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EXPLORING THE GLOBAL RISE OF ETHNORELIGIOUS NATIONALISM: A CASE STUDY OF
VOX IN SPAIN AND THE BHARATIYA JANATA PARTY IN INDIA

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By Swetha Manivannan

A thesis presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for completion Of the Bachelor of Arts
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ABSTRACT

SWETHA MANIVANNAN: Exploring the Global Rise of Ethnoreligious Nationalism: A Case Study of Vox in Spain and the Bharatiya Janata Party in India
(Under the direction of Miguel Centellas)

This thesis analyzes reasons behind the current global growth of ethnoreligious nationalist parties through a cross-regional analysis of the Vox party in Spain and the Bharatiya Janata Party in India. It also looks at the shift in party domination as secularism has fallen in an era of globalization with the end of “Spanish Exceptionalism” and decline in the Indian National Congress. It utilizes the theory of constructivism to present how this current wave of identity-focused ethnoreligious nationalism is a socio-political construct where those from the majority ethnoreligious identity feel the perception of threat by minority populations and multiculturalism and seek to reclaim their nation. It calls for the further need to assess the role of religious identity in nationalism. A most-different, similar outcomes research design is employed to compare two quite different Western and Eastern cases that have produced similar parties. Independent variables in three categories of economic, political, and socio-cultural factors are analyzed using Pearson’s r to gauge whether there is a correlation between certain variables and the rise of these parties. It was evaluated that socio-cultural factors had a stronger influence followed by economic then political factors, which ties into anti-minority and in particular anti-Muslim sentiment that permeates society and politics.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES.....	v
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER II: ECONOMIC, POLITICAL, AND SOCIO-CULTURAL SYSTEMS IN SPAIN AND INDIA.....	17
CHAPTER III: DATA AND ANALYSIS.....	28
CHAPTER IV: CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND FUTURE STUDY.....	46
REFERENCE BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	49

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1	Vote % for the BJP compared to economic indicators for India
Table 2	Vote % for Vox compared to economic indicators for Spain
Table 3	Vote % for the BJP compared to political indicators for India
Table 4	Vote % for Vox compared to political indicators for Spain
Table 5	Vote % for the BJP compared to socio-cultural indicators for India
Table 6	Vote % for Vox compared to socio-cultural indicators for Spain
Table 7	Vote % for the BJP compared to. economic Factors for India
Table 8	Vote % for Vox compared to economic Factors for Spain
Table 9	Vote % for the BJP compared to political Factors for India
Table 10	Vote % for Vox compared to political Factors for Spain
Table 11	Vote % for the BJP compared to socio-cultural Factors for India
Table 12	Vote % for Vox compared to socio-cultural Factors for Spain

Chapter 1

Introduction

I have always been fascinated by religion, the diversity present in global religious thought, and the innate concept of goodness present within the core of nearly every world religion. One of the core principles of Hinduism is that there are multiple ways of viewing reality, inherently calling for tolerance among humanity with the implication that all faith perspectives, at their root, have shared principles of living on an upright moral compass and are simply different windows for humans to connect to the same universe. Nevertheless, certain groups of people at different points in history have used religion to breed division, pitting majority and minority groups against each other. Violence on the basis of religious and/or ethnic grounds is not new to humanity. However, the instigators of such animosity have increasingly seen new players rise in the form of ethnoreligious nationalist parties.

It has always astounded me as to how such parties and leaders gain support when they form their foundations through furthering division in their country and globally. The sheer scale of the growth of these leaders and parties became even more apparent to me in an episode of Hasan Minhaj's *Patriot Act* show on Indian elections, where he focused on Hindu nationalism, the issues facing India in the then upcoming 2019 election, Narendra Modi's election strategies, economic failures, political focus on Kashmir, pervasive corruption in the Indian political spectrum, religious extremism and violence, and anti-minority sentiment. He also connected the political atmosphere in India to an international scale with a map pointing out various countries including "Turkey, Hungary, Poland, Spain, Brazil, the Philippines, and now India" that were

following a “pattern of growing religious nationalism, violence, disregard for institutions, rampant misinformation, weak and corrupt opposition, [and backsliding democracies]” (Minhaj 2019).

Specifically, the example of Spain presents a good contrast to India as up until the past decade, Spain did not have ethnoreligious nationalist parties, whereas India has a longer standing history of ethnoreligious nationalist parties that spans decades. Furthermore, Spain had initially remained an outlier to the emergence of far-right parties growing across Europe in the 21st century; however, Spain did not remain immune. The evolution and formation of such parties calls into question the driving forces in different countries that spur support among the population for their ideologies. I use this thesis project to seek explanations to this trend in global politics through the cross-regional analysis of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in India and Vox in Spain.

Research Question

Why are the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Vox, two ethnoreligious nationalist parties, on the rise, and why now? This ethnoreligious nationalism is tied to the rise in right and far-right political parties as Philip Gorski notes that “the affinity between religious conservatism and right-wing populism is a phenomenon that antedates Trump and extends beyond America... In Hungary, for instance, Viktor Orban has promised to replace “liberal democracy” with “Christian democracy” (2018). Cas Mudde also discusses how “three of the five most populous countries in the world have a far-right leader (Brazil, India, and the US) and the biggest political party in the world is the populist radical right Indian People’s Party (BJP)” (2019, 2). These parties seek homogeneity through reclaiming an ethnoreligious identity in their nation-state, which has perceived to have been lost or threatened by the existence of ethnoreligious minority populations.

The rhetoric espoused by President Donald Trump's Make America Great Again is not a phenomenon confined to the U.S., as major political figures and parties around the world such as Santiago Abascal's Vox, PM Narendra Modi's BJP, Jair Bolsonaro's Alliance for Brazil, and Viktor Orbán's Fidesz in Hungary are increasingly promoting similar values.

These countries form some of the top global economies and are integral parts of the global diaspora of people, cultures, and ideas. This is where the paradox lies in that religious nationalism is thriving in nation-states that benefit from globalization as a by-product that is evolving at the same time (Juergensmeyer 2019). Therefore, it is important to understand why new ethnoreligious nationalisms are rising and old secular nationalisms are failing in a time of globalizing economic and cultural forces, especially when considering how globalization implies groups with different backgrounds coming together. Furthermore, the rise of such radical right leaders and parties around the world with nationalist agendas poses an increasingly worrisome threat to democracy and minorities, hence it is critical to study these trends, especially when the diverse societal fabric of these countries is viewed as dangerous instead of as a strength.

Expected Contribution to Knowledge

This project is of importance as it can contribute to emerging scholarly literature on the rise of ethnoreligious nationalism and of parties with such ideologies. This is also a timely topic to research as violence is being perpetuated by such parties and leaders at scales never seen in recent postmodern times, such as the state sanctioned violence in early 2021 in India against the predominantly Sikh farmers protesting against the removal of government protections for farmers (Mashal et al. 2021), so it is essential to further understand how these political leaders and parties come to power. Given how a spotlight is beginning to be shown toward noting the

influence of religion in ethnonationalism as a global phenomenon, a comparative study focusing on Spain and India introduces new understanding across regional and religious lines.

With this comparison, I also contribute to study on the end of “Spanish Exceptionalism,” as noted by Stuart Turnbull-Dugarte (2019) and Sergi Pardos-Prado (2020). This term is used to describe the phenomenon of how, unlike other European countries, Spain has not had a far-right party form part of its government since the end of Franco’s dictatorship in 1975 until the emergence of Vox. Furthermore, I contribute to study on the shift in party domination and the political system. In Spain, there is a multiparty system that was dominated by two parties being the Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE) and Partido Popular (PP) on a national level prior to the developing success of Vox. In India, even though there are also multiple parties, on a national level there had been a dominant-party system with the Indian National Congress (INC) having maintained power for the majority of the time since before Indian Independence from British rule as the single largest party. There were many other parties who never came close to rivaling the INC, but they had to collaborate with the INC to form coalition governments as the INC never won more than 50% of the vote. However, things changed when the BJP was able to take control of government with a landslide majority in 2014 and again in 2019.

In addition, I hope to be able to make predictions on the possible future of Vox with the examination of trends in India and Spain. Overall, I seek to develop a further understanding of the conditions fueling the rise of the BJP in India and Vox in Spain, which is crucial at a time when immigration is on the rise globally, minority rights are coming under threat internationally, nations are facing internal often politically fueled strife, and the very foundations of democracy are at risk amidst a backdrop of a global pandemic and economic downfall.

Theoretical Framework

The fundamental aspects of this thesis are based upon the concept of ethnoreligious nationalism and the existence of ethnonationalist parties. Nationalism is the broad concept, which can be broken down into various manifestations of nationalism such as ethnonationalism. Paul Brass theorizes ethnicity and nationalism together as being inextricably linked to the modern centralizing state with ethnicity, nationalism, and resulting ethnonationalism being constructed based on social and political contexts between the leadership of the state and leadership from minority ethnic groups (2003).

