

# A Study of How the Political System of India is Beneficial or Harmful for Democracy

Pramod Kumar Chaudhary

Research Scholar, Department of Political Science, Shri Venketateshwara University, Gajraula, Uttar Pradesh, INDIA.

Corresponding Author: pramodchdr7@gmail.com



[www.ijrah.com](http://www.ijrah.com) || Vol. 3 No. 1 (2023): January Issue

Date of Submission: 13-11-2022

Date of Acceptance: 14-12-2022

Date of Publication: 01-01-2023

## ABSTRACT

A type of governance known as democracy is one in which members of the population take part in the making of decisions either directly or indirectly via the use of a system of representation that includes the holding of free elections on a regular basis. It is generally agreed that India's democracy is the biggest one in existence on a global scale. In a democracy, the citizens or their representatives have the power, as well as the people are the ultimate authority in every aspect of administration. This holds true regardless of the kind of government in place. On the other hand, democracy has been met with several obstacles in contemporary India, such as social and economic disparities, unemployment and poverty casteism, illiteracy, corruption, communalism, terrorism, and population expansion. It is essential that this issue be resolved if India is to continue to function as a genuine parliamentary democracy. In this article, an attempt is made to investigate and analyse the democratic system that is now in the country and what the impact of the Indian political system is on democracy. In addition to this, it proposes a number of feasible actions or adjustments to existing institutions that may be made in order to make India's democracy more robust and long-lasting.

**Keywords-** Democracy, Political System of India, Challenges in Indian Democracy, social and economic disparities, administration.

## I. INTRODUCTION

How can one sound right of the increasing paradoxes in our democracy: a highly competitive politics with party elites winning significant assembly polls as well as an engaged populace demonstrating on the roads, combined with the BJP's intellectual power structure? Or, can one explain the contradiction that, on the one side, the majority of political groups in India are deteriorating as organisations and exhibiting centralising inclinations, but play an essential role in generating democratic results like the presence of minority groups?

The Indian democracy is unique in its kind. It is both an outcome of institutional design and an unintended consequence of society's conflicting dynamics. The political parties of India serve as a forum for these social influences, with a mixed track record of success in certain fields and failure in others<sup>[1]</sup>. Their agility and flexibility have maintained the vitality of

ordinary politics. The routinization of politics as well as entrepreneurial culture of India's leaders would operate as a protective device to prevent any kind of national discourse from attaining dominant status. In addition, the cultural and moral variety of India ensures that no electoral plurality is permanent and also no intellectual dominance may enjoy enduring power. Diverse India will continue to develop competing impulses and maintain the democratic equilibrium of our system as a result of constant change.

Democracy is founded on representative government, public engagement in the political process, freedom, and openness of political actions and processes. Political scientists would likely include established civilized society in their list of democracy's major traits. This argument is logical since democracy gives all the circumstances for civil society organisations and their members. Thus, although citizen engagement in the political process is a cornerstone of democracy, it is also the foundation of a healthy civil society.

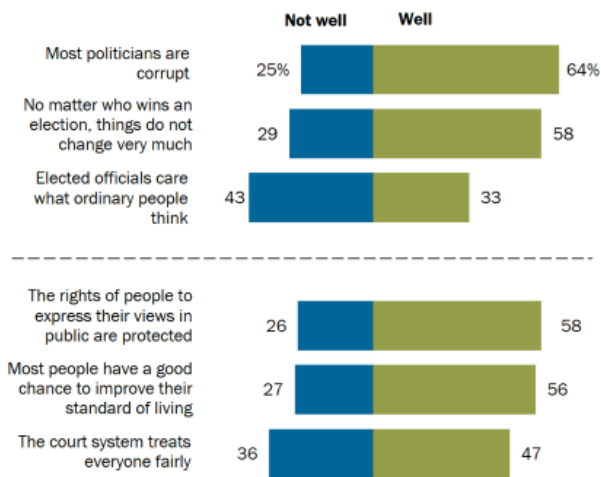


Figure 1: Opinion of Indians on democracy

Above given figure 1 shows the graphical representation of Indians' view that politicians are corrupted but Indian democracy allows them to freedom of speech. As per the above given graph the Lok Sabha, the lower chamber of the Indian Parliament, has 545 seats, and its members were elected in April and May of 2019. There are almost 900 million individuals that could really vote. Indians expressed deep dissatisfaction with their electoral system and their government representatives on a number of key issues<sup>[2]</sup>. People in India believe their politicians are corrupt, but they also believe they have a right to express their opinions freely in a democratic society. Sixty-four percent of people say they believe this to be true, with a sizable proportion 43% holding this position with great enthusiasm. Significantly, almost 69% of those who favour the BJP and those who support the Congress agree that their elected officials are corrupt.

