

Research Article

Role and Implication of Political Leadership in Uttar Pradesh Politics: An Overview

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Abstract

A political leader, aiming to restore an oppressive government, requirements to establish her trustworthiness with citizens whose participation in her movement affects its accomplishment. If her perceived capability is in an intermediate range of values, her optimal strategy is to masquerade as a no-threat before announcing a movement directly against the regime. Uttar Pradesh (UP's) rich historical tapestry highlights its eternal influence on Indian politics as the birthplace of notable leaders and the focal point of significant political movements. The political landscape of Uttar Pradesh has been influenced by many socio-economic causes, caste dynamics, and regional identities, ranging from the liberation fight to current electoral struggles. A comprehensive approach is required for a thorough examination of UP's political relevance. Political leaders constitute an important feature of a liberal democracy, it is more so in a "novel" democracy such as India primarily because the parties and the party system that constitute them are weakly institutionalized and also electorates have shifting loyalties to parties. In fact the political leaders in India, more than their counterparts in other liberal democracies, are called upon to address a whole range of different and complex social, economic, and political issues that concern the different identities and to whom these identity groups respond differently as they are socially and economically differently situated. The present paper analyse role of political leaders influence in Uttar Pradesh state politics in contemporary period.

Keywords: Caste, Democracy, Government, Liberal, Loyalties, Political Leader, Parties, and Regional Identity.

1) Introduction:

The tremendous rise in the number of diverse social groups and deepening political consciousness among them has resulted in struggles around the assertiveness and conflicting claims of identity groups, and struggles among them, often fought out via political parties along the lines of region, religion, language (even dialect and script in some cases), caste, and community and sometime even on the basis of common economic interests, ideology, and policies. Under the circumstances, then, any decision taken by the leader is bound to run into some disapproval in a diverse and therefore complex and volatile electoral democracy like India. As a result, in addition to holding the party organization together, leaders need to keep together a collective of workers/vote mobilizers and followers/supporters with them. For the purpose, they are required to constantly "mediate in extant conflicts and offer acceptable compromises," which are bound to arise as it is

seldom the ideology that is the glue, especially in “post-reform” India (Alok Rai, 1995). As far back as the 1950s, Park and Tinker in the earliest work on leadership studies in India had argued that “the burdens placed upon India’s present-day leadership are very great, indeed; not only for the urgent problems of today, but in establishing the foundations for tomorrow and beyond.” Arguably, the challenges have increased manifold for the present crop of leaders as hitherto dormant identities and sub regions all are in the process of getting politicized and mobilized with every new elections and asking for their share in terms of resources and services. A leader in a volatile/tough electoral democracy such as India needs to be more adaptable/flexible/skilled/plausible/adjustable¹⁶ for not only his followers but also dissenters than their counterparts elsewhere, if he/she has to survive and remain relevant politically (Atul Kohli, 1995)

2) Statement of the Research Problem and Research Gap:

Sifting through the pertinent literature, one finds that whatever limited focus there has been on leadership studies in India and Particularly Uttar Pradesh, it has mostly been in the form of biographies/profiles of the leaders, mostly attempted by journalists writing biographies but also a few by academics. Academic writings, the focus of this article, are mostly in the form of collections of articles that have focused on “Indian leadership” rather than on “leader-ship in India.” Of late, there have been a few writings of note that discuss the state-level leadership or simply the political life and times of a singular state leader. Ironically, while focusing on pan-Indian leaders, operating at the national level, even among these, only few leaders such as Gandhi, Nehru, and Ambedkar, and later Indira Gandhi (and now Patel and Deen Dayal Upadhaya) have mainly been studied. As state patronage in the form of institutional grants has played an important role in focusing on these and other leaders, the objectivity of these studies has always been somewhat suspect (Baliyan S K, 2016)

Paradoxically, the subject of political leadership has remained under-researched in India even in the election studies/studies of elections in India. There has been some academic interest only in the last two elections, especially in the aftermath of 2014 electoral verdict. The “Modi factor/effect/ wave,” for instance, has received wide attention while dissecting the electoral outcome in favour of the BJP in 2014 and subsequently-held assembly elections.

