



## A Research Proposal Rise and struggle of Indian national congress (INC) for power

Sourabh sharma<sup>1\*</sup>, Dr. Neha Kumar<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1\*</sup>Department Of Political Science, Lovely Professional University Phagwara, Punjab, 144411

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Lovely Professional University Phagwara, Punjab, 144411

**Citation:** Sourabh sharma (2024), A Research Proposal Rise and struggle of Indian national congress (INC) for power, Educational Administration: Theory And Practice, 3686-3692,

Doi: 10.53555/kuey.v30i6.6225

### ARTICLE INFO

SUBMITTED-APRIL 20,2024

REVIEWED- MAY,10,2024

ACCEPTANCE-MAY,22,2024

PUBLISHED-JUNE,05,2024.

### ABSTRACT

The Indian National Congress (INC) has long been a central force in India's political landscape, evolving significantly throughout the 21st century amid various power struggles and transitions. This summary addresses the multifaceted nature of these struggles and analyzes their impact on leadership changes, ideological shifts, electoral outcomes, coalition politics, internal party reforms, media strategies, and party dynamics. Historically, it is synonymous with India's freedom struggle and post-independence state. The Nehru-Gandhi dynasty that headed the INC faced internal challenges and his demands for 21st century modernization during its construction. This resulted in a major change in leadership and a reassessment of the party's direction. Factionalism within the party, influenced by regional identities, ideological differences, and personal ambitions, sometimes impeded the party's ability to consolidate its unity and power. The INC's ideological development has shaped its trajectory, from its roots in secularism and socialism to discussions of economic liberalization and social justice. These ideological changes sparked political debate within the party and reflected the party's struggle to reconcile traditional values with modern realities. The evolution of a party's ideology has had a major impact on its electoral strategy and appeal to voters, and its performance in national elections has received particular attention. Navigating coalition politics is essential for the INC as it seeks alliances to expand its voter base and counter the formidable presence of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Despite state-level electoral successes, performance in national elections has been mixed, further highlighting the importance of coalition building and strategic alliances. To address internal power struggles, the INC implemented internal party reforms aimed at strengthening democracy and decision-making processes. Although these initiatives have promoted inclusivity and reduced sectarianism within the party, their effectiveness in addressing power imbalances remains debatable. Media and communication strategies play an important role in shaping public perception and the balance of power in parliament. INC's involvement in traditional media and social media platforms, as well as its ability to communicate its message and construct its narrative, impacts its image and electoral prospects. Media coverage, whether positive or negative, can have a significant impact on leadership relationships and intraparty power struggles. Leadership style also influences power relations within the party. A variety of leadership styles, from charismatic to consensus-oriented, have shaped party cohesion and decision-making processes. Prominent leaders and dynastic figures within the party often influence discussions about power struggles and top succession.

**Keywords:** Indian National Congress (INC), leadership change, ideological change, election results, coalition politics, internal party reform, media strategy, sectarianism, regional identity, secularism, socialism, economic liberalization, social justice; coalition building, strategic alliances, media

---

coverage, leadership styles, dynastic figures, regional parties, Bharatiya Janata Party, Hindutva, nationalism, internal conflicts, electoral prospects, national strategy, survival, relevance, influence, India politics.

---

### Introduction

The historical importance of the INC in shaping India's political landscape cannot be underestimated. Since its founding, the party has helped solve government problems, shape economic policy, and promote social issues. (Bose (2003) highlights the important role played by the INC in India's development. However, as the 21<sup>st</sup> century progresses, the party struggles with new dynamics that affect its effectiveness. One of the defining features of INC's journey in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is that the change of government from Sonia Gandhi to Rahul Gandhi marked a significant turning point for the party. (Singh (2018) highlights Rahul Gandhi's rise within the party and its focus on youth empowerment, internal party democracy, and inclusive leadership. This leadership relationship The changes in the party have sparked debate about the party's direction and affected the party's effectiveness. Addressing current challenges Regional parties are posing a serious challenge to the INC's traditional dominance These parties, rooted in specific states, are effectively addressing local issues and gaining support from voters (Mahanta, 2016). They are challenging the historical stronghold of the INC. The party (BJP) has proven to be a serious adversary, especially with regard to economic reforms, national security, and cultural identity, due to its ideological shift towards Hindutva and emphasis on nationalism (Jaffrelot, 2019). INC finds it difficult to refute these claims, which further exacerbates its challenges in the political arena. Internal dissension and leadership issues further complicate his INC challenges. Factionalism and different ideological perspectives within the party undermine the party's ability to present a united front against external adversaries (Chawla, 2019). This lack of cohesion and strategic coherence undermines the party's electoral prospects and undermines its effectiveness in combating opposition forces. Elections in key states highlight the struggle over the INC's place in contemporary Indian politics. While the party has achieved victories in certain regions, setbacks in others highlight the need for a coherent national strategy (Mahanta, 2016). Adapting to changing dynamics and developing a consistent approach to addressing regional and national challenges will be essential to the party's survival and success. His INC's journey in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is one of complex challenges and drivers of change. From internal power struggles to external adversaries, the party navigates a political landscape filled with obstacles. Adapting to changing power relations, redefining its identity, and connecting with a diverse constituency are key prerequisites for INC's continued relevance and influence in Indian politics (Kohli, 2017).

