



RESEARCH PAPER

**Role of Hindutva Ideology in Escalation of Extremism in India: A Comparative Analysis of Congress and BJP Govt. (2009-2019)**

Muhammad Akif Rashid\*<sup>1</sup> Rashida Abbas<sup>2</sup> Fazal Elahi Bilal<sup>3</sup>

1. Ph. D. Scholar (International Relations), School of Integrated Social Sciences, the University of Lahore, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan
2. Ph. D. Scholar (International Relations), School of Integrated Social Sciences, the University of Lahore, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan
3. Ph. D. Scholar (International Relations), School of Integrated Social Sciences, the University of Lahore, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

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**\*Corresponding Author**

akifgujjar351@gmail.com

The objective of this study is to investigate the role of Hindutva Ideology in the escalation of extremism in India through a Comparative Analysis of the Congress and BJP Govt. Extremism in India has increased enormously in the last few years. The violence of extremism is due to the cause of Hindutva ideology, which foremost purpose is to transform an Indian secular state into a Hindu state. This study was conducted through the use of qualitative content analysis. This study concludes First, how the Hindutva ideology affected the escalation of extremism. Secondly, how BJP instrumentally shapes the Hindutva sentiments for its political motives. Thirdly, looks at what was Congress's secular policies to counter extremism in India and determined with a comparative analysis of Congress and BJP Govt. counter-extremism policies This study recommends that the Indian State has to take steps to stop such escalation in the society and create religious harmony and tolerance in Indian society.

Introduction

Hindutva, the ideological drive of Hinduism, is also an initial crusade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in the antiquity of the subcontinent. Disparate its European counterpart in Germany, Spain, and Italy, which materialized in the last of the 1<sup>st</sup> World War epoch and hurriedly climbed to influence, Hindutva thrashed to achieve corps recognition and was held rancid by mass self-governed drives (Sahgal, 2020). Hindu Nationalism (Hindutva) is a philosophy that stepped on theorization. It paradigms a venerated Hindu as the emblematic inhabitant of India. In the history of the subcontinent the evolution of the Hindu extremist approach, Hindutva unavoidably envisages an assortment of selves to be contemptible of being in the right place to its outset of India (Waikar, 2018).

Rationalist radicalism has been mounting and has converted to a more conventional sensation worldwide with many rightest parties and eventually, rightest extremists captivating basis and inserting these in the hell of the complicated

pattern of many states. The Indian state now reflects the version of extremist right-wing politics in the shape of Hindu ideological politics (Siyech, 2021). The basis of Hindu nationalism in India is not linked to any party or state narrative but also to communal thespians, precisely, the bourgeois Indian class. Hindu patriotism has emerged in society in a very narrow domain in spells of ostensible concord and in the elections and with the consent of enthusiastic cohorts, spectators, and disciplinarians (Sinha, 2021).

Against this backdrop, this research paper will outline the origin of Hindutva Ideology how its rise come about in India and how the BJP instrumentally shape the Hindutva sentiments for its political motives which caused an escalation of extremism in India. While providing an assessment in perspective of the Congress's secular policies to counter the extremism in India, finally it concludes with a discussion on a comparative analysis of Congress and BJP Govt. counter-extremism policies (2009-2019).

### **Literature Review**

The research work on the Hindutva ideology is available in a huge data form. Researchers have been investigating the basis of Hindutva ideology and its role before and after the partition of India, and it is linked with the freedom movement. (Sahai, 1956), (Anderson, 1987), (Chitkara, 2004). The murder of the founding father of India, Mahatma Gandhi, diver the focus of researchers towards the extremist Hindutva ideology and its link with the partition. (Mukherjee, 2008). The extremism factor can be seen more prominently after the general elections in 2014, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) charged with the government and started a new chapter of extremism ideology in the history of India (Lutful, 2021).

