

2013

Has Engaging in Party Coalitions Affected BSP Ideology?

Jasjeet S. Virk
Claremont McKenna College

Recommended Citation

Virk, Jasjeet S., "Has Engaging in Party Coalitions Affected BSP Ideology?" (2013). *CMC Senior Theses*. Paper 622.
http://scholarship.claremont.edu/cmc_theses/622

This Open Access Senior Thesis is brought to you by Scholarship@Claremont. It has been accepted for inclusion in this collection by an authorized administrator. For more information, please contact scholarship@cuc.claremont.edu.

CLAREMONT MCKENNA COLLEGE

THE BAHUJAN SAMAJ PARTY: HAS ENGAGING IN PARTY COALITIONS AFFECTED BSP
IDEOLOGY?

SUBMITTED TO

PROFESSOR ASEEMA SINHA

AND

DEAN GREGORY HESS

BY

JASJEET VIRK

FOR

SENIOR THESIS

SPRING 2013

APRIL 29TH, 2013

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Dr. Aseema Sinha, professor of government at Claremont McKenna College who helped oversee the process of the formulation of the study and consistently providing insightful and invaluable comments and suggestions.

Much gratitude is given to the individual in the A.I.C.C. that served as a critical primary source by provided a politician's perspective and discussing his knowledge of the topic from his experiences in participating in the arena of UP Politics.

Lastly, I would like to thank Claremont McKenna College and the Claremont Consortium for providing an extensive amount of resources, which without, this study would not have been possible.

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	5
Chapter 1:	
Introduction.....	7
Literature	
Review.....	22
Chapter 2: The BSP-SP Political	
Coalition.....	26
Chapter 3: The BSP-BJP Political	
Coalition.....	33
Chapter 4: The BSP, Change, and Ideology: An AICC	
Perspective.....	39
Chapter 5: The BSP as a Single-Handed	
Majority.....	45
Conclusion.....	50
Bibliography.....	51

Abstract

A nation of one billion people, India is often recognized as the world's largest democracy. The ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity in India creates a unique collection of voters whose divisions are not only brought about due to differences in ideological preferences, but also as a result of various caste and ethnic divisions that remain strongly ingrained in modern Indian society. Indian political parties must not only be able to gain voter confidence through the production and presentation of sound ideology, but also must struggle to help relate this ideology to a much divided and ethnically stratified voter base. This social construct has led to the rise of various political parties in India whose political agenda is to cater specifically to unique ethnic groups and minorities, while at times having to form political alliances gain power (Jana & Sarmah, 2002, 1). This study will analyze the rise of one such Indian political party formally established as the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) in the state of Uttar Pradesh. More specifically, it will address the following question: Has engaging in party coalitions caused the BSP to sacrifice its ideology in the arena of Uttar Pradesh Politics?

Introduction

Why Uttar Pradesh?

Uttar Pradesh is a state in the northern region of India bordering the state of Delhi and the country of Nepal to its east. With a population of nearly 200 million people, Uttar Pradesh is the most populous state in all of India and has struggled to prosper, with one of the highest infant mortality rates in the country (Dhankani, 2010). Approximately one-third of its population lives below the poverty line and the state has the highest amount of children who drop out of school to find labor (Dhankani, 2010). The BSP has grown quite effectively over the years, but has experienced the most popularity and development of political will in the state of Uttar Pradesh.

Perhaps one reason for the BSP's ascendancy in Uttar Pradesh was due to the fact that the Scheduled Caste population of Uttar Pradesh constitutes approximately 28.9 percent of the state's population (National Commission for Scheduled Castes, 2013). This is the largest Scheduled Caste (SC) population of any state, making it the perfect breeding ground for a political party that caters specifically to this caste groups economic, political, and social interests. Uttar Pradesh has historically had a large SC population, but the SC and Other Backwards Castes (OBCs) were never able to unify in neither a potent nor organized manner (Pai, 2004, 1589). The other main challenge was supplanting the dominant party of the state, Congress. Table 1 below shows the chronology of Chief Ministers in the state of Uttar Pradesh. In addition, it provides the time periods during which the BSP was in power.

Table 1.1 Chronology of chief ministers in the state of Uttar Pradesh

S No	Name	Took Office	Demit Office	Political Party
1	Govind Ballabh Pant	26-Jan-50	20-May-52	Indian National Congress
2	Govind Ballabh Pant	20-May-52	27-Dec-54	Indian National Congress
3	Sampurnanand	28-Dec-54	9-Apr-57	Indian National Congress
4	Sampurnanand	10-Apr-57	6-Dec-60	Indian National Congress
5	Chandra Bhanu Gupta	7-Dec-60	14-Apr-62	Indian National Congress
6	Chandra Bhanu Gupta	14-Apr-62	1-Oct-63	Indian National Congress
7	Sucheta Kriplani	2-Oct-63	13-Mar-67	Indian National Congress
8	Chandra Bhanu Gupta	14-Mar-67	2-Apr-67	Indian National Congress
9	Charan Singh	3-Apr-67	25-Feb-68	Bharatiya Lok Dal
10	President`s Rule	17-Feb-68	26-Feb-69	
11	Chandra Bhanu Gupta	26-Feb-69	17-Feb-70	Indian National Congress
12	Charan Singh	18-Feb-70	1-Oct-70	Bharatiya Lok Dal
13	President`s Rule	2-Oct-70	18-Oct-70	
14	Tribhuvana Narayana Singh	18-Oct-70	3-Apr-71	Indian National Congress
15	Kamalapati Tripathi	4-Apr-71	12-Jun-73	Indian National Congress
16	President`s Rule	12-Jun-73	8-Nov-73	
17	Hemwati Nandan Bahuguna	8-Nov-73	4-Apr-74	Indian National Congress
18	President`s Rule	5-Apr-74	29-Nov-75	
19	President`s Rule	30-Nov-75	21-Jan-76	
20	Narayan Dutt Tiwari	21-Jan-76	30-Apr-77	Indian National Congress
21	President`s Rule	30-Apr-77	23-Jun-77	
22	Ram Naresh Yadav	23-Jun-77	27-Feb-79	Janata Party
23	Banarsi Das	28-Feb-79	17-Feb-80	Janata Party
24	President`s Rule	17-Feb-80	9-Jun-80	
25	Vishwanath Pratap Singh	9-Jun-80	18-Jul-82	Indian National Congress
26	Sripati Mishra	19-Jul-82	2-Aug-84	Indian National Congress
27	Narayan Dutt Tiwari	3-Aug-84	10-Mar-85	Indian National Congress
28	President`s Rule	11-Mar-85	24-Sep-85	
29	Vir Bahadur Singh	24-Sep-85	24-Jun-88	Indian National Congress
30	Narayan Dutt Tiwari	25-Jun-88	5-Dec-89	Indian National Congress
31	Mulayam Singh Yadav	5-Dec-89	24-Jun-91	Janata Dal

32	Kalyan Singh	24-Jun-91	6-Dec-92	Bharatiya Janata Party
33	President`s Rule	6-Dec-92	4-Dec-93	
34	Mulayam Singh	4-Dec-93	3-Jun-95	Samajwadi Party
35	Mayawati	3-Jun-95	18-Oct-95	Bahujan Samaj Party
36	President`s Rule	18-Oct-95	21-Mar-97	
37	Mayawati	21-Mar-97	21-Sep-97	Bahujan Samaj Party
38	Kalyan Singh	21-Sep-97	21-Feb-98	Bharatiya Janata Party
39	Jagdambika Pal	21-Feb-98	23-Feb-98	Indian National Congress
40	Kalyan Singh	21-Feb-98	12-Nov-99	Bharatiya Janata Party
41	Ram Prakash Gupta	12-Nov-99	28-Oct-00	Bharatiya Janata Party
42	Rajnath Singh	28-Oct-00	8-Mar-02	Bharatiya Janata Party
43	President`s Rule	8-Mar-02	3-May-02	
44	Mayawati	3-May-02	29-Aug-03	Bahujan Samaj Party
45	Mulayam Singh Yadav	29-Aug-03	13-May-07	Samajwadi Party
46	Mayawati	13-May-07	7-March 2012	Bahujan Samaj Party

(Zee Research Group, Zeenews.India.com)

Based on the history of elections in Uttar Pradesh, it can be seen that the Congress party has taken 19 out of 37 contested elections, taking into consideration that there were 10 instances of President`s rule. It is clear that the apex of BSP political power has been from 1995-2012.