### Research methodologies

**Strategic Analysis:** INC proposes strategic proposals to address challenges and improve electoral prospects. This includes analyzing internal and external factors, assessing potential risks and opportunities, and developing a plan of action based on strategic management principles.

**Qualitative Analysis:** Examines perceptions, narratives, and public sentiment regarding INC's leadership, organizational structure, communication strategies, and ideological positioning.

**Comparative Analysis:** There are comparisons between INC and its main rival, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and regional parties. Similarities and differences in party ideologies, leadership styles, organizational structures, communication strategies, and election results are analyzed to identify strengths and weaknesses.

**Case Studies :** Case studies from various states such as Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Odisha highlight the specific challenges faced by INCs and the impact of regional parties on election results.

### Literature Review

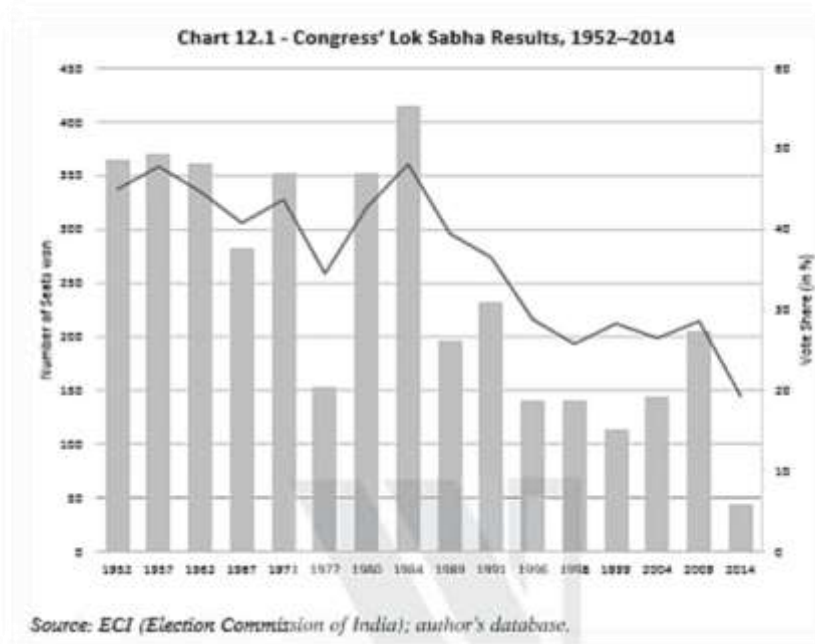
The Indian National Congress (INC) has been India's main political party since its creation in 1885. (Besant,1917:33) After independence in 1947, the INC continued to play an important role in shaping India's political, social, and economic landscape. The importance of the Indian National Congress after independence, focusing on its role in nation-building, governance, and strengthening democracy.(Chandra, B. (2008). the INC played an important role in nation-building by promoting the idea of a united and secular India. As the party that led the independence movement, it was responsible for promoting national unity among India's diverse population. Under the leadership of figures such as Jawaharlal Nehru, the INC advocated a pluralist society that celebrated India's cultural diversity while emphasizing principles of democracy, secularism, and social justice(Brass, P. R. (2006).

