The Evolution of Electoral Politics in India Since Independence

Rupesh Kumar
Research Scholar, M.B.P.G. College, Lucknow

Introduction

Since gaining independence in 1947, India has established itself as the world's largest democracy, navigating the complexities of a vast and diverse electorate. Electoral politics in India is not merely a mechanism for choosing representatives but a reflection of the country's social, economic, and cultural fabric. With a population of over 1.4 billion, representing numerous religions, castes, languages, and regional identities, India's electoral system has been a remarkable experiment in democratic governance. The Constitution of India enshrined universal adult suffrage, granting the right to vote to all citizens above the age of 21 (later reduced to 18), regardless of their caste, gender, or economic status. This bold move, in a largely illiterate and impoverished society at the time, underscored the commitment of India's leaders to establish a participatory democracy that would empower every citizen.

The electoral journey of India has been marked by significant milestones, each adding a new layer of complexity and character to its political landscape. The first General Election in 1951-52 was a logistical marvel, introducing millions to the practice of voting. This was a period of Congress dominance under Jawaharlal Nehru, whose leadership was pivotal in shaping the early years of the nation. However, as India's democracy matured, the political landscape diversified, giving rise to regional parties, coalition governments, and issue-based politics. Electoral politics evolved to reflect the changing aspirations of the people, influenced by factors such as economic liberalization, social justice movements, and the rise of technology in campaigning.

Indian elections have also become a battleground for addressing deep-seated issues of caste, religion, and regional identity. The Mandal Commission report in the 1990s brought caste-based reservations to the forefront, reshaping the dynamics of electoral politics and leading to the rise of parties representing marginalized communities. Religion has similarly played a central role, with events like the Ayodhya dispute and the subsequent rise of Hindutva politics shaping voter behavior and party strategies. Regionalism, too, has emerged as a dominant theme, with state-based parties challenging the supremacy of national players, particularly in states like Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, and Uttar Pradesh.

Over the years, the introduction of technology has revolutionized elections in India. From the use of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) to the rise of social media campaigning, political parties have embraced modern tools to connect with voters, particularly the youth. This has also brought challenges such as the spread of misinformation and concerns about electoral transparency. The Election Commission of India has played a critical role in maintaining the integrity of elections, implementing reforms to address issues like voter fraud, money power, and the influence of criminal elements.

Electoral System in India

India's electoral system is a cornerstone of its democratic framework, ensuring that the voices of over a billion citizens are heard and represented. The country follows a parliamentary system of governance, where elections are conducted at two levels: the Lok Sabha (House of the People) at the national level and the Vidhan Sabha (Legislative Assembly) at the state level. At the heart of this system lies the **first-past-the-post (FPTP)** method, where the candidate with the highest number of votes in a constituency wins, regardless of whether they secure a majority. This system, while simple to understand and implement, has been subject to debate, particularly concerning its ability to reflect proportional representation in a highly diverse society.

The **Election Commission of India (ECI)**, established under Article 324 of the Constitution, plays a pivotal role in ensuring free and fair elections. An independent constitutional body, the ECI oversees the conduct of elections, addresses grievances, and implements reforms to uphold the sanctity of the democratic process. The introduction of **Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs)** in the late 1990s marked a significant leap in ensuring efficiency and transparency in the voting process. Despite skepticism and occasional challenges to the credibility of EVMs, their use has largely minimized errors and expedited the electoral process.

Universal adult suffrage is one of the most remarkable aspects of India's electoral system. When India adopted universal voting rights at the time of independence, it was a bold and unprecedented decision for a country with low literacy rates and stark socio-economic disparities. This decision underscored the belief in equality and inclusivity, making every adult citizen, regardless of caste, gender, religion, or economic status, a stakeholder in the democratic process. Over the years, lowering the voting age from 21 to 18 through the **61st Amendment in 1988** further empowered India's burgeoning youth population.

Another critical aspect of India's electoral system is its federal structure, which accommodates the diverse needs of its states and union territories. Each state conducts elections for its legislative assembly, while the national elections determine the composition of the Lok Sabha. The presence of a bicameral legislature at the national level, with the Rajya Sabha (Council of States) representing the states and union territories, ensures a balance between regional and national interests. This federal arrangement has allowed for the coexistence of strong regional parties alongside national parties, fostering a unique dynamic in electoral politics.