This sudden rise of the BSP makes it a unique party to study. As will be established in future chapters, Scheduled Castes in Uttar Pradesh vote almost exclusively for the BSP. There has been a shift in confidence and high levels of lower caste political mobilization that has allowed the BSP to gain power and sway in the state. The BSP`s wide range of political coalitions have obviously helped the party gain influence and control in various states, but in order to gain this newer, more powerful political status, has it sacrificed the very principles that made it such a popular and earnest party for the lower castes to follow?

The Bahujan Samaj Party and its Unique History

Dalits or “ex-untouchables”, and backwards castes as a whole comprise a stunning 52 percent of India’s population (Ghose, 2003, 83). From the years 1930 to 1950 a social activist named Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar introduced a new form of leadership involving grassroots level work, striving to address the concerns of lower caste “untouchables” in India who had historically been oppressed both socially and economically (Jaffrelot, 1998, 35). Dr. Ambedkar’s struggles and eventual passing led to the rise of a new leader, Kanshi Ram, who aimed to unite lower castes through social work and eventually began focusing the bulk of his organizational efforts in the building of the political party that is known today as the BSP (Jaffrelot, 1998, 35).

Prior to formally being established as the BSP, the party went through a wide range of changes. As of 1971, Kanshi Ram had established “The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes, and Minority Communities Employees Association,” which served to unite various employees in districts who were considered to be under the lower caste umbrella (Jaffrelot, 1998, 36). It can be seen that Kanshi Ram’s initial work revolved heavily around the ideas of social transformation and economic freedom for lower castes. However he quickly realized that these goals were difficult to attain without major political backing and lower caste unification (Jaffrelot, 1998, 37).

The Bahujan Samaj Party was then officially formed on April 14th, 1984, allowing for the official shift of organizational focus from social work to party politics. In the legislative assembly elections of 1985 for the state of Uttar Pradesh the BSP contested the

majority of the seats and won a meager 2.5 percent of the vote (Duncan, 1999, p. 40). However, the party's subsequent growth allowed it to obtain the title of National Party from the Election Commission of India (Jaffrelot, 1998, 37). The next two decades saw the BSP experience rapid growth and influence in the arena of party politics and the implementation of policy aimed at aiding the Dalit and backward caste struggle, most prominently in the state of Uttar Pradesh.

Political Coalitions

The BSP's electoral success is seen as a unique phenomenon due to the fact that no other Indian political party running primarily under the platform of catering to the interests of ex-untouchables has achieved such success (Duncan, 1999, 36). However, the BSP could not have achieved success by simple voter majority because Dalits and other backwards castes (OBCs) do not comprise a direct voter majority. The BSP has found success by forming political coalitions with the Samajvadi Party (SP), Congress, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), all of which have very different political ideologies and agendas than those of the BSP (Duncan, 1999, 44). The major question to address is whether the formation of these political coalitions has led to the BSP having to sacrifice its ideology for seats and political power at both the state and national level.

The BSP-SP government from 1993-1995 began to fade quickly after its inception as the contradictions between the lower castes and middle classes began to come to surface. As a result clashes between BSP and SP supporters began to increase at the grassroots level (Jana & Sarmah, 2002, 245). The leader of the SP, Mulayam Singh

Yadav began a process referred to by the BSP as “Yadavization” in which Yadav pushed for defecting against various members of the legislative assembly, leading to the creation of anti-SP propaganda spread by the BSP (Jana & Sarmah, 2002, 246).

Soon after the failure of the BSP-SP coalition, the BSP entered into a political alliance with the BJP, making rising political figure Mayawati the first female Dalit to become the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh. Mayawati’s tenure as Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh will be of significant focus throughout this study, as many changes were effected during her administration that pose questions concerning political coalitions and BSP ideology. While the political alliance between the BSP and BJP was surprising, it displayed the political strategy of the BSP. The alliance would aid in exerting more influence and power in the region, while the BJP allied to gain more Dalit support. This was a trap specifically set by the BSP so that if the BJP were to back out of the alliance, they would risk being labeled as biased against the lower castes (Jana & Sarmah, 2002, 247).

These various coalitions are important to analyze not only because they give critical insight to the political and electoral strategies of the BSP, but more importantly provide a framework of analysis to evaluate and investigate changes in BSP ideology throughout each period of political alliance. Did the specific type of alliance lead to different forms of ideological change? How did the era of the specific alliance affect the implementation of BSP ideology through tangible, legislative action? Answering these questions will help address how significant ideology is to the BSP relative to its need for political coalitions.

What is BSP Ideology?

In order to understand the potential changes in BSP ideology and the various actions taken by the BSP in recent decades, information regarding the ideology must be established. The political ideology of the BSP has a very strong egalitarian nature and strives to create equal opportunity for the oppressed Dalit, Scheduled Caste (SC), and other backwards caste (OBC) population. The ideology is deeply rooted in themes concerning equality, economic and social independence, and bringing about change within the “system.” The BSP’s voter base is cognizant of the party’s strong stance on issues concerning social justice, which has made it one of the most popular parties for underrepresented, oppressed, and lower caste communities.

Kanchan Chandra of New York University performed a statistical analysis which aimed to determine whether a party had taken an official stance on an issue. This was done by obtaining a sample consisting of “public statements by prominent party leaders, including campaign speeches, radio broadcasts, slogans, press conferences, and statements made during interviews” while excluding party literature not meant for a mass audience (Chandra, 2004, 201). This is because the data was meant to be focused on statements that voters have access to on a broad and common level. The data was chosen from a random 9 of the 36 days of the official campaign period that lasted from April 7th to May 12th, 1996.

Table 1.2 Party issue positions, 1996

Issue	Congress	Bharatiya Janata Party	National/Left Front	Akali Dal	BSP
Good governance	95.4	30.5	57.2	52.2	0
Price rise	.92	1.5	3.0	0	0
Nationalism	5.53	41.4	0	0	0
Social justice	2.3	3.4	10.7	0	91.6
Local issues	0	0	0	0	0
Other	1.38	5.4	8.4	30.4	4.2

(Chandra, 2004, 204).

The results of the study indicated in table 1.2 above, showed that the BSP mentioned issues pertaining to social justice 91.6 percent of the time. Social justice and the process of social transformation dominate BSP's political discourse. The incredible importance placed on this issue will play a key role when later analyzing whether the BSP lives up to its hard stance on its ideology. The party has explicitly stated its ideology on its official website, which is also addressed in the BSP constitution and has enumerated various points that encompass its ideology for the public to access. Below are some important excerpts of the party constitution that highlight the BSP's political mentality.

“1. That all citizens of India being equal before law are entitled to be treated as equal in true sense and in all matters and all walks of life, and where equality does not exist it has to be fostered and where equality is denied it has to be upheld and fought for” (BSP, 4).

“The party shall work for these down trodden masses to- remove their backwardness; to fight against their oppression and exploitation; to improve their status in society and public life; to improve their living conditions in day to day life” (BSP, 5).

“The social structure of India is based on inequalities created by caste system and the movement of the Party shall be geared towards changing the social system and rebuild it on the basis of equality and human values” (BSP, 5).

These explicitly stated proclamations within the BSP constitution provide for an excellent reference when analyzing BSP ideology through time periods and political coalitions. Have these political coalitions and various power struggles within national and state elections forced the BSP to contradict the very beliefs that they were founded upon? The BSP’s rallying cry has famously been “85 percent living under the rule of 15 percent, this will not last, this will not last” (Jaffrelot, 1998, 38). This theme has consistently been that of the call for unification of those that experience social and economic injustice. Figure 1 below, often reproduced in BSP speeches and publications, visually displays where various caste groups fall into the “oppressed” region and into the “Bahujan Samaj” (Chandra, 2004, 156).

Figure 1.1 BSP claimed “social system” as a product of Brahminism (Chandra, 2004, 156).