3) Methodology:

The study foundational material comes from secondary sources collected from Uttar Pradesh government historical records, state government official documents, and scholarly papers. The influence and development of regional parties in Uttar Pradesh’s politics may be better understood via an examination of election outcomes, party platforms, and political movements and the socio-economic variables that shape regional political agendas.

Result and Discussion:

4) Political Dynamics and Alliance

India’s most populous state, Uttar Pradesh, has always been at the forefront of coalition politics. In actuality, Uttar Pradesh has long been accustomed to coalition governments. The political landscape of the state was depicted in the 2012 assembly elections, demonstrating how Uttar Pradesh politics varied greatly from national politics. After each election, the state had a history of overthrowing the incumbent party, but that all changed the day it adopted a coalition government. The Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and the Samajwadi Party (SP), the state’s two largest political parties, have now adopted the strategy of allying with the state’s smaller parties to have power. The current national leaders with the least amount of popularity in Uttar Pradesh were probably going to lose the battle to become India’s next prime minister. The coalition politics in the state, I believe, is the cause behind the rise in popularity of these two national leaders, L. K. Advani and Rajnath Singh. Uttar Pradesh, on the other hand, sends the greatest number of legislators to the Lok Sabha, a center of power, in national politics. The formation of strong alliances is crucial in the increasingly intense political competition, especially in the first-past-the-post system. This essay in the upcoming chapter will examine the dynamics of state alliances and how the formation of the ruling alliance occurs with the assistance of political powers (Tiwari AK., 2015)

5) Renaissance of State-Level Leaders

The emergence of states in an increasingly decentred polity or economy and state-level parties has led to the resurgence of state-level political leaders, reminiscent of “Nehru era” satraps in the Congress era. However, unlike them, the new crop of state leaders almost singlehandedly makes crucial policy decisions, and their decisions actually affect political happenings in their respective states. As such, they leave an indelible imprint over the states’ politics. The resurgence of this new crop of state leaders could be attributed to the following factors:

- With the mode of democracy remaining “patrimonial” in India, “patronage” and “clientelism” catering to primordial identities continues to reign supreme despite all rhetoric of “inclusive growth.” State-level leaders, in particular, “directly represent and serve the needs, not only of territorial constituencies, but frequently the more tangible ones of primordial groups.”
- Acting as “transactional leaders,” the newly emerged leaders, in exchange for the electoral support received, ensure direct/visible transfer of public resources to the targeted social constituency. This mode of clientele ensures that the electorates identify themselves with not only the party in power but with the party leader as the benefactor/patron. As a result, castes/ communities acting as “political or voting” categories tend to cling to the leader they consider as their “own” in a “realistic” hope of having access to public resources, as well as protection provided the leader comes into power.
- Second, given the ascendance of politics of “presence” and dignity, having their “men” (hardly any women) in the seat of power also brings a “feel good or psychic good” factor to the concerned community that the leader belongs to, particularly if the community in question has been on the margin historically in social and political terms. Even the proven excesses/extravagance of such leaders are condoned/disbelieved by their followers/loyalists.
- Third, an explanation of the power and influence of the state parties’ bosses is due to the sheer size in terms of the territory and population of the states that these leaders rule, some comparable or even bigger than countries.
- It allows the leaders, especially when they are in power, to gain access to massive “political resources-organization, money, votes,” in addition to the bureaucracy if they are in power.
- This partly answers the question raised in the article as to why the political leaders find it difficult to shun electoral politics. Furthermore, this also explains, more than three decades ago, why “it is in the states where many of India’s most ambitious politicians concentrate their energies,” at least in the beginning of their career though many of them aim at moving to the center.
- Therefore, unlike the “Congress era,” when political leaders were able to “move directly into national politics” after doing a stint at state level, now an increasing number of political leaders have to graduate to “national” politics only after having a successful career at the state-level. As in the past, even now, states have been “training grounds for national politicians.” Additionally, currently, most of the powerful state-level leaders from the national parties, if chief ministers, are reluctant to move to the center as mere union ministers. It was evident in the case of Manohar Parrikar who went back to Goa as chief minister, leaving the powerful defense ministry.
- Fourth, decline in terms of organizational presence as well as the inability to present ideological alternatives that afflict the state and national parties further underlines the criticality of the local leadership factor.
- This is especially true for the “new” parties whose founder-presidents and their “natural heirs” cultivate their personal community-based support. Depending more on their personal charisma and sphere of influence than the deliberately weakened party machinery, these resourceful leaders make and unmake the parties on their own terms.
- As such, they are instrumental in shaping the form and content of their parties’ agenda/manifesto, tenor of election campaigns, and also deciding about the important