Despite these robust mechanisms, the system has faced numerous challenges. Issues such as **electoral malpractices**, **money power**, and the influence of criminal elements in politics have plagued the democratic process. The ECI has continuously worked to address these issues through reforms such as the introduction of **Model Code of Conduct**, limits on campaign expenditures, and the disqualification of candidates with criminal records. However, the persistence of these issues highlights the need for constant vigilance and adaptation in the electoral system.

Early Years (1947–1967): The Era of Congress Dominance

The initial two decades after independence were marked by the consolidation of India's democracy under the leadership of the Indian National Congress, which emerged as the dominant political force. The period from 1947 to 1967 is often referred to as the **"Congress System,"** a term coined by political scientist Rajni Kothari to describe the party's unparalleled

influence and its ability to act as an umbrella organization accommodating diverse political and social interests. This dominance was rooted in the party's central role in the freedom struggle, its strong organizational network, and the widespread appeal of its leaders, particularly **Jawaharlal Nehru**, India's first Prime Minister.

The first General Election of 1951-52 was a monumental event, laying the foundation of India's democratic process. Conducted over four months, the election witnessed the participation of over 173 million eligible voters, many of whom were voting for the first time in their lives. Despite the challenges posed by widespread illiteracy and logistical hurdles, the elections were conducted successfully, earning admiration from across the world. The Congress secured an overwhelming victory, winning 364 out of 489 seats in the Lok Sabha, while the Communist Party of India emerged as the main opposition with just 16 seats. This result underscored the immense trust placed in Nehru and his vision for a secular, socialist, and democratic India.

During this era, elections were largely characterized by ideological debates and developmental issues rather than the identity-based politics that would dominate in later years. Nehru's focus on nation-building, industrialization, and social reforms resonated with the electorate. The Congress party, with its pan-Indian presence and ability to accommodate various interest groups, acted as a unifying force in a country grappling with the challenges of partition, communal violence, and socio-economic disparities. However, the period was not devoid of political opposition. Leaders like **Dr. Syama Prasad Mukherjee** of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh and **Ram Manohar Lohia** of the Socialist Party offered alternative visions for India's governance, though their impact remained limited during this time.

The subsequent elections of 1957 and 1962 reinforced the Congress party's dominance, with Nehru continuing to lead the government. However, cracks began to appear in the system as regional and caste-based movements gained traction. The Communist Party's success in forming the first democratically elected communist government in Kerala in 1957 was a significant development, signaling the growing importance of regional dynamics in Indian politics. Similarly, the rise of Dravidian politics in Tamil Nadu, led by the **DMK (Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam)**, challenged the Congress's traditional stronghold in the South.

By the mid-1960s, the political landscape began to shift. The death of Nehru in 1964 marked the end of an era, and his successors struggled to command the same level of authority and public trust. The Congress party's internal divisions, coupled with growing discontent over issues such as food shortages, unemployment, and regional inequalities, created an environment ripe for political change. The 1967 General Election became a turning point, as the Congress faced its first major electoral setback, losing control of several state governments to a coalition of opposition parties. This marked the beginning of the decline of Congress dominance and the emergence of a more competitive, fragmented political landscape in India.

Era of Political Instability and Coalition Politics (1967–1989)

The period from 1967 to 1989 marked a significant transformation in India's electoral politics, characterized by the decline of Congress dominance, the rise of regional and caste-based parties, and an era of political instability. This phase witnessed the fragmentation of the political landscape as new players emerged to challenge the Congress's hegemony. The changing socio-economic realities of India, coupled with growing discontent over the

unfulfilled promises of development, led to the rise of alternative political voices and the emergence of coalition governments.

The **1967 General Election** was a watershed moment in Indian politics. For the first time since independence, the Congress suffered major electoral losses, retaining power at the center with a reduced majority but losing control in eight key states, including Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Tamil Nadu. This election marked the end of the Congress's unchallenged dominance and signaled the rise of regional parties and non-Congress coalitions. In Tamil Nadu, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) became the first regional party to form a state government, paving the way for the increasing influence of regionalism in Indian politics.

The post-1967 period also saw the emergence of caste-based politics as a significant factor in electoral outcomes. Leaders like **Charan Singh** in Uttar Pradesh and **Karpoori Thakur** in Bihar mobilized backward classes and rural communities, challenging the Congress's traditional upper-caste, elite-centric support base. The growing prominence of the Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in electoral politics highlighted the shift toward identity-based mobilization, which would later become a defining feature of Indian democracy.