Beneficiaries of the system (10-15)%	Brahmins Kshatriya Vaishya
Victims of the System (85-90%)	Intermediary Castes Other Backward Castes (OBCs) Scheduled Cases (SC) Scheduled Tribes

Relevant Introductory Data

The BSP has been specifically chosen as the party of interest in this study because of its rapid growth and rise into one of India’s top national parties. The BSP has broken social and political barriers through its powerful political agenda and the shrewd politics of its leader, Mayawati, whose victory was the first time a Dalit-led party won a state election as a singlehanded majority (Sengupta, 2007, 6). This rise in standing can be seen from the data provided in table 1.4 and figure 1.2.

First, to put in perspective the type of demographic that the BSP has captured, the table below describes the occupation and literacy rates among the Scheduled Castes (SCs), who comprise the vast majority of BSP voters, versus the occupations and literacy rates amongst non-Scheduled Castes (non-SCs). Table 1 makes it clear that the SC has a considerably lower literacy rate compared to that of the non-SC. Additionally, most of the SC work as agricultural laborers compared to cultivators, a key indicator of economic inferiority.

Table 1.3 Comparative figures of scheduled caste (SC) and non-scheduled caste (non-SC) population in Uttar Pradesh

	SC	Non-SC
Working as cultivators in rural areas	46.7	68.5
Working as agricultural laborers in rural areas	41.3	14.8
Urban population	11.8	22.0
Literacy (all)	21.1	36.4
Literacy (urban men)	43.9	59.4
Literacy (urban women)	30.7	44.8
Literacy (rural men)	21.5	43.5
Literacy (rural women)	6.6	17.5

(Duncan, 1999, 38)

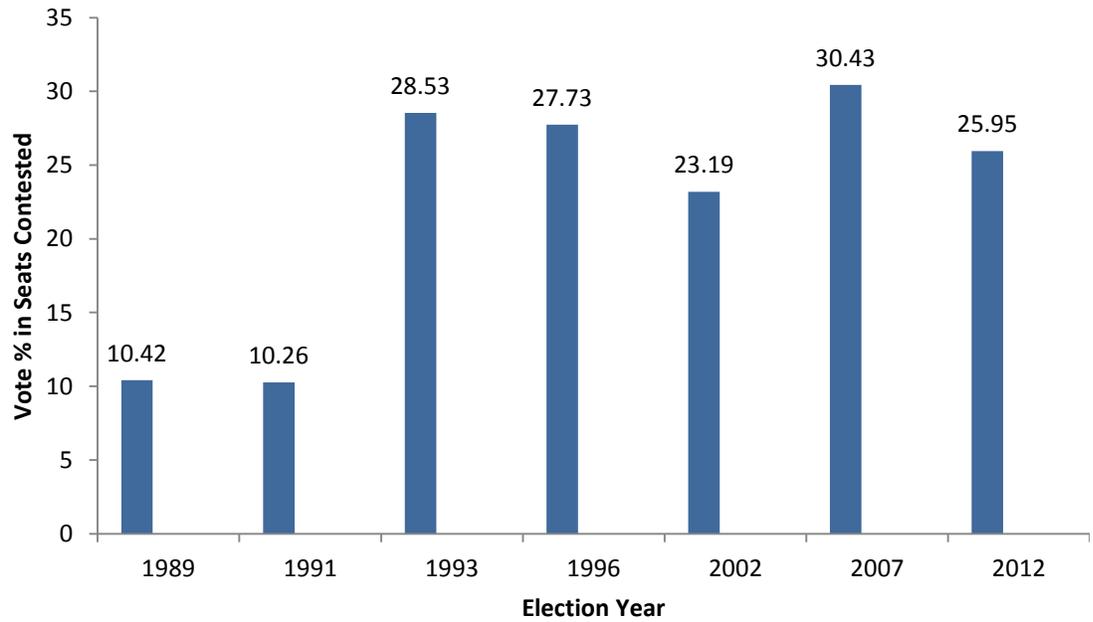
Both table 1.4 and figure 1.2 show the positive trajectory of the BSP in terms of total votes and vote percentage in seats contested. This rapid upward trend occurred spans close to over three decades and in a mere 7 elections. For a party that is comprised of ex-untouchables and one that has been formed much later than most prominent national parties in India to have accelerated at this rate, is quite remarkable. This data is representative of electoral trends and associated statistics in the state of Uttar Pradesh, the state in which the BSP has had the most electoral success (Sridharan, 2003, 149).

Table 1.4 Electoral performance of BSP in Uttar Pradesh state Assembly elections from 1989-2012

Year	Contested	Won	FD	Votes	% of Total Votes	Vote % in Seats Contested
1989	372	13	282	3,664,417	9.41	10.42
1991	386	12	299	3,532,683	9.44	10.26
1993	164	67	40	5,554,076	11.12	28.53
1996	296	67	28	10,890,716	19.64	27.73
2002	401	98	91	12,374,388	23.06	23.19
2007	403	206	36	15,872,561	30.43	30.43
2012	403	80	51	19,647,303	25.91	25.95

(Election Commission of India)

Figure 1.2 Performance of BSP in Uttar Pradesh State Legislative Assembly Elections from 1989-2012 (Election Commission of India).



Methodology

Throughout this study, various methods will be employed in order to reach a firm and educated conclusion involving BSP ideological changes in accordance with the various political coalitions that have been formed in the BSP's active history. First, the different periods of BSP prominence in Uttar Pradesh will be identified using data from the Electoral Commission of India concerning election results. Analyzing election results for the state of Uttar Pradesh will aid in laying the foundation for juxtaposing BSP success in relation to ideology across various states and regions.

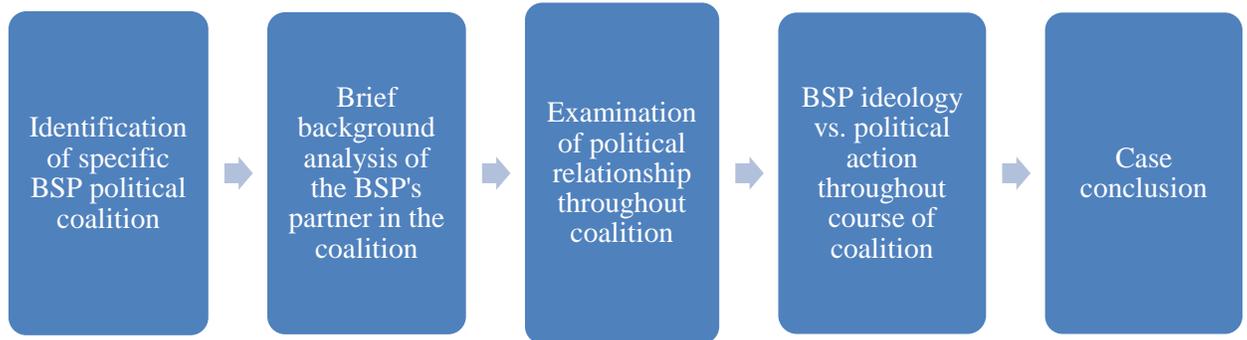
This is significant because it allows for more accurately investigating the BSP's numerous courses of action and how their political strategies concerning ideology may

vary across different demographics in different states. It would be of importance to see whether the BSP caters its ideological message in a unified manner or whether it must defer due to political pressure when aligning itself with another party.

When the period of BSP control has been determined, thorough analysis will be completed in evaluating the type of political coalition that the BSP had engaged in along with which specific party it had joined forces with. The focus will be on the relationship between the two parties throughout the tenure of the administration. The analysis will address for example, questions concerning the party agenda and whether dissension led to specific political action.

The next feature of the study is perhaps the most important. For each BSP contested election in which a party coalition was formed, an examination of BSP policy throughout the period will be completed. This will then later be contrasted with instances of a BSP led government that has been formed without the potential advantage of a party coalition. This will then be followed by an analysis of political action and ideological stance during those administrations. Figure 1.3 visually displays the process that will be applied to case study so that sound conclusions can be formed in regards to the effect of coalitions on BSP ideology.