matter of alliance-building. In fact, in a democracy such as India where “mass politics” trumps “elite politics,” it is mainly through the leader and his public speeches during the campaign that electorates come to know about the party’s ideological position on the issues and the reasons behind the party entering into/breaking the electoral alliances.

- Also, given the electoral volatility that is due to weak loyalties/identification of a sizable number of voters with a particular party, the leader plays a crucial role not only to ensure the turnout of the staunch supporters of his party to vote but also swing the floating/indecisive voters’ vote. This, however, also depends on many factors. There are many examples

6) Significance of Electoral System in Contemporary Period:

Uttar Pradesh has a very high selectivity the state has been consist of 31 seats in the Rajas Sabha and 80 seats in the Lok Sabha. Since this accounts for a sizable portion of the total seats available, the state has a strong advantage in the national political elections. Since the political power in Uttar Pradesh has changed over the contemporary period between two major events, the state is seen as a swing state. In Uttar Pradesh, the ‘Bhartiya Janata Party’ (BJP) secured 71 out of 80 seats in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections. This result was remarkable since the ‘Samajwadi Party’ had gained five years in power in the previous general election and was the main celebrant in the state. However, the BJP’s ascent to a majority in the state had a significant impact on the federal government at large it allowed them to establish a majority in the Lok Sabha. There are crucial battlegrounds spread throughout the state, and the victor in a handful of these larger cities usually stands a chance of assuming national leadership. This is only one of the primary reasons Uttar Pradesh matters on a national level, since state politics have the potential to shape the federal administration of the entire country. The fact that many of India’s prime ministers are from the state further emphasizes Uttar Pradesh significance in the country’s political landscape. Many of India’s prime ministers have roots in the state, which further emphasizes Uttar Pradesh’s significance in the country’s political landscape. The fact that candidates such as Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi, and Narendra Modi were all selected as politically active members of the state indicates that it has advanced to the forefront of Indian politics.

7) Socio-Economic Factors:

Uttar Pradesh is one of the most populous states in India with a population of 238,875,000 according to the census. The population of the state contributes to its immense significance in Indian national politics, since it has the widest range of Lok Sabha seats. Uttar Pradesh, which has 80 legal constituencies, is highly relevant when it comes to selection, especially since it holds over 13% of all Lok Sabha seats. It is impossible to overestimate the state’s importance for national political elections, and federal governments created at the facility usually have a strong presence in Uttar Pradesh. Political elections in Uttar Pradesh usually have an impact on the federal government’s development at the national level because of its real estate population and crucial value. For instance, the ‘Bhartiya Janata Party’s’ (BJP) significant victory in the state during the 2017 Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly elections strengthened the party’s designation as the facility’s judge. The state is also known for its swing states, where different parties, including the Samajwadi Party and the Bahujan Samaj Party, have held power at different points in time (Kaur H, Mishra P K, 2017). Since Uttar Pradesh has a wide range of legal seats available, forming strong alliances is typically key to establishing a stable national federal administration. This factor further raises the state’s significance in national politics at large. In addition, the states’ vital role as fixate power is facilitated by India’s multi-level political architecture. The Indian constitution provides for a strong system of governance that includes a leadership residence to safeguard state autonomy as well as an independent judiciary. The way that politics is portrayed in the government is proportionate to each state’s population. Compared to various other states with smaller populations, this shows that the state federal government of Uttar Pradesh, with a larger populous can affect the national federal government plan timeline (Kaur H, Mishra P K, 2016)

