebellion in the state party ranks. One reason for this, as the party sources point out, could be that the AICC (I) chief, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, and his coterie of advisers have apparently decided to let Mr. Pawar play a calculated gamble. They probably foresaw that the party could not have avoided the rebellion in its ranks in the state whatever factional permutations and combinations it has made. Since Mr. Pawar happens to be the only mass-based leader among the ontemporary leaders in the state party unit, the Congress-I high had no choice other than going along Mr. Pawar's strategy, the sources said

Based on the above quotation, I classify the Maharashtra regional branch to have high levels of autonomy over its organisation prior to the 1990s regional elections.

2 A second example comes from the Gujarat BJP unit prior to the 1990s regional elections. The following text from the Indian Express is used to classify the level of autonomy. In this case, the evidence is illustrative of the last theme (i.e. dealing with the coalition partner) to classify the level of autonomy for the Gujarat BJP unit



ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

DMK making all efforts to win Palani seat

PALANI, Feb 24 (UNI)

The ruling Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) in Tamil Nadu is making an allout effort to shatter the bastion of the Congress (I) in Palani as the campaign touched a feverish pitch for the lone election to the Lok Sabha from the south on February 27.

Wounded by its total rout in the November Lok Sabha elections in the state, the DMK had made the contest prestigious with at least six Cabinet Ministers camping in the constituency working overtime for the party's success.

In the fray in one of the bitterly fought elections are Mr A. Senapathy Gounder of the Congress (I) who had won from the constituency in the two previous elections with his rival being DMK's Rajkumar Mandradiar, his distant relative.

Besides the two main rivals there are 49 others in the fray, including Mrs Usha Rajender, who adds a filmi touch to the elections.

JD, BJP ties

The honeymoon is over in Gujarat

By ANGANA PAREKH

Express News Service

AHMEDABAD, Feb 24

That "friendly fight" is a contradiction in terms is being clearly illustrated in Gujarat where the Janata Dal and the Bharatiya Janata Party, supposedly electoral partners, are engaged in a vicious, no-holds barred smear campaign against each other.

The animosity that the two opposition parties had for each other was simmering under the surface until now but during this last leg of electioneering, the thin veneer of "friendliness" has been completely discarded.

Assuming that the Congress (I) is out of the running in the stakes to form the next government, both the BJP and the JD are doing their best to pull each other down to ensure a clear majority for themselves. As anatural corollary, skirmishes between workers of the two parties have begun to erupt in constituencies where there is a keen contest.

In the past four days, there have been six incidents of clashes between JD and BJP workers in Ahmedabad city alone. Both parties are trading charges of attempts to burn election offices and break up public meetings, party workers being threatened and beaten up and, most important, of covert support to independent candidates in seats where there is meant to be a one-to-one contest by the terms of the seat accord between the BJP and JD.

The partial seat accord between the two opposition parties, forged with the aim to defeat the Congress (I), became virtually defunct after the first week of electioneering when it was clear that the Congress (I) would not pose a major threat. However, the mud-slinging activities of the JD and the BJP have become so acrimonious that the demoralised Congress (I) might gain from them. Ironically, both parties are now calculating that such benefits to the Congress (I) are desirable since they would cut into the votes of the other.

The seat accord was originally for one-to-one contests on 136 of the 182 seats. Now, however, there are straight fights against the Congress (I) in only 80 seats.

The BJP has accused the JD of "moving heaven and earth" and "hatching conspiracies with the Congress (I)" to ensure its supremacy over the BJP, particularly the defeat of the party's state parliamentary board president, Mr Keshubhai Patel (the BJP's candidate for the Chief Minister's post). The JD in turn, has charged the BJP of "plotting the removal" of Chimanbhai Patel (JD state president and his party's choice for CM).

Open fight

An open fight between the BJP and the JD had erupted over the Tankara constituency (Rajkot district) from where the BJP's Keshubhai Patel is contesting. The JD's refusal to withdraw from the fray there even though the BJP vacated Mr Chimanbhai Patel's Unjha seat, has enraged the BJP. Particularly because the JD candidate is so strong as to pose a very real threat to Mr Keshubhai Patel.

The JD, meanwhile, insists that it did not withdraw from Tankara because the BJP did not withdraw its candidate in Idar, where the JD parliamentary board president is standing from. Both parties are busy explaining their stand and accusing the other of violating the seat accord.

The BJP, aided by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, has launched a slanderous campaign against Chimanbhai Patel and the JD. Posters lampooning Mr Patel and resurrecting the corruption charges made against him in 1974. Huge hordings depicting Mr V. P. Singh as a 10-headed Ravana and leaflets attacking the secular values of the JD are now seen in Ahmedabad.

Restraint

Although the national leaders of both parties – Mr L. K. Advani, Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee and Mr V. P. Singh – have been counselling prudence and restraint, the state leadership has obviously disregarded the advice.

On February 19, Mr Chimanbhai Patel told reporters that there were concealed triangular fights in many constituencies and that the BJP was supporting independents in many constituencies. He named three-Anjaar, Petlad and Thasra. Immediately after that, the BJP general secretary, Mr Nathalal Jhagada, said that the JD was "nothing but a pack of self-centred, greedy, unprincipled ousted Congress (I) members" and a "new shelter for the rotten Congress culture". He also accused the JD workers of disrupting an RSS meet in the Idar constituency.

On Friday, another BJP general secretary, Mr Narendra Mody, told reporters that while it was utterly baseless that the BJP was supporting any independent against the JD, the JD was backing four independents in Sabarkantha district (in the constituencies of Bayad, Malpur-Meghraj, Prantij and Khedbhratha) while another independent was being supported by the JD in Ankleshwar. He also accused the JD of siding with the Congress (I) in some constituencies.

Launching a scathing attack on the JD candidates, he said that many anti-social elements had been given tickets by a party which was promising to bring a change in Gujarat. He mentioned two JD candidates in Baroda district – one who was allegedly involved in the Baroda lattha tragedy which claimed more than 100 lives, and another who reportedly had six rape charges against him. Another such candidate, he said, was Santokben Munjha, a known Mafia gangleader, who is contesting on the JD ticket from Porbandar.

With each day bringing more charges and counter-charges, a question-mark hangs over the relationship between the BJP and the JD after the elections.

107 arrested for specific offences

PONDICHERRY, Feb 24 (PTI)

As many as 107 persons belonging to different political parties, including, the ruling Congress(I) have so far been arrested for specific offences during the pre-election period, the Inspector-General of Police, Mr S. Ramakrishnan, said here on Saturday.

Most of them had been released on bail, he told newsmen.

Mr Ramakrishnan denied an allegation of partiality in the arrests made, and said there was no truth in the charge.

Figure 4.2: Clipping from Indian Express 25th February 1990, page 5

In the fourth paragraph of Picture 4.2 above, under heading Restraint, the text says the following:

> Although the national leaders of both parties-Mr. L.K Advani, Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Mr. V.P.Singh-have been counselling prudence and restraint, the state leadership has obviously disregarded the advice. On February 19, Mr. Chimanbhai Patel told reporters that there were concealed triangular fights in many constituencies and that the BJP was supporting independents in many constituencies. He named three-Anjar, Petlad, and Thasra.

The above quote is illustrative of the high levels of autonomy for the Gujarat BJP unit when it comes to dealing with its alliance partner.

The above two are examples that help illustrate the nature of evidence being used to classify the level of autonomy within the two parties i.e. factual news reportage. As mentioned above, I am unable to find evidence for all the six themes for every single regional election in which case I have tried to interpret the existing piece(s) of evidence within the larger context surrounding the regional election to classify the level of autonomy within the political party. In many cases, I have also interpreted the newspaper evidence in light of the responses and stories I heard from politicians themselves. For regional elections held after 2000, I have triangulated reports from Indian Express with similar information published in other newspapers or political journals.

Lastly, when reviewing the pieces of evidence to classify the level of autonomy within polity-wide parties, I have largely focused around regional elections. The

focus around regional elections is intentional, as it allows me to investigate the plethora of media reports and journalistic evidence that is available prior to the elections. Detailed media reports covering a range of regional issues are particularly available during the regional election time. It is true that the distribution of authority within a polity-wide party does not mirror the regional elections. However, I have treated regional elections as discrete time periods to evaluate the changing levels of autonomy within a party.

4.6 Conclusion

By way of conclusion, in this chapter I have discussed the first part of my argument that involves explaining polity-wide party dominance at the sub-national level. The chapter began with a discussion on the assumptions under which my argument holds. I have identified three specific assumptions, namely 1) the presence a single dominant polity-wide party at the time of a country's transition into democratic rule, 2) the division of political authority and power across multiple levels, and 3) the presence of a society dominated by clientelism as opposed to programmatic politics, where elites have a greater leverage in shaping regional party systems. Under these specific assumptions, I argue that polity-wide parties are able to dominate the sub-national level if a single regional branch of a polity-wide party has autonomy. Autonomy brings with it control over resources and the lucrative patronage opportunities at the sub-national level. This control discourages regional elites from forming their own parties or joining existing regional parties. Forming a political party is a costly endeavour which does not guarantee access to power and resources. Moreover, joining existing regional parties would mean that they gain control over the lucrative sub-national level at the expense

of losing influence over the central level (still the most powerful level in the Indian context). Therefore, regional political elites are only going to form one when they are unable to gain autonomy and power at the state level within existing polity-wide parties. In this section, I then go on to explain how my argument differs from existing literature on party organisation in India. In particular, I show that I am primarily concerned with measuring intra-party autonomy as opposed to intra-party institutionalisation, which has been the sole focus of existing party organisation literature in India. This opens a different challenge for my argument i.e. how does intra-party autonomy alone prevent defections of regional political elites, particularly if the regional branch is controlled by an authoritarian regional leader. I concede that intra-party autonomy alone will not prevent defections of all politicians, but I argue that not all defections will have the same effect on the regional party system. It is only when factional leaders decide to join or form non-polity-wide parties that dominance of regional party systems will be affected. This explains why a single regional branch autonomy is sufficient to explain polity-wide party dominance at the sub-national level so long as it is able to accommodate the defecting factional leader. Finally, in the latter part of this chapter (section 4.4 and 4.5) I operationalise my concept of intra-party autonomy and discuss the data collection strategy. In the subsequent chapters on Gujarat and Maharashtra I empirically demonstrate my argument following the major themes surrounding intra-party autonomy mentioned above.

Chapter 5

Gujarat

In the previous chapter, I presented my core argument and elaborated on my theoretical framework. In this chapter, I empirically test my argument using a case study of Gujarat. In Gujarat, polity-wide parties have been dominant since mid-1990s. In particular, since the 1995 Gujarat regional elections, the BJP have been able to win every single regional election with a simple majority. While most other Indian states experienced competition from non-polity-wide parties in the post-1989 era, polity-wide parties have dominated the Gujarati party system even in an era of increasing political competition at the state-level. The average aggregate vote share of polity-wide parties since the 1995 regional elections is 84 percent and the average aggregate seat share is 95 percent. In Chapter 1, I have discussed the existing arguments that explain why polity-wide parties dominate in some states, but not in others. Existing research argues that polity-wide parties increasingly face competition from non-polity-wide parties when there is coalition politics at the national level and/or there is increasing political and economic decentralisation from the central level. While coalition politics at the national level

began in 1989 (Ziegfeld and Tudor, 2015), the July 1991 economic liberalisation unleashed political and economic decentralisation (Sinha, 2004). Despite these conditions, the Gujarati party system remained dominated by polity-wide parties.[65] This failure has long remained an intellectual puzzle for academics working on Gujarat.[66] As I have argued in the previous chapter, non-polity-wide parties are unable to challenge the dominance of polity-wide parties at the state-level when there is autonomy within a single polity-wide party at the state-level. Even when we account for coalition politics at the national level and/or economic and political decentralisation, autonomy within a single polity-wide party at the state-level is able to dis-incentivise political elites from joining or forming non-polity-wide parties. Certainly, there were defections of politicians in Gujarat, but in most cases either they were accommodated within rival polity-wide parties or they were not factional leaders and thus failed to dent the dominance of polity-wide parties.

In this chapter, I will show that for all Gujarat regional elections since the 1990s up until the 2012 regional elections either of the two main polity-wide party's regional branch had high levels of autonomy from their respective party's central branch (except the 1998 regional election). I will demonstrate that autonomy within a single polity-wide party at the state-level is sufficient to explain the dominance of polity-wide parties. I show multiples of examples of this in the following two sections.

This chapter is divided into three main sections; Section 5.1 presents and discusses the evidence used to classify the level of autonomy for the Gujarat BJP unit. In Table 5.1 below I assign the category for the theme(s) around which the discussion proceeds in Section 5.1 for each regional election-year. The categories

[65]Except a brief sixteen month interlude when Shankarsinh Vaghela defected from the BJP to form a government led by his All India Rashtriya Janata Party (AIRJP).

[66]Interview with Ghanshyam Shah, 3rd April 2016, Ahmedabad, Gujarat.

are cross-referenced from Table4.1. In some regional elections, like the 1995 regional elections, the story revolves around more than one theme to assign the level of autonomy for the Gujarat BJP unit whereas in others, like that of 1998, 2007, and 2012, the story revolves around a single theme to assign the level of autonomy for the Gujarat BJP unit. In section 5.2, I present and discuss evidence used to classify the Gujarat Congress unit. In Table 5.2 below I mention the categories for the theme(s) around which the discussion proceeds in Section 5.2 for each regional election-year. Once again the categories for each theme are cross-referenced from Table 4.1.

Table 5.1: Themes discussed to code the Level of autonomy for the Gujarat BJP unit

Election Year/Themes	Organisation of the regional branch	Selection of regional leader	Selection of candidates for regional elections	Financing of the regional branch	The central leader makes endorsements or public appearances during regional elections	Dealings with the coalition partner when forming a state government	Level of autonomy
1990	2					3	High
1995	5		5	5			High
1998		1					Low
2002	5		5		4		High
2007					4		High
2012					4		High

Table 5.2: Themes discussed to code the Level of autonomy for the Gujarat Congress unit

Election Year/Themes	Organisation of the regional branch	Selection of regional leader	Selection of candidates for regional elections	Financing of the regional branch	The central leader makes endorsements or public appearances during regional elections	Dealings with the coalition partner when forming a state government	Level of autonomy
1990	5						High
1995		1	1			1	Low
1998					1	1	Low
2002	5	5					High
2007		1			1		Low
2012	1		1				Low

In both these sections the discussion proceeds chronologically with a focus around regional elections. I have discussed in the previous chapter as to why I limit my attention to regional elections. Finally, in the last section, I move away from party-level analysis towards an analysis of the party system with concluding remarks to show how intra-party autonomy for a single regional branch explains the dominance of polity-wide parties in Gujarat.

5.1 Gujarat BJP

The BJP formed state governments in Gujarat for the first time in the 1990s. Although it had formed state governments earlier in 1977-9 when it was part of the Janata Party, it was only in the 1990s that the party was able to form state governments under its own separate party label. While the party was able to form state governments on its own in Madhya Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh, it formed a pre-electoral alliance with the Janata Dal [67] in Gujarat and Rajasthan prior to the 1990s regional elections (Sridharan, 2002b; Heath, 1999). The alliance with the Janata Dal was a national strategy designed by the BJP's central leadership, in particular by L.K Advani and A.B Vajpayee (Hansen et al., 1998). The central leadership was seeking to consolidate electoral support at the regional level as means to gradually capture power at the central level (Yadav, 1999). However, this nationally designed strategy did not go down well with the Gujarat BJP unit, who felt that the party did not need an electoral alliance to win the Gujarat regional elections. The Gujarat BJP had gradually built up its organisation and support through a sustained effort since the end of the 1960s (Sanghvi, 1996; Thakkar, 1997). Furthermore, the Janata Dal Gujarat unit was led by Chimanbhai Patel

[67] In the early 1990s Janata Dal is classified as a polity-wide party based on the party nationalization scores.

who was previously associated with the Congress Party. Therefore, an alliance with a former Congress leader and an ex-opponent did not go down well with the Gujarat BJP unit (Shah, 1991).

The Gujarat BJP unit defied the pre-electoral alliance with the Janata Dal. As part of the pre-electoral alliance designed by the central BJP leadership, the Gujarat BJP unit was asked to leave 39 seats for its alliance partner. However, in Gujarat, a senior Janata Dal leader told reporters that the Gujarat BJP state unit was supporting independent candidates in many of the constituencies that were left for the Janata Dal candidates (Prakash, 1990: 5). The BJP state leaders in Gujarat did not follow the directives of the party's central branch where they were asked not to support independent candidates, but to endorse a Janata Dal candidate. Nevertheless, when it came to forming the state government, the BJP central leadership directed the Gujarat BJP unit to support the Chimanbhai Patel led Janata Dal government (Indian Express, 1990a: 1) and the regional branch fell into line. The BJP's central branch wanted to form state governments at any costs so as to gradually win power at the national level.[68] Nearly half the ministers in the Janata Dal-BJP government were from the BJP.

Concurrently, at the national level, L.K. Advani, the BJP's foremost central leader at that time, launched a Rath Yatra (religious procession) in order to advocate the building of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya. The Rath Yatra was his way of deflecting attention away from the protests between forward and backward castes that erupted as a result of the central government's decision of introducing reservations in education and government for social and educationally backward castes. The BJP's core support base of the urban and semi-urban upper caste was part of the protests against the Mandal Commissions' recommendations (Jaffrelot, 1996).

[68] Interview with Professor D.L Sheth, 9th April 2016, New Delhi, India. Professor D.L Sheth is a senior fellow at the Centre for Studies of Developing Societies (CSDS), New Delhi.

The Rath Yatra began in Somnath in Gujarat and was managed by Narendra Modi, then general secretary of the Gujarat BJP. The Rath Yatra turned out to be the most impressive mobilisation effort in Gujarat after the freedom struggle. The event also managed to improve the relations between the Gujarat BJP unit vis-a-vis the party's central branch. As mentioned above, the relations between the two branches had deteriorated prior to the 1990s Gujarat regional elections. The Rath Yatra began a great political show of the Gujarat BJP unit where they used the state machinery such as the government's wireless service to relay information on Advani's movement in the state. Importantly, the event passed off peacefully in the state mainly because the entire state machinery was on alert and protecting the procession. This event gradually improved the position of the Gujarat BJP unit within the party hierarchy (Yagnik and Sheth, 2005: 257-261).

Unlike Gujarat, where the Rath Yatra had the support of the BJP state government, the Bihar state government headed by Lalu Prasad Yadav ordered Advani's arrest in October 1990. Subsequently, the BJP withdrew support from the VP Singh-led National Front government in Delhi, and the Chimanbhai Patel led Janata-BJP government in Gujarat (Yagnik and Sud, 2004). Chimanbhai Patel-led Janata Dal then sought support from the Congress Party to form the government. Later he merged his Janata Dal (Gujarat) faction with the Congress Party, and remained as the Chief Minister until his death in 1994. The Congress Party chose Chhabildas Mehta as the new Chief Minister in 1994, which helped the Congress Party remain incumbent until the 1995 regional elections.[69] The Gujarat BJP contested the 1995 regional elections without forming a pre-electoral alliance with any party. For these regional elections, Shankarsinh Vaghela, a factional BJP state-level leader at that time, managed the party's state-level election strategy. Particularly important was his control of the nomination of candidates.

[69]I have explained in detail the merger between Chimanbhai Patel-led Janata Dal and the Congress Party under section 5.2 Congress Party.

This is evident from the fact that the majority of the candidates nominated by the state-level BJP were close associates of Vaghela who had joined the party very recently (Indian Express, 1995a: 7). Vaghela personally financed these candidates for the 1995 regional elections on the tacit understanding that they would back him when the time came to choose the Chief Minister (Parekh, 1995b: 9).

The BJP won a simple majority in the 1995 Gujarat regional elections. It won 121 seats in the 182 member legislative assembly. However, this victory created deep tensions within the BJP state unit. The tensions were primarily between two state level leaders, Kesubhai Patel and Shankarsinh Vaghela. The rift between the two eventually led to the exit of Vaghela, who would later form his own party in 1996. Shankarsinh Vaghela's split from the party was blamed on the Gujarat BJP's general secretary, Narendra Modi[70] (Patel, 1999b). Press reports claimed that Narendra Modi, an RSS hardliner with powerful backers in the RSS, ran the Kesubhai Patel led BJP government. The remote control of the government by Modi was resented among party cadres and dissatisfaction increased in the ranks of the party (Shah, 1998). Furthermore, Modi's rise was at the expense of Vaghela, the only leader other than Kesubhai Patel with a mass following. There were three attempts to shift Modi out of Gujarat but each time he managed to stay in Gujarat on the party's central branch, in particular L.K. Advanis, insistence (Indian Express, 1995c: 9). Narendra Modi's influence on the state unit created tensions within the state unit, as other state level leaders, like Vaghela, felt sidelined.

In addition to Vaghela, a number of state level legislators organised a convention to fight the perceived authoritarianism, nepotism and corruption by the state

[70]Interview with Achyut Yagnik, Ahmedabad, Gujarat, 2nd April 2016. Achyut Yagnik is the founder-secretary of Setu: Centre for Social Knowledge and Action, an Ahmedabad-based voluntary organisation.

level leadership. The convention adopted a resolution demanding the immediate removal of Narendra Modi from his post of party general secretary (Indian Express, 1995b: 1). However, LK Advani intervened in favour of Narendra Modi. Advani's intervention split the convention. Shankarsinh Vaghela led the split along with 47 Gujarat BJP MLAs. In hindsight, had LK Advani [read central branch] not intervened in support of Narendra Modi, the convention would not have supported Vaghela's move to split the party.

The Vaghela-led split further led to interventions by the BJP's central branch. A split in the state unit would have brought down the Kesubhai Patel led BJP state government. However, Vaghela demanded a change in the state level leadership before he would return back to the party along with other legislators who had split with him (Parekh, 1995c: 1). In order to avoid a split in the party, the BJP's central leadership promised Vaghela that they would replace Kesubhai Patel as the Chief Minister and move Narendra Modi out of Gujarat. The party's central branch appointed Suresh Mehta[71]as the new Chief Minister of Gujarat replacing Kesubhai Patel. This was a period when the BJP's central branch, in particular LK Advani, made key interventions in the state-level party affairs. First, as described earlier, he personally intervened to support Narendra Modi when a number of state-level candidates had organised a convention to remove him from Gujarat. Second, he appointed Suresh Mehta as a compromise candidate, appointed to maintain support from the Kesubhai Patel and Narendra Modi faction, as opposed to leaving the Chief Ministers' choice based on a majority vote of the Gujarat BJP state-level legislators (Indian Express, 1995). These interventions alienated faction leader Shankarsinh Vaghela.

Continued interventions from the BJP's central branch incentivised Vaghela

[71]Interview with Shankarsinh Vaghela, Gandhinagar, Gujarat, 25th March 2016. Shankarsinh Vaghela was a former BJP state unit president who later joined the Congress Party.

to leave the BJP to form his own party. Vaghela claimed that L.K Advani and Narendra Modi (who was now at the centre) maintained their dominance over the state-level branch through their protege Chief Minister, Suresh Mehta. In the aftermath of the 1996 Indian general elections, Vaghela defected from the BJP and formed a non-polity wide party, the All India Rashtriya Janata Party (AIRJP). In the previous chapter, I have argued that a polity-wide party's dominance is challenged only when a factional leader decides to defect to form or join a non-polity-wide party. Importantly, I have discussed that it is difficult to predict whether the defecting leader is a factional leader or not, but have argued that candidate renomination data can help us assess their status. In the BJP's case it is clear that Vaghela was a factional leader, which is reflected in his ability to take 33 candidates (or 18 percent of the BJP candidates)[72] with him, who contested under AIRJP's party label during the 1998 Gujarat regional elections. Importantly, all of his 33 candidates were previously BJP MLAs.

It is Vaghela's ability to attract a large number of BJP legislators to defect with him that explains his confidence in staking his claim on the Gujarat government. Vaghela-led AIRJP formed the Gujarat government between 1997 and 1998 with the Congress Party's outside support. However, his party performed poorly in the 1998 regional elections. Winning merely four seats and 11.7 percent of the vote share, a large number of his candidates lost the elections.[73] Thirty-six[74] candidates of Vaghela's AIRJP lost deposit in Saurashtra alone (Patel, 1999b:

[72]This data is based on candidate renomination pattern based on my own calculations from the ECI. The raw data is available in the supplementary file.

[73]Why did Vaghela-led AIRJP lose the 1998 regional elections is an altogether different question. To answer this research question, I would need to access voting behaviour data, for which I did not get permission despite sending repeated emails and conducting two in person trips to the data unit myself. Also, in this thesis, I elucidate how intra-party autonomy explains dominance of polity-wide parties at the state-level. Lack of intra-party autonomy within the BJP state unit did motivate Vaghela to forms his own party. In the latter part of this chapter, I will show why Vaghela did not decide to join the Congress state unit straight after leaving the BJP, and only joined it in the aftermath of the 1998 regional elections.

[74]The Vaghela-led AIRJP contested 168 seats of the 182 assembly seats in for the 1998 regional elections.

2432). Soon after the 1998 regional elections Vaghela merged his party with the Congress Party thereby ending a short-lived presence of a non-polity-wide party in the Gujarati party system. As I will show in the latter part of this chapter, Vaghela was convinced to join the Congress Party on the promise that he would have autonomy over the Congress state unit.

For the BJP, despite the party's impressive victory in the 1998 regional elections, tensions emerged within the party. Many BJP legislators and ministers protested at the overbearing presence of the central branch, and in particular, LK Advani. Factionalism increased in the party-with legislators and workers divided between the supporters of Kesubhai Patel and Narendra Modi. High levels of central intervention and the lack of autonomy reflected the state affairs for the Gujarat BJP during the 2000 local-level elections, which saw their own party men work for their political rivals (Yagnik and Sud, 2004).

5.1.1 Gujarat BJP under Modi

The BJP's national leadership replaced Kesubhai Patel with Narendra Modi as the Chief Minister of Gujarat in 2001. The party was losing ground in Gujarat in the aftermath of the 2001 earthquake in Bhuj, Kutch. It lost a number of local district and village level elections in the aftermath of the earthquake (Patel, 2002: 4826). The party decided to change the leadership in order to save its flagship state in the country (Bunsha, 2001). Kesubhai Patel's initial resistance was quickly squelched. He objected to the authoritarian manner in which he was dismissed. His supporters, around 30 MLAs mainly from the politically dominant Patel community, wrote a memorandum to the BJP's central leadership in Delhi emphasising their support of Kesubhai Patel. They argued that the new

CM should only be appointed after consulting the BJPs state unit (V.Venkatesan, 2001). However, the party's central leadership backed Modi as the new Chief Minister disregarding the resistance from Kesubhai Patel and his supporters. Interestingly, in hindsight a number of BJP legislators have argued that the Gujarat BJP would not have elected Narendra Modi as their leader, and therefore he had to be appointed by the central command, in a top-down manner (Jose, 2012).

However, things changed after Narendra Modi became the Chief Minister of Gujarat. Narendra Modi effectively took control of the organisation, gradually reducing the role of the central branch. In an interview, Christophe Jaffrelot argued that Nitin Gadkari, former President of the BJP, could not exert any form of authority over Modi. This is confirmed by a senior BJP legislator from Gujarat who reported that 'Modiji wishes to control everything, even your breath' (Desai, 2002). A second report highlighted how Modi led the party to capitalise on the religious polarisation that occurred in the wake of the 2002 Godhra riots (Bunsha, 2002a). Then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee [BJP's central leader] undermined the use of religious polarisation as an electoral strategy in the aftermath of the 2002 Gujarat riots. Vajpayee directed the Gujarat BJP state unit not to campaign on a Hindutva platform in the wake of the Gujarat riots. However, Modi disregarded this directive. He directed the party's state unit to make use of the religious polarisation in the wake of the Gujarat riots in their favour (Patel, 2002; Prakash, 2003; Spodek, 2010).

Furthermore, when it came to selecting candidates for the regional elections, the BJP's central leadership was helpless. Modi personally took the call on practically every seat. He refused tickets to sitting MLAs, especially those who had incurred his displeasure. He also prevented the party's central command, even senior national leaders like Vajpayee and Advani, from interfering in his choice

of candidates (V.Venkatesan, 2002). An example will help illustrate the above point. The BJP's central leadership had promised a ticket to Haren Pandya, a former minister in the Gujarat Government. Nevertheless, upon stiff resistance from Modi, Pandya was not only removed from the cabinet, but was also denied a ticket for the 2002 Gujarat elections. Modi threatened to withdraw from the 2002 Gujarat elections if Pandya was re-nominated. Interestingly, Pandya's name was cleared in the first list of 144 candidates, but was held back till the last moment because of Modi's resistance. The Pandya episode showed the vulnerability of the central BJP leadership in Gujarat (Bunsha, 2002c).

Modi's autonomous style of working was also reflected in campaigning and canvassing. For example, it was reported that Vajpayee was so fearful of Modi that when he went to Ahmedabad for election campaigning, he said that

> usually when the Prime Minister and leader of the party come to a state, the Chief Minister would be waiting in anticipation. Here, forget about Modi coming to receive me - my heart is wondering what the hell Modi will say at a rally (Jose, 2012).

Modi side-lined BJP's central leadership during the 2007 regional election campaign. For the 2007 regional elections, he personally visited almost every constituency in Gujarat (Naqvi, 2007). Jaffrelot's (2008) detailed study about the 2007 Gujarat regional elections clearly underlines that the focus of the regional campaign was Narendra Modi, and not a central level BJP leader. Even central Congress leaders that campaigned in Gujarat targeted Modi as opposed to a BJP central level leader. A Modi-centric BJP campaign is evident of the fact that autonomy over the Gujarat BJP unit prior to the 2007 regional elections lay with

him. Modi continued to exercise his autonomy over the regional branch for the 2012 regional elections. Jaffrelot has also conducted a detailed analysis of the 2012 Gujarat regional elections. He highlights how Modi systematically built a focus around himself (Jaffrelot, 2013). Using technologically innovative techniques, he tried to reach out to every voter in the state. Using holographic technology, Modi simultaneously conducted rallies in 52 places. In his campaign, Modi claimed that this election is a straight contest between the Congress Party and him. He stated that this election is

> not limited to electing Govindbhai [BJP candidate in Talala constituency] and Rajshi [BJP candidate in Veraval]. What kind of government you want in Gujarat is more important than who becomes your MLA. It is about deciding in whose hands Gujarat is safe and who can be trusted. Vote for the one you know for 11 years. I [Modi] am a labourer who has not taken a break for an hour in past 11 years in order to work for the development of Gujarat.(Dave, 2012: 3)

In his 45 minute speech, Modi emphasised that people should vote for him rather than candidates or the party. He not only undermined BJP central party leaders but also the party which he was representing (Indian Express, 2012a: 3).

Modi's style of working prevented the BJPs central leadership from intervening in Gujarat's state-level affairs[75], but he was not able to prevent or contain the defection of state-level BJP politicians e.g. the defection of the former Chief Minister of Gujarat, Kesubhai Patel. Citing differences with Modi's functioning, Kesubhai Patel formed his own party, the Gujarat Parivartan Party (GPP), prior

[75]In chapter 7 I explain why the party's central branch was not able to intervene in the state-level party affairs.

to the 2012 Gujarat regional elections.[76] Nevertheless, in 2012, Kesubhai Patel cannot be classified as a factional leader. Unlike in 2001, where he had the support of 30 Patel MLAs from the Saurashtra region, Kesubhai Patel did not garner large support prior to 2012. If he had defected then (prior to 2001) it is certain that polity-wide parties would have faced an effective challenge to their dominance in the state (if Kesubhai Patel and his 30 MLAs were not accommodated within the Congress Party). However, the scenario in 2012 was radically different and Kesubhai Patel was unable to attract other BJP legislators to join him. Modi decided to not only nominate his sitting MLAs, but also re-nominated close to a hundred others who had lost their elections in 2007. He did this to prevent further defection from the BJP (Bavadam, 2012). The BJP was able to re-nominate 103 candidates, an increase from 96 candidates it re-nominated during the 2007 regional elections. Only four candidates who were nominated by the BJP during the 2007 regional elections decided to fight for GPP. The Modi-led BJP was able to retain its MLAs, and particularly over Patel MLAs who came from the Patidar dominated Saurashtra region (Verniers, 2016). Out of the 117 seats the BJP won in 2007 regional elections, the party was able to nominate 84 incumbents, many of whom were Patel candidates who had won in the 2007 Gujarat regional elections.

5.2 Congress

In this section, I provide evidence to assess the level of autonomy for the Gujarat Congress unit for all the elections in the post-1989 period. The discussion will show that when the Congress state unit had autonomy, it was able to prevent the defection of regional elites and/or attract regional elites from other polity-

[76]Interview with Vishnu Pandya, Ahmedabad, Gujarat, 3rd April 2016. Senior journalist who comments on Gujarat politics extensively in a number Gujarati newspapers.

wide and non-polity-wide parties. In cases where the Congress state unit had less autonomy where the other polity-wide party in the state-the BJP-had higher levels of autonomy, regional political elites chose to switch parties.

The Congress Party lost the 1989 general election. This significantly undermined the leadership of Congress Party's national leader, Rajiv Gandhi. However, the loss of the Congress Party at the national level created an opportunity for state-level Congress leaders to demand more autonomy from the party's central branch (Bose, 1990: 8). In Gujarat, Madhavsinh Solanki was the state-level president of the Congress Party. He had led the party to a historic win in the 1985 Gujarat regional elections. As mentioned in chapter 3, Madhavsinh Solanki built a coalition of middle and lower caste groups involving Kshatriyas (K), Dalits or Harijans (H), Tribals or Adivasis (A) and Muslims (M). This alliance was more popularly known as KHAM. The Solanki-led KHAM alliance helped the Congress Party secure a historic win in the 1985 Gujarat regional elections. The Congress Party won 149 seats in a 182 member legislative assembly with a vote share of 55.6 percent (ECI Statistical Reports). Coupled with this historic win in the 1985 Gujarat regional elections and the defeat of the party's central branch[77] in the 1989 general elections, Madhavsinh Solanki ran the Gujarat regional branch of the Congress Party with complete autonomy [78] from the party's central branch.

The Congress state unit suffered a setback in the 1990s Gujarat regional elections. Despite receiving a higher vote share (30.7 percent) in comparison to the Janata Dal (29.4 percent) and the BJP (26.7 percent), the party won its lowest tally of seats (33 or 18 percent seat share) in the 1990 Gujarat regional elections. A coalition of Janata Dal and the BJP formed the Gujarat state government with

[77]Interview with Mahashweta Jani, journalist, Ahmedabad, 2nd April 2016. Gujarat based journalist, who co-directed CSDS surveys in Gujarat.

[78]In chapter 7, I further explore why some states units are able to extract autonomy where others are not.

Chimanbhai Patel as their chief minister. As mentioned above, the Gujarat BJP unit was weary of its alliance with Janata Dal, but forged one on the BJP's central branch's insistence. However, the Gujarat BJP withdrew support from the Chimanbhai Patel led government when Chimanbhai Patel joined the Chandra Shekar faction of the National Front government against then Prime Minister V.P. Singh. Thereafter, Chimanbhai Patel formed the Gujarat state government with support of the Gujarat Congress unit. In a similar manner to the BJP state unit, the Gujarat Congress state unit were compelled to forge an alliance with the Janata Dal (Gujarat) by the party's central branch (Yagnik and Sud, 2004). While the party's central branch did not want to lose support from the strong Patel lobby represented by Chimanbhai Patel, the Gujarat Congress state unit had fought the 1990s regional elections against Chimanbhai Patel led Janata Dal (JD) branding him as a pro-rich, upper caste peasant leader (Shah, 1996).

The coalition of Gujarat Congress and Chimanbhai led Janata Dal fought the 1991 general elections in Gujarat but lost the general elections as the BJP secured 24 out of 26 seats in the 1991 general elections. Soon after the 1991 general election, some senior Congress leaders from the state openly advocated withdrawing support from the Chimanbhai Patel government. However, they were not allowed to pursue this further by the Congress Party's central branch. Fearing the loss of power, Chimanbhai Patel lobbied to win the support of the Congress Party's central branch and merged his Janata Dal (Gujarat) faction with the Gujarat Congress state unit. Here, it is important to mention that Chimanbhai Patel-led Janata Dal faction[79] agreed to merge with the Congress Party on the guarantee that Chimanbhai Patel would have autonomy over the regional branch. This is evident from the fact that soon after coming to power at the national

[79]Note, the situation would be classified very differently had Chimanbhai Patel been alive. In that case, the Gujarat Congress state unit would be classified as one having high levels of autonomy from the party's central branch.

level, Prime Minister Rao moved powerful state-level Congress leader and former Chief Minister Madhavsinh Solanki out of the state. Rao passed the Gujarat Congress mantle into the hands of the erstwhile Janata Dal (Gujarat) faction of the Congress Party (Indian Express, 1995d: 12).