Figure 1.3 Methodological process for BSP coalition case studies



While ideological shifts within the BSP can be mapped by simply comparing party action to the BSP constitution, juxtaposing BSP governments formed with the help of party coalitions versus those formed without coalitions provides for a stable control group. The study can then more accurately analyze to what extent party coalitions affect BSP ideology, and if whether these coalitions affect ideology at all. This method of analysis will help establish the last phase of the study in which patterns of ideological action within BSP political coalitions will be contrasted with the 2007 BSP led government in the state of Uttar Pradesh, which achieved victory without any coalition partners (Sengupta, 2007, 6). The 2007 government led by chief minister Kumari Mayawati will serve as the control group in the study.

Literature Review

A myriad of resources will be used throughout this study in order to properly analyze BSP ideology. A combination of scholarly articles, professional journal publications, books, interviews, newspaper archives, and original BSP documents will aid in answering the overarching research questions posed throughout the study. The literature review will serve to help identify a collection of various sources in terms of their importance to the development of the study.

Election Commission of India

The Election Commission of India is a permanent constitutional body that was established in 1950 in order to give authority for the supervision, direction, and control of the process for conducting elections in India. The website for the Election Commission of India will provide the majority of the raw data regarding election results. The website contains data regarding election results from the local to the national level. This data will be of particular interest when juxtaposing the BSP's relative popularity across various states to its actual political success in those regions. This data will be investigated and presented in both tables and graphs throughout the study in order to make the argument that the BSP has risen and has a growing voter bank. In addition, data from the Election Commission of India will help argue the significance of the BSP-SP and BSP-BJP alliances.

India's Silent Revolution by Christophe Jaffrelot

This specific book is integral to this study in order to study the foundations of the Dalit rise in India. Initially, the book breaks down the Congress party's stronghold in India and in various regions in which the lower castes primarily resided in. This information will help set up the process of answering research questions concerning the differences in political climate before and after the rise of the BSP. Jaffrelot extensively discusses the various divisions between the scheduled castes and OBCs and delves deeply into the importance of geography in the political shifts that occurred as a result. Most importantly however, Jaffrelot includes a detailed chapter directly addressing the BSP. The chapter is broken down into three major subsections.

The first discusses the evolution of the BSP from a mere interest group to a political force. The second discusses the emergence of the BSP in different states focusing on the years 1989-1999 and how Kanshi Ram, the face of the BSP in the early phase of its rise, developed Dalit-dominant policy. The third and final section concerning the BSP provides integral information pertaining to the specific political alliances that the BSP engaged in, in order to merge the fragmented Dalit vote into one consistent voter base. This section is significant because the information extracted from it will help make the argument that the alliance that the BSP made with the Samajwadi and Bharatiya Janata Parties was a result of a purely opportunistic party strategy.

Jaffrelot provides tables displaying statistics concerning atrocities committed against Dalits and the percentages of Dalit government employees. This information will be used to make arguments regarding what factors led to the unification of Dalits and

why did this occur during that specific time period. Furthermore, Mayawati's victory as Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh is analyzed. The information presented on Mayawati will be critical in analyzing whether or not BSP ideology was put into action and implemented throughout her tenure as Chief Minister.

Why Ethnic Parties Succeed by Kanchan Chandra

Kanchan Chandra consistently frames her arguments in the context of theory followed by data to back up claims. Chandra's work focuses directly on the BSP and the role of the various caste groups in making it an influential political party. Chandra breaks down the motivations behind BSP support amongst the lower caste, why their preferences have shifted, and why these preferences have translated into votes for the BSP. Chandra's analysis contains comparative studies between the caste representation of the BSP across various time periods to numerically display the rising trend of Dalit and SC members joining the party. Most importantly however, her analysis attempts to isolate the BSP from the equation and attempt to decipher whether external events may have also played a role in rising BSP support. This perspective will be of great interest when arguing that participating in a coalition government helped the BSP lay its foundation as a political power in Uttar Pradesh.

Dalits and Politics in Rural North India: The Bahujan Samaj Party in Uttar Pradesh by Ian Duncan

Ian Duncan's paper sponsored by the Journal of Peasant Studies is a significantly valuable resource that will be consistently referred to throughout the study. Duncan

initially presents the socio-economic conditions surrounding Dalits and lower caste groups in the state of Uttar Pradesh. For example, data is given comparing literacy rates of both SC urban men and women and compared to those of non-SC men and women. Relevant statistics involving job occupations amongst the lower caste in Uttar Pradesh are presented. This data will be applicable when analyzing the specific pockets of BSP support and whether these statistics may change in the future if BSP ideology evolves and helps argue that ideology did not evolve due to circumstances involving party coalitions. When addressing whether BSP ideology has changed in the face of political coalition, implemented legislation will be examined. Statistics such as the ones provided in Duncan's paper will give insight to the extent of such potential changes.

Religion, Caste and Politics in India by Christophe Jaffrelot

This book will be used for an analysis of Mayawati's 2007 BSP government in Uttar Pradesh. The text contains information essential to chapters 3 and 5 in this study, specifically in the context of the political action taken by Mayawati to improve the standing of the lower caste. Jaffrelot introduces information that will be directly relevant to the argument made that Mayawati's actions as chief minister leading up to and during the 2007 administration was indeed different from her prior administrations in 1995, 1997, 2002, and 2007. This text will help cement the argument that BSP ideology did indeed change over time.

Chapter 2: The BSP-Samajwadi Party (SP) Alliance

The Samajwadi Party (SP) has seen success in Uttar Pradesh as the party chiefly representing the interests of OBCs. The party believes in creating a socialist society that combines emphasizing egalitarian principles in conjunction with a secular and democratic perspective (Samajwadi Party, 2012). The SP strongly believes in the “upliftment of weaker sections of society” and standing against communal forces (Samajwadi Party, 2012). At first glance, the BSP and SP seem to have similar ideological interests as they strive to work for the weak and oppressed minorities. However, over time the Samajwadi party has attracted primarily OBCs while the BSP has developed a strong Dalit and Scheduled Caste voter base (Verma, 2004, 1509). In order to more accurately understand the complexity of the eventual relationship and political coalition between the BSP and SP, it is important to consider the SP’s roots.

Brief History of the Samajwadi Party

The SP was founded by Mulayam Singh Yadav in October 1992 (Verma, 2004, 1509). Yadav was heavily influenced by the philosophy of Ram Manohar Lohia, an Indian nationalist political leader. The party heavily stresses the development and advancement of the common man, and has adopted the bicycle as its political symbol to reflect that philosophy (Samajwadi Party, 2012). The SP has come to prominence specifically in the state of Uttar Pradesh and formed the majority governments of 1993 and 2003 led by Mulayam Singh Yadav as the Chief Minister. Currently, the Chief

Minister and the face of the SP in Uttar Pradesh is Akhilesh Yadav, son of Mulayam Yadav (Samajwadi Party, 2012). Table 2.1 below shows a brief timeline of prominent events leading up to the current political state of the SP, while table 2.2 shows the SP's success in the Lok Sabha and Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections from the years 1993-2002.

Table 2.1 Timeline of SP political milestones 1992-2003 ((Verma, 2004, 1510)

Year	
1992	In September, Mulayam Yadav leaves Samajwadi Janata Party (SJP) and forms the SP
1993	Yadav elected leader of the SP legislature party and becomes chief minister
1996	Yadav wins Mainpuri Lok Sabha sea and becomes union defense minister
1998	Yadav elected as member of parliament (MP) for 2 nd time
1999	Yadav leads SP to victory in Lok Sabha elections in Uttar Pradesh
2002	In Uttar Pradesh assembly elections, SP wins an impressive 143 seats
2003	Yadav becomes chief minister for the third time

Table 2.2 Seat and vote share of SP in Lok Sabha and Assembly elections in UP 1993-2002

Year	Lok Sabha		UP Assembly	
	Seats	Vote %	Seats	Vote %
1993	-	-	109	17.82
1996	16	20.8	110	21.8
1998	20	28.7	-	-
1999	26	24.06	-	-
2002	-	-	143	25.41

(Verma, 2004, 1510)

The data in table 2.2 shows the overall positive trajectory in vote majority in both the Lok Sabha and assembly elections that the SP experienced for nearly a decade. This rise to prominence is important to recognize because it lays the framework for analyzing the eventual BSP-SP coalition in 1993, with Mulayam Yadav as chief minister.