8) Caste and Identity Politics

The influence of caste on Uttar Pradesh' political scene is among the most important factors that demonstrate the state's importance in Indian national politics. The word "caste" itself refers to the social mobility and stratification of people within a culture according to their birth status. This nation's political directives have also been significantly impacted by the stratification that has long been a pillar of Indian society. However, caste appears to have become a more prominent issue in state politics over the past few years. This impression is supported by searches that show over 20,000 reported cases of physical violence in the state over the previous five years, many of which were motivated by caste differences. It is difficult to understand why caste plays such a major role in Uttar Pradesh's national politics (Brennan L, 2011). Given that the state is home to more than 200 million people, different castes have typically established support networks that coincide with political occasions or agendas. As a result, different political parties typically try their hardest to enlist the support of these numerous teams and strive to carry out strategies that will give them an advantage over their rivals. The significance of acknowledging the role of caste in determining success is highlighted by contemporary national politics in the state, as seen by the BJP's ability to secure the support of non-Yadav Other Backward Classes in addition to Scheduled Caste members, and their resounding victory in 2017. The demise of the traditional Congress celebration, which had focused on retaining the support of the Muslim and Dalit populations, and the rise of even more right-wing gatherings seem to indicate the growing influence of caste-based national politics in the state. However, within political events itself, there is also division and division along caste lines. The 'Pragati Sheel Samajwadi Party' (Lohia) is a key component of the perceived nepotism and discrimination against 'Akhilesh Yadav', the current head of state and a member of the Yadav family. As an example, the 'Samajwadi Party', which is generally acknowledged as a celebration that champions the legal rights as well as liberty of the Yadav caste, is not entirely free from internal disagreements and ideological differences. This department suggests that the event has suffered significant selection losses in recent years, a fact that further solidifies the growing influence of caste partnerships on state political outcomes. This indicates that an analysis of the political plans being implemented in Uttar Pradesh today, as well as their solution, require an understanding of the historical and social significance of caste, especially given the unconventional and tactical nature of using caste assistance to select benefits. Caste dynamics play a crucial role in electoral strategies, coalition-building, and the distribution of political power (Singh S., 2015)

9) Regional Imbalance and Development Issues:

Even if most sources rank cities wealthy areas first, two thirds of the population still live in towns. People are forced to relocate to cities due to the lack of basic amenities like proper roads, hospitals, and other institutions. However, cities and towns have a unique set of issues, such as uncontrolled development, a lack of structure, and subpar infrastructure. People will have to move to the cities as a result. However, cities have their own problems as well:

- Rapid and unplanned development, a lack of structure, poor centers, population growth, and so on.
- Cities lack any form of easily expandable space. Because of this, the burden of land plus numerous other immobile residential or business properties makes the rates prohibitive for many people. Many are therefore compelled to live in the shanty communities.
- The federal government also appropriated forests, farmlands, lakes, fishponds, and rivers in the name of progress, which resulted in a full loss of revenue and sources of income, variation, and damage to all-natural deposits.
- The development carried out in the name of towns only benefited a small number of wealthy farmers, and occasionally this also resulted in socioeconomic equality since the land that farmers sold was not adequately compensated to support various sources of income, employment creation, healthcare, housing and Income.
- That required the farmers to become day workers in the exact same territories that were taken. When decisions on the distribution of resources to different places are made in secret and without public participation, corruption and inequities follow.

- Only by considering the environment and maintaining an eco-friendly balance can the growth process be fruitful, and people must be able to reap the benefits everywhere.
- To do this, it is critical to identify the underlying reasons for the local disparities and find a solution for them. Additionally, public awareness and a well-thought-out plan can help to reduce local disparities.
- To achieve desired socio-economic and group outcomes with the necessary levels of well-balanced local progress, planners must implement spatial growth strategies while keeping an eye on resolving local disparities.
- The surplus space needs to be circulated as well. Place particular emphasis on the development of areas that are in reverse, such as the Northeast Hill area and tribal areas.
- Giving farming and industry top priority because these two are related to one another and industry helps to address the issue of unemployment.
- It needs to be carefully thought out and executed, utilizing the available resources. Provide a financial and commercial structure to the opposite areas.
- Maintaining an environmentally friendly balance is also vital, and it must be monitored from the planning and decision-making stages on.
- Always ensure that people are involved and that sources are used correctly. Start providing support or aid to the areas that are in need. Maintain the local governments for the better and provide dependable solutions for the region to achieve this. Always keep your political leaders in line and under control.
- In the current political and economic climate, it is imperative to grant authority to the regions, as the prosperity of the country is contingent upon the prosperity of the states and the quality of life enjoyed by the people residing in those regions (Upadhyay, M. 2015).