The Indian state ignored several incidents of extremist ideology in history. It can be seen in the strikes in the shape of Ayudhya in 1992 and very alarming incidents of Gujrat in 2002. In the same way, a series of riots can be observed in the year 2018 against the extremist ideology. (Palanisamy, 2020). The extreme level of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the context of radical Hindu ideology can be observed in the case of the selection of Yogi Adityanath as the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, the most famous state of India and the place where the Babari mosque riots occurred. Yogi Adityanath was very popular and famous in Hindu extremist wings for their services as the main pioneer of the Hindu extremist group Yuva Vahini (Malji, 2018).

Throughout the history of India, it never faced a more severe issue than extremism. Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) aligned all the state institutions, media groups, law enforcement agencies, and election commission in its hardline extremist Modi strategies. The political stakeholders are suppressed and arrested in different cases by the Modi Government. The ideology of Hindutva is now at its peak and ultimately a great threat to the liberal democracy and constitution of India. (Subramanian, 2020). In recent years in 2019, the graph of uncertainty and insecurity raised high day by day and as a Hindu representative society leader, Narendra Modi fully supported the extremist ideology to justify Hindustan as a Hindu state. At the beginning of 2014, the Modi government started to support the Hindutva ideology at the government level. The Hindu leaders passed unheard able remarks in their speeches against Muslims to support the Hindutva ideology. Hindu extremist groups

launched anti-Muslimism operations, causing thousands of Muslims injured and killed as other minorities of the state (Zaheer, 2021).

During the period of the Congress government, the economy of the state jumped high, especially in the areas of the IT sector and technical services sector. The economic boom however paced slowly in some of the rural areas. Agriculture mainly depends on the spell of monsoon rains and opened new lands for cultivation, so that the natural resources are exploited with benefits to the domestic farmers. Congress opened up new doors for the farmers through the latest technology with the collaboration of the United States and revolutionized the agrarian sector by opening the investment in agriculture. In this way, the Congress government improved the agriculture technological gap and improved the agrarian economy by producing capital for the farmers (Agrawal, 2010).

Over time, these beliefs changed as Congress was pursuing an economic program hesitant to sanction greater freedom to market-based regulations in product and factor markets; on the contrary, the policies of Congress after 2009 were more sounded based on the freedom, economy-driven, liberal, and people-oriented. These policies caused the reduction in extremism in society and the participation of all the parts of society glue the Indian state under the united umbrella of India. This picture of the state of affairs is reflected in the true sense of the Indian constitution as a secular state, which was aimed by the founding father of India Mahatma Gandhi (De, 2017).

## **Discussion**

The political organization as a Sang Parivar was introduced in the year of 1926 with the ideological background of the National Volunteers Organization Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). The Hindutva ideology reflected in the cultural and religious form of the World Hindu Council or Vishwa Hindu Parishad was based in the year 1964. The extremist political cell of this ideology was known as the Jana Sangh in the year 1956 but in the researcher's opinion, it was documented in 1980 under the name Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). This extremist ideology Hindutva containing by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and launched very extreme level operations against Muslims and Christian minorities in India and an RSS worker murdered Mahatma Gandhi (Kamala, 2009). The Hindutva ideology is a political motive that reflects through the Indian culture, traditions, and as a Hindu nation. Vinayak Damodar Savarkar argued that Hindus are the only realistic Indians with their pitrbhu (fatherland) and punyabhhu (holy land) in India, while the other minorities like Muslims and Christians are not considered Indians as their holy lands are not in India. The Muslims and Christians are different in every phase of life in culture and language from Hindus and could not claim any right to live in India and not claim any Indian citizenship (Ramachandran, 2020).