The tenure of **Indira Gandhi** as Prime Minister from 1966 to 1977 was a defining period in India's electoral politics. After consolidating her position within the Congress following the 1969 split, Indira adopted a populist approach, focusing on slogans like **"Garibi Hatao" (Remove Poverty)** and implementing radical economic measures, including bank nationalization and the abolition of privy purses. These moves endeared her to the masses but also centralized power within the Prime Minister's Office, sidelining regional and party-level leaders. Her authoritarian tendencies culminated in the declaration of the **Emergency (1975–1977)**, a period during which democratic processes were suspended, and civil liberties curtailed. The 1977 General Election that followed the Emergency marked a significant turning point, as the Congress was decisively defeated by the **Janata Party**, a coalition of opposition groups united against Indira's authoritarian rule.

The Janata Party government, led by **Morarji Desai**, represented India's first non-Congress coalition government at the center. However, internal conflicts and lack of cohesion among its leaders led to its collapse in 1979, paving the way for Indira Gandhi's return to power in 1980. The 1980s witnessed a resurgence of Congress dominance under Indira, but it was accompanied by increasing political violence and instability. The assassination of Indira Gandhi in 1984 following Operation Blue Star and the subsequent anti-Sikh riots deeply polarized Indian society. The Congress, led by **Rajiv Gandhi**, secured a landslide victory in the 1984 elections, riding on a wave of sympathy and a promise of modernization and economic reforms.

Liberalization and the Mandal Era (1990–2000)

The 1990s marked a transformative phase in Indian electoral politics, shaped by the twin forces of economic liberalization and social justice movements. This period saw the dismantling of single-party dominance, the rise of coalition politics, and an intensified focus on caste and identity-based mobilization. It was an era of significant political, economic, and social upheaval, with long-lasting implications for India's democratic landscape.

One of the defining moments of this period was the implementation of the **Mandal Commission Report** in 1990 by the Janata Dal government under Prime Minister **V.P. Singh**. The report recommended 27% reservations for Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in government jobs and educational institutions. While it aimed to address historical injustices and promote social equity, it also triggered widespread protests, particularly among upper-caste groups, leading to deep social divisions. The Mandal Commission's implementation marked the institutionalization of caste-based politics, giving rise to regional parties like the **Samajwadi Party (SP)** and **Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD)**, which championed the cause of backward classes and marginalized communities.

Simultaneously, the **Ram Janmabhoomi movement**, led by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and affiliated organizations like the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP), gained momentum. The campaign for the construction of a Ram temple at Ayodhya on the site of the Babri Masjid polarized Indian society along religious lines. The demolition of the Babri Masjid in December 1992 was a watershed moment, leading to nationwide communal violence and altering the trajectory of Indian politics. The BJP, which had been a marginal player in the 1980s, emerged as a significant force, championing Hindutva as a central plank of its electoral strategy.

The early 1990s also saw the ushering in of **economic liberalization**, initiated by the Congress government under Prime Minister **P.V. Narasimha Rao** and Finance Minister **Manmohan Singh**. The liberalization of the Indian economy, marked by deregulation, privatization, and opening up to foreign investments, transformed the socio-economic landscape. While it spurred economic growth and urbanization, it also widened economic inequalities, influencing voting patterns. The shift from socialist policies to market-driven reforms changed the rhetoric of electoral politics, with political parties increasingly focusing on issues like development, employment, and infrastructure.

This decade was also marked by the rise of coalition governments at the center. The era of single-party dominance was replaced by fragmented mandates, necessitating alliances among ideologically diverse parties. The **United Front** governments (1996–1998) and the subsequent rise of the BJP-led **National Democratic Alliance (NDA)** under **Atal Bihari Vajpayee** demonstrated the increasing importance of coalition politics. This period also witnessed the growing influence of regional parties like the **DMK**, **AIADMK**, **TMC**, and **Shiv Sena**, which played crucial roles in national governance.

Despite its successes, the coalition era was not without challenges. Frequent government collapses and ideological contradictions within alliances led to political instability. However, these coalitions also reflected the deepening of democracy, as they allowed for greater representation of diverse regional and social interests.

The 21st Century: Shift to Bipolar Politics and the Rise of Technology (2000–Present)

The dawn of the 21st century ushered in significant changes in India's electoral politics, marked by the emergence of bipolar competition between the Congress-led **United Progressive Alliance (UPA)** and the Bharatiya Janata Party-led **National Democratic Alliance (NDA)**. This period also saw the increasing personalization of politics, the integration of technology into electoral processes, and the redefinition of development and nationalism as central electoral themes.