10) Role in National Politics:

According to the reservation policy, there are many different types of reservations available in every field of employment to accommodate different groups of people. These groups range from ex-combatants to the Scheduled Caste (SCs), which is the lowest category in the hierarchy, with varying percentages of reservations for each. Then, regarding a recent policy women's bill in the Parliament, there is a call for women to be reserved, but there is also a counterargument that the measure itself may not be discussed in every Parliament because it depends on the current Authorities. The fact that Uttar Pradesh sends the most representatives to Parliament means that it has a significant influence on national policies. Uttar Pradesh and Bihar's role in the establishment of the central government will always be significant from a national standpoint in a federal democracy like India, where the party or alliance with a majority in the Parliament forms the government at the center. Most of the time, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar together send 120 or more members to the Lok Sabha or Rajya Sabha, out of a total of 540–545 members. In actuality, Uttar Pradesh has frequently produced hung parliaments, meaning that no one party could Authorities. The fact that Uttar Pradesh sends the most representatives to Parliament means that it has a significant influence on national policies. Uttar Pradesh and Bihar's role in the establishment of the central government will always be significant from a national standpoint in a federal democracy like India, where the party or alliance with a majority in the Parliament forms the government at the center (Maurya, N. K., Singh, S., & Khare, S. 2016).

11) Political Movement: From Commoners to Repressed Groups

Understanding the dynamics and changes in Uttar Pradesh's politics requires looking back to the 1980s, a time of many ideological and political conflicts. There have been several farmers' movements and their political equivalencies in the state, and they have all started to fade away on a national level. There was a dramatic shift in the way political interests in Uttar Pradesh came together and were mobilized as a result of the ideological differences stated before, which led to a series of party splits and mergers. The main mobilizing approach of the political leaders and parties vying for power within the Janata Parivar shifted from a general categorization of backward classes or Kisan identity to one that concentrated on caste and identity. In reality, parties try to engage individuals across a range of political and ideological dimensions; they do not mobilize solely on a single

component. Bruce Graham argues that many sorts of religion, economic, caste, land, regional, and sectoral interests have always manifested as political agendas in Uttar Pradesh. The factional structure of the Janata Parivar reflected this variety of interests; it was made up of many parts with different and often incompatible aims. In the past, ideological and personal rivalries among socialist party leaders have caused the party to split and even combine on occasion. Disagreements between leaders, which sometimes took the form of splits, sometimes originated in more theoretical theological disagreements. Caste and party control were two of the main points of contention throughout the 1980s.

Not only did different political heavyweights within Charan Singh's Lok Dal support different candidates, but significant members of different castes also did so, with the Jat supporting Ajit Singh and the Yadavs supporting Mulayam. In the 1980s, caste-based mobilization became consolidated with the resurgence of the issue of Other Backward Classes (OBC) extension of quota privileges. This led to a shift in the sociological makeup of socialist formations, which had previously been dominated by members of higher castes, and now included more individuals from lower castes.

A new political mechanism emerged in the 1990s, altering the fundamental character of UP's party system, as a result of the convergence of religious and caste-based mobilizations. While Congress fell apart, three major political parties—the BJP, the BSP, and the SP—saw gains in both organizational base and electoral success. Parties in the 1990s formed unstable alliances since they couldn't get majorities on their own; this caused the state to experience President's Rule many times.

