

Review of: "MODI 'Wave'-Leadership Legitimation and Institutionalization in Indian Politics"

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Praveen Rai's article, "MODI 'Wave'-Leadership Legitimation and Institutionalization in Indian Politics," offers an incisive examination of political legitimacy and the leadership dynamics of the current Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi. The article presents a compelling overview of the anticipated electoral victory of the National Democratic Alliance (Bharatiya Janata Party-BJP), suggesting that Modi's leadership has generated an unstoppable momentum, solidifying his position as a dominant political figure.

Structured around a clear and relevant research hypothesis, Rai's analysis delves into the concepts of political legitimacy, leadership, charisma, political clientelism, and Hindu nationalism. The article also touches on the significance of populism and transformational governance.

The arguments put forth are robust and persuasive. The article is theoretically sound; however, it would benefit from a more detailed exploration of Modi's international achievements. Expanding on the theoretical framework of populism and incorporating reflections on the interplay between foreign policy successes and the enhancement of political legitimacy and charisma would enrich the analysis. Additionally, referencing Holsti's Roles of National Conceptions could provide a deeper understanding of India's role on the global stage, thereby elucidating Modi's effectiveness in leveraging ethno-confessional factors for political mobilization, particularly in the context of Cultural Hindu Nationalism and historical Hindu mythologies.

Another area for enhancement is the discussion of political change and the observed regression in democratization. Including an analysis of autocratization, especially within electoral processes, would strengthen the critique. Furthermore, to comprehend the high approval ratings among the national populace, it would be insightful to investigate the relationship between Modi and the proprietors of major media outlets in India.

Despite these areas for improvement, Rai's article is highly engaging and well-structured. It is a valuable resource for those interested in Indian national politics and the broader themes of democratization and democratic regression.