A further 58% agree that nothing changes regardless of who wins an election. The plurality of both BJP and Congress supporters are included here. In addition, just a minority of Indian adults (33%) say their government really values the opinions of regular citizens. Even if males are more inclined to think that government officials wouldn't care, women are less likely to speak out. The population also believes that the Indian government supports liberal ideals.

By a margin of more than 58% to 26%, Indians believe their freedom to express themselves is very well or relatively well protected. Those with greater knowledge are more likely than those who have less knowledge to believe that free expression is preserved, albeit, once again, a sizable proportion of the less qualified (22%) have no view<sup>[3]</sup>. A comparable majority (56% to 27%) believe that most individuals in India have a strong likelihood of improving their level of life. People in cities are more prone to believe in such prospects than those in rural India. BJP supporters (66%) are more inclined than Congress supporters (53%) to believe that Indian democracy provides economic opportunities. A majority (47%) feel the legal system

handles everyone equally, a view shared particularly by young people.

## II. INDIAN POLITICAL SYSTEM

The Westminster form of governance in the United Kingdom serves as a general inspiration for India's governing structure. It is made up of a president who serves as the head of state, an executive branch that is directed by the prime minister, a legislature that is made up of a parliament that has both an upper and lower house (known respectively as the Rajya Sabha and the Lok Sabha), and a judicial branch that is led by the supreme court. Every five years, there occurs a general election that employs the very first voting system, and there are 543 open seats in the Lok Sabha<sup>[4]</sup>. Indirect elections for state members to the Rajya Sabha are held on staggered six-year terms; hence, about one-third of seats in the chamber are up for election every two years. These seats are determined by the various state legislatures.

The Constitution of India lays forth the political system of the nation, its federal structure, as well as the powers of the government. It also protects the rights of Indian citizens, such as the right to equality before the law as well as the freedoms of expression, assembly, and movement, amongst other rights. The caste system in India is a hierarchical social framework that separates the Hindu majority into groups, with 'Brahmins' at the top of society and 'Dalits' at the bottom of society. This social structure adds a layer of complexity to the system. It is generally possible to determine a person's caste based on their surname. Caste is still a strong component in Indian politics, despite the fact that the country's constitution outlaws caste discrimination and early administrations institute quotas to ensure a more equitable distribution of employment and educational opportunities. In some areas, political parties continue to solicit voters according to their castes, and castes often vote together as a unit.

## III. DEMOCRACY IN INDIA

India is the biggest democracy. On 26 January 1950, the Constitution made it secular and democratic. Democratic India values equality, justice, liberty, and brotherhood. All castes, creeds, sexes, and regions can participate and elect their representatives. India's parliamentary system is modelled after the British. India has both a central and state government. The parliament oversees the central government, while state legislatures oversee state governments<sup>[5]</sup>. The central and state governments are democratically elected and follow the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha. President and Head of State are elected by the central government and the state.

It's well known that Indian democracy is transforming. This has been defined by structural changes in political competitiveness, a multi-fold

expansion in the middle class, social media penetration, and the decline of traditional hierarchies. Since 2014, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has expanded socially and geographically, marginalising the Congress, decimating the Left Front, and weakening state-level parties. The BJP's widespread successes have narrowed voting groups and other socioeconomic cleavages. State-level specialisations, which dominated the discourse for two decades, are now less important in election assessments, particularly for national politics.



Figure 2: Democracy in India

As India commemorated 75 years of independence, researchers evaluated the role of political groups in building the nation's democracy amid a fast-shifting political scene. Modern democracies are inconceivable without political parties, which serve as the nerve center connecting citizens and the State in three crucial realms: as networks for voicing personal concerns, as vehicles for political aspirations, and as systems for interest groups to advance political settlements.