The early 2000s were dominated by the leadership of **Atal Bihari Vajpayee**, whose tenure as Prime Minister from 1998 to 2004 was marked by economic reforms, infrastructure development, and efforts to project India as a global power. However, despite its achievements, the NDA's **"India Shining"** campaign failed to resonate with rural voters, leading to its unexpected defeat in the 2004 General Election. The Congress-led UPA, under **Manmohan Singh**, came to power, promising inclusive growth and social welfare. The UPA's flagship schemes, such as the **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)** and the **Right to Information Act**, were aimed at addressing rural distress and promoting transparency.

However, the UPA era was also marred by allegations of corruption, including the **2G spectrum scam** and the **Commonwealth Games scandal**, which eroded public trust. This period saw the rise of mass movements, such as **Anna Hazare's anti-corruption campaign**, which galvanized urban middle-class voters and created a political space for the emergence of the **Aam Aadmi Party (AAP)** in 2012. The AAP's focus on governance and anti-corruption resonated with voters in urban areas, particularly in Delhi, challenging the traditional dominance of national parties.

The turning point in 21st-century Indian politics came with the rise of **Narendra Modi** and the BJP's landslide victory in the **2014 General Election**. Modi's leadership style, characterized by strong, centralized decision-making and a focus on development and nationalism, marked a shift in Indian politics. The BJP's campaign, built around the slogan **"Achhe Din" (Good Days)**, leveraged social media, large-scale rallies, and targeted outreach to connect with voters across demographics. The party's success was also fueled by its ability to consolidate Hindu votes, sidelining regional and caste-based parties in several states.

The **2019 General Election** further cemented the BJP's dominance, with Modi's leadership and the party's narrative of nationalism and economic reforms resonating with a wide electorate. The BJP's focus on issues like the abrogation of **Article 370** in Jammu and Kashmir, the **Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA)**, and the **construction of the Ram temple** in Ayodhya highlighted its commitment to its ideological base while appealing to nationalist sentiments. Meanwhile, the Congress struggled to counter the BJP's narrative, with its leadership facing criticism for lacking direction and cohesion.

Technology has played an increasingly critical role in shaping electoral politics in the 21st century. The widespread use of social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp has transformed political campaigning, allowing parties to engage directly with voters and amplify their messages. However, this shift has also raised concerns about the spread of misinformation, data privacy, and the role of algorithmic biases in influencing voter behavior. The introduction of **electoral bonds** for political funding and the ongoing debates around EVM tampering have further highlighted the challenges of ensuring transparency and trust in the electoral process.

Another significant trend in recent decades has been the centralization of power and the personalization of politics. Leaders like Narendra Modi and regional figures such as **Mamata Banerjee**, **Arvind Kejriwal**, and **K. Chandrashekar Rao** have dominated political narratives, often sidelining traditional party structures. This has led to the rise of personality-driven

campaigns, where elections are increasingly seen as referendums on individual leaders rather than party ideologies or manifestos.

Challenges and Criticisms

Despite being the world's largest democracy, Indian electoral politics faces numerous challenges that threaten its integrity, inclusiveness, and effectiveness. These issues underscore the need for continuous reforms to ensure that the electoral process remains a true reflection of the people's will. Below are some of the key challenges and criticisms that have shaped debates around India's electoral system.

Electoral malpractices, such as vote-buying, booth capturing, and rigging, have long been a concern in Indian elections. While the Election Commission has made significant efforts to curb these practices through measures like the deployment of security forces and surveillance, incidents of voter intimidation and fraud still occur in certain areas. The influence of money and muscle power exacerbates these issues, particularly in rural and underdeveloped regions.

The role of money in Indian elections has grown significantly, with candidates and parties spending vast sums on campaigning, advertisements, and mobilization. This creates an uneven playing field, favoring wealthier candidates and parties with corporate backing. The lack of transparency in political funding, despite initiatives like **electoral bonds**, remains a major concern. Critics argue that these bonds obscure the identity of donors, making it difficult to track the influence of money on electoral outcomes.

A persistent challenge in Indian electoral politics is the criminalization of candidates and parties. A significant number of elected representatives face serious criminal charges, raising questions about the integrity of the electoral process. Despite Supreme Court rulings and Election Commission guidelines aimed at disqualifying candidates with criminal records, loopholes and delays in judicial proceedings often allow such candidates to contest and win elections.

Urban voter apathy and low turnout in metropolitan areas are recurring issues in Indian elections. Factors like a lack of trust in political candidates, disinterest in politics, and logistical challenges on voting day contribute to this trend. This is in contrast to high voter participation in rural areas, where elections are often seen as a means of addressing local grievances.