Even after the merger, members of the Janata Dal within the Congress Party maintained separate profiles. The Congress state unit warned the party's central branch that it was 'suicidal' for the party to support and merge with the Chimanbhai Patel led Janata Dal. However, the Congress Party's central branch wanted to keep Gujarat under Congress rule and accepted Chimanbhai Patel's terms of merger, disregarding the opinion of the regional branch (Shah, 1994).

Chimanbhai Patel died in 1994 and the Congress Party's central branch replaced him with another member from the Congress Party's Janata Dal faction. Had the party's central branch left the decision to the Congress state unit, the state unit would have decided to pick a leader loyal to the Congress Party since its inception in the state as opposed to selecting one from a newly merged Janata Dal faction (Desh Gujarat, 2008). The Congress Party's central branch, in particular Narasimha Rao's Prime Ministership, depended on the support of Janata Dal leaders who joined the Congress Party central branch in the early 1990s (New York Times, 1993). Their support was vital in helping the Congress Party central branch stay in power. This made the Congress Party's central branch submissive in front of the incoming Janata Dal members. Keeping light of their critical role, the Janata Dal members exercised their supremacy by rewarding those Janata Dal members who had joined the Congress state branches. This is clearly reflected in the choice of the Gujarat Congress leader from the Janata Dal faction . In addition, the Janata Dal faction of the Congress Party succeeded in nominating the majority of the candidates for the 1995 regional elections. Out of the 181 seats that

the Congress Party contested during the 1995 regional elections, 52 candidates belonged to the former Janata Dal. Madhavsinh Solanki, former Chief Minister, was only able to select 18 candidates in the 182 member assembly for the 1995 Gujarat regional elections (Miglani, 1995: 11). This is indicative of the lower level of autonomy for the Gujarat Congress state unit. The low level of autonomy did motivate many Congress regional elites to leave the party. Importantly, the Congress regional elites joined the BJP prior to the 1995 regional elections. If you recall, the BJP did have high levels of autonomy prior to the 1995 regional elections. In particular, Shankarsinh Vaghela was involved in the distribution of tickets for the BJP prior to the 1995 regional elections. Two prominent Congress regional elites joined the BJP, namely Jesabhai Goria and Prabhatsinh Chauhan. Jesabhai Goria was associated with the Congress Party since the 1972 Gujarat regional elections and had a strong network of supporters in Dwarka district. Prabhatsinh Chauhan, contested as the Congress candidate in the 1980 Gujarat regional elections. He presented the Kalol constituency where he had a broad network of party workers. Their support was vital for the BJP to consolidate its position in Dwarka and Gandhinagar districts.

The Congress Party's central branch also played an important role in the post-1995 Gujarat regional elections scenario. In the aftermath of the 1995 Gujarat regional elections[80], the BJP Gujarat unit split, with factional leader Shankarsinh Vaghela staking to form the government. In my interview with Shankarsinh Vaghela, he confessed that he approached the Congress state unit in the hope of aligning with the party in the aftermath of the 1995 Gujarat regional elections . However, he said that the Congress Party was divided on whether to extend support to him. The Gujarat Pradesh Congress Committee (GPCC) chief Prabodh Raval, President of the state Congress Legislature party, Amarsinh Chaudhary

[80]Interview with Shankarsinh Vaghela, Gandhinagar, Gujarat, 25th March 2016. Shankarsinh Vaghela was a former BJP state unit president who later joined the Congress Party.

and former Chief Minister, Chhabildas Mehta were in touch with Congress Party President Rao (Parekh, 1995a: 9). Although factional leader Vaghela had meetings with GPCC chief Prabodh Raval, the Congress state unit was not able to decide on whether to extend support to Vaghela, as the party'a high command had not "disclosed its mind" (Editor, 1995: 9). Media sources reported that Congress President and Prime Minister Narasimha Rao took the final decision on whether to extend support to the rebel leader (Indian Express, 1995e: 9). The Congress Party's central branch decided that they would support a government led by Vaghela, but did not accept his terms for merger of his faction with the Congress Party. The Congress Party feared that merger of Vaghela-led BJP faction within the Congress Party would undermine the Congress's traditional support (Patel, 1999b). Shankarsinh Vaghela's prior association with the BJP and the RSS would alienate the Congress Party's support amongst the minorities, in particular within the Muslim community. Interestingly, after forming a state government, Vaghela began wooing Congress's core constituencies. He began seeking support from Muslims and also made inroads into tribal and other backward castes regions of the state which were traditionally areas of Congress dominance (EPW, 1999). Vaghela argued that this was his way of showing to the Congress Party that he was serious about "shedding his communal past".[81]

Closer to the 1998 regional elections, he once again approached the Congress Party to form a pre-electoral alliance with the AIRJP in order to improve their chances of defeating a strong Gujarat BJP. He approached Congress leaders at the central level like Pranab Mukherjee and B.K Gadhvi to broker the deal (Trivedi, 1998: 1). These central leaders relied on the directives from Sonia Gandhi on whether to go ahead with the alliance (Frontline, 1998). The party's central leadership decided not to form a pre-electoral alliance with the AIRJP. The Congress

[81]Interview with Shankarsinh Vaghela, Gandhinagar, Gujarat, 25th March 2016. Shankarsinh Vaghela was a former BJP state unit president who later joined the Congress Party.

central leadership believed that Sonia Gandhi's entry into the politics would turn the tide in their favour, and relied heavily on Sonia Gandhi's campaigns in the state to improve the prospects of the party in the assembly elections (Trivedi, 1998: 1). The lower level of autonomy for the Gujarat Congress state unit prior to the 1998 regional elections did motivate many politicians to leave the party. A total of ten politicians left the Congress Party to contest for the AIRJP prior to the 1998 regional elections. Importantly, two Congress regional elites, namely Jasabhai Barad and Laxmanbhai Patini left the Congress Party to join the AIRJP. Both the Congress regional elites and the Congress candidates decided to join the AIRJP as opposed to the BJP because the BJP also had lower levels of autonomy prior to the 1998 regional elections.

Despite Sonia Gandhi's entry into politics and campaigning for the 1998 Gujarat regional elections, the party won 53 seats as opposed to the BJP's 117 seats in a 182 member legislative assembly. This compelled the Congress Party's central branch to reconsider Vaghela's offer of merger of his BJP rebel faction with the Congress Party. The Congress state-level leadership raised many objections against the merger, but were silenced by the party's central branch. Here, it is also important to acknowledge that Vaghela-led AIRJP also received 11.7 percent share of votes and won only four seats in the regional elections. This poor showing of the AIRJP helped sustain his offer of merger with the Congress Party.

The Congress Party faced a difficult task prior to the 2002 Gujarat regional elections. The regional elections were held in the wake of the worst communal riots since partition. The Gujarat violence of 2002 recorded the highest annual death toll in any event of Hindu-Muslim violence in a single state. Most victims were Muslims who were killed following the death of 59 Hindu passengers on a train near Godhra on February 27. The post-Godhra violence continued for four

months, and then for another six months. Many reports highlighted how the Gujarat BJP unit along with the RSS planned and executed the riots for electoral benefits for the subsequent regional elections (Dhattiwala and Biggs, 2012). In the wake of the communal riots, the Election Commission postponed the regional elections.

In order to counter the electoral benefits the BJP would reap in the wake of the 2002 communal riots, Sonia Gandhi appointed Vaghela, a former BJP and RSS member, as the new President of the Gujarat Pradesh Congress Committee. The central leadership decision was based on a rationale that a former RSS member would avoid the consolidation of the Hindu vote behind the BJP in the wake of the communal riots. Shankarsinh Vaghela had complete autonomy in running the state-level organisation during the 2002 Gujarat regional elections (Bunsha, 2002b). The guarantee of autonomy over the regional branch convinced Vaghela to merge his party (AIRJP) with the Congress Party. Vaghela had control over the candidate selection process in the Gujarat Congress state unit prior to the 2002 regional elections. He was able to nominate 60 percent of the AIRJP members (which were previously associated with the BJP) as Congress candidates during the 2002 regional elections. This evidence confirms that Vaghela did have autonomy over the Congress state unit.

Many state-level Congress leaders were unhappy with Vaghela's selection, in particular Shaktisinh Gohil, Bharatsinh Solanki, son of former Congress Chief Minister, Madhavsinh Solanki and Arjun Mohwadia expressed their discomfort with the choice of Vaghela and the confidence the Congress Party's central leadership reposed in him.[82] The Congress Party's strategy of choosing a former BJP and RSS member failed. The BJP won 127 seats out of the 182 member legislative

[82]Interview with Lalji Desai and Balabhai Patel, Ahmedabad Gujarat, 27th March 2016. General secretary, Gujarat Pradesh Congress Committee.

assembly. A number of Congress state leaders overtly campaigned against their own party to express their disappointment with the manner in which the party's central leadership gave autonomy to a new state party president. They argued that the level of autonomy enjoyed by Vaghela was unprecedented in the Gujarat Congress state unit.[83]

The BJP's massive victory changed the status quo within the Congress Party. The Congress Party's central leadership constrained autonomy for the state unit and increasingly intervened in the 2007 regional election campaign. For instance, none of the state-level leaders, Arjun Mohwadia, Shaktisinh Gohil, Bharatsinh Solaki and Shankarsinh Vaghela were allowed to project themselves as Chief Ministers (Jaffrelot, 2008). Furthermore, the Congress Party completely relied on Sonia Gandhi to lead the campaign for the 2007 regional elections. The importance attached to Sonia Gandhi's campaign helped the media turn the election into a Modi [BJP Chief Ministerial candidate] versus Sonia Gandhi contest (Bunsha, 2008). In addition, the party invited an array of central leaders to campaign in different regions of the state (Mitra, 2007).

The central leaders who were invited to campaign in Gujarat during the 2007 regional elections did not listen to the advice given by the state-level leaders. The Gujarat state-level leadership advised the central leadership not to articulate the campaign in a way that would appear as anti-Hindutva or appear to directly target Narendra Modi. For instance, Sonia Gandhi launched the official campaign by arguing the following:

> We all know the misdeeds committed during his [Modis] rule in 2002.

[83]Interview with Suryasinh Dhabi, Gandhinagar Gujarat, 24th March 2016. Gandhinagar district president, Congress Party.

> The truth makes us hang our heads in shame. Which civilised society would want such a ruler? After all we all are mothers, wives and daughters of those who have been killed and jailed. We have to raise our voice against barbarians. (Jaffrelot, 2008: 13)

In addition, Digvijay Singh, then general secretary of the Congress Party insisted that "Hindu terrorist [referring to Modi] had misbehaved in 2002 in Gujarat." In short, these are just few examples of how the Congress central leadership completely ignored the campaign warnings issued by the party's state leadership.

The low level of autonomy did motivate many Congress elites to leave the party. Importantly, the Congress regional elites joined the BJP prior to the 2007 regional elections. If you recall, the Gujarat BJP had autonomy prior to the 2007 regional elections. For example, prior to the 2007 regional elections, Neemaben Acharya left the Congress Party to join the BJP. Dr. Neemaben Acharya was long associated with the Congress Party, and had represented the Congress Party for 2002 and 1998 regional elections from Anjar constituency in the Kutch region of Gujarat. Neemaben was not an isolated example. Pabubha Manek also left the Congress Party to join the BJP prior to the 2007 regional elections. Pabubha Manek first got elected to the Gujarat assembly from Dwarka constituency in the 1990 Gujarat regional elections. He got elected as an independent candidate. He defeated the Janata Dal candidate to win the 1990s regional elections in Dwarka. Similarly, he won the 1995 regional elections as an independent candidate, but this time he defeated the Congress candidate, Sadurbha Ker from the Dwarka constituency. During the 1998 regional elections, he defeated the BJP candidate to win the election as an independent. However, it is important to note that during the 1998 regional elections, the Congress did not put up a candidate on the tacit understanding that he would later join the Congress Party. During the 2002

regional elections he contested as a Congress candidate to defeat BJP's candidate despite a strong communal mobilisation in favour of BJP in Dwarka. Dwarka is an important religious town in Gujarat with a strong RSS presence. Pabubha Manek's strong local network of organisation helped the Congress Party win this seat despite many conditions favouring the BJP. However, in the run-up to the 2007 regional elections, he left the Congress Party to join the BJP on the grounds of Congress Party having low levels of autonomy.

Similarly in the 2012 Gujarat regional elections, the Congress state unit completely relied on the party's central branch. It lacked any meaningful autonomy. The lack of autonomy is reflected in an account given by a prominent Congress member, who rebelled against the party. Asifa Khan, a school teacher from Bharuch district in Gujarat claims that she left the Congress Party because,

> I [Asifa Khan] could not work for people and get their matters resolved at the state level. State level Congress leaders are not competent and issues go directly to Delhi for being sorted out (Saiyed, 2012: 4; Hindustan Times, 2012).

Unhappy with the centralisation in the Gujarat Congress state unit, Asifa Khan, protege of senior Congress leader Ahmed Patel, left the Congress Party to join the BJP prior to the 2012 elections. Despite the limited representation of Muslims in the Gujarat BJP organisation, Asifa Khan was able to secure nomination for candidates that left the Congress Party with her in local level Gujarat BJP organisational posts and district level elections in Bharuch.

Demonstrating that the centralisation continues, the Congress Party denied a ticket to Narhari Amin to contest the 2012 Gujarat regional elections on the basis

of the new rule set forth by the Congress Partys Vice President, Rahul Gandhi (Indian Express, 2012b: 4). This new rule did not permit the re-nomination of candidates who had lost two consecutive elections. Although in the past the party had bent the rules in order to accommodate state level leaders, in the case of Amin the party adhered to the directives set forth by the Vice-President. In order to avoid Amin's defection, a number of senior state level Congress leaders urged the party's central command to bend the rule. However, the party's central command, and particularly Rahul Gandhi did not accommodate the demands made by the state-level leadership, which ultimately led to the defection of Amin to the BJP (Indian Express, 2012c: 4). Amin's defection to the BJP is particularly interesting because he was an arch-rival of Gujarat's former Home Minister and an important state-level BJP leader, Amit Shah (from when they were both associated with the Gujarat Cricket Association). Despite these personal animosities, politicians switch parties in order to further their career prospects.

5.3 Gujarat Party System

In Table 5.3 below, I summarise the evidence provided in the previous two sections. In the previous two sections, I presented evidence that helped assess the level of autonomy within the BJP and the Congress Party for each regional election since the 1990s regional elections. Table 5.3 summarises this evidence in the form of high or low level of autonomy for the BJP and the Congress Party. Table 5.3 also includes additional information in terms of the party responsible for forming the state government, vote and seat share of the two main polity-wide parties, and aggregate total of both the parties. I summarise evidence from the 1990s up until the 2012 Gujarat regional elections.

Table 5.3: Summarising the level of autonomy within the BJP and the Congress Party, Gujarat 1990-2012

Gujarat Election Year	State governments	BJP Level of autonomy	Congress Level of autonomy	BJP vote share(%)	BJP seat share(%)	Congress voteshare (%)	Congress seat-share(%)	Polity-wide parties vote share(%)	Polity-wide parties seatshare (%)
1990	BJP + JD/JD (G) + Congress	High	High	26.7	36.8	30.7	18.1	57.4	54.9
1995	BJP/AIRJP	High	Low	42.5	66.5	32.9	24.7	75.4	91.2
1998	BJP	Low	Low	44.8	64.3	34.8	29.1	79.6	93.4
2002	BJP	High	High	49.9	69.8	39.3	28	89.2	97.8
2007	BJP	High	Low	49.1	64.3	38	32.4	87.1	96.7
2012	BJP	High	Low	47.9	63.2	38.9	33.5	86.8	96.7

Polity-wide parties dominate the Gujarati party system. In Table 5.3, we see that polity-wide parties, in particular the BJP, have been responsible for forming most state governments since 1995. At the party system level, the aggregate vote and seat share of the polity-wide parties also reflect the dominance of polity-wide parties since the 1995 regional elections. I argue that this dominance of polity-wide parties in Gujarat is the result of autonomy within a single polity-wide party at the state-level for most Gujarati regional elections. First, high level of autonomy promised to Chimanbhai Patel over the Congress state unit branch prevented Janata Dal (Gujarat) to pose an effective long-term challenge for polity-wide parties in Gujarat. It is important to note that it is difficult to capture this episode in vote and seat shares as it unfolded between the 1990 and 1995 regional elections. Second, and particularly since the 1995 regional elections, the high level of autonomy for the Gujarat BJP prevented the defection of factional leaders from leaving the party, with the exception of Shankarsinh Vaghela. The defection of Vaghela is reflected in the brief challenge to polity-wide party dominance in Gujarat. Once again, it is difficult to capture this challenge using vote and seat shares as the episode unfolded between the 1995 and 1998 regional elections. However, the candidate defection data prior to the 1998 regional elections echo this trend. In section 5.1 above, I presented data to show that for the 1998 regional election year, 18 percent of the BJP candidates defected to a non-polity-wide party. In Section 5.1 I also showed that most of the candidates that left the BJP for a non-polity-wide party prior to the 1998 regional elections in fact contested for the Vaghela-led AIRJP. However, the non-polity-wide party challenge did not last long as Vaghela was accommodated within the Congress Party on the promise that he would be given autonomy in running the state-level branch. As mentioned above, Vaghela did have autonomy prior to the 2002 Gujarat regional elections. Apart from the Vaghela episode, the high level of autonomy for Gujarat BJP unit meant that the party was successful in preventing

defections of factional leaders. In section 5.1 of this chapter, I gave examples of politicians (for example, Kesubhai Patel) who left the BJP but demonstrated that they were in fact not factional leaders.

The Congress Party in Gujarat did not consistently have high levels of autonomy from the party's central branch. The low level of autonomy did lead to defections of important Congress regional elites. In section 5.2 I gave a number of examples of Congress regional elites leaving the party because of the lack of autonomy. Importantly, I showed that a number of them decided to join the BJP as opposed to forming their own party or join non-polity-wide parties.

To sum up, in this chapter, I have first presented evidence to assess the level of autonomy within the two major polity-wide parties in Gujarat. I have also shown that while some politicians will attempt to form or join non-polity-wide parties, their success in challenging the dominance of polity-wide parties depends on whether they are a factional leader or no. It is only when a factional leader decides to form or join a non-polity-wide party that we see a challenge to the dominance of polity-wide parties. But if existing polity-wide parties accommodate the factional leader then their dominance remains intact. More importantly, factional leaders do not join existing polity-wide parties when their regional branches have low levels of autonomy from their central branch. In the following chapter, I use the case of Maharashtra to demonstrate why non-polity-wide parties were able to challenge the dominance of polity-wide parties in Maharashtra.

Chapter 6

Maharashtra

In chapter 4, I argued that polity-wide parties remain dominant at the state-level when at least a single polity-wide party competing at the state-level has autonomy. Despite political and economic decentralisation, coalition politics at the national level, and presence of sub-nationalism, polity-wide parties remain dominant if their sub-national units have autonomy or the opposing regional branch of a polity-wide party has autonomy. In the previous chapter, I presented empirical evidence from Gujarat to support this argument. Since the early 1990s, a single polity-wide party regional branch has consistently had autonomy from the central branch.[84] This helped the party limit defection from factional leaders.[85] Although there were attempts by politicians to set up non-polity-wide parties, the majority of them failed as they were not formed by factional leaders. The presence of an autonomous regional branch of a polity-wide party changed the structure of inter-party competition in Gujarat. In contrast, as I will show in this chapter, the regional branches of both the polity-wide parties competing in Maharashtra did not

[84]Except prior to the 1998 regional elections.
[85]Except Shankarsinh Vaghela in the mid-1990s

consistently have autonomy from their central branch. This incentivised regional political elites into forming or joining non-polity-wide parties. The Maharashtrian case is particularly important because the Maharashtra Congress state unit did have autonomy, but only until the 1995 regional elections. This disjuncture over time further helps in isolating my explanation of intra-party autonomy. I am able to clearly show that polity-wide parties were able to dominate the Maharashtrian party system until the 1995 regional elections because the Maharashtra regional branch of the Congress Party had autonomy until the 1995 regional elections, but not thereafter.

This chapter is divided into three sections. In section 6.1 I present and discuss evidence used to classify the level of autonomy for the Maharashtra Congress state unit. Table 6.1 below marks the categories for the theme(s) around which the discussion proceed in the section 6.1 section. In section 6.2, I present evidence from the BJP. Table 6.2 below marks the themes used to assign the level of autonomy for the Maharashtra BJP unit.

Similar to the previous chapter, in both these sections, the discussion proceeds chronologically with a focus around measuring intra-party autonomy around regional elections. In the third section, I move away from a party-level analysis towards an analysis of the party system.

Table 6.1: Themes discussed to code the Level of autonomy for the Maharashtra Congress unit

Election Year/Themes	Organisation of the regional branch	Selection of regional leader	Selection of candidates for regional elections	Financing of the regional branch	The central leader makes endorsements or public appearances during regional elections	Dealings with the coalition partner when forming a state government	Level of autonomy
1990	5		5				High
1995		5			4		High
1999	1		1			1	Low
2004					1	1	Low
2009		2	1			2	Low
2014	4				4	4	High

Table 6.2: Themes discussed to code the Level of autonomy for the Maharashtra BJP unit

Election Year/Themes	Organisation of the regional branch	Selection of regional leader	Selection of candidates for regional elections	Financing of the regional branch	The central leader makes endorsements or public appearances during regional elections	Dealings with the coalition partner when forming a state government	Level of autonomy
1990						1	Low
1995						1	Low
1999		2					Low
2004	1				1		Low
2009				3	1	3	Low
2014		1		1	1	1	Low

6.1 Maharashtra Congress

Until the late 1970s, the Maharashtra party system was a textbook example of Congress Party supremacy (Deshpande and Palshikar, 2003; Lele, 1984). The Congress Party's early supremacy in Maharashtra is particularly due to the leadership of Y.B Chavan and the successful accommodation of the numerically preponderant Maratha castes within the Congress organisation.[86] As mentioned above, the Maharashtra Congress unit, and particularly the Maratha leadership within the Congress organisation, enjoyed autonomy from the party's central branch under Nehru's leadership. However, after Nehru's death, Indira Gandhi sought to recentralise authority (Kochanek, 1968; Deshpande and Palshikar, 2003: 100). Predictably, her centralisation drives resulted in a number of important state level elites leaving the party (EPW, 1979). In chapter 3, subsection 3.3.1, I explained why the Congress Party in Maharashtra had to form the government in 1978 with help of coalition partners, albeit partners who were former members of the Congress Party (Deshpande and Palshikar, 2003: 100). The defecting leaders went back to the Congress Party after they were promised autonomy at the state-level (Nikolenyi, 2015: 196-197). After Indira Gandhi's death, the Maharashtra Congress unit's autonomy was restored. Rajiv Gandhi personally convinced Sharad Pawar to join the Congress Party on the promise that he would have complete autonomy over the state-level branch.

During the 1990 regional elections, media sources reported that the Congress high command, and particularly Rajiv Gandhi, had given complete autonomy to Sharad Pawar in organising the election campaign (Pagedar, 1990: 5). Pawar's campaign platforms ushered in a new style of decision making independent of the

[86]Interview with Professor Ghanshyam Shah, 3rd April 2016, Ahmedabad, Gujarat. Ghanshyam Shah is a former Professor at Jawaharlal Nehru University.

party's high command (Indian Express, 1990a). This was also expressed by a noted observer of Maharashtrian politics, Thomas Blom Hansen (Hansen, 1998a: 137), who wrote that "in an unprecedented relaxation of otherwise tightly centralised selection of candidates for the Lok Sabha election, the Congress high command had given Sharad Pawar an almost free hand in Maharashtra."

Pawar's independent style is also demonstrated in his handling of the selection of candidates for the regional elections. Pawar personally prepared the candidate list for the regional elections disregarding the inputs from the central level leadership (Pagedar, 1990: 5). Pawar dropped a number of sitting Congress MLAs and some senior state-level leaders including three ministers from his candidate list. Most of those who lost their tickets were known detractors of Pawar, making it evident that it was his work (Indian Express, 1990b: 5).

Pawar's style of functioning and control of the regional branch infuriated other Congress politicians in the state, who launched a new regional party called the Maharashtra Indira Congress, to fight Pawar's control over the Congress state unit (Indian Express, 1990b: 8). They told the party's central command and the All India Congress Committee (AICC) that they were willing to merge their newly formed regional party-Maharashtra Indira Congress-with the Congress Party in Maharashtra if Pawar was kept out of the talks (Indian Express, 1990c: 7). However, Pawar was able to maintain his level of autonomy, and the defectors were not able to challenge the dominance of the Congress Party. As mentioned in chapter 4, it is only when factional leaders defect that we see a challenge being posed to the dominance of polity-wide parties. Not all defections have the same effect. In Maharashtra, despite the exit of state level Congress politicians, the Pawar-led Congress state unit was able to retain the loyalty of majority of its politicians. The candidate re-nomination data reflects this loyalty. The Congress Party was able

to renominate 105 (36.6 percent[87]) candidates during the 1990 regional elections, an increase from the 98 candidates (34.3 percent) the party renominated in the 1985 regional elections[88]. More importantly, the Congress Party was able to re-nominate 90 incumbents in the 1990 regional elections or 60 percent of its sitting MLAs from the previous 1985 regional elections[89]. The candidate re-nomination data demonstrates that despite the exit of some regional politicians, the majority remained with the Congress Party.

The majority of the politicians renominated by Sharad Pawar belonged to the numerically dominant Maratha community[90] (Verniers, 2016). Their support for the Congress Party was vital in stopping other non-polity-wide parties such as the Shiv Sena from making electoral gains in Maharashtra. As mentioned in Chapter 3, from the early 1980s, Shiv Sena desperately tried to cultivate the growing dissatisfaction within the Maratha community. As mentioned above, by the late 1980s and early 1990s-the Shiv Sena was able to replicate the Congress Party in terms of the latter's social base. The Shiv Sena had a strong base among the Marathas, exactly what the Congress would have looked like in the 1960s and 1970s (Deshpande and Palshikar 2003, p.113). Shiv Sena's relationship with the Congress Party is of particular importance for my argument. As noted by Hansen (2004: 23), Shiv Sena grew for years in the protective shadow of the Congress Party. At the grass-root and local level there were many parallels and continuities between the Congress Party and Shiv Sena. Many Congressmen had very close links with Shiv Sena local level organisational units. As noted by Hebsur (2011: 255), "many Congress leaders and CMs were sympathetic to SS [Shiv Sena],

[87]Candidate renomination proportions are calculated by dividing the absolute number of candidate renominatons/number of seats contested in the previous elections.

[88]Data calculated from ECI, attached in the supplementary file

[89]Data calculated from ECI, attached in the supplementary file

[90]Interview with Dr. Bharatkumar Raut, 12th February 2016, Mumbai. Dr. Raut was a former Rajya Sabha (Indias upper house of the parliament of India) member, and former editor of Maharashtra Times. He was nominated by Shiv Sena to represent Maharashtra in the upper house of the Indian parliament.

and took its help to weaken the communists". Even when there were grass-root level linkages between the Congress Party and Shiv Sena, the Congress Party's state-level leadership, in particular the Maratha leadership, made sure to carefully monitor Shiv Sena's growth. With the disintegration of the Maratha leadership due to increasing intervention by the Congress Party's central branch, political elites that were earlier sympathetic to the Congress Party shifted their political allegiances along with their support base. They took with them their control over the local cooperative sector and local governmental bodies. This helped the Shiv Sena gradually consolidate its support base in Maharashtra. Vaibhav Purandare (2012) in his book gives multiple examples of Maharashtrian Congressmen joining the Shiv Sena Party in the 1970s.

However, the restoration of autonomy for Sharad Pawar within the Congress Party stalled Shiv Sena's growth, albeit temporarily. With Sharad Pawar back in the Congress Party, majority of the Maratha elites chose to remain within the Congress state unit (Dahiwale, 1995). Not only did Sharad Pawar retain the loyalty of the majority of his Maratha elites, but he also attracted a number of them who had earlier left for the Shiv Sena party. For instance, in the aftermath of the 1991 general elections, the Congress state unit was able to attract long-standing Shiv Sena leader Chhagan Bhujbal along with a number of Shiv Sena MLAs to join the Congress Party (Hansen, 1998a). Chhagan Bhujbal is not an isolated example. Now prominent Congress leader, Sanjay Nirupam and Ganesh Naik were also part of the Shiv Sena prior to joining the Congress Party. Both represent strong factional support in Ratnagiri and Navi Mumbai, respectively.

Pawar comfortably retained his control of the Congress state unit during the 1995 Maharashtra regional elections. The focus of the regional election campaign was Sharad Pawar as opposed to a Congress central level leader. Sharad Pawar

addressed a record number of 220 meetings in 30 out of 31 districts in Maharashtra (Marpakwar, 1995: 7). Although the Congress Party emerged with 80 seats in the 288 member legislative assembly, the single largest party in the assembly, the pre-electoral alliance of the Shiv Sena and the BJP won 138 seats, 58 more seats than Congress Party (Marpakwar, 1995: 5). But individually, Shiv Sena was able to win 73 seats whereas the BJP was able to win 65 seats (ECI, Statistical Reports). The governor of the state invited the leader of the largest party to form the government - the Congress Party with 80 seats. Seizing this opportunity, the Congress high command issued a directive to try and form the government at any cost. Despite this pressure, Pawar conceded defeat and claimed that "he would not form the government even if he was invited by the governor to form one" (Indian Express, 1995f: 1). Pawar was able to take independent decisions even when they conflicted with the directives issued by the central level of the party.

But this autonomy was soon removed after a change of national leadership in the Congress Party. With Sonia Gandhi taking charge of the national leadership in 1998, the party re-centralised many important matters away from the regional branch (Indian Express, 1998). Ironically, Pawar had played an important role in the process of Sonia Gandhi's takeover. In an attempt to undermine Sitaram Kesri as the national president of the Congress Party, Sharad Pawar created a faction within the Congress Party to replace Kesri with Sonia Gandhi as the party president (Simha, 1998b; Simha, 1998e). His strategy to replace Sonia Gandhi won him a number of supporters from a number of Congress state unit presidents (Simha, 1998a). Their backing consolidated Sonia Gandhi's position vis-a-vis Kesri. However, after taking charge of the national leadership, Sonia Gandhi took advantage of her support from a number of Congress state-level leaders to centralise the Congress Party (Simha, 1998d). Sonia Gandhi's arrival as the national president changed the intra-party dynamics. It brought back the

role of the central level, in particular the Congress Working Committee (CWC) and the All India Congress Committee (AICC), as the primary body involved in overseeing candidate selection for the national and regional elections (Simha, 1998c). The central branch increased its authority over the state units (Kidwai, 2011a).

Many local and state level Congress elites were unhappy with the central branch's intervention in the candidate selection process for regional elections (Palshikar, 1999). Sharad Pawar was one of them. While Sharad Pawar was successful in ousting Kesri as the party president, he lost control over the party's key decision-making body, the Congress Parliamentary Party (CPP) to Sonia Gandhi who was appointed as the chairperson of the CPP. Moreover, his ambition to rise up to the post of the Prime Minister disappeared with Sonia's accession to power (Kidwai, 2011b).[91]Disgruntled with losing power and control, Sharad Pawar formed his own party, the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), to contest the 1999 Maharashtra regional elections.[92]

[91]The popular narrative behind Sharad Pawar's exit is his disappointment with the elevation of Sonia Gandhi because of her foreign (Italian) origins. Even Sharad Pawar claims this to be the sole reason (Pawar 2015). However, my interactions with a number of senior Congress members and office bearers have revealed that Sharad Pawar was unhappy with Sonia Gandhi's assertive and decisive leadership after her elevation as party president. He felt that by bringing in Sonia Gandhi he would be able to silence leadership bids by other senior Congress members, but still have his autonomy over the Congress central decision body as he anticipated Sonia Gandhi not to actively engage in the politics of the highest decision body. But this did not happen. This episode is very similar to the manner in which the politics around Indira Gandhi's succession unfolded. Many important state level Congress leaders believed that by elevating Indira Gandhi they would be able to maintain their hold of their regional branch with a weak national party leader. Ironically, many of them helped her take over control of the Congress Presidency. However, after her rise she managed to eliminate her competitors . Certainly, many important Congress leaders left the party as a result of Indira Gandhi's centralising drives. In a similar fashion, Sonia Gandhi's rise to power in the party was abetted by powerful regional leaders, Sharad Pawar included, in the hope that she would be a weak national leader. However, after taking charge she revitalised the central branch's intervention in state-level affairs. Disgruntled with her rise, Sharad Pawar (and others) left the party in much the same way as many of his colleagues did during Indira Gandhi's rise.

[92]Ideally, this defection is better captured through influence as opposed to autonomy. In the comparative politics literature on the role of party organisation influencing party systems, scholars have discussed autonomy as well as influence. Influence refers to the degree to which the regional branch is important force in the central party branch. Coming back to the above example, one could argue that Sharad Pawar defected from the Congress Party as he lost his

Unlike the politicians that defected from the Maharashtra Congress state unit during the 1990s regional elections, Sharad Pawar was able to attract a large number of candidates to defect with him. The scale of defection is reflected in the candidate re-nomination data for the 1999 Maharashtra regional elections. The Congress Party was only able to renominate 61 (21.3 percent) candidates from the previous election, compared to 131 (47.5 percent) of candidates the party renominated in 1995. The different renomination patterns helps put the scale of defection in perspective. More specifically, the Congress Party lost 74 of the candidates (or 25 percent) it had re-nominated in the previous election to Sharad Pawar's NCP. The loss for the Congress Party is also reflected in the lower proportions of incumbents the Congress Party was able to renominate in the 1999 regional elections compared to the 1995 regional elections. In the 1995 regional elections, the Congress Party renominated 103 incumbents, or close to 73 percent[93] of incumbents, whereas during the 1999 regional elections, the Congress Party renominated 28 incumbents, or close to 35 percent of incumbents. The majority of the candidates that defected from the Congress Party to the NCP were incumbents, bringing with them local grass root level support which helped the NCP gain entry into the Maharashtrian assembly. The NCP was able to win 58 seats capturing 22.6 percent of the vote share during the 1999 Maharashtra regional elections.[94]

The loss of autonomy for the Maharashtra Congress unit and the defection of Sharad Pawar had another important consequence in Maharashtra. Many political

influence in the partys central branch. While this might be a relatively straightforward example, conceptualising this process in the Indian case is very difficult. This difficulty stems from any formal process of meaningful representations of regional branches in the polity-wide partys central branch. Nonetheless, I have discussed in the concluding chapter 9 why this is particularly necessary even if it requires a descriptive analysis of manually coding regional leaders that are influential in a polity-wide partys central branch.

[93]This figure is based on dividing the raw number of incuments renominated/seats contested in the previous election i.e. 103/141 = 73 %

[94]Data calculated from ECI, attached in the supplementary file

elites who had earlier joined the Congress state unit from non-polity-wide parties, such as Shiv Sena, also left the Congress Party. For example, Chhagan Bhujbal, a prominent Shiv Sena leader who had earlier defected to the Congress state unit left the party for the newly formed NCP. In a similar manner, a number of young Congressmen and women left the party either to join the NCP when they no longer had autonomy within the Congress Party.

Before moving forward, I wish to highlight that NCP was an attractive option for Sharad Pawar and his coterie of supporters because the alternative to the Maharashtra Congress state unit-the Maharashtra BJP unit- also had low levels of autonomy during the late 1990s. In my thesis, I have argued that autonomy within a single regional branch of a polity-wide will be sufficient to dis-incentivise regional elites into forming or joining non-polity-wide parties. But as I will show in the latter part of the chapter, Maharashtra BJP unit had low levels of autonomy during the late 1990s. Pramod Mahajan, a central level BJP leader, ran the Maharashtra BJP unit. With his firm grip over the Maharashtra BJP unit, Sharad Pawar would not be able to enjoy the levels of autonomy he enjoyed over the Congress state unit prior to its centralisation. One could counter-argue by saying that Sharad Pawar decided not to join the BJP because of ideological reasons as opposed to organisational reasons. It is true that there are ideological differences between the Congress Party and the BJP in Maharashtra. However, I argue that this is not the primary reason behind Sharad Pawar not joining the BJP. If it were for ideological reasons, then why did Sharad Pawar support the BJP in multiple local elections. In addition, in the aftermath of the 2014 Maharashtra regional elections, Sharad Pawar offered unconditional electoral support to the BJP. Finally, a number of interviews I had with state-level BJP and Shiv Sena leaders confirm that Sharad Pawar is said to have a close relationship with a number of BJP state and central level leaders.

