

'We do politics so we can change politics': communication strategies and practices in the Aam Aadmi Party's institutionalization process

Divya Siddarth , Roshan Shankar & Joyojeet Pal

To cite this article: Divya Siddarth , Roshan Shankar & Joyojeet Pal (2021): 'We do politics so we can change politics': communication strategies and practices in the Aam Aadmi Party's institutionalization process, Information, Communication & Society, DOI: [10.1080/1369118X.2020.1856910](https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2020.1856910)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2020.1856910>



Published online: 14 Feb 2021.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 68



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)



'We do politics so we can change politics': communication strategies and practices in the Aam Aadmi Party's institutionalization process

Divya Siddarth^a, Roshan Shankar^b and Joyojeet Pal^a

^aMicrosoft Research, Bengaluru, India; ^bFreelance Researcher, Delhi, India

ABSTRACT

This decade has marked a rise in social movement-originating political parties, many of which have gained considerable political power and achieved surprising electoral success. In doing so, these parties have challenged traditional definitions and conceptualizations of party institutionalization. One such party is the Aam Aadmi Party in India, formed in the wake of the massively viral 2011 India Against Corruption (IAC) movement. Through interviews and observations, as well as digital artefact analysis, we trace the process of the Aam Aadmi Party's institutionalization through an analysis of its media and communication practices. We argue that party workers' drive to institutionalize into a durable electoral force has pushed AAP into projecting contradictory images and embracing conflicting narratives, both online and offline. However, the durability of the party and recent electoral successes point to the ways AAP can nonetheless inform conceptions of institutionalization.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 28 September 2019
Accepted 18 November 2020

KEYWORDS

Movement parties; social media; party institutionalization; reification

Introduction

In 2013, Arvind Kejriwal, the head of the nascent Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), spoke to a reporter at the *New Yorker* about transitioning from being one of the leaders of a mass movement in India to being the leader of an upstart political party in the nation's capital. He maintained that the two roles were, at their core, the same. 'The next election,' he said, 'will be a revolution'. And indeed, the following elections did mark a turning point for Indian politics, both in the national capital of Delhi and around the country.

The meteoric rise and subsequent mixed fortunes of AAP provides a rich case study for understanding the process, framing, and context of movement party institutionalization. The party was formed in the wake of the 2011 India Against Corruption (IAC) movement, which brought hundreds of thousands of Indians to the streets in urban centers around the country, to raise their voices in a campaign against government corruption. Driven by a massively viral social media campaign, the movement saw significant spontaneous mobilization, particularly in the national capital of Delhi (Eipe et al., 2012). Yet, it failed to achieve its stated aim of establishing a *jan lokpal* (people's ombudsman) to investigate state corruption. Amid skepticism, a group of leaders from the thus

far loosely organized movement formed a political party – the Aam Aadmi Party, or Common Man’s Party.

AAP ran in the Delhi elections on an anti-corruption platform in 2013. The party shocked the political system by forming a minority government after its very first poll contest, and by almost as dramatically resigning from that government in less than two months, a decision that was widely criticized and led to major losses in the 2014 general elections. However, this seemingly catastrophic resignation would eventually be vindicated, as AAP won a re-election by landslide in 2015, capturing 67 out of 70 seats in the nation’s capital. This marked a stunning upset, particularly given that the opposition campaign was spearheaded by Narendra Modi, the hugely popular, recently elected prime minister (Bornstein & Sharma, 2016; Jaffrelot, 2015). Since then, the party has had stops and starts in its momentum, winning just one seat across the 40 it contested in the 2019 national elections, but again sweeping the Delhi elections in 2020, with 62 seats out of 70 – indicating a persistent split between its strength in the capital city and its performance across the rest of the country. Further, all of this has occurred during a particularly tumultuous decade in Indian politics, seeing both the unprecedented rise of the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the steep decline of the traditionally dominant Indian National Congress (INC).

From its victory in 2013, which was heralded as a ‘new era in Indian politics’, to its national losses in 2019 and Delhi success in 2020, AAP has evolved, both ideologically, in terms of its positioning in the political spectrum, and structurally, as an organization seeking its place in the political system of India. In this process of institutionalization, the party’s internal and external narratives, particularly in the digital sphere, has morphed from that of a social movement party, to a political party with social movement origins, to an uneasy mix of political institution, personalistic political party, and self-identified political ‘outsider’.

In this paper, we analyze aspects of those changes, examining the institutionalization of AAP from its social movement origins to its current place in the Indian political system. First, we examine and define party institutionalization, particularly with regards to movement parties and personalistic parties. Then, we apply this definition to a case study of AAP, focusing on the strategies used to construct and communicate the party’s institutionalization. We draw from 23 interviews with activists, journalists, party workers, and party leaders, supplemented with an analysis of party documents.

This piece first serves to complicate the current understanding of social movements and movement parties in the Indian context, where existing literature currently focuses either on India’s two main national parties or on caste – or religion-based regional parties (DeSouza, 2006; Ziegfeld, 2012). Secondly, we qualitatively map the practices and processes that construct digitally mediated voter outreach in emerging democracies more generally. Lastly, this study deepens scholarly approaches to understanding institutionalization in the context of early-stage personalistic movement parties.

Understanding party institutionalization

Personalistic and movement party institutionalization

We ground our analysis in an understanding of the Aam Aadmi Party as a movement party with personalistic tendencies. *Movement parties* are coalitions of political activists

who emanate from social movements and try to apply the strategic practice of social movements in the area of party competition (Kitschelt, 2006). AAP, which was formed by leaders of the ‘India Against Corruption’ movement in the wake of protests and mass mobilization, and carried forward movement tactics into electioneering, falls into this category (Leichty et al., 2016).

Personalistic parties are defined as ‘strongly related to or even dependent on the figure of political leaders’ (Musella, 2015). AAP is in an interesting position with regards to this definition. Often, personalistic movement parties will be led by the central figure of the movement (Mossige, 2009), which in this case would be Anna Hazare. However, Hazare was against the formation of a political party from the start, and actively distanced himself from AAP (Leichty et al., 2016). Instead, the current leader of the party and another major figure in the movement, Arvind Kejriwal, formed AAP, along with several prominent leaders, most of whom were well-known by the public and the media during the IAC movement (Sengupta, 2012). Over the next few years, Kejriwal, himself a charismatic figure and author of a bestselling book on governance, *Swaraj* (self-governance), slowly consolidated power and support within AAP. This process came to a head in 2015, when several of the other prominent leaders and party officials were ousted for ‘anti-party activities’ (Sriram, 2015). This left Kejriwal as the last major public figure associated with the party’s movement origins and as the single head of AAP, crystallizing AAP as a personalistic party centered around his leadership (Subrahmaniam, 2015).

Approaches to institutionalization

Party institutionalization at large is crucial to understanding the development and success of political parties, party systems, and democracy at large (Kuenzi & Lambright, 2001; Mainwaring & Scully, 1995; Mainwaring & Torcal, 2006); as such, it has been theorized extensively. This paper does not provide an exhaustive summary of the literature; rather, we aim to present an operational definition of party institutionalization in the context of personalistic movement parties, considering institutionalization as a multidimensional and sequenced process (Weissenbach & Bukow, 2019).