Hindutva Ideology remained in the sphere of Indian politics for many decades and several movements gathered momentum in the 1980s and began moving to the central stage of politics. The Ramjanmabhoomi movement assured a site in Ayudhya in Uttar Pradesh, which it claimed was where the Hindu deity Ram was born. The Mughal King Babar built a mosque in this place as a temple has existed there. In December 1992, the Parivar started a protest movement to build a temple again on this site and eventually demolished the Babari mosque. (Ramachandran, 2020). The Hindutva ideology cannot be removed from Indian society because of its

deep roots in civilization. The Hindutva implications are witnessed in the foreign policies of India and especially the relations with neighboring nuclear state Pakistan (Jathol & Muzaffar, 2019), (Karmat, et. al. 2019) & (Yaseen, & Muzaffar, 2018).

The Hindutva ideology plays a crucial role to mobilize the mob to craft ferocity in society against Muslims as in the case of cow vigilantism. The cow is anticipated blessed by Hindus, who worship it as "Taumata" (the universal mother). Since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the cow is considered an imperative constituent of Hindu nationalism and substantiated a very hard point against Muslims. Muslims eat beef unlike other caste Hindus and Hindutva activists corroborate vehemence against Muslims as an act of cow fortification. Meanwhile, this ideology is used by many political outlets for their policies to drive intention. The Hindutva ideology is always used for political motives by both the parties BJP and Congress, the only difference was the soft and hard imaging for the tool of the election. However, the insistent and antagonistic version of Hindutva can be observed in the case of the BJP (Nielsen, 2021).

The connotation and concept of extremism term are imprecise in the boundaries of political ideologies and practices are indistinct. There is no proper definition of extremism in different countries, however, many agendas are managed to deal with violent extremism. (Bötticher, 2017) In the twilight twentieth century, the right emerged as a supreme political power in the world. The conservative ideologies prejudiced politics, policies, and public issues such as extremism with racism, xenophobia, and immigration (Creasap, 2010). Extremism interrelated issues are snowballing in India besides the change of government in India and possessions the security apparatus as well. While India currently facades many threats from extremism and insurgency, the threat from ideological Hindutva drive is very high due to the segment of the Narendra Modi Government (Rajakumar 2016).

The participation of women in Indian extremist groups is very decisive to comprehend their complex roles and expended practices in society. This dimension is not only understudied but in war and conflict times its standing is augmented further. (Narain, 2017) A wave of extremism was engrained in the moans of the Adivasi and other rural crofters. Since the British rule in the sub-continent witnessed a feudal system of land ownership and allotted the land lands in response to collecting tax revenue for the British. After independence, the Indian government did not introduce any land reforms, which caused the rise of extremism and used by political ideologies (Rawat, 2019).

Recently, anti-Muslimism ferocity has increased terrifyingly and is sponsored by the Hindutva ideology, which intends at making secular India a Hindu state. The bellicose approach of a hardline Hindu agenda by the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is constructing anxieties for India's religious minorities, particularly Muslims. In the same way, the mounting stimulus of Hindutva ideology has inferences for other religious groups, including Hindus, and weakens the idea of India itself. (Ramachandran, 2020). Extremist propaganda when harmonizing with a political motive carries mass entreaty, especially if it is associated with rampant sociopolitical and economic apprehensions. The extremist group's feats intrigue to entice recruits, auxiliary their extremist ideologies, and fuel vehemence merit consideration. (Basit, 2021)

The Indian Nation Congress in Tamilnadu during the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century frolicked a dynamic role in inculcating nationalism among the people as in the rest of the sub-continent. At the same time, the starring role of the Congress bargains a stimulating prospect to gauge the nature of moderate and extremist ideologies and their bearing on the freedom scuffle in the region (Thandavan, 1985). In 1999, a Graham Australian and his two sons were scorched to death by Hindu extremists as they slept in a car in a rural village in India. This incident is one in a series of many attacks on India's tiny Christian population. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), a political outlet has long allied with Hindu extremism. Among the cohorts in the BJP's parliamentary alliance were the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) party, a customary stronghold of Hindu extremism and the party the BJP initially nurtured (MYERS, 2001).