In a democratic nation, the populace chooses and elects a representative to serve as their leader. The definition of democracy is "government of the people, by the people, and for the people." It is a political system in which the individual is paramount and freedom of choice is at its centre. The word "democracy" derives from the Greek word "dēmokratía," which meaning "government of the people." In the globe, there are two sorts of democracies<sup>[6]</sup>. One is direct democracy, in which qualified individuals engage in political decision-making directly and actively. This sort of democracy is sometimes referred to as a democratic republic or representative democracy.

When political and socio-economic ambitions are met can a society and system be termed democratic. This is divided into political factors that might lead to political democracy as well as conditions of society and economy that could result in societal democracy. A people-powered Constitution is needed to attain political conditions. The Constitution should guarantee basic human rights, and universal adult franchise should elect representatives. Democratic ideals and social progress must represent the people's social security, welfare, as well as status. Economic progress should benefit the poor<sup>[7]</sup>.

The following are some important recommendations that should be considered to ensure the democracy in India continues to operate effectively.

- It is essential to keep in mind that the voter is the core of democracy. Political awareness should be transmitted to the people. It implies that individuals are informed of their rights and responsibilities. At the grassroots level, individuals must organise workshops, seminars, and conferences on their rights and benefits.
- Illiterate people in India should be educated in order to vote wisely. Democracy is threatened by ignorance. Political education and information sharing can remedy this in India. Democracy will fail if people are unaware of their political issues.
- Government and NGO institutions should collaborate to improve the nation. They must encourage national economic and social growth.
- The fourth pillar of democracy—media—should actively promote truth and democracy. India's government needs media independence to discover the truth.
- Democracy depends on politicians. They must be democratic and think of themselves as servants, not masters. They should serve the people and improve the nation. Indian politicians may campaign on topics, not caste, religion, or communal politics. They must restore and reform democracy to ensure its seamless operation.
- The leader should be moral and honest. Citizens must pick leaders based on character and behaviour. Leaders must comprehend public relations management. They must be fair and serve the public interest. Youth should emulate leaders. Therefore, democracy succeeds when people and government are ethical.
- Part IV's Directive Principles of State Principles (DPSP) should be justiciable rights like Part III's basic rights. The DPSP should promote Indian economic and social development.
- The three components of democracy—legislature, executive, and judiciary—should monitor national issues together. These institutions should uphold democracy and adapt to the country's changing circumstances.

#### IV. POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE EFFECT OF THE INDIAN POLITICAL SYSTEM ON DEMOCRACY

India is the most populous democracy in the world, therefore democratic forms of government have broad support there. And so do other nondemocratic forms of government. Approximately 79% Indians are content with the present state of their democracy. This includes 33 % of very contented customers. Significantly more BJP supporters (84%) are happy with Indian democracy than Congress followers (65%).

The condition of Indian democracy reflects the public's opinion of the economy. Those who feel economic circumstances in India are favourable are much more likely to be pleased with the country's democracy<sup>[8]</sup>. Similarly, those who believe today's children will be financially better off than their parents are more content with democracy than those who are negative about the future of the upcoming generation.

People embrace both direct as well as representative democracy. Three-quarters of Indians believe that a representative democracy in which residents elect people who determine what becomes legislation would be an effective method to rule their nation. Similar proportions agree that it would be preferable for individuals, not elected leaders, to directly vote on significant national issues and choose what constitutes law. India has never had a nationwide referendum in its seven decades of independence, but there have been state-level votes.

Approximately two-thirds of Indians believe that the ideal method to rule the country would be for professionals, not elected politicians, to make choices based on what is best for the country. India is one of seven nations out of the 38 questioned in which more than sixty percent of the population supports technocracy. 55% of Indians prefer a style of government in which a strong leader makes choices without intervention from legislature or the judiciary, while 53% favour military control<sup>[9]</sup>. India has more support for authoritarian authority compared to any other country assessed. Therefore, India is one of just four countries where more than half of the population favours military rule. India's democracy has failed to provide the type of continuous economic growth experienced by China and its neighbours over the last 40 years. This is perhaps the nation's biggest issue. Additionally, it has failed to eradicate severe poverty.