6.1.1 Maharashtra Congress After Sharad Pawar

The Congress Party fought the 1999 Maharashtra regional elections not only in opposition to the BJP and Shiv Sena, but also in opposition to the NCP. The result of the 1999 Maharashtra regional elections was a hung parliament. The Congress Party emerged as the single largest party but without the numbers required to form a government. Congress sought to form an alliance with the NCP in order to keep the 'communal forces' out of Maharashtra (Palshikar and Birmal, 2003).[95]

The post-election negotiations between the Congress Party and the NCP provide evidence in locating the level of autonomy within the Congress Party. The following claim made by Sharad Pawar in his autobiography shows that the Congress state unit did not enjoy high levels of autonomy in the aftermath of the 1999 Maharashtra regional elections;

> Vilasrao Deshmukh [a senior state-level Congress leader] called me and said, if the NCP is willing to join hands with the Congress, we too can think along those lines. But I [Sharad Pawar] knew that decisions in the Congress were not taken at the state level, so I suggested that he should first get consent from New Delhi and then we could proceed. Vilasrao immediately talked to the Congress high command and called me again in the evening to inform me that he had received the green signal from the party high command. The next day, Praful Patel [a senior member of the NCP] and I [Sharad Pawar] held a meeting in New Delhi with Vilasrao Deshmukh, Maharashtra Congress President Prataprao Bhosale and Margaret Alva, who was the party in charge

[95]Interview with Aslam Sheikh, February 24th 2016, Mumbai. Aslam Sheikh is a Congress member of Legislative Assembly Maharashtra representing the Malad (West) constituency in Mumbai. He was earlier part of the Samajwadi Party.

for Maharashtra. (Pawar, 2015: 159)

The Congress Party formed the Maharashtra government in the aftermath of the 1999 regional elections with Vilasrao Deshmukh as the Chief Minister and Chhagan Bhujbal of the NCP as Deputy Chief Minister. The Maharashtra government remained under the leadership of Vilasrao Deshmukh but was replaced by Sushilkumar Shinde, a senior Congress leader from the Dalit community in 2003.

The 1999 Maharashtra regional elections were a turning point for the Congress Party. It overcame its traditional reluctance to forming alliances with non-polity-wide parties (Roy and Wallace, 2007b). The Congress Party maintained its alliance with the NCP prior to the 2004 Maharashtra regional elections. However, when it came to choosing additional coalition partners in Maharashtra, the Congress state unit followed the central branch's lead in keeping distance from the Samajwadi Party (Frontline, 2004). Furthermore, during the 2004 regional elections in Maharashtra, the Congress state unit gave particular importance to its national leadership. The bulk of the campaign in the state was spearheaded by Sonia Gandhi, the Congress Party's national president (Ramakrishnan, 2004). Sonia Gandhi not only campaigned in the state, but was also strategically projected as the 'ideal woman' who made sacrifices for the nation (Ramakrishnan, 2004). This reflects how bulk of the campaign was focused on a national leader as opposed to a regional Congress leader.

The Congress Party led coalition emerged victorious at the national level in 2004. However, in Maharashtra, the Congress Party emerged as the second largest party. Although contesting more seats than its alliance partner (the NCP), the Congress Party ended up winning a fewer seats. The Congress Party contested a total of 157 seats, but ended up winning 69 whereas the party's alliance partner,

the NCP, contested 124 seats and ended up with 71 seats (ECI, Statistical reports). This became a growing cause of concern within the Congress state unit in Maharashtra. The party's state unit believed that their alliance partner, the NCP, was trying to attract a number of Congress legislators and improve the party's influence in the state.[96] Despite these concerns, the state-unit was directed to maintain its alliance with the NCP by Sonia Gandhi (Palshikar et al., 2010). Disgruntled with the centralisation within the party, a total of 23 Congressmen left the party to join other non-polity-wide parties or contest as independents.

The Congress Party geared up for the 2009 Maharashtra regional elections with a renewed sense of confidence. Having been in power at the national and regional level since 2004 boosted the party's morale. However, the party did not lose sight of the reasons behind its victory in the 2004 elections. It acknowledged the importance of alliance building and coalition politics. The Congress Party appointed AICC member Digvijay Singh as the general secretary in charge of Maharashtra. Digvijay Singh coordinated matters related to the state assembly elections and dealt with the NCP as a representative of the AICC, where the final decisions regarding its alliance with the NCP were taken at the central level (Indian Express, 2009a).

The second round of seat sharing talks between the Congress Party and the NCP were held in Mumbai in the presence of Mumbai Regional Congress Committee (MRCC) President Kripashankar Singh. Suggestions were taken from state and local level Congress leaders on the issues pertaining the alliance. However, the final seat sharing deal was announced in New Delhi further indicating the dynamic relationship between the central and the state unit where the state unit provided initial recommendations, but the final authority rest with the party's

[96]Interview with senior Congress member, February 25th 2016, Mumbai. The Congress member requested anonymity.

central branch (Indian Express, 2009b).[97]

When it came to important matters such as candidate selection at the regional level, the party denied a ticket to a senior state level candidate - Sunil Deshmukh - who was not only a sitting MLA, but also a Minister of State for Finance in the Maharashtra government. The party dropped his nomination despite the entire local Congress leadership rallying behind him (Despande, 2009). Instead of Sunil Deshmukh, the party fielded then President Pratibha Patils son - Rajendra Shekawat as well as the son of central level leader Vilasrao Deshmukh and daughter of Sushilkumar Shinde (Indian Express, 2009d). Although Vilasrao Deshmukh, Pratibha Patil and Sushilkumar Shinde had begun their political career in Maharashtra, they occupied various positions at the central level. Their closeness to the Congress Partys central command helped them secure nominations for their children or relatives. This is indicative of the centralisation within the party when it came to selecting candidates for the 2009 regional elections because the state-level unit was unable to secure nomination for regional elites even when they were strongly supported by local party workers. Consequently, Sunil Deshmukh left the party to contest as independent. He had the support of both the regional parties-Shiv Sena and the NCP-who did not field a candidate against him. In addition to Sunil Deshmukh, a total of 13 Congressmen left the party to contest for other parties or independents during the 2009 regional elections.

The Congress Party emerged as the single largest party in the aftermath of the 2009 Maharashtra regional elections with 82 seats in a 288 member assembly. Along with the party's alliance partner, the NCP (which had 62 seats), the Congress Party had a comfortable majority. This result motivated a senior

[97]Interview with Manikrao Thakre, 27th February 2016, Mumbai. Former president of the Congress state unit in Maharashtra. Currently, a member of the Maharashtra Legistative Council.

Congress state leader to urge the Congress Party to break the alliance with the NCP.[98] However, the party's central branch once again overruled the regional branch's calls to break the alliance (Bavadam, 2009). Newly elected Congress MLAs left the choice of the next Chief Minister to the party high command (central level) and party President Sonia Gandhi. The party's central level leaders, AK Antony, Digvijay Singh and K Rehman interacted with all the 82 elected legislators to seek their input and opinions on the post of the Chief Minister, but the decision was made by the party's central branch.[99] After long meetings at 10 Janpath (the official residence of Sonia Gandhi), senior party leaders AK Antony and Prithviraj Chavan told reporters that 51 year old Ashok Chavan would become the Congress Legislature Party leader in Maharashtra. The manner in which the Chief Minister was appointed by the party's central command, and especially at the official residence of the Congress Partys President, indicates the level of centralisation of authority within the party (Indian Express, 2009c).

The Maharashtra regional elections in 2014 were held in October, three months after the general elections. During the 2014 general elections, the BJP secured its first parliamentary majority at the national level where the Congress Party won only 44 seats (ECI, Statistical Reports). Out of the 48 parliamentary constituencies in Maharashtra, the Congress Party was able to win only two, the party's lowest ever tally in the state. As mentioned above, Maharashtra has been cited as a textbook example of Congress Party dominance. The party's poor performance at the national level coupled with the party's abysmal performance in the state increased the importance of the Maharashtra state unit during the 2014 Maharashtra regional elections.[100] Importantly, the timing of the Maharashtra regional elections, which were held just three months after the national elections, further

[98]Interview with Manikrao Thakre, 27th February 2016, Mumbai.
[99]Interview with Aslam Sheikh, February 24th 2016, Mumbai.
[100]Interview with Bharatkumar Raut, 12th February 2016, Mumbai.

undermined the party's central branch capacity to intervene in Maharashtra regional elections. The state-level leaders felt that the central branch's intervention would further hurt the party's electoral prospects in the state-level elections.[101] Prithviraj Chavan, Maharashtra's incumbent Chief Minister at that time, had a free hand in running the 2014 state electoral campaign (Indian Express, 2014b: 4). One important example that illustrates the state-level branch's dominance during the 2014 regional elections is the coalition dynamics that unfolded in the state.

The run-up to the 2014 Maharashtra regional elections was different from previous regional elections. The BJP state unit called off its 25 year alliance with Shiv Sena on the BJP's central branch's directive.[102] Without any pre-electoral alliance, the BJP and Shiv Sena were free to contest all of the 288 assembly seats whereas a pre-electoral alliance between the Congress Party and the NCP constrained the party from contesting all the assembly seats. This put immense pressure on the Congress Party and the NCP in Maharashtra to reconsider their alliance. Chief Minister Prithviraj Chavan claimed that the Congress Party agreed to call off its 15 year alliance with the NCP in order to avoid Congress Party members joining the BJP or Shiv Sena.[103] He argued that those politicians not selected for the Congress ticket would seek to join the BJP or Shiv Sena as they would have more seats to offer than the Congress Party. Even though the party's central branch, and in particularly Sonia Gandhi, was reluctant to break the electoral alliance with the NCP, the party's state unit unilaterally broke it. The party's state unit began preparing for a scenario in which they had to campaign in constituencies which were previously reserved for the NCP.[104] In the 2014 Maharashtra regional elections, the Congress Party contested 287 of the 288 seats as opposed to the pre-

[101]Interview with Prithviraj Chavan, April 6th 2016, Mumbai. Prithviraj Chavan, former Congress Maharashtra Chief Minister between 2010 and 2014.
[102]I have discussed this episode at length in the subsequent section on the BJP in Maharashtra.
[103]Interview with Prithviraj Chavan, April 6th 2016, Mumbai.
[104]Interview with Manikrao Thakre, 27th February 2016, Mumbai.

vious average of 163 seats. Here, it is important to note that the Congress state unit called off its alliance with NCP despite pressure from the central branch to maintain the state-level pact. However, this move by the Congress state unit proved to be very significant when it came to limiting defection away from the Congress state unit. Interviews with two senior Congress members confirm this. Two senior state-level Congress leaders revealed that if the Congress state unit followed the central branch's directive of maintaining alliance with the NCP, a number of Congress regional elites would have joined the BJP and/or the Shiv Sena. They argued that the break-up of the BJP and Shiv Sena alliance allowed them to have 'more seats on offer' for the Congress regional elites and their coterie of supporters. However, the Congress state unit prevented this by breaking its own alliance with the NCP and contested 287/288 assembly seats in Maharashtra.

6.2 Maharashtra BJP

At the national level, the BJP and its predecessor the BJS, had never exceeded 10 percent of the vote share before the 1989 general elections. The party had a marginal presence outside the Hindi heartland states of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Delhi, Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh. In Maharashtra, the BJP had a marginal presence before the early 1990s (Heath, 1999). Hansen argues that the BJP's marginal presence in Maharashtra is ironic in light of the overall evolution of the Hindu nationalist movement in the state. Maharashtra was the birthplace of the RSS, the cultural movement of which the BJP is the political wing (Hansen, 1998a). The RSS headquarters is still in Nagpur. For decades, the RSS recruited its cadres from the Chitpavan Brahmin community in Maharashtra. Despite this cultural presence, the BJP could not improve its electoral prospects in the state

until the early 1990s. In chapter 3 subsection 3.3.1, taking a contrary view to Hansen, I argued that the BJP's marginal presence in Maharashtra was a result of the lack of autonomy of the BJP state unit from the RSS. In Maharashtra, the Marathas were never attracted to a version of Hindu nationalism sold by the RSS. It is only when Hindu nationalism was construed with a distinctly vernacularized idiom of Maratha martiality with rustic values that the Maratha community became susceptible to Hindu nationalism. The lack of autonomy of the BJP state unit from the RSS meant that the BJP was never able to successfully tap into the growing discontent of the Maratha elites within the Congress Party. As mentioned above, the Shiv Sena was able to take advantage of the growing discontent of the Maratha elites within the Congress Party.

Prior to the 1990s regional elections, the BJP forged an alliance with the Shiv Sena. Pramod Mahajan, then the BJP's joint general secretary, was responsible for Maharashtra. In an interview with Hansen (1998a), Mahajan noted that:

> At this time (in 1984-85) the BJP could not anticipate what was happening in the Hindu mind [in Maharashtra], but the Shiv Sena was the first to see it. So Thackrey was the first person to go for the Hindu line. Slowly from 1985-87 Shiv Sena was solely in charge of the Hindu wave in the country. For the Shiv Sena it is very easy to assess the situation and take a line. But for me there is a long way to convince my leadership to go for it. Even having an alliance with Shiv Sena created a great debate in BJP and as I told you we were culturally different in many ways But my problem was that if I am not with the Shiv Sena then the Shiv Sena will slowly kill me and capture my entire constituency. If you cannot beat them you join them. It was a precise political expediency if you want.

Pramod Mahajan directed the BJP state unit to forge an alliance with the Shiv Sena. Many important BJP state leaders, who came from the RSS, were against this alliance as they regarded Shiv Sena as a 'crude, uncultured plebeian organisation', identical to the Congress Party, but with a militant Hindu nationalist image (Hansen, 1996). The BJP state leadership argued that Shiv Sena's commitment to Hindutva was shallow and opportunistic. Despite these inhibitions, Pramod Mahajan went ahead with the alliance. Pramod Mahajan hailed from the state of Maharashtra but was an important central level BJP leader. He held important central level positions in the BJP and until his death, was the biggest financier for the entire BJP, and not just of the BJP state unit in Maharashtra.[105]

The BJP-Shiv Sena alliance came second behind the Congress Party in the 1990s regional elections in Maharashtra. The BJP contested 104 seats and ended up winning 42 whereas the Shiv Sena contested 183 seats winning only 10 more seats than the BJP with a total of 52 seats (ECI, Statistical Reports). This prompted a number of BJP state-level leaders to break the alliance with Shiv Sena. A number of BJP state leaders blamed the loss on Shiv Sena's campaigning methods. For example, Ram Naik a prominent BJP state level leader argued that the use of Hindutva rhetoric and the communal slant in the party's election campaigns should be downplayed in the future (Hansen, 1998a). Many Shiv Sena candidates overtly employed religious themes in election campaigns which helped the Congress Party file legal suits against a number of Shiv Sena candidates demanding de-recognition of their candidature on the grounds that they were violating the restrictions on employing religious themes in election campaigns.

Despite the cautious attitude of the BJP state level leadership over its alliance with Shiv Sena, the BJP's central leadership directed the party to go ahead with

[105]Interview with Bharatkumar Raut, 12th February 2016, Mumbai.

the alliance for the 1995 Maharashtra regional elections. The alliance was able to secure 138 seats in these elections with Shiv Sena winning 74 seats and the BJP winning 64 (ECI, Statistical reports). The alliance was able to form the state government with help from a number of independent candidates. The differences between the BJP and the Shiv Sena came into sharp focus when they were in power. The BJP's central leadership, and particularly L. K Advani, announced the creation of a separate Vidarbha state prior to the elections. This would have been a new state carved out from the existing territory of Maharashtra. Through the 1980s, the BJP had gradually built up considerable strength and a dense political network in Vidarbha. Much of the party's rank and file in the state came from this region. The BJP's strength in the state depended upon the support from this region. However, the party, and particularly Advani, had to defer the issue of Vidarbha's formation for two years, respecting Thackreys (Shiv Sena leader) wishes. Advani personally gave a statement underlining how the BJP would not take up the Vidarbha issue (Rattani and Koppakiar, 1995). He went against the wishes of the BJP's state unit who underlined the importance of the issue in helping the party win support in the region and the state.

Similarly, the BJP had fought the regional elections by concentrating the campaign on Congress-corruption in the cooperative sector and critiqued the Pawar-led Congress of 'selling out' the state of Maharashtra to multinationals, such as the large American power company Enron (Hansen, 1998a). However, the attitude to foreign investments proved to be a major point of contention between the BJP and Shiv Sena and also between the BJP's central branch and the party's state unit. Soon after the formation of the new Maharashtra government in the aftermath of the 1995 regional elections, the new cabinet announced that the new government would not reverse the economic policies of the previous government. This view was supported by Pramod Mahajan and Balasaheb Thackeray, Shiv Sena's leader.

However, many in the BJP's state level leadership felt that the Enron project and other deals with multinationals would result in the 'foreign exploitation' of the Indian consumer. Despite the objections from the BJP's state level leadership, the Maharashtra government went ahead with the Enron project and other deals with multinational firms, albeit with modifications (Hansen, 1998b).

A number of key BJP state-level leaders left the party because of the central branch's intervention over the above issues. In Vidharbha, BJP legislator Bhola Bhadel left the party to contest as an independent. Others like Vilas Khodap, Govindrao Chaudhari, Nanaji Kokre, Purshottam Rajguru, and Dr. Vimaltai Mundala contested under NCP's banner in protest of the BJP's central branch's intervention in state-level affairs.

Incumbency in Maharashtra not only opened up opportunities for conflict between the BJP and Shiv Sena, but also within the party's state unit vis-a-vis the party's central branch. However, until Pramod Mahajan's death, the central branch of the BJP maintained tight control of the state unit. Gopinath Munde, deputy Chief Minister of the Maharashtra government between 1995 and 1999, was not only a close associate of Pramod Mahajan but was also married to his younger sister, making Munde Pramod Mahajan's brother in law. Deviating from the BJP's national campaign strategy of not allowing the state-level leadership to declare Chief Ministerial candidates prior to the elections, Munde was able to project himself as the next Chief Minister of the state upon Pramod Mahajan's behest.[106] Importantly, the party's state unit was able to take on board Munde's suggestion for simultaneous regional and national elections in 1999. After the internal defections within the Congress Party (with the exit of Sharad Pawar and his followers), Munde predicted a victory for the BJP's state unit in the state

[106]Interview with Raj Purohit, BJP MLA presenting the Colaba constituency, 26th February 2016, Mumbai. He was a chief whip of the BJP's legislative party in the Maharashtra assembly.

elections if they coincided with the national elections (Anandan, 1999).

Despite a split in the Congress Party at the state-level in 1999, the Congress Party emerged as the single largest party with 75 seats in the state assembly (ECI, Statistical Reports). Together with the splinter NCP, the Congress Party was able to form the state government in Maharashtra. However, at the national level, the BJP led a coalition of twenty-four non-polity-wide parties to form the national government (Adeney and Saez, 2005). This meant that the BJP state unit was out of power when the party's central branch had access to political power at the national level.[107]

The BJP's central branch approached the 2004 general elections in the hope of a major victory (Wilkinson, 2005). In 2004, India was enjoying near record economic growth rates, and Indians consistently told pollsters that the BJP Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee was the person they most wanted as the prime minister (Roy and Wallace, 2007b). But, to everyone's surprise, the Congress Party won the general elections albeit with capturing only 27 percent vote share and 145 of the 543 seats in the parliament (ECI, Statistical Reports). Senior BJP leaders and party activists blamed Pramod Mahajan's decision to use a technologically advanced and media savy election campaign for the party's loss in the national elections. The Maharashtra state elections in 2004 became his one chance of regaining his position at the BJP's central level. In the run-up to the Maharashtra regional elections, Mahajan went on a *Parivartan Yatra* (literally meaning transformation journey) covering all the districts of Maharashtra. He campaigned extensively in the state holding rallies across urban and rural Maharashtra (Sahgal, 2004). In this way, he took all the matters pertaining to the Maharashtra regional election

[107]In chapter 7, I will show how this different incumbency arrangement within the same party explains the differences in the level of autonomy for the regional branch.

in his own hands limiting inputs from the BJP state unit.[108] Predictably, important BJP state-level leaders left the party to contest elections for other political parties. A total of 10 BJP politicians left the party. Importantly, two senior state-level BJP legislators, Hemandra Mehta who represented Borivali constituency and Kisanrao Kale, who represented Sillod constituency, contested as independents.

The BJP-Shiv Sena alliance lost the 2004 Maharashtra regional elections. The Congress Party was able to capture 69 seats while the Congress Party's alliance partner, the NCP, captured 71 seats. In contrast, the BJP ended up winning 54 seats with the party's alliance partner, Shiv Sena with 62 seats (ECI, Statistical Reports). The party's loss in the regional and national elections in 2004 prompted a number of state level BJP leaders to seek more autonomy vis-a-vis the central branch.[109] Furthermore, the Maharashtra 2009 regional elections were held in the aftermath of the 2009 general elections in which the BJP-led coalition was defeated at the national level. The Congress Party not only improved its seat tally in the 2009 general elections but also reversed the anti-incumbency in India. A number of scholars have underlined how India was the only country where it was statistically better to be a challenger than an incumbent (Uppal, 2009; Ravishankar, 2009; Linden, 2004). Hence, the BJP's loss in the 2009 general elections opened up opportunities for other state-level leaders to seek more autonomy from the party's central branch.

The 2009 Maharashtra regional elections followed the constituency delimitation process where a number of boundaries of the previous constituencies were changed. This motivated the BJP and its coalition partner, Shiv Sena, to renegotiate the seat sharing agreement. For example, after the delimitation process, the percent-

[108]Interview with Bharatkumar Raut, 12th February 2016, Mumbai.

[109]In chapter 7, I use the changing incumbency pattern across the two levels to explain the different levels of intra-party autonomy for the regional branch.

age of the Marathi speaking population sharply increased in some constituencies in Mumbai. This prompted the Shiv Sena to stake claim to some constituencies which were previously contested by the BJP. However, the BJP reacted sharply. The BJP Mumbai city unit chief Gopal Shetty claimed that "under no circumstance will we concede this seat to anyone. This will be one of the 13 seats that the party [BJP] is planning to contest [in Mumbai]" (Times of India, 2009e). In addition, then BJP state general secretary, Vinod Tawde, said that the party's state election committee has finalised 60 to 65 names for recommendation to the central leadership as candidates for the polls (Times of India, 2009a). However, this claim was refuted by state BJP President Nitin Gadkari claiming that the central level was not intervening in the candidate selection issue. Gadkari claimed that the candidate list was prepared by the state level, which was then approved by the central level (Times of India, 2009b). Another evidence that highlights how candidate selection was reserved by the state level is when the party faced resignation from important state level leaders, such as Vinay Natu, three time sitting MLA from Guhagar seat. It was the state leadership headed by Nitin Gadkari, that convinced the rebels not to contest as independents (Times of India, 2009d). In the past, Pramod Mahajan was brought in from the central level in order to contain defections by state level BJP politicians. After Mahajan's death in May 2006, the party's central branch lost a key negotiator to maintain a hold on the party's state unit in Maharashtra.

However, it was a different story when it came campaigning and canvassing for the party. The main list of campaigners submitted by the party to the ECI was lead by the central leadership. Heading the list was former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. The party relied on Vajpayee's image even after his retirement from active politics in December 2005 (Bavadam and Katakam, 2009). In addition to Vajpayee, the party relied on other central leaders such as L.K.Advani, Rajnath

Singh and Arun Jaitley to campaign in the elections (Times of India, 2009c). As argued in the theory chapter 4, when campaigning and canvassing are focused on the central level leadership then the overall autonomy of the state level is low as opposed to when the state-level leadership is the primary focus of the electoral campaign.

To summarise, the BJP state unit had higher levels of autonomy during the 2009 regional elections compared to previous state elections.[110] The defeat of the party at the national and state level in 2004 prompted the BJP's state unit to demand more autonomy from the party's central branch. Furthermore, the BJP central branch's influence diminished after the death of its key negotiator, Pramod Mahajan. This enabled state-level leaders such as Gopinath Munde to fill the leadership vacuum. Despite this, the party's central branch had a key role when it came to campaigning and canvassing for the state elections. The party was banking on Atal Bihari Vajpayee's charisma to garner votes and support even for the regional elections. This strategy did not help the BJP defeat the Congress Party-NCP alliance in the 2009 Maharashtra regional elections.

The defeat of the BJP in the 2009 Maharashtra regional elections led to growing demands within the party to seek more autonomy from the party's central branch. But the events leading up to the 2014 general elections changed the political context.[111] The BJP won its first ever parliamentary majority at the national level. Narendra Modi spearheaded the election campaign giving the electoral contest a quasi-presidential style feel (Tillin, 2015). A number of scholars have underlined how the BJP won the 2014 elections because of Narendra Modi's charisma and his ability to win votes across caste and community lines (Jaffrelot, 2015; Chhibber

[110]Interview with Ameet Satam, BJP MLA representing Andheri West, 16th February 2016, Mumbai.

[111]Once again, I have explored this scenario in chapter 7 where I explain the reasons behind the different levels of intra-party autonomy.

and Ostermann, 2014). The huge mandate received by the party at the national level coupled with the predominance of Narendra Modi and his electoral team at the helm of the BJP's central level increased central branch's intervention in state-level affairs especially in regions where the BJP was not incumbent.[112] Maharashtra was one such state. Furthermore, the Maharashtra state elections in 2014 were held only three months after the general elections. The aura generated by Narendra Modi in the 2014 general elections had not died down by the 2014 Maharashtra regional elections.

For example, during the 2014 regional elections, the BJP embarked on an ambitious campaign titled *Muluk Maidan*. It would hold 300 rallies across 288 constituencies in Maharashtra (Khapre, 2014a: 4). It invited 53 leaders, many of whom were either Union ministers or BJP Chief Ministers of other states. Prime Minister Modi personally held at least 22 rallies in Maharashtra. Importantly, the BJP national general secretary in charge of Maharashtra, Rajiv Pratap Rudy, coordinated Modi's rallies (Despande, 2014: 9). The BJP made Narendra Modi the party's face for the assembly polls. This was also reflected in the campaigns organised by opponent parties. Leaders of the opposition parties targeted Modi instead of highlighting local state level issues or the state level leadership of the BJP (Khapre, 2014b: 3). Political analysts and commentators argued that the BJP solely depended on Prime Minister Modi's image to carry the party forward. The stakes were very high for the Prime Minister, for the results were to be seen an indicator for how far the wave of support that swept the BJP to power in the general elections had been sustained.

Second, when it came to the autonomy of the state unit in dealing with Shiv

[112]Interview with Achyut Yagnik, Ahmedabad, Gujarat, 2nd April 2016. An intellectual of Gujarati politics and history, he is also a honorary secretary of SETU, a social organisation in Ahmedabad, Gujarat.

Sena, the BJP fought the 2014 regional elections without any pre-electoral alliance with Shiv Sena. The negotiations that unfolded prior to the elections helps us evaluate the power dynamics within the BJP. The main aim of this exercise is not to evaluate why the alliance, which was formed in 1989, broke apart prior to the 2014 regional elections, but to understand the distribution of power within the BJP through the coalition negotiations between the BJP state unit and Shiv Sena.

The BJP's central leader in charge of Maharashtra, Rajiv Pratap Rudy was involved in talks with Shiv Sena (Indian Express, 2014d: 2). Alongside Rudy, central BJP leader O P Mathur, held negotiations with the alliance partner (Indian Express, 2014a: 3). Both Rajiv Pratap Rudy and O P Mathur were directed by the BJP central leadership, particularly Prime Minister Narendra Modi and party President Amit Shah (Indian Express, 2014c: 2). Media sources reported that Prime Minister Narendra Modi left the decision [whether to break the alliance or not] to O P Mathur [BJPs central leader in charge of Maharashtra]. My interviewees also confirmed that it was Narendra Modi's and BJP President Amit Shah's decision to call off the alliance with Shiv Sena.

The BJP emerged as the single largest party with 122 seats in a 288 member assembly. However, soon after the election, the divide in the state party unit became evident. 39 of its 44 MLAs from the Vidarbha region of Maharashtra took a flight from Mumbai to Nagpur and asked Union Minister and former party President Nitin Gadkari to take over as Chief minister. Media sources reported this manoeuvre was an assertion of strength by Gadkari, who wanted to send a strong message to the central leadership, especially Modi and Amit Shah, about his dominance in the state (Despande and Khapre, 2014b: 2). However, two days after Gadkari's show of strength, the BJP central leadership cleared the way for

state party chief Devendra Fadnavis name as the next Chief Minister of the state (Despande and Khapre, 2014a: 1).

The superiority of the BJP's central branch is also confirmed by Gilles Verniers in his detailed account of the BJP's electoral strategy for the state-assembly elections that followed the 2014 general election in India. Maharashtra is one of his important case studies in the report. The report underlines the weakness of BJP's state-level leadership in every aspect of election management. Verniers (2015) reports that

> Centralisation is a common feature of political parties in India, but generally the ticket distribution exercise consists of creating balances between castes and factional representation. In the case of the BJP, the practice has been a brutal top-down imposition of the high commands wishes..In fact, the party high command took the opportunity of these elections to discard the deadwood-putting aside all aspiring candidates with a history of losing-and to side-line local leaders.

The report clearly underlines the low levels of autonomy for the Maharashtra BJP branch prior to the 2014 regional elections.

6.3 Maharashtra Party system

In Table 6.3 below, I summarise the evidence provided in the previous two sections. In the previous two sections, I presented evidence that helped assess the level of autonomy within the BJP and the Congress Party for each regional election since

the 1990s regional elections. Table 6.3 summarises this evidence in the form of high or low level of autonomy for the BJP and the Congress Party. Table 6.3 also includes additional information in terms of the party (or a coalition of parties) responsible for forming the state government, vote and seat share of the two main polity-wide parties, and aggregate total of both the parties. I summarise evidence from the 1990s up until the 2014 Maharashtra regional elections.

Table 6.3: Summarising the level of autonomy within the BJP and the Congress Party, Maharashtra 1990-2014

Maharashtra Election Year	State governments	BJP Level of autonomy	Congress Level of autonomy	BJP voteshare (%)	BJP seatshare (%)	Congress voteshare (%)	Congress seatshare (%)	Polity-wide parties voteshare (%)	Polity-wide seatshare (%)
1990	Congress	Low	High	10.7	14.8	38.18	48.9	48.8	63.7
1995	BJP + Shiv Sena	Low	High	12.8	22.5	31	27.7	43.8	50.2
1999	Congress + NCP	Low	Low	14.5	19.4	27.2	26	41.7	45.4
2004	Congress + NCP	Low	Low	13.4	18.3	20.9	23.6	34.3	41.9
2009	Congress + NCP	Low	Low	14	15.9	20.9	28.4	34.9	44.3
2014	BJP + Shiv Sena	Low	High	27.8	42.3	17.9	14.5	45.7	56.8

As mentioned above, the Maharashtra Congress case was cited as a textbook example of Congress Party supremacy at the state-level in India. In this chapter, I have provided further empirical evidence to show how the Maharashtra state unit had autonomy for the 1990 and 1995 Maharashtra regional elections. When the party at the state-level had autonomy, it did not prevent politicians from defecting, but it did stop the defection of regional political elites. However, when elites in the Congress Party did not get autonomy, they decided to join or form non-polity-wide parties. Elites decided to join or form non-polity-wide parties in Maharashtra because the opposing polity-wide party had low levels of autonomy. As Table 6.3 demonstrates, the BJP in Maharashtra consistently had low levels of autonomy. Therefore, when Congress elites did not get the level of autonomy over their regional branch, they decided to form or join non-polity-wide parties. The example of Sharad Pawar illustrates this process. As described above, the events leading up to the 1999 regional elections created a number of leadership changes in the central branch of the Congress Party. For example, Sonia Gandhi's ascendancy at the central level of the Congress Party brought back the control of the central branch over the Congress state units. Sharad Pawar, a factional Maharashtra Congress leader, was particularly unhappy with this change, and decided to form his own party prior to the 1999 Maharashtra regional elections. In this thesis, I have argued that one of the main reasons why Sharad Pawar decided to form his own party is because the BJP in Maharashtra did not have high levels of autonomy from the party's central branch. The Maharashtra BJP unit was in the firm grip of Pramod Mahajan, a central level BJP leader. In the presence of Pramod Mahajan, it was unlikely that Sharad Pawar would enjoy high levels of autonomy over the state branch. At this point, I wish to draw a parallel with Maharashtrian political history. I have discussed at length in chapter 3 how the Maharashtra Congress enjoyed high-levels of autonomy during Nehru's leadership of the Congress central branch. Soon after Nehru's death, Indira Gandhi took

control of the Congress Party central branch. She reformed the party's internal structure by tightening her grip over the party's state units. The loss of autonomy did motivate many Congress regional elites to join other regional parties. The BJP was not an attractive option for many Congress regional elites because of its subservient position to the RSS. Similarly, in the late 1990s, the BJP was not an attractive option for Sharad Pawar because of the lower levels of autonomy enjoyed by the state unit. This is in contrast to what happened in Gujarat. In Gujarat, the BJP was able to accommodate Congress regional elites when they left the Congress Party because of Indira Gandhi's centralisation drives. Post-1990s Gujarat consistently had a single autonomous polity-wide party regional branch[113] whereas post-1990s Maharashtra did not consistently have an autonomous polity-wide party regional branch. This is the key difference that explains why polity-wide parties dominate the Gujarat party system but not the Maharashtrian one.

[113]One exception is the 1998 regional elections.

Chapter 7

Explaining party organisational variations

7.1 Introduction

In the previous chapters, I have shown how a polity-wide party's internal structure, or organisation, has a strong influence on the sub-national party system. Building on recent work on party organisation (Chandra, 2004; Chhibber et al., 2014; Ziegfeld, 2016b: 158), I argue that polity-wide parties dominate the sub-national level if a single regional branch of a polity-wide party has autonomy. Once we establish the importance of intra-party autonomy, it is important to understand what leads to differing levels of intra-party autonomy. Understanding the origins of different levels of intra-party autonomy at the sub-national level will in turn enhance our knowledge of why different party systems exist. The existing literature on party organisational variation in India has exclusively fo-

cused on the national level or on single party case studies (Brass, 1964; Weiner, 1967; Kochanek, 1968; Kochanek, 2002; Roy, 1966; Graham, 1990; Jaffrelot, 2002; Manor, 2005; Guichard, 2013). I argue that this approach needs to be revisited. A focus on the national level is carried out at the expense of the sub-national level in a multi-level polity such as India (Yadav and Palshikar, 2009a). In this chapter, I wish to move towards a comparative framework at the sub-national level in India. Drawing from literature on party organisations in multi-level settings (Fabre, 2008; Fabre, 2011; Thorlakson, 2009; Fabre and Swenden, 2013), this study is the first, of which I am aware, to comparatively explain party organisational variations at the sub-national level in India.

An influential body of scholarship has underlined the importance of the type of federation on explaining different levels of intra-party autonomy cross-nationally (Swenden, 2006; Thorlakson, 2009; Renzsch, 2001). Similarly, others have underlined the importance of electoral systems in explaining intra-party autonomy variations (Swenden and Maddens, 2009: 21). But, what explains the variation within a country sharing the same federal structure with identical rules of electoral competition? By employing the sub-national research design (Snyder, 2001), this chapter is able to move beyond the macro-political variables such as federalism and electoral systems to evaluate and assess the merits of micro-contextual variables, such as incumbency, internal party features, sub-nationalism, the timing of regional elections, and the nature of regional party system on the different levels of intra-party autonomy within two major polity-wide parties - the Congress Party and the BJP - in India.

Using a focused comparison between Gujarat and Maharashtra in this chapter, I find that political factors, such as incumbency, help explain all three forms of party organisational variation i.e. inter-party within a state, intra-party across

states and finally intra-party within a state but at different time points. The capacity of the central branch to constrain autonomy of the sub-national branches increases in periods of central branch's incumbency at the central level and diminishes in periods of opposition, especially if the regional branch is in power at the regional level.