One of the first conceptualizations of party institutionalization is in Panebianco’s *Political Parties*, which states that a party is institutionalized ‘when it becomes valuable in and of itself.’ Panebianco provides two scales by which this can be measured: *autonomy* – the degree of autonomy in decision-making between a party and its external environment, and between a party and its own leader, and *systemness* – the internal organization and composition of the party (Panebianco, 1988).

There have been several critiques of this definition for being imprecise in general, and particularly lacking explanatory power in the cases of personalistic parties, movement parties, and other nontraditional political formations (Randall & Svåsand, 2002; Rose & Mackie, 1988). The necessary dimension of internal autonomy emerged as problematic: under this, personalistic, charismatic parties, which are not autonomous from their leader, cannot become institutionalized (Pedahzur & Brichta, 2002). For example, far-right charismatic parties, such as the National Front in France and the Freedom Party of Austria, have attained substantial electoral support and continuous legislative representation, despite decisions being very much leader-driven (Pedahzur & Brichta, 2002). In fact, even parties which score poorly on metrics of both autonomy and

systemness, such as, the Justicialist Party in Argentina and the Party of the Democratic Revolution in Mexico, have proved remarkably resilient despite internal turmoil (Mosige, 2009).

Thus, initial extensions of Panebianco's definition focused on internal and external measures of reification, as well as adaptability and durability, holding that a party must have some measure of coherence, flexibility, and electoral success to be considered institutionalized (Harmel & Svåsand, 1993; Rose & Mackie, 1988). Our analysis is rooted in a review of these extensions, formalized in the theory of institutionalization laid out by Harmel et al. (2016), which considers institutionalization along three distinct (and not necessarily co-occurring) dimensions:

- (a) internal, measured by internal decision-making routinization and ability to persist after current leadership;
- (b) external, measured by external perception that the party is an established, lasting 'institution'; and
- (c) objective, measured by adaptability and longevity.

However, we must adapt this framework to account for the current case of upstart 'technopopulist parties', such as AAP, which are a fairly new phenomenon and have not yet been fully theorized in the space (Bickerton, 2018). First, the focus on routinization and decision-making processes as internal measures and 'perceived lasting power' as an external measure does not adequately capture the need for narrative and communicative cohesion that is core to media-centric movement parties such as AAP (Udupa, 2014). Thus, we add measures of internal and external *reification*, measured by cohesion around narrative, purpose, and presence, in both internal party identity and in the mind of the public and external actors (Basedau & Stroh, 2008; Levitsky, 1998). Second, many of the objective measures of longevity that have been proposed, including participation in three national elections (Rose & Mackie, 1988), ability to transcend initial founding generation of leadership (Randall & Svåsand, 2002), electoral and legislative stability (Pedahzur & Brichta, 2002), and criteria around name changes and organizational discontinuities (Janda, 1980), do not form an instructive basis to evaluate recent parties such as AAP. We thus focus specifically on outlined aspects of adaptability to environmental change, as well as shorter-term electoral success and base-building (Arter & Kestilä-Kekkonen, 2014), as the appropriate objective measures.

Studies of movement parties

While the institutionalization process of movement parties has not been studied in depth, there have been significant contributions. For example, Deseriis investigated how the technopolitical cultures of the Pirate Party of Germany and the Italian 5-Star Movement (M5S), both digital movement parties, have influenced decision-making and routinization processes, finding that they often fall short of promises of radical democratic functioning (Deseriis, 2019). These organizational trends have also been studied in the context of Podemos and the 15M movement, with regards to the use of technology

platforms as participatory, democratic spaces, and how this affects movement functioning (Bennett, 2012; Kouki & González, 2018; Micó & Casero-Ripollés, 2014).

M5S forms a particularly instructive comparative case study to AAP, as one of the most evident examples of how a digital movement party may seem to institutionalize quickly on the dimension of objective electoral success, despite potential contradictions, and then lose these gains due to failures on the internal and external measures. The party began as strongly leader-centric (Musella, 2015; Turner, 2013), but also pushed claims of internal democracy and non-hierarchical functioning on its digital and social platforms, operating initially as ‘a pyramid truncated in the middle’ (Vignati, 2015), with consistent tensions between grassroots participation and centralized control. The party has also promoted conflicting and confused policy proposals, and is still in search of a clear ideological definition (Manucci & Amsler, 2018). Despite this lack of internal and external reification, M5S was electorally successful in both the 2013 and 2018 elections, with support from a diverse set of voters (Corbetta et al., 2018). However, this success was short-lived, with major vote losses in the 2019 elections and the party currently in disarray (Horowitz, 2020). This shows not only the possibility of significant variation *between* the three described dimensions, particularly for upstart movement parties, but also highlights the need for cohesion *across* these three dimensions for successful institutionalization.

There has been considerable study of the social media use and communication practices of social movements and of political parties. Notably, Garrett diagrammed new ICT use in movements, providing a pre-social media framework for the study of digital and media-involved activism (Kelly Garrett, 2006). Extending this, Bennett put forth the theory of ‘connective action’, the light-touch, low-risk activist actions encouraged by social media (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012), and Coretti et. al. diagrammed the centralization and fragmentation that occurs due to the erosion of collective identity on social media (Coretti & Pica, 2015). On the other hand, it has also been shown that social media involvement in a movement is intertwined with on-ground action, even of unaffiliated audiences (Mercea, 2012), and can be used to forecast onsite protest (Bastos et al., 2015). However, the implications for these trends on digital movement parties requires more systematic analysis, particularly with regards to the external and communicative practices of these parties as they institutionalize, and situated in emerging democracies, in which voter coalitions are often more fluid (Mainwaring & Torcal, 2006).

The Aam Aadmi party: the internal narrative

Background

First, we briefly outline AAP’s remarkable trajectory, from its beginnings in November 2012 to the present (Kumar, 2019; Leichty et al., 2016). In December 2013, one year after its formation, AAP won 28 out of 70 state legislature seats in the Delhi elections, forming a coalition government with INC, with Kejriwal as Chief Minister. However, Kejriwal resigned from government in February 2014, and soon after, in May, AAP won only four out of the 432 seats across India; Narendra Modi, and the BJP, were elected to the central government.

Then, in a huge upset, AAP won 67 out of 70 state legislature seats in the Delhi elections in February 2015, and formed the government. Soon after, Arvind Kejriwal expelled top AAP leaders for ‘anti-party activities’ and centralized power. However, this victory was not sustained nationwide, and in April 2017, AAP won zero seats in Goa and 20 seats in Punjab during assembly elections. This was followed by more major losses in June 2019, when AAP contested 40 seats in the Indian national election and lost 39. Finally, in February 2020, AAP again swept the Delhi election, winning 62 out of 70 contested seats.

Previous research on the party has examined AAP’s election successes and failures, its policies, and its relationships to other parties (Diwakar, 2016; Gianolla, 2017). There has also been some study, largely quantitative, of AAP’s digital media presence, with Leichty et al. determining that AAP was able to appeal on Twitter to audience members’ collective identities and grievances against corruption (Leichty et al., 2016; Udupa, 2014). Most of these studies investigate AAP’s conceptual role in the Indian socio-political sphere or focus on quantitative analysis, rather than subjectively investigating the party’s narrative and structural evolution. We address this lacuna in the present study.