Why did the BSP and SP form a political coalition?

While there are a myriad of reasons that political parties engage in the process of forming coalitions, the 1993 alliance between the BSP and SP was simply a matter of increasing the political power of both parties. BSP leader Kanshi Ram was quoted as saying “The reason why I concluded an alliance with Mulayam Singh Yadav is that if we join our votes in Uttar Pradesh we will be able to form the government” (Jaffrelot, 1998, p. 43). This type of political philosophy is directly related to Kanshi Ram’s assertion that

Dalits should take each and every opportunity to exert influence and power in the arena of party politics in order to be in a position to effect change. The 1993 assembly elections saw the SP win 109 seats out of 425, while the BSP won 67 (Election Commission of India; Verma, 2004, 1510). Additionally, the BSP attained 11 out of a total of 27 ministerial portfolios (Jaffrelot, 1998, 43).

BSP-SP Relations

The harmonious stages of the BSP-SP relationship did not last very long. As time went on, both parties began to attempt to execute their own political party agendas at the expense of cohesion and mutualism. The first such sign of discontent occurred primarily due to the largely divided interests between the OBCs and SCs whose differing interests are chiefly represented by the SP and BSP, respectively (Srinivasulu, 1994, 2585).

Dissension rose in regards to issues concerning land ownership, wages of agricultural laborers.

Due to the BSP-SP victory, lower caste groups had become more assertive and self-confident. This led to a dramatic rise in atrocities committed against Scheduled Castes in the state of Uttar Pradesh, backlash inflicted by the higher castes as a result of the potential for the rise and recent heavy politicization of Dalits, SCs, and OBCs (Jaffrelot, 2003, 411). This staggering rise in reported atrocities from 4,200 in 1984 to 14,966 by 1995 further divided the two parties (Tatu, 1991, 31).

Leaders within the BSP felt that not enough was being done to protect Dalits and atrocities continued to rise, culminating during a period of four months in 1994 when 21

Dalit casualties occurred while attempting to install Ambedkar statues in various parts of Uttar Pradesh (Jaffrelot, 2003, 412). SP leader and chief minister, Mulayam Singh Yadav, also established many openly close relationships with BSP dissidents and persuaded many to leave the BSP for the SP (Singh, 2002, 245). On June 2nd, 1995, the BSP officially dissolved its political alliance with the SP (Jaffrelot, 2003, 412).

Ideology vs. Political Action

While BSP-SP relations began to fail shortly after the formation of the political coalition, evidence suggests that the pressures and dissension had little effect on the BSP going against its ideology. In fact, one of the main reasons for the conflict between the two parties was the BSP's insistence on standing behind its core values and principles, and this was reflected through the actions the party took from 1993-1995.

One of the main pieces of evidence confirming the BSP's efforts in implementing its ideology was how its leaders confronted both the opposing Bharatiya Janata and Congress parties, as the party tried to push for the implementation of the stipulations in the Mandal Report. The Mandal Commission Report was a mandate that served to identify the socially or educationally backward by adopting caste as the measure for determining social and educational backwardness (Sakrikar, 1994). The commission developed various social, educational, and economic criteria shown in table 2.3. The 11 indicators established by the commission were significant in that they provided the Indian government with a more comprehensive and thorough definition of backwards castes in India. The criteria established by the Mandal Report would then later be used to introduce a system of reservation, in which those identified as members of a backwards caste,

would benefit from a 49.5% quota for governmental positions and educational institutions.

Table 2.3 Standards established by Mandal Report for determining backwardness

Social	Educational	Economic
Castes considered as socially backward by others	Castes where the number of children ages 5-15 who never attended school is at least 25% above the state average.	Castes where average value of family asset is at least 25% below state average
Castes which mainly depend on manual labor for their livelihood	Castes where student dropout rate amongst ages 5-15 is at least 25% above the state average	Castes where number of families living in kachcha houses is at least 25% above state average.
Castes in which the percentage of married women below 17 is 25% above state average	Castes amongst whom the proportion of matriculates is at least 25% below state average	Castes where the source of drinking water is beyond half a kilometer for more than 50% of households
Castes in which the participation of females in work is at least 25% above the state average	--	Castes where number of households having taken a consumption loan is at least 25% above state average.

(Sakrikar, 1994)

Despite the fact that Kanshi Ram publicly stated that there was no ideological reason for a BSP-SP alliance, and how it was a mere vehicle to attain more influence in Uttar Pradesh politics, both parties teamed together to vehemently oppose the Congress and Bharatiya Janata Party's attempts to block implementation efforts (Jaffrelot, 2011, 544). The BSP remained consistent with its ideological principles concerning social transformation throughout the political process when they strongly supported the implementation of reservations for the backwards castes. Moreover, a large reason that the BSP-SP coalition fell out was due to the BSP feeling slighted by the SP, as the SP attempted to take sole credit of many legislative actions completed by BSP leaders.

These measures established by both BSP and SP legislators included reservations in schools, appointments of Urdu teachers which was highly popular with the minority Muslim voters, and lastly giving jobs in the police force and public accounts committee to those of backwards castes (Verma, 2004, 1512). While the SP cornered the BSP and took the lion's share of the credit, the BSP remained persistent throughout and effected the type of tangible change reflective of social transformation that is so heavily emphasized within its ideology and the party's constitution.

Chapter 3: The BSP- Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Alliance

Directly after ending the political coalition between themselves and the SP, the BSP forged a political alliance with the BJP. This was a monumental moment for the BSP, as the newly formed BSP-BJP government elected Kumari Mayawati as chief minister of Uttar Pradesh on June 3rd, 1995 (Jaffrelot, 1998, 46). The BSP-BJP alliance, similar to that of the BSP-SP coalition, did not have anything to do with ideological interests. Kanshi Ram publicly stated “we can take the help of the BJP to advance our national agenda. We feel that the upper castes will be more amenable to social transformation than the intermediate castes” (Jaffrelot, 1998, 47).

The BSP benefited from the coalition because they were able to effectively establish themselves as the lead party in Uttar Pradesh, its home state. The BJP tactfully joined the alliance in order to establish a strong split between the SP and BSP, who if had stayed united, would have made the BJP largely irrelevant in Uttar Pradesh. This would have had negative effects on BJP’s national agenda, and hampered its efforts to gain a larger degree of central power (Brass, 1997, 2404).

Who are the BJP?

The BJP views Uttar Pradesh as an important state, a vehicle through which it can exert its influence in Delhi. The party has been highly successful at the national level in the past, has conservative Hindu roots, and favors economic liberalization. While the BSP focuses almost entirely on social transformation, the BJP favors a wider, broader

approach towards its issues. In Uttar Pradesh, the chief issues that BJP politicians attempt to discuss when campaigning are good governance and creating policy deeply rooted in nationalism (table 1.2). The BJP's objective is to build India as a strong and powerful nation and help facilitate a progressive, modern, and enlightened society drawing inspiration from its cultural roots with an emphasis on a Gandhian approach to socio-economic issues (Bharatiya Janata Party, 2012). Table 3.1 below displays the BJP's performance in the Uttar Pradesh's assembly elections from 1989 to 2012, years that coincided with a rise in BSP prominence.

Table 3.1 BJP performance in Uttar Pradesh assembly elections from 1989-2012.

Year	Contested	Won	FD	Votes	% of Total Votes	Vote % in Seats Contested
1989	275	57	153	4,522,867	11.61	18.11
1991	415	221	41	11770214	31.45	31.76
1993	422	177	20	16637720	33.3	33.3
1996	414	174	13	18028820	32.52	33.31
2002	320	88	50	10776078	20.08	25.31
2007	350	51	146	8851199	16.97	19.62
2012	398	47	229	11371080	15	15.21

(Election Commission of India)

The data presented in the table shows a clear decline in BJP success at the state level in Uttar Pradesh. The data gives numerical insight as to perhaps why the BJP

decided to engage in a political coalition with the BSP on multiple occasions. The coalition resulted in a mutualistic relationship where both parties win, while each of their individual agendas can be carried out.