7.2 Incumbency Explanation

Earlier studies on party organisation in India have placed greater emphasis on the personalities of leaders either at the central or the state-level in implicitly explaining why political parties might have different levels of intra-party autonomy (Kochanek, 1968; Guichard, 2013; Chhibber et al., 2014). For example, Chhibber et al. argue that 'the organisation of a party at the state-level depends on the political aspiration of the local, state and national leadership and the interactions between them.' (2014: 494). While it is true that leadership strength explains why some state units experience lower or high levels of autonomy over time, this explanation misses a key underlying mechanism behind what drives leadership strength. I argue that leaders within a party derive their strength from incumbency.[114] Access to political power, key governmental resources and policy-making influence increases the power of leaders either at the central or the state level. Incumbency is particularly important in a context dominated by clientelism (Chandra, 2004: 132) as it provides access to patronage resources, which could be used for electoral advantage. Therefore, if either of the party's branch has access to valuable governmental resources while the other does not, then this will play an important role in mediating the power dynamics within the party.

[114]Here, it is important to mention that I am only referring to incumbency advantage within the party hierarchy, and not incumbency as an advantage in elections.

By incumbency I specifically mean the presence of the party's central or regional branch in office either at the central or state level. This renders four possible scenarios where either the (1) party's central and regional branch is in office, (2) only the party's regional branch is in office while party's central branch is in opposition, (3) the party's central branch is in office while the party's regional branch is in opposition, and (4) the party's central and regional branch are in opposition (Swenden and Maddens, 2009: 22; Fabre and Swenden, 2013: 346-347; Mendez-Lago, 2005; Leon-Alfonso, 2007).

Table 7.1: Combination matrix government and opposition for polity-wide parties

	Central branch in government	Central branch in opposition
Regional branch in government	Scenario 1	Scenario 2
Regional branch in opposition	Scenario 3	Scenario 4

Maddens and Swenden 2009

Scenario 2 and Scenario 3 are relatively easy to explain. If the polity-wide party's central branch is in office at the central level, but the regional branch is in opposition at the state-level (Scenario 3 in Table 7.1 above), then the autonomy of the regional branch will be severely limited. In contrast, the regional branch is able to extract more autonomy if it holds power at the state-level while the polity-wide party at the central level is in opposition (Scenario 2 in Table 7.1 above). The assumption being that incumbency brings with it benefits and resources.[115] While the above scenarios are easy to explain, it is more difficult to explain when both the branches of the polity-wide parties are in power or in opposition at the respective (national or state) levels (Scenario 1 and Scenario 4 in Table 7.1 above). Swenden and Maddens (2009: 22) argue that polity-wide party

[115]It is true that incumbency also invites criticism and increases the opportunities for failure and mismanagement, but these are more of a concern when looking at incumbency advantage (and disadvantage) for elections as opposed to the benefits attached to incumbency within the party hierarchy.

may constrain autonomy of the regional branch when both the branches are in power (Scenario 1). This is because internal party disagreements could generate genuine policy disagreements and produce deadlock or contradictory public and party policies. Conversely, Swenden and Maddens argue that the autonomy of the regional branch is highest when the polity-wide party and its regional branches occupy the opposition benches at both the levels (Scenario 4). This is because the party sees benefits in allowing the regional branch to deviate in developing policies and platforms specific to the region which do not necessarily hurt the party at the national level when it is in opposition. However, these observations by Swenden and Maddens assume politics to be structured around a programmatic basis, where political parties win votes and seats based on their policy platforms. I argue that in a polity dominated by clientelistic politics, the autonomy of the regional branch is dependent on how centralised the polity is. The internal divisions of authority within a party will reflect the institutional set up of the polity (Len, 2014) and political opportunities available on monopolising it. When power is politically and economically centralised at the central-level, regional branch autonomy is low when the party's branches are in power at the national and the state level (i.e. Scenario 1). This is because the material benefits of incumbency are clearly in favour of the central branch as opposed to the regional branch.

When both the branches of a polity-wide party are in power, relations between the levels will be affected by whether they are obliged to share the benefits of incumbency with other political parties who serve as important coalition members. During coalition politics, polity-wide parties often have to share the payoffs associated with being in government with coalition members (Ziegfeld, 2012: 76). They lose their monopoly over vital governmental power and resources. Therefore, when both the levels of polity-wide parties are in power, regional branch autonomy will be conditional on whether either level requires support from coalition parties

to remain in power.

Similarly, I argue that the regional branch autonomy is also low when the party's branches are in opposition at both levels (Scenario 4) in a polity which is politically and economically centralised. Scenario 4 is best explained in light of the following assumption. I assume that the central branch is always keen to intervene in state-level affairs, and constrain the autonomy of its regional branch. However, if the regional branch is in power where the central branch is in opposition, state-level leaders can prevent central interventions by threatening to defect if the central branch does not stop intervening. The fear of mass defection by incumbent state level leaders, which could lead to the fall of the government, compels the central branch to give autonomy to its regional branches. However, when both the branches are in opposition, the state-level branch does not have the incumbency bargaining chip to prevent the central branch from intervening in state-level party affairs.

Despite increasing political and economic decentralisation in India since the July 1991 economic reforms, the central level in India still holds more power than the state-level (Chhibber, 2009: 58; Kailash, 2011b). As Yadav and Palshikar (2009a: 56) succinctly put it,

> the institutional arrangement put in place by the Constitution loads the distribution of power in favour of the central government. Arguably, the central government has gain in power and economic clout precisely in the period when state politics has gained greater autonomy.

Therefore, in this thesis, I argue that the central branch is able to constrain

the autonomy of its regional branches in instances when they are both in power and in opposition.[116]

7.3 Alternative Explanations

Incumbency is not the only explanation that deals with explaining different levels of autonomy within polity-wide parties, the comparative politics literature has also emphasised the role of internal party features, sub-nationalism, the economic independence of the state, the nature of the regional party system, and finally, the role of election timing in accounting for differences in the levels of autonomy within polity-wide parties.

1 Internal party features: Existing scholarship in comparative politics (Hopkin, 2009) has underlined the importance of 'party centred' accounts in providing an understanding of how parties devolve autonomy to their sub-national units. In other words, regional branch autonomy is predominantly shaped by the party's historical strength in a region, the timing of incorporation of social groups into the political processes, and the parties' development of a strong social base. These factors can exert a path dependent

[116]In a multi-level setting it is possible that some sub-national units have more political and economic autonomy in comparison to others. This is referred to as an asymmetric form of federalism (Swenden and Maddens, 2009: 17). In this case, when the regional and central branches of polity-wide parties are in power or in opposition at their respective levels of government, regional branch autonomy is high in sub-national units that have constitutionally autonomous decision making authority. When it comes to the constitutional set-up within India, it is true that some regions or states have more powers than others. This is also referred to as asymmetric form of federation. India is often regarded as an example of an asymmetric form of federation with regard to Jammu and Kashmir or the North Eastern states (Adeney, 2007; Tillin, 2007; Stepan et al., 2011). In contrast, rest of the states or regions have a constitutionally symmetric relationship with the centre. Therefore, when both the branches are in power or in opposition at their respective levels, polity-wide parties are able to constrain autonomy of their regional branches in states which have a greater extra constitutionally mandated powers.

effect (Panebianco, 1988; Ware, 1996) whereby differences in historical support for the party across different regions can explain why polity-wide parties have different levels of autonomy across different sub-national units. First, it could be argued that the Congress Party organisation is able to seek more autonomy in those sub-national units which were directly governed by the British-colonial government as opposed to the princely ruled states. This is because the British-colonial government introduced elections in their jurisdiction, which helped the Congress Party spread its organisation in directly British-governed provinces as opposed to the princely-ruled ones. The post-independent elections held in 1952 were the very first elections for those places which fell under the princely domain. As argued in chapter 3, the post-linguistic reorganisation of the country meant that most boundaries were changed resulting a complex mixture of directly and princely governed territories at the state-level.

As mentioned above, both Gujarat and Maharashtra contain significant population that were part of contrasting jurisdictions. Nevertheless, one could argue that intra-state differences in Congress Party strength in the post-independence period within Gujarat and Maharashtra could be explained by whether the particular constituency was part of former British-governed or princely-governed jurisdiction. However, the British versus princely state distinction cannot explain inter-state differences. Second, in chapter 3, I have discussed at length how the Congress Party had a strong presence in both Gujarat and Maharashtra in the post-independence period. The Congress Party was responsible for forming most state governments up until the 1995 regional elections in both the states. Of course, it is true that the manner in which the Congress built its supremacy was specific to the regional environment in them. However, the regional environment in both the states did not prevent the party in building large intra-party coalitions

that helped the party win simple majorities in both the states. Unlike the Congress Party, the BJP was a minor player in both Gujarat and Maharashtra prior to the early 1990s. The BJP began to increase its presence in Gujarat and Maharashtra by forming pre-electoral alliances in the post-1989 period. In Gujarat, the BJP formed a pre-electoral alliance with the Janata Dal whereas in Maharashtra it formed a pre-electoral alliance with Shiv Sena. In sum, prior to 1989, party systems of Gujarat and Maharashtra were similar with a dominant Congress Party and a minor BJP. Therefore, I argue that internal party features is not a very convincing explanation that helps account for the different levels of intra-party and inter-party autonomy within and across the two states in the post-1990s period.

2 Sub-nationalism: the variation in the levels of intra-party autonomy could be explained by whether the regions are culturally different from the polity as whole (Fabre, 2008; Hopkin and Van Houten, 2009). In states where the level of sub-nationalism is low, polity-wide parties will find it less necessary to tolerate regional branch autonomy in comparison to those regions with strong sense of sub-nationalism. Both Gujarat and Maharashtra were formed as a result of the linguistic agitation representing a culturally distinct identity from the polity as a whole. Also, as described above, both Gujarat and Maharashtra display remarkably high levels of sub-nationalism. Therefore, I argue that sub-nationalism is not a convincing explanation when it comes to accounting for the differing levels of intra-party and inter-party autonomy within and across the two states.

3 Economic leverage: Diwakar (2010) argues that it is not just centre-led decentralisation that affects party systems at the state-level, but the state's dependence on the centre for economic help. The same argument can be interpreted when evaluating the internal organisational dynamics within the

parties. It could be argued that regional branches of polity-wide parties in regions that have strong economic leverage over the centre are more likely to extract autonomy from their central branch as opposed to those regional branches of polity-wide parties in regions which are economically impoverished. Both Gujarat and Maharashtra have undergone high levels of industrialisation and economic growth in comparison to other Indian states. As mentioned above, when it comes to their economic leverage, both the states reflect high levels of it from the central level. In sum, I argue that economic leverage argument is unable to account for the differing levels of intra-party autonomy within and across the two states.

4 Nature of the regional party system: As argued by Fabre and Swenden (2013: 346), the nature of party competition is another important factor that affects the organisation of polity-wide parties. In regions where the party system is nationalised i.e. where effective competition is between polity-wide parties, polity-wide parties find it easy to constrain autonomy of their regional branches. On the other hand, where the regional party system is weakly nationalised i.e. where polity-wide parties face competition from regional parties, polity-wide parties find it difficult to constrain autonomy of its subnational branches. As argued by Swenden and Toubeau (2013), pressures created by regional parties are the "key proximate source of change that force mainstream (or polity-wide) parties into adapting a clear territorial strategy". It is true that Swenden and Toubeau's focus of study was autonomy at the polity-level as opposed to the intra-party level. However, I would extend Swenden and Toubeau's explanation to the intra-party level, and argue that polity-wide parties face pressures generated by regional parties both at the polity and the intra-party level. I explore this explanation in the endogeneity section (See section 7.5).

5 Lastly, regional branch autonomy is also affected by the *timing* of regional elections (Deschouwer, 2006). This is because a polity-wide party may feel more inclined to constrain the level of regional branch autonomy if the election result may be interpreted as a popularity test for the central government (Fabre and Swenden, 2013: 346; Jeffery and Hough, 2003). Regional branch autonomy is often constrained when general and regional elections coincide and when they are held closer to the general elections as opposed to when regional elections are held further away from the general elections.

7.4 Intra-party autonomy for the Congress Party and the BJP in Gujarat and Maharashtra

In chapter 5 and 6, I classified the levels of autonomy for the BJP and the Congress Party in both the states from the 1990s up until the last regional election till 2014. Table 7.2 below presents the classification for both the parties in both the states.[117]

Table 7.2: Intra-party autonomy across Gujarat and Maharashtra, 1990-2014

Election Year	Gujarat BJP	Gujarat Congress Party	Election Year	Maharashtra BJP	Maharashtra Congress Party
1990	High	High	1990	Low	High
1995	High	Low	1995	Low	High
1998	Low	Low	1999	Low	Low
2002	High	High	2004	Low	Low
2007	High	Low	2009	Low	Low
2012	High	Low	2014	Low	High

Prima facie, Table 7.2 above reflects three forms of intra-party autonomy variations; inter-party within a state, intra-party across two states, and intra-party over time within a state. In order to explain them I empirically seek to answer three questions: (1) why does the Gujarat BJP unit consistently have more autonomy vis-a-vis the Gujarat Congress state unit, (2) why does the Gujarat BJP unit have

[117]Classification in Table 7.2 is based on chapters 5 and 6

more autonomy vis-a-vis the Maharashtra BJP unit, and (3) why does the Maharashtra Congress state unit have more autonomy up until the 1995 Maharashtra regional elections, but not thereafter?

When it comes to answering the first empirical question (1) it is important to stress that the Gujarat BJP has been incumbent at the state-level since 1995. Except a brief sixteen month interlude when Shankarsinh Vaghela defected from the BJP to form a government led by his AIRJP. During the same time period, the party's central branch was not in power at the central level except for a short period in 1996 and between 1998 and 2004. The BJP central branch's incumbency at the central level, coupled with the Gujarat BJP's opposition prior to the 1998 regional elections, explains why the Gujarat BJP unit had lower levels of autonomy prior to the 1998 Gujarat regional elections. In contrast to the 1998 regional elections, the Gujarat BJP's incumbency coupled with the BJP's central branch's opposition explains why the Gujarat BJP unit has consistently had high levels of autonomy. In addition, since the early 2000s, Gujarat regional elections are held in between the general election cycle. When regional elections are held in between the general election cycle, the regional branch is able to extract more autonomy from the party's central branch. The regional branch's incumbency coupled with the timing of Gujarat regional elections explains why the Gujarat BJP unit has higher levels of autonomy in the post-2000s.

The incumbency factor and timing of Gujarat regional elections also explain the high levels of autonomy for the Gujarat Congress unit (see Table 7.2 above) prior to the 1990s Gujarat regional elections. The Gujarat state unit under Madhavsinh Solanki received a historical mandate in the 1985 Gujarat regional elections. It won 149 of the 182 seats in the legislative assembly. The party's historical mandate in the 1985 regional elections coupled with the Congress Party defeat at the national

level between 1989 and 1991 explains the Gujarat Congress unit high levels of autonomy during the 1990 regional elections. Importantly, the 1990s Gujarat regional elections were held in between the general election at the national level. But, since the 1995 regional elections, the Gujarat Congress unit has consistently been in opposition at the state-level whereas the Congress Party's central branch has only been in opposition between 1998 and 2004. The Congress Party's central branch took advantage of its incumbency at the central level to constrain the autonomy of sub-national units, particularly of those units that were in opposition at the state-level.

But, what happened between 1998 and 2004 when both the party's branches were in opposition? As discussed above, when both branches of a polity-wide party are in opposition in a clientelistic context like India, the central party branch is able to constrain the autonomy of the regional branch. Furthermore, it is important to note that none of the two states (Gujarat or Maharashtra) has any extra constitutionally mandated powers. This makes it easier for the central branch to constrain the autonomy of its regional branches in both the states if their regional branches are in opposition.

What about the high levels of autonomy for the Gujarat BJP and Congress state unit prior to the 2002 regional elections despite the BJP's central branch being incumbent and the Congress's central branch being in opposition, respectively? It is true that based on the hypotheses specified above, we should expect the Gujarat BJP to have lower levels of autonomy if the party's central branch is incumbent at the central level. Also, we should expect the Congress state unit to have lower levels of autonomy when both the branches are in opposition at their respective level. I do acknowledge that the high levels of autonomy for both the states units prior to the 2002 regional elections pose a challenge to the incumbency

hypotheses specified above. However, in the same hypothesis, I have also argued that the level of autonomy is partly conditional on whether the party's incumbent branch is expected to share the benefits of incumbency with other coalition members. Unlike the BJP's central branch, the BJP's regional branch in Gujarat had a simple majority where the benefits of incumbency were not shared with any coalition members. This partly explains why the Gujarat BJP unit had high levels of autonomy prior to the 2002 regional elections.

The high level of autonomy for the Congress state unit could be explained by the nature of the 2002 regional elections. As described in chapter 5, the Gujarat 2002 regional elections were held in the wake of the worst communal riots in independent India. The Congress Party's central branch, in particular Sonia Gandhi, felt that Shankarsinh Vaghela, a former RSS and BJP member, would be able to help the Congress Party win elections in the wake of the communal mobilisation that took place prior to the elections. The Congress central branch gave autonomy to Vaghela keeping in mind the specific nature of the regional elections. In sum, I would argue that the 2002 Gujarat regional elections represent a special case when compared to other regional elections, and it is this exceptional characteristic of the 2002 Gujarat election that explain why the level of intra-party autonomy for the Congress state unit does not confirm the incumbency hypothesis (Scenario 4) specified above.

Moving onto the second empirical question; what explains the different levels of autonomy between the Gujarat and Maharashtra BJP units? The Gujarat BJP unit successive incumbencies at the state-level explain the high levels of autonomy enjoyed by the party's state branch. In contrast, the Maharashtra BJP unit did not form state governments in Maharashtra except between 1995 and 1999. However, it is important to note that while the Maharashtra BJP unit was in power

at the state-level between 1995 and 1999, the BJP's central branch also had some stake at the national level during the same time period. The BJP's central branch emerged as the single largest party in the 1996 general elections and formed national governments in 1998 and 1999. Notably, even when both the BJP's central branch and the Maharashtra BJP unit formed state governments with coalition help, the difference lay in the nature of the coalition arrangements. While the BJP's central branch headed the coalition government at the central level, the Maharashtra BJP unit was a *junior coalition* partner with the post of the Chief Ministership being held by the Shiv Sena party. In addition, unlike the recent (i.e. post-2000) Gujarat regional elections that were held in between the general election cycle, Maharashtra regional elections either coincide with the general elections or are held immediately after the general elections. This explains why the Maharashtra BJP unit consistently had lower levels of autonomy in comparison to the Gujarat BJP unit.

Third, what explains the temporal variation in the levels of intra-party autonomy where the Maharashtra Congress state unit had more autonomy up until the 1995 regional elections, but the level of autonomy has declined since then? The Maharashtra Congress state unit had higher levels of autonomy until the 1995 regional elections because the Maharashtra state unit won a comfortable majority at the state-level in 1990 and emerged as the single largest party in 1995 whereas the Congress Party's central branch was out of power at the national level between 1989 and 1991, and won a precarious majority during the 1991 general election. Importantly, both 1990 and 1995 Maharashtra regional elections did not coincide with the general elections. This explains why the Maharashtra Congress unit had higher levels of autonomy for the 1990 and 1995 regional elections.

In the aftermath of the 1999 Maharashtra regional elections, the Congress

Party's central and Maharashtra state unit were in opposition at the respective levels. Also, the 1999 Maharashtra elections coincided with the general elections. This explains why the Congress state unit had lower levels of autonomy prior to the 1999 Maharashtra regional elections. The 2004 Maharashtra regional elections present an interesting case study highlighting the importance of taking into account the timing of regional elections. The Congress Party-led coalition at the national level won the 2004 general elections debunking all expectations (Roy and Wallace, 2007a). Many senior Congress leaders believed that Sonia Gandhi's intervention was vital and asked for her intervention in regional elections held in the immediate aftermath of general elections.[118] The Maharashtra regional elections were held in the immediate aftermath of the general elections where we see the Congress central branch, in particular Sonia Gandhi, playing an increasingly important role. In chapter 6, I provide evidence to support why I code the Maharashtra regional branch to have low levels of intra-party autonomy prior to the 2004 regional elections.

Between 2004 and 2014 the Congress Party's central branch and the state unit were in power both at the national and the state level. But, in this case, the level of autonomy is conditional on the level of political and economic decentralisation in the polity, the constitutional set-up of the particular sub-national unit and whether either of the branches had to share the benefits with coalition partners. Both the central and the regional branches were incumbent at the respective levels with other coalition members. Furthermore, as highlighted above, since the central level in India constitutionally holds more power and Maharashtra does not have any 'extra' constitutionally mandated powers, the Congress Party's central branch is able to constrain the autonomy of its regional branch when both the branches

[118]Interview with Shaktisinh Gohil, national spokesperson of the All India Congress Committee (AICC) and a Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) in Gujarat Assembly, 16th April, 2016, Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

are in power at the national and regional level. However, things changed during the 2014 Maharashtra regional elections. The Congress Party's central branch lost the 2014 general election. The Maharashtra Congress unit was incumbent prior to the 2014 Maharashtra regional election where the central branch was in opposition. The state-level leaders felt that the central branch's intervention would further hurt the party's electoral prospects in the state-level elections.[119] Prithviraj Chavan, Maharashtra's incumbent Chief Minister at that time, was the face of the Congress Party and ran the 2014 Maharashtra regional election campaign with high levels of autonomy from the party's central branch.[120] This case is particularly important in helping me underline the importance of Scenario 2[121] in explaining the higher levels of autonomy for the regional branch. Prithiviraj Chavan was appointed by Sonia Gandhi as a replacement to Ashok Chavan because of Ashok Chavan's involvement in a corruption scandal.[122] Despite being a close confidant of Sonia Gandhi, and the Gandhi family in general, Prithviraj Chavan chose to keep the family (and with it the central branch) away from the state prior to the 2014 Maharashtra regional elections. The central branch's loss in the 2014 general elections incentivised state-level leaders of those regional branches, which were in power at their level, to extract more autonomy from the central branch. However, the Maharashtra case prior to 2014 is particularly interesting because Prithviraj Chavan was only recently appointed by the central branch. We should have expected him to further involve the central branch to repay his appointment as the Chief Minister of the state. However, the party's loss at the central level coupled with the incumbency of the Maharashtra Congress state unit prior to the 2014 regional elections explains why he chose not to do so.

[119]Interview with Prithviraj Chavan, April 6th 2016, Mumbai. Member of the Congress Party. He was the Chief Minister of Maharashtra between 2010 and 2014.

[120]After the defeat of the Congress Party in the 2014 Maharashtra regional elections, Chavan told reporters that 'since I had taken the initiative in these elections, and thus I am responsible for the poor performance'. (ANI-Asian News International, 2014)

[121]Regional party branch in government where the central branch is in opposition.

[122]Ashok Chavan was involved in a corruption scandal involving allocation of residential flats to widows of army veterans killed during the Kargil war.

Table 7.3: Summarising incumbency, intra-party autonomy and timing of elections in Gujarat (GJ) and Maharashtra (MH)

GJ Election Year	State governments	GJ BJP autonomy	GJ Congress autonomy	National election Year	National government	MH Election Year	State governments	MH BJP autonomy	MH Congress autonomy
1990	BJP + JD/ JD(G) + Congress	High	High	1989/1991	National Front	1990	Congress Party	Low	High
1995	BJP/AIRJP	High	Low	1996	United Front	1995	BJP +Shiv Sena	Low	High
1998	BJP	Low	Low	1998/1999	BJP-led NDAd	1999	Congress Party +NCP	Low	Low
2002	BJP	High	High	2004	Congress-led UPA	2004	Congress Party +NCP	Low	Low
2007	BJP	High	Low	2009	Congress-led UPA	2009	Congress Party +NCP	Low	Low
2012	BJP	High	Low	2014	BJP-led NDA	2014	BJP +Shiv Sena	Low	High

7.5 Endogeneity

The above discussion raises two important points: 1) about the direction of causality, and 2) about the impact of regional party systems on regional branch autonomy.

First, one could point out that it is not incumbency that explains intra-party autonomy, but rather it is intra-party autonomy that explains the party's chances of gaining incumbency. The extensive literature on party adaption underscores the merit of the above argument (Hopkin and Van Houten, 2009: 15; Fabre, 2008; Van Biezen and Hopkin, 2006). Scholars have shown how polity-wide parties devolve autonomy to their regional branch in order to win elections in sub-national units with a distinctive cultural identity and/or a regional party contender. The assumption is that autonomy will give the regional branch flexibility in catering to state-specific demands and issues. In a non-programmatic context like India, scholars have shown how strong party organisation can retain the defection of regional elites at the sub-national level in turn preventing further fractionalisation (Chhibber et al., 2014: 492). Even when the literature in both the contexts - programmatic and non-programmatic -acknowledges the importance of intra-party autonomy in multi-level contexts, it does not assume that intra-party autonomy will guarantee the party's victory in the elections. The victory of an individual party depends on a number of other short term and long term factors that are beyond the party's control. Literature on party organisation in India, such as Chhibber et al.'s study, also acknowledges that party organisation could prevent further party fractionalisation at the party system level, but does not necessarily associate party organisation with an individual party's victory in elections. I use quantitative analysis in chapter 8 to empirically demonstrate this. In this chapter,

I present evidence to show why incumbency is not an endogeneous variable.

The first example is that of the Maharashtra Congress state unit. The Maharashtra Congress unit had high levels of autonomy during the 2014 regional elections, but this did not guarantee victory for the party. On the contrary, the Maharashtra BJP unit won the elections despite having low levels of autonomy from the party's central branch. It won the elections riding on Narendra Modi's charisma. A second piece of evidence is from the Gujarat Congress unit during the 2002 regional elections. The Vaghela-led Congress state branch had higher levels of autonomy during the 2002 Gujarat regional elections, but this did not help the party win the regional elections. Finally, what about the Gujarat BJP unit? Are successive incumbencies for the state unit of the BJP the result of high levels of autonomy for its regional branch? In my thesis, I argue that high levels of autonomy for the Gujarat BJP explains the dominance of polity-wide parties at the state-level in Gujarat, but I do not argue that it explains the BJP's success in winning elections. If this was the case then the BJP should have lost the 2017 Gujarat regional elections, as the party's state unit had very low levels of autonomy prior to the 2017 Gujarat elections (Verniers and Shrimankar, 2017). The lower levels of autonomy did not stop the BJP from winning the Gujarat elections. There are many other factors that explain why the Gujarat BJP successively wins elections, which are beyond the scope of this thesis to explore, but from the examples above it is certain that intra-party autonomy is not sufficient to propel a regional branch into incumbency.

Second, the existing literature suggests that regional branches of polity-wide parties are more likely to have autonomy when they face effective competition from regional parties (Fabre and Swenden, 2013). Higher ENEP scores in Figure 2.2 reflect how the Congress Party and the BJP in Maharashtra faced effective com-

petition from strong regional parties post-1990s. In particular, successive state governments in Maharashtra have included two important regional parties, the Shiv Sena and the NCP as coalition members alongside the two main polity-wide parties in Maharashtra. Existing research also tells us that regional branch autonomy increases when they are in coalition with regional parties (Renzsch, 2001). But empirical evidence from Maharashtra does not confirm these expectations. Table 7.3 shows how the Congress Party and the BJP have not devolved autonomy to their regional branches even when they have formed coalition governments with regional parties in Maharashtra. Interestingly, in Maharashtra, the state-level leadership of both the Congress Party and the BJP have been wary of their alliance with regional parties, but have been directed to form or maintain this alliance by their respective central branches. In chapter 6 I gave multiple examples of the regional branches of the Congress Party and the BJP reluctance in allying with the NCP and Shiv Sena respectively. However, they were directed by their central branches (in particular by Sonia Gandhi in the case of the Congress Party and Pramod Mahajan and L.K. Advani in the case of the BJP) to continue allying with the regional parties. The presence of strong regional parties in Maharashtra did not motivate the Congress Party and the BJP's central branches to give more autonomy to their regional branches.

7.6 Conclusion

This chapter provides the first comparative assessment of why parties have different levels of autonomy at the sub-national level in India. It adds value to the on-going research on the role of party organisations in shaping regional party systems in India (Chhibber et al., 2014; Ziegfeld, 2016b). Using a comparative study

of Gujarat and Maharashtra, I show that regional branch incumbency i.e. where the regional branch of the party holds power at the regional level where the central level is in opposition helps explain different levels of intra-party autonomy at the sub-national level in India. Furthermore, in scenarios where both the branches of a polity-wide party are in power or in opposition, the regional branch autonomy is conditional upon the level of political and economic decentralisation, the constitutional set-up of the particular sub-national unit and whether the party's branch has to share power with coalition partners. Since the Indian case is an example of a relatively politically and economically centralised federation, and Maharashtra and Gujarat having no 'extra' constitutionally mandated powers, regional branch autonomy is constrained when both the branches are in power or in opposition at their respective levels.

In addition to the evidence provided above, the on-going intra-party dynamics within the Gujarat BJP unit vis-a-vis its central branch further confirms the above hypothesis. Since the Modi-led BJP central branch has won power in the 2014 general elections, the Gujarat BJP unit's autonomy is relatively constrained. For example, a number of media sources expected Gujarat Health Minister, Nitin Patel to be the likely successor to Anandiben Patel as the Chief Minister of Gujarat, but to everyone's surprise Vijay Rupani was made the Chief Minister (Mahurkar, 2016). He was selected by the BJP National President Amit Shah, so that he would be able to 'remote control' state-level party affairs from the central level (Kumar, 2016). In line with the argument made in this thesis, the BJP's central branch, and in particular Prime Minister Modi and party president Amit Shah, were increasingly involved in the candidate selection process for the 2017 Gujarat regional elections (Dave, 2017). The party's state-level unit virtually had no role in the candidate selection process.[123] The preliminary evidence from the 2017

[123]Interview with senior state-level BJP leaders in Valsad district, 12th December 2017, Dharampur, Gujarat. The leaders requested anonymity.

Gujarat regional elections confirms that the central branch of the party is able to constrain autonomy when both the branches are in power.

While in this chapter, I have focused on the role of incumbency in explaining different levels of intra-party autonomy, future research should look at the role of incumbency in explaining the influence of regional branches on the party's central branch. In particular, scenario 2 (see Table 7.1), is an interesting scenario to explore the level of influence of regional branch on the central branch party affairs. Does regional branch incumbency increase the influence of the regional branch in central party affairs, particularly if the central branch is in opposition? However, we are unable to explore this scenario until and unless we first collect data on the level of influence of the regional branch in central level party affairs.

Chapter 8

Large N

8.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I statistically test the two central tenets of my thesis developed through a comparative study of Gujarat and Maharashtra. The first central argument put forward in this thesis is that polity-wide parties are able to dominate at the state-level when their sub-national units have autonomy. It is important to note that autonomy for a single branch of a polity-wide party is sufficient to sustain the dominance of polity-wide parties at the state-level. The second central argument is about explaining different levels of intra-party autonomy. If intra-party autonomy is important in explaining the dominance of polity-wide parties at the state-level, then what explains the differing levels of intra-party autonomy at the state-level? In the previous chapter, I have shown how the incumbency factor explains why polity-wide parties have differing levels of autonomy at the state-level.

In the previous chapters, I have shown how a comparative study between Gujarat and Maharashtra helps mitigate or rule out alternative explanations for both the central claims. In this chapter, by means of statistical analysis of a larger dataset of Indian states, I further test my central arguments vis-a-vis alternative explanations. To do this, the chapter is divided into two separate sections, where the first section deals with testing the hypotheses that seek to explain the dominance of polity-wide parties at the state-level in India, and the second section deals with the hypotheses that seek to explain why polity-wide parties have differing levels of autonomy at the state-level in India. But prior to that I wish to discuss the primary dataset of party organization that is central to both the sections.

8.2 Dataset

In my thesis, I have focused on one aspect of party organisation i.e. level of intra-party autonomy for the sub-national units. Autonomy measures the degree of freedom of the sub-national unit to conduct its affairs without interference from the central level of the polity-wide party (Thorlakson, 2009). To my knowledge, only Chhibber et al. (2014) and Bohlken (2016) have attempted to operationalise party organisation at the state-level in India. While Bohlken measures intra-party competition at the state-level, Chhibber et al. develop a measure of intra-party institutionalisation at the state-level in India. In my thesis I use Chhibber et al.'s data as they are readily available in the appendix and provide an easier proxy as opposed to Bohlken's data. Nevertheless, Bohlken's data correlate with Chhibber et al.'s dataset and are statistically significant at the 95 percent level. Chhibber et al. collected data on the organisational structure of all Indian parties that received five percent of the vote share during the state elections held between 1967 to 2004,

treating each state-party unit as an observation. They include data from all the 15 major Indian states. In their dataset, state units of polity-wide parties can take different values in different states at the same time. They code a party unit as less organised

> when there was no clear succession plan within the party, where party functionaries roles were fluid and election-focused, and where opportunities for upward mobility were either limited or prone to the whims of a few leaders. In addition, a less organised party depended on the charisma of a single leader and decision-making within the party was referred to as ad hoc. (Chhibber et al., 2014: 493)

In contrast, they code a party unit as more organized

> when career decisions for party activists and succession issues were more transparent and routinized and the party did not depend only on the personalities of individuals. Also, in these units politicians had clarity about their role in the organization, such as the qualifications required to fill certain positions, the process for upward mobility in the party, the rules of succession planning, the organizations tolerance for intra-party factionalism and, finally, the extent to which party decisions are taken based on clearly understood institutional norms as opposed to the whims of leaders. (Chhibber et al., 2014: 493)

As discussed in previous chapters, intra-party institutionalization does not directly imply intra-party autonomy. A regional branch could have all the characteristics of a less institutionalised party but still have autonomy from the central

branch. For instance, the Gujarat BJP unit is the perfect example of a regional branch having consistent levels of autonomy but is in no way internally institutionalised at the regional level. Party decisions were monopolized at the state-level under then Gujarat BJP unit chief Narendra Modi (Guichard, 2013). Despite the conceptual differences, there exists a uni-directional relationship between the two: where we can assume that intra-party institutionalization implies high level of autonomy for the sub-national units but not vice versa. In other words, internally institutionalised parties could be treated as internally autonomous, but not the other way round.

An example will help illustrate this better. For the 1967 election year, Chhibber et al. (2014) code the Kerala Congress state unit as institutionalised.[124] During the same year, they code the Bihar Congress state unit to have low levels of institutionalisation. As mentioned above, a strong institutionalised branch is characterised as one where career decisions for party activists and succession issues were more transparent and routinised and the party did not depend on the personalities of individuals. There is more clarity for politicians in these branches. These characteristics allow the regional party branch to develop cohesive regional agendas, and to be in a position to bargain with the central branch. The assumption being that if the regional branch of a polity-wide party is coded as institutionalised, it has some level of autonomy from the party's central branch in maintaining its institutionalised characteristics at the sub-national level. It is unlikely that we would find an institutionalised state-branch of polity-wide party with low levels of autonomy. Put differently, as argued by Ziegfeld (2016a: 117), high levels of intra-party autonomy [125] is incompatible with low levels of intra-party institutionalisation. In sum, there exists a positive correlation between high levels of

[124]For 1967 Kerala Congress state unit is coded as 3 as opposed to 1 for the Bihar Congress state unit.

[125]Ziegfeld (2016a: 117) refers to it as intra-party decentralisation.

intra-party institutionalisation with high levels of intra-party autonomy. Randall and Svasand (2002) also discuss how intra-party institutionalisation implies some degree of autonomy from the external environment. It is true that autonomy from the external environment is different from autonomy from the party's central branch, but extending the logic of autonomy from the external environment to the intra-party level, we could assume that high-levels institutionalisation does include a higher level of autonomy for the state branch.

Keeping these caveats in mind, Chhibber et al. provide the only dataset on the internal organisation of the BJP and the Congress Party in all the major Indian states.[126] They provide coding for all the 138 regional election years[127] between 1967 and 2004, with state-party units receiving a score of 1, 2 or 3, with 3 being the most organised and 1 being the least.[128] In their dataset, they provide coding for all the Congress state units in all of the 138 election years except for Tamil Nadu in 1971, 1996 and 2001, as the Congress Party did not receive more than five percent of the vote share in the state for those election years. For the BJP, they include the Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS), the predecessor to the BJP, for

[126]The Indian states included in their dataset are the following: Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. Together these states comprise over 90 % of India's population.

[127]Due to data limitations, the sample sizes in the regressions are slightly smaller, as discussed below.