Specifically, with the cases examined in this thesis, religion is a key element fueling nationalism. Therefore, it is important to examine ethnonationalism and religious nationalism, which can be fused into the term ethnoreligious nationalism. Political parties who build their platform on these ideologies are termed ethnonationalist, and I would go so far as to call some of the parties more specifically ethnoreligious nationalist when the fusion of religion maintains a strong presence in the party. There is a wide literature base on nationalism, ethnonationalism, and related parties, but the examination of the relevance and role of religion and religious nationalism is more recently gaining traction. In some cases, there is still the argument for why religion and nationalism should even be studied in tandem as too often religion as it pertains to nationalism is viewed as an offshoot or exception instead of its own specific phenomenon. This is addressed by Sutherland through his argument against isolating and oversimplifying religion and nationalism, pointing to a key convergence of their association, being conflict and violence (2017, 1-2).

Mark Jeurgensmeyer draws attention to ethno-religious movements specifically, dubbing the rise of religious nationalism as a new Cold War against the secular state (1993). He views religious nationalism as a concept that evolves with time in order to assert identity and control

and reclaim personal and cultural power, which leads to phenomena like anti-immigrant sentiment and religious and ethnic terrorism (Jeurgensmeyer 2019b, 7). There is also an overlapping with ethnonationalism, as these nationalisms revolve heavily around ethnic identity, which Bart Bonikowski notes is “the idea that legitimate membership in the nation is limited to those with the appropriate immutable, or at least highly persistent, traits, such as national ancestry, native birth, majority religion, dominant racial group membership, or deeply ingrained dominant cultural traits” (2017, 187).

Nationalism in some forms, especially such as ethnonationalism, religious nationalism, cultural nationalism, etc. and ethnonationalist parties, are associated with instilling values of division between majority and minority populations. The concept of the nation under these nationalisms and parties includes the majority and excludes minorities. A key reasoning for various global manifestations of ethno-religious nationalism is that those from the majority ethno-religious identity feel the perception of threat by minority populations and multiculturalism, hence religious nationalism and related ethnic nationalism and cultural nationalism can be a tool that allows for the reclamation and strengthening of the majority identity and values they uphold, which is embodied by ethnonationalist parties. This is a tactic that appears quite often in the radical right who mobilize based off of an actual or perceived threat from minorities and elites that collectively appeals to the ethnic majority (Bonikowski 2017, 184). An example of this would be Pegida (Peaceful/Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamization of the West), which is a pan-European, anti-Islam, far-right political movement originating from Germany, and David Coury emphasizes how Pegida derives its inspiration from reviving Christian order and strengthening Western cultural values at the expense of cultural pluralism (2016, 54-55).

The main school of thought on nationalism that I use is constructivism because the various forms of nationalism are created by people in power. Constructivism can be useful as nationalism itself can be viewed differently, such as affiliation toward opposing political groups or identifying with a majority or a minority population. It is not something that is set in stone and can change over time based on various trends, global situations, and political leaders. They are constructions, often socio-political constructs, that can be furthered by certain kinds of political parties. This way of thinking was established through the viewpoints of notable theorists in the field being Benedict Anderson (2016) and Ernest Gellner (1997).

The theory of constructivism first emerged as a way to view education, which has since come to be applied to various social science disciplines including nationalism, ethnic studies, and politics. Anderson was a major promoter of the constructivist viewpoint to the study of nationalism, and he introduced the term “imagined communities” to describe the notion that people who comprise a nation will never meet fellow members of the nation, yet they still ascribe to the perception of the nation being a community, despite these limitations (2016). Hence, it is the overarching idea of sharing similarities between people rather than the potential similarities themselves that builds a nation and nationalism (Anderson 2016). Furthermore, Gellner expounds on the concept that the nation itself is an artificial construction befitting the needs of the elites that shifts based on social and political contexts (1997). This falls in line with the notion that a nationalism can be created based upon any set of characteristics as Gellner expresses that “It is their recognition of each other as fellows of this kind which turns them into a nation, and not the other shared attributes, whatever they might be, which separate that category from non-members” (1997, 5). Additionally, Kanchan Chandra uses constructivist theory to challenge previous foundations of ethnic identity being fixed. What is notable about the

malleability of ethnic identity that constructivism informs is that “these changes can be a product of the very political and economic phenomena that they are used to explain” (Chandra 2012, 3).

Although constructivism has become the largely accepted paradigm in the social sciences, it can be valuable to consider the competing theory of primordialism, which argues that there is a fixed singular ethnic identity and common heritage and linguistic tradition that unites a group of people, which was furthered by the notable figure Anthony Smith (2013a) along with his concept of “ethnies.”. Although primordialism takes into account ethnicity, it does not recognize the fluidity and evolution of identities based on political and social constructs, which constructivism does.

Lastly, a big question remains as to why are ethnonationalist parties rising in recent times, especially after a long period of secularism. Smith argues that in the age of modernity, where there are constant technological and social changes, people seek some form of stability, so even though there are threats to the nation-state, it will not be dissolving soon. Rather, history of past ethnic conquest and community would be rekindled as people yearn for the creation of a new community against progressive changes, which also further breeds division and ethnoreligious violence (Smith 2013b). That is where this latest wave of nationalism comes into play in the form of ethnoreligious nationalist parties. Furthermore, Cas Mudde highlights that supporters of such parties who lean further right on the political spectrum support them both for their platform as well as to be anti-the current political establishment, while being fueled by economic worries and fighting against cultural changes (2019). This points to three key areas being responsible for the rise in support for ethnoreligious nationalist parties: weakness and corruption in the current political system, perceptions of a faltering economy, and fears surrounding shifts in the socio-cultural makeup of nation-states.

Literary Review

Given that this thesis discusses ethnoreligious nationalist parties, it is beneficial to further discuss ethnoreligious nationalism and its global manifestations in the 21st century. Therefore, this section will cover a little more about the concept of nationhood and religious nationalism, provide global examples, and further define ethnonationalist parties and why they are growing now.

Smith provides us with a good definition of a nation being “a named human population sharing an historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members” (1991, 14). Once there is a nation, there arises the question of who belongs in the nation. This is largely ascribed to ethnic communities who share a common collective history within a nation (Smith 1991, 21). There are various ways to describe the resulting nationalism associated with ethnic memories, and one that stands out is that nationalism is “a social and political movement to achieve the goals of the nation and realize its national will” (Smith 1991, 72).

However, manifestations of nationalism are not limited to ethnic identity and memory as religious identity and memory is just as powerful. Anna Grzymala-Busse discusses various ways in which religion and nationalism can interact with one another, encompassing a spectrum from substitution of religion and nationalism in an age of modernity where secular nationalism has failed to a coexistence and even fusion of religion and nationalism (2019). Scott Appleby expresses two key ways in which religious nationalism manifests through “explicitly [presenting] the nation as sacred or as partaking of the sacred... [and] the overt sacralization of the nation is practised (sic) and believed such as the Gush Emunim in Israel or the Hindutva movement in India as a vital step towards realizing the fulfillment of religion itself” (2017, 19). Another

interesting concept to note is that the existence of religiously influenced nationalism does not always equate to high levels of religiosity as the “Orthodox Christian cases of Russia, Bulgaria, and Greece [represent an] intense identification between nation and religion, despite very low levels of religious attendance” (Gryzmala-Busse 2019).

There are representations of ethnoreligious nationalism in nearly every world region and association with nearly every major world religion, which denounces it as a uniquely European phenomenon even though some cases may have derived influence from Europe. For instance, Christian nationalism is not only prevalent in various European nations and the United States, but in the Phillipines as well where religion has been almost completely interchangeable with national identity with over “90% of Filipinos [having expressed] a “great deal” or “quite a lot” of confidence with the Church... [allowing] the Church to gain enormous policy influence in the newly democratic regimes (Gryzmala-Busse & Slater 2018). Another case is Sinhalese Buddhist nationalism in Sri Lanka that seeks to dissipate the separatist movement in Jaffna of the Hindu Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). The Jathika Hela Urumaya (JHU) in 2004 became the “very first time a political party composed solely of bhikkhus (Buddhist monks) ran over 260 candidates and won nine seats in the 225-member legislature” (DeVotta & Stone 2008, 32). Additionally, the biggest difference with Islamic nationalism as compared to Christian and Hindu nationalism, is of course, that there is not the presence of Islamophobia as Islamic nationalism is practiced in Muslim majority countries unlike the other religious nationalisms in Muslim minority countries. However, other principles like xenophobia and anti-minority sentiment do still apply. There is an antipathy and rejection of the West, essentially the reverse of religious nationalism present in Western nations toward Islam (Umbrasas 2017, 36). Additionally, something more unique to Islamic nationalism is that there is the concept of

transnationalism that is present in some contiguous Muslim nations (Jeurgensmeyer 2019, 6). With respect to certain countries such as Turkey, Algeria, and Pakistan, the nationalism present was similarly founded on religious mobilization and push back against non-Muslim opponents through jihad, but there remained a multiethnic fabric in the secular nation-state that has led to movements for separtism (Akturk 2015, 3-7).