In the aftermath of the Babri Mosque's demolition, three political factions have remained in power. There were three separate chief ministers in the four years and 169 days that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was in power in the state. Over the course of its seven years in power, the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) governed the state in partnership with the BJP twice and the SP once. The Samajwadi Party (SP) ruled the state for 107 days prior to the 2017 Assembly elections. For a total of two years and 208 days, the President's Rule was declared three times within the same time frame. The state has been under the administration of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) since 2017 when they gained a comfortable majority in the legislature. In contrast to its last term, when it controlled 312 MPs, the political party now has 255 seats in the legislature. With 111 seats and 32.06% of the vote, the Samajwadi Party became the state's second-largest political party in the 2022 assembly elections, marking a significant improvement over the previous year. The BJP administration in Uttar Pradesh, headed by Yogi Adityanath, faces a major challenge from the SP's comeback.

12) An Opposition to Upper-Caste Dominance in Uttar Pradesh: Lower-Caste Mobilization

In the last ten years, the political involvement of OBCs has been more visible in the Hindi-speaking regions of the north, especially in Uttar Pradesh. As a sociological category, the Other Backward Classes (OBCs) occupy a space between the untouchables and the higher castes. The majority of these people belong to the Shudra caste, which is the fourth lowest in the ancient Hindu social structure based on the varna system. Overwhelmingly, people from OBC backgrounds work in agriculture or skilled crafts, making up over half of India's population. Nevertheless, they have always been considered less important by society. There is cause for worry about the persistent public domination of upper castes due to the expansion of this specific group. One may make the case that there are two distinct strategies used by those who sought to depose the ruling urban elite of higher caste in the northern Indian states. (Paul R. Brass, 1997)

Kisan, or the mobilization of people as farmers, was the primary goal from the outset. Notable personalities like Chhotu Ram who was at the vanguard of this project in Punjab and Swami Sahajanand who became a major member of the Bihar Kisan Sabha in the 1930s were among the agricultural castes, including the Jat community, who championed its inception before India's independence.

This alternate perspective, which tended to centre on caste identities, was mostly advocated by socialist leaders like 'Rammanohar Lohia' who considered caste as the greatest obstacle to creating a fair society. People who worked in agriculture were encouraged by the Kisan School to unite around common economic and social goals. On the other hand, socialist leaders who concentrated on caste-based politics pushed for caste-based reservations, especially in government positions, in an effort to form an alliance of non-elite groups via affirmative action programs.

13) Summary and Conclusion:

- This research concludes by clarifying the historical, socioeconomic, and electoral aspects of Uttar Pradesh and emphasizing its enormous significance in Indian politics.

- Being the biggest state in India, Uttar Pradesh plays a key role in national politics and governance models that go beyond simple electoral math.
- With its intricate caste system, changing political environments, and wealth of historical legacies, Uttar Pradesh has become known as the "Heartland of Indian Politics."
- Despite their enormity, the state's socioeconomic problems offer chances for inclusive growth and revolutionary changes to the government structure.
- Policymakers may make use of UP's enormous potential to propel socioeconomic advancement at the state and federal levels by tackling ingrained inequities and encouraging participatory decision-making processes.
- Furthermore, the academic conversation surrounding Uttar Pradesh is an essential tool for comprehending the subtleties of Indian democracy, governance, and socio-political dynamics. Sustained transdisciplinary investigation and discourse are crucial in navigating the intricacies of UP's political terrain and providing insight for evidence-based policy responses.
- Recognizing Uttar Pradesh's pivotal role in shaping the course of Indian politics and policy is crucial in promoting democratic values, social harmony, and inclusive growth. Uttar Pradesh can genuinely play the role of the beating heart of Indian democracy, pulsating with life, diversity, and promise for the future, by embracing the different narratives and ambitions of its people.

Uttar Pradesh's political scene exemplifies the significance of regional parties in India's democratic system for representing minority groups and local concerns. Party loyalty and voting patterns have been swayed by caste-based mobilisation in the past, but regional parties promote a more representative government by attending to issues that national parties may ignore. The change from a one-party system in Uttar Pradesh to a multi-party system shows a trend towards a more varied political structure that includes people from different economic, religious, and caste backgrounds. Greater decentralisation has resulted from this process, which has helped strike a balance between national unity and regional concerns. Last but not least, regional parties continue to play a significant role in Uttar Pradesh, which is representative of a national trend towards regionalism in India.

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