[128]Chhibber et al.'s coding is consistent with my coding of Gujarat BJP unit, except for the 1998 regional elections. With respect to the Gujarat Congress unit, their coding matches my classification for the election year 2002. However, it is important to note that Chhibber et al. assign a score of 2 ('medium level of organisation') for the Gujarat Congress unit for 1990, 1995, and 1998 election years. In this thesis, I have treated a score of 2 as a proxy for high levels of autonomy. This is to maintain consistency with how others (Ziegfeld 2016b: 117) have used Chhibber et al.'s data, but one could interpret a score of 2 (medium levels of autonomy) to indicate low levels of autonomy in which case their coding would be consistent with my classification of the Gujarat Congress unit. For the Maharashtra Congress unit, their assessment approximates my coding of the same unit if we were to interpret a score of 2 (medium level of autonomy) differently. Finally, I acknowledge that their coding of the Maharashtra BJP unit is different from my assessment of the same unit. Here, it is important to mention that Chhibber et al.'s data is only a proxy for intra-party autonomy. Ideally speaking, I would have liked to code the level of autonomy for both the parties for all the major Indian states, but due to limitations of time and resources I have not been able to do so for the purpose of this thesis. Instead, I have used Chhibber et al.'s data as proxy for intra-party autonomy for the reasons specified above.

election years prior to the 1980s. Despite including data for the BJS, there are 61 missing cases out of the 138 election years where there is no coding for state party units of the BJP/BJS. The majority of them are in the southern Indian states of Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Tamil Nadu where the BJP/BJS had a very marginal presence until very recently (Heath, 1999).

8.3 Section 1

The purpose of this section is to test whether party organisation (as a proxy for intra-party autonomy) is key to explaining the dominance of polity-wide parties at the state-level after controlling for alternative explanations.

8.3.1 Measuring the primary explanatory variable

I have used Chhibber et al.'s dataset on party organization to code the level of intra-party autonomy at the state-level. For the purpose of my argument, I have developed a scale of Polity-wide party organization for each state by combining the codes assigned for the individual branches of the two main polity-wide parties.[129] This is because my argument is about the state-level party system as opposed to individual parties. In essence, the variable of *polity-wide party organisation* captures the combined level of autonomy for regional branches of polity-wide parties at the state-level. In cases where there is no coding for the BJP, I have used the coding for the Congress Party to provide a code for my variable of *polity-wide party*

[129]Certainly there are other polity-wide parties, such as the Janata Dal and the Janata Party, but in this chapter, and in my thesis, I have restricted my attention to two main polity-wide parties; the Congress Party and the BJP. Following Ziegfeld (2016), I do not consider Communist Party of India (Marxist) as a polity-wide party.

organization for that particular state. Importantly, in cases when there is coding for both the branches, I have used the higher order coding to code my variable of *polity-wide party organization*. As mentioned above in the introduction, and in my theory chapter, polity-wide parties are able to dominate even when a single regional branch of a polity-wide party has autonomy at the state-level. Therefore in cases when either of the polity-wide party has a higher score assigned, I have used that to code my primary independent variable of *polity-wide party organisation*. For example, in Assam in 1991, Chhibber et al. code the BJP state organization as 2 and the Congress state organization as 1, but my final polity-wide party organization variable is coded as 2. Similarly, in Punjab in 1967, the Congress Party state unit is coded as 3 where the BJP state organization received a score of 1, but my variable is coded as 3 as one of the regional branches has a higher levels of autonomy. Since this is an ordinal variable, in the final model, I use a dummy variable[130] where I treat a state with a score of 2 or 3 as having autonomous regional branches and those with a score of 1 as having less autonomous regional branches. This is consistent with how other scholars (Ziegfeld 2016: 117) have coded Chhibber et al.'s data. Figure 8.1 shows party organisational variation cross-sectionally and over-time for all the major Indian states.

[130]The findings are consistent with treating it as an ordinal variable, and are available on requests.

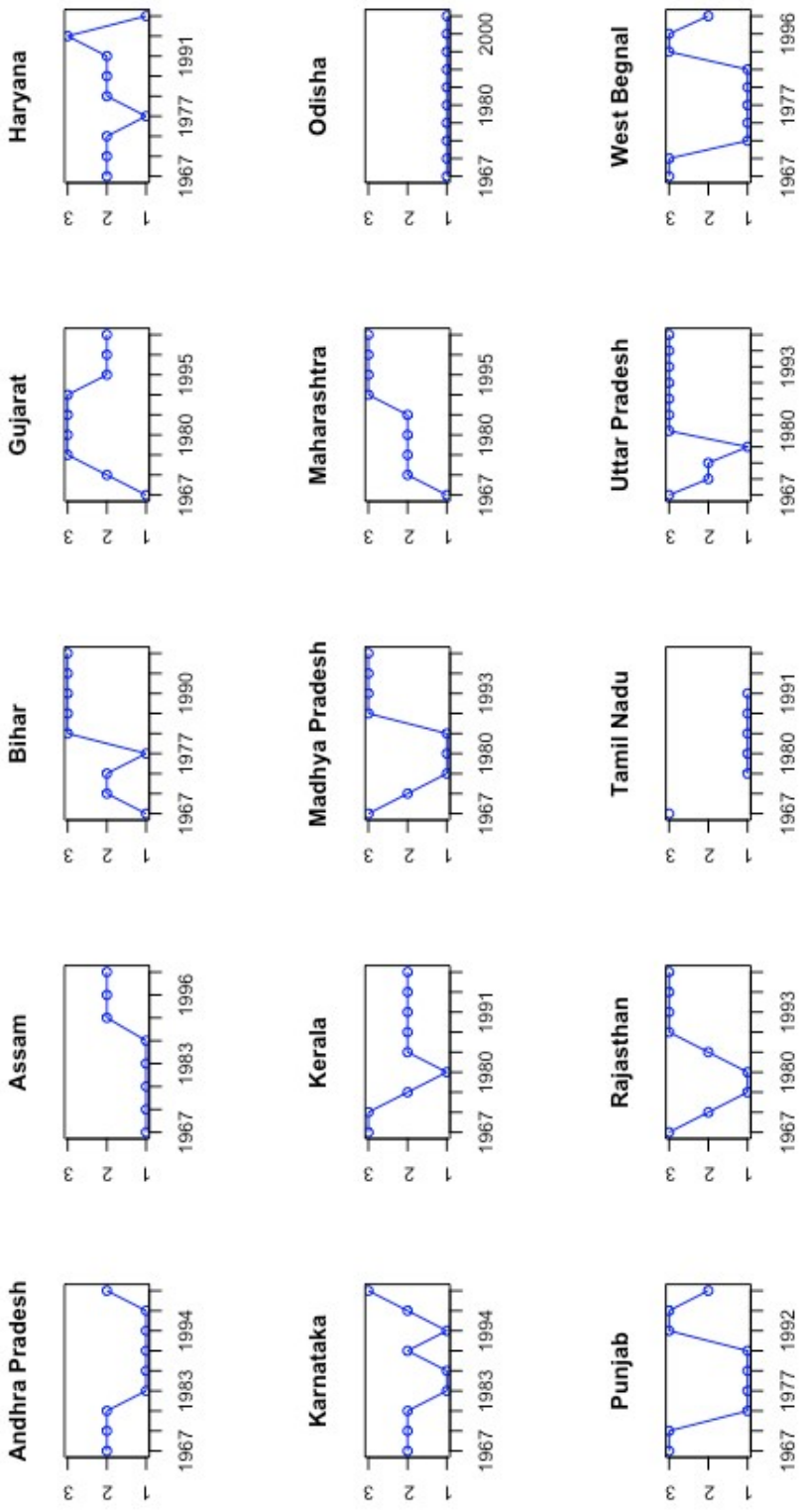


Figure 8.1: Level of autonomy for Polity-wide party organisation for all the major Indian states, 1967-2004

8.3.2 Measuring the primary outcome variable

To measure the primary outcome variable, I have used a combined seat share of the BJP and the Congress Party at the state-level; polity-wide party seat share. I have aggregated the seat shares[131] because my argument is about explaining the dominance of polity-wide parties at the state-level as opposed to explaining why individual polity-wide parties win or lose. Section 8.2 shows variation in support for polity-wide parties across major Indian states and within each state over time.[132] The expectation is that the primary independent variable of polity-wide party organisation is positively correlated with this variable of combined seat share indicating support for my argument where high levels of autonomy for at least a single polity-wide party indicates higher support for polity-wide parties at the state-level. However, since the ultimate outcome of interest is to capture the dominance of polity-wide parties at the state-level, I have used an additional

[131]I have used seat share as opposed to vote share because it comes closer to capturing the conceptualisation of dominance used in this article. In a disproportionate single member simple plurality system (SMDP), like the one used in India, political parties can dominate without winning majority of the votes, and therefore vote share measurement would underestimate the dominance of polity-wide parties.

[132]As mentioned in the introductory chapter, this conceptualisation of polity-wide party dominance is close to party system nationalisation at the sub-national level. The statistically significant correlation between my measure of polity-wide party seat share with party system nationalisation measure confirms this. To calculate party system nationalisation measure, I borrow Chhibber and Kollman's (1998) party aggregation measure. Party system nationalisation is measured by first calculating the effective number of parties (calculated using Laakso and Taagepara method) score for each constituency in the state. The average of the constituencies provides a measure of the effective number of parties at the constituency level. This average measure is then subtracted from the effective number of parties calculated at the state-level to give us a measure of party system nationalisation at the sub-national level. Party system nationalisation is a continuous score where lower values indicate higher levels of party system nationalisation and higher values indicate a lower level of party nationalisation. If indeed my measure of polity-wide party seat share is close to party system nationalisation at the sub-national level, then we should expect to a see a negative relationship between polity-wide party seat share and party system nationalisation. For the dataset of 15 largest Indian states between 1967-2004 used in this thesis, there exists a negative and a statistically significant relationship between polity-wide party seat share and party system nationalisation. For every unit increase in party system nationalisation score we expect polity-wide party seat share to go down by approximately 10-percentage point. This relationship is statistically significant at 99 % confidence interval level. I have included the party system nationalisation measure in the dataset attached along with the thesis should anyone wish to replicate the results.

variable, polity-wide party dominance. This binary variable takes a value of 1 if either the Congress Party or the BJP won more than 50 percent of the seats in the state-assembly elections, or 0 if both of them won less than 50 percent of the seats.[133] I have used the 50 percent share of seats as a threshold as it denotes a situation when the party can form a government without the support of coalition partners. Importantly, I have triangulated the coding exercise with existing datasets on coalition politics at the state-level, such as the one constructed by Saez and Sinha (2010) and the state-level data on electoral alliances built by Ziegfeld and Tudor (2015). These data are particularly helpful in triangulating my coding of polity-wide party dominance at the state-level.

[133]This measure is also negatively correlated (statistically significant) with party system nationalisation score providing further confidence in stating that the measure of polity-wide party dominance is indeed close to party system nationalisation.

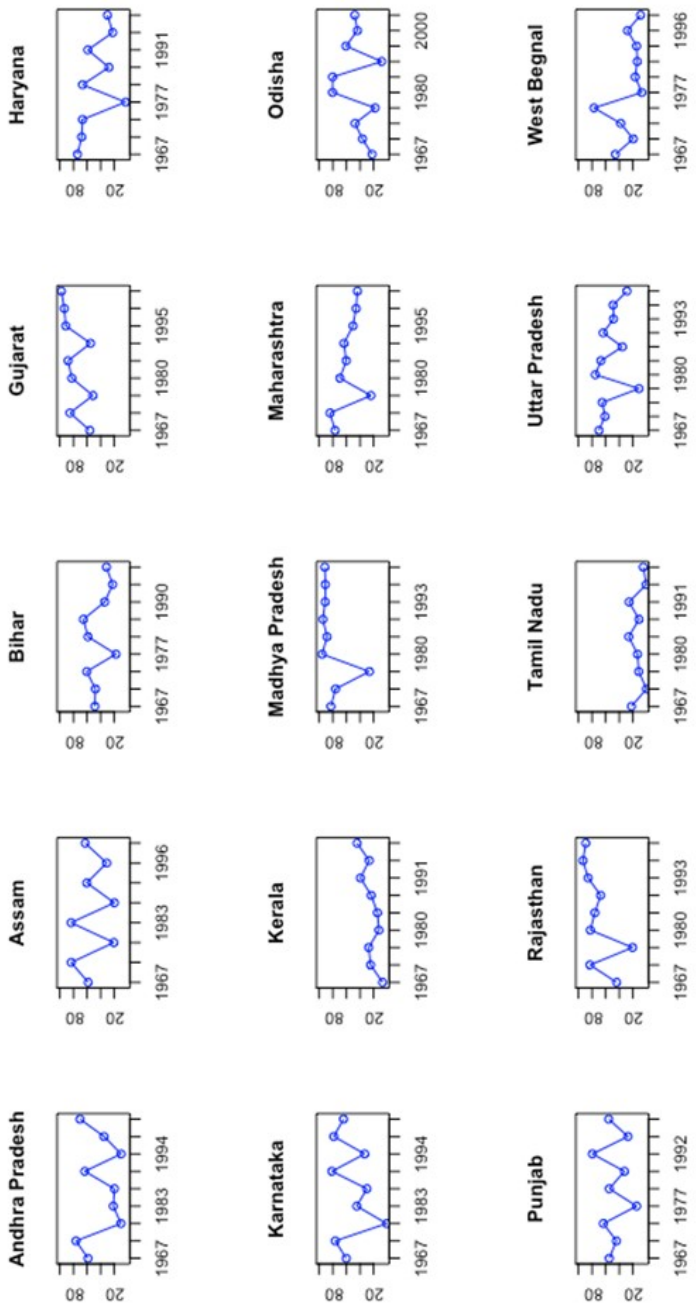


Figure 8.2: Combined seat share (%) of the Congress Party and the BJP across all the major Indian states.

8.3.3 Controls

My control variables are based on the existing explanations that have been ruled out in the earlier chapters. I have tried to operationalize each explanation with a closely related control variable. The expectations are that they do not have an independent effect on the primary outcome variable of combined seat share (%) used in this chapter.

- Political and economic decentralization

  Existing scholarship (Chhibber and Kollman, 1998; Brancati, 2008b) argues that when political and economic powers are decentralized, political parties give more autonomy to their sub-national units. Even though the state-level has constitutional mandated autonomy within the India's federal structure, the wide-ranging economic reforms of July 1991 unleashed extensive political and economic decentralization (Sinha 2004). In order to capture this explanation, I have included a dummy variable, post-1991 where 1 = post-1991 observations and 0 = pre-1991 observations.

- Dependence of the sub-national unit on the central level

  One important variant of the above argument is put forward by Diwakar (2010). She argues that it is not just centre-led decentralisation reforms that affect the party systems at the state-level, but it is the state's dependence on the centre for economic help that affects its particular party system. She argues that those states that are dependent on the centre are more likely to be dominated by polity-wide parties in contrast to states that are less dependent on the centre for financial help. This is because regional elites will have less financial and political incentives to defect from polity-wide

parties in states that are dependent on the centre as opposed to the ones that are less dependent on the centre.

As acknowledged by Diwakar (2010:490), it is particularly difficult to measure the state's dependence on the centre in India. However, there are several proxies available from the literature on fiscal federalism. Building on Khemani's (2003) work, Nooruddin and Chhibber (2008: 1076-1077) argue that states that have some leverage at the centre have higher deficits, because they can obtain more resources from the central government. Based on this conceptualisation of leverage, Nooruddin and Chhibber (2008: 1077) develop a measure of fiscal space, which is the sum of the difference between the state's total revenues and primary commitments (civil administration, including pensions and other retirement benefits; police and debt) and the deficit the central government allows the state to run. Therefore, to measure a state's economic (in) dependence from the centre, I have used Nooruddin and Chhibber's measure of fiscal space. Consistent with Nooruddin and Chhibber, I have taken a logarithmic transformation of the raw fiscal space a state enjoys. A higher fiscal space score would indicate a higher level of economic leverage on the central level, which in turn is a proxy for high level of economic independence.

- Coalition politics at the national level

  There is growing evidence that suggests coalition governments encourage the growth of non-polity-wide parties (Ziegfeld, 2012). Through participating in coalition governments, regional political elites are able to have their share in national power without rising through the ranks of polity-wide parties: thereby increasing the incentives amongst regional political elites to join and form non-polity-wide parties. India experienced the rise of coalition governments at the national level since the 1989 general election. To account

for this, I have included a dummy variable capturing any differences in the post-1989 period where post-1989 = 1 and pre-1989 = 0. In my final model, I have decided to drop the dummy variable post-1991, this is because if I include both dummy variables post-1989 and post-1991, I have issues of high multicollinearity. The variable post-1989 had a Variation Inflation Factor of 4.58 when post-1991 was included in the model. Therefore, I have decided only to include one as opposed to including both the variables.

- Sub-nationalism

  There is a rich tradition within political sociology that has dealt with the variation in the success of polity-wide parties across political units. Scholars (De Winter and Tursan, 1998) have argued that polity-wide parties are weakest where regional identity is strong. In the Indian context, one plausible application of this argument is that those states that have a strong feeling of sub-national identity are more likely to see the decline of polity-wide parties. In order to capture the degree of sub-nationalism, I use Prerna Singh's (2015b) measurement of sub-nationalism. Singh's conceptualisation of sub-nationalism is different from secessionism, which involves political demands for a separate sovereign country. It contrast, Singh's conceptualisation matches my understanding of sub-national identity, which is identification with, or aspiration for a self-governing homeland located within the boundaries of a sovereign country. Singh's sub-nationalism index runs from a theoretical minimum of 0 indicating a deeply fragmented sub-national identity to a maximum of 4 indicating very powerful sub-nationalism.

- Turnout

  Turnout is included as a control variable because existing scholarship in India have shown that mobilisation of relatively inactive voters have led to the rise of regional parties that have come to challenge the dominance of polity-

wide parties (Jaffrelot, 2003; Yadav, 2000). Terming the increase in the turnout as the second democratic upsurge, Yadav argues that mobilisation of previously inactive lower castes groups in the 1990s led to the rise of new political parties.

- Social cleavages

  As mentioned in the previous chapters, students of Indian politics have often focused on three different identities that have become salient political cleavages: religion (Brass, 1974; Wilkinson, 2004), caste (Chandra, 2004), and sub-caste or jati (Chhibber, 1999; Huber and Suryanarayan, 2012). The decline of the Congress Party in the post-1989 period is attributed to the failure of the Congress Party in keeping these groups under its umbrella, and eventually fractionalising along these lines.

  Similarly, others have shown that the early challenges to the BJP's rise were the party's inability to mobilise groups beyond the upper castes (Sridharan, 2005). And, when the Congress Party fractionalised along caste lines, the BJP was not ready to monopolise the opportunity. Other political formations filled the vacuum by representing them. Importantly, the Congress Party mobilized support at the state-level, where its support was heavily dependent on particular state-specific social cleavages (Chhibber and Petrocik, 1989: 60-64). It could be argued that the Congress Party lost support in those states that had a higher share of social cleavages. Similarly, it could be argued that the BJP was not able to grow in states that had a higher share of social cleavages. Here, it is important to note that social cleavages by themselves are not sufficient to pose a challenge to the two polity-wide parties. It is the presence of salient social cleavages that pose challenge to the polity-wide parties at the state-level. In sum, the expectation is that the Congress Party and the BJP faced competition from non-polity-wide

parties in states that had a higher share of salient social cleavages. In order to capture this explanation, I have used multiple conceptualisations of the salient social cleavages. First, I borrow Chhibber et al.'s (2014) measure of *effective number of groups*. This measure captures the number of effective or politically salient cleavage groups in each state in a similar way that the effective number of parties describes the party structure of a state. Second, I borrow the cleavage polarisation index developed by Heath (2005). The cleavage polarisation index (in the model as social cleavages) is calculated by looking at the relationship between caste-community, and the cluster voted for, and uses an index of dissimilarity to measure the degree to which political competition is polarised along castecommunity[134] lines. The index of dissimilarity measures the difference between the observed results and the expected results assuming no relationship between the two variables. Higher values on cleavage polarization variable indicate higher degree of cleavage polarization whereas a lower score indicates lower degree of polarization on salient political cleavages. I refer to this variable as social cleavage variable. The results are consistent when we control for effective number of groups and social cleavages. I only report results where I have included effective number of groups as a control variable. However, the script file contains the code where I have included alternative specifications of salient social cleavages.

[134]Caste-community is based on Centre for Study of Developing Societies (CSDS) classification of groups from different jatis together into four social blocs, it groups the Muslims together into one group, and groups all the other smaller religions into a residual group. For example, the upper caste jatis, such as Brahmins, Banias and Rajputs are banded together into one upper caste category. Similarly, the shudra jatis, such as Yadavs, Jats and Kurmis are banded together to form the Other Backward Class (OBC) category. The ex-untouchable jatis, such as the Chamars, are banded together to form the Scheduled Castes (SC) and the aboriginals are banded together to form Scheduled Tribes (ST); the OBCs, SCs, and STs all have official reservation status, which provides quotas in government jobs, schools and universities for their members. Outside of the Hindu caste system, the index for castecommunity also includes Muslims, and Other Religions, which are specifically Sikh in Punjab and Christian in Kerala. In the other states, however, this is just a residual category of all non-Hindu and non-Muslim religions.

Table 8.1: Summary Statistics

Statistic	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Max
Lag PW.seatshare	119	48.823	27.168	0.000	95.630
Politywide seatshare	119	49.159	27.480	0.890	97.800
Polity wide Party dominance	119	1.471	0.501	0	1
Party Organisation	119	1.933	0.831	1	3
Log FiscalSpace	119	11.530	1.465	8.680	14.380
Post 1989	119	1.445	0.499	0	1
Post 1991	119	1.361	0.482	0	1
Subnationalism	119	2.217	1.283	0.000	4.000
Turnout	119	61.695	10.243	22.900	82.940
Effective Number of Groups	119	3.055	0.407	2.034	3.540

8.3.4 Bivariate analysis

It is helpful to begin this section with some descriptive analysis before moving onto the main multivariate analysis.

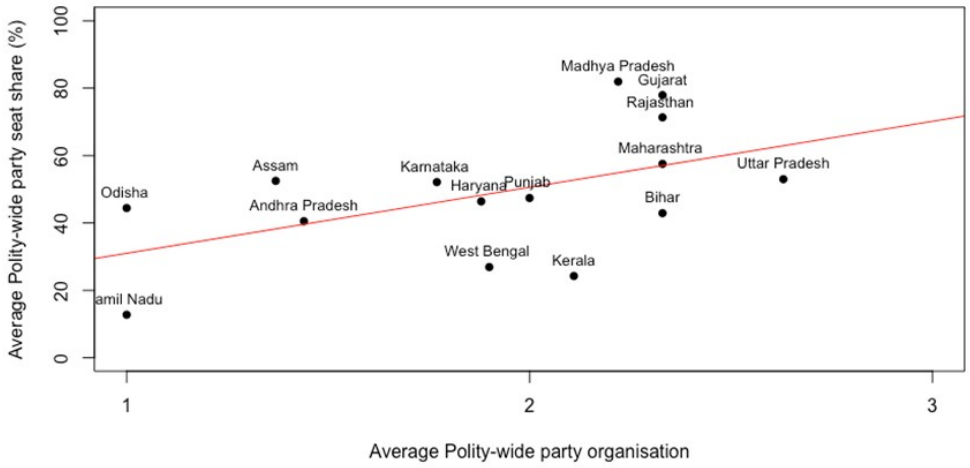


Figure 8.3: Bivariate relationship between average polity-wide party organisation and average polity-wide party seat share (%)

Figure 8.3 above shows the bivariate relationship between the average polity-wide seat share (%) and average polity-wide party organisation score for all the states included in the dataset. There exists a positive (with r= 0.51) and a statistically significant relationship at the 95% confidence level. The positive correlation in Figure 8.3 supports the main theoretical claim made in this thesis, which is that states with a higher average level of intra-party autonomy are more likely to have a high average combined seat share of polity-wide parties. However, the above figure runs a risk of missing subtle details especially when we include average scores for an ordinal variable such as polity-wide party organisation. Below I analyse the data in its time series and cross-sectional (TSCS) form. I also include the control variables mentioned above to test whether the primary variable of interest is statistically significant after controlling for alternative explanations.

8.3.5 Multivariate Analysis

Since the data is time series cross sectional (TSCS), I estimate a series of Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression models with panel corrected standard erros (model 1 and model 2) and state-fixed linear model (model3) with heteroskadastic robust standard errors. Model 4 is estimated using logistic regression because the dependent variable is binary (0/1) variable with 1 indicating Polity-wide party dominance. Keeping in mind the panel structure of the data, I have corrected the standard errors of Model 4 for clustering by state. Below are the four equations reflecting the four models in Table 8.2. In all four equations, i is the state unit and t indicates state election year. In equation 8.3 α_i indicates state-fixed effects.

$$\begin{aligned}\text{PWseatshare}_{it} = \alpha &+ \beta_1 \text{Lag.PWseatshare}_{it} \\ &+ \beta_2 \text{Party.Organisation}_{it} \\ &+ \beta_3 \text{Subnationalism}_{it} \\ &+ \beta_4 \text{ln.Fiscal.Space}_{it} \\ &+ \beta_5 \text{Ef.groups}_{it} \\ &+ \beta_6 \text{Turnout}_{it} \\ &+ \beta_7 \text{Post.1989}_{it} + \epsilon_{it}\end{aligned} \tag{8.1}$$

$$\begin{aligned}\text{PWseatshare}_{it} = \alpha &+ \beta_1 \text{Party.Organisation}_{it} \\ &+ \beta_2 \text{Subnationalism}_{it} \\ &+ \beta_3 \text{ln.Fiscal.Space}_{it} \\ &+ \beta_4 \text{Ef.groups}_{it} \\ &+ \beta_5 \text{Turnout}_{it} \\ &+ \beta_6 \text{Post.1989}_{it} + \epsilon_{it}\end{aligned} \tag{8.2}$$

$$\begin{aligned}\text{PWseatshare}_{it} = \alpha_i &+ \beta_1 \text{Lag.PWseatshare}_{it} \\ &+ \beta_2 \text{Party.Organisation}_{it} \\ &+ \beta_3 \text{Subnationalism}_{it} \\ &+ \beta_4 \text{ln.Fiscal.Space}_{it} \\ &+ \beta_6 \text{Turnout}_{it} \\ &+ \beta_7 \text{Post.1989}_{it} + \epsilon_{it}\end{aligned} \tag{8.3}$$

$$\Pr(\text{PW.dominance} = 1) = \frac{\exp(\alpha + \beta_1 \text{Party.organisation...} + \beta_6 \text{Post.1989})}{1 + \exp(\alpha + \beta_1 \text{Party.organisation...} + \beta_6 \text{Post.1989})} \quad (8.4)$$

Table 8.2: Party organisation and Polity-wide parties in India

	Dependent variable:			
	PW.seatshare			PW.dominance
	OLS		*panel linear*	*logistic*
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Constant	82.682	89.303		3.178
	(57.237)	(48.723)		(3.836)
lag.PWseatshare	0.058		−0.335***	
	(0.180)		(0.093)	
Party organisation	17.154***	17.799***	19.602***	1.600***
	(5.32)	(4.82)	(5.436)	(0.366)
Sub.nationalism	−2.164	−2.245	−2.534	−0.570
	(2.13)	(1.90)	(4.822)	(0.372)
fiscal.space	−0.096	−0.141	−0.150	−0.038
	(3.28)	(3.12)	(2.604)	(0.228)
Ef.groups	−1.962	−1.862		−0.641
	(8.400)	(8.13)		(0.822)
Turnout	−0.585*	−0.648**	−0.192	−0.007
	(0.307)	(0.302)	(0.277)	(0.023)
Post 1989	2.087	2.390	−1.318	−0.423
	(10.68)	(10.13)	(7.552)	(0.550)
Observations	119	119	119	119
Adjusted R^2	0.153	0.157	0.040	
Residual Std. Error	25.298 (df = 111)	25.224 (df = 112)		
χ^2				24.740*** (df = 6)

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
Model 1 and Model2 OLS models with Panel corrected standard errors.
Model 3 is linear fixed effects model with heteroskadistic robust errors by state.
Model4 is logistic regression with clustered standard errors

Model 1 reports OLS regression coefficients with panel-corrected standard errors (Beck and Katz, 1995). In model 1 we see that increasing intra-party autonomy correlates with 17 percent more seats for polity-wide parties in comparison to states with less autonomous regional branches. In Figure 8.4, I use model 1 to make predictions upon changing values of polity-wide party organisation in pre-1989 (left plot labelled coalition.NL = 0) and post-1989 period (right plot labelled coalition.NL=1). For both the time periods we see that when polity-wide parties have higher levels of autonomy, there is a greater aggregate seat share (%) of polity-wide parties. Model 2 reports the same model but without the lagged variable, as it can suppress the explanatory power of other variables (Achen, 2000). In this model, we see polity-wide parties win 17 percent more seats in states with autonomous regional branches in comparison to states with non-autonomous regional branches. Model 3 reports a fixed effects model which sets a demanding test for the argument as it controls for unobserved cross-sectional heterogeneity and allows us to analyse whether changes in the key independent variables over time within a state are correlated with changes in the dependent variable. Once again, the primary variable of interest, party organisation is statistically significant indicating support for my primary theoretical argument. In all of the three models we see that none of the other variables have a statistically significant relationship with our dependent variable at (or below) 95% confidence levels (except Turnout). Turnout variable is statistically significant in model 2. There exists a statistically significant negative relationship between increasing turnout levels and polity-wide party dominance. These results are consistent with existing commentaries in India. Yadav (2000) shows how mobilisation of dormant groups into electoral politics led to the rise of regional parties, which eventually challenged the dominance of polity-wide parties.

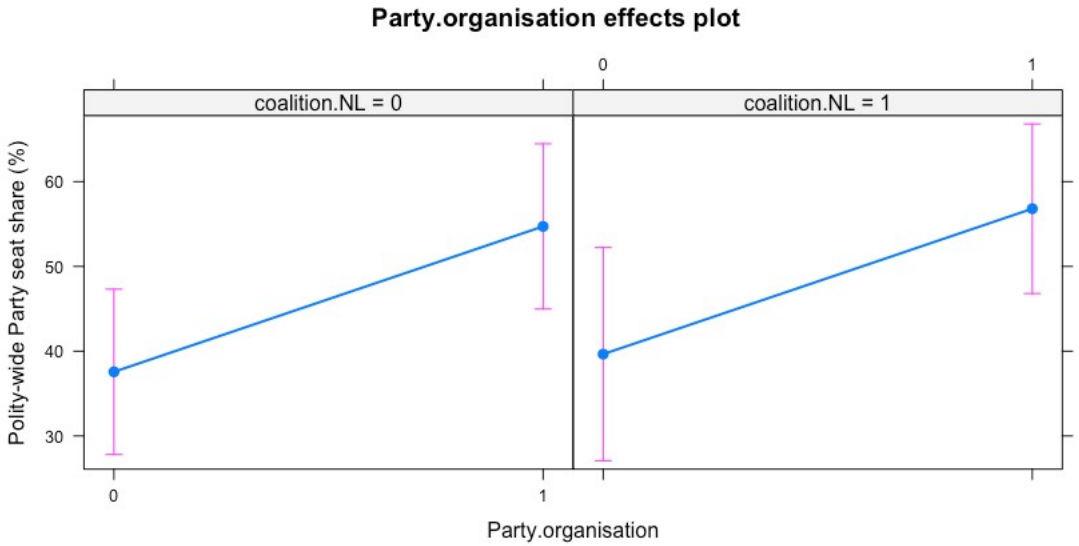


Figure 8.4: Predictions for polity-wide parties seat share (%) with standard error bars

I repeat the analysis in model 4[135] where the dependent variable is a binary variable warranting a logistic regression. Model 4 is estimated using a simple logistic regression with robust standard errors clustered by state. Once again, we see that our primary variable of interest, party organisation has a positive relationship with the dependent variable. This confirms the hypothesis explicated above where increasing intra-party autonomy increases the probability of polity-wide party achieving dominance at the state-level. Using model 4 to predict probabilities, there is a 56 percent probability of polity-wide parties dominating in states with autonomous regional branches as opposed to a 20 percent chance for polity-wide parties to dominate in states with non-autonomous regional branches. These probabilities are calculated for the post-1989 time period keeping all other variables at their mean (right plot in Figure 8.5). In the pre-1989 period (left plot in Figure 8.5), there is once again a 66 percent probability of polity-wide parties dominating in states with autonomous regional branches in comparison to a 28 percent chance for polity-wide parties to do the same in states with non-autonomous regional branches. This is also graphically represented below in Figure

[135]I have calculated logistic regression models with fixed and random effects with consistent results.

8.5.

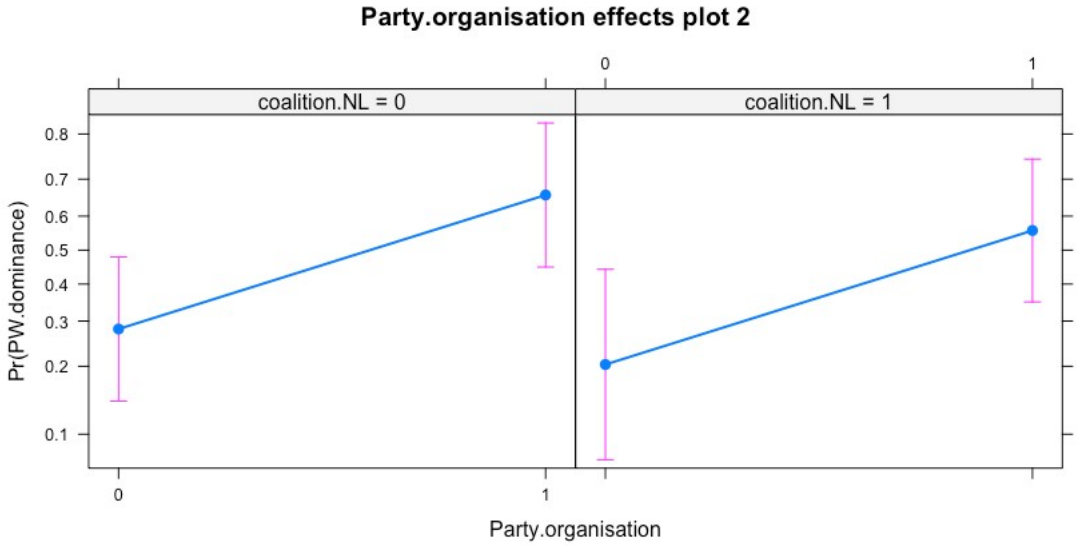


Figure 8.5: Predicted probability of Polity-wide party dominance

8.4 Section 2

In the previous section, we established the importance of party organisation in explaining the dominance of polity-wide parties at the state-level in India. If party organisation is a key explanatory variable, then it is important to study the determinants of different levels of party organisation at the sub-national level in India.[136] Why do some regional branches have higher levels of autonomy as opposed to others? Understanding the determinants of party organisational variation will in turn enhance our understanding of why different party systems exists at the state-level in India.

[136]In the previous chapter, I explored three sub-research questions; why do polity-wide parties have different organisational templates between them within a state, within them across different states, and within them within a state but over different time points. In this section, I only explore the latter two (i.e. within party across state, and within party within a state but across different time points). This is because I do not have strong measures that can control for party-level effects. In other words, the model specification would be poor as it would miss a number of control variables that are needed to fix party-level effects were we to explain inter-party organisational differences.

In the previous chapter, using a focused comparison between Gujarat and Maharashtra, I found that political factors, such as incumbency, help explain party organisational variation at the sub-national level in India. Importantly, the comparative design helped rule out explanations that relied on political and economic decentralisation, internal party features, sub-nationalism, and the nature of the regional party system to explain party organisational variation. In this chapter, I test the hypotheses discussed in the previous chapter using Chhibber et al.'s party organisation dataset. It is important to note that since Chhibber et al.'s dataset involves coding party organisation at the sub-national level, I will not test the effects of macro-contextual variables such as federalism and electoral system. This is because Indian states in the dataset are part of the Indian federal structure that follow identical rules to elect state-assembles.

8.4.1 Measuring the primary outcome variable

In this section, the main outcome variable is coded from Chhibber et al.'s dataset where 1 indicates low levels of autonomy, 2 and 3 indicates higher levels of autonomy for the regional branches of the Congress Party and the BJP. Consistent with prior treatment of Chhibber et al.'s data (see Ziegfeld 2017: 117), I merge the two categories (2 and 3 = autonomous). However, the findings are consistent when I do not merge the two categories, and treat Chhibber et al. party organisation variable as an ordinal variable (1= low autonomy, 2=medium autonomy and 3=High autonomy).[137]

[137]See Tables 4 and 5 for robustness checks.