The affiliation between religion and extremism is very complex and confronts any clear direction of causality. In some suitcases of extremism, religion is not a prime driver, however, in some, it may be crucial. Struggle to counter or reduce the intensity of extremism and radicalization therefore the urgency to emphasize religion as both a contributing factor and part of the solution. (Nozell, 2017)The factors exposed how western extremism has shown grave concern about the internet from early times to modern social media and multiple apps. It naked how extremism receives numerous online tools, not only to channel the concerned but to radicalize others, and in the long run to apprentice new adherents (Maura, 2019).

The BJP under Prime Minister Narendra Modi has executed many laws and policies to stimulate its Hindutva ideology and crushed the secular policies and political participation of minorities and other political outlets. The BJP policies threaten the security of minorities and the multicultural fabric of India, resultantly protests have been organized by the public throughout the state. (Ahmad, 2020)The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)'s gain power through the Hindutva ideological drive in the 2014 elections and shaped the national policies according to its political motives. This treacherous turn of BJP in India may be proved a very debauched experience in the history of India. (Desai, 2014)The rise of the BJP created a challenge for Congress as well as for the Nehru-established state and its secular democratic motives. Its leadership uses the religious sentiments for its political drive and they discuss not only roti but Ram-the bread of life itself. (Lyon, 1993)The BJP Government in its tenure from 2014 to 2019 has taken several right decisions on economic policies as action on black money, financial inclusion, Goods and services tax, and Bankruptcy Code. (CHIKERMANE, 2018)

The main political party in India the Congress gained its roots in 1886 by A.O. Hume's struggle for the people's representation for their political rights in the sub-continent. The role of Congress before and after the partition remained prominent because it gave many leaders to the sub-continent and India as well. The Congress-led as the single big party in India and under its leadership the role of India in the world remained very positive and prosperous for its minorities. The founding father of India under the umbrella of the Congress declared India a secular state in its constitution. Congress is represented by all the minorities even in the main seats of the state. This reflects the true spirit of a political party. The Congress remained the main political stakeholder in the state till the elections of 2009, however, no political party gained a majority and formed an independent government. The Congress formed a coalition with other political parties known as the United Progressive

Alliance (UPA) and the Congress leader Sonia Gandhi gained the option but again recommended Manmohan Singh a Sikh for the Prime Minister post. In this way, Singh becomes the Prime Minister for the second time. The policies of Singh remained friendly to the minorities and the economy of the state uplifted.

The domestic policies of the Congress after the 1990s remained overall good as India's economy boomed especially in the areas of information technology and technical sector, however, in the rural areas, it seems to stagnate due to the reason as it depends on the rain season for the cultivation. The UPA-led government started the evolution of the agriculture sector with the help of the latest technology in the United States. The government policies improved the infrastructure and quality of life in the rural areas through employment opportunities. Women's rights can be gauged from the fact that Pratibha Patil charged India's first woman president in 2007 and Meira Kumar become the first woman speaker of the Lok Sabha in 2009. In the same way, the women reserved the main seats in all the provinces. The notable work done by Singh was the anti-terrorism policies which eliminated terrorism in the state and abroad as well.

The foreign policies of the Congress were very friendly and mutually respect-based with the neighboring countries, especially Pakistan. Singh met with the president of Pakistan Pervaiz Musharraf at a summit and both agreed to work jointly against terrorism. After this breakthrough in 2008 limited trade started between both the states and a great through in the last six decades. In this way, the bilateral relationships strengthen between the states. Singh also met with the Prime Minister of Pakistan Yousef Raza Gillani in 2009 and 2010 to normalize the relationship between the states. The Congress government focused on diplomatic ties and engaged in the multilateral dialogue with the World Trade Organization and lobbied for a permanent seat for India in the UN Security Council. The Congress government started free trade agreement with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and South Korea in 2010. Another agreement was signed with Japan in 2010 and hosted the 2010 Commonwealth Games in Delhi.