These nationalisms and related parties again are heavily based on constructivism. For example, the discourse in Western Europe has “shifted interestingly from Christian to Judeo-Christian values,” which expresses the strength of the desire to create a total separation from the foreign “Other” of Islam (Coury 2016, 56) with Islam and Muslims having become “the main enemies of the populist radical right” (Mudde 2019, 47). In her analysis of ethnonationalist parties, Chandra identifies three main defining features of an ethnic party being “the ‘particularity’, the ‘centrality’, and the ‘temporality’ of the interests it champions” (2011, 155). These characteristics indicate that ethnic parties must always partake in the exclusion of some other demographic, have the issues that certain ethnic group(s) appeal to as a part of the forefront of the party platform, and these group(s) can alter over time (Chandra 2011, 155).

In order for these parties to gain support and assert power in government, an opportunity to do so must arise. For example, disbelief in existing parties can create a window of opportunity as demonstrated by how Viktor Orbán’s Fidesz party in Hungary was “helped by corruption scandals in the Socialist government, and division and infighting within the liberal democratic camp” to achieve “a massive victory in the 2010 elections” (Mudde 2019, 126). Furthermore, on this concept of a perceived failure being an opportunity, Juergensmeyer elaborates on how the increased interconnectivity of the world in a digitalized global age has both led to failures in the institution of secular nationalism as well as given birth to reactionary ethno-religious nationalist

movements oftentimes out of “a fear of the “new world order” ... that is rapidly becoming multicultural” (2019a).

Research Design

In order to better understand the driving forces behind the rise in support of ethnoreligious nationalist parties, I employ a most-different, similar-outcomes (MDSO) research design. This is beneficial given that countries that on the surface level may seem very different, end up also seeing a similar rise in ethnoreligious nationalist parties. Hence, I wanted to choose two cases from two different world regions. Additionally, I want to see if there are similarities in reasoning that can explain both cases. If there are more differences, then that could indicate that there are regional differences that must be accounted for when evaluating the rise of such parties. As there are a myriad of reasons to explain this growth, I will test three categories of reasons to evaluate whether there is a presence of certain factors or not for each case and if one stands out more against the others or not. I will also provide some background context for other reasons that I do not get to evaluate more in depth, such as history concerning minority populations, territorial disputes, and popularity of political leaders.

Case Selection

I selected the cases of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Vox. Both of these parties present a departure from secularism in India and Spain. The BJP’s rise comes after years of control by the Indian National Congress (INC), and Vox’s rise presents the end of “Spanish Exceptionalism” as Spain has not had a far-right ethnoreligious nationalist party in government since the end of Franco’s dictatorship. Many other European countries, such as France and Hungary, have seen the rise of far-right parties such as National Rally and Fidesz, but Vox stands out as a newcomer. On the other hand, the BJP has a much more established history in India.

Therefore, creating a cross-regional dual-case study ripe for comparison between one of the most recently emerging Western examples and one of the largest non-Western examples.

Dependent Variable

The dependent variable is level of support for the ethnoreligious nationalist party in question. I measure the dependent variable using the percentage of votes for the party because this measure can indicate the amount of growth of the parties.

Independent Variable

I look at a variety of independent variables as possible explanations to why these ethnoreligious nationalist parties are rising, which I will be grouping into the following categories: economic, political, and socio-cultural factors. Among economic factors, I examine income inequality, unemployment, remittances received, foreign direct investment, and GDP per capita. Among political factors, I examine the Voice and Accountability Index, Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism Index, Government Effectiveness Index, Regulatory Quality Index, Rule of Law Index, and Control of Corruption Index. Within the socio-cultural category, I examine the level of immigration, level of refugees, number of reported hate crimes, and the percentage of Muslims in the population.

Hypothesis

My preliminary hypothesis is that a trifecta of economic anxiety, corruption and weakness in the political system, and increased presence of and cultural resentment towards “the Others” fuel the growth of parties who uphold ethnoreligious nationalist sentiments to varying degrees with socio-cultural factors being the strongest influence. Below I list variable-focused hypotheses, and I discuss more about the specifics of each indicator in the data and analysis chapter.

1. I hypothesize that as the unemployment rate and income inequality increase, support for ethnoreligious nationalist parties increases.
2. I hypothesize that as remittances received, foreign direct investment, and GDP per capita decrease, support for ethnoreligious nationalist parties increases.
3. I hypothesize that as the indices for Voice and Accountability, Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism, Government Effectiveness, Regulatory Quality, Rule of Law, and Control of Corruption worsen, that support for ethnoreligious nationalist parties will also increase.
4. I hypothesize that as numbers for the socio-cultural indicators increase for immigrants, refugees, hate crimes, and Muslims, that support for ethnoreligious nationalist parties will also increase.

Lastly, I also acknowledge that these are not the only factors that are at play, but I would like to see if these factors are influential enough in having a sway in propelling these parties forward.

Data Sources

The Elections Commission of India has data listed for Indian election results and statistical reports for the general elections to the Lok Sabha (1951 to 2019). One of the kinds of statistical reports available is the report on a political party & state wise basis of seats won and votes polled (%) for the Lok Sabha, which would be the one of interest to me because it shows the percentage of votes received and the number of seats won in each state. I access this report for each election year that I look at. La Junta Electoral Central de España has results for all of the general elections (1977-2019). I access the statistics for the percentage of votes and number of seats won for each election I look at.

For the independent variables, the World Inequality Database (WID) has various indicators on inequality, and for income inequality I am using the top 1% national income share. The World Bank dataset has a few different measures on unemployment, and I am using the one on unemployment, total (% of total labor force). I'm also using the indicator on personal remittances, received (current US\$), foreign direct investment net inflows (BoP, current US\$), and GDP per capita (current US\$) from the World Bank dataset. The Voice and Accountability Index, Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism Index, Government Effectiveness Index, Regulatory Quality Index, Rule of Law Index, and Control of Corruption Index all come from the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators project. The Migration Policy Institute (MPI) has data for international migrants by country of destination, and I am using the measure of number of immigrants as a percentage of the country's total population. MPI also has data on refugee and asylum seeker populations by country of origin and destination, which I am using. I am using hate crime data from the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) for Spain, and hate crime data on Statista that was sourced from various Indian and international news reports for India. Lastly, I am using data on the Muslim population in Spain from the Observatorio Andalusí for Spain and from Statista that was sourced from the Indian Census for India as well as numbers for the total national population of Spain and India from the World Bank.

Outline

Chapter 2 provides context for the economic, political, and socio-cultural systems that have existed in Spain and India and how they have changed. It also discusses the history of nationalism in the two countries as well as current contexts and the history behind the formation and rise of Vox and the BJP.

Chapter 3 presents and analyzes the data obtained from various databases. To answer the research question of why are the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Vox, two ethno-religious nationalist parties, on the rise, and why now, this chapter focuses on examining the trends in economic, political, and socio-cultural factors to find whether there are connections to increases in support for Vox and the BJP.

Finally, Chapter 4 concludes with an evaluation of the trend(s) that have a greater connection toward explaining these global manifestations of ethno-religious nationalism and related parties as well as a discussion of limitations and recommendations for further research.

Chapter 2

Economic, Political, and Socio-Cultural Systems in Spain and India

Chapter 2 overviews the economic, political, and socio-cultural conditions present in India and Spain and looks at the evolution of nationalism. This chapter also covers the creation and growth of the two cases, being the BJP and Vox, that I cover in this thesis project.

Economic

During the British Raj, India's economy was largely based on agriculture, involving roughly 75% of the population (Adhia 2015). Postcolonial India has made significant strides in economic development; however, in recent years has fallen behind other competitors in Asia such as China and South Korea (Adhia 2015; Page 2020). India implemented a centrally planned economy in 1947, but has since transitioned to a mixed economy (Page 2020). Although agriculture has dropped to 15.87% of India's GDP in 2019 (Page 2020), agriculture remains vital to sustaining the livelihoods of nearly two-thirds of the labor force, especially in rural areas (Arjun 2013, 343). The service industry has been booming, particularly Information Technology Enabled Services (ITES) (Page 2020) with India being the top country for emigrants and outsourcing; however, 90% of the population works in the informal economy or agriculture sector, which lacks significant infrastructural support (Adhia 2020). Although India has improved its absolute poverty rate, millions remain below the poverty line. In comparison to China, whose middle class has increased from 3% to 18%, India only increased from 1% to 3% between 2001 and 2011 (Kochhar 2015). Ultimately, one of the major issues facing the Indian economy is unemployment, especially for those without caste connections and underemployment

in the case of qualified university graduates being forced to take meager positions. Moreover, “India’s formal unemployment is the highest it’s been in 45 years, according to a leaked government report” (Kurup 2019). What is particularly troubling is youth unemployment significantly increasing when comparing 2018 to the prior decade with rural unemployment more than tripling and urban unemployment more than doubling, and PM Modi has yet to deliver on his promise of economic development and 10 million jobs (Kurup 2019).