Ideology vs. Political Action

Chapter 2 showed that the coalition between the BSP and SP did not affect the BSP's efforts in attempting to push for legislation that favored the lower caste despite considerable opposition, a critical aspect of BSP ideology. When examining the BSP-BJP coalition, the role of chief minister Kumari Mayawati cannot be ignored, as she aggressively promoted the interests of the scheduled castes in Uttar Pradesh. Mayawati's tenure as chief minister during the 1993 BSP-BJP coalition played an integral role in creating a consistent and loyal voter bank.

One of Mayawati's first actions was to rename universities, local districts, stadiums and other public spaces to reflect the history and culture of the scheduled caste struggle (Jaffrelot, 1998, 47). In addition, Mayawati placed dozens of statues of Bhimrao Ambedkar throughout the state, whose social work, philosophy, and grassroots work were of great influence to the BSP (BSP, 2012). Mayawati placed these statues of Ambedkar to symbolically impose a sense of BSP and scheduled caste power, while also attempting to irk the upper class (Jaffrelot, 2011, 561).

During the first four and half months of her first tenure as chief minister of Uttar Pradesh, Mayawati expanded various programs that appealed strongly to the scheduled caste population. Perhaps the most important action taken by Mayawati was the changes

her administration made to the existing Ambedkar Villages Scheme. The program granted special funds for socioeconomic development for a period of one year to villages who qualified if they had a scheduled caste population of at least 50 percent (Jaffrelot, 2011, 561). In June 1995, Mayawati changed the standards from at least 50 percent to a mere 22-30 percent, which resulted in a total of 25,434 official Ambedkar villages (Jaffrelot, 2011, 561). Due to this re-classification, many villages now had increases in funding that eventually provided for new roads, water pumps, and houses.

The implementation of this policy was essential for establishing the important consistent voter bank that the BSP enjoys today, and more importantly the scheduled caste population was receptive and appreciative that a government was finally going to large lengths to ensure that their condition was improved (Pai, 2002, 129). Table 3.2, organized by type of minority group in Uttar Pradesh, shows the numerous new measures granted under Mayawati's BSP-BJP coalition government.

Table 3.2 Minority-specific measures enacted by BSP-BJP coalition government under Mayawati

Minority Group	New Measures
Scheduled Castes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Renaming of major institutions and regions to those related to the SCs -Expansion of Ambedkar Villages Scheme to increase accessibility to funding. -Infrastructural improvements in villages -Increase in education grants -Social rehabilitation programs
OBCs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Implementation of quotas -Allocation of 27 percent of state budget to improving the OBC condition. -Land reform
Muslims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Increase in student grants -Reservations for low caste Muslims -Allocation of 8.77 percent of state budget for Muslim grievances

(Jaffrelot, 1998, 47-48)

The fact that this expansion of Ambedkar villages and finances was under the direct supervision of Mayawati, indicates that the BSP did not have to sacrifice its agenda and ideology due to the coalition. The BSP regards its ideology as “a movement for ending exploitation of the weaker sections and suppression of the deprived through social and economic change” (BSP, 3). An assertion can be made that the true motivation behind the Ambedkar Villages Scheme was simply to consolidate the voter bank by showing swift BSP action.

While that surely may have played a part in loosening the standards set for receiving the title of “Ambedkar village”, the effort on behalf of the BSP and the programs’ resulting success cannot be disregarded. Within four and half months, the BSP began to immediately show signs of high political efficacy. More importantly, the BSP-BJP coalition had no effect on the BSP’s efforts to translate its verbal promises into positive, tangible changes for its constituents, despite BJP opposition towards some of the new policies.

The BSP-BJP government lasted only 136 days, as the BJP officially withdrew support after just a little over four months as a result of both the rapid modifications to pre-existing legislation and the implementation of new measures that were unpopular with BJP officials (Duncan, 1999, 43). Instead of altering its strategy of social transformation to accommodate the strategic opinions of the BJP, the BSP simply regrouped and stood alone in the 1996 Lok Sabha elections and gained 20.6 percent of the vote share, in hopes of further executing their policy agenda (Election Commission of India). The BSP-BJP coalition did not result in a major change in BSP ideology.

Chapter 4: The BSP, Change, and Ideology- An AICC Perspective

For years, the All India Congress Committee (abbreviated AICC), commonly referred to as Congress, was the preferred and dominant political party in Uttar Pradesh (table 1.1). Congress is one of the most recognized and accomplished national parties in Indian history, its roots as far back as Mahatma Gandhi's civil disobedience movements during the Indian struggle for Independence (AICC, 2008). The party was at the forefront of major political negotiations with the United Kingdom leading up to eventual Indian independence on August 15th, 1947 (AICC, 2008). Congress's constitution states the primary objective of the party is "the well-being and advancement of the people of India and the establishment in India, by peaceful and constitutional means.....in which there is equality of opportunity and of political, economic and social rights...." (AICC, p. 1)¹.

Previous chapters attempted to determine whether the BSP had shifted or sacrificed its ideology as a result of the political alliances it formed using information gathered and studied from scholarly articles, books, and statistical data. This chapter however, will attempt to answer the same research question through an interview conducted by myself with a prominent member of the Congress party.

¹ There is a lack of information regarding the year the source was published. For purposes of clarification, the parenthetical (AICC) refers to the All India Congress Committee's constitution.

Interviewee Profile

The individual interviewed has asked that he remain anonymous. This study will refer to him simply as “A.K.” and he has been heavily involved in Congress for nearly two decades. A.K. has contested multiple elections in his district in Uttar Pradesh against candidates from parties including but not limited to, the SP, BJP, and BSP. He is highly informed of the political history, demographics, culture, and political trends in the state of Uttar Pradesh, as well as being heavily experienced in the nuances of election campaigning in the state. A.K. was specifically selected for this interview due to the difficulties his campaigns have experienced in winning elections due to the rising influence of the BSP, and various other ethnic-based parties. His experiences as a politician representing Congress in Uttar Pradesh can provide a unique perspective on the BSP, its evolution, and its ideology. The interview follows a typical question and answer format.

Interview of Congress party member “A.K.”

Q: Do you think that over the years, the power of Congress has diminished in Uttar Pradesh?

A: Yes, it definitely has. We have seen the lower caste and Dalit vote bank move to the BSP, and Congress has lost it. It was not always like this. Congress used to be an important party for the Dalits in Uttar Pradesh for many years. It is becoming difficult to gain that vote bank back for Congress.

Q: As you are familiar, the BSP often engages in alliances with other parties that have no ideological connection. Do you feel that this will be harmful to the BSP in the long run?

A: If you are referring to the alliances made with parties such as the BJP and Samajwadi party, then I would say yes. Once, the Congress made a seating arrangement with BSP. But, the ideology of BSP has been compromised by doing these alliances. The BSP is not big enough to have a majority on its own. When the BSP won in 2007 for the Assembly elections, they did so only because they realized that they had to change. They had to change so that they can gain majority and this was done when they moved away from the core vote bank to gain majority.

Q: The BSP strongly advocates social transformation as the main issue in its party platform. How does congress respond to voters that claim that it does not cater as much to the interests of lower castes, as the BSP does.

A: We have done a lot for lower castes. If you look at the history of Congress, Congress was not just a party. We started as a movement; it was a party for all in the beginning, starting with Gandhiji. It was a movement based on equality for all.

Q: Then what led to the eventual shift in voter preference?

A: This was because Congress was compromising its own ideology in UP. The system that became from this favored the upper castes. As the time went on, upper caste got the upper hand.

Q: Some literature that I have come across regarding BSP ideology has shown that specifically, Mayawati has attempted to change the social structure of UP, for example

her reservation policies. As an experienced member of Congress what are your thoughts on this?

A: I think that she has gone against Kanshi Ram's philosophy. Kanshi Ram's was very broad based in his policy. He wanted to get support of all different kinds of lower castes. Mayawati's policies in UP have caused divisions within the Scheduled Castes. You are looking at the things she's done like the quotas. See, but you have to also look at how she is slowly shifting away from the original Kanshi Ram ideology. She has started to favor Chammar much more recently and this has split the low castes.

Q: Do you think that engaging in political coalitions affects the BSP's ability to properly implement its ideology? Do you believe the BSP feels pressure to implement its partner party's ideology instead, in terms of the BSP having to engage in "chamchagari"?