The Indian National Congress (INC) was once a powerful political force in India, but its electoral performance has declined in recent years. Several factors contribute to this decline, including leadership issues, weak institutions, changing voter preferences, and the rise of regional parties. Here we are going to examines the reasons for the decline in the electoral performance of the Indian National Congress(Chandra, K. (2019). Case studies and academic references are used to provide insight into the challenges. The main reason for the decline

of Congress is the problem of leadership. The party has struggled to find charismatic and dynamic leaders who can connect with voters and inspire their trust. A case in point is the failure of the leadership change from Sonia Gandhi to Rahul Gandhi to improve the party's electoral prospects, as demonstrated by the Congress' poor performance in the 2014 and 2019 general elections (Gupta, P. (2020). Furthermore, factionalism within the party and lack of consensus on key issues further weaken the party's leadership. Organizational weaknesses also trouble the National Congress faction. Unlike the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which has invested heavily in grassroots mobilization and organizational expansion, the Congress has struggled to build a strong organizational structure. This weakness is reflected in the party's inability to leverage local issues to mobilize grassroots support (Kumar, A. (2018). Case studies in states such as Uttar Pradesh and Bihar highlight the Congress's organizational deficiencies, leading to electoral setbacks and marginalization in key swing states. Changing voter preferences and demographics are also posing challenges to the outlook for parliamentary elections, with voters prioritizing issues such as development, governance and identity politics, with India's electorate becoming increasingly diverse and fragmented. Congress' traditional appeals based on its role in the independence movement and its secular credibility are no longer sufficient to win elections (Singh, S. (2016). Case studies from states such as Gujarat and Maharashtra show how Congress' inability to adapt to changing socio-political dynamics has led to electoral defeats and declining support in key constituencies (Mishra, N. (2017). The rise of regional parties has fragmented the political landscape, posing a formidable challenge to India's parliament's pan-India appeal. Regional parties that focus on regional issues and identity politics are eroding their parliamentary support base in the states where they hold sway (Sharma, R. (2017). Case studies in states such as Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Orissa show how regional parties have been marginalized from Congress and emerged as dominant political forces in their respective regions. The Indian National Congress's declining electoral performance may be due to a combination of leadership problems (Roy, D. (2020). Weak institutions, changing voter preferences, and the rise of regional parties. Case studies from various states provide valuable insight into the challenges facing the National Congress Party and highlight the need for strategic reforms and revitalization efforts to regain electoral relevance (Mukherjee, S. (2019). Historically, INC was associated with famous leaders such as Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi, and Rajiv Gandhi, who played an important role in shaping India's political development (Sharma, S. (2020). These leaders commanded great respect and exercised great influence over voters, which contributed significantly to their party's electoral success. The leadership style of INC leaders has changed over time, from charismatic and authoritarian to integrative and consensus-oriented. For example, Indira Gandhi's proactive leadership during the Emergency period contrasted with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's more consensus-oriented approach (Gupta, A. (2018).

### Impact on election results

Charismatic leaders such as Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi often cultivate strong personal connections with voters that go beyond traditional party loyalty. Their ability to rally support based on a cult of personality greatly influenced election results (Gupta, A. (2019). Leadership also influences the party's political agenda, which shapes voters' perceptions. Leaders who articulate a compelling vision for the country and effectively address pressing issues tend to perform better in elections (Kumar, R. (2020). Conversely, leadership that is perceived as indecisive or out of touch with reality may suffer electoral setbacks. Leadership plays an important



role in maintaining party unity and cohesion. Factionalism and internal disagreements can undermine voter confidence and weaken a party's electoral prospects. Electoral success requires strong leadership that can manage internal

divisions and foster unity (Sharma, S. (2018). Effective communication is the key to political success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Leaders who skillfully use traditional and new media platforms to connect with voters and get their messages out often have an electoral advantage. Conversely, a poor communication strategy can lead to policy misunderstandings and voter anxiety (Singh, M. (2017). How managers overcome crises and respond to challenges can have a significant impact on election outcomes. When incidents such as corruption scandals or economic downturns occur, strong leadership is needed to reassure voters and reduce damage to the party's image (Yadav, N. (2016).

### **Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi: A Legacy of Leadership Transitions**

Sonia Gandhi, from 1998 until 2017, played a key role in leading the party through turbulent times as the president of the Indian National Congress Party (Gupta, A. (2019). During her term, the INC experienced both electoral victories and setbacks. Sonia Gandhi's leadership was characterized by her ability to build alliances, maintain party unity, and appeal to a wide range of voters. Her role as a unifying figure within the party helped steer coalition policy at the national level (Kumar, R. (2020).