Methods

Our aim was to understand the evolution of AAP as a movement party *through the experiences* of the flesh-and-blood party workers, leaders, and strategists who together constructed this evolution. Thus, data collection and analysis were targeted to highlight the various narrative intentions, strategies, and implementations that together constitute AAP’s institutionalization process.

To this end, the primary researcher conducted 23 semi-structured interviews with a range of participants affiliated with or adjacent to the party and the IAC movement, as well as a total of 60 h of observation. Semi-structured interviews were chosen over unstructured interviews to enable us to understand how participants described their experiences of the party’s evolution from a range of vantage points. Semi-structured interviews enable the researcher to explore a topics they believe are core to their investigation, ensuring some consistency across interviewees, whilst at the same time giving the interviewees freedom to highlight issues and experiences which are important to them (Silverman, 2005). In this case, participants were asked about when and why they joined AAP, the extent of their involvement in the IAC movement, online and offline communication strategies, their views on AAP’s place in the political establishment, and their perspectives on AAP’s trajectory. We further asked participants to evaluate the effectiveness of AAP’s communication strategies and to discuss the criteria by which they determined this effectiveness, as in Rohlinger et al. (Rohlinger & Bunnage, 2015).

All interviews were conducted from September 2018 to February 2019 in batches, alongside the transcript analysis process. Of the total of 23 interviews conducted, 15 were in Delhi, 2 were in Chennai, and 6 were via telephone or Skype. Three journalists, five activists, three party canvassers, and twelve party leaders and strategists at a variety of levels were interviewed (Table 1). Interviewees were chosen based on proximity to party communication strategy and decisions, and to cover the range of party activities. Other than the party canvassers, who were interviewed as a group and spoke a combination of

Table 1. Interviewee information.

Interviewee category	Number of interviews	Interviewee roles
Journalists (J)	3	Journalists who covered AAP from 2013 to 2017
Activists (A)	5	IAC activists, three no longer involved with AAP, two in advisory roles
Party leadership (L)	3	AAP Delhi co-conveners (highest position in Delhi wing of the party), two from 2013 to 2017 and one from 2013-present
On-ground heads (H)	3	AAP Operational heads for district campaigns (each in charge of 1–4 of Delhi's eleven districts, two later in charge of districts in Punjab), two from 2013 to 2015, one from 2018
Party canvassers (C)	3	On-ground canvassers for AAP (lowest-level party operatives), all from 2014 to present
Digital strategy (S)	3	Two IAC and AAP social media heads from 2012 to present; one AAP digital messaging strategist from 2015 to 2018
Media strategy (M)	3	One AAP media strategy coordinator from 2013 to 2016; two media narrative strategists from IAC, one of whom also worked with AAP from 2013 to 2017

Hindi and English, all interviews were individual and in English. Interviews ranged in time from thirty minutes to three hours, with an average of 75 min. All interviews were translated when needed and transcribed verbatim. It was clear from the initial round of interviews that most stakeholders in the party clearly demarcated the party's progress around key electoral battles from 2013 to 2016, based on which we analyzed changes around these temporal lines.

Observation was conducted in Delhi, for one week each in September 2018, December 2018, and January 2019; data collected consisted of field notes and audio recordings. The aim was to inform the context of analysis, and develop a background understanding of the lived practices and processes of the party leaders and strategists (Silverman, 2005). The primary researcher shadowed two party strategists as they conducted internal meetings and events and discussed public-facing media and communication strategies, largely located in five different Delhi locations (two party-affiliated houses, three tea shops). This allowed the researcher to observe first-hand how party narratives were constructed, and how internal and external structures were navigated by various party affiliates. The process was coordinated by one of the paper authors, who was associated with the party and its functionaries through work with the Delhi government.

During the analysis process, the primary researcher assigned descriptive codes by hand, and thematic and descriptive discussions were held stepwise with the research team. Analyses were built on inductive methods of applied thematic analysis, designed for sensemaking in this semi-structured approach with both interviews and document-based artefacts (Guest et al., 2012). Specifically, we coded for aspects of electoral success, voter targeting and base construction, internal and external organizational structure, and internal and external narrative reification, all of which are associated with notions of institutionalization. We stopped conducting interviews once we confirmed that codes on these key themes had reached saturation and were being repeated consistently (Table 2).

Concurrently, we performed an in-depth discursive analysis of key internal and external-facing party documents, identifying and coding the patterns present (Guest et al., 2012). These documents were sampled based on their relevance to the themes that emerged from the interviews, and provided a second angle of inquiry regarding the

Table 2. Thematic distribution among interviews.

Theme	Interviewee mentions	Proportion mentioned
Theme 1: Desire to become an established political party	L1, L2, H1, H2, C1, C2, C3, S1, S2, S4, M1, M2	12 / 23
Theme 2: Personalization around Kejriwal / Kejriwal-centric messaging	J1, J3, A1, A2, A3, H1, S1, S2, M1, M2	10 / 23
Theme 3: Pulling together disparate voter bases into a coalition	A2, L1, L3, H1, H2, S1, S2, M1, M3	9 / 23
Theme 4: Anti-corruption centric messaging	A3, A4, L1, L2, H2, C1, C2, S2, S4, M1, M2	11 / 23

institutionalization process, allowing the research team to supplement subjective, post-hoc interview data with specific illustrative snapshots of the party's evolution.

Four main themes were identified: the desire to become established (e.g., the need for consistent electoral success, hopes and plans for national expansion), personalization (e.g., the primacy of Kejriwal-centric messaging and narratives), coalition-building (e.g., desire to remain outside of identity-based parties, group-targeted messaging), and the IAC / anti-corruption narrative (e.g., external messaging focused on IAC, internal discussions around party purpose and identity). In the remainder of the paper, we describe these main themes and illustrate them with quotations from the interviews and an analysis of party documents.

Findings

Our participants unilaterally described AAP's current goal as that of becoming an established, consistent, and stable political party, and the need to communicate this clearly. *'We are here to win elections, after all. That is how we can change things. We are not here to just say we are the good guys ... We are here to win.'* (L2), as one senior party official put it, echoing similar quotes heard in many interviews. This shows the move to an institutionalist standing, nested in which is a departure from the discourse and tone of AAP's social movement origins and *'activist heart'* (C1), with electoral success and stability now the ultimate goal.

'No, Arvind is the party' (H1)

Participants were clear about the outsize role that AAP's leader, Arvind Kejriwal, played, particularly in being the face of external strategy and communication. As one-party strategist put it, *'See, people like me are triggered by Swaraj (self-rule, independence), ok. Then there are many others, voters, who are triggered by Arvind's face only.'* (M1).

This points to a feeling, even within the party, that party members, volunteers, and voters support AAP in large part due to Kejriwal's charismatic leadership, rather than due to AAP's ideology, which was arguably crucial for the early electoral successes of the party. Many strategists pragmatically took advantage of this perception, creating digital artefacts with 'Arvind's face' prominently featured, making billboards that were centered on Kejriwal, and linking AAP's narrative to Kejriwal's at every opportunity.

Thus, when AAP was losing support, after resigning from the Delhi government in 2013 and a disastrous 2014 national and municipal election, actions that were viewed as the intransigence of Kejriwal, the natural solution proposed by workers was still to

centralize messaging around their leader, and to subsume the party narrative under its leader's story and promises.

In 2014 we had lost some credibility – two things were troubling the brand. One was ... that you leave government when we gave it to you ... Second thing, Arvind was more loved than the party. 15 points more. So instead of going with AAP messaging, we said no – Paanch saal Kejriwal (Kejriwal for 5 years). That's what people want. On social media, on ground, we even made a song, everywhere. And we won. – H2

The idea that the party would build credibility through this practice points to the role of Kejriwal in legitimizing AAP's electoral success in the political sphere. This party worker draws a comparison between two possible types of messaging – 'AAP' messaging and Kejriwal messaging and believes that the messaging that will resonate best with AAP's voters will be around the party leader. The slogan decided upon by the party – 5 years of Kejriwal! – flooded their digital properties as well as their on-ground rallies, becoming their rhetorical identity, and the worker credits this with the sweep victory in 2015. The fact that the nation had just experienced a successful, massively personality-centric digital campaign (from a party that is typically ideologically driven), in the election of Narendra Modi (Jaffrelet, 2015; Pal, 2015), signaled an important change in the way Indian voters were looking at elections, particularly online. This clearly influenced the decision to bring Kejriwal to the fore, with one strategist explaining that social media posts and volunteer rhetoric was targeted to potential voters by drawing a clear, personalistic distinction, '*We tried to say, subtly, you want Modi for PM, he won't solve your Delhi problems, so take Arvind for CM*' (M2).

The strategic decisions made to centralize both communication and messaging around Kejriwal at this stage is very clearly seen in the progression of AAP's election manifesto, from 2013, 2014, and 2015.

The 2013 manifesto (Figure 1) distinctly characterizes AAP as a social movement-based party, immediately contextualizing it in the 'struggles of Ramlila Maidan and Jantar Mantar', the two main protest venues of the IAC movement in Delhi. The party is positioned as 'not just another party', but instead a transformative force, ready to bend the government to the will of the people. The first promise on this manifesto is the implementation of the Lokpal bill, which was the goal of the IAC movement. There is no mention of either Kejriwal or of any other party leaders, and the agency is given to AAP as an entity and to 'the people', who are consistently mentioned as the leaders of this movement.

Aesthetically, we see the change in the party's branding in 2014 (Figure 2), as messaging becomes more visually pleasing and professionalized. However, the background image, of a crowd of 'common people' holding up AAP's symbol (the broom), still evokes viral images and rhetoric shared during the IAC movement. The first page of the manifesto, which can be compared to the 2013 image, lists 'martyrs', who have 'sacrificed their lives to free the nation', including Gandhi, Bhagat Singh, and others who died during the Independence struggle. The manifesto then implies that these martyrs' dream of freedom can only continue if AAP is elected to power. While these sentiments are similar to the previous manifesto – the sentence on 'Ramlila Maidan and Jantar Mantar' is copied exactly – the drama and intensity of the language is heightened. This manifesto paints AAP as a crusading, revolutionary party, tying it to other revolutionaries in India's history.

AAM AADMI PARTY

DELHI ELECTION MANIFESTO 2013

SUMMARY

1. WHY VOTE FOR THE 'AAM AADMI PARTY'?

Elections happen every five years, but a chance to change the country is a rare occurrence. The upcoming Delhi elections, to be held on the 4th of December, present one such unique opportunity. This is not merely an opportunity to change the party in power in Delhi, this is a moment to transform the politics of India. The possibility of Swaraj is knocking at doors of Delhi. If this electoral battle is won in Delhi, it would open the whole country to the winds of change. You hold the key to the future of this country...

The announcement of elections is accompanied by the rituals that have come to define today's electoral politics. Ruling parties make untruthful and exaggerated claims. Election manifestoes are released, which are a collection of false promises; both the readers and the writers of these documents are aware of the untruthfulness and the insignificance of these promises. In these elections, there is not one, but two ruling parties. While Congress has been holding the reins of the Delhi government for 15 years, BJP has been in power in the MCD for the past 7 years. Both parties are hand-in-glove and share the fruits of power. The result lies before you/

The Aam Aadmi Party is not just another party. It is a party that has arisen from the struggles of Ramlila Maidan and Jantar Mantar. It is a party that is not here merely to fight elections, it is here to change the rules of the game. It is here to rewrite the politics of this country, it is here to transform the relationship between the government and the people, it here to make the government truly 'of the people'. It is a party that brings with it the perspective of the common women and men of this country; it is a party that wants to bring power back into the hands of the people.

2. BRINGING AN END TO CORRUPTION IN DELHI

2.1 Delhi Jan Lokpal Bill

The Aam Aadmi Party is committed to the passing the Delhi Jan Lokpal Bill within 15 days of coming to power. This would model the Lokayukta along the lines of the Jan Lokpal Bill. The provisions of this law include:

- i. All public officials (including the Chief Minister, Ministers and MLAs) shall fall within the purview of the investigation of the Lokayukta
- ii. Any public official found guilty of corruption would be removed from their jobs, sent to prison and their property confiscated
- iii. Time bound investigation and punishment in cases of corruption

Figure 1. AAP 2013 manifesto, first page.

In the 2015 manifesto (Figure 3), the cover is almost entirely taken over with a picture of Kejriwal. This reflects the strategist's perceptions that, after the 2014 losses, messaging should focus not on the social movement or policy aspect of AAP, but on its charismatic and popular leader. On the first page, the dramatic rhetoric of the 2014 manifesto has been replaced with a pragmatic summary of AAP's achievements in its 49 days in office in 2013, and an explanation of the Delhi Dialogues, a people-centric, partly online process through which AAP crowdsourced its manifesto. This process is painted in contrast to the opposition political parties, Congress and the BJP, rather than as evidence of a people's movement. Callbacks to AAP's origins

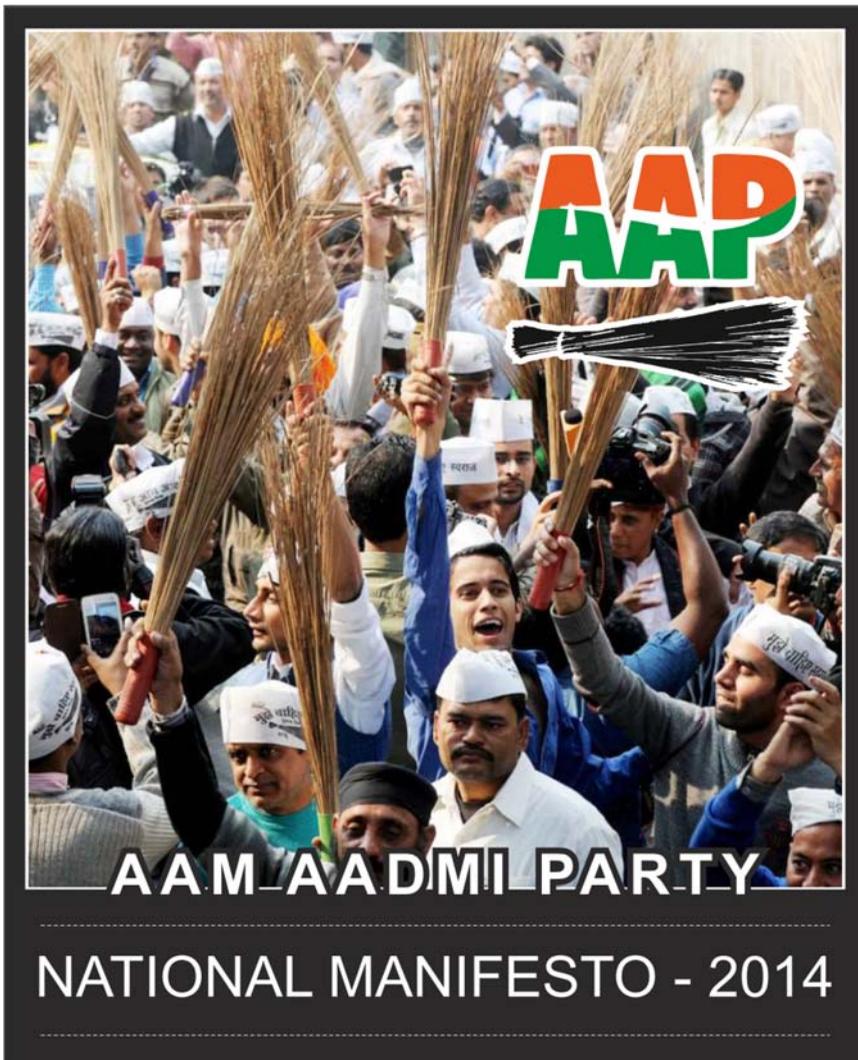


Figure 2. AAP 2014 manifesto, first page.

are far more subdued, and while Kejriwal is referred to as ‘fearless, honest, and clean’ in the first sentence of the manifesto, there is no direct mention of the IAC movement.

The 2013 and 2015 manifesto are for Delhi elections, whereas the 2014 manifesto was for national elections, possibly influencing the content and aesthetic choices. However, the clear progression in aesthetic, from the basic, text-only 2013 manifesto, to the energized crowd in the 2014 manifesto, to a smiling Kejriwal in the 2015 manifesto, as well as the transition in content, from that of a movement to a revolutionary political party to a more typical opposition party, mirrors AAP’s trajectory in the electoral space, and tracks the increasing centrality of Kejriwal as leader, symbol, and preacher for the party.

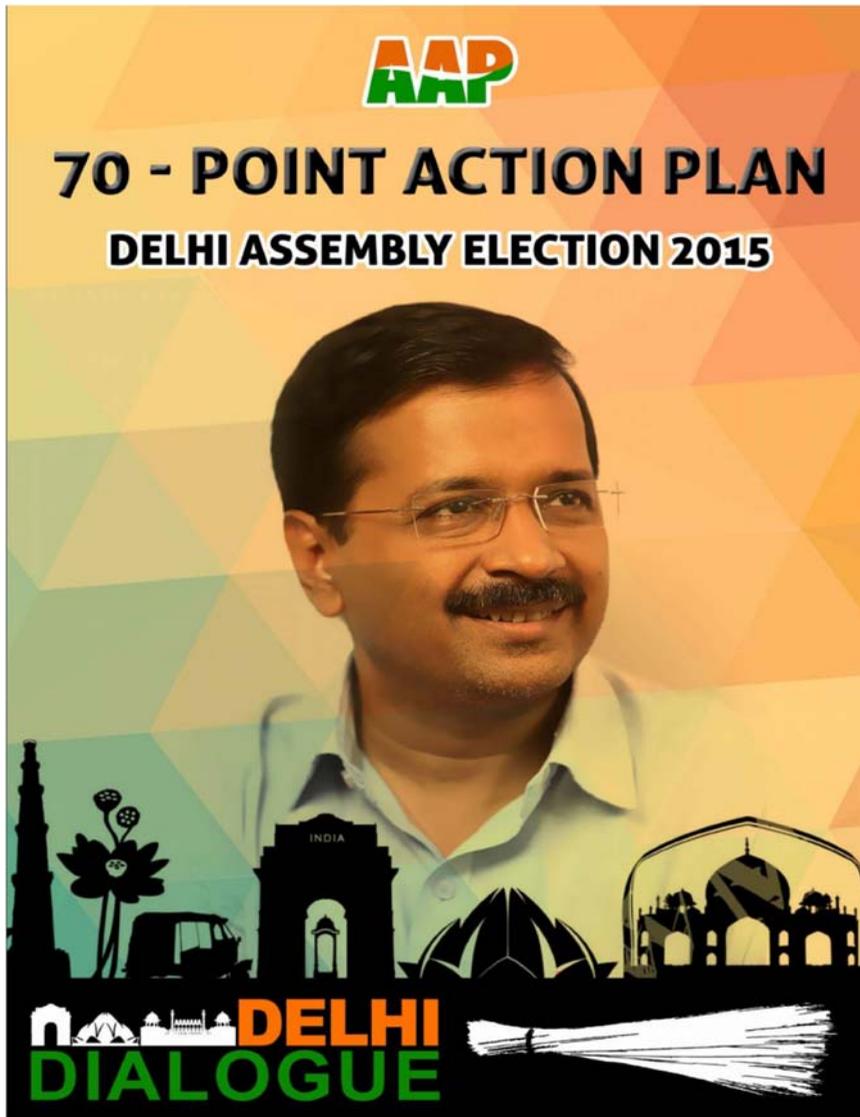


Figure 3. AAP 2015 manifesto, first page.

'Different things for different people' (S2)

AAP's media strategists spoke about trying to create a new, winning coalition in the urban center of Delhi, bringing together groups into a nontraditional voter base. The India Against Corruption movement was, at its core, a middle-class movement (Sitapati, 2011), but AAP has attempted to buttress this core group of support with outreach to a range of other target groups without falling into the identity-based voting model employed by many other Indian political parties (Chhibber & Verma, 2019). During its first two campaigns, AAP was careful to avoid overt calls to caste or religion, and mentioned class only implicitly, through the broom-and-muffler branding as well as, of course, in the name of the party itself. However, the attempt to reach out to marginalized

urban populations was clear in both its branding and its election promises in 2015, which, while never explicitly calling out to caste, aimed to balanced welfarist populism alongside a technocratic justification to power (Tripathy, 2017) (Figure 4).

So, 70% of Delhi is Hindi speaking. But writing about WiFi in Hindi is something that no one understands. That content has to go out in English, has to have more beautiful graphics, on social media. That would not attract anyone from some unauthorized colony, it doesn't solve their problem ... But ... it looks futuristic. Similarly, with women ... Specific promises for specific demographics, specific geographies ... we are different things, for different people, that's the way we can win. – S1

This type of messaging is particularly common on AAP's social media pages. The promises in Figure 5 – degree, income, WiFi, governance via phone, support for women entrepreneurs – are atypical for Indian political parties, and highlight the piecemeal nature of AAP's coalition. In the quote above, the campaigner speaks about trying to appeal to these distinct sets of the population. He outlines the needs of each group, realizing that AAP's voting bloc requires a breadth and variety of campaign promises. Consequently, AAP has taken on causes such as ending the oppression faced by unauthorized slum colonies, offering cuts to electricity and water bills, and providing free transit and healthcare. Yet, at the same time, we see that the party will put conservative individualist Ayn Rand's quotes on messaging and create highly designed graphics promoting WiFi access, deftly signaling a tech-forward and entrepreneurial ethic to upper-class professionals (Figures 6 and 7).

Interviewees pointed to this breadth of promises, carried through to the 2019 and 2020 elections, as evidence of AAP's consistently inclusive platform. However, it must be noted that the party has been criticized for the under-representation of women and lack of caste diversity in its upper echelons (Rajesh Ramachandran, 2016). Unlike



Figure 4. AAP 2015 Facebook post, promises to the common people.



Figure 5. AAP 2015 Facebook post, E-governance.

most other prominent Indian political parties, AAP did not have a Dalit or minority wing until 2018 (NDTV, 2018), and the induction of Dalit leaders Raj Kumar Anand and Surendra Kumar in the run up to the 2019 elections was largely seen as driven by electoral exigency.

Citing these criticisms, some original IAC activists felt that, unlike in a social movement, AAP and its supporters have not retained their ideological core. We spoke to one IAC activist who held this view, and who had never supported the formation of the political party:

Arvind was successful because he won the first election. Without that, the whole organization would have fallen apart ... If you look at his people – they were with Congress and BJP at some point in time. They are there for the winnability. But I don't know what will be the future if [AAP] loses an election ... their coalition, all that won't exist then. – A2

This activist is suspicious of the ideological commitment of AAP's cadre and coalition, instead attributing the sweep elections in 2015 to pure strategy and winnability. In this activists' view, the moment AAP loses this winnability quotient, their coalition will crumble. To an extent, this view has been borne out, with AAP failing at coalition building at a national level, where it has suffered significant losses, but retaining votes and party cadres within Delhi, where they have had consistent success.

'Our brand is anti-corruption' (L2)

Despite spending significant time on both personalization and coalition-building, most participants still maintained that AAP's narrative would, or at least should, always be centered around anti-corruption. Multiple interviewees referred to their anti-corruption messaging and promises for clean, honest politics as *'the brand of the party'* (L2) and *'our party's USP (unique selling point)'* (C2), particularly in their digital outreach. The party's social media head discusses how this manifest.

[IAC] ... and Anna, you could say they were created by the social media. Messaging has to be very, very simple. For us, the USP was, fighting against corruption. Too many messages, that central message is lost, especially on these platforms. – S2

DELHI DIALOGUE **AAP**

DEGREE, INCOME, WIFI
आम आदमी पार्टी लाई

केजरीवाल फिर से

इस बार पूर्ण बहुमत दें

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/TheDelhiDialogue>
Email ID: delhidialogue@aamaadmiparty.org
Whatsapp Helpline: +919643327265

Figure 6. AAP 2015 Facebook posts, degree, income, WiFi.

This campaigner found that clear, simple, familiar messaging was around anti-corruption was most successful online, partially attributing the reduction of the party to this single message to the specific affordances of social media, where more complex, involved messaging does not drive attention and engagement.

Another digital strategist explained how consistent callbacks to AAP's social movement origins, as well as to the story and mythology surrounding AAP's leader, helps establish this brand on social media.

See – what do people recognize us for? Honesty. Anti-corruption, yes, and the ultimate deliverable is honesty, that's our brand. In 2018 ... we still bind to the same thing, with every post ... It ties to the same thread of honesty we have been talking to 2011, we tie it to Annaji,

"The question isn't who's going to let me; it's who is going to stop me." – Ayn Rand



AAP will support and empower women entrepreneurs.

 delhidualogue.in

 /thedelhidualogue

 @delhidualogue

 delhidualogue@aamadmiparty.org



DELHI DIALOGUE

Figure 7. AAP 2015 Facebook posts, women entrepreneurs.

then to Arvind, the way he has lived his life, all that ... Somehow, we try to tie that in every post. – S4

Through the consistency of the messaging around this 'brand' of honesty, this campaigner hopes to create a clear association between this party and the issue of anti-corruption, solidified with every digital post. The emphasis on the timeline, and the continuity shown between the leader of the IAC movement, Anna, and the leader of AAP, Arvind, shows the intensity with which, despite contradictions with increasing personalization, AAP still campaigns on its social movement origins. For seven years, and through five local, state, and national-level campaigns, AAP's social media lead has tried to attach this narrative in some way to every message. Even Kejriwal's own life story is tied to this anti-corruption narrative, intertwining the personalistic and movement nature of the party around a single issue and brand.

An ex-party leader felt so strongly that anti-corruption should be the crux of AAP's messaging that he considered the incorporation of other messages as weakening the party's appeal, citing this as one of the reasons he left the party.

I think AAP's messaging [since 2015] is quite lost. It is trying to communicate too many things, about education, health, all this ... Before there was a clarity in the mind of AAP, we are here to fight corruption, change the system ... change politics in India – L2

After winning the 2015 election, AAP has chosen not to base its entire narrative around honesty and anti-corruption. However, this ex-party leader feels that without consistent callbacks to anti-corruption and anti-establishment rhetoric, voters will find that AAP

simply does not have enough of an exciting, systemic narrative to offer. This also points to a larger national vs. state communication divide evident in several of the interviews; AAP's policy messaging is successful at the level of Delhi, but, unlike the simplicity and strength of the anti-corruption narrative, may not provide a cohesive enough national message, especially to counter that of the BJP.

Discussion and conclusion

Our case study of AAP shows a divergence across dimensions of institutionalization. On one hand, we find party workers pushed towards personalistic, inconsistent, and often even conflicting messaging. This interferes with institutionalization across measures, impeding internal routinization processes through leadership turnover and centralization, as well as disrupting internal and external reification. Often, these disruptions are exacerbated by the affordances and composition of social media, which can reward contradictory and simplistic messaging, particularly in a party that gained initial prominence through a massively viral social movement. However, we also recognize the overwhelming mandate of AAP in the 2020 Delhi elections, which solidifies its institutionalized position on objective measures of adaptability – as it has weathered significant turnover, centralization, and a rapidly evolving national political environment – as well as on external measures of perceived lasting power, cementing the party as a key player in the state of Delhi. Thus, while these dimensions need not co-occur, and each has value in its own right, the differing outcomes leave open the question of AAP's future as an institutionalized electoral force in India.

There are notable limitations to our study. First, our interviewees were overwhelmingly concentrated in Delhi, and a richer picture of AAP's functioning would have involved more national diversity in data gathering. Second, in focusing on a qualitative and subjective exploration of the AAP's institutionalization through interviews and document analysis, we likely did not capture the full picture of AAP's institutionalization process. Third, AAP is still in its early stages – our analysis would benefit from a re-evaluation and recontextualization after more time has passed.

Despite these limitations, the current analysis serves to paint a fascinating and contradictory picture of AAP's initial institutionalization, rooted in the experiences of those who carried out and constructed it. First, we see that party strategists have heavily pushed personalistic and leader-centric messaging around the current leader, Arvind Kejriwal since 2015, a strategic communications choice that seems to be consistently moving AAP in the direction of personalization. However, at the same time, AAP workers across leadership levels also highlighted the narrative of an ideologically-driven, social movement-based party, whose main goal is and always would be the eradication of corruption in government – often standing in direct conflict with both the personalistic structure of the party, as well as the party's now nearly decade-long presence in Delhi politics.