A: When they started yes, but not anymore. They are a very dominant force...Important and very dominant in UP. Now the national parties are like a chamcha to them, whether it be Congress or BJP.

Q: When I'm doing my research I read some statistics and they say that, Dalits who are older in age, they continue to prefer Congress, whereas the younger generations tend to prefer BSP. Do you think there is a reason for this?

A: In our agenda, we always talked about uplifting of Dalits. But when the younger generation grew up, they realized that it was a benefit to them much more to go with the majority caste than just any lower caste. That's how the original founder of the

BSP, Kanshi Ram started this movement. It was called BS-4. See, he said that the Dalits are not getting their due and stuff like that, he collected the whole Dalit society and then picked up....in fact Mayawati has damaged the whole agenda of Kanshi Ram. Because Kanshi Ram used to talk about Dalits in general, you know not particularly picking up on any particular caste. But Mayawati is a Chammar, and she just talks about Chammars. That's why there is a division in the Dalits also.

Q: Do you think that the rise of ethnic parties in UP, such as BSP, is becoming a threat to congress at the central stage?

A: See, UP is a very important state, and UP gives 80 MPs to the Lok Sabha. It's a very crucial and politically important state. And obviously the reason parties like BSP or SP, which has damaged Congress only because they are eating our core vote bank. Whether it is BSP or SP. SP has taken the Muslim vote bank. BSP has taken away the Dalit vote bank. Congress is basically right now, a party without a core vote bank. That's the problem, Congress is damaged and affected. When we used to be in government in UP, our majority used to be much more.

Examination of Interview Commentary

Congress party member A.K. places special emphasis on vote banks and how the rise of ethnic and caste based parties has caused a traditional national party such as Congress to be weakened and left without a core vote bank. A.K. also asserts that the BSP has now become a more fragmented party in its Scheduled Caste base after enjoying

higher levels of unity in its initial stages. He essentially argues that the 2007 BSP victory in the state assembly, while monumental for BSP since it gained power without the need for an alliance with another party, demonstrated a severe shift from original BSP philosophy developed by Kanshi Ram.

While the methodology employed in investigating BSP ideology throughout the study has been focused around BSP legislative action, A.K. brings up an intriguing point in that the broadening of the BSP voter base should be considered as sacrificing ideology for votes and power. Interestingly however, is the fact that such attempts to broaden voter base have occurred in the absence of a BSP political alliance, and instead during BSP attempts to branch out on its own to become a more independent party rather than when in a coalition. The next chapter focuses entirely on the BSP's 2007 UP state Assembly victory, will take into consideration the assertions made by Congress member A.K., and will also exploring the differences between BSP actions pertaining to ideology when the party engages in political alliances versus when it does not.

Chapter 5: The BSP as a Single-Handed Majority

May 11th, 2007 marked a monumental moment in the history of Indian politics, as the BSP was voted to power as a single-handed majority in Uttar Pradesh's state assembly elections (Verma, 2007, 2039). Mayawati's victory was the first time that a Dalit-led party emerged victorious in state elections without participating in a coalition government (Sengupta, 2007). Previous chapters in this study focused on the political alliances that the BSP engaged in with the SP and BJP, and whether or not those alliances affected BSP ideology. Chapters 2 and 3 established that neither the BSP-SP coalition nor the BSP-BJP coalition affected the BSP's ability or motivation to implement its ideology in the form of legislation aimed at improving the Scheduled Caste condition.

This chapter will serve as a control in the study. The interview conducted in chapter 4 with A.K., a prominent member of the Congress party, suggested that BSP ideology has indeed changed in recent years. While analysis of coalitions with the SP and BJP produced no significant evidence to suggest that the alliances affected BSP ideology, would the case be different if the BSP was not participating in a coalition government?

BSP Strategy, Performance, and Political Action in the 2007 Uttar Pradesh Assembly Election

In previous elections, the BSP consistently used caste as the focal point of its campaign efforts, focusing solely on the interests of the lower castes and minorities such

as SCs, OBCs, and Muslims. This was a successful strategy in the party's early stages in attempting to develop a consistent vote bank (A.K., 2013). Table 1.4 displays the BSP's consistent upward rise in terms of overall percentage of votes claimed in Uttar Pradesh assembly elections, which coincided with the party's early strategy of mobilizing lower caste votes. Table 5.1 below shows the BSP's electoral performance for the year 2007 in the assembly elections. The BSP won a majority of 30 percent without the help of an outside party or joining any official political alliance.

Table 5.1 BSP performance in 2007 Uttar Pradesh assembly elections

Contested	Won	Vote (%)
402	206	30.46

(Verma, 2007, 2039)

When campaigning for the 2007 election, the BSP shifted its electoral strategy. While the BSP did advocate its usual caste dominated political aspirations, it instead used the idea more of as a metaphor in order to create and cement grassroots alliances. These grassroots efforts were built heavily on the premise of showing that the concerns of lower castes were valued by the party just as much as the concerns of other communities (Gupta and Kumar, 2007, 3388).

Mayawati began to reach out to the Brahmans in order to put forth an understanding that the BSP was willing to listen to their concerns and grievances, while being fully confident that the party would not lose the support of the lower caste by engaging in political dialogue with upper castes (Gupta and Kumar, 2007, 3388). One

major indicator of a shift in BSP policy was the fact that throughout the entire 2007 election campaign, Mayawati did not commit herself to Mandal policy. Mandal policy refers to the various proposals concerning reservations and quotas that would improve the conditions of the lower caste from an economic and social standpoint (see chapter 2 “Ideology vs. Political Action” for details of the Mandal Commission). This indicated that the BSP was clearly sensitive to the perceptions of the upper castes in Uttar Pradesh and began to think about the party’s potential to hold power in the long run. In fact, the party decided against issuing a manifesto for the 2007 state elections in order to allow Mayawati more flexibility in amassing a more diverse support network for the BSP (Gupta and Kumar, 2007, 3390).

Another indicator of shifts in BSP ideology and strategy was the changing of BSP slogans. In the early 1990’s the main slogan was as follows, and was directed at the upper castes, who were painted as the enemies and the oppressors:

(1) “tilak, tarazu aur talwar, inko maro jutey char” (Gupta and Kumar, 2007, 3390)

The above slogan essentially berates the three symbols of Brahman and upper caste superiority (tilak, tarazu, and talwar). Another famous BSP slogan that was used consistently shortly after the party’s inception was the following:

(2) “85 percent living under the rule of 15 percent, this will not last, this will not last” (Gupta and Kumar, 2007, 3390)

Now let us examine one of the main political slogans during the 2007 election campaign, a more integrative slogan

(3) **“haathi nahin, Ganesh hai, Brahma, Vishnu, Mahadev hai”** (Gupta and Kumar, 2007, 3390)

(4) **“haathi badhta jayega, brahman shankh bajaega”** (Gupta and Kumar, 2007, 3390)

These quotes instead paint a very different picture of the BSP’s view on the upper caste. Quote 3 states that it is not about just the elephant (BSP symbol), but that one is also a part of a broader Hindu spectrum. This slogan intends to push for more unity between different castes. Slogan 4 essentially states that the elephant will continue to rise and the Brahman will signal it. These slogans display how the BSP began to shift its Scheduled Caste dominated agenda to increase the depth of their voter bank, something that the party’s founder, Kanshi Ram, was against (Jaffrelot, 1998, 37).

Baichara Banao Samitis (Brotherhood Building Communities)

Mayawati continued to channel her new enthusiasm for creating a larger, more diverse vote bank by creating the Baichaar Banao Samitis, which are essentially committees to promote work between the higher and lower castes (Gupta, 2009, 21). Each of the 403 assembly constituencies had one committee which contained 300 Brahmans and 100 Dalits, with a Brahman chairman and a Dalit general secretary (Gupta, 2009, 21). Mayawati’s plan began to work because as the upper castes began publicly favoring the party, the lower castes began to rapidly throw even more support, thereby increasing the vote bank and not limiting it to merely SCs, some OBCs, and a minority of Muslims.