The increasing polarization of Indian society along religious, caste, and regional lines poses a significant challenge to the democratic process. While identity politics can empower marginalized communities, excessive reliance on divisive rhetoric undermines the broader goals of nation-building and social harmony. The rise of communal polarization, particularly in the wake of contentious issues like the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and the Ram Mandir movement, highlights the dangers of exploiting identity for electoral gains.

The advent of social media has transformed election campaigns but has also led to the proliferation of misinformation and fake news. Politically motivated propaganda and the misuse of digital platforms to spread divisive narratives have become common, influencing voter perceptions and decision-making. Traditional media, too, has faced criticism for bias and sensationalism, often prioritizing corporate or political interests over objective reporting.

While India's democracy is inclusive in principle, certain groups remain underrepresented in the electoral process. Women, for instance, continue to hold a disproportionately small number of seats in Parliament and state assemblies. Similarly, the representation of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and minorities often falls short of their population share, limiting their influence in policymaking.

Despite advancements like the use of **Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs)**, certain aspects of India's electoral system remain outdated. The lack of provisions for remote voting, for example, disenfranchises millions of migrant workers and non-resident Indians. Similarly, the failure to update electoral rolls regularly leads to issues like duplication, missing names, and disenfranchisement.

While technology has improved election management, it has also raised concerns about voter privacy and data security. Allegations of misuse of voter data, targeted advertisements, and surveillance have undermined trust in the electoral process. Additionally, debates around the potential hacking of EVMs, though largely unsubstantiated, have added to public skepticism.

Reforms in Electoral Politics

The evolution of electoral politics in India has been accompanied by the implementation of various reforms aimed at addressing systemic issues and ensuring the integrity, inclusivity, and transparency of the democratic process. These reforms have been initiated by the Election Commission of India (ECI), judiciary, legislature, and civil society, reflecting a collective effort to strengthen the electoral system.

The Election Commission of India has played a pivotal role in overseeing and reforming the electoral process. Measures such as deploying central forces to curb booth capturing, introducing **Voter ID cards**, and streamlining electoral rolls have significantly enhanced the credibility of elections. Additionally, the ECI's implementation of the **Model Code of Conduct** ensures a level playing field by regulating political campaigns, speeches, and election spending.

The adoption of **Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs)** in the late 1990s marked a revolutionary shift in the electoral process. EVMs have reduced the time taken for vote counting, minimized errors, and curtailed malpractices like ballot stuffing. The subsequent addition of **Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trails (VVPATs)** has further enhanced transparency, allowing voters to verify their choices and ensuring accountability in case of disputes.

To curb the criminalization of politics, the judiciary has introduced measures such as mandating the disclosure of candidates' criminal records, assets, and liabilities. The **Supreme Court's 2018 ruling** requiring political parties to justify the selection of candidates with criminal records marked a significant step toward greater accountability. However, the enforcement of these rulings remains a challenge, with many candidates still contesting elections despite pending cases.

The issue of opaque political funding has been addressed through measures like the introduction of **electoral bonds** and limits on campaign spending. While electoral bonds aim to streamline political donations, they have faced criticism for lacking transparency regarding

donor identities. Proposals for **state funding of elections** have also been debated as a means of reducing dependence on corporate contributions and minimizing the influence of money in politics.

5. Enhancing Women's Representation

The underrepresentation of women in Indian legislatures has prompted calls for gender-sensitive reforms. The **Women's Reservation Bill**, which seeks to reserve 33% of seats for women in Parliament and state assemblies, has been introduced multiple times but remains pending. Meanwhile, parties have started fielding more women candidates, albeit slowly, to address this imbalance.

The introduction of **NOTA (None of the Above)** in 2013 provided voters with the option to reject all candidates on the ballot. While NOTA has not yet carried legal weight to force re-elections, it has been a symbolic tool for expressing dissatisfaction with the choices offered, pushing political parties to field better candidates.

Efforts to enhance voter participation have included the lowering of the voting age from 21 to 18 through the **61st Constitutional Amendment in 1988**. Recent initiatives to enable **remote voting** for migrant workers and overseas citizens are being explored to address issues of disenfranchisement. Special provisions like **postal ballots** have also been extended to senior citizens and differently-abled voters.

In the digital age, the ECI has recognized the growing influence of social media on elections and introduced guidelines to monitor online campaigns. Platforms are now required to remove objectionable content within 48 hours of complaints during the election period. The regulation of fake news and targeted advertising, however, remains a work in progress, with demands for stricter rules and penalties.