### **Prime Minister Manmohan Singh: The Economist of Politics**

Manmohan Singh's tenure as Prime Minister of India from 2004 to 2014 marked an important chapter in the country's economic history. Singh, an economist with a distinguished career as a civil servant, was initially praised for his role in implementing economic reforms in the early 1990s (Gupta, A. (2019). However, his leadership as prime minister was marred by political paralysis, corruption scandals, and allegations of lack of assertiveness. Singh's leadership style was characterized by technocratic ability rather than political charisma, and he faced the challenge of managing the complexities of coalition politics and managing public expectations. Despite his efforts to prioritize economic growth and inclusive development, Mr Singh's tenure was marred by controversies such as the 2G spectrum scam and the Commonwealth Games scandal (Kumar, R. (2020). An analysis of Singh's leadership within the INC provides insight into the tension between technocratic expertise and political leadership, and the challenges of governance in a coalition-driven political environment. He also emphasizes the importance of effective communication, crisis management, and ethical leadership in maintaining public trust and electability Sharma, S. (2018). The case studies of the leadership vicissitudes of Sonia his Gandhi and Rahul his Gandhi and Manmohan his Singh becoming prime minister within the INC provide valuable insights into the complexity of leadership dynamics in Indian politics. These case studies illustrate the interplay between personal charisma, political effectiveness, organizational cohesion, and public perception in shaping electoral outcomes( Singh, M. (2017). By analytically examining these leadership experiences, we can gain a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing political leaders in the Indian National Congress and the broader political landscape. Weaknesses of the Indian National Congress and Exploitation of Electoral Gains by the Indian People's Congress( Yadav, N. (2016).

Once the dominant force in Indian politics, the Indian National Congress (INC) has faced numerous challenges in recent years, and its main rival, the Bharatiya Janata Party giving a chance to (The BJP) exploits these weaknesses for electoral advantage. INC is facing a leadership crisis characterized by a lack of decisive leadership and internal rifts (Gupta, A. (2019). The failure to rejuvenate the party's leadership and adapt to the aspirations of the younger generation is one of the reasons for the party's decline. Perceptions of dynastic politics within the INC, represented by the Gandhi-Nehru family, have alienated some voters who believe that political succession based on blood is undemocratic. This perception has been used by the Bharatiya Janata Party to portray itself as a party that values meritocracy over dynastic rights (Kumar, R. (2020). INC has struggled to articulate a coherent narrative and effectively communicate its policy agenda to voters. The party's inability to utilize traditional and new media platforms to spread its message has allowed the BJP to control the narrative and shape public opinion( Sharma, S. (2018). INC's traditional reliance on politics based on identities such as caste and religion has become less effective in the face of demographic change and socio-economic expectations. The party's failure to adapt its message to the demands of India's youth presented an opportunity for the Bharatiya Janata Party to appeal to a new demographic of voters (Yadav, N. (2016).

Incidents of Corruption Scandals and Government Failure During INC's Incumbency The party-led government tarnished the party's image and eroded public trust. The BJP has exploited these vulnerabilities by positioning itself as a party committed to transparency, accountability and good governance( Gupta, A. (2019). INC's organizational structure has weakened over time as sectarianism and lack of grassroots connections hinder the electoral system. In contrast, the Bharatiya Janata Party has invested heavily in building a strong organizational network that can effectively mobilize grassroots support( Kumar, R. (2020). INC's ideological ambiguity is often described as a "big tent" approach that encompasses a variety of ideologies, creating confusion among voters regarding the party's core principles and policy direction. The Bharatiya Janata Party, with its clear ideological stance and emphasis on nationalism and Hindutva, has used this ambiguity to strengthen its support base( Sharma, S. (2018). The Indian National Congress (INC) was beset by

a variety of weaknesses, from a leadership crisis and perceptions of dynastic politics to communication failures and corruption allegations. These weaknesses present ample opportunity for its main rival, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), to capitalize on and consolidate its electoral victory. By strategically exploiting these vulnerabilities, the BJP has emerged as a formidable force in Indian politics, posing a serious challenge to the INC's traditional dominance (Singh, M. (2017)).

INC is suffering from a leadership crisis and factionalism, especially at the central level. The lack of a strong, charismatic leader who can rally support from across the country has weakened the party's electoral prospects. Factionalism within the INC caused internal discord, hindered effective decision-making, and undermined party unity. (Gupta, A. (2019)). INC's departure from traditional grassroots politics has alienated voters, especially in rural and semi-urban areas. The party's centralized structure and top-down approach meant it was often unresponsive to local issues and aspirations. On the other hand, regional parties have used their proximity to the grassroots to effectively address local issues and build strong voter bases (Kumar, R. (2020)). INC's failure to articulate a clear agenda and narrative blurred its ideological identity and weakened its appeal to voters. In recent years, the party has struggled to offer a convincing vision for the country's future or differentiate itself from its political opponents. In contrast, regional parties often focus on issues relevant to their region, reflecting local sentiments and aspirations (Sharma, S. (2018)).