While Mayawati’s newfound support for Brahmans was not with any particular or official political party, it essentially served the same purpose. The BSP was able to attain power by broadening its previously narrow base of supporters, and the Brahmans benefited by attaining positions of power in her government. Despite gaining this majority and winning office, enthusiasm waned for Mayawati’s newfound philosophy because while the main bulk of her supporters were Dalits and lower castes, the promises made by Mayawati concerning social transformation were truly made for the poor among the upper castes (Gutpa, 2009, 22). Table 5.2 below numerically shows the rise in upper caste support for the BSP. The BSP essentially shifted its philosophy from Bahujan to Sarvajan, along with an ideological shift from exclusive to inclusive and reaped the benefits at the expense of its ideology (Verma, 2007, 2042).

Table 5.2 BSP and caste-wise support in Uttar Pradesh assembly elections 1996-2007

Castes/ Communities	<u>Percentage of Voters</u>		
	1996	2002	2007
Dalits	62	69	77
OBCs	13	20	27
Muslims	12	10	17
Upper Castes	4	5	16

(Kumar, 2007, 2238)

Conclusion

Kanshi Ram once aimed to transform the BSP into a major political force that would cater directly to the interests of Dalits and other lower castes in India. Nearly three decades later, it can be seen that the BSP has succeeded politically. With humble beginnings, the BSP has now become a powerful political party with a strong and loyal voter bank, most notably in the state of Uttar Pradesh. The whole purpose of creating the BSP was to politically mobilize the weak, exploited, and oppressed lower castes in India, and to work to improve their situation and standing in a social, political, and economical context.

In order to consolidate this consistent and loyal voter pool, the BSP adhered very strictly to its ideology in its early stages. Aware that their party was too weak to attain majority by itself, the BSP engaged in political coalitions with the Samajwadi Party and Bharatiya Janata Party, both parties that differed from the BSP ideologically. This study posed the question of whether engaging in these political coalitions, caused the BSP to shift its ideology. The analysis shows that yes, engaging in political coalitions did indeed cause the party to shift its ideology over a long period of time, but not directly because of coalitions.

First, there was the BSP-SP alliance. While the two had nothing in common ideologically, both parties understood that an alliance would put them in a powerful position in the state politics of Uttar Pradesh. The alliance still saw the BSP put into motion numerous provisions and acts to help improve the condition of lower castes in the

state. Second, there was the BSP-BJP alliance. This coalition government did not hinder the BSP, as it rejected opposition from BJP members and went through with a series of economic and social provisions. These provisions included quotas, reservations, and increased funding for Ambedkar villages throughout Uttar Pradesh.

Lastly, the singular BSP state government of Uttar Pradesh in 2007 was studied, and this is when the most notable changes to BSP ideology occurred. The BSP changed party slogans, policies on reservations, and introduced a variety of measures to appeal to the upper caste in an attempt to broaden its one-dimensional voter bank that at the time was comprised mainly of Scheduled Castes, OBCs, and a minority of Muslims in the state.

The analysis establishes that the BSP initially stayed very firm to its ideology even when engaging in political coalitions, in order to create a dependable and stable voter bank. Once the BSP confirmed that it had established enough political popularity and authority in the state of Uttar Pradesh, it began to shift ideology towards a more long-term and all-encompassing approach. It was not the BSP's participation in coalition governments that directly resulted in changes in ideology, but rather using those coalitions as ladders to build power, influence, and party identity. Once the BSP's political power in Uttar Pradesh was confirmed through its early success, the party then had the luxury to shift its ideology starting in the 2007 state assembly elections of Uttar Pradesh, and begin to shift its agenda towards broader electoral support. All of these ideological changes occurred due to an underlying ambition within members of the party, to one day establish the BSP as the majority party at the national level.

Bibliography

AICC. "Congress and the Freedom Movement." *Www.aicc.org.in*. AICC, 2008. Web.

A.K. Phone interview. 22 April 2013.

Brass, Paul R. "General Elections, 1996 in Uttar Pradesh: Divisive Struggles Influence Outcome." *Economic and Political Weekly* 32.38 (1997): 2403-2413. *JSTOR*. Web.

BSP. "BSP Constitution." *www.bspindia.org*. Bahujan Samaj Party, n.d. Web.

BSP. "National Party: The Bahujan Samaj Party." *Www.bspindia.org*. N.p., 2012. Web.

Chandra, Kanchan. *Why Ethnic Parties Succeed: Patronage and Ethnic Head Counts in India*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge UP, 2004. Print.

Dhankani, Rita. "Uttar Pradesh." *Www.unicef.org/India*. N.p., n.d. Web.

Duncan, Ian. "Dalits and Politics in Rural North India: The Bahujan Samaj Party in Uttar Pradesh." *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 27.1 (1999): 35-60. Web.

Election Commission of India. *Election Results- Full Statistical Reports*. *Eci.nic.in*. Retrieved from http://eci.nic.in/eci_main1/ElectionStatistics.aspx

Ghose, Sagarika. "The Dalit in India." *Social Research* 70.1 (2003): 83-109. *JSTOR*. Web.

Gupta, Dipankar, and Yogesh Kumar. "When the Caste Calculus Fails: Analyzing the BSP's Victory in UP." *Economic and Political Weekly* 42.33 (2007): 3388-396. Web.

Gupta, Smita. "BSP at the Crossroads." *Economic and Political Weekly* 44.26 (2009): n. pag. *JSTOR*. Web.

India. The Bharatiya Janata Party. *Constitution and Rules of Bharatiya Janata Party*. By Bharatiya Janata Party. New Delhi: BJP, 2012. Print.

India. Census of India. *Uttar Pradesh Data Highlights: The Scheduled Castes*. N.p.: n.p., 2001. Print.

India. AICC. *Constitution and Rules of the Indian National Congress*. By AICC. N.p.: n.p., n.d. Print.

Jaffrelot, Christophe. *India's Silent Revolution*. New York: Columbia UP, 2003. Print.

Jaffrelot, Christophe. *Religion, Caste, and Politics in India*. New York: Columbia UP, 2011. Print.

Jaffrelot, Christophe. "The Bahujan Samaj Party in North India: No Longer Just a Dalit Party?" *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 28.1 (n.d.): 35-52. JSTOR.

Jana, Arun K., and Bhupen Sarmah. *Class, Ideology and Political Parties in India*. Colorado Springs, CO: International Academic, 2002. Print.

NCSC. "Introduction." [Http://ncsc.nic.in/](http://ncsc.nic.in/). NCSC, Government of India, 2013. Web.

Pai, Sudha. "Changing Contours of Dalit Politics." *Economic and Political Weekly* 39.16 (2004): 1589-590. JSTOR. Web.

Pai, Sudha. "Dalit Assertion and the Unfinished Democratic Revolution: The Bahujan Samaj Party in Uttar Pradesh." (2002). Print.

Sakrikar, Dinkar. "The Mandal Commission Report." *Pucl.org*. People's Union for Civil Liberties, Aug. 1994. Web.

Samajwadi Party. *Samajwadi Party*. N.p., 2012. Web.

Sengupta, Somini. "Brahmin Vote Helps Party of Low Caste Win in India." *New York Times* [New York, NY] 12 May 2007, 1st ed., sec. A: 6. Print

Singh, Jagpal. "The Bahujan Samaj Party: Ideology, Social Basis of Support and Politics." *Class, Ideology, and Political Parties in India*. Colorado Springs: International Academic, 2002. 241-53. Print.

Sridharan, Eswaran. "Coalitions and Party Strategies in India's Parliamentary Federation." *Oxford Journals* 33.4 (2003): 165-152. JSTOR. Web. 06 Feb. 2013.

Srinivasulu, K. "BSP and Caste Politics." *Economic & Political Weekly* 29.40 (1994): 2583-586. JSTOR. Web.

Tatu, V. "Politics of Ethnic Nepotism." New Delhi: Sterling Publishers United, 1991.

Verma, A. K. "Mayawati's Sandwich Coalition." *Economic and Political Weekly* 42.22 (2007): 2039-043. JSTOR. Web.

Verma, A. K. "Samajwadi Party in Uttar Pradesh." *Economic & Political Weekly* 39.14 (2004): 3-16. JSTOR. Web.

Zee Research Group. "UP Story so Far." *Zeenews.india.com*. Zee News, n.d. Web.