Conclusion

The evolution of electoral politics in India since independence has been a journey of extraordinary complexity, reflecting the country's diversity, aspirations, and contradictions. From the early days of Congress dominance to the fragmented coalition era and the emergence of strong, personality-driven leadership, India's electoral landscape has undergone profound transformations. Each phase in this journey has highlighted different facets of the democratic process, from the challenge of conducting elections in a newly independent nation to the integration of technology and social media in the modern era.

India's electoral politics has been a mirror to its society, capturing shifts in caste dynamics, religious identities, regional aspirations, and economic transformations. The role of the Election Commission of India, coupled with constitutional safeguards like universal adult suffrage, has ensured the resilience of democratic institutions even in the face of challenges such as criminalization, polarization, and money power. However, these issues remain persistent, requiring continuous reforms and active civic engagement to uphold the integrity of the electoral process.

The rise of coalition governments in the 1990s and the consolidation of bipolar politics in the 21st century have demonstrated the adaptability of Indian democracy. Regional parties have

played a crucial role in strengthening federalism, while the increasing use of technology has transformed campaigning and voter outreach. At the same time, the challenges posed by misinformation, media bias, and voter apathy underscore the need for vigilance and innovation to safeguard democratic values.

Looking ahead, the future of electoral politics in India will depend on addressing pressing concerns such as transparency in political funding, greater representation for women and marginalized groups, and the impact of digital technologies on voter behavior. Simultaneously, fostering civic awareness and participation will be essential to counter the growing polarization and ensure that elections remain a means of empowerment for all citizens.

References

1. Bhattacharyya, D. (2016). *Government as Practice: Democratic Left in a Transforming India*. Cambridge University Press.

2. Jaffrelot, C. (2008). *The Hindu Nationalist Movement and Indian Politics: 1925 to the 1990s*. Penguin Books India.

3. Yadav, Y., & Palshikar, S. (2009). *Ten Theses on State Politics in India*. *Seminar*, (591).

4. Kumar, S. (2013). *Electoral Reforms in India: Issues and Challenges*. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention*, 2(3), 1-9.

5. Election Commission of India. (2024). *Evolution of Electoral Mechanism in India: A Historical Perspective*. *Social Studies Journal*, 6(2), 106-115.

6. Ramesh, R. (1999). *Historical Perspectives of the Electoral Reforms in India*. *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, 60(1), 51-66.

7. Shastri, S., Suri, K. C., & Yadav, Y. (Eds.). (2009). *Electoral Politics in Indian States: Lok Sabha Elections in 2004 and Beyond*. Oxford University Press.

8. McMillan, A. (2012). *The Election Commission of India: Guardian of Democracy*. *India Review*, 11(2), 123-145.

9. Palshikar, S., & Kumar, S. (2004). *Participatory Norm: How Broad-based is India's Democracy?*. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 39(51), 5404-5410.

10. Chopra, J. K. (1984). *Election Reforms in India since 1952*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Delhi.

1. Kumar, V. (2020). *Electoral Reforms in India: Needs, Issues, and Challenges*. *International Journal of Political Science and Governance*, 2(2), 4-9.

2. Rao, A. N. (2023). *Changing Strategies of Electoral Processes, Political Participation, and Behaviour in Indian Democracy*. *International Journal of Novel Research and Development*, 8(6), 662-673.

3. Arumugam, T. (2015). *Indian Electoral Politics: A Critical Analysis*. *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, 76(3), 389-391.

4. Sur, P. K. (2022). *The Legacy of Authoritarianism in a Democracy. arXiv preprint arXiv:2202.03682.*

5. Chebrolu, T., Chowdary, R., Vardhan, N. H., Kumaraguru, P., & Rajadesingan, A. (2023). *Game, Set, and Conflict: Evaluating Conflict and Game Frames in Indian Election News Coverage. arXiv preprint arXiv:2310.04331.*

6. Narayanaswamy, A. (2020). *A Critical Analysis on Electoral Reforms in India. International Journal of Creative Research Thoughts*, 8(4), 2169-2175.

7. Gaikwad, D. D., & Patne, S. D. (2024). *Electoral Reforms and Political Funding in India: An Analytical Overview. International Journal of Research Publication and Reviews*, 5(8), 4295-4299.

8. Khushboo. (2024). *Evolution of Electoral Mechanism in India: A Historical Perspective. Social Studies Journal*, 6(2), 106-115.