The Congress formed a good relationship with India with the Western and Eastern blocks and set priority for peace dialogue with Pakistan and exchange of high officials and leaders from both sides. The Congress-led government tried to resolve the border disputes with China through dialogue. The Congress-led government improved the relationships with Afghanistan and enhanced the donation in the context of the development of education, health, infrastructure, and defense. The Congress-led government also improved political, cultural, and economic ties with the Central Asian countries. The Congress policies remained friendly with Japan and European Union states, the United Kingdom, France, and Germany.

The economic policies of the Congress-led government were very productive as economic liberalization and mixed economic policies were introduced. The replacement of foreign goods with domestic proved a great initiative and strengthen the local industry and enhanced the capital and employment opportunities. The government reforms the banking and financial sectors and increased the productivity of the public sector companies. A revolutionary step was taken by the government to introduce policies for farmers to bail out from debt. The government increased the

budget for literacy improvement and health care. The expansion of infrastructure programs and electricity coverage expansion was good initiatives.

The defense policies of the Congress-led government remained constant throughout history as China tested nuclear which created a threat to the security of India and Congress eventually test nuclear which gauged the graph high even the restrictions from the United States and Canada. Administration initiatives were taken to stabilize the peace in the region and strengthened the ant-terrorism laws to stop extremist activities. In this way, the Congress-led government remained successful to counter the extremist activities and insurgency in the different provinces of the state. Legislation more empowered the law enforcement agencies to deal with the extremist and terrorist groups in the state.

The Congress-led government started the National Rural Health Mission, which recruited nearly one million community health workers and was praised by the international community like the economist Jaffrey Sachs. Another successful program started the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan program to feed the mid-day meal and the opening of new schools, especially in rural areas to combat literacy. The Congress-led government in 2009 emphasizes social equality besides religion, freedom, and secularism in the state. The Congress historically represented the farmers, laborers, and religious minorities and opposed unregulated business, and supported progressive taxes. The party supported the doctrine of Mahatma Gandhi's Sarva Dharma Sama Bhava and turned party members into secularism and it realized the real asset of all the minorities in the state.

### **Conclusion**

Conclusively, the Hindutva ideology defames the state affairs of India due to the hardline policies of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The Hindutva ideology was rooted before the Partition and after the assassination of the founding father of India Mahatma Gandhi. The Hindutva ideology was adopted by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) as a religious tool to lead in the election in 2014 and remained successful. The population graph of the Hindu community is very high which was cached by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) to contest the election and crushed the minorities through its extremist workers. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) elected Narendra Modi as Prime Minister which adopted the policies of Hindutva ideology to suppress the minorities especially the Muslims in the state. This leads to extremism and intolerance in the society and reported many cases throughout the state, which created insecurities among the minorities in the state. This extremist agenda is not limited to inside India but crosses the boundaries and created issues with the neighboring countries.

The Congress-led government policies in 2009 can be gauged as overall very productive for the whole society in India. The role of Congress in the history of India remained exemplary through its liberal policies for the minorities, especially for the Muslims. During the period of the Congress, the causes of extremism and terrorism were reduced due to the effective anti-terrorism policies and empowerment of law enforcement agencies to crush the curse of extremism and terrorism in the state. The Congress policies reflect outside the boundaries of the state as the relationship with the neighboring countries and other states. The Congress represents the farmers, laborers, and minorities, and a special status for the women in the main positions.

The welfare policies of the Congress-led government were appreciated by the international community and focused on the minorities' rights as well.

Finally, the policies of the Congress period from 2009-14 proved historical in the context of the welfare of people and reduced the graph of extremism and terrorism in the state. While the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) policies during 2014-19 remained very disastrous for society as it used the Hindutva ideology for political motives and crushed the minorities through its hardline ideology. During this period the causes of extremism and terrorism increased even though the neighboring countries put their consent against the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) policies. The main motive of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) transformed secular India into a Hindu state through its Hindutva ideological drive in the state. This study recommends that the Indian State has to take steps to stop such escalation in the society and create religious harmony and tolerance in the Indian society.

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