Building atop this contradiction, a focus (at least from party leaders, if not canvassers) on a creating a diverse, non-traditional, and stable electoral coalition indicates a desire for external institutionalization. However, to be successful, this would require such a base to be stable, reliable, and long-lasting: a complicated proposal, given the range of opposing promises and narratives being constructed. Complicating the reification process, the party has also begun incorporating gentle nods to soft *Hindutva* (Hindu

nationalist rhetoric), as recently seen in Kejriwal's nationalistic response to COVID-19 and to recent Chinese military action (Hindustan Times, 2020; Rahul Shrivastava, 2020). Since the 2019 general elections, the word 'secular' has not once appeared on the party's official site – aamaadmiparty.org, likely an attempt to broaden the 'ideal' voter coalition by appealing to BJP voters in Delhi. In fact, when the BJP overturned Article 370 to change the status of Kashmir, AAP supported the move, and when Dalit leaders joined the party prior to the 2019 state elections, the party referred to it as a Gharwapsi, a term specific to a Hindu 'return-to-fold' (AAP, 2019). This further calls into question the ideological core of the party and indicates that the search for a solid party identity, both internally and externally, is ongoing.

Thus, despite objective electoral successes, and a measure of external, institutional perception, internal routinization, as well as both internal and external reification, is not yet complete. Previously, we have often seen that movement parties eventually commit to a reified identity which is internally and externally cohesive, as they institutionalize. A party may become a personalistic vehicle, like Le Pen's Front National (Pappas, 2016), or commit to egalitarian, social movement, anti-establishment rhetoric, like the Communist Party of India (Hicken & Kuhonta, 2015), or be entrenched in the political establishment, creating a stable, fairly centrist voter base, like the Brazilian Worker's Party (Goirand, 2014). However, AAP has not yet settled on such an identity. Without discounting AAP's policies, it is clear that the pervasive presence of digital messaging has contributed to this ability to sustain these often conflicting identities, with a slew of differently targeted content cycling through the party's online presence: a post of Kejriwal's face next to a slogan about tech-forward governance, immediately preceded by an in-depth look at education reform and followed by a rousing call to oust the corrupt industrialists of Delhi. For the time being, this seems to be a winning strategy – at least in Delhi – contributing to objective measures of success. And yet, as in the case of M5S, we have seen the dangers of initial electoral successes belying narrative and organizational contradictions. While AAP has significantly more concrete policy successes than M5S, what remains to be seen is whether this combination of narrative tactics and strategies can work long-term outside of the particularities of an urban capital, or whether AAP will have to take a more traditional approach as it again attempts to expand nationally.

Disclosure statement

One of the authors volunteered with the initial AAP campaigns, and was an advisor to the Delhi Government.

Funding

This work was supported by Microsoft Research.

References

- AAP. (2019). *CM Kejriwal welcomes Dalit activist Raj Kumar Anand back into party – Aam Aadmi Party*. <https://aamaadmiparty.org/cm-kejriwal-welcomes-dalit-activist-raj-kumar-anand-back-into-party/>

- Arter, D., & Kestilä-Kekkonen, E. (2014). Measuring the extent of party institutionalisation: The case of a populist entrepreneur party. *West European Politics*, 37(5), 932–956. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2014.911486>
- Basedau, M., & Stroh, A. (2008). *Measuring party institutionalization in developing countries: A new research instrument applied to 28 African political parties*.
- Bastos, M. T., Mercea, D., & Charpentier, A. (2015). Tents, tweets, and events: The interplay between ongoing protests and social media. *Journal of Communication*, 65(2), 320–350. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcom.12145>
- Bennett, W. L. (2012). The personalization of politics: Political identity, social media, and changing patterns of participation. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 644(1), 20–39. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716212451428>
- Bennett, W. L., & Segerberg, A. (2012). The logic of connective action: Digital media and the personalization of contentious politics. *Information, Communication & Society*, 15(5), 739–768. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2012.670661>
- Bickerton, D. (2018). *Language and species*. University of Chicago Press.
- Bornstein, E., & Sharma, A. (2016). The righteous and the rightful: The technomoral politics of NGOs, social movements, and the state in India. *American Ethnologist*, 43(1), 76–90. <https://doi.org/10.1111/amet.12264>
- Chhibber, P., & Verma, R. (2019). The rise of the second dominant party system in India: BJP's new social coalition in 2019. *Studies in Indian Politics*, 7(2), 131–148. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2321023019874628>
- Corbetta, P., Colloca, P., Cavazza, N., & Roccatò, M. (2018). Lega and five-star movement voters: Exploring the role of cultural, economic and political bewilderment. *Contemporary Italian Politics*, 10(3), 279–293. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23248823.2018.1524678>
- Coretti, L., & Pica, D. (2015). The rise and fall of collective identity in networked movements: Communication protocols, Facebook, and the anti-Berlusconi protest. *Information, Communication & Society*, 18(8), 951–967. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2015.1043317>
- Deseriis, M. (2019). Digital movement parties: A comparative analysis of the technopolitical cultures and the participation platforms of the Movimento 5 Stelle and the Piratenpartei. *Information, Communication & Society*, 23(12), 1770–1786. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2019.1631375>
- DeSouza, P. R. (2006). *India's political parties*. SAGE Publishing India.
- Diwakar, R. (2016). Local contest, national impact: Understanding the success of India's Aam Aadmi Party in 2015 Delhi assembly election. *Representation*, 52(1), 71–80. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00344893.2016.1241296>
- Eipe, J. J., Varghese, T., & Veranani, S. M. (2012). India against corruption movement: An online version of a non-violent mass movement. *Quarterly Journal of the Gandhi Peace Foundation*, 34(3), 343–353.
- Gianolla, C. (2017). Party-movement's power dynamics in transcultural perspectives: The AAP and the M5S between participation and electoral politics. *Glocalism: Journal of Culture, Politics and Innovation*, 1, 1–40. <https://doi.org/10.12893/gjcp.2017.1.8>
- Goirand, C. (2014). The worker's party, from contention to public action: A case of institutionalization. *Journal of Politics in Latin America*, 6(3), 95–127. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1866802X1400600305>
- Guest, G., MacQueen, K. M., & Namey, E. E. (2012). Introduction to applied thematic analysis. *Applied Thematic Analysis*, 3, 50–65.
- Harmel, R., Svasand, L., & Mjelde, H. (2016). *Party institutionalization and de-institutionalization: Concepts and indicators*. 44th ECPR Joint Sessions of Workshops, Pisa, Italy, April 2016.
- Harmel, R., & Svåsand, L. (1993). Party leadership and party institutionalisation: Three phases of development. *West European Politics*, 16(2), 67–88. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402389308424961>
- Hicken, A., & Kuhonta, E. M. (2015). *Party system institutionalization in Asia: Democracies, autocracies, and the shadows of the past*. Cambridge University Press.

- Hindustan Times. (2020, June 22). 'Fighting 2 wars against China, will win them both': Arvind Kejriwal on Covid-19 fight. *Hindustan Times*. <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/our-soldiers-didn-t-back-down-we-too-won-t-retreat-kejriwal-on-covid-19-fight/story-66qqoZqwtUbmDatyCy6TaK.html>
- Horowitz, J. (2020, January 18). As Five Star Party risks implosion, Italy fears the fallout. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/18/world/europe/italy-five-star.html>
- Jaffrelot, C. (2015). The Modi-centric BJP 2014 election campaign: New techniques and old tactics. *Contemporary South Asia*, 23(2), 151–166. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09584935.2015.1027662>
- Janda, K. (1980). *Political parties: A cross-national survey*. Free Press; Collier Macmillan.
- Kelly Garrett, R. (2006). Protest in an information society: A review of literature on social movements and new ICTs. *Information, Communication & Society*, 9(02), 202–224. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13691180600630773>
- Kitschelt, H. (2006). Movement parties. *Handbook of Party Politics*, 1, 278–290. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781848608047.n24>
- Kouki, H., & González, J. F. (2018). Syriza, podemos and mobilizations against austerity: Movements, parties or movement-parties?. In J. Roose, M. Sommer, & F. Scholl (Eds.), *Europas Zivilgesellschaft in der Wirtschafts- und Finanzkrise* (pp. 123–140). Springer.
- Kuenzi, M., & Lambright, G. (2001). Party system institutionalization in 30 African countries. *Party Politics*, 7(4), 437–468. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068801007004003>
- Kumar, A. (2019). A timeline of the Aam Aadmi Party's years in government. *The Citizen*. Accessed September 28, 2019, from <https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/NewsDetail/index/2/16488/A-Timeline-of-the-Aam-Aadmi-Partys-Years-in-Government>
- Leichty, G. B., D'Silva, M. U., & Johns, M. R. (2016). Twitter and Aam Aadmi Party: Collective representations of a social movement turned political party. *Intercultural Communication Studies*, 25(2).
- Levitsky, S. (1998). Institutionalization and Peronism: The concept, the case and the case for unpacking the concept. *Party Politics*, 4(1), 77–92. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068898004001004>
- Mainwaring, S., & Scully, T. (1995). *Building democratic institutions: Party systems in Latin America*. Stanford University Press.
- Mainwaring, S., & Torcal, M. (2006). Party system institutionalization and party system theory after the third wave of democratization. *Handbook of Party Politics*, 11(6), 204–227. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781848608047.n19>
- Manucci, L., & Amsler, M. (2018). Where the wind blows: Five Star movement's populism, direct democracy and ideological flexibility. *Italian Political Science Review/Rivista Italiana Di Scienza Politica*, 48(1), 109–132. <https://doi.org/10.1017/ipo.2017.23>
- Mercea, D. (2012). Digital prefigurative participation: The entwinement of online communication and offline participation in protest events. *New Media & Society*, 14(1), 153–169. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444811429103>
- Micó, J.-L., & Casero-Ripollés, A. (2014). Political activism online: Organization and media relations in the case of 15M in Spain. *Information, Communication & Society*, 17(7), 858–871. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2013.830634>
- Mossige, D. D. (2009). *The personalistic movement-party and the dangers of duality*, 522.
- Musella, F. (2015). Personal leaders and party change: Italy in comparative perspective. *Italian Political Science Review/Rivista Italiana Di Scienza Politica*, 45(3), 227–247. <https://doi.org/10.1017/ipo.2015.19>
- NDTV. (2018). Minority, Dalit wings formed in Aam Aadmi Party. *NDTV.Com*. <https://www.ndtv.com/delhi-news/delhi-minority-dalit-wings-formed-in-aam-aadmi-party-1936986>
- Pal, J. (2015). Banalities turned viral: Narendra Modi and the political tweet. *Television & New Media*, 16(4), 378–387. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1527476415573956>
- Panbianco, A. (1988). *Political parties: Organization and power* (Vol. 6). Cambridge University Press.
- Pappas, T. S. (2016). Are populist leaders “charismatic”? The evidence from Europe. *Constellations (Oxford, England)*, 23(3), 378–390. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8675.12233>

- Pedahzur, A., & Brichta, A. (2002). The institutionalization of extreme right-wing charismatic parties: A paradox? *Party Politics*, 8(1), 31–49. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068802008001002>
- Rahul Shrivastava. (2020, February 12). Populism mixed with soft-Hindutva makes Arvind Kejriwal a force to reckon with. *India Today*.
- Rajesh Ramachandran. (2016). Why is there no adequate representation by common men & women in the AAP Cabinet in Delhi? *Economic Times*. <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/why-is-there-no-adequate-representation-by-common-men-women-in-the-aap-cabinet-in-delhi/articleshow/50977916.cms?from=mdr>
- Randall, V., & Svåsand, L. (2002). Party institutionalization in new democracies. *Party Politics*, 8(1), 5–29. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068802008001001>
- Rohlinger, Deana A., & Bunnage, Leslie A. (2015). Connecting people to politics over time? Internet Communication Technology and retention in MoveOn.Org and the Florida Tea Party Movement. *Information, Communication and Society*, 18(5), 539–552.
- Rose, R., & Mackie, T. T. (1988). Do parties persist or fail? The big trade-off facing organizations. *When Parties Fail: Emerging Alternative Organizations*, 533–558. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781400859498.533>
- Sengupta, M. (2012). Anna Hazare and the idea of Gandhi. *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 71(3), 593–601. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0021911812000617>
- Silverman, D. (2005). *Doing qualitative research: A practical*.
- Sitapati, V. (2011). *What Anna Hazare's Movement and India's new middle classes say about each other*. 30, 6.
- Sriram, J. (2015, April 21). AAP expels Yogendra Yadav, Prashant Bhushan. *The Hindu*. <https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Delhi/aap-expels-four-rebel-leaders/article7123615.ece>
- Subrahmaniam, F. V. (2015). Reaching for the stars: The incredible rise of Arvind Kejriwal. *The Hindu Centre for Politics and Public Policy*, 25.
- Tripathy, J. (2017). The broom, the muffler and the Wagon R: Aam Aadmi party and the politics of de-elitisation. *International Quarterly for Asian Studies*, 48(1–2), 77–95. <https://doi.org/10.11588/iqas.2017.1-2.4074>
- Turner, E. (2013). The 5 Star movement and its discontents: A tale of blogging, comedy, electoral success and tensions. *Interface: A Journal for and About Social Movements*, 5(2), 178–212.
- Udupa, S. (2014). *Aam Aadmi: Decoding the media logics*. 7, 3.
- Vignati, R. (2015). The organization of the Movimento 5 Stelle: A contradictory party model. *Beppe Grillo's Five Star Movement: Organisation, Communication and Ideology*, 29–52.
- Weissenbach, K., & Bukow, S. U. (2019). Travelling concepts of party institutionalization? A comparative perspective. *Zeitschrift Für Vergleichende Politikwissenschaft*, 13(2), 157–174. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12286-019-00426-4>
- Ziegfeld, A. (2012). Coalition government and party system change: Explaining the rise of regional political parties in India. *Comparative Politics*, 45(1), 69–87. <https://doi.org/10.5129/001041512802822905>