The lifestyles of intellectual elite in more globalised cities such as Delhi and Mumbai are radically different from those of India's poorest residents. Low-wage, low-skilled occupations continue to be the most likely kind of occupation for millions of young Indians, especially in poorer, populous areas such as Uttar Pradesh, resulting in a significant number of disgruntled, disenfranchised voters. Indian nationalism as well as populism have fed off this resentment by scapegoating religious minorities — specifically Muslims and Dalits — while promoting Hindu pride.

Prime Minister Modi as well as the BJP party symbolise the century-old Hindu nationalist ideology, whose philosophy is Hindutva. Since before freedom, nationalists have contended that India should be the homeland of South Asia's Hindus, just as Pakistan was for the region's Muslim population. The current BJP strives to unite the Hindu community, saying, not without validity, that caste divides were intentionally

accentuated during the colonial era as part of a divide-and-conquer plan by the British.

The BJP has been focused on advancing its goal since gaining power. Hindu nationalists are unconcerned with other faiths that have their roots in India, such as Sikhism as well as Jainism, but they are more antagonistic to religions that have their roots abroad, particularly Islam and Christianity<sup>[10]</sup>. The BJP claims that it is elevating the status of Hindus and that previous parties have favoured the minority (Muslim) community.

The sole Muslim-majority state in India, Kashmir, was placed under lockdown from 2019 to 2021 and had its communications cut off. The region's autonomy was abolished, and hundreds of people—including separatists and leaders from Kashmir—were detained. Detention centres have been established in Assam, a state in the northeast region of India where uncontrolled immigration is a serious issue and where Muslims comprise about a third of the population.

This came after the Citizenship Amendment Act of 2019 was approved, which relaxed citizenship criteria for people of other faiths, but specifically left Muslims out. Due to their omission from India's National Register of Citizens, 1.9 million Muslims in Assam have already been essentially deprived of their citizenship. Though economic development has slowed and political debate has grown more divisive as a result of the BJP's drive to recreate India, additionally, it has damaged Indian institutions and fundamental democratic tenets such as the rule of law<sup>[11]</sup>. India's broken judicial system, which keeps many people languishing in custody before trial for "crimes" like nonviolent protest, further erodes faith in the rule of law. Amnesty International, meanwhile, documents several instances of India's security services and police using excessive force.

India also has a number of demographic issues. Male and female populations are significantly out of balance as a result of years of selective abortion. A growing working-age population is what is known as a "demographic dividend" in India right now. The creation of employment remains a challenge, however<sup>[12]</sup>. The rate of unemployment is at a 40-year peak. As a main conclusion, population growth has been faster in the poorer northern states than in the southern states, which tend to have a greater level of education. The crime inside the political system in India presents additional difficulties for democracy. In the 2019 general election, 43% of candidates who gained seats in the national parliament had some kind of criminal record against them.

#### ***Challenges to Democracy in India:***

There are a growing number of obstacles that democracy as a system of governance must overcome. The democratic process faces a number of significant difficulties, some of which are listed here.





**Figure 3: Challenges of Indian Democracy**

- Democracy is threatened by political criminalization. It usually involves criminals entering political parties and legislatures via elections and using criminal techniques to influence politics. Lawbreakers becoming legislators harms up democracy. Thus, society and democracy may collapse. Many Indian political parties collaborated with criminal gangs to obtain power or profit<sup>[13]</sup>. Democracy has been eroded by criminalising politics. 67 Janata Party MPs with criminal records were elected in Bihar in 1997. This affects contemporary Indian democracy.
- Another threat to the functioning of Indian democracy is casteism. The caste system that exists in India is an odd one. Caste-based politics, voting practises, and even caste-based warfare have all occurred under India's democracy. The caste system in India affects an individual's basic freedoms to live and develop, which are at the heart of democracy. The caste structure in Indian society has an impact on democracy at the social and political levels.
- Illiteracy hinders democracy. Their ignorance of government operations affects democracy. India cannot have democracy and illiteracy. Because rule of law and equality strengthen democratic government. Ignorant and illiterate people cannot pick good leaders in a democracy<sup>[14]</sup>. They don't comprehend democracy either. Thus, the weak democratic institutions of an uninformed or illiterate community cannot produce a vibrant democracy.
- Democracy also faces terrorism. It destroys democracies and murders innocents. Terrorism distorts public discussions, discredits moderates, empowers political extremists, and polarises society in democratic countries like India. It hampers national and international progress. Governments, international institutions, and civil society ameliorate the most harmful political impacts of terrorist attacks in India and worldwide<sup>[15]</sup>. After 9/11, the US labeled terrorism the global threat. Terrorism has plagued Jammu & Kashmir for years. Terrorist Attack in Indian Parliament (2001), TajHotel (2008), Pathankot (2016), and Pulwama (2019) attacked India's democracy.
- Political corruption is yet another obstacle to democracy's proper functioning. It undercuts democratic