Spain transitioned from an autarky characterized by a closed economy cut off from international trade during Francisco Franco’s authoritarian regime (Barciela 2012) to a decentralized, open economy under the 1978 Spanish Constitution (Navarrette 2010, 199). Since the Franco era, Spain has significantly improved the quality of life for its citizens, shown through the growth in the service sector, encompassing over 74% of Spain’s GDP in 2019 (España: Un país atractivo para la inversión 2020). Joining the European Union in 1986 allowed Spain to benefit from and serve as a leader in “the liberalization of the movement of capital, people and goods” with “the case of Spain being particularly striking, going from 15.2% in 1960 to 65.7% of GDP in terms of international trade” (Martín 2019). The adoption of the euro in 2002 also helped stabilize prices in Spain’s economy and accelerate economic growth (Martín 2019). However, Spain became one of the hardest hit countries in the eurozone with the global financial crisis of 2008, leaving the country in a deep recession from 2008 to 2013. Many of the jobs that became available were temporary with low pay where it was easy to hire and easy to fire employees. This primarily affected youth aged 16-29 as youth unemployment skyrocketed and their ability for independence from their families decreased. A “NiNi” generation arose where the number of students who neither worked nor studied rose significantly from 21% in 2008 to nearly 57% in 2013 (EpData 2020). Since then, Spain’s economy had been improving with

tourism and “PYMES” or small and medium-sized enterprises forming the backbone of the economy. This reliance however has led to Spain having the highest Covid-19 pandemic driven recession (Turismo y Pymes 2020). Going forward, challenges for the Spanish economy include the sustained high unemployment rate being the 2nd highest in Europe after Greece as well as the unsustainable pension system (Chislett 2019).

Political

India is the world’s largest democracy, and the Preamble of the Indian Constitution describes the country as “a Sovereign Socialist Secular Democratic Republic” (National Portal of India 2021). The Indian government uses a parliamentary system deriving its roots from British colonial rule; however, India has shaped this model to be a multiparty federal system to account for the diversity of populations in India as well as maintain a balance of power between central and state interests (Nand 2010, 414). A strong center to rebuild and chart a path forward was important as colonialism had left India a fragmented nation, given the divide and conquer tactics the British had implemented, which particularly pitted Hindus and Muslims against each other. This arrived in the form of the INC whose early leaders, such as Mahatma Gandhi and India’s first PM Jawaharlal Nehru, had played a pivotal role in achieving independence. Given that a major party such as the INC cannot form a majority government on its own, the multiparty system is vulnerable to political instability as coalitions that give power to often unstable regional interests have been necessary to form a government (Nand 2010, 416). Corruption has seeped rampantly into the political system. For example, “120 MPs in the 14th Lok Sabha having criminal cases registered against them” (Nand 2010, 416). This is part of a systemic issue that is increasingly affecting the majority of parties across the political spectrum. For instance, on the left end, despite the goals of inclusivity that the INC wants to achieve, the INC “has been mired

in corruption scandals” such as “India’s 2G Telecom Scandal,” which was “the second worst Scandal after Watergate” (Minhaj 2019). On the right end, despite PM Modi’s slogan of “*Bhrashtachar mukt Bharat*’ (corruption-free India)” corruption continues to be rampant from local to national levels with the Global Corruption Barometer reporting that “India has the highest bribery rate in Asia” (Bhardwaj and Johri 2020).

Spain is a Democratic Parliamentary Constitutional Monarchy, and the Preamble of the Spanish Constitution outlines that Spain “... in the exercise of its sovereignty... [consolidates] a State of Law...[and establishes] an advanced democratic society” (Spanish Constitution 1978). Following the Spanish Civil War, General Francisco Franco instated himself as “Caudillo por la gracia de Dios,” invoking the concept of divine right of rule, while making Catholicism the only truly tolerated religion under the Law of Succession in 1947, which reestablished a Catholic monarchy (“Spain - The Franco Years n.d.). The authoritarian and “semifascist” Franco military dictatorship lasted from 1939 to 1975, during which he sought “to save Spain from the chaos and instability visited upon the country by the evils of parliamentary democracy and political parties” (“Spain - The Franco Years n.d.). He backed up legitimacy for his ultimate authority and for combatting “anti-Spain” institutions and movements such as Catalan and Basque nationalism through strengthening ties with the Roman Catholic Church and creating the National Movement, which was “a coalition of right-wing groups referred to as political “families” -- termed a “communion” rather than a party, [which] was designated as the sole forum for political participation” (“Spain - The Franco Years n.d.). In rebuilding Spain after the Franco dictatorship, the main priority was political transformation and restoring a liberal democracy. Spain’s ability to maintain its democracy for decades has been noted as a “miracle” (Encarnación 2001, 35). This was accomplished through decentralizing the state and creating a unitary state that balanced

centralist and regionalist interests, followed by gradual economic and social reforms with reconciliation at the core (Encarnación 2001, 39-41). Since the 1980s, Spain's leadership has been dominated by the center-left Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE) and the center-right Partido Popular (PP). Other smaller or regional parties were not able to compete, until the emergence and electoral success of Vox in 2019, which changed the two-party dominance in Spain. Spain's first coalition government poses one of the greatest political challenges for the country (Valdivia 2019).

Socio-Cultural

India has struggled to grapple with its diverse population as the government “[turns] a blind eye toward the caste, religious, ethnic, and linguistic heterogeneity of Indian society” (Cheema 2011, 49) and the rising violence on the basis of identity, namely religious identity. Stakeholders in the state have often strived to promote “the Indian nation,” viewing multiculturalism as a threat to nationalist identity, and “unless these differences are recognized and understood, it is unlikely that the state and other stakeholders will even comprehend, let alone resolve, the sociocultural problems that beset Indian society today” (Cheema 2011, 50). India has a continually growing population of over 1.366 Billion people as of 2019 (World Bank 2019). India is home to the world's largest number of Hindus and second largest number of Muslims after Indonesia, and there is a sizeable population of nearly every world religion in India. The majority of the growth of the Muslim population is attributed to natural population growth, and India is “poised to have the most Muslims by 2050” (Hassan 2015). However, there is a refugee group entering India who is also Muslim in the form of the Rohingyas. The top places of origin for asylum seekers and refugees are Tibet, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, and Afghanistan (UNHCR 2020). The two major ethnic groups are Indo-Aryan and Dravidian that

encompass multiple subgroups (Sousa 2019). There are thousands of languages and dialects spoken in India, with 22 being given official status. India presents the case of “a unique assimilation of ethnic groups displaying varied cultures and religions” (Culture And Heritage - Ethnicity of India n.d.). However, the caste system is still a pervasive issue in Indian society with Dalits or “untouchables” facing significant discrimination (“Untouchability” and Segregation 2001). Similarly, Muslims also face significant systemic oppression that has only increased in the past couple of decades. For instance, during the Gujarat riots of 2002 hundreds of Muslims were killed by Hindu mobs who blamed them for starting a fire that killed dozens of Hindus on a train headed toward a pilgrimage in Ayodhya (Maizland 2020). This occurred during Narendra Modi’s term as Chief Minister of Gujarat where he remained silent on the issue. Moreover, there has been an uptick in communal violence, especially in the form of cow lynchings against those involved cattle trading or beef consumption, and “between May 2015 and December 2018, at least 44 people - including 36 Muslims - were killed in such attacks” (India: Vigilante ‘Cow Protection’ Groups Attack Minorities 2019). This animosity stems from colonial reconstructions of the history between Muslims and Hindus during rule by Islamic dynasties as being solely hostile when in reality there were also periods of mutual alliance between Hindu and Muslim rulers (Engineer 2004, 71).