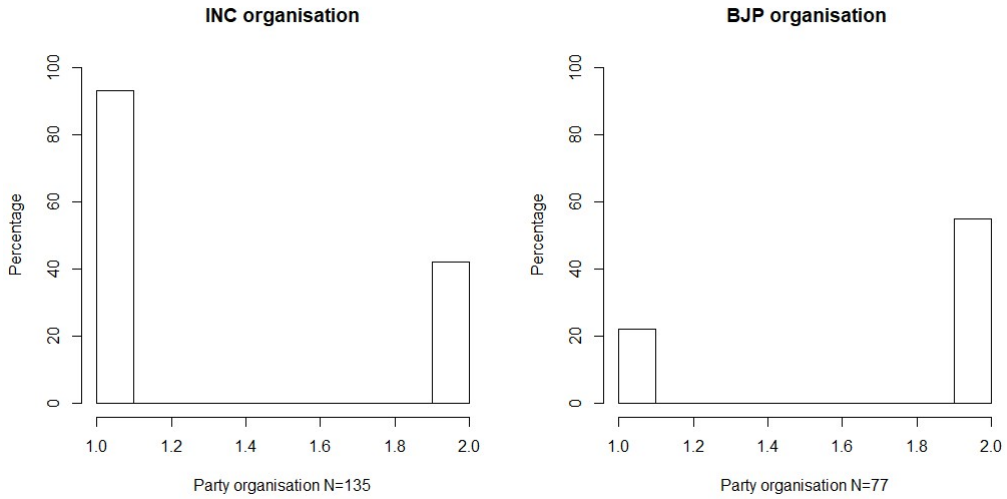


Figure 8.6: Histogram of Congress Party and the BJP organisation

From the above Figure 8.6 we can say that Congress state units have proportionately lower levels of autonomy in comparison to the BJP state units.[138] This confirms the existing commentary on party organisation in India, which associates Congress Party with higher level of centralisation in comparison to the BJP (Farooqui and Sridharan, 2014)[139]. In addition to inter-party organisational differences, in Figure 8.6 we can also see that Congress Party has intra-party variation with 31 percent of its state units having high levels of autonomy. Similarly in the BJP's case, despite the majority of state units having higher levels of autonomy, 28 percent of the BJP's regional branches have low levels of autonomy. What explains these intra-party organisational variations across states and also within each state, but over time? In the following section, I explain the above variations using the time-series cross-sectional (TSCS) data on party organisations of the BJP and the Congress Party.

[138]Please see Figure 1 in the appendix for the party organistion trends by state.

[139]I do acknowledge that Farooqui and Sridharan (2014: 80) categorise both the Congress Party and the BJP as centralised party organisations in India. However, for the BJP, they mention that the centralisation has taken place since 2000, and particularly after 2004. The data analysis in this section involves data that was coded between 1967-2004, and before the transformation of the BJP post-2004, as mentioned by Farooqui and Sridharan.

8.4.2 Measuring the primary explanatory variable

My primary independent variable is that of incumbency. As mentioned in the previous chapter (see Table 7.1), theoretically speaking there are four possible incumbency scenarios. I have manually coded this variable to capture all the four scenarios.

I have included two independent variables and an interaction between them. First, I included a 0/1 dummy variable indicating whether the central branch is incumbent (1) or no (0). Second, I include a 0/1 dummy variable indicating whether the state branch is incumbent (1) or no (0). Third, I include an interaction term-central branch incumbency × state branch incumbency for conditional effects.[140]

8.4.3 Controls

The main controls are based on the alternative hypotheses and explanations identified in the previous chapter. I have discussed them at length in the previous chapter, but in this chapter I discuss how I operationalize each of them.

1 Internal party features: Existing scholarship in comparative politics (Hopkin, 2009) has underlined the importance of 'party centred' accounts in providing an understanding of how parties devolve autonomy to their sub-national units. In other words, a party organisation is predominantly shaped by way the party came to be formed exerting a path dependency effect, also

[140]See appendix Table 4 and 5 for additional robustness checks where I merge Scenarios 1,3, and 4 =0 and scenario 2=1 to create a single Incumbency variable.

known as the genetic model (Panebianco, 1988; Ware, 1996). I use two types of measures to account for internal party features. For the purpose of this analysis, it could be argued that Congress and BJP state units are able to extract more autonomy in places where they are historically strong. As discussed in chapter 7, I have captured the historical strength of the Congress Party and the BJP by using vote share as opposed to the seat share measure. This is because of India's disproportionate electoral system where a party might be able to win seats and form government without winning majority of the votes because of opposition's failure in coordinating the electoral campaign as opposed to the party's actual strength (Ziegfeld and Tudor, 2015). I have decided to include a lag of the Congress Party and the BJP vote share in order to account for Congress and BJP support in previous elections. Put differently, Congress and BJP state units are able to extract more autonomy from the central branch if they have received a higher vote share in previous elections. Based on this hypothesis, we should expect the lagged Congress and BJP vote share to have a positive correlation with autonomy for their regional branches.

Second, I have included a dummy variable that captures whether the present day territories of states include territories from predominantly British-direct ruled states or contain significant territories from British-direct ruled states and princely states or contain territories from princely states.[141] As mentioned in the chapter 3, existing scholarship has shown that the Congress Party was able to spread its organisation in British governed states as opposed to princely states. Therefore, we should expect higher levels of autonomy for the Congress Party in British-direct ruled states as opposed to the Mixed-ruled states and/or princely states. In contrast, for the BJP, Jaf-

[141]The coding is based on Wood's (1984: 66) classification used also in Chapter 3. See Table 3.2.

frelot (1999) points how the BJP was stronger in princely states as opposed to the British-direct ruled states. Therefore, we should expect higher levels of autonomy for the BJP in princely states as opposed to the British-direct ruled states and/or Mixed states. Being a nominal variable I have included dummy variables in the model with the third category (predominantly from princely states) as a reference category. The coding is based on Wood's (1984a: 66) classification of states based on their historical boundaries and cross-checked with data provided by Verghese (2016).

2 Sub-nationalism: variation in the organisations of polity-wide parties could be explained by whether the regions are culturally different from the polity as whole (Fabre, 2008; Hopkin and Van Houten, 2009). Regional branches of polity-wide parties are more likely to have autonomy in sub-national units with high levels of sub-nationalism as opposed to those sub-national units that do not exhibit strong regional feelings. Like the previous section, I use Singh's (Singh, 2015b) sub-nationalism scores to measure sub-nationalism.

3 Economic leverage: Diwakar (2010) argues that it is not just centre-led decentralisation that affects the party systems at the state-level, but the states economic dependence on the centre that affects its particular party system. The same argument can be interpreted when evaluating the internal organisational dynamics within the parties. It could be argued that regional branches of polity-wide parties in regions which have higher economic leverage from the central level are more likely to extract autonomy from their central branch as opposed to those regional branches of polity-wide parties in regions which do not have high levels of economic leverage. Once again, like the previous section, I have used Nooruddin and Chhibber's measure of fiscal space to measure a state's level of economic leverage. Consistent with Nooruddin and Chhibber, I have taken a logarithmic transformation of the

raw fiscal space a state enjoys. A higher fiscal space score would indicate a higher level of economic leverage from the central level. The expectation is that those sub-national units with higher fiscal space are more likely to have autonomous regional branches.

4 Nature of regional party system: As argued by Fabre and Swenden (2013: 346), the nature of party competition is another important factor that affects the organisation of polity-wide parties. In regions where the party system is nationalised i.e. where effective competition is between polity-wide parties, polity-wide parties find it easy to constrain autonomy of their regional branches. On the other hand, where the regional party system is weakly nationalised i.e. where polity-wide parties face competition from regional parties, polity-wide parties find it difficult to constrain autonomy of its sub-national branches. I have captured this explanation using the Effective Number of Parties (vote share wise-calculated, ENOP.Votes) measurement where a higher score reflects presence of strong regional parties. Once again, based on the explanation we should expect to have a positive correlation with autonomy for regional branches.

5 Regional branch autonomy is also affected by the *timing* of regional elections (Deschouwer, 2006). This is because polity-wide parties may feel more inclined to constrain the level of regional branch autonomy if the election result may be interpreted as a popularity test for the central government (Fabre and Swenden, 2013: 346; Jeffery and Hough, 2003). Regional branch autonomy is often constrained when general and regional elections coincide and when they are held closer to the general elections as opposed to when regional elections are held further away from the general elections. I have operationalized this explanation using a dummy variable where 0 = election held in the same year as general election and 1 = election not held in the

same year as the general elections.

6 Time: the 1989 general elections were a landmark election in India as they brought the advent of coalition politics at the national level (Ziegfeld, 2012). The party system went through a major shift in the post-1989 period with the Congress Party losing its dominance not only at the national-level, but also at the sub-national level. Moreover, the July 1991 economic reforms in India unleashed political and economic decentralisation that made the state-level politically and economically more autonomous in comparison to the pre-1991 era (Sinha, 2004). I have decided to include only one dummy variable post-1989 (coalition.NL) as opposed to including both post-1989 and post-1991, as a result of multicollinearity issues. Importantly, in order to capture the conditional effects of coalition politics, I have included two additional interaction terms: central branch incumbency dummy × coalition politics at the national level and state branch incumbency dummy × coalition politics (Coalition.SL) at the state level.

Table 8.3: Descriptive Statistics: Congress Party

Statistic	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Max
Congress regional branch autonomy	119	1.3	0.54	1	3
Congress.Central.Incumbency	119	0.588	0.494	0	1
Congress.State.Incumbency	119	0.462	0.500	0	1
Election.timing	119	0.58	0.49	0	1
Coalition.NL	119	0.44	0.49	0	1
Coalition.SL	119	0.46	0.50	0	1
ENOP.votes	119	4.063	1.231	2.460	8.400
Ln.fiscal.space	119	11.530	1.465	8.680	14.380
sub.nationalism	119	2.217	1.283	0.000	4.000
lag.Congress.voteshare	119	34.808	11.388	0.000	56.360
Direct.Rule states	119	0.38	0.48	0	1
Mixed.Rule states	119	0.54	0.49	0	1
Princely.Ruled states	119	0.06	0.25	0	1

Table 8.4: Descriptive Statistics: BJP

Statistic	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Max
BJP regional branch autonomy	61	2.32	0.78	1	3
BJP.Central.Incumbency	61	0.460	0.502	0	1
BJP.State.Incumbency	61	0.245	0.434	0	1
Election.timing	61	0.7	0.0.45	0	1
Coalition.NL	61	0.68	0.49	0	1
Coalition.SL	61	0.475	0.503	0	1
ENOP.votes	61	4.153	1.083	2.460	7.400
Ln.fiscal.space	61	12.107	1.457	8.680	14.380
sub.nationalism	61	1.881	1.240	0.000	3.940
lag.BJP.voteshare	61	16.590	11.514	0.500	44.800
Direct.Rule states	61	0.4	0.49	0	1
Mixed.Rule states	61	0.49	0.50	0	1
Princely.Ruled states	61	0.09	0.3	0	1

8.4.4 Multivariate analysis

Since my dependent variable is a binary and an ordinal one, I ran a series of logistic regressions to estimate the effects.[142] I estimate two separate models for the Congress Party and the BJP.

$$\Pr(\text{Regional branch autonomy} = 1) = \frac{\exp(\alpha + \beta_1 \text{INC.Incumbencies} ... \beta_6 \text{Mixed.Rule legacy})}{1 + \exp(\alpha + \beta_1 \text{INC.Incumbencies} + \beta_6 \text{Mixed.rule legacy})} \tag{8.5}$$

[142]The equations represent logistic regressions for the Congress Party and the BJP model. Ordinal logistic regression equations are not reported in text. Ordered logistic regression are extensions of the logistic regression where the constant is replaced with estimable cutpoints or threshold. For k categories, there will k-1 cutpoints. The cutpoints are not used in the interpretation of the results. Moreover, in the text I only report models estimated where the dependent variable is binary. For ordinal logistic regression, see Tables 4 and 5

$$\Pr(\text{Regional branch autonomy} = 1) = \frac{\exp(\alpha + \beta_1 \text{BJP.Incumbencies...} \beta_6 \text{Mixed.Rule legacy})}{1 + \exp(\alpha + \beta_1 \text{BJP.Incumbencies...} \beta_6 \text{Mixed.rule legacy})} \tag{8.6}$$

In Table 8.5, I report findings from a model where the Congress party organisation is the dependent variable. Model 1 is estimated using a simple logistic regression whereas model 2 corrects for the clustering of standard errors by state. In both the models we see that the primary variable of interest, Congress regional branch incumbency is statistically significant and has a positive relationship with our dependent variable. Substantively, this means that Congress regional branch is more likely to have higher levels of autonomy in those sub-national units where the regional branch is incumbent as opposed to those sub-national units where the regional branch is not incumbent. The other primary variables of interest, Congress central branch incumbency and the interaction variable (Congress central branch incumbency *times* Congress regional branch incumbency) is not statistically significant. However, it is important to note that the p-value of the interaction variable is close to 0.15. Also, the sign of the interaction term is in the direction hypothesised by the theoretical argument. The regional branch autonomy is less when both the central and regional branches are incumbent in a political and fiscally centralised federation like India. The conditional effects plot in Figure 8.7 further confirms the theoretical argument. In Figure 8.7 we first see that the probability of Congress regional branch is more when the Congress regional branch is incumbent as opposed to when it is not (left plot vs right plot). In addition, in the right plot we further see that the probability of Congress regional branch autonomy is higher when the Congress regional branch is incumbent and the central branch is in opposition. It decreases when Congress central branch gains incumbency i.e. when both the regional and central branches are incumbent. This confirms the

primary hypothesis specified in the theoretical argument.

In addition to incumbency, we see that ENOP.votes or regional party competition has a positive effect on the Congress regional branch autonomy. However, it is important to note that this variable is not robust to alternative specifications. In addition to ENOP.votes, we see that sub-nationalism has a positive effect on Congress regional branch autonomy. This confirms alternative explanation that Congress regional branches are able to extract more autonomy in sub-national units with high levels of sub-nationalism. With reference to the dummies of Direct ruled legacies and Mixed ruled legacies being statistically significant, this substantively indicates that Congress regional branches are more likely to be autonomous in princely states in comparison to states that were formed from historically British direct ruled states and states that have mixed historical boundaries. However, these results should be read with caution. The reference category for these dummies is princely ruled states, which only contains the state of Rajasthan.[143] Therefore, this could be down to the fact the Congress Party had strong support in Rajasthan despite the state being historically drawn from mainly princely states (Sisson, 1971).

[143]If your recall this coding is based on Wood's (1984: 66) classification. Wood includes a number of other states such as Himachal Pradesh and other small states which are not part of Chhibber et al. 15 states dataset.

Table 8.5: Logistic Regressions with Congress Party organisation as dependent variable

	Dependent variable: Congress branch autonomy	
	Logistic	*Logistic Clustered*
	(1)	(2)
Congress.Central.Incumbency	0.352	0.352
	(1.133)	(1.347)
Congress.State.Incumbency	2.078**	2.078**
	(0.971)	(1.022)
ENOP.votes	0.378	0.378*
	(0.268)	(0.206)
Election.timing	0.538	0.538
	(0.605)	(0.446)
Ln.fiscal.space	−0.215	−0.215
	(0.311)	(0.290)
Sub.nationalism	0.811***	0.811**
	(0.313)	(0.359)
Coalition.NL	0.708	0.708
	(1.210)	(1.080)
Coalitions.SL	−0.813	−0.813
	(0.830)	(0.889)
Lag.Congress.voteshare	0.049	0.049
	(0.034)	(0.045)
Direct.ruled	−1.986**	−1.986***
	(0.978)	(0.438)
Mixed.ruled	−1.258	−1.258***
	(0.850)	(0.402)
Congress.Central.Incumbency:Congress.State.Incumbency	−1.811	−1.811
	(1.121)	(1.308)
Congress.Central.Incumbency:Coalition.NL	0.072	0.072
	(1.226)	(1.340)
Congress.State.Incumbency:Coalitions.SL	0.506	0.506
	(1.072)	(1.128)
Constant	−3.555	−3.555
	(4.371)	(3.859)
Observations	119	119
Log Likelihood	−50.123	
Clustered SE	No	Yes

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

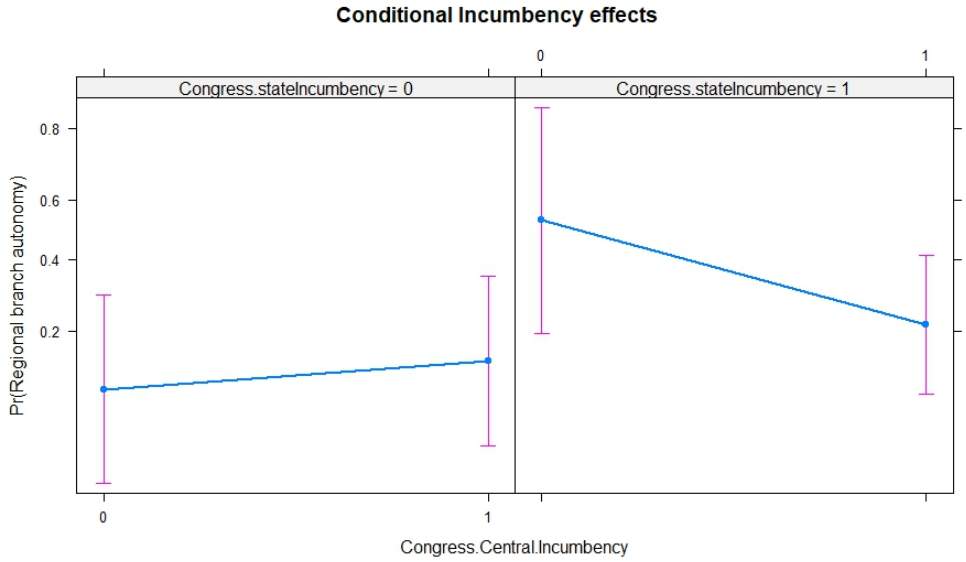


Figure 8.7: Conditional effects for INC.Incumbency with standard error bars

In Table 8.6 I report findings from models where the BJP is the main dependent variable. Modelling BJP's regional branch autonomy created three main problems. First, the overall lower number of cases in the dataset posed problems in estimating a logistic regression. Second, the lower number of cases for specific states created problems for clustering standard errors by state.[144] Third, quasi-separation with reference to the primary variable of incumbency and BJP regional branch autonomy is particularly problematic (Rainey, 2016).[145] The likelihood function under quasi-separation also monotonically increases as the coefficient of *Incumbency* increases, which implies that the maximum likelihood estimate does not exist.

The first model is a naive model which does not account for the bias resulting from clustering, small number of cases per panel and quasi separation in the data. The second model accounts for the clustering of standard errors by state, and to ensure robustness of the results, it reports p values from bootstrapped asymp-

[144]The clustered standard errors might (non-asymptotically) be downward biased when the number of clusters is very small (Angrist and Pischke, 2008)

[145]I have used package 'brglm2' in R to detect separation in the model. The detection is based on the method for detecting separation developed by (Konis2007).

totically valid Gaussian t-statistics as suggested by Esarey and Menger (2018). Finally, to account for quasi-separation in the data, I have estimated a penalised logistic regression.[146] In addition, as recommended by Gelman et al., 2008, I have also estimated a Bayesian logistic regression (see Table 6 in appendix).

Using model 3 in Table 8.6 to interpret the substantive findings, we first see that the BJP central and regional branch incumbency variables are statistically significant and have a positive sign. More importantly, we also see that the BJP state branch incumbency has a greater effect on BJP regional branch autonomy in comparison to the BJP central branch incumbency. This confirms the hypothesis specified in the theoretical argument section that regional branch autonomy is higher when the BJP state branch is incumbent in comparison to a scenario where the central branch is incumbent. In addition to the incumbency variables, ENOP.votes, election timing, fiscal space, and an interaction between BJP central branch incumbency and coalition politics at the national level is statistically significant. The positive signs for ENOP.votes and fiscal space indicate higher probability for BJP regional branch autonomy when the region has greater political competition and economic leverage at the central level. The negative sign for the election timing variable indicates that the probability of BJP regional branch autonomy is higher in those sub-national units where the elections are held in the same general election year as opposed to those elections that are held away from the general elections. Finally, the negative sign for interaction between BJP central branch incumbency and coalition politics at the national level indicates that the BJP regional branch autonomy is lower when the BJP's central branch is incumbent with coalition partners. Does this contradict the coalition politics hypothesis specified earlier that the BJP regional branch autonomy is high if the

[146]The penalised logistic regression is calculated in R using package rms, with default penalty scale for those variables that have quasi-separation. With reference to my model, it penalises the parameters: BJP.central.Incumbency, BJP.state.Incumbency and their interactions.

central branch has to the share the advantages of incumbency with coalition partners? From the literature on the BJP's rise in Indian politics we also know that the BJP only formed national governments in the post-1989 period. Therefore, I would argue that the negative sign confirms the primary argument specified in the theoretical section that the BJP regional branch autonomy is low when the BJP's central branch is incumbent at the national level, albeit with coalition partners. This is because the BJP controlled the most important portfolios when they formed central governments with coalition partners. For example, during the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government between 1998-2004, the BJP kept the core portfolios of Prime Ministership, Home Ministership, and Finance Ministership. It is true that coalition members did have important portfolios like Defence and Railways, but the ownership of key governmental portfolios (mentioned above) meant that the spoils of the central government were disproportionately in favour of the BJP as opposed to the coalition members. This meant that coalition politics did not constrain the BJP's central branch's ability to limit autonomy of those state branches which were incumbent at the state-level (even those that were incumbent on their own). Finally, I have not reported predicted probability graphs for the BJP's case because of very large standard errors as a result of quasi-separation in the data.

Table 8.6: Logistic Regressions with BJP organisation as dependent variable

	Dependent variable:BJP branch autonomy		
	Logistic	*Logistic Clustered*	*Logistic penalised*
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Constant	−14.971**	−14.971	−14.971
	(7.283)	(5.713)	(4.789)
BJP.Central.Incumbency	17.203	17.203	7.397***
	(10,754.010)	(3.764)	(1.601)
BJP.State.Incumbency1	19.956	19.956**	10.076***
	(4,162.413)	(3.386)	(2.839)
ENOP.votes	1.654	1.654	1.654**
	(1.015)	(0.964)	(0.807)
Election.timing	−1.989	−1.989	−1.989*
	(1.422)	(1.419)	(1.189)
Ln.fiscal.space	1.054*	1.054*	1.054***
	(0.582)	(0.355)	(0.298)
Sub.nationalism	0.524	0.524	0.524
	(0.575)	(0.546)	(0.457)
Coalition.NL	−3.995	−3.995	−3.995
	(2.092)	(3.463)	(2.903)
Coalitions.SL	−1.007	−1.007	−1.007
	(1.135)	(1.148)	(0.962)
Lag.BJP.voteshare	0.024	0.024	0.024
	(0.062)	(0.056)	(0.047)
Direct.ruled	0.914	0.914	0.914
	(2.109)	(1.618)	(1.356)
Mixed.ruled	−0.654	−0.654	−0.654
	(1.896)	(1.273)	(1.066)
BJP.Central.Incumbency ∗BJP.State.Incumbency	−0.851	−0.851	−0.870
	(4,878.052)	(3.464)	(2.904)
BJP.Central.Incumbency ∗Coalition.NL	−16.657	−16.657**	−6.851*
	(10,754.010)	(3.251)	(3.657)
BJP.State.Incumbency ∗Coalitions.SL	−0.092	−0.092	−0.114
	(4,782.413)	(1.309)	(1.095)
Observations	61	61	61
Log Likelihood	−16.372		
Clustered SE	No	Yes	Yes
χ^2			27.744** (df = 14)

Note: Clustered bootstrapped p values for model 2 *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

8.4.5 Endogeneity

The above discussion has shown how incumbency is one of the consistent explanations for intra-party organisational variation within the Congress Party and the BJP. If you recall, in chapter 7, I have dismissed the argument in favour of endogeneity. The endogeneity argument states that it is not incumbency that explains the different levels of intra-party autonomy, but rather the higher levels of intra-party autonomy explaining the regional branch's chances of gaining incumbency. In this section, I provide quantitative evidence to show that intra-party autonomy does not lead to incumbency for individual regional branches of the two main polity-wide parties. Once again, to measure intra-party autonomy, I use Chhibber et al.'s (2014) data. Following on Ziegfeld's (2016:117) use of Chhibber et al.'s data, I merge categories 2 and 3 as proxies for autonomous regional branches whereas category 1 would indicate low level of autonomy. The main dependent variable is Congress party seatshare (%) or BJP party seatshare (%) in regional elections. If the argument were to be endogenous, we would find a positive relationship between intra-party autonomy and Congress Party seatshare (%) or BJP party seatshare (%). This would indicate that intra-party autonomy does increase support for the specific regional branches' chances of gaining incumbency. I specify two models, each for a party. I choose the control variables based on the discussion in the literature on the decline of the Congress Party at the sub-national level. Similarly, for the BJP, I include the same control variables for consistency. In the BJP's case, the choice of the control variables is also consistent with the discussion in the Indian literature on the reasons behind the cross-sectional variations in the BJP's growth at the sub-national level in India.

$$
\begin{aligned}
\text{Congress.seatshare}_{it} = \alpha &+ \beta_1 \text{lag.Congseatshare}_{it} \\
&+ \beta_2 \text{INC.Organisation}_{it} \\
&+ \beta_3 \text{Ef.groups}_{it} \\
&+ \beta_4 \text{Sub.nationalism}_{it} \\
&+ \beta_5 \text{Turnout}_{it} \\
&+ \beta_6 \text{ln.Fiscal.Space}_{it} \\
&+ \beta_7 \text{Coalition.NL}_{it} \\
&+ \beta_8 \text{Ln.Income} \\
&+ \beta_9 \text{Direct.ruled} \\
&+ \beta_{10} \text{Mixed.ruled} + \epsilon_{it}
\end{aligned} \tag{8.7}
$$

$$
\begin{aligned}
\text{Congress.seatshare}_{it} = \alpha_i &+ \beta_1 \text{lag.Congseatshare}_{it} \\
&+ \beta_2 \text{INC.Organisation}_{it} \\
&+ \beta_4 \text{Sub.nationalism}_{it} \\
&+ \beta_5 \text{Turnout}_{it} \\
&+ \beta_6 \text{ln.Fiscal.Space}_{it} \\
&+ \beta_7 \text{Coalition.NL}_{it} \\
&+ \beta_8 \text{Ln.Income} + \epsilon_{it}
\end{aligned} \tag{8.8}
$$

$$
\begin{aligned}
\text{BJP.seatshare}_{it} = \alpha &+ \beta_1 \text{lag.BJPseatshare}_{it} \\
&+ \beta_2 \text{BJP.Organisation}_{it} \\
&+ \beta_3 \text{Ef.groups}_{it} \\
&+ \beta_4 \text{Sub.nationalism}_{it} \\
&+ \beta_5 \text{Turnout}_{it} \\
&+ \beta_6 \text{ln.Fiscal.Space}_{it} \\
&+ \beta_7 \text{Coalition.NL}_{it} \\
&+ \beta_8 \text{Ln.Income} \\
&+ \beta_9 \text{Direct.ruled} \\
&+ \beta_{10} \text{Mixed.ruled} + \epsilon_{it}
\end{aligned} \tag{8.9}
$$

$$
\begin{aligned}
\text{BJP.seatshare}_{it} = \alpha_i &+ \beta_1 \text{lag.BJPseatshare}_{it} \\
&+ \beta_2 \text{BJP.Organisation}_{it} \\
&+ \beta_4 \text{Sub.nationalism}_{it} \\
&+ \beta_5 \text{Turnout}_{it} \\
&+ \beta_6 \text{ln.Fiscal.Space}_{it} \\
&+ \beta_7 \text{Coalition.NL}_{it} \\
&+ \beta_8 \text{Ln.Income} + \epsilon_{it}
\end{aligned} \tag{8.10}
$$

Table 8.7: Intra-party autonomy and Congress Party seatshare (%)

	Dependent variable:	
	Congress.seatshare	
	OLS	*panel linear*
	(1)	(2)
Lag.Congseatshare	−0.244	−0.323***
	(0.158)	(0.097)
INC.organisation	2.863	5.091
	(4.662)	(5.617)
Ef.groups	4.243	
	(6.984)	
Sub.nationalism	−7.135***	−0.024
	(2.218)	(4.393)
Turnout	−0.218	−0.113
	(0.294)	(0.218)
ln.Fiscal.space	−6.757**	−6.982*
	(2.865)	(3.798)
Coalition.NL	−8.218	−8.952
	(9.400)	(9.144)
Ln.Income	20.328**	19.120*
	(7.936)	(10.288)
Direct.ruled	−22.483**	
	(7.073)	
Mixed.ruled	−6.103	
	(4.991)	
Constant	−16.009	
	(70.814)	
Observations	119	119
Adjusted R^2	0.183	0.040
Residual Std. Error	22.088 (df = 108)	

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
Model 1 includes panel-corrected standard errors
Model 2 includes standard errors clustered by state

In Table 8.7 we see that our primary variable of interest Congress organisation is not statistically significant at conventional levels of significance. This is consistent with alternative model specifications. This confirms my disagreement with the argument in favour of endogeneity. In other words, the models above confirm that increasing intra-party autonomy does not lead to increasing support for Congress Party at the sub-national level in India.

In the BJP's case (see Table 8.8), the primary variable of interest BJP organisation is statistically significant at 90 % confidence level. Importantly, the model is not robust to alternative specifications. This indicates that increasing intra-party autonomy does not systematically lead to increasing support for the BJP at the regional level.

To summarise, I wish to reiterate that intra-party autonomy does not increase the regional party branches' chance of gaining incumbency. This is the case for both the parties. Incumbency could be a result of a host of other factors, which are beyond the scope of this chapter to be discussed. Finally, does this contradict the argument set forward in the first part of this dissertation? In the first part of this dissertation, I have argued that intra-party autonomy explains the dominance of polity-wide parties at the sub-national level. I have not argued that intra-party autonomy explains the individual parties chances of gaining incumbency. Of course, intra-party autonomy changes the structure of inter-party competition at the state-level where a presence of a single regional branch restricts competition in the state between polity-wide parties. An explanation for a state-level party system is different from an explanation focusing on individual parties.

Table 8.8: Intra-party autonomy and BJP seatshare (%)

	Dependent variable:	
	BJP.seatshare	
	OLS	*panel linear*
	(1)	(2)
Lag.BJPseatshare	0.474***	0.207
	(0.161)	(0.250)
BJP.organisation	9.028*	6.987
	(4.875)	(5.341)
Ef.groups	6.809	
	(5.238)	
Sub.nationalism	−2.641	2.689
	(3.406)	(6.575)
Turnout	−0.367*	−0.005
	(0.195)	(0.175)
ln.Fiscal.space	−1.124	−0.820
	(2.183)	(0.681)
Coalition.NL	13.452**	14.692**
	(6.374)	(5.393)
Ln.Income	6.754	16.692*
	(9.641)	(12.250)
Direct.ruled	−13.890	
	(9.651)	
Mixed.ruled	−1.573	
	(6.451)	
Constant	−35.830	
	(78.509)	
Observations	61	61
Adjusted R^2	0.508	0.300
Residual Std. Error	14.422 (df = 50)	

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
Model 1 includes panel-corrected standard errors
Model 2 includes standard errors clustered by state

8.5 Discussion

In section 8.3 and section 8.4, I have tested my main arguments using a larger dataset of the Indian states. In both the sections, I have tried to incorporate a number of alternative explanations as control variables so as to test my main arguments after taking into account possible alternative explanations. In my main empirical chapters, I have shown how polity-wide parties are able to dominate Gujarat's party system because a single polity-wide party has consistently had high levels of autonomy at the regional level. In contrast, in the case of Maharashtra, we see that polity-wide parties are unable to dominate the electoral system because both the polity-wide parties - the Congress Party and the BJP - have not consistently had high levels of autonomy from their respective central branch. The statistical analysis involving a larger dataset of Indian states confirms the importance of intra-party autonomy. Despite using a number of different estimating techniques, the primary variable of interest, party organisation is positive and statistically significant at conventional levels of significance.

In section 8.4, I statistically tested the importance of incumbency in explaining party organisational variation at the sub-national level in India. The incumbency explanation is positive and statistically significant for both the Congress Party and the BJP. In addition to the incumbency explanation, there are a number of other (specific to each party) factors that are relevant in explaining intra-party organisational variation for the Congress Party and the BJP. For the Congress Party, we see that sub-nationalism has a positive and a statistically significant relationship in explaining party organisational variation at the sub-national level. While we were able to rule out the effect of sub-nationalism in explaining variation across Gujarat and Maharashtra, a larger Indian dataset lends support for this

alternative explanation. Similarly, in the case of the BJP, apart from the main incumbency explanation, we find that fiscal space and ENOP.votes consistently have a positive and statistically significant relationship in explaining party organisational variation. In the comparative study of Gujarat and Maharashtra we were able to rule out the effect of these alternative explanations, but we are unable to ignore them when we include a larger dataset of other Indian states. These findings, however, should not be seen as contradicting the qualitative comparative work from the previous chapter. In the comparative work, while ruling out these alternative explanations, I have mentioned that they are necessary conditions, but not sufficient, to explain party organisational variation. The large-N study of Indian states has only flagged these necessary conditions while keeping the primary theoretical claim of incumbency intact.

By way of conclusion, I want to underscore that the main explanations of intra-party autonomy and incumbency developed through the comparative study of Gujarat and Maharashtra are positive and statistically significant at conventional levels of significance. In addition, statistical analysis of a larger Indian dataset has also shown the relevance of some alternative explanations in addition to the main explanation. Future research and studies should investigate these explanations through a nested comparative study of different Indian states. A combination of comparative in-depth work along with a large-N design of different Indian states is an ideal approach in gaining confidence for our results.

Finally, I wish to underline that the results in both the above sections are based on the primary variable (either independent or dependent) of party organisation, which is based on Chhibber et al.'s coding exercise. While Chhibber et al. are primarily involved in coding intra-party institutionalisation, I have discussed at length how their coding could be used as a proxy for intra-party autonomy. Future

research should develop a larger database of the levels of intra-party autonomy for the main polity-wide parties in India. Testing the above hypotheses on a database of intra-party autonomy would provide additional robustness for the results obtained in the above sections.

Chapter 9

Conclusions

In this thesis, I have addressed two important research questions; why do polity-wide parties dominate in some Indian states but not others, and why do polity-wide parties have different levels of intra-party autonomy at the sub-national level in India. The dissertation began with answering the first research question. The first research question is directly linked to the concept of party system nationalisation, but one which is conceptualised at the sub-national level. While a number of studies have used party system nationalisation as an explanatory variable in explaining increasing levels of social spending (Jurado, 2014), democratic accountability (Rodden and Wibbels, 2011) and political stability (Brancati, 2011), existing literature that uses party system nationalisation as a dependent variable have been confined to the national level. Deviating from this trend, this study focuses on the sub-national level. In multi-level settings across the world, the sub-national level is gaining more power and importance, and this increase in power and importance should be reflected in the scholarly work on it. This thesis attempted to do this in a multi-level polity like India. I exploited the striking variations in the dominance

of polity-wide parties found at the sub-national level in India to advance a novel theoretical argument to explain it. Using a combination of statistical analysis and comparative case study of Gujarat and Maharashtra, I demonstrate how a polity-wide party's internal structure (i.e. intra-party autonomy) is able to shape the regional party system in which it competes. In sub-national units where at least a single regional branch of a polity-wide party has autonomy, non-polity-wide parties find it hard to challenge the dominance of polity-wide parties. Autonomy within at least a single regional branch of a polity-wide party sustains the dominance of polity-wide parties in that state because it opens up alternatives among regional political elites to switch parties as opposed to forming or joining new ones. In contrast, in those sub-national units where all the existing polity-wide parties have less autonomous regional branches, non-polity-wide parties are gradually able to challenge polity-wide parties dominance. This is because regional political elites have more incentives for forming new political parties or joining existing non-polity-wide parties.

Certainly, for this argument to work there are certain assumptions one has to make about the context. The first assumption is the presence of at least a single dominant polity-wide party at the time of country's transition to democracy. Unlike the formation of European party systems where the nationalisation was a gradual process coinciding with the development of representative democracies, my argument is more about explaining why dominant polity-wide parties were able to sustain their dominance in some states but not others. It is not about explaining the origins of polity-wide party dominance, but more about its sustenance. Second, the state or the sub-national level should have important decision making powers and jurisdiction over key policy arenas. It is only under politically and economically decentralised settings that politicians have incentives of gaining autonomy at the sub-national level. In political settings which are highly centralised,

politicians will have little incentives to gain autonomy at the sub-national level, and therefore they will be attached to existing polity-wide parties even when they do not have autonomy for their sub-national units. Third, is an assumption of an elite centred or a top-down understanding of politics. I have assumed that when existing regional political elites decide to switch parties they bring with them local electoral support with them. This is because in a clientelistic democracy, voters are largely indifferent to the type of party or candidate for which they vote so long as the party or candidate is able to deliver clientelistic goods. From the voters perspective whichever party or candidate is most likely to provide the clientelistic benefits will be the voters preferred party or candidate. Both polity-wide and non-polity-wide parties can provide clientelistic benefits, by roping in the 'right' types of candidates, and voters should have no reason to prefer one type of party to another. In such a context, when elites decide to form or join non-polity-wide parties then these parties will be successful so long as the elites are able to guarantee clientelistic benefits to the voters. I have shown how the Indian case satisfies the three principal assumptions.

If intra-party autonomy is important in explaining the dominance of polity-wide parties at the sub-national level, then why do polity-wide parties have different levels of intra-party autonomy? In the second part of the dissertation, I argued that the key explanation behind different levels of intra-party autonomy at the sub-national level is incumbency. By incumbency, I specifically mean the presence of the party's central or regional branch in office either at the central or state level. This renders four possible scenarios where either the (1) party's central and regional branch is in office, (2) only the party's regional branch is office while party's central branch is in opposition, (3) the party's central branch is in office while the party's regional branch is in opposition, and (4) the party's central and regional branch are in opposition. Together these four scenarios constitute

the incumbency explanation. I used the incumbency explanation to explain party organisational variation at the sub-national level in India.

I evaluated the importance of this explanation vis-a-vis the ones highlighted in the comparative politics literature. Existing literature has focused on federalism, electoral system, sub-nationalism, nature of regional party competition, the timing of regional elections, and internal party features in explaining the differing levels of intra-party autonomy. While these explanations are of particular importance in understanding cross-national variations, I evaluate their merit at the sub-national level within a country. I did this for the two main polity-wide parties - the BJP and the Congress Party - at the sub-national level in India. Once again, I combined statistical analysis of all major Indian states with a comparative study of Gujarat and Maharashtra. The importance of the incumbency explanation is confirmed by both the statistical analysis of a larger dataset of Indian states and by a comparative study of Gujarat and Maharashtra. In addition, the statistical analysis highlights other important explanations. For the Congress Party, we see that sub-nationalism has a positive and a statistically significant relationship in explaining party organisational variation at the sub-national level. And, for the BJP, apart from the main incumbency explanation, we found that economic leverage of a particular sub-national unit and the nature of regional party competition consistently have a positive and statistically significant relationship in explaining higher levels of intra-party autonomy. In the comparative study of Gujarat and Maharashtra, we were able to rule out the effect of these alternative explanations in explaining party organisational variation within the Congress Party and the BJP at the sub-national level. These findings, however, should not be seen as contradicting the qualitative comparative work. In the comparative work, while ruling out these alternative explanations, I have mentioned that they are necessary conditions but not sufficient to explain party organisational variation. The

large-N study of Indian states has only flagged these necessary conditions while keeping the primary theoretical claim of incumbency consistently important.

Having recapitulated the dissertation's main arguments, I use the rest of this chapter to discuss the implications of this research, both from why it is important to study polity-wide party's dominance at the sub-national level as well as the implications of explaining party organisational variations within the two main polity-wide parties at the sub-national level. Finally, I conclude by pointing out avenues for future research based on the conclusions of this study.

9.1 Polity-wide partys dominance at the sub-national level

When polity-wide parties dominate at the sub-national level, it contributes to party system nationalisation. As mentioned above, a number of studies have explored the consequences of party system nationalisation in a polity. However, the focus on explaining variations in party system nationalisation is limited. Moreover, those that do exist tend to focus on the national level (a notable exception is Diwakar (2010)). In the Indian case, scholars have long argued that the geographic concentration of groups, in particular caste, but also language, is important in explaining why the Indian party system is increasingly denationalised. In my thesis, I have also acknowledged the importance of these studies in helping us understand changes at the national level, but have demonstrated their inability to explain changes at the sub-national level. Political and economic decentralisation, the concentration of power, coalition politics were national-level changes, then why do we still observe variations in the dominance of polity-wide parties in some

states but not others? Does the specific geographic concentration of caste or linguistic groups help explain the variations at the sub-national level? Most Indian states have specific geographic concentration of caste and linguistic groups, which demonstrates why the geographic concentration of caste and linguistic groups are not sufficient to explain why some states are dominated by polity-wide parties where others are not.

Party organisation is an important explanatory variable that explains why some states are dominated by polity-wide parties while others are not. In particular, as I have shown in the thesis, intra-party autonomy helps explain polity-wide party dominance even after controlling for political and economic decentralisation, the advent of coalition politics at the national level, and sociological factors, such as the role of sub-nationalism and social cleavages at the sub-national level. By concentrating on the party's internal organisation, this thesis directly speaks to the growing literature on the role of party organisation in shaping party systems and electoral outcomes in India.

While there exists a plethora of work on the role of party organisation in shaping the regional party systems in Western democracies, systematic work in India is limited to a few studies (Ziegfeld, 2016b; Chhibber et al., 2014; Bohlken, 2016). This gap exists because of the difficulty in collecting data on intra-party indicators in India. My own experience from an extensive period of fieldwork in Gandhinagar, Ahmedabad, Mumbai, and New Delhi confirms this difficulty. Politicians in India are particularly weary of speaking about basic features of their party's organisation to 'outsiders'. However, they did open up when local journalists introduced me to the local politicians. In addition to speaking with politicians, I have extensively scanned newspapers and political magazines for information on intra-party organisations, and then ask specific questions to politicians based on

the information I had already collected. Therefore, the bulk of my primary research material comes from manually going through newspaper clippings before, during, and in some cases, after all the regional elections held in both Gujarat and Maharashtra in the post-1989 period. This technique allowed me to tap into a number of intra-party indicators that were long considered the 'secret garden' of Indian politics.

This approach also has a practical implication. While existing work on India acknowledges the role of party organisation, they fall short of providing empirical evidence to substantiate their theoretical argument. By showing that data on intra-party organisations can be collected, this thesis initiates research to see whether the theoretical arguments do match with the empirical evidence from the ground. In this sense, this study followed the tradition first set forth by Myron Weiner (1967), who in his book, *Party Building in A New Nation*, explains the success of the Congress Party by focusing on the party's organisational aspects. Building on his work, I have explored how intra-party autonomy within the BJP and the Congress Party at the regional level shaped the party system in which they competed. However, unlike Weiner, in the latter part of the thesis I have also explored why political parties in India have different organisational forms at the sub-national level.

9.2 Explaining intra-party autonomy

As mentioned above, if intra-party autonomy is important in explaining the dominance of polity-wide parties at the sub-national level, then why do polity-wide parties have different levels of intra-party autonomy? This is a particularly impor-

tant question to ask as much of the existing scholarly work in comparative politics assumes that polity-wide parties give autonomy to their sub-national branches when they face competition from non-polity-wide parties. In addition, in the comparative politics literature, decentralisation at the polity-level is invariably being positively correlated with the level of autonomy for the regional party branch. This understanding stems from the European case studies where polity-wide parties devolved autonomy to their sub-national branches in the wake of growing decentralisation and devolution at the polity-level. However, my research from the Indian case has shown how this is not always the case. Polity-wide parties in India have not consistently preserved the autonomy of their sub-national units despite growing decentralisation at the polity-level in the wake of the July 1991 economic reforms. In the first part of the thesis I have used the inconsistency in the level of autonomy for the polity-wide party's regional branches to explain how they face competition from non-polity-wide parties when their regional branches do not have autonomy. This poses a larger question. If the polity-wide party are able to avoid competition from non-polity-wide parties, then why don't they give autonomy to their regional branches? In my thesis I have argued that the level of intra-party autonomy depends on the political aspiration of the local, state and national leadership, which in turn are further mediated through their access to power. In a clientelistic context like India, access to political power, policy-making influence, and patronage resources increases the bargaining power of those politicians who have them vis-a-vis those who do not. Therefore, if either of party's branch have access to valuable governmental resources while the other does not, then this will play an important role in mediating the power dynamics within the party. Building on this logic, I have shown in this thesis how political factors such as incumbency play in an important role in mediating the interactions between politicians across different levels. This has major theoretical implications. Much of the existing work has tended to focus on the role of formal

institutional structures, such as the type of federalism and the electoral system in explaining the differing levels of intra-party autonomy cross-nationally. However, the type of federalism and electoral system does not help us in explaining the variations within a country sharing the same federal structure and/or electoral system. Once again, the sub-national comparative method offers useful guidance in moving beyond the macro-institutional variables of federal and electoral systems to account for micro-political contextual variables of incumbency, internal party features, sub-nationalism, and nature of regional party system in explaining party organisational variation within a country.

9.3 Avenues for Future research

For students of Indian politics, and for those interested in party organisation, one of the most pressing tasks this study leaves is collecting primary data on intra-party autonomy. Since there exists no systematic data on intra-party autonomy within polity-wide parties in India, I have used Pradeep Chhibber, Francesca Jensenius and Pavithra Suryanarayans dataset on intra-party institutionalisation as a proxy for measuring intra-party autonomy at the sub-national level. In chapter 8 of this thesis I have discussed at length of how intra-party institutionalisation and intra-party autonomy are related but at the same time very distinct. In order to compensate for the weakness in using intra-party institutionalisation as proxy for intra-party autonomy, I have built a unique dataset on the levels of intra-party autonomy for the two main polity-wide parties, the Congress Party and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Gujarat and Maharashtra. Future research should extend this work for all the other Indian states.

In addition, future research should also collect data on the level of influence of a regional branch on the central party branch. To my knowledge there exists no systematic data on the degree of influence a regional branch extends on the central branch. Partly this stems from lack of official quotas or a formal process for ensuring regional branch influence within the two main polity-wide parties in India. Nonetheless, this lack of formality can be overcome with a descriptive analysis of the representatives of the central branch organisation from different states. This could serve as valuable source of information in understanding regional branch influence in central party politics. A combination of these two dimensions - autonomy and influence - will give an insight into the role of party organisations in shaping the party systems at the sub-national level in India.

While there exists number of studies on Indian politics that make use of data from electoral outcomes, there exists no study that seeks to systematically integrate the two. For instance, it is important to test whether autonomous and influential regional branches of polity-wide parties in a state increase voter coordination behind polity-wide parties. The Lokniti-CSDS, New Delhi, which collects the largest public opinion data in India, has repeatedly included the following question in their survey design: "Tell me, to what extent do you agree with the statement 'compared to national parties, regional parties can provide better government in states"'. Here, we should expect voters to disagree with the statement if their state has autonomous and influential regional branches of polity-wide parties, but we are unable to provide any conclusive evidence for this until we first have data on intra-party autonomy and influence within major polity-wide parties in India.

Finally, in the theory chapter 4, I have discussed at length that not all defections affect existing party systems equally. It is only when political elites, who are

factional leaders, defect that we see a challenge to the dominance of polity-wide parties. Importantly, I have shown that autonomy within existing polity-wide parties helps accommodate the factional leader. I have also developed an empirical strategy to classify if the defecting leaders are factional or non-factional. General speaking, when factional leaders defect from the party, they will be followed by a high number of defections with them. Here, I have used candidate renomination data as a proxy to estimate the scale of defection. I have argued that if the defecting political elite is able to nominate large number of candidates who were previously associated with their former party in the new party, then s/he is a factional leader. Importantly this will also be reflected in the former party's inability to nominate its own candidates in successive elections. In contrast, if the defecting leader is unable to convince larger number of candidates from the former party then s/he is not a factional leader, and this will be reflected in the continued nomination of majority of candidates in the former party. In support of the above theoretical argument I have collected candidate renomination data for both the main parties-the Congress Party and the BJP-in Gujarat and Maharashtra. Future research should collect data on candidate renominations for the two main parties for all the states. In a party system, like India, where elites have tremendous leverage in shaping party systems, it is important to collect primary data on their movements in order to better understand their impact on party systems. The Trivedi Data Centre at the Ashoka University in Delhi National Capital Region (NCR) are in the process of developing an algorithm to map candidate (re)nomination patterns across all Indian states for all general and regional elections. However, they have not compiled the code for all the Indian states. Once complete, the director of the data centre, Gilles Verniers, has agreed to share the algorithm with me. With candidate renomination data for all the Indian states for all regional elections, I will be able to map the movement of regional politicians from one polity-wide party to another polity-wide party, polity-wide party

to non-polity-wide parties, and vice versa. In the empirical chapters (5 and 6) of this thesis, I gave a number of individual examples of politicians moving from one party to another. The candidate renomination data for all Indian states and for all regional elections will allow me to statistically test these movements on the larger dataset of Indian states.

Bibliography

Achen, Christopher H. 2000. "Why lagged dependent variables can suppress the explanatory power of other independent variables." *Annual Meeting of the Political Methodology Section of the American Political Science Association* (University of Michigan: Ann Arbor).

Adeney, Katharine. 2007. *Federalism and Ethnic Conflict Regulation in India and Pakistan*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Adeney, Katharine and Andrew Wyatt. 2004. "Democracy in South Asia-getting beyond the structure and agency debate." *Political Studies* 52(1):1–18.

Adeney, Katharine and Lawrence Saez. 2005. Introduction: Coalition politics, religious nationalism and public policy: a theoretical examination. In *Coalition Politics and Hindu Nationalism*, ed. Katharine Adeney and Lawrence Saez. London: Routledge.

Anandan, Sujata. 1999. "Declawed, but still clinging on." *Outlook* 30th Aug.

Anckar, Carsten. 2008. "On the applicability of the Most Similar Systems Design and the Most Different Systems Design in Comparative Research." *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 11(5):389–401.

Angrist, Joshua D and Jörn-Steffen Pischke. 2008. *Mostly harmless econometrics: An empiricist's companion*. New Jersey: Princeton university press.

Arora, Balveer. 2002. Political parties and the party system: The emergence of New Coalitions . In *Parties and Party Politics in India*, ed. Zoya Hasan. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Auerbach, Adam Michael. 2016. "Clients and Communities: The Political Economy of Party Network Organisation and Development in India's Urban Slums." *World Politics* 68(01):111–148.

Auerbach, Adam Michael and Aseema Sinha. 2013. "Is India a Clientelistic Democracy? Degrees of Clientelism in the World's Largest Democracy." *Annual Conference On South Asia* .

Bagchi, Amaresh. 2003. "Rethinking Federalism: Changing Power Relations Between the Center and the States." *Publius: The Journal of Federalism* 33(4):21–42.

Bavadam, Lyla. 2009. "Shaky alliances." *Frontline* 26:9th October 2009.

Bavadam, Lyla. 2012. "Modi will be a disaster in Delhi." *Frontline* 29:11th January 2013.

Bavadam, Lyla and Anupama Katakam. 2009. "Battles within." *Frontline* 26:23rd October 2009.

Beck, Nathaniel and Jonathan N Katz. 1995. "What to do (and not to do) with time-series cross-section data." *American political science review* 89(3):634–647.

Bhandari, Pranjul. 2012. "Refining state-level comparisons in India." *Planning Commission of India* (Government of India: New Delhi).

Bille, Lars. 2001. "Democratizing a Democratic Procedure: Myth or Reality?: Candidate Selection in Western European Parties, 1960-1990." *Party Politics* 7(3):363–380.

BJP. 2012. "Constitution and rules.".

URL: *http://www.bjp.org/images/pdf_2012_h/constitution_eng_jan_10_2013.pdf*

Bobbio, Tommaso. 2012. "Making Gujarat Vibrant: Hindutva, development and the rise of subnationalism in India." *Third World Quarterly* 33(4):657–672.

Bochsler, Daniel. 2010. "Measuring party nationalisation: A new Gini-based indicator that corrects for the number of units." *Electoral Studies* 29(1):155–168.

Bohlken, Anjali T. 2016. *Democratization from Above: The logic of Local Democracy in the Developing World* . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bose, Ajay. 1990. "Congress (I): Turbulent times ahead." *Indian Express* 18th Feb.

Brancati, Dawn. 2008. "The origins and strengths of regional parties." *British Journal of Political Science* 38(1):135–159.

Brancati, Dawn. 2011. *Peace by Design: Managing Intrastate Conflict through Decentralization: Managing Intrastate Conflict through Decentralization.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Brass, Paul R. 1964. "Factionalism and the Congress Party in Uttar Pradesh." *Asian Survey* 4(9):1037–1047.

Brass, Paul R. 1974. *Language, religion and politics in North India.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Brass, Paul R. 1994. *The politics of India since independence.* Vol. 1 Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Brown, Judith M. 1977. *Gandhi and Civil disobedience: the Mahatma in Indian Politics, 1928-34.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bunsha, Dionne. 2001. "A New Oarsman." *Frontline* 18:26th October 2001.

Bunsha, Dionne. 2002*a*. "An ambitious pracharak." *Frontline* 19:3rd January 2003.

Bunsha, Dionne. 2002*b*. "Poles Apart." *Frontline* 19:20th December 2002.

Bunsha, Dionne. 2002*c*. "Riding the Hate Wave." *Frontline* 19:3rd January 2003.

Bunsha, Dionne. 2008. "Modi's mandate." *Frontline* 25:18th January 2008.

Butler, David, Ashok Lahiri and Prannoy Roy. 1991. *India Decides: Elections 1952-1991*. New Delhi: Living Media India.

Cameron, A Colin and Douglas L Miller. 2015. "A practitioner's guide to cluster-robust inference." *Journal of Human Resources* 50(2):317–372.

Caramani, Daniele. 2004. *The nationalization of politics: The formation of national electorates and party systems in Western Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Chandra, Kanchan. 2004. *Why ethnic parties succeed: Patronage and Ethnic head counts in India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Chandra, Kanchan and Chandrika Parmar. 1997. "Party Strategies in the Uttar Pradesh Assembly Elections, 1996." *Economic and Political Weekly* 32(5):214–222.

Chhibber, Pradeep. 2009. "Are national elections any more than aggregations of state-level verdicts." *Economic & Political Weekly* 44(39):58.

Chhibber, Pradeep, Francesca Refsum Jensenius and Pavithra Suryanarayan. 2014. "Party organization and party proliferation in India." *Party Politics* 20(4):489–505.

Chhibber, Pradeep and Geetha Murali. 2006. "Duvergerian Dynamics in the Indian States: Federalism and the Number of Parties in the State Assembly Elections." *Party Politics* 12(1):5–34.

Chhibber, Pradeep and Irfan Nooruddin. 2004. "Do Party Systems Count?: The Number of Parties and Government Performance in the Indian States." *Comparative Political Studies* 37(2):152–187.

Chhibber, Pradeep K. 1999. *Democracy without associations: transformation of the party system and social cleavages in India.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Chhibber, Pradeep K and John R Petrocik. 1989. "The puzzle of Indian politics: social cleavages and the Indian party system." *British Journal of Political Science* 19(2):191–210.

Chhibber, Pradeep K and Susan L Ostermann. 2014. "The BJP's Fragile Mandate: Modi and Vote Mobilizers in the 2014 General Elections." *Studies in Indian Politics* 2(2):137–151.

Chhibber, Pradeep and Ken Kollman. 1998. "Party Aggregation and the Number of Parties in India and the United States." *American Political Science Review* 92(2):329–342.

Chhibber, Pradeep and Ken Kollman. 2004. *The formation of National Party Systems: Federalism and Party Competition in Canada, Great Britain, India and the United States.* New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Collier, David and James Mahoney. 1996. "Insights and pitfalls: Selection bias in qualitative research." *World Politics* 49(1):56–91.

Dahiwale, S M. 1995. "Consolidation of Maratha Dominance in Maharashtra." *Economic & Political Weekly* 30(6).

Dalton, Russell J. 1996. *Citizen politics: Public opinion and political parties in advanced western democracies.* London: Sage.

Dave, Hiral. 2012. "Modi says its loud and clear: Its Congress vs CM." *Indian Express* 3rd Dec.

Dave, Hiral. 2017. "BJP Chief Amit Shah indicates no early elections in Gujarat, eyes 150 of 182 seats." *Hindustan Times* 7th May.

De Winter, Lieven and Huri Tursan. 1998. *Regionalist parties in western Europe.* London: Routledge.

Desai, Darshan. 2002. "All Aboard." *Outlook* 11th Nov.

Desai, K D. 1967. Socio-Economic Infra-Structure of Gujarat Politics. In *State Politics in India*, ed. Iqbal Narain. Meerut: Meenakshi Prakashan pp. 105–121.

Desai, K D and Ghanshyam Shah. 2009. Gujarat: When Patels resist the Kshatriyas. In *Rise of the Plebeians? The Changing face of Indian Legislative Assemblies*, ed. Christophe Jaffrelot and Sanjay Kumar. New Delhi: Routledge.

Deschouwer, Kris. 2003. "Political Parties in Multi-Layered Systems." *European Urban and Regional Studies* 10(3):213–226.

Deschouwer, Kris. 2006. "Political parties as multi-level organizations." *Handbook of party politics* pp. 291–300.

Deschouwer, Kris and Sam Depauw. 2014. *Representing the People: A survey among Members of Statewide and Sub-state Parliaments* . Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Desh Gujarat. 2008. "Former Gujarat Chief Minister Chhabildas Mehta Dead." *Desh Gujarat* 29th Nov.

URL: *http://deshgujarat.com/2008/11/29/former-gujarat-chief-minister-chhabildas-mehta-dead/*

Deshpande, J V. 1984. "Maharashtra-Y B Chavan." *Economic & Political Weekly* 19(51-52).

Deshpande, Rajeshwari and Suhas Palshikar. 2003. "Maharashtra: challenges before the Congress system." *Journal of Indian school of Political Economy* Jan-June:2409–2422.

DeSouza, Peter. 2006. Political Nomadism and the Party System in India: The Struggle between the Fence and the Field. In *India's Political Parties*, ed. Peter DeSouza and Eswaran Sridharan. New Delhi: Sage.

Despande, Vivek. 2009. "Pratibha son gets Cong ticket, not party support in Amravati." *Indian Express* 25th Sep.

Despande, Vivek. 2014. "Modi has 22+ rallies in BJP's historic plan." *Indian Express* 1st Oct.

Despande, Vivek and Shubhangi Khapre. 2014*a*. "Fadnavis set to be CM, Gadkari says 'happy in Delhi'." *Indian Express* 23rd Oct.

Despande, Vivek and Shubhangi Khapre. 2014*b*. "Gadkari flexes 39-MLA muscle." *Indian Express* 22nd Oct.

Dhattiwala, Raheel and Michael Biggs. 2012. "The Political Logic of Ethnic Violence: The Anti-Muslim Pogrom in Gujarat, 2002." *Politics & Society* 40(4):483–516.

Diwakar, Rekha. 2010. "Party Aggregation in India: A State Level Analysis." *Party Politics* 16(4):477–496.

Downs, Anthony. 1957. "An economic theory of political action in a democracy." *Journal of Political Economy* 65(2):135–150.

Editor. 1995. "Vaghela seeks Cong help." *Indian Express* 3rd Oct.

EPW. 1979. "Congress Party-Point to Chavan." *Economic & Political Weekly* 14(11).

EPW. 1999. "Gujarat : Small Gains." *Economic & Political Weekly* 34(27).

Esarey, Justin and Andrew Menger. 2018. "Practical and Effective Approaches to Dealing With Clustered Data." *Political Science Research and Methods* First view:1–19.

Fabre, Elodie. 2008. "Party organization in a multi-level system: Party organizational change in Spain and the UK." *Regional and Federal Studies* 18(4):309–329.

Fabre, Elodie. 2011. "Measuring party organization: The vertical dimension of the multi-level organization of state-wide parties in Spain and the UK." *Party Politics* 17(3):343–363.

Fabre, Elodie and Wilfried Swenden. 2013. "Territorial Politics and statewide parties." *Regional Studies* 47(3):342–355.

Farooqui, Adnan and Eswaran Sridharan. 2014. "Incumbency, internal processes and renomination in Indian parties." *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics* 52(1):78–108.

Fearon, James D and Pieter Van Houten. 2002. "The politicization of cultural and economic difference." *Fifth meeting of the Laboratory in Comparative Ethnic Processes. Stanford University, May* .

Frontline. 1998. "Elections 98': The campaign phase." *Frontline* 15:3rd April 1998.

Frontline. 2004. "A close race." *Frontline* 21(19):24th September 2004.

Geddes, Barbara. 2003. *Paradigms and sand castles: Theory building and research design in comparative politics*. University of Michigan Press.

Gélineau, François and Éric Bélanger. 2005. "Electoral accountability in a federal system: national and provincial economic voting in Canada." *Publius: The Journal of Federalism* 35(3):407–424.

Gelman, Andrew, Aleks Jakulin, Maria Grazia Pittau and Yu-Sung Su. 2008. "A weakly informative default prior distribution for logistic and other regression models." *The Annals of Applied Statistics* 2(4):1360–1383.

Golosov, Grigorii V. 2016. "Factors of party system nationalization." *International Political Science Review* 37(2):246–260.

Graham, B. 1990. *Hindu Nationalism and Indian Politics: The origins and develoment of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Guichard, Sylvie. 2013. "A study of Narendra Modi's BJP: How Autonomous Are the Branches?" *Economic & Political Weekly* 48(9):41.

Hansen, Thomas Blom. 1996. "The vernacularisation of Hindutva: the BJP and Shiv Sena in rural Maharashtra." *Contributions to Indian Sociology* 30(2):177–214.

Hansen, Thomas Blom. 1998*a*. BJP and Politics of Hindutva in Maharashtra . In *The BJP and the compulsions of Politics in India*, ed. Thomas Blom Hansen and Christophe Jaffrelot. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Hansen, Thomas Blom. 1998*b*. The ethics of Hindutva and the spirit of capitalism. In *Compulsions of Politics*. Oxford University Press.

Hansen, Thomas Blom. 2004. *Politics of Permanent Performance: The Production of Political Authority in the Locality*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Hansen, Thomas Blom, Zoya Hasan and Christophe Jaffrelot. 1998. Short Cuts to Power: From Lucknow to Delhi. In *The BJP and the Compulsions of Politics in India*, ed. Thomas Blom Hansen and Christophe Jaffrelot. Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Harmel, Robert and Kenneth Janda. 1982. *Parties and their environment*. New York: Longman.

Harriss, John. 1999. "Comparing political regimes across Indian states: A preliminary essay." *Economic and Political Weekly* 34(48):3367–3377.

Heath, Oliver. 1999. "Anatomy of BJP's Rise to Power: Social, Regional and Political Expansion in 1990s." *Economic and Political Weekly* 34(34/35):2511–2517.

Heath, Oliver. 2014. "Does multiparty competition increase ethnic secuirty fears? Evidence from North India." *Party Politics* First View:1–12.

Hebsur, Raghavendra K. 2011. Maharashtra: Still a Bipolar System, But Turmoil Ahead. In *India's 2009 Elections: Coalition politics, party competition and Congress continuity*, ed. Ramashray Roy and Paul Wallace. New Delhi: Sage Publications.

Heller, Patrick. 2011. "Making Citizens from Below and Above: The Prospects and Challenges of Decentralization in India." *Understanding India's New Political Economy* pp. 157–171.

Hicken, Allen. 2009. *Building party systems in developing democracies.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hindustan Times. 2012. "Gujarat: former Congress spokeswoman joins BJP." *Hindustan Times* 21st Oct.

Hindustan Times. 2015. "42% of resources to go to states, Centre accepts finance commission report." *Hindustan Times* 25th Feb.

Hopkin, Jonathan. 2003. "Political Decentralization, Electoral Change and Party Organizational Adaptation: A Framework for Analysis." *European Urban and Regional Studies* 10(3):227–237.

Hopkin, Jonathan. 2009. "Party Matters: Devolution and Party Politics in Britain and Spain." *Party Politics* 15(2):179–198.

Hopkin, Jonathan and Jonathan Bradbury. 2006. "British statewide parties and multilevel politics." *Publius: Journal of Federalism* 36(1):135–152.

Hopkin, Jonathan and Pieter Van Houten. 2009. "Decentralization and state-wide parties: an introduction." *Party Politics* 15(2):131–135.

Huber, John.D and P Suryanarayan. 2014. "Ethnic inequality, political mobilization and the ethnification of political parties across states in India." *World Politics* First View.

INC. 2010. "Constitution and rules.".
URL: *https://cdn.inc.in/constitutions/inc_constitution_files/000/000/001/original/Congress-Constitution.pdf?1505640610*

Indian Express. 1990*a*. "AICC (I) backs Pawar: Revolts spreads over list." *Indian Express* 5th Feb.

Indian Express. 1990*b*. "BJP agrees to join govt headed by Chimanbhai." *Indian Express* 4th March.

Indian Express. 1990*c*. "JD promises a New Gujarat." *Indian Express* 11th Feb.

Indian Express. 1990*d*. "Maharashtra Indira Congress launched." *Indian Express* 6th Feb.

Indian Express. 1990*e*. "Maharashtra rebels agree to talks." *Indian Express* 7th Feb.

Indian Express. 1990*f*. "Pawar's triumph." *Indian Express* 5th March.

Indian Express. 1995*a*. "BJP factions dig heels over leadership issue." *Indian Express* 17th Feb.

Indian Express. 1995*b*. "Gujarat BJP rebels hold convention." *Indian Express* 25th Sep.

Indian Express. 1995*c*. "It is not the end of troubles for BJP." *Indian Express* 9th Oct.

Indian Express. 1995*d*. "No decision yet on supporting Vaghela: Cong." *Indian Express* 5th Oct.

Indian Express. 1995*e*. "Sena-BJP takes lead, Pawar concedes defeat." *Indian Express* 12th March.

Indian Express. 1995*f*. "Suresh Mehta sworn in Gujarat CM." *Indian Express* 22nd Oct.

Indian Express. 1998. "Absolutely Mrs Gandhi." *Indian Express* 16th March.

Indian Express. 2009*a*. "Cong needles NCP again, brings back 'thorn in the flesh' Digvijay." *Indian Express* 28th Sep.

Indian Express. 2009*b*. "Deshmukh's son, Shinde's daughter figure in Cong Maha list." *Indian Express* 25th Sep.

Indian Express. 2009*c*. "New formula: NCP settles for 114." *Indian Express* 17th Sep.

Indian Express. 2009*d*. "Who will be the next CM? CLP leaves it high command." *Indian Express* 25th Oct.

Indian Express. 2012*a*. "Day after, Jaitley, Munde bat for Modi as PM candidate." *Indian Express* 3rd Dec.

Indian Express. 2012*b*. "Key Cong meet to finalise nominee today." *Indian Express* 4th Nov.

Indian Express. 2012*c*. "Shukla visits sulking Amin leader to take a call today." *Indian Express* 3rd Dec.

Indian Express. 2014*a*. "Amit Shah attends meeting, BJP says willing to climb down." *Indian Express* 24th Sep.

Indian Express. 2014*b*. "Cong launches campaign, Chavan attacks NCP." *Indian Express* 1st Oct.

Indian Express. 2014*c*. "Sena-BJP." *Indian Express* 3rd Sep.

Indian Express. 2014*d*. "Sena, BJP resumes seat-sharing talks." *Indian Express* 17th Sep.

Jaffrelot, Christophe. 1996. *Hindu Nationalist Movement and Indian Politics 1925 to the 1990s: Strategies of Identity-buildings Implantation and Mobilisation*. London: Penguin Books.

Jaffrelot, Christophe. 1999. *The Hindu nationalist movement and Indian politics: 1925 to the 1990s: strategies of identity-building, implantation and mobilisation (with special reference to central India)*. India: Penguin Books.

Jaffrelot, Christophe. 2002. A specific party-building strategy: the Jana Sangh and the RSS network. In *Parties and Party Politics in India*, ed. Zoya Hasan. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Jaffrelot, Christophe. 2003. *India's silent revolution: the rise of the lower castes in North India*. New Delhi: Orient Blackswan.

Jaffrelot, Christophe. 2008. "Gujarat: The Meaning of Modi's Victory." *Economic & Political Weekly* 43(15):12–17.

Jaffrelot, Christophe. 2013. "Gujarat Elections: The Sub-Text of Modi's 'Hattrick'–High Tech Populism and the 'Neo-middle Class'." *Studies in Indian Politics* 1(1):79–95.

Jaffrelot, Christophe. 2015. "The Modi-centric BJP 2014 election campaign: new techniques and old tactics." *Contemporary South Asia* First View:1–16.

Jaffrelot, Christophe. 2016. "Narendra Modi between Hindutva and subnationalism: The Gujarati asmita of a Hindu Hriday Samrat." *India Review* 15(2):196–217.

Jaffrelot, Christophe and Gilles Verniers. 2017. "Tweedledee Tweedledum." *Indian Express* 5th Oct.

Jaffrelot, Christophe and Sanjay Kumar. 2009. *Rise of the Plebeians?: The Changing Face of the Indian Legislative Assemblies*. New Delhi: Routledge.

Jeffery, Charlie and Dan Hough. 2003. "Regional Elections in Multi-Level Systems." *European Urban and Regional Studies* 10(3):199–212.

Jenkins, Rob. 2004. *Regional reflections: comparing politics across India's states.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Jensenius, Francesca R and Pavithra Suryanarayan. 2015. "Fragmentation and decline in India's State Assemblies." *Asian Survey* 55(5):862–881.

Jensenius, Francesca R and Pavithra Suryanarayan. 2017. "Party candidate linkages and Anti-Incumbency Voting: Evidence from the Indian States." *Working Paper* .

Jones, Dawn E and Rodney W Jones. 1976. "Urban Upheaval in India: The 1974 Nav Nirman Riots in Gujarat." *Asian Survey* 16(11):1012–1033.

Jones, Mark P and Scott Mainwaring. 2003. "The Nationalization of Parties and Party Systems: An Empirical Measure and an Application to the Americas." *Party Politics* 9(2):139–166.

Jose, Vinod K. 2012. "The Emperor Uncrowned." *Caravan* 1st March.

Jurado, Ignacio. 2014. "Party system nationalisation and social spending." *European Journal of Political Research* 53(2):288–307.

Kailash, K K. 2011*a*. "Federal Calculations in State Level Coalition Governments." *India Review* 10(3):246–282.

Kailash, K K. 2011*b*. "Varieties of Comparative state research in India, States in Transition: A symposium on democracy, politics and forthcoming state elections." *Seminar* .

Kailash, K K. 2014. "Regional Parties in the 16th Lok Sabha Elections." *Economic and Political Weekly* 49(39).

Kashyap, Subhash C. 1970. "The politics of defection: The changing contours of the political power structure in state politics in India." *Asian Survey* 10(3):195–208.

Khapre, Shubhangi. 2014*a*. "BJP to hold 300 rallies across 288 seats in 48 hours." *Indian Express* 30th Sep.

Khapre, Shubhangi. 2014*b*. "In multi-cornered contest, Modi target of all parties." *Indian Express* 2nd Oct.

Khemani, Stuti. 2003. "Partisan Politics and Intergovernmental Transfers in India." *World Bank Group* Technical.

Kidwai, Rasheed. 2011*a*. *24 Akbar Road: A Short history of the people behind the rise and the fall of the Congress*. New Delhi: Hachette India.

Kidwai, Rasheed. 2011*b*. *Sonia: a biography*. New Delhi: Penguin Books India.

King, Gary and Margaret Roberts. 2012. "How robust standard errors expose methodological problems they do not fix." *Working Paper* .

King, Gary, Robert O Keohane and Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing social inquiry: Scientific inference in qualitative research*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Kitschelt, Herbert and Steven I Wilkinson. 2007. *Patrons, clients and policies: Patterns of democratic accountability and political competition.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kochanek, Stanley. 1968. *The Congress Party of India: the dynamics of one-party democracy.* New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Kochanek, Stanley. 2002. Mrs.Gandhi's Pyramid: The New Congress. In *Parties and Party Politics in India*, ed. Zoya Hasan. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Kohli, Atul. 1987. *The state and poverty in India: the politics of reform.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Konis, Kjeil. 2007. Linear programming algorithms for detecting separated data in binary logistic regression models PhD thesis University of Oxford.

Kothari, Rajni. 1964. "The Congress 'System' in India." *Asian survey* 4(12):1161–1173.

Kothari, Rajni. 1970. *Politics in India.* New Delhi: Orient Blackswan.

Krishna, Anirudh. 2003. "What Is Happening to Caste? A View from Some North Indian Villages." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 62(4):1171–1193.

Krishna, Anirudh. 2007. Politics in the Middle: mediating relationships between the citizens and the state in rural North India . In *Patrons, Clients and Policies*, ed. Herbert Kitschelt and Steven Wilkinson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kumar, Shakti S. 2016. "Amit Shah's masterstroke? Why Vijay Rupani was chosen as Gujarat CM." *India Today* 5th Aug.
URL: *https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/vijay-rupani-gujarat-chief-minister-amit-shah-bjp-nitin-patel-anandiben-333572-2016-08-05*

Laakso, Markku and Rein Taagepera. 1979. "Effective number of parties: A measure with application to West Europe." *Comparative political studies* 12(1):3–27.

Lele, Jayant. 1984. One Party Dominance in Maharashtra: Resilience and Change. In *State Politics in Contemporary India: Crisis or Continuity*, ed. John R Wood. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press.

Lenz, Gabriel S. 2013. *Follow the leader?: how voters respond to politicians' policies and performance*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Leon-Alfonso, S. 2007. *The political economy of Fiscal Decentralisation: Bringing Politics to the Study of Intergovernmnetal Transfers*. Barcelona: Institut d'Estudis Autonomics.

León, Sandra. 2014. "How does decentralization affect electoral competition of state-wide parties? Evidence from Spain." *Party Politics* 20(3):391–402.

Lieberman, Evan. 2005. "Nested Analysis as a Mixed-Method Strategy for Comparative Research." *American political science review* 99(3):435–452.

Lieberson, Stanley. 1991. "Small N's and big conclusions: an examination of the reasoning in comparative studies based on a small number of cases." *Social forces* 70(2):307–320.

Lijphart, Arend. 1971. "Comparative politics and comparative method." *The American Political Science Review* 65(3):682–693.

Lillerker, Darren. G. 2003. "Interviewing the Political Elite: Navigating a Potential Minefield ." *Politics* 23(3):207–214.

Linden, Leigh. 2004. "Are incumbents really advantaged? The preference for non-incumbents in Indian national elections." *Working Paper* .

Lipset, Seymour Martin and Stein Rokkan. 1967. *Party systems and voter alignments: Cross-national perspectives*. New York: The Free Press.

Lundell, Krister. 2004. "Determinants of candidate selection the degree of centralization in comparative perspective." *Party Politics* 10(1):25–47.

Mahoney, James. 2007. "Qualitative methodology and comparative politics." *Comparative Political Studies* 40(2):122–144.

Mahurkar, Uday. 2016. "Why Modi-Shah picked Rupani as new Gujarat CM." *Daily O* 6th Aug.

Manikandan, C and Andrew Wyatt. 2014. "Elite formation within a political party: the case of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam." *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics* 52(1):32–54.

Manor, James. 2000. "Small-Time Political Fixers in India's States: 'Towel over Armpit'." *Asian Survey* 40(5):816–835.

Manor, James. 2005. In part a myth, the BJP's organisational myth. In *Coalition politics and Hindu nationalism*, ed. Katharine Adeney and Lawrence Saez. London: Routledge.

Manor, James. 2016. "India's States: The Struggle to Govern." *Studies in Indian Politics* 4(1):8–21.

Marpakwar, Prafulla. 1995*a*. "Pawar confident of Cong victory despite rebels." *Indian Express* 10th Feb.

Marpakwar, Prafulla. 1995*b*. "Pawar may retain throne by default." *Indian Express* 2nd March.

Mendez-Lago, M. 2005. The Socialist Party in government and opposition. In *The Politics of Contemporary Spain*, ed. S Balfour. London: Routledge.

Michelutti, Lucia. 2008. *The vernacularisation of democracy: Politics, caste and religion in India*. New Delhi: Routledge India.

Miglani, Sanjeev. 1995. "Congress reins in JD (G) hands." *Indian Express* 11th Feb.

Mitra, Chandan. 2007. "A sting without Venom." *Outlook* 12th Nov.

Modi, Narendra. 2015. "Cooperative Federalism.".
URL: *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MF0hhKIe-Tw*

Naqvi, Saba. 2007. "The Vendetta Vendor." *Outlook* 17th Dec.

Narain, Iqbal, D B Mathur and Sushil Kumar. 1967. *State politics in India*. New Delhi: Meenakshi Prakashan.

New York Times. 1993. "10 Defections give Premier Majority in India Parliament." *New York Times* 31st Dec.

Nikolenyi, Csaba. 2015. Party system institutionalisation in India . In *Party system institutionalisation in Asia*, ed. Allen Hicken and Erik Martinez Kuhonta. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Nooruddin, Irfan and Pradeep Chhibber. 2008. "Unstable Politics Fiscal Space and Electoral Volatility in the Indian States." *Comparative Political Studies* 41(8):1069–1091.

Pagedar, Pramod. 1990. "Rebels may erode Cong (I) votes." *Indian Express* 9th Feb.

Pai, Sudha. 1998. "The Indian Party System under Transformation: Lok Sabha Elections 1998." *Asian Survey* 38(9):836–852.

Palshikar, Suhas. 1996. "Capturing the moment of realignment." *Economic & Political Weekly* 31(2-3):174–178.

Palshikar, Suhas. 1999. "Maharashtra : Manipulative Politics Continues." *Economic & Political Weekly* 34(13).

Palshikar, Suhas. 2004. "Revisiting state level parties." *Economic and Political Weekly* 39(14/15):1477–1479.

Palshikar, Suhas. 2013. Regional and caste parties. In *Routledge Handbook on Indian Politics*, ed. Atul Kohli and Prerna Singh. London: Routledge.

Palshikar, Suhas and Nitin Birmal. 2003. Maharashtra. In *India's 1999 general elections and 20th Century Politics*, ed. Ramashray Roy and Paul Wallace. New Delhi: Sage.

Palshikar, Suhas and Nitin Birmal. 2004. "Maharashtra : Towards a New Party System." *Economic & Political Weekly* 39(51):5467–5472.

Palshikar, Suhas, Nitin Birmal and Vivek Ghotale. 2010. "Coalitions in Maharashtra; political fragmentation or social reconfiguration." *CAS Occasional Paper Series* 4.

Panebianco, Angelo. 1988. *Political parties: organization and power.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Parekh, Angana. 1995*a*. "After Andhra, it is Gujarat now: Congress divided over support to Vaghela." *Indian Express* 1st Oct.

Parekh, Angana. 1995*b*. "Rivals launch campaign to discredit Vaghela." *Indian Express* 11th Sep.

Parekh, Angana. 1995*c*. "Talks still on, says Vajpayee." *Indian Express* 7th Oct.

Patel, Arjun. 1999*a*. Becoming Hindus: Adivasis in South Gujarat. In *Untouchables: Dalits in Modern India*, ed. S M Micheal. London: Lynne Rienner Publisher.

Patel, Girish. 2002. "Narendra Modi's One-Day Cricket." *Economic & Political Weekly* 37(48):4826–4837.

Patel, Priyavadan. 1999*b*. "Sectarian mobilisation, factionalism and voting in Gujarat." *Economic and Political Weekly* 34(34/35):2423–2433.

Patel, Priyavadan. 2003. "Gujarat: Hindutva Mobilisation and Electoral Dominance of the BJP." *Journal of Indian School of Political Economy* 15(1):123–142.

Pawar, Sharad. 2015. *On my terms: from grassroots to corridors of power* . New Delhi: Speaking Tiger.

Prakash, Angana. 1990. "The honeymoon is over in Gujarat." *Indian Express* 25th Feb.

Prakash, Aseem. 2003. "Re-imagination of the state and Gujarat's electoral verdict." *Economic and Political Weekly* 38(16):1601–1610.

Przeworski, Adam and Henry Teune. 1970. *The logic of comparative social inquiry*. Florida: Krieger Publishing Company.

Purandare, Vaibhav. 2012. *Bal Thackeray and the rise of the Shiv Sena* . New Delhi: Lotus Collection.

Rainey, Carlisle. 2016. "Dealing with separation in logistic regression models." *Political Analysis* 24(3):339–355.

Ramakrishnan, Venkitesh. 2004. "Congress winning spree." *Frontline* 21:5th November 2004.

Randall, Vicky and Lars Svåsand. 2001. "Political parties and democratic consolidation in Africa." *ECPR Joint Sessions* Grenoble(April 6-11):1–27.

Randall, Vicky and Lars Svåsand. 2002. "Party Institutionalization in New Democracies." *Party Politics* 8(1):5–29.

Rattani, Lekha and Smruti Koppakiar. 1995. "Maharashtra: Storming the citadel." *India Today* 31st March.

Ravishankar, Nirmala. 2009. "The Cost of Ruling: Anti-Incumbency in Elections." *Economic and Political Weekly* 44(10):92–98.

Renzsch, Wolfgang. 2001. "Bifurcated and integrated parties in Parliamentary Federations: The Canadian and the German Cases." *IIGR Working Paper* 4.

Rodden, Jonathan. 2004. "Comparative Federalism and Decentralization: On Meaning and Measurement." *Comparative Politics* 36(4):481–500.

Rodden, Jonathan and Erik Wibbels. 2011. "Dual accountability and the nationalization of party competition: Evidence from four federations." *Party Politics* 17(5):629–653.

Rosenthal, Donald B. 1974. "Making It in Maharashtra." *The Journal of Politics* 36(2):409–437.

Roy, Ramashray. 1966. "Selection of Congress Candidates. I: The Formal Criteria." *Economic and Political Weekly* 1(20):833–840.

Roy, Ramashray and Paul Wallace. 2007*a*. *India's 2004 elections: grass-roots and national perspectives*. Sage.

Roy, Ramashray and Paul Wallace. 2007*b*. Introduction: India shining Trumped. In *India's 2004 Elections: Grass-roots and national perspectives*, ed. Ramashray Roy and Paul Wallace. New Delhi: Sage.

Rudolph, Lloyd I and Susanne Hoeber Rudolph. 1960. "The political role of India's caste associations." *Pacific affairs* 33(1):5–22.

Rudolph, Lloyd I and Susanne Hoeber Rudolph. 1987. *In pursuit of Lakshmi: The political economy of the Indian state*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Saez, Lawrence. 2002. *Federalism without a Centre: The impact of political and economic reform on India's federal system*. London: Sage.

Saez, Lawrence and Aseema Sinha. 2010. "Political Cycles, Political Institutions and Public Expenditure in India, 19802000." *British Journal of Political Science* 40(1):91–113.

Sahgal, Priya. 2004. "On a Pressure trip." *India Today* 18th Oct.

Saiyed, Kamal. 2012. "Now in BJP, Ahmed Patel's pick slams Cong." *Indian Express* 18th Nov.

Sanghavi, Nagindas. 2010. "From Navnirman to the anti-Mandal riots: the political trajectory of Gujarat (19741985)." *South Asian History and Culture* 1(4):480–493.

Sanghvi, Nagindas. 1996. *Gujarat: A Political Analysis*. Ahmedabad: Centre for Social Studies.

Sarangi, Asha. 2013. States Reorganization Commission: A critical reading. In *Handbook of Politics in Indian states*, ed. Sudha Pai. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Sartori, Giovanni. 1976. *Parties and party systems: A framework for analysis*. Colchester: ECPR press.

Schakel, Arjan H and Wilfried Swenden. 2016. "Rethinking Party System Nationalization in India (19522014)." *Government and Opposition* FirstView:1–25.

Shah, Ghanshyam. 1975. *Caste association and political process in Gujarat: a study of Gujarat Kshatriya Sabha*. New Delhi: Popular Prakashan.

Shah, Ghanshyam. 1976. "The 1975 Gujarat Assembly Election in India." *Asian Survey* 16(3):270–282.

Shah, Ghanshyam. 1987. "Middle Class Politics Case of Anti-Reservation Agitations in Gujarat." *Economic & Political Weekly* 22(19-20-21).

Shah, Ghanshyam. 1991. "Tenth Lok Sabha Elections: BJP's Victory in Gujarat." *Economic and Political Weekly* 26(51):2921–2924.

Shah, Ghanshyam. 1994. "The BJP and Backward Castes in Gujarat." *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 14(1):57–65.

Shah, Ghanshyam. 1996. "Gujarat-BJP s Rise to Power." *Economic & Political Weekly* 31(2-3):165–170.

Shah, Ghanshyam. 1998. The BJP's Riddle in Gujarat: Caste, Factionalism and Hindutva. In *The BJP and the Compulsions of Politics in India*, ed. Christophe Jaffrelot and Thomas Blom Hansen. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Shani, Ornit. 2007. *Communalism, caste and Hindu nationalism: the violence in Gujarat*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Simha, Vijay. 1998*a*. "Kesri hands over party to Sonia." *Indian Express* 10th March.

Simha, Vijay. 1998*b*. "Pawar tries to rope in Sonia to hang Kesri." *Indian Express* 6th March.

Simha, Vijay. 1998*c*. "Sonia repackages herself, advances AICC session." *Indian Express* 18th March.

Simha, Vijay. 1998*d*. "Sonia shows party she's The Boss." *Indian Express* 17th March.

Simha, Vijay. 1998*e*. "Soniaphobia grips Kesri." *Indian Express* 9th March.

Singh, Prerna. 2015*a*. *How Solidarity Works for Welfare: Subnationalism and Social Development in India* . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Singh, Prerna. 2015*b*. "Subnationalism and Social Development: A Comparative Analysis of Indian States." *World Politics* 67(3):506–562.

Singh, Ruchika. 2015*c*. "Intra-party democracy and Indian political parties." *Policy Report* 7.

Sinha, Aseema. 2003. "Rethinking the Developmental State Model: Divided Leviathan and Subnational Comparisons in India." *Comparative Politics* 35(4):459–476.

Sinha, Aseema. 2004. "The changing political economy of federalism in India: A historical institutionalist approach." *India Review* 3(1):25–63.

Sisson, Richard. 1971. *The Congress Party in Rajasthan: political integration and institution-building in an Indian state*. Berkley: Univ of California Press.

Snyder, Richard. 2001. "Scaling down: The subnational comparative method." *Studies in Comparative International Development* 36(1):93–110.

Spodek, Howard. 1989. "From Gandhi to violence: Ahmedabad's 1985 riots in historical perspective." *Modern Asian Studies* 23(4):765–795.

Spodek, Howard. 2010. "In the Hindutva laboratory: Pogroms and politics in Gujarat, 2002." *Modern Asian Studies* 44(2):349–399.

Sridharan, Eswaran. 2002. *The fragmentation of the Indian party system, 19521999: seven competing explanations*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press pp. 475–503.

Sridharan, Eswaran. 2003. "Coalitions and party strategies in India's parliamentary federation." *Publius: The Journal of Federalism* 33(4):135–152.

Sridharan, Eswaran. 2005. "Coalition strategies and the BJP's expansion, 1989-2004." *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics* 43(2):194–221.

Sridharan, Eswaran and Peter DeSouza. 2006. Introduction: The evolution of Political Parties in India. In *India's Political Parties*, ed. E Sridharan and Peter DeSouza. New Delhi: Sage.

Stepan, Alfred, Juan J Linz and Yogendra Yadav. 2011. *Crafting state-nations: India and other multinational democracies.* Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.

Stokes, Susan C, Thad Dunning, Marcelo Nazareno and Valeria Brusco. 2013. *Brokers, voters, and clientelism: The puzzle of distributive politics.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Swenden, Wilfried. 2006. *Federalism and regionalism in Western Europe.* Houndsmills: Palgrave Macmillan.

Swenden, Wilfried and Bart Maddens. 2009. *Territorial party politics in Western Europe.* London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Swenden, Wilfried and Simon Toubeau. 2013. Mainstream parties and territorial dynamics in the UK, Spain and India. In *Federal Dynamics: Continuity, Change, and the Varieties of Federalism*, ed. Arthur Benz and Jorg Broschek. Oxford: Oxford University Press pp. 249–74.

Thachil, Tariq. 2014. "Elite Parties and Poor Voters: Theory and Evidence from India." *American Political Science Review* 108(2):454–477.

Thakkar, Usha. 1997. "Politics of Gujarat." *Economic & Political Weekly* 32(35):2199–2201.

Thorlakson, Lori. 2009. "Patterns of party integration, influence and autonomy in seven federations." *Party Politics* 15(2):157–177.

Thorlakson, Lori. 2011. "Measuring vertical integration in parties with multi-level systems data." *Party Politics* 19(5):713–734.

Tillin, Louise. 2007. "United in Diversity? Asymmetry in Indian Federalism." *Publius: The Journal of Federalism* 37(1):45–67.

Tillin, Louise. 2013. "National and Subnational Comparative Politics: Why, What and How." *Studies in Indian Politics* 1(2):235–240.

Tillin, Louise. 2015. "Indian elections 2014: explaining the landslide." *Contemporary South Asia* 23(2):117–122.

Times of India. 2009*a*. "BJP campaign to focus on development." *Times of India* 15th Sep.

Times of India. 2009*b*. "BJP denies giving Guhagar seat to Sena." *Times of India* 18th Sep.

Times of India. 2009*c*. "BJP hopes warring leaders will unite in fight for Maharashtra." *Times of India* 26th Sep.

Times of India. 2009*d*. "Its MLA Lodha vs Shaina for a BJP ticket." *Times of India* 13th Sep.

Times of India. 2009*e*. "Rebel yell: Over 110 resign from BJP." *Times of India* 21st Sep.

Trivedi, Deepal. 1998. "Alliance with Cong off: RJP." *Indian Express* 2nd Feb.

Uppal, Yogesh. 2009. "The disadvantaged incumbents: estimating incumbency effects in Indian state legislatures." *Public Choice* 138(1):9–27.

Van Biezen, Ingrid and Jonathan Hopkin. 2006. Party organization in multi-level contexts. In *Devolution and electoral politics*, ed. Dan Hough and Charlie Jeffrey. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Van Evera, Stephen. 1997. *Guide to methods for students of political science*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Varshney, Ashutosh. 2002. *Ethnic conflict and civic life: Hindus and Muslims in India*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Verghese, Ajay. 2016. *The Colonial Origins of Ethnic Violence in India*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Verma, Rahul, Jyoti Mishra, Shreyas Sardesai and Sanjay Kumar. 2014. "Return of the National' in Indian Elections: When do National-level Factors Play a Role in Influencing the Outcomes of State Assembly Elections?" *Studies in Indian Politics* 2(1):81–97.

Verniers, Gilles. 2015. "The BJP and State Politics in India: A Crashing Wave?" *Institute francais des relations internationales: Centre for Asian Studies* .

Verniers, Gilles. 2016. "Social Profiling of Legislators." *Dataset* Ashoka Uni(Trivedi Data Centre).

Verniers, Gilles and Dishil Shrimankar. 2017. "The Gujarat Difference." *Indian Express* 3rd Oct.

Vicziany, Marika. 2007. The BJP and the Shiv Sena: A Rock Marriage? . In *Hindu Nationalism and Governance*, ed. Ian McGuire. John and Coupland. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Vora, Rajendra. 2009. Maharashtra or Maratha Rashtra. In *Rise of the Plebeians? The Changing face of Indian Legislative Assemblies*, ed. Christophe Jaffrelot and Sanjay Kumar. New Delhi: Routledge.

V.Venkatesan. 2001. "A pracharak as Chief Minister." *Frontline* 18:26th October 2001.

V.Venkatesan. 2002. "Dealing with a genie." *Frontline* 19:3rd January 2003.

Ware, Alan. 1996. *Political parties and party systems*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Weiner, Myron. 1967. *Party building in a new nation: The Indian National Congress*. [Chicago]: University of Chicago Press.

White, Halbert. 1980. "A heteroskedasticity-consistent covariance matrix estimator and a direct test for heteroskedasticity." *Econometrica: Journal of the Econometric Society* pp. 817–838.

Whiteley, Paul. 1983. *The Labour Party in Crisis*. London: Methuen.

Wilkinson, Steven. 2004. *Votes and Violence: Electoral Competition and Ethnic Riots in India* . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wilkinson, Steven. 2005. "Elections in India: behind the Congress comeback." *Journal of Democracy* 16(1):153–167.

Wilkinson, Steven. 2007. Explaining changing patterns of party-voter linkages in India. In *Patrons, Clients and Policies: Patterns of democratic accountability and political competition*, ed. Herbert Kitschelt and Steven Wilkinson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press pp. 110–140.

Wilkinson, Steven. 2015. "Where's the party? The decline of party institutionalization and what (if anything) that means for democracy." *Government and Opposition* 50(3):420–445.

Wood, John R. 1975. "Extra-Parliamentary Opposition in India: An Analysis of Populist Agitations in Gujarat and Bihar." *Pacific Affairs* 48(3):313–334.

Wood, John R. 1984*a*. "British versus Princely Legacies and the Political Integration of Gujarat." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 44(1):65–99.

Wood, John R. 1984*b*. Congress Restored? The KHAM Strategy and Congress (I) Recruitment in Gujarat. In *State Politics in Contemporary India: Crisis or Continuity*, ed. John R Wood. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press pp. 197–228.

Wood, John R. 1987. "Reservations in Doubt: The Backlash Against Affirmative Action in Gujarat, India." *Pacific Affairs* 60(3):408–430.

Wyatt, Andrew. 2009. *Party system change in South India: Political entrepreneurs, patterns and processes*. London: Routledge.

Yadav, Yogendra. 1999. "Electoral Politics in the Time of Change: India's Third Electoral System, 1989-99." *Economic and Political Weekly* 34(34/35):2393–2399.

Yadav, Yogendra. 2000. Understanding the second democratic upsurge: Trends of Bahujan participation in electoral politics in the 1990s. In *Transforming India: Social and political dynamics of democracy*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press pp. 120–145.

Yadav, Yogendra and Suhas Palshikar. 2006. Party System and Electoral Politics in the Indian States, 1952-2002: From Hegemony to Convergence. In *India's Political Parties*, ed. Peter DeSouza and Eswaran Sridharan. New Delhi: Sage pp. 73–115.

Yadav, Yogendra and Suhas Palshikar. 2009*a*. "Principal State Level Contests and Derivative National Choices: Electoral Trends in 2004-09." *Economic and Political Weekly* 44(6):55–62.

Yadav, Yogendra and Suhas Palshikar. 2009*b*. "Ten thesis on state politics in India." *Seminar* 591(November).

Yagnik, Achyut and Nikita Sud. 2004. Hindutva and Beyond: The political topography of Gujarat. In *Working Paper*. London: State Politics in India in the 1990s: Political Mobilisation and Political Competition.

Yagnik, Acyuta and Suchitra Sheth. 2005. *The Shaping of Modern Gujarat: Plurality, Hindutva, and Beyond*. New Delhi: Penguin Books India.

Ziegfeld, Adam. 2009. Rule of law and party systems-a study of regional political parties in India PhD thesis Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Ziegfeld, Adam. 2012. "Coalition Government and Party System Change: Explaining the Rise of Regional Political Parties in India." *Comparative Politics* 45(1):69–87.

Ziegfeld, Adam. 2014. "Electoral Rules and elite collusion: achieving Duvergerian Outcomes in India through Pre-Election Alliances." *Working Paper* .

Ziegfeld, Adam. 2016*a*. Dynasticism across Indian political parties . In *Democratic Dynasties: State, Party and Family in Contemporary Indian Politics*, ed. Kanchan Chandra. New Delhi: Cambridge University Press.

Ziegfeld, Adam. 2016*b*. *Why Regional Parties? Clientelism, Elites and the Indian Party System*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ziegfeld, Adam and Maya Tudor. 2010. "Subnational Democratization in India: Colonial Competition and the Challenge to Congress Dominance." *Working Paper* .

Ziegfeld, Adam and Maya Tudor. 2015. "How opposition parties sustain single-party dominance: Lessons from India." *Party Politics* First View:1–12.

Appendices

Table 1: Types of parties

Polity-wide Parties (PW)

INC = Congress Party

BJP = Bharatiya Janata Party

JD = Janata Dal

JP = Janata Party

Regional Parties (RP)

CPM = Communist Party of India (Marxist)

CPI = Communist Party of India

JP = Janata Party

PSP = Praja Socialist Party

SWA = Swatantra Party

NCO = Indian National Congress

BLD = Bharatiya Lok Dal

JP (S) = Janata Party (Secular)

INC (T) = Indian National Congress (Tiwari)

BJS = Bharatiya Jana Sangh

INC (Urs) = Indian National Congress (Urs)

ICS = Indian National Congress (Socialist)

SOC = Socialist Party

Samata Party = Samata Party-Bihar

RJD = Rashtriya Janata Dal-Bihar

JD (U) = Janata Dal (United)-Bihar

JD (G) = Janata Dal (Gujarat)- Gujarat

AIRJP = All-India Rashtriya Janata Party-Gujarat

INLD = Indian National Lok Dal-Haryana

BSP = Bahujan Samaj Party-BSP-Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and Haryana

JD (S) = Janata Dal (Secular)-Karnataka

LKS = Lok Shakti Party-Karnataka

NCP = Nationalist Congress Party-Maharashtra

AAP = Aam Aadmi Party-Delhi, and Punjab

SP = Samajwadi Party-Uttar Pradesh

NPP = National People's Party-Meghalaya

TRMC= Trinamool Congress, Meghalaya

RPI (A) = Republican Party of India (Athawale)-Maharashtra

AIDMMSM = All Indian Dalit Muslim Minorities Suraksha Mahasangh-Gujarat

PWP = Peasants and Workers Party-Maharashtra

SSP = Samyukta Socialist Party-Madhya Pradesh

TDP = Telugu Desam Party-Andhra Pradesh

PRP = Praja Rajyam Party-Andhra Pradesh

YSRCongress= Yuvajana, Shramika, Rythu Congress Party (literally, Youth, Labour and Farmer Congress)-Andhra Pradesh

HVP = Haryana Vikas Party-Haryana

HLDR = Haryana Lok Dal Rashtriya-Haryana

HJC = Haryana Janhit Congress-Haryana

SHS = Shiv Sena Party-Maharashtra

BJD = Biju Janata Dal-Odisha

SAD = Shrimoni Akali Dal-Punjab

AIADMK = All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam-Tamil Nadu

DMK=Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam-Tamil Nadu

TRMC = Trinamool Congress-West Bengal

Himachal Vikas Congress = HVC-Himachal Pradesh

JMM = Jharkhand Mukti Morcha-Jharkhand

JVC = Jharkhand Vananchal Congress-Jharkhand

JKNC = Jammu and Kashmir National Conference-Jammu and Kashmir

PDP = People's Democratic Party

AGP = Asom Gona Parishad-Assam

AUDF= Asom United Democratic Front-Assam

ARC = Arunachal Congress-Arunachal

NPF = Naga's People's Front-Nagaland

NPC = Naga People's Convention_Nagaland

MNF = Mizo National front_Mizoram

UDP = United Democratic Party-Meghalaya

MNCP = Meghalaya Nationalist Congress Party-Meghalaya

HPD = Hill's State People's Democratic Party-Meghalaya

A-Chik National Congress-Meghalaya

PPA = People's Party of Arunachal Pradesh

MAG = Maharashtrawadi Gomatak

UGDP = United Goans Democratic Party

SDF = Sikkim Democratic Front

SSP = Sikkim Sangram Parishad

SKM = Sikkim Krantikari Morcha

NJP = Nutanmaha Gujarat Parishad

GAVP = Gujarat Adijati Vikash Paksh

MJP = MahaGujarat Janata Parishad

Table 2: List of primary sources

ANI- Asian News international, https://www.aniin.com/

BJP constitution, http://www.bjp.org/about-the-party/constitution

Frontline, http://www.frontline.in/magazine/

INC constitution, http://inc.in/documents/constitution.pdf

Indian Express, Ahmedabad edition, http://epaper.indianexpress.com/t/300/?s=Ahmedabad

Indian Express, Mumbai edition, http://epaper.indianexpress.com/t/236/?s=Mumbai

Indian Express, New Delhi edition, http://epaper.indianexpress.com/t/226/?s=Delhi

India Today, http://indiatoday.intoday.in/calendar

Outlook, http://www.outlookindia.com/magazine/archive

Pawar, Sharad, 2015, On my terms, From the grassroots to the corridors of power. New Delhi: SpeakingTiger.

Times of India, http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/archive.cms

The Hindu, http://www.thehindu.com/archive/

Table 3: British vs Princely districts, Gujarat and Maharashtra

Gujarat British districts	Gujarat Princely districts	Maharashtra British	Maharashtra princely
Ahmedabad	Amreli	Ahmednagar	Aurangabad
Anand	Banaskantha	Akola	Beed
Bharuch	Bhavnagar	Amravati	Hingoli
Dahod	Dang	Bhandara	Jalna
Kheda	Gandhinagar	Buldhana	Kolhapur
Panchmahals	Jamnagar	Chandrapur	Latur
Surat	Junagadh	Dhule	Nanded
Valsad	Kutch	Gadchiroli	Osmanabad
	Mehsana	Gondia	Parbhani
	Narmada	Jalgaon	Sangli
	Navsari	Mumbai City	
	Patan	Mumbai Suburban	
	Porbandar	Nagpur	
	Rajkot	Nandurbar	
	Sabarkantha	Nashik	
	Surendranagar	Pune	
	Vadodara	Raigad	
		Ratnagiri	
		Satara	
		Sindhudurg	
		Solapur	
		Thane	
		Wardha	
		Washim	
		Yavatmal	

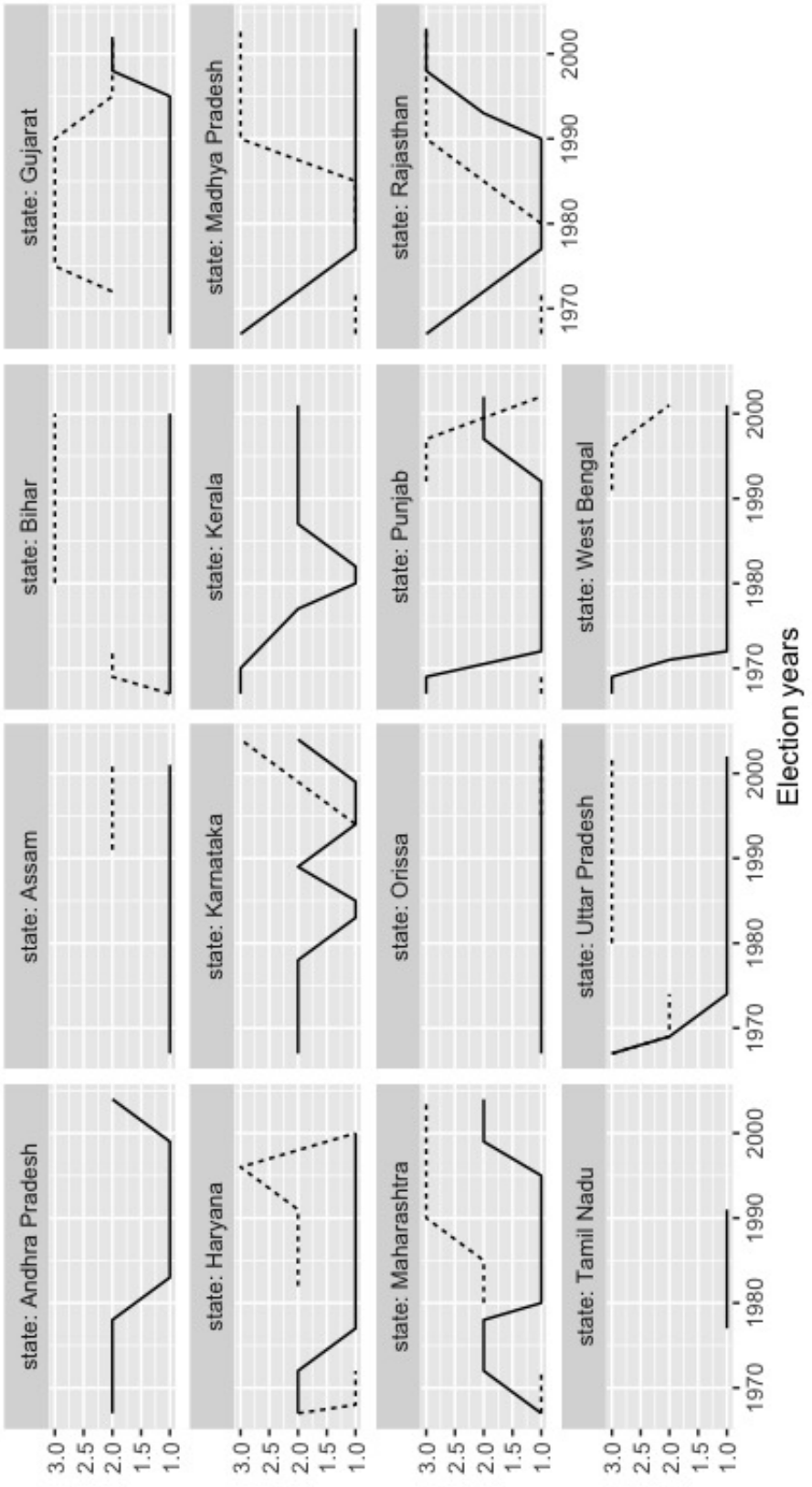


Figure 1: Level of autonomy for Congress Party (solid) and BJP (dashed) for all the major Indian states, 1967-2004

Table 4: Congress Party organisation as dependent variable

	Dependent variable:	
	INC.organisation	INC.organisation
	logistic	*ordered logistic*
	(1)	(2)
INC.Incumbency	1.932**	1.550***
	(0.517)	(0.391)
ENOP.votes	0.263	0.282
	(0.206)	(0.195)
Election.Timing	0.486	0.479
	(0.473)	(0.406)
ln.Fiscal.space	−0.259	−0.283
	(0.284)	(0.299)
Sub.nationalism	0.652**	0.640**
	(0.282)	(0.287)
Coalition.NL	0.526	0.625
	(0.652)	(0.590)
Lag.Congressvoteshare	0.037	0.042
	(0.034)	(0.029)
Direct.ruled legacy	−2.103**	−2.532***
	(0.380)	(0.443)
Mixed.ruled legacy	−1.080***	−1.621***
	(0.381)	(0.370)
Constant	−1.653	
	(3.54)	
Observations	119	119
Log Likelihood	-51.417	
Note:		*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
		Robust standard errors clustered by state

Table 5: BJP organisation as dependent variable

	Dependent variable:BJP organisation	
	Logistic	ordered
	(1)	(2)
y>=2		−8.894**
		(3.581)
y>=3		−10.637***
		(3.745)
BJP.Incumbency	7.101***	1.477**
	(0.542)	(0.673)
ENOP.votes	1.299***	0.758***
	(0.546)	(0.284)
Election.timing	−1.508	−0.767
	(1.119)	(0.514)
ln.Fiscal.space	0.969**	0.751**
	(0.325)	(0.292)
Sub.nationalism	0.495	0.078
	(0.319)	(0.298)
Coalition.NL	−2.647*	−1.025
	(1.562)	(1.276)
lag.BJPvoteshare	0.066**	0.027
	(0.028)	(0.045)
Direct.ruled	0.092	−0.944
	(1.413)	(0.749)
Mixed.ruled	−1.236*	−1.254**
	(0.744)	(0.552)
Constant	−13.655**	
	(4.872)	
Observations	61	61
χ^2 (df = 9)	21.461**	23.002***

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
Robust standard errors clustered by state

Table 6: Bayesian Logistic regression with BJP organisation as dependent variable

	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	p-value
(Intercept)	-7.6784	4.6467	-1.65	0.0984
BJP.Central.Incumbency	0.3801	1.3674	0.28	0.7810
BJP.State.Incumbency	2.5252	1.7806	1.42	0.1561
BJP.Central.Incumbency:BJP.State.Incumbency	0.6550	1.9024	0.34	0.7306
ENOP.votes	0.7539	0.5566	1.35	0.1755
Election.timing	-1.2251	0.9949	-1.23	0.2182
Ln.fiscal.space	0.6286	0.3713	1.69	0.0904
sub.nationalism	0.1496	0.3744	0.40	0.6896
Coalition.NL	-1.6340	1.1755	-1.39	0.1645
Coalitions.SL	-0.4670	0.8149	-0.57	0.5666
Lag.BJP.voteshare	0.0171	0.0426	0.40	0.6871
Direct.ruled	0.8385	1.2238	0.69	0.4932
Mixed.ruled	-0.6492	1.1195	-0.58	0.5620
BJP.Central.Incumbency:coalition.NL	-0.2948	1.4517	-0.20	0.8391
BJP.State.Incumbency1:Coalitions.SL	0.5272	1.9308	0.27	0.7848