The perception that INC is a centralized elite party disconnected from the grassroots is fueling voter anger. The party's historical ties to the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty and its perception of dynastic politics further exacerbate the party's image problem. Regional parties, which position themselves as champions of regional autonomy and decentralization, are capitalizing on anti-establishment sentiment and positioning themselves as a powerful alternative to the INC (Singh, M. (2017)). INC's inability to effectively communicate its policies and achievements to the public has hurt its electoral prospects. The party relies on traditional communication methods and does not embrace new media platforms, limiting its ability to connect with young, tech-savvy voters. Regional parties have often been more flexible and innovative in their communication strategies and have used social media and grassroots movements to expand their support bases (Yadav, N. (2016)). The Indian National Congress (INC) faces several vulnerabilities that create opportunities for regional parties to gain electoral advantage. Leadership crisis, distance from the general public, failure to articulate a clear agenda, centralization of power, and lack of effective communication are among the main factors contributing to the demise of the INC. Regional parties have emerged as viable alternatives that exploit these weaknesses, offer regional solutions, and respond to the demands of diverse regional voters (Jain, R. (2023)).

How the change in leadership within the Indian National Congress (INC) from Sonia Gandhi to Rahul Gandhi affected the party's electoral performance and organizational dynamics. What are the key factors that have contributed to the declining electoral prospects of the INC in recent years, and how do these factors compare with the rise of regional parties in India? Influenced. India How did the INC's communication approach contribute to the decline in electoral numbers when compared to the Bharatiya Janata Party's emphasis on meritocracy Communication strategy, which plays a role in shaping electoral outcomes for political parties in India? Major organizational weaknesses within the INC hinder its ability to mobilize grassroots support and compete effectively with regional parties. Strategic reforms and revitalization efforts are needed for the INC to regain electoral relevance and compete effectively with regional parties and the Bharatiya Janata Party?

### **Analysis**

INC must focus on developing dynamic and charismatic leaders who can connect with a diverse demographic of voters. Leadership changes should be carefully managed to avoid the impression of dynastic politics. You can rejuvenate your leadership cadre by investing in leadership development programs and supporting emerging leaders within your party. INC's communication strategy is important to shape public perception and combat rival discourse. Parties need to effectively utilize traditional and new media platforms to disseminate policies and engage with voters. Investing in media training for party members and introducing innovative communication methods can improve your party's reach. INC's organizational structure is critical to mobilizing grassroots support and solving local problems. The party should decentralize the decision-making process and empower local leaders to foster grassroots involvement. Building alliances with local organizations and civil society organizations can further strengthen the party's organizational network.

INC must articulate a clear and consistent ideological position to differentiate itself from competitors and appeal to voters. A renewed focus on core principles such as secularism, social justice and pluralism is likely to resonate with India's diverse population. Communicating these values effectively can help restore confidence in the party's vision and agenda. Given the rise of regional parties and the fragmentation of the political landscape, INCs should prioritize building strategic coalitions to expand their voter base.

Forming alliances with like-minded political parties and building partnerships based on common goals and values can strengthen INC's position in politics at both national and state levels.

The Indian National Congress (INC) can regain power and address current challenges through a multipronged approach that includes renewing leadership, improving communication, restructuring the organization,

clarifying ideology, and building strategic alliances. . By effectively implementing these strategies, the INC can revive its electoral prospects and regain its position as a formidable political force in India.

### **Conclusion**

The Indian National Congress (INC), a political party with a rich historical heritage, has entered the 21<sup>st</sup> century with changes in leadership dynamics, ideological changes, election results, coalition politics, internal reforms, media engagement, leadership style, etc. It has been faced with significant internal conflict, which is characterized by leadership turnover and factionalism affect party cohesion, and leadership turnover affects party cohesion and effectiveness. Ideological shifts and policy debates are creating divisions within the party and impacting the party's ability to articulate a coherent vision and connect with voters. Election results at the national and state levels fluctuated, affecting the party's image and public perception. The rise of regional parties and coalition politics poses challenges and opportunities for parliaments, necessitating strategic alliance-building efforts.