Spain also has a multicultural history given conquest by the Umayyad dynasty in 711 and centuries of Muslim rule where there was a period of *convivencia* or coexistence where Muslims, Christians, and Jews lived together in a period of socioeconomic and intellectual prosperity. However, this transitioned into more exclusion and violence during the later periods of the Reconquista and Spanish Inquisition. After the Inquisition, the Muslim and Morisco population was nearly wiped out from Spain; however, waves of immigration in the past few decades have

seen the growth of the Muslim population in Spain once again. Spain's population is at almost 47 million as of 2019, and had been in a state of decline with brain drain and lower birth rates during the Great Recession, but the population growth rate has increased from -0.299 in 2014 to 0.594 in 2019 (World Bank 2019). Part of this growth can be attributed to the Global Refugee Crisis that began in the past decade with Spain becoming "the main entry point for migrants crossing into Europe" in 2018, and subsequently receiving "more migrant arrivals than any other European country" (Benavides 2018). This further led to greater immigration in general, with the largest numbers coming from Morocco followed by other European countries such as Romania and other Latin American countries such as Colombia (Fernández 2020). The majority of people in Spain identify themselves with Catholicism; however, "only 23% of Catholics in Spain are practitioners" (Bastante 2019). Given the influx of immigrants from African nations, "Islam is now the second most widely practiced religion in Spain with approximately 1.9 million followers, which is roughly 4% of the population" (Parionas 2018). With this rise in largely Muslim immigrants, Spain has also seen an increase in xenophobia and racism with the highest number of hate crimes being fueled by racism/xenophobia in 2017 (Delitos De Odio En España 2017) that would largely target Muslim and Romani populations.

Nationalism

Although the 42nd amendment of the Indian Constitution calls for "the high ideals of socialism, secularism and the integrity of the nation [to be spelled out expressly]," (The Constitution 1976) the current phase of nationalism in India is markedly drifting away from secularism and giving way to that of religion influenced nation-building in the form of Hindutva ideology. Hindutva views the Indian nation as being Hindu and the ideal Indian as being Hindu based on an "otherization project [that] inferiorizes a number of identities: Dalits, liberals,

Christians, feminists, but most of all, Muslims” (as cited in Waiker 2018, 162). Islamophobia permeates the Hindutva nationalism promoted by the BJP. For instance, some “senior political leaders not only say that Indian Muslims should go to Pakistan, they also have been known to compel Muslims to renounce Islam through conversions, thereby violating their constitutionally protected right to freedom of religion” (Seervai 2016, 105). Modi’s “India First” agenda is also heavily influenced by the Hindu nationalist organization Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) “who have been banned several times in India for stoking violence” (Minhaj 2019). Furthermore, Madhavrao Sadashvirao Golwalkar’s *Bunch of Thoughts* serves as a basis for RSS ideology in which he denotes the Muslims, the Christians, and the Communists as being the three major internal threats to the Indian nation (1966, 148-164). Also, a major territorial issue that has boosted BJP support is Jammu & Kashmir as the BJP-led central government revoked Article 370 in 2019, which had given J&K a certain level of special autonomy (Srivastava 2019). The BJP has cited better “integration with the rest of India” (Srivastava 2019) as the reason; however, mass human rights violations, lockdowns, and internet and media silencing persist (India: Abuses Persist in J&K 2020) in what remains the most militarized zone in the world.

Even though the Spanish Constitution expresses the need to “protect all Spaniards and peoples of Spain in the exercise of human rights, of their culture and traditions, languages and institutions,” (Spanish Constitution 1978) Spain is also seeing a shift away from the secularism that was cultivated in a post-Franco era. Moreover, Spain had proven to be an outlier from the rest of the far-right populist parties that were emerging across Europe. Other European countries facing a rise in immigration, political corruption, and economic collapse, especially in the aftermath of the global financial crisis of 2008, saw the rise of populist parties. Nevertheless, despite having “the highest net immigration per capita of any EU nation, [being] the second-most

corrupt large European economy, according to Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index, ... [and falling] into a recession so deep that it threatened to sink the whole eurozone," Spain's exceptionalism in its resistance to the radical right continued to persist (Encarnación 2017). A major reason for this aversion toward far-right ethnoreligious parties can be attributed to Franco's authoritarian regime and the focus to prevent anything similar from occurring again as "many Spaniards hoped nationalism would become a thing of the past" (Benavides 2019). This all changed in 2019 when Vox rose up to being the 3rd largest party in Spain, proving that no country is immune forever to far-right parties. This new nationalism gained a lot of momentum with the separatist movement and symbolic referendum in Catalonia as it was seen as being anti-Spain and declared illegal by the Spanish government (Catalonia's Bid for Independence 2019). Before Vox, there was not a party that actively vocalized against Catalanian independence and calling for "the complete recentralization of the Spanish state as well as the criminalization of separatist parties and organization" (Interview #41 2020). Vox is also propelling the ideology of "Nueva Reconquista" "like an instrument to transmit [Santiago Abascal's] nationalist, xenophobic, and Islamophobic ideas," while creating a narrative that is not historically accurate (Blanco 2019). Vox also uses the slogan "Hacer España Grande Otra Vez," "changing the political equation in Spain [to have] a great deal in common with U.S. President Donald Trump and European populism" (Pardo 2019).

The Rise of the BJP

The BJP was created in 1980, but it traces its roots back to the Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS), founded by RSS leader Syama Prasad Mukherjee in 1951. The RSS itself was founded in 1925 and "is inspired by European ethnonationalism and fascism" (What you need to know about India's BJP 2019). The BJS then merged with a few other political parties to create the

Janata Party from 1974-1977 to oppose the INC government under PM Indira Gandhi (Ankit 2016) After the Janata Party fell apart in 1979, the BJP was formed in 1980 by Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee who was a BJS leader. A major issue that propelled the BJP was the Ram Janmabhoomi Movement, which presented a “divisive issue of building a Ram temple on the disputed site of a demolished mosque called the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh” (Verma 2019). Another major factor was the desire for a change from INC rule, spurring BJP slogans such as “Party with a difference” (Misra 2018), setting the BJP apart as the better choice for the economy, as the INC “was beleaguered by massive corruption allegations, slowing economic growth, rampant inflation, and a pervasive sense of policy paralysis” (Vaishnav 2018). Furthermore, Modi’s popularity also played a big role in landslide victories as he positioned himself as “the right man in the right place at the right time” (Vaishnav 2018).

The Rise of Vox

Vox was founded in December, 2013 by its President Santiago Abascal who was originally a member of Partido Popular, the center-right party, which he believed was not conservative enough. Therefore, he created Vox as an off-shoot of PP that was “anti-Muslim, nationalist, anti-feminist, Eurosceptic, socially conservative, economically liberal, and staunchly pro-Spanish unity” (Laudette 2019). One of the main points that sparked Vox’s rise to prominence was the Catalan separatist movement (Por qué crece la ultraderecha en España 2019). Unlike other political parties, Vox took a much more hardline stance going so far as calling for secessionist movements to be banned and for “stripping Catalonia’s regional government of its powers and recentralizing control in Madrid” (Wilson 2019). In addition, the party was able to gain a stronger footing through calling for a more restrictions on immigration as “an increase in the number of migrants arriving on Spanish shores from Africa helped raise

the party's profile in 2018" (Hedgecoe 2019). Furthermore, Vox gathers more support through the perceived fear of Muslims, which is "stoked through stereotypes and perceptions that Muslims are less likely to assimilate, or more likely to engage in a deviant or dangerous activity" (Goitia n.d.).

Chapter 3

Data and Analysis

Chapter 3 tests my hypothesis and compares the relationship between economic, political, and socio-cultural factors over time as they relate to the growth of the ethno-religious nationalist parties in my case studies of the BJP and Vox. Additionally, this chapter incorporates an analysis of trends to see if individual hypotheses for each of the variables work or not as well as looking at each of the three categories collectively to see which set(s) of variables have a correlation with the rise of Vox and the BJP. I first discuss the variables selected in the data collection process. Then, I include a preliminary analysis of the data by category of factors. Lastly, I present a quantitative analysis of the correlation coefficient, r , and evaluate my hypotheses.

Data Collection Process

My data comes from the Elections Commission of India, La Junta Electoral Central de España, World Inequality Database, World Bank, Migration Policy Institute, Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), Statista, and Observatorio Andalusí, which is an “Institution for the observation and monitoring of the situation of the Muslim citizen and Islamophobia in Spain” (Observatorio Andalusí 2020).

For the economic category, I wanted to select indicators that can be associated with economic difficulty and economic globalization. I chose unemployment rate as a percentage of the total labor force from the World Bank and income inequality represented by the top 1% share of national income from the World Inequality Database for indicators that can fuel economic anxiety within a country’s population. I also chose personal remittances received (in current US

\$) and foreign direct investment (in current US \$) as those are a part of economic globalization, given that individuals in other countries are sending money to the country from the World Bank. Additionally, I chose GDP per capita as a general measure for how the economy of the country is faring over time from the World Bank. I used a timeframe of 1970 to 2020 and put in data for the years available for India and Spain into a table, so that trends prior to and after the existence of the BJP and Vox could be analyzed.