principles, good administration, and the legitimacy of the government. Political leaders utilise their position of influence to amass the nation's illicit fortune. In a nation like India, corruption has an immediate impact on politics, government, and institutions<sup>[16]</sup>. The decision-making system is corrupted, which undermines the rule of law in the judiciary, accountability in government policymaking, as well as the effective delivery of services in government administration. The nation's economy may be directly impacted by corruption.

## V. CONCLUSION

Scholars have reached a number of findings after considering political participation as a conception of democracy and studying political involvement in the India. First, it is clear that the political system and the degree of public involvement in political life are related. It doesn't matter whether an institution was initially democratic, is now reforming, or uses democracy as a garnish for an authoritarian regime; what matters is its institutional architecture. In the case of the Indian model, civil society is powerful as well as political involvement is well-developed and quite efficient. However, civil society is already well-organized, but citizens do not yet have a wide range of opportunities to influence political process. Additionally, individuals engage in political activity when political institutions permit them to do so and refrain from doing so when political institutions place a greater emphasis on representation than on engagement. Secondly it should be noted that political engagement relies on how individuals believe, whether they accept the obligation to be engaged, and if they have prior political experience. People in the India live with the assumption that they are given the freedom to express their views since democratic traditions there are strong and robust, engagement at the supranational level is very new, there is a lack of clarity, and individuals may not be sure how to contribute under these novel circumstances. However, people just haven't had the opportunity to participate, thus they are unable to understand the value of the participation process. The third conclusion is connected to the first two after some consideration of the character of political engagement. Of course, it relies on the sort of governmental structure and historical context that through time shaped the manner in which the people thought. But when it is considered the word "voluntary," another important feature clearly stands up. The issue is how each individual personally understands his or her own position and function in the political process, whether they are really interested in taking part or are completely uninterested, and if they adhere to the life philosophy that they must fight for their rights and opinions or not. In conclusion, it should be remarked that a citizen's desire to engage in the political process is always more important than just the right that is explicitly stated in the Constitution.

---

**REFERENCES**

- [1] Bakshi P.M., 1999, The Constitution of India with selective comments, Universal Law Publishing Co. Pvt. Ltd.
- [2] Krishnappa M. P., Eradicate Corruption and Save the Nation, 2019, Bangalore.
- [3] Pradhan V.P., The Constitution of India, Ombudsman Publishing House, New Delhi.
- [4] Fowler F.G. and Fowler H.W., 1977, The Oxford Hand Dictionary, First Edition, Chancellor Press.
- [5] Indian Human Rights Law Review, Vol.1, No.1, June 2010.
- [6] Journal of the Indian Law Institute, Vol.55, No.1, January – March 2013 issue, New Delhi.
- [7] Kashyap Subhash, 2008, Our Parliament, National Book Trust, India, New Delhi.
- [8] Lawyers Update, Vol XIX, Part 11, November 2013.
- [9] Lawyers Update, Vol XIX, Part 12, December 2013.
- [10] Mane Suresh, 2011, The Global Law, Volume 1, Aarati & Co., Mumbai.
- [11] Pandey J.N., 2000, Constitutional Law of India, 35th Edition, Central Law Agency, Allahabad.
- [12] Takwani C.K., Lectures on Administrative Law, Eastern Book Company, Third Edition, Lucknow.
- [13] Vaidya Sharvari V., Privileged Class Deviance, Allahabad Law Agency, Haryana.
- [14] Yaji Raman B.S., 2005, Constitutional Law and Professional Ethics, United Publishers, Bangalore, India.
- [15] Dr. Mane Suresh, 2007, Indian Constitutional Law: Dynamics and Challenges, Aarati & Co., Mumbai.
- [16] Singh Mahendra P., 2000, V.N. Shukla's Constitution of India, Eastern Book Company, Lucknow.