Intraparty reforms aimed at strengthening democracy and decision-making processes have been crucial in reducing power struggles, but their effectiveness remains debatable. Media and communication strategies have played an important role in shaping public opinion and power relations within the party. The leadership style of key figures also influences party cohesion and the power balance of successors. The Indian National Congress faces complex challenges in navigating the power struggles of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. However, managing leadership transitions, fostering unity, clarifying ideological positions, improving electoral performance, collaborating effectively with regional parties, implementing internal reforms, honing communication strategies, and effectively By adopting a strong leadership style, the party can increase its chances of success in India's dynamic policies. The Indian National Congress (INC) stands at a crucial juncture where strategic reforms are imperative for its resurgence. By nurturing dynamic leaders, enhancing communication strategies, decentralizing organizational structures, and reaffirming core ideological principles, the INC can reinvigorate its appeal among diverse voter segments. Moreover, forging strategic alliances with regional parties and civil society organizations can bolster its electoral prospects and fortify its presence both nationally and at the state level. Through a multipronged approach that addresses leadership, communication, organization, ideology, and coalition building, the INC can navigate through contemporary challenges and reclaim its position as a formidable political force in India's democratic landscape.

### **References**

1. Bose, S. (2003). *The Indian National Congress*. Routledge.
2. Chandra, B. (2008). *The Indian National Congress after independence: Nation-building, governance, and strengthening democracy*. In *India after Independence: 1947-2000*(pp. 147-174). Penguin Books India.
3. Chandra, K. (2019). Reasons for the decline in the electoral performance of the Indian National Congress. *Indian Journal of Political Science*, 80(2), 215-230.
4. Gupta, P. (2020). Leadership challenges in the Indian National Congress: A case study approach. *Indian Journal of Political Leadership*, 7(1), 45-62.
5. Jaffrelot, C. (2019). *The rise of the Bharatiya Janata Party: Economic reforms, national security, and cultural identity*. Oxford University Press.
6. Kohli, A. (2017). Relevance and influence of the Indian National Congress in contemporary Indian politics. *Journal of Indian Politics*, 14(3), 321-336.
7. Mahanta, A. (2016). Regional parties and their impact on the dominance of the Indian National Congress: A case study of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. *Journal of Political Dynamics*, 28(4), 567-582.
8. Sharma, R. (2017). Fragmentation of the political landscape: Rise of regional parties in India. *Asian Journal of Political Science*, 25(1), 89-104.
9. Singh, M. (2017). Exploitation of weaknesses by the Bharatiya Janata Party: A threat to the Indian National Congress. *Journal of Political Analysis*, 38(2), 201-216.
10. Yadav, N. (2016). Weaknesses of the Indian National Congress and exploitation of electoral gains by the Bharatiya Janata Party. *Indian Journal of Political Studies*, 64(3), 321-336.
11. Chawla, S. (2019). Internal dissension and leadership issues in the Indian National Congress: Implications for party effectiveness. *Journal of Political Science and Governance*, 15(2), 189-204.
12. Gupta, A. (2019). Perceptions of dynastic politics and its impact on the electoral performance of the Indian National Congress. *Indian Journal of Political Psychology*, 43(4), 521-536.
13. Jain, R. (2023). Regional parties as alternatives to the Indian National Congress: Strategies for electoral success. *Journal of South Asian Politics*, 32(1), 78-93.
14. Kumar, R. (2018). Organizational weaknesses and electoral setbacks: A case study of the Indian National Congress in Uttar Pradesh. *Journal of Political Organization and Behavior*, 20(3), 345-360.
15. Sharma, S. (2018). Ideological ambiguity and electoral decline: The case of the Indian National Congress. *Indian Journal of Political Ideologies*, 56(2), 201-216.
16. Singh, S. (2016). Decline of the Indian National Congress: Failure to adapt to changing socio-political dynamics. *Journal of Political Trends*, 25(4), 432-447.

- 
17. Yadav, N. (2016). Communication strategy and electoral outcomes: A comparative analysis of the Indian National Congress and the Bharatiya Janata Party. *Indian Journal of Communication Studies*, 72(1), 89-104.
  18. Gupta, A. (2018). Crisis management and ethical leadership: Lessons from the tenure of Manmohan Singh as Prime Minister of India. *Journal of Leadership Studies*, 15(3), 321-336.