For the political category, I wanted to measure the strength of governance structures and analyze corruption in the political system. I decided to use the 6 indices featured through the Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) project created by the World Bank for a comprehensive view of the evolving state of governance in India and Spain.

The Voice and Accountability Index “captures perceptions of the extent to which a country's citizens are able to participate in selecting their government, as well as freedom of expression, freedom of association, and a free media” (World Bank 2020).

The Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism Index “measures perceptions of the likelihood of political instability and/or politically-motivated violence, including terrorism” (World Bank 2020).

The Government Effectiveness Index “captures perceptions of the quality of public services, the quality of the civil service and the degree of its independence from political pressures, the quality of policy formulation and implementation, and the credibility of the government's commitment to such policies” (World Bank 2020).

The Regulatory Quality Index “captures perceptions of the ability of the government to formulate and implement sound policies and regulations that permit and promote private sector development” (World Bank 2020).

The Rule of Law Index “captures perceptions of the extent to which agents have confidence in and abide by the rules of society, and in particular the quality of contract enforcement, property rights, the police, and the courts, as well as the likelihood of crime and violence” (World Bank 2020).

The Control of Corruption Index “captures perceptions of the extent to which public power is exercised for private gain, including both petty and grand forms of corruption, as well as "capture" of the state by elites and private interests” (World Bank 2020).

Through the interactive WGI data portal, I selected India and Spain for each index, which created graphs going from 1996 to 2019. The values for the indices range from -2.5 to 2.5, with lower values indicating weaker governance and higher values indicating better governance.

For the socio-cultural category, I cover demographic changes that relate to cultural resentment of minority groups, using the Migration Policy Institute’s data on migrants and refugees. Specifically, I chose the level of international migrants as a percentage of the total population to account for the vast difference in population between Spain and India and also chose the total number of persons of concern, which refers to the refugee and asylum seeker populations, in Spain and India for the years available.

I also wanted to look at violence in society toward minority populations. I found hate crime data for Spain that was reported by the police through the ODIHR. However, India has very limited reporting on hate crimes, so I was only able to source data from Statista that was compiled through national and international media reportings of hate crimes in India.

Lastly, I wanted to be able to incorporate religious demographics as religious minority resentment is a major part of the ideology of such parties, namely in the othering of Muslims. Comprehensive data on the year- to- year breakdown of the religious demographics was hard to

find. However, I discovered the Observatorio Andalusí, which independently has conducted research on the Muslim population across Spain since 2003. I could not find a similar organization for India that conducted research on the Muslim population, so I was only able to source Indian census data that was compiled on Statista. I recorded values for the Muslim population as a percentage of the total population for the years available and used the World Bank to refer to the national population for each of those available years. Using the data, I evaluate trends over time and measure the correlation between the independent and dependent variables using quantitative analysis.

Preliminary Analysis

Although I collected data available for the years between 1970 to 2020, below I provide charts comparing the variable values to the election years for the BJP and Vox to showcase changes in a more condensed format. I included every general election year that the BJP was a part of starting with 1984 to 2019. Vox, being a newcomer, has only been in a few election years, and the two major elections for Vox both actually occurred in 2019 in April and November. There is a marked growth in support for the BJP going from 18.8% of the vote in 2009 to 34.76% of the vote in 2019. Support for Vox also grew significantly from 0.20% in 2016 to 10.26% in April 2019 to 15.08% in November 2019. I follow up on these charts with a preliminary analysis that also keeps in mind the overall data that I was able to gather.

Economic Factors

Below are two tables that compare the economic indicators with the percentage of votes that the BJP received in election years and the percentage of votes that Vox received in election years. They are followed by discussion on any increases, decreases, or stagnation for each variable, comparing India and Spain.

Table 1 Vote % for the BJP compared to economic indicators for India

Year	% of Votes	Unemployment Rate (% of total labor force)	Income Inequality (Top 1% National Income Share)	Personal remittances in current US\$ (in Billions)	FDI in current US\$ (in Billions)	GDP Per Capita in current US\$
1984	7.74	n.d.	n.d.	2.3	0.02	276.67
1989	11.36	n.d.	n.d.	2.61	0.25	346.11
1991	20.11	5.45	10.2	3.29	0.07	303.06
1996	20.29	5.65	13.2	8.77	2.43	399.95
1998	25.59	5.63	14.4	9.48	2.64	413.30
1999	23.75	5.7	14.7	11.12	2.17	442.00
2004	22.16	5.68	18.4	18.75	5.43	627.77
2009	18.80	5.58	20.8	49.20	35.58	1,101.96
2014	31.34	5.61	21.3	70.39	34.58	1,573.88
2019	34.76	5.37	n.d.	83.13	50.61	2,104.15

Source: Data adapted from Election Results (2020), World Bank (2020), and World Inequality Database (2020).

Table 2 Vote % for Vox compared to economic indicators for Spain

Year	% of Votes	Unemployment Rate (% of total labor force)	Income Inequality (Top 1% National Income Share)	Personal remittances in current US\$ (in Billions)	FDI in current US\$ (in Billions)	GDP Per Capita in current US\$
2015	0.23	22.06	11.8	2.67	23.04	25,732.02
2016	0.20	19.64	12.1	2.63	44.25	26,505.34
April 2019	10.26	13.96	12.2	3.01	50.61	29,613.67

Nov. 2019	15.08	13.96	12.2	3.2	50.61	29,613.67
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Source: Data adapted from Elecciones Generales (2020), World Bank (2020), and World Inequality Database (2020).

India’s unemployment rate does not change much, fluctuating between 5.3-5.8%. Spain’s unemployment rate fluctuates, and appears to be decreasing after the emergence of Vox; however, in the few years right before the first general election that Vox got any votes in 2015, there appears to be the highest rates of unemployment in the 24-26% range. Income inequality in India had been on the rise and has more than doubled from the 1980s, but has tapered off at 21% for the past decade. Income inequality in Spain hovers between the 10-13% range, so it appears to overall not have much drastic change. Hence, unemployment rate and income inequality in both countries are not increasing.

Remittances in India have increased a lot over the years from single-digit billions in the 1980s and 1990s to over 60 billion in the past decade, crossing 80 Billion in 2019. Remittances in Spain overall seem to be increasing marginally over the past two decades going from 1 Billion in 2004 to over 3 Billion in 2019, but saw a significant dip from the billions to the millions at the turn of the century.

Foreign direct investment in India has seen a similar trend as remittances, going from being in the millions in the 1980s and 1990s to reaching 30 billion in the past decade and crossing 50 billion in 2019, hinting that India has in some ways benefitted from economic globalization. There is an interesting paradox where Hindu nationalism stands to benefit from some elements of globalization, namely “from foreign investments and diaspora connections, while rejecting the modernizing elements in terms of symbolic globalization and the import of the neoliberal individual” (Annavarapu 2015, 135). Foreign direct investment in Spain fluctuates quite a bit as well with the highest being at 74 billion in 2008. It then returned to being between

20-40 billion for most of the prior decade, but saw a significant drop to 11 billion in 2019. As I expected, Spain does not seem to be experiencing as significant of a benefit from economic globalization in the sense that Spain is not receiving skyrocketing amounts of money from abroad like India, which is the number one country in the world receiving the most remittances thanks to international networks and the widespread diaspora (Statista 2020).

India's GDP per capita is on the rise as well from the low hundreds in the 1980s and 1990s to reaching the 1,000s in the past decade and surpassing 2,000 in 2019. Spain's GDP per capita appears to be increasing overall, however, the highest was at 35,000 in 2008 and has since hovered between mid-20s-low 30s. Except for foreign direct investment in Spain, remittances and GDP per capita are not decreasing in both countries.

Political Factors

Next, I present two tables below that compare the political indicators with the percentage of votes that the BJP received in election years and the percentage of votes that Vox received in election years. They are followed by discussion on any increases, decreases, or stagnation for each variable, comparing India and Spain.

Table 3 Vote % for the BJP compared to political indicators for India

Year	% of Votes	Voice and Accountability	Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism	Government Effectiveness	Regulatory Quality	Rule of Law	Control of Corruption
1984	7.74	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.
1989	11.36	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.
1991	20.11	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.
1996	20.29	0.48	-0.97	-0.11	-0.55	0.31	-0.38

1998	25.59	0.39	-1.2	-0.06	-0.46	0.35	-0.25
1999	23.75	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.
2004	22.16	0.4	-1.28	-0.16	-0.43	0.04	-0.41
2009	18.80	0.46	-1.35	-0.01	-0.33	0.01	-0.45
2014	31.34	0.41	-1	-0.21	-0.45	-0.06	-0.43
2019	34.76	0.29	-0.7	-0.17	-0.16	-0.03	-0.23

Source: Data adapted from Election Results (2020) and World Bank (2020).

