2 Creating majoritarian democracy

Bharatiya Janata Party in the 2017 Legislative Assembly election in Uttar Pradesh

Norio Kondo

The 2017 legislative election in Uttar Pradesh (UP) was apparently an epoch-making election. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) won a landslide victory, with 39.67% votes polled. The BJP were awarded 312 seats out of 403. The then ruling party, the Samajwadi Party (SP), won 47 seats, with 21.82% votes, whereas the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) won 19 seats with 22.23%; the Indian National Congress (Congress) won 7 seats with 6.25%. Although the SP and Congress made an electoral alliance, their combination was no match for the BJP's ability to win the election. For the first time since June 1991, the BJP's single-party rule was established in UP. The BJP's sweeping victory in 2017 was apparently a repetition of the 2014 Lok Sabha (Lower House of Indian Parliament) election, which apparently brought about a kind of majoritarian rule in UP, at least in party politics.

This chapter presents a look into the factors leading to the broad victory of the BJP in the 2017 Legislative Assembly election and offers some implications for political prospects in UP.

Electoral politics in UP and BJP victory in the 2017 Legislative Assembly elections

The BJP victory in the 2017 Legislative Assembly election was expected in view of the BJP performance in the 2014 Lok Sabha election. The victory surprised many people and brought about substantial change in UP politics. Figure 2.1 presents changes in the percentage of votes polled by major parties in the Legislative Assembly and Lok Sabha elections after 1989. The rise of the BJP from 2014 Lok Sabha election to the 2017 Legislative Assembly election was tremendous. Before analysing factors leading to the phenomenal victory of BJP, one must understand the trajectory of recent state politics.

Party politics in UP: 1989–2017

Party politics in the UP changed radically after 1989 when the Congress government collapsed both in the centre and UP. Congress has shown no sign of revival in UP to date, as shown in Figure 2.1.

During the first half of the 1990s, the BJP retained about one-third of people's support and came to power in 1991 without the support of other parties. However,

Figure 2.1 Percentage of votes polled by major parties in Legislative Assembly and Lok Sabha elections in Uttar Pradesh after 1989.

Source: Created by author on the basis of data in Election Commission of India (Legislative Assembly Election data: 1989, 1991, 1993, 1996, 2002, 2007, 2012, 2017, Lok Sabha Election data: 1998, 1999, 2004, 2009, 2014) (http://eci.nic.in/eci_main1/ElectionStatistics.aspx, accessed November 23, 2017).

Note: "JD" = Janata Dal.

the BJP government was dismissed by the central government because of the communal disturbance caused by the destruction of Babri masjid in Ayodhya in December 1992. Another feature of party system evolution in the 1990s was the rise of SP led by Mulayam Sing Yadav and BSP led by Kanshi Ram and Mayawati. The rise of these parties is largely attributable to the churning of political perception of people caused by the so-called Mandir and Mandal issues and others. The former refers to Hindu–Muslim communal conflicts related to the Ayodhya problem. The latter refers to social conflicts between Other Backward Classes (OBCs)¹ and socially and economically advantaged groups among the populace, especially high castes, which resulted from the creation of reservations in the central government for OBCs. The social turmoil attributable to the Mandir and Mandal issues and other issues caused a strengthening of the caste/community-consciousness of people in the party politics. The growth of the SP, after its separation in 1992 from Janata Dal (JD), was based on OBC support, especially the Yadav caste and Muslims after the 2010s. The growth of BSP, on the other hand, was based on the increasing support of Scheduled Castes (SCs: Dalit),² especially the Jatav/Chamar castes.

The growth of the SP and the BSP based on caste/community identity brought about the fragmentation of the party system and unstable government formation from the mid-1990s to the mid-2000s. There were eight chief ministers of different parties between 1993 and 2007. However, in the 2007 Legislative Assembly

election, a stable single-party government was established by the BSP with Mayawati as chief minister. BSP won the election by attracting not only Dalits but also other sections of the populace such as Muslims, high-caste people, and others who had come to be dissatisfied with successive unstable governments. Although the Mayawati government came to power based on the support of fairly wide sections, its main beneficiaries were Dalits, especially the Chamar/Jatav castes, which dissatisfied other sections, leading to the defeat in the next election in 2012. During the Mayawati government, it was said that the perceptions of some sections of Dalits in evaluating government changed with more emphasis on development and governance (Heath and Kumar 2012), although caste/community-based identity continued to play an important role.

In the 2012 Legislative Assembly election, SP won a majority and came to power with Akhilesh Yadav, son of Mulayam Singh Yadav, as chief minister, and completed his full 5-year tenure. Although Akhilesh Yadav himself was said to be a clean and development-oriented chief minister, his government was perceived as incompetent in administering law and order, and as corrupt, nepotistic, and casteist (Kang 2016: 16). Although the support of Yadav caste was stable, dissatisfaction was reflected in the 2014 Lok Sabha election when vast groups of people changed their allegiance to vote for the BJP. Increasingly, people have emphasized the government's performance based on development and governance (Verma 2014). The 2017 Legislative Assembly elections demonstrated the people's rising dissatisfaction leading to the great victory of the BJP.

Victory of the BJP in the 2017 Legislative Assembly Election

This section points out several factors leading to a broad victory of the BJP and the defeat of other parties based on election surveys and some descriptive analyses of the election, which is necessary to decide the direction of the statistical analyses in the next section.

First, the anti-incumbency feelings against the BSP and the SP cannot be ignored among various communities which have not attached greater importance in earlier governments. According to several surveys, the core castes/communities supporting Mayawati's BSP, are Jatav or Chamar³ among Dalits. It is often said that Jatav/Chamar have received a larger share of benefits under the BSP government than other Dalits, which causes feelings of relative deprivation among non-Jatav/Chamar Dalits, resulting in their dissatisfaction. Furthermore, the intraparty feud and the exit of OBCs' influential leader, S. P. Maurya in 2016, had adverse effects on BSP's electoral prospect (*Times of India* 2016). The fact that BSP is nearly a Mayawati-centred party and that she controls the whole process of ticket distribution in the election is an important factor underlying his defection (Farooqui and Sridharan 2015: 87).

The same might be said about the SP (Michelutti 2008: 162). The core castes/communities supporting the SP are Yadav and Muslim. The non-Yadav OBCs have not benefitted sufficiently under the SP governments, which resulted in the dissatisfaction among non-Yadav OBCs. In addition, the SP's internal feud between the development-oriented chief minister, Akhilesh Yadav, and his father and party leader Mulayam Singh Yadav (Kang 2016), seems to have worked against popularity of the SP.

According to a survey conducted by the Lokniti, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), in January 2017,⁴ an overwhelming 79% of Jatav supported the BSP. However, related to other Dalits, although 47% of them supported the BSP, 24% supported the BJP and its allied parties, and 21% supported the SP and its allied parties. A 2009 survey⁵ showed that 64% of other Dalits supported the BSP. The support of non-Jatav Dalits has been diversified. Regarding the SP, in 2017 survey 73% of Yadav and 74% of Muslim supported the SP. However, only 20% of other OBCs (excluding Yadav and Kurmi) supported the SP, whereas 34% of other OBCs supported BJP and its allied parties; 16% of other OBCs supported the BSP. A 2009 survey revealed that 25% OBCs other than Yadav, Kurmi and Lodh supported the SP, whereas 29% of them supported the BJP and its allied parties; 19% supported the BSP.

Consequently, the diversification of the support base had been recognized by the 2017 election among both other Dalits and other OBCs. Apparently, the castes/communities which were made light of in the BSP and SP governments, especially the non-Jatav/Chamar Dalits and non-Yadav OBCs and non-Muslims, had shifted their support to the BJP, which had been appealing to people for development under the Modi central government (Jha 2017).

Second, in connection to the first point, it must be pointed out that development-conscious voters seem to emphasize government performance in terms of development and governance in selecting party in the election. Therefore, if people do not evaluate the BSP and SP governments in development and governance, they will vote for another seemingly more development-oriented BJP. In fact, most parts of the BJP manifesto for the 2017 Legislative Assembly election were devoted to the statements of development and welfare schemes; only one sentence touched on the Ram temple and Ayodhya issue (Bharatiya Janata Party – Uttar Pradesh 2017: 20).

Third, the popularity and propagations of BJP are important. In particular, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's popularity among Hindus is an important factor because the 2017 Legislative Assembly election can be understood as a continuation of the 2014 Lok Sabha election in which the popularity of Modi and the campaign of BJP-associated groups, such as Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh (RSS), were influential in attracting the votes of diverse voters.⁶

The propagation of the BJP ideology, "Hindutva," also cannot be ignored. It might have worked effectively, especially in attracting the marginal castes/communities associated with the BSP and SP described earlier (Ramaseshan 2016). Several news sources reported that workers of the BJP and its associated organizations, such as the RSS, propagated communal discourse among Hindu, which was likely to increase the support of Hindus to the BJP.⁷ Furthermore, although a series of communal incidents such as the Muzaffarnagar communal riots between Muslims and Hindus in 2013, the Saharanpur Riots in 2014 between Muslims and Sikhs, the lynching of an old Muslim man, suspected of storing beef, by a Hindu mob in Dadri of Gautam Buddha Nagar district in 2015 has been further alienating Muslims from BJP, the communal tension, in turn, has been sensitizing communal sentiment of majority Hindu simultaneously, which was likely to raise Hindu support for the BJP.

The next two sections present statistical analyses based on election data and population census data to look for the factors explaining major parties in UP. Although the survey data based on the interviews and their analyses paint a more detailed and accurate picture of the election, its coverage is narrow compared to the aggregated macro-election data. It is sometimes difficult to ascertain the influence of macro-scale structural factors such as urbanization, quantitatively. There are, of course, limitation of macro-scale aggregated data in analysing electoral behaviours, such as the “ecological fallacy.” However, if interpreting the result while considering the survey data-based analyses of other studies, there would be no severe mistake in understanding the people’s behaviours. The analyses explained in the following sections illustrate quantitatively what the survey data-based analysis said and gives a wider perspective of the party–people nexus.

Methodology

To analyse the election data on the basis of socio-economic data at macro/aggregate level, the matching of election data and socio-economic data is necessary. According to electoral laws,⁸ a Lok Sabha constituency consists of several Legislative Assembly Constituencies (LACs). The statistical records of Lok Sabha elections after the 2009 election are shown not only for each Lok Sabha constituency but also for the LACs within the Lok Sabha constituency. Furthermore, no major delimitation of the constituencies occurred after 2008. Therefore, the data for the 2012 and 2017 Legislative Assembly elections and those of 2014 Lok Sabha election can be dealt with as a set of a continuous panel data set based on LACs.

It is important that the geographical boundary of a specifically aggregated set of continuous LACs completely matches a specifically aggregated set of continuous “tehsils”, a sub-district unit in UP. Most items of population census have tehsil-level data. Consequently, the geographical boundary matching between a set of continuous LACs and a set of continuous “tehsils” in the population census was made for 2012, 2014, and 2017 elections. In this way, I have created 143 aggregated sample units (hereinafter called “sample units”) all over UP. The matching made regression analyses possible between the two data sets. This is a method used by Paul Brass (1985).

Variables used for statistical analyses are presented in Table 2.1. The dependent variables are the percentage of votes polled by major parties and the differences in the percentage of votes polled by parties between two elections. One can get a better understanding of UP electoral politics by examining the picture of a party in one election as well as the changes occurring between two elections.

The independent variables include the percentage of voter turnout and differences in voter turnout between the two elections, as well as variables created from the population census data. The former might be significant because voter turnout or an increase in the voter turnout might affect the support of a particular party. The latter variables related to ethnicity, economic class, and the level of modern life are created based on the population census. Ethnic and economic class variables, such as percentages of “Muslim,” “Scheduled Castes,” “Main Cultivators,”

and “Main Agricultural Labourers,” are regarded as important for examining the socioeconomic basis of party support in UP because of the close connection between major parties, on one hand, and castes or economic classes, on the other, as in the case of the BSP and the SP. In addition, a variable representing the overall level of modern life might be important because the rising level of modern life can be regarded as rendering people more sensitive to politics and changing their voting behaviours. Modern life is regarded as a variable having various aspects such as “urbanity,” “literacy,” “tap water,” and “electrical light.” Therefore, the author has created a composite variable of “level of modern life,” called “Mdnly”, consisting of the four variables in Table 2.1, through principal component analysis. Thus, we can estimate the popular voting behaviours related to major parties in relation to castes, religious communities, economic classes, and standard of living based on the population census of 2011.

For statistical analyses, weighted least squares (WLS) regression was applied with the “Number of voters” in each sample unit 2014 Lok Sabha or 2017 Legislative Assembly elections as weight variables. It is because the voter group sizes are widely different among sample units. It is attributable to the heterogeneous combinations of LACs and tehsils in matching the boundaries of both variables. A sample unit, for example, includes six LACs in one case while only one LAC included in another. Regarding the probable problem of “endogeneity,” it appears to be intractable.⁹ The problem of severe endogeneity can arise because of reasons such as the cyclical causation between dependent and independent variables. For example, the voter turnout, which is an independent variable, can be raised by the political mobilization of a particular party. However, actually in all the WLSs that follow, voter turnout or the difference of voter turnouts between two elections is statistically not significant in explaining the dependent variables, which most probably indicates the very low probability of the severe endogeneity caused by them. Furthermore, in the estimation, those sample units are excluded from the WLSs, which include LACs where there was no candidate of the party concerned to avoid the strong, biased estimation of coefficients.

Finally, it must be described that the interpretation of the results must be done carefully so that no mistake of “ecological fallacy” is committed. That would occur in misunderstanding the estimation based on aggregated macro-data as what would happen at the individual level. The risk of “ecological fallacy” can be minimized in two ways. First, the size of aggregated macro-data should be as small as possible. As described in this chapter, the level of aggregation, the sample unit, is smaller than the district, which ensures better estimation. Second, survey data based on the opinion poll should be taken into account for the interpretation of estimation simultaneously.

Statistical analyses of the party performance in three elections

First, it must be described that the continuity of the elections between 2014 Lok Sabha election to 2017 Assembly election is stronger than that from 2012 to 2014. The Pearson’s correlation of the BJP vote percentage between 2012 and 2014 elections is 0.398 whereas that between 2014 and 2017 is 0.543.¹⁰

Table 2.1 Variables used for statistical analyses

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Explanation</i>	<i>No. of Obs.</i>	<i>Mean (standard deviation)</i>	<i>Min. Max.</i>	<i>Source</i>
bjp2017*	Percentage of votes polled by BJP in 2017 Legislative Assembly election.	127	41.1 (6.61)	21.0 55.6	ECI
bjp17as12as*	[bjp2017] – [Percentage of votes polled by BJP in 2012 Legislative Assembly election]	126	26.9 (8.14)	7.70 49.8	ECI
bjp17as14ls*	[bjp2017] – [Percentage of votes polled by BJP in 2014 Lok Sabha election]	125	–1.60 (7.27)	–28.6 19.5	ECI
bsp2017	Percentage of votes polled by BSP in 2017 Legislative Assembly election.	143	23.0 (5.79)	7.00 39.6	ECI
bsp17as12as	[bsp2017] – [Percentage of votes polled by BSP in 2012 Legislative Assembly election]	143	–3.35 (5.87)	–25.8 13.6	ECI
bsp17as14ls	[bsp2017] – [Percentage of votes polled by BSP in 2014 Lok Sabha election]	143	2.57 (6.12)	–18.3 20.0	ECI
sp2014ls*	Percentage of votes polled by SP in 2014 Lok Sabha election.	137	23.6 (10.1)	3.40 59.8	ECI
sp14ls12as*	[sp2014ls] – [Percentage of votes polled by SP in 2012 Legislative Assembly election]	136	–6.83 (10.1)	–30.0 21.4	ECI
inc2014ls*	Percentage of votes polled by Congress in 2014 Lok Sabha election.	114	9.13 (11.7)	0.500 64.5	ECI
inc14ls12as*	[inc2014ls] – [Percentage of votes polled by Congress in 2012 Legislative Assembly election]	107	–3.30 (11.5)	–46.4 45.6	ECI

Table 2.1 (Continued)

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Explanation</i>	<i>No. of Obs.</i>	<i>Mean (standard deviation)</i>	<i>Min. Max.</i>	<i>Source</i>
spinc2017*	Percentage of votes polled by both SP and Congress in 2017 Legislative Assembly election.	142	27.8 (6.81)	6.30 48.1	ECI
spinc17as14ls*	[spinc2017] – [Percentage of votes polled both SP and Congress in 2014 Lok Sabha election]	142	–2.51 (8.30)	–26.5 16.9	ECI
vote2017	Number of voters in 2017 Legislative Assembly election.	143	606,492 (437,724)	164,353 221,6559	ECI
vote2014ls	Number of voters in 2014 Lok Sabha election.	143	562,547 (406,447)	153,938 1,959,196	ECI
vote2017p	Percentage of voter turnout in 2017 Legislative Assembly election.	143	61.1 (5.09)	44.8 75.0	ECI
vote2014lsp	Percentage of voter turnout in 2014 Lok Sabha election.	143	57.8 (5.93)	42.5 75.7	ECI
vote17as12as	[vote2017p] – [Percentage of voter turnout in 2012 Legislative Assembly election.]	143	1.70 (2.25)	–4.80 8.30	ECI
vote17as14ls	[vote2017p] – [vote2014lsp]	143	3.35 (2.69)	–5.60 9.90	ECI
vote14ls12as	[vote2014lsp] – [Percentage of voter turnout in 2012 Legislative Assembly election]	143	–1.64 (3.40)	–10.0 9.90	ECI
vrbjp121417*	{(bjp17as14ls) ² + ([Percentage of votes polled by BJP in 2014 Lok Sabha election] – [Percentage of votes polled by BJP in 2012 Legislative Assembly election]) ² } ^{0.5}	124	29.4 (8.93)	8.46 61.5	ECI

Table 2.1 (Continued)

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Explanation</i>	<i>No. of Obs.</i>	<i>Mean (standard deviation)</i>	<i>Min. Max.</i>	<i>Source</i>
muslim	Percentage of Muslim persons	143	16.8 (11.1)	2.76 61.6	Census
p_sc	Percentage of Scheduled Castes persons	143	21.5 (6.07)	8.81 41.7	Census
main_cl_p	Percentage of persons engaged in cultivation of land owned or held and work at least 6 months in the preceding one year.	143	8.17 (3.27)	0.870 18.6	Census
main_al_p	Percentage of persons work as agricultural laborers on another person's land for wages in money or kind or share at least 6 months in the preceding one year.	143	5.13 (1.86)	1.13 12.6	Census
Mdnty	"Mdnty" shows the level of modern life. It is made by Principal Component Analysis (with weight of total population) using the following data: "Percentage of urban population (%)," "Percentage of literacy population (%)," "Percentage of Households which have access to tapwater (%)," and "Percentage of Households which have electrical light (%)." The first principal component is adopted. It summarizes 65.2% of the variance of the four variables.	143	-0.40 (1.40)	-2.68 6.41	Census

Source: "ECI" = Created by present author from the data of Election Commission of India. "Census" = Created by present author from data of the India Population Census 2011.

Note: An observation, namely sample unit, is the data of specifically aggregated and geographically continuous LACs, the boundary of which is exactly same as the boundary of a specifically aggregated set of geographically continuous tehsils.

* indicates that those samples are excluded which include Legislative Assembly constituencies where there was no candidate of the party concerned.

Tables 2.2 through 2.14 present results of WLSs. In all the WLSs, the Variance Inflation Factors (VIFs) are sufficiently small that they show no severe multicollinearity among independent variables in the WLSs. Party-wise analyses are presented next.

BJP

In the 2017 election, according to Table 2.2, people living in the more modern areas are apparently more likely to vote for the BJP. Regarding castes/communities, the BJP received fewer votes where more Muslims and more SCs people live. Furthermore, the BJP won more votes where more cultivators and agricultural labourers live. This is, in a sense, a static picture of the BJP support structure in 2017.

A somewhat different story is apparent when we examine the change of BJP vote percentage from 2012 to 2017 in Table 2.3 and that from 2014 to 2017 in Table 2.4. An analysis of the change in BJP vote percentages from 2012 to 2017 reveals that BJP vote percentage increased less in the areas where more Muslim people live, but it increased more in the areas where more cultivators live. The analysis of the change in BJP vote percentage from 2014 to 2017 shows that the BJP vote percentage increased more in the areas where more cultivators and more SCs people live. These analyses are not contradictory to what the CSDS survey data and other data show, which means that we can interpret these statistical results, by and large, without fear of ecological fallacy.

Based on the three tables, first, it is clear that most Muslims do not support BJP, which did not change from 2012 to 2017.

Second, SCs are, by and large, unlikely to support BJP in the 2017 elections. However, some sections of SCs people probably support BJP, which is understandable because the agricultural labourers, whose main portion consists of SC people, tend to support BJP.¹¹ Agricultural labourers are economically weakest

Table 2.2 BJP's support base in 2017 Legislative Assembly elections

<i>Dependent Variable = bjp2017</i>	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>Robust Std. Err.</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>P > t </i>	<i>Variance Inflation Factor (= VIF)</i>
vote2017p	0.0948	0.104	0.91	0.363	1.52
Muslim	-0.217	0.0502	-4.31	0.000	1.76
p_sc	-0.333	0.103	-3.22	0.002	1.51
main_cl_p	0.501	0.205	2.44	0.016	2.54
main_al_p	1.11	0.342	3.24	0.002	2.16
Mdnty	2.48	0.412	6.02	0.000	2.84
constant	37.4	5.49	6.80	0.000	

Weighted least squares with robust standard error: Weight variable = vote2017
 Number of obs = 127, $F(6, 120) = 9.13$, Prob > $F = 0.0000$, R -squared = 0.3231
 Source: Calculated by the author.

Table 2.3 Variables explaining the change in BJP vote percentage from 2012 to 2017 elections

<i>Dependent Variable = bjp17as12as</i>	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>Robust Std. Err.</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>P > t </i>	<i>Variance Inflation Factor (= VIF)</i>
votep17as12as	-0.196	0.280	-0.70	0.486	1.04
muslim	-0.178	0.0666	-2.67	0.009	1.35
p_sc	0.204	0.110	1.86	0.066	1.40
main_cl_p	0.738	0.254	2.91	0.004	2.21
main_al_p	-0.277	0.485	-0.57	0.569	2.16
Mdnty	0.797	0.529	1.51	0.135	2.69
constant	21.2	3.56	5.94	0.000	

Weighted least squares with robust standard error: Weight variable = vote2017
 Number of obs = 126, $F(6, 119) = 5.22$, Prob > $F = 0.0001$, R -squared = 0.2498
 Source: Calculated by the author.

Table 2.4 Variables explaining the change in BJP vote percentage from 2014 to 2017 elections

<i>Dependent Variable = bjp17as14ls</i>	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>Robust Std. Err.</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>P > t </i>	<i>Variance Inflation Factor (= VIF)</i>
votep17as14ls	-0.277	0.266	-1.04	0.300	1.22
muslim	-0.0616	0.0459	-1.34	0.182	1.41
p_sc	0.221	0.0969	2.28	0.024	1.40
main_cl_p	0.537	0.194	2.77	0.007	2.27
main_al_p	-0.209	0.459	-0.46	0.649	2.26
Mdnty	-0.452	0.376	-1.20	0.232	2.71
constant	-8.00	3.17	-2.52	0.013	

Weighted least squares with robust standard error: Weight variable = vote2017
 Number of obs = 125, $F(6, 118) = 10.79$, Prob > $F = 0.0000$, R -squared = 0.2457
 Source: Calculated by the author.

section in India. Therefore, it can be inferred that economically weaker SCs tend to support the BJP. Such economically weaker SCs might be, most probably, Dalits other than Jatav if we incorporate the evidence from the CSDS surveys.

Third, cultivators tend to support the BJP and tend to have increased their support constantly between 2012 and 2017. In light of the fact that major groups of cultivators consist of OBC farmers and that the CSDS surveys show that Yadav people firmly support the SP, probably non-Yadav OBCs have increased their support for the BJP continuously.¹²

Finally, it is interesting that people in modernized areas tend to support the BJP in 2017. However, no such tendency is clear in the percentage changes of BJP votes from 2012 to 2017 and 2014 to 2017. The signs of the variable “Mdnty” in

Table 2.3 are positive, whereas those of Table 2.4 are negative. Neither coefficient is statistically significant. Based on these facts, it can be inferred that modern life is a feature that accelerates change in the short run and that the accumulation of changes has contributed to the substantial increase in the BJP vote percentages in 2017. To assess this idea, an indicator of the fluidity of the BJP vote percentage based on the changes of BJP vote percentage from 2012 to 2014 and 2014 to 2017 is constructed as shown in Table 2.1 and regressed against independent variables. The result in Table 2.5 shows, with statistical significance of the 5% level, that modern life is likely to increase the fluidity of the BJP vote percentage between elections. Modern life has brought some fluidity into the people's support to the BJP, implying that the other parties have also been affected. That fluidity has cumulatively caused a substantial increase in the support to the BJP in the 2017 election.

BSP

Results show that the BSP's social base is still SCs in 2017 according to Table 2.6, which is presented in Figure 2.2. However, as discussed in the BJP analysis, the economically weaker SCs in the agricultural labourer category appear to be less supportive of the BSP. Cultivators, mainly consisting of OBCs, were less supportive of the BSP. Furthermore, people in modern areas are less likely to support the BSP. This pattern is a reverse of the case for the BJP, except for Muslims.

Related to the changes in the BSP vote percentages, the process of erosion of the BSP support base is apparent in Tables 2.7 and 2.8. Table 2.7 shows that, between 2012 and 2017, the BSP has lost the support of people in the more modern areas as well as the support of cultivators. Additionally, it is important that, according to Table 2.8, the BSP has tended to lose the support of SC people overall between 2014 and 2017. The erosion of SC support is a severe matter because SC people have been traditionally core supporters of the BSP. Furthermore, it

Table 2.5 Variables explaining the fluidity of BJP vote percentage between 2012, 2014 and 2017 elections

<i>Dependent Variable = vrbjp121417</i>	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>Robust Std. Err.</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>P > t</i>	<i>Variance Inflation Factor (= VIF)</i>
muslim	-0.124	0.0832	-1.50	0.138	1.34
p_sc	-0.0303	0.126	-0.24	0.811	1.39
main_cl_p	0.244	0.283	0.86	0.391	2.24
main_al_p	-0.0751	0.587	-0.13	0.898	2.18
Mdnty	1.20	0.602	2.00	0.048	2.70
constant	30.5	4.04	7.54	0.000	

Weighted least squares with robust standard error: Weight variable = vote2014ls

Number of obs = 124, $F(5, 118) = 2.03$, Prob > $F = 0.0790$, R -squared = 0.0793

Source: Calculated by the author.

Table 2.6 BSP's support base in 2017 Legislative Assembly elections

<i>Dependent Variable = bsp2017</i>	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>Robust Std. Err.</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>P > t </i>	<i>Variance Inflation Factor (= VIF)</i>
vote2017p	-0.00774	0.0842	-0.09	0.927	1.50
muslim	0.0364	0.0403	0.90	0.368	1.60
p_sc	0.473	0.0764	6.19	0.000	1.45
main_cl_p	-0.390	0.161	-2.42	0.017	2.31
main_al_p	-0.724	0.327	-2.21	0.029	2.09
Mdnty	-1.237	0.380	-3.26	0.001	2.76
constant	18.8	4.51	4.17	0.000	

Weighted least squares with robust standard error: Weight variable = vote2017

Number of obs = 143, $F(6, 136) = 9.45$, Prob > $F = 0.0000$, R -squared = 0.3016

Source: Calculated by the author.

Figure 2.2 Scheduled Castes population (%) and votes polled by BSP (%) in 2017 Legislative Assembly elections.

Source: Created by the author.

must be noted that the Muslim position vis-à-vis the BSP is not clear in spite of the BSP efforts to gain Muslim support.

SP in the 2012 and 2014 elections

In the case of the SP and the Congress Party, statistical analyses involving the 2017 Legislative Assembly election are difficult to conduct because both parties made electoral alliances against the BJP and its ally Apna Dal in the 2017 election. Therefore, statistical analyses are conducted only for the 2012 Legislative Assembly and the 2014 Lok Sabha elections.

Table 2.7 Variables explaining the change in BSP vote percentage from 2012 to 2017 elections

<i>Dependent Variable = bsp17as12as</i>	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>Robust Std. Err.</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>P > t</i>	<i>Variance Inflation Factor (= VIF)</i>
votep17as12as	0.0340	0.223	0.15	0.879	1.04
muslim	0.0504	0.0394	1.28	0.202	1.28
p_sc	0.0163	0.0888	0.18	0.855	1.37
main_cl_p	-0.588	0.137	-4.28	0.000	2.02
main_al_p	-0.371	0.281	-1.32	0.189	2.05
Mdnty	-1.82	0.413	-4.40	0.000	2.53
constant	1.42	2.24	0.63	0.528	

Weighted least squares with robust standard error: Weight variable = vote2017
 Number of obs = 143, $F(6, 136) = 4.52$, Prob > $F = 0.0003$, R -squared = 0.1837
 Source: Calculated by the author.

Table 2.8 Variables explaining the change in BSP vote percentage from 2014 to 2017 elections

<i>Dependent Variable = bsp17as14ls</i>	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>Robust Std. Err.</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>P > t</i>	<i>Variance Inflation Factor (= VIF)</i>
votep17as14ls	0.228	0.259	0.88	0.381	1.26
muslim	-0.00889	0.0603	-0.15	0.883	1.37
p_sc	-0.241	0.112	-2.15	0.033	1.37
main_cl_p	0.0765	0.172	0.44	0.658	2.07
main_al_p	-0.428	0.428	-1.00	0.319	2.17
Mdnty	0.0158	0.404	0.04	0.969	2.56
constant	8.38	3.36	2.49	0.014	

Weighted least squares with robust standard error: Weight variable = vote2017
 Number of obs = 143, $F(6, 136) = 1.42$, Prob > $F = 0.2109$, R -squared = 0.0759
 Source: Calculated by the author.

According to Table 2.9, the support base of the SP in 2014 is clearly cultivators among which the OBC population occupies a main portion. It is difficult for the SP to gain the support of SC groups, agricultural labourers, and people in modernized areas. Regarding the change between 2012 and 2014 when the SP vote percentage was reduced from 29.13% to 22.35%, the SP retained their votes among cultivators but lost votes where more SC people live, according to Table 2.10.

Regarding Muslims, who have been regarded as SP supporters,¹³ Table 2.9 cannot clarify whether they supported the SP. However, clues indicate their increasing support for the SP between the 2012 and 2014 elections, which is apparent in Table 2.10, although it is not statistically significant at the 5% level.

Table 2.9 SP's support base in 2014 Lok Sabha elections

<i>Dependent Variable = sp2014ls</i>	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>Robust Std. Err.</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>P > t</i>	<i>Variance Inflation Factor (= VIF)</i>
vote2014lsp	0.0429	0.216	0.20	0.843	1.55
Muslim	0.115	0.118	0.97	0.334	1.71
p_sc	-0.338	0.155	-2.18	0.031	1.43
main_cl_p	1.33	0.404	3.30	0.001	2.41
main_al_p	-1.40	0.503	-2.78	0.006	2.07
Mdnty	-1.74	0.727	-2.39	0.018	2.82
Constant	21.5	9.04	2.38	0.019	

Weighted least squares with robust standard error: Weight variable = vote2014ls
 Number of obs = 137, $F(6, 130) = 9.26$, Prob > $F = 0.0000$, R -squared = 0.3149
 Source: Calculated by the author.

Table 2.10 Variables explaining the change in SP vote percentage from 2012 to 2014 elections

<i>Dependent Variable = sp14ls12as</i>	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>Robust Std. Err.</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>P > t</i>	<i>Variance Inflation Factor (= VIF)</i>
vote2014ls12as	0.267	0.250	1.07	0.288	1.23
Muslim	0.143	0.0834	1.72	0.088	1.36
p_sc	-0.642	0.149	-4.31	0.000	1.37
main_cl_p	1.09	0.275	3.97	0.000	2.07
main_al_p	0.278	0.473	0.59	0.558	2.15
Mdnty	0.607	0.751	0.81	0.421	2.64
Constant	-5.50	4.62	-1.19	0.236	

Weighted least squares with robust standard error: Weight variable = vote2014ls
 Number of obs = 136, $F(6, 129) = 10.18$, Prob > $F = 0.0000$, R -squared = 0.2866
 Source: Calculated by author.

Congress in 2012 and 2014 elections

In view of Table 2.11, Congress gained more support among SCs and people in the modernized area in 2014. It reduced its support among agricultural labourers between 2012 and 2014 according to Table 2.12. These pictures of Congress, however, are less clear in view of the generally lower levels of statistical significance of coefficients.

SP and Congress in the 2014 and 2017 elections

As described already, in the 2017 election, the SP and Congress made an electoral alliance¹⁴ to cope with other parties, especially the BJP. Therefore, it is interesting to analyse the effects of the combination by examining the combined vote percentage of SP and Congress. Table 2.13 presents clearly that the SP and Congress

Table 2.11 Congress's support base in 2014 Lok Sabha elections

<i>Dependent Variable =</i> <i>inc2014ls</i>	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>Robust</i> <i>Std. Err.</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>P > t </i>	<i>Variance Inflation</i> <i>Factor (= VIF)</i>
vote2014lsp	-0.356	0.221	-1.62	0.109	1.34
muslim	0.150	0.0990	1.52	0.132	1.36
p_sc	0.472	0.225	2.09	0.039	1.51
main_cl_p	-0.0321	0.404	-0.08	0.937	2.37
main_al_p	0.826	0.558	1.48	0.141	1.97
Mdnty	1.79	0.72	2.47	0.015	2.18
constant	13.3	11.0	1.20	0.231	

Weighted least squares with robust standard error: Weight variable = vote2014ls
 Number of obs = 114, $F(6, 107) = 2.24$, Prob > $F = 0.0446$, R -squared = 0.1172
 Source: Calculated by the author.

Table 2.12 Variables explaining the change in Congress vote percentage from 2012 to 2014 elections

<i>Dependent Variable =</i> <i>inc14ls12as</i>	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>Robust</i> <i>Std. Err.</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>P > t </i>	<i>Variance Inflation</i> <i>Factor (= VIF)</i>
vote14ls12as	-1.06	0.651	-1.63	0.106	1.17
muslim	0.0724	0.103	0.70	0.484	1.24
p_sc	0.416	0.212	1.96	0.053	1.45
main_cl_p	-0.696	0.368	-1.89	0.061	2.02
main_al_p	-1.36	0.660	-2.06	0.042	2.23
Mdnty	-0.824	0.599	-1.38	0.172	2.14
constant	-3.52	4.94	-0.71	0.478	

Weighted least squares with robust standard error: Weight variable = vote2014ls
 Number of obs = 107, $F(6, 100) = 1.61$, Prob > $F = 0.1523$, R -squared = 0.1404
 Source: Calculated by author.

Table 2.13 SP and Congress joint support base in 2017 Legislative Assembly elections

<i>Dependent Variable =</i> <i>spinc2017</i>	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>Robust</i> <i>Std. Err.</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>P > t </i>	<i>Variance Inflation</i> <i>Factor (= VIF)</i>
vote2017p	-0.116	0.141	-0.83	0.410	1.51
muslim	0.249	0.0670	3.72	0.000	1.60
p_sc	0.110	0.101	1.09	0.280	1.44
main_cl_p	0.355	0.211	1.68	0.096	2.33
main_al_p	-0.380	0.359	-1.06	0.292	2.11
Mdnty	-0.102	0.519	-0.20	0.845	2.76
constant	27.2	6.54	4.16	0.000	

Weighted least squares with robust standard error: Weight variable = vote2017
 Number of obs = 142, $F(6, 135) = 4.56$, Prob > $F = 0.0003$, R -squared = 0.1541
 Source: Calculated by the author.

Figure 2.3 Muslim population (%) and votes polled by SP and Congress (%) in the 2017 Legislative Assembly elections.

Source: Created by the author.

Table 2.14 Variables explaining the change in SP and Congress joint vote percentage from 2014 to 2017 elections

<i>Dependent Variable = spinc17as14ls</i>	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>Robust Std. Err.</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>P > t </i>	<i>Variance Inflation Factor (= VIF)</i>
vote2017as14ls	0.110	0.353	0.31	0.755	1.27
muslim	0.0436	0.0629	0.69	0.490	1.37
p_sc	0.0735	0.151	0.49	0.626	1.36
main_cl_p	-0.546	0.225	-2.42	0.017	2.10
main_al_p	0.218	0.434	0.50	0.617	2.19
Mdnty	0.831	0.509	1.63	0.105	2.55
constant	-1.46	4.57	-0.32	0.749	

Weighted least squares with robust standard error: Weight variable = vote2017

Number of obs = 142, $F(6, 135) = 3.90$, Prob > $F = 0.0013$, R -squared = 0.1322

Source: Calculated by author.

alliance attracted Muslim in 2017, which is presented in Figure 2.3. It might be that Muslims perceived the SP and Congress combination to be the most appropriate force to cope with the BJP. However, such a positive effect of the combination is apparently reduced by the decreasing support of cultivators between 2014 and 2017 in view of Table 2.14. It is clear that many cultivators shifted their support to the BJP, if taking into account the preceding statistical analysis of the BJP's votes.

Concluding remarks

It can be said that the 2014 Lok Sabha election caused a drastic change in voters' support structure of the party system in UP, and that the 2017 election can fundamentally be viewed as a follow-up.

In the mid-2010s, support for the BJP increased in more modern or developed areas. Socio-economic modernization has certainly accelerated changes that have favoured the BJP. Additionally, it is most likely that the groups that tilted to the BJP were the relatively weaker sections among Dalits as well as cultivators consisting of OBCs other than the Yadavs. However, the traditional core castes/communities that supported the BSP, namely Jatav/Chamar, or the SP, namely Yadav, by and large, seem to have generally continued to support their respective parties, although to a lesser degree. The SP and Congress appeared to be the best combination that have elicited trust from Muslims against the BJP in the 2017 election.

Consequently, the new BJP government, led by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, owes its political support not only to the traditional support base of high castes but also to those people living in modernized areas, and those Hindu castes and cultivators who were marginalized by the previous BSP and SP regimes. The new BJP government owes its majoritarian support base to these heterogeneous social strata, except for Muslims. That is to say, the BJP depends on a 'heterogeneous majority', not a 'monolithic majority', in Hindu society. To maintain their support, therefore, the BJP government needs to make a few delicate policies.

First, the BJP government has to assign greater emphasis to its good governance and development agendas, as it had declared in its election manifesto. This would satisfy the heterogeneous social strata and would clarify the difference between the previous governments and the current BJP government. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's continued emphasis on good governance and development is a clear sign of this need. In September 2017, he released a white paper on the earlier government.¹⁵ It severely criticized the misrule of previous governments over the past 15 years, such as the mismanagement of government expenditures, delays, and corruption within government projects, namely, their poor development performance and misgovernance.

It goes without saying that the BJP government knows that its development and good governance agendas are key to maintaining a stable government and balancing various social groups because these concepts are comprehensive and appealing to heterogeneous social groups. The agendas overlap the image of the Modi government in the centre.

Second, the BJP government should conduct policies to strengthen the cohesiveness of its heterogeneous social support base, except for Muslims. Muslims are firmly behind the SP and Congress combination. For example, in April 2017, the BJP issued an order to remove the reservations in private medical colleges for candidates belonging to the SC, ST, and OBC categories. This order had already been decided by the previous SP government.¹⁶ Furthermore, the UP BJP is trying to woo Dalits and OBCs by re-creating new icons for these communities, such as Raja Suheldev, Rani Jhalkari Bai, and Lakhan Pasi, while simultaneously showing respect to icons like Ambedkar.¹⁷

In spite of the unmistakable necessity of the above policies and schemes, however, the basic trait of the Hindutva ideology of Yogi Adityanath's BJP government seems to pose some uncertainty regarding the choice of policies. Hindutva, if it is plainly biased in favour of high castes, is most likely to put a limitation on maintaining a delicate balance among heterogeneous castes/communities, or in promoting social amalgamation for the benefit of Hindutva, especially for Dalit people. An incident involving local officials insulting a section of the Dalit caste in Kushinagar district in May 2017,¹⁸ for example, elicited strong reactions from the Dalit people. This incident forced the chief minister to show a reconciliatory attitude toward Dalit communities.¹⁹ This example seems to show that the BJP cannot be in a position to impose the tyranny of a 'monolithic' majority, even on the Hindu society. However, positioning Hindutva against religious minorities, especially Muslims, could have the effect of consolidating the support of various Hindu castes or communities. This could contribute to the strengthening of the support bases among Hindus; however, it could also result in widespread law-and-order problems.

This inherent uncertainty concerning the Hindutva policy seems to have meant that the Yogi Adityanath government has been easily influenced by the policies of the central government. If Narendra Modi's government in the centre tilted toward Hindutva policies, this would accelerate the Hindutva policies of Yogi Adityanath's government.

Nevertheless, the first priority of the BJP UP government has to be socio-economic modernization through good governance and development. This is because, in view of the finding of this analysis, modernization would surely broaden the support bases of the BJP in UP. This would make it easier for the Yogi Adityanath government to adopt a stronger Hindutva policy.

Notes

- 1 "OBCs" is an administratively defined category of castes/communities that are socially and educationally backward, excluding Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (STs). The designation was created for affirmative action, such as reservation of government employments, and so on, for these peoples.
- 2 *Dalit* means "depressed class of people," which includes SCs and STs and others depending on the context. In this chapter, *Dalit* is used interchangeably with SC.
- 3 Although in the UP villages, Dalits were, by and large, under the pressure of dominant upper castes before the 2000s, their status seems to be improving gradually (Lieten and Srivastava 1999; Kapur et al. 2010). Some sections of Dalits, especially Chamar, were successful in raising their social status; the BSP clearly accelerated such process in the 2000s. Consequently, Chamar "*neta*" (leaders) emerged, although they were still few (Jeffrey et al. 2008).
- 4 Lokniti (2017). The survey was conducted from January 17 through January 23, 2017, among 6481 voters in 322 locations (polling stations) spread across 65 assembly constituencies.
- 5 *The Hindu*, May 26, 2009, "Why the Congress Did as Well as It Did." Original source is Centre for the Study of Developing Societies 2009, "National Election Survey 2009" (sample size: 2849).
- 6 *The Hindu*, May 28, 2014. According to the article, in January to March 2014, about 34% of people preferred Modi as the next Prime Minister, while only 15% preferred Rahul Gandhi of Congress. Regarding the campaign and strategy of the BJP and RSS, see Narayan (2014).

- 7 Ramakrishnan (2017) presents an illustrative example.
- 8 As described in the Delimitation of Parliamentary and Assembly Constituencies Order, 2008.
- 9 For example, it is virtually impossible to apply the method of instrumental variables because of the difficulty of finding appropriate instrumental variables.
- 10 In both cases, $n = 124$ after excluding the sample units involving BJP-vacancy LACs.
- 11 Regarding this point, the informal welfare provision of BJP-related organizations to poorer people might play an important role in rural areas. In this connection, see important work by Thachil (2014).
- 12 The strategy of BJP to divide the OBCs and get support of non-Yadav OBCs can be seen much before the 2010s. See, for example, Zérinini (2009: 58–63).
- 13 Muslims do not seem to vote en bloc for a particular party to defeat the BJP. By and large, Muslims seem to be anti-BJP (Verma and Gupta 2016).
- 14 The adjustment was not complete. SP fielded 311 candidates while Congress fielded 114 candidates. There were 25 overlapping constituencies and 3 constituencies with no candidates from both parties. The coalition is not up to the expectation of both parties (Farooqui and Sridharan 2017).
- 15 “White Paper Released by Yogi Adityanath Targets ‘Misrule’ by SP, BSP Govts,” *Hindustan Times*, September 18, 2017, <http://www.hindustantimes.com/lucknow/white-paper-released-by-yogi-adityanath-targets-misrule-by-sp-bsp-govts/story-NfjFRxPaCRqZLeecgEaoMO.html>.
- 16 *India Today*, April 13, 2017, <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/education/story/yogi-adityanath/1/928050.html>.
- 17 *Hindustan Times*, June 13, 2017, “New Dalit Icons Emerging in Uttar Pradesh as BJP Tightens Its Reins,” <http://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/new-dalit-icons-are-emerging-in-up-as-the-bjp-tightens-its-reigns-in-up/story-udbF7fXZHMhH5aWk3WzrhK.html>.
- 18 People belonging to a Scheduled Caste have alleged that they were given soap and shampoo by the local administration ahead of a visit by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. They were asked to take baths and clean up properly before attending a function in Kushinagar. *NDTV*, May 28, 2017, <https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/given-soap-told-to-take-bath-before-yogi-adityanath-visit-say-dalits-in-uttar-pradesh-kushinagar-1704806>.
- 19 In a conciliatory move following caste tensions, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on June 14, 2017, had lunch with Dalits and unveiled a statue of B. R. Ambedkar in Gorakhpur. *Economic Times*, June 14, 2017, <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/uttar-pradesh-cm-yogi-adityanath-lunches-with-dalits-after-caste-tensions/articleshow/59149342.cms>.

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