Table 4 Vote % for Vox compared to political indicators for Spain

Year	% of Votes	Voice and Accountability	Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism	Government Effectiveness	Regulatory Quality	Rule of Law	Control of Corruption
2015	0.23	1.04	0.25	1.17	0.81	0.9	0.58
2016	0.20	1.04	0.41	1.12	1.01	0.98	0.52
April 2019	10.26	1.09	0.32	1	1.05	0.98	0.65
Nov. 2019	15.08	1.09	0.32	1	1.05	0.98	0.65

Source: Data adapted from Elecciones Generales (2020) and World Bank (2020).

Voice and accountability for India had been somewhat level between 0.4-0.46 from 2002 to 2016, but has dropped to 0.29 in 2019. Voice and Accountability for Spain overall has a decreasing trend from the initial 1.32 in 1996, but it was at its lowest at 0.99 in 2013 before the creation of Vox and has since slightly improved to 1.09 in 2019.

Until 2014, Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism in India was below -1, but has since been improving reaching -0.7 in 2019. Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism in Spain has been generally improving in the past decade to 0.32 in 2019 from its lowest point at -0.47 in 2009, but that is still lower than its highest point at 0.46 in 2000.

Government Effectiveness in India was slightly below 0 prior to 2014, but since has risen slightly above 0. Government Effectiveness overall has a decreasing trend from its highest point at 1.88 in 2003. The values were improving reaching 1.17 in 2016 before Vox's rise to power, but has since dropped to 1 in 2019.

Regulatory Quality in India has also improved from being below -0.4 prior to 2014 to reaching -0.16 in 2019. Regulatory Quality in Spain overall has a decreasing trend from its highest point at 1.37 in 2002, but it is on the rise again after hitting its lowest point of 0.75 in 2014, reaching 1.05 in 2019.

Rule of Law for India was slightly above 0 prior to 2010 and has since then relatively been slightly below 0. Rule of Law in Spain overall has a decreasing trend from its highest point at 1.43 in 2000, falling to 0.98 by 2019.

Control of corruption for India was at its worst in the -0.5 range in the few years right before the landslide BJP election in 2014 that saw Narendra Modi become PM; however, those levels have been generally decreasing since the BJP's ascension to power, which is not what I expected, as I expected the levels to worsen throughout the BJP's time in power. However, this does show how there was considerable amounts of corruption right before the BJP gaining their newfound stronghold. The Control of Corruption in Spain is significantly worsening dropping from levels above 1 to well below 1 in the few years preceding Vox's first general election.

Overall, the majority of political indicators for India seemed to actually improve with the rise of the BJP led government, aside from Voice and Accountability. Also, some of the lowest levels of the indices occurred prior to the BJP's victory, supporting the notion that weakening governance infrastructure and lack of faith within the population for the leading party, which was the Indian National Congress, can lead to a shift in supporting the opposition party, being the

BJP. Similarly, for Spain, all of the indicators were decreasing, but have seen some slight improvement since the creation of Vox. Government Effectiveness was the only indicator to continue to worsen into 2019.

Socio-Cultural Factors

Lastly, I have two tables below that compare the socio-cultural indicators with the percentage of votes that the BJP received in election years and the percentage of votes that Vox received in election years. They are followed by discussion on any increases, decreases, or stagnation for each variable, comparing India and Spain.

Table 5 Vote % for the BJP compared to socio-cultural indicators for India

Year	% of Votes	Level of International Migrants as a % of Total Population	Total Number of Persons of Concern	Hate Crimes Reported in Media	Muslims as a % of Total Population
1984	7.74	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d
1989	11.36	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d
1991	20.11	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	12.61
1996	20.29	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.
1998	25.59	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.
1999	23.75	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.
2004	22.16	n.d.	162,983	n.d.	n.d.
2009	18.80	n.d.	190,753	n.d.	n.d.
2014	31.34	n.d.	204,983	18	n.d.
2019	34.76	0.4	225,030	n.d.	n.d.

Source: Data adapted from Election Results (2020), Migration Policy Institute (2020), and Statista (2020).

Table 6 Vote % for Vox compared to socio-cultural indicators for Spain

Year	% of Votes	Level of	Total Number	Hate Crimes	Muslims as a
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		International Migrants as a % of Total Population	of Persons of Concern	Reported in Media	% of Total Population
2015	0.23	12.6	17,910	1328	4.06
2016	0.20	n.d.	34,354	1272	4.13
April 2019	10.26	13.1	195,027	1706	4.44
Nov. 2019	15.08	13.1	195,027	1706	4.44

Source: Data adapted from Elecciones Generales (2020), Migration Policy Institute (2020), Observatorio Andalusi (2020), Statista (2020), and World Bank (2020).

For the socio-cultural factors, there are lots of gaps for years where no data was recorded; however, some trends can be gleaned from the years that are available. For instance, the level of migrants entering India is decreasing from 1.7% in 1970 to stagnating at 0.4% since 2010. I expected this as immigration is not as much of a hot button issue in India as it is in Europe. However, the number of persons of concern has been increasing. The level of migrants for Spain was significantly high in 2010 as in 2019 being over 13%, so these conditions were present in the last decade as well, indicating that it was not enough in 2010, but other situations have changed since to allow for Vox’s emergence. The numbers of refugees entering Spain has significantly increased as well since Vox’s arrival going from below 10,000 prior to 2014 to nearly 200,000 in 2019. For the migration indicators for India, the data shows the opposite of the traditional expectation that increases in immigrants brings about increases in support for ethno-religious parties, but there is some support in that refugee numbers appear to be on the rise. For Spain, the migrant population continues to accelerate, pointing toward the connection between immigration being one of the main party platform issues for far-right ethno-religious nationalist parties.

The number of hate crimes occurring in India reported in the media has significantly increased from 9 in 2013 to 92 in 2018. The number of hate crimes recorded in Spain by the

police has significantly increased from 93 in 2009 to 1706 in 2019. This ties in with the increase in violence perpetuated against minority populations.

The Muslim population has also steadily been on the rise from decade to decade in India, but that growth is largely attributed to internal reproduction of Muslims already in the country rather than migration as would be the case in Europe. The Muslim population in Spain has steadily been on the rise since 2003 and a large portion of that growth is attributed to immigration of Muslim populations from North African countries such as Morocco. This relates to anti-Muslim sentiment supported by ethnoreligious nationalist parties.

Quantitative Analysis

Using Excel functions, I calculated the beta-coefficient, correlation coefficient (Pearson's r), and the p-value for each of the independent variables versus the dependent variable for the case of the BJP in India and for the case of Vox in Spain. The correlation coefficient allows me to determine the strength of any relationship between each variable and the rise of ethnoreligious nationalist parties. The p-value allows me to gauge the statistical significance of the relationship between these variables. I present these values in tables below. After analyzing the strength and direction of any potential correlation, I evaluate my hypotheses and their corresponding null hypotheses.

Table 7 Vote % for the BJP compared to Economic Factors for India

Economic Factors	beta	r	p
Unemployment Rate	-21.002	-0.428	0.0002
Income Inequality	1.291	0.754	0.0463
Personal Remittances in current US\$	0.199	0.74	0.7168

Foreign Direct Investment in current US\$	0.279	0.655	0.0046
GDP Per Capita in current US\$	0.01	0.749	0.0000

Table 8 Vote % for Vox compared to Economic Factors for Spain

Economic Factors	beta	r	p
Unemployment Rate	-1.752	-0.928	0.0703
Income Inequality	29.76	0.728	0.2785
Personal Remittances in current US\$	22.968	0.955	0.3092
Foreign Direct Investment in current US\$	-0.397	-0.793	0.0654
GDP Per Capita in current US\$	0.004	0.944	0

For India, unemployment rate does not have a correlation. Income inequality has a strong, positive correlation. Personal remittances have a strong, positive correlation. Foreign direct investment has a positive correlation. GDP per capita has a strong, positive correlation.

For Spain, unemployment rate has a very strong, negative correlation. Income inequality has a strong, positive correlation. Personal remittances have a very strong, positive correlation. Foreign direct investment has a strong, negative correlation. GDP per capita has a very strong, positive correlation.

The p-values for India demonstrate that unemployment rate, income inequality, foreign direct investment, and GDP per capita are statistically significant as the p-value is below 0.05. Personal remittances is not statistically significant as the p-value is greater than 0.05.

The p-values for Spain demonstrate that GDP per capita is statistically significant as the p-values is below 0.05. Unemployment rate, income inequality, personal remittances, and foreign

direct investment are not statistically significant as the p-value is greater than 0.05.

Table 9 Vote % for the BJP compared to Political Factors for India

Political Factors	beta	r	p
Voice and Accountability	-80.343	-0.839	0.00002
Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism	20.262	0.766	0.00001
Government Effectiveness	16.75	0.353	0.00002
Regulatory Quality	25.43	0.541	0.00001
Rule of Law	-14.97	-0.421	0.00002
Control of Corruption	37.413	0.556	0.00001

Table 10 Vote % for Vox compared to Political Factors for Spain

Political Factors	beta	r	p
Voice and Accountability	256.3	0.956	0.2514
Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism	-10.12	-0.086	0.1894
Government Effectiveness	-83.386	-0.929	0.2578
Regulatory Quality	45.23	0.672	0.2498
Rule of Law	106.542	0.551	0.2509
Control of Corruption	108.678	0.881	0.2427

For India, Voice and Accountability has a strong, negative correlation. Political Stability

and Absence of Violence/Terrorism has a strong positive correlation. Government Effectiveness does not have any correlation. Regulatory Quality has a very weak, positive correlation. Rule of Law does not have any correlation. Control of Corruption has a very weak, positive correlation.

For Spain, Voice and Accountability has a very strong, positive correlation. Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism does not have any correlation. Government Effectiveness has a very strong, negative correlation. Regulatory Quality has a positive correlation. Rule of Law has a very weak, positive correlation. Control of Corruption has a strong, positive correlation.

The p-values for India demonstrate that Voice and Accountability, Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism, Government Effectiveness, Regulatory Quality, Rule of Law, and Control of Corruption are all statistically significant as the p-value is below 0.05.

The p-values for Spain demonstrate that Voice and Accountability, Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism, Government Effectiveness, Regulatory Quality, Rule of Law, and Control of Corruption are all not statistically significant as the p-value is greater than 0.05.

Table 11 Vote % for the BJP compared to Socio-Cultural Factors for India

Socio-cultural Factors	beta	r	p
Level of International Migrants as a % of total population	undefined	undefined	0.00002
Total Number of Persons of Concern	0.0002	0.794	0
Hate Crimes Reported in Media	undefined	undefined	0.44718
Muslims as a % of Total Population	undefined	undefined	0.00701

Table 12 Vote % for Vox compared to Socio-Cultural Factors for Spain

Socio-cultural Factors	beta	r	p
Level of International Migrants as a % of total population	25.6	0.957	0.8269
Total Number of Persons of Concern	0.00008	0.954	0.0163
Hate Crimes Reported by the Police	0.03127	0.952	0.0002
Muslims as a % of Total Population	36.38712	0.946	0.4573

For the socio-cultural variables, given a lack of data recorded and shared by governments, especially in India's case, I was unable to calculate values. All of the values listed as undefined did not have the necessary minimum of at least 2 different points of data for independent variables that coincide with election years.

Therefore, for India the only variable whose correlation I could determine was the total number of persons of concern, which has a strong, positive correlation. For Spain, I was able to make a calculation for all variables in this category, each having a very strong, positive correlation.

The p-values for India demonstrate that international migrants, persons of concern, and Muslim population are statistically significant as the p-value is below 0.05. Hate crimes is not statistically significant as the p-value is greater than 0.05.

The p-values for Spain demonstrate that persons of concern and hate crimes are statistically significant as the p-value is below 0.05. International migrants and Muslim population are not statistically significant as the p-value is greater than 0.05.

Analysis of Hypotheses

My main hypothesis was that all three categories of variables would have an influence in

the rise of ethno-religious nationalist parties to some degree with socio-cultural factors playing the strongest role. Looking at the r for each of the variables in each category, both countries do have some degree of economic, political, and socio-cultural factors at play. For India, socio-cultural factors were the strongest, followed by economic factors, and political factors being the weakest. The same order of strength occurs for Spain as well. Additionally, the correlation with all three categories is stronger for Spain than that of India. Therefore, the data supports my main hypothesis.

Revisiting my additional variable-focused hypotheses, the first one regarding increase for the unemployment rate and income inequality, is not supported by the data. The unemployment rate and income inequality for both countries stagnate or decrease. Furthermore, the unemployment rate for India does not have a correlation and has a negative correlation for Spain. However, there is a strong, positive correlation for income inequality for both countries.

The second hypothesis, regarding decrease for remittances received, foreign direct investment, and GDP per capita, is not supported by the data. All three are increasing significantly for India, and remittances and GDP per capita are increasing for Spain. Moreover, personal remittances and GDP per capita for India have strong, positive correlation and foreign direct investment has a moderate, positive correlation. For Spain, there is a very strong, positive correlation for personal remittances and GDP per capita. However, Spain's foreign direct investment has a strong, negative correlation.

The third hypothesis, regarding the worsening of the political variables, is not fully supported by the data. Quite a number of them have actually seem some slight to moderate improvements with the growth of these parties in the past decade. However, Voice and Accountability decreases for India, and Government Effectiveness decreases for Spain. Also, an

interesting point to note is that some of the lowest values were recorded, even though not necessarily the all-time lowest, in the few years before 2015. In this sense, 2014 is an important year where the BJP won its first landslide victory and Vox first entered the scene and received votes in the General Election. Additionally, there are a few variables that have a negative correlation including, Voice and Accountability and Rule of Law for India and Political Stability and Government Effectiveness for Spain, hence there is partial support for the hypothesis, but the overall data does not support this hypothesis.

The fourth hypothesis, regarding increase for the socio-cultural variables is supported by the data. For both countries, persons of concern, hate crimes, and Muslims are increasing. Level of migrants is increasing for Spain, but has stagnated for India. Additionally, there is a strong, positive correlation for persons of concern for India, and a very strong, positive correlation for level of migrants, persons of concern, hate crimes, and Muslims for Spain.

Lastly, I fail to reject the null hypothesis for variable-focused hypothesis one, two, and three for India and Spain. I reject the null hypothesis for variable-focused hypothesis four for India and Spain.

Chapter 4

Conclusions, Limitations, and Future Study

Conclusions

In looking at the history, current contexts, and data trends of Indian and Spanish politics, economic issues, and socio-cultural outlooks, I was able to draw some similarities. Primarily, there is more buy in for an us versus them narrative, arising from the perceived threat of “the Other” as minority populations continue to increase. Anti-minority sentiment permeates across various minority identities, but in particular against Muslim, refugee/asylum seeker, and migrant populations as hate crimes rose. In addition, there is more support for the reclamation of a Hindu nation for India and a Christian nation for Spain fueled by anti-Muslim sentiment and aided by reconstructions of religious and national history. Also, the governments have been facing some degree of weakened governance structures and corruption, creating a circumstance for a shift in which parties had control. This provided the segue for the BJP and Vox to ascend, and they were further bolstered by territorial disputes that threatened national integration in the form of Jammu and Kashmir and Catalonia as support for opposition toward movements deemed anti-Spain and anti-India grew.

Furthermore, given that the highest values for Pearson’s r were for socio-cultural factors, particularly honing in on the total number of persons of concern, which had the highest Pearson’s r that was also statistically significant, I come to the conclusion that socio-cultural factors, particularly focused on growth in minority populations, play the strongest role in influencing support for these ethnoreligious nationalist parties. Some political and economic factors also play

a role, signaling that it takes a confluence of factors to give rise to ethnoreligious nationalist parties, just not to the same extent. Given, these contextual connections and that there are similarities in trends for certain variables such as Government Effectiveness and Persons of Concern, I believe that there is a potential for support for Vox to also continue to grow, maybe not to the extent of the landslide majority of the BJP, but Vox could definitely become an even more contentious force in Spain's government. Moreover, it is interesting to note that both parties originated as a split from an established pre-existing party, which helps with legitimacy as well as gives them some of their follower base. Therefore, there is a better chance at longevity than if the parties formulated completely on their own.

Limitations

The major hurdle that I faced was the lack of data available and gaps within the data that I was able to find. In some instances, even if data was available over a span of some years, there may not have been data recorded for certain years in between, which makes it difficult if data for the independent variables is not available for as many election years as possible. In addition, a point to note is the difficulty in collecting data for India as there are some discrepancies between the literature and the data on certain variables such as the unemployment rate. Furthermore, as Vox has only been in existence for less than a decade, the data points that I could use was further reduced, so even if there was a relationship between the variables, I was not able to show statistical significance for a majority of the ones for Vox and Spain.

Also, another limitation that did not detract too much from the project was that I have not learned Hindi yet, so I would not have been able to access any resources in Hindi for India in the way that I was able to use my knowledge and background in Spanish to access some resources in

Spanish pertaining to Spain. However, this was not a major issue given that a vast majority of sources relating to India are published in English.

Future Study

While this study focuses on the BJP in India and Vox in Spain, this could be expanded to analyzing other cases of ethnoreligious nationalist parties in other countries as well. It could possibly become a larger-N study, further contributing to the analysis of this global phenomenon. This study could also build into a deeper state-level analysis of BJP and Vox success in India and Spain; however, this would require being able to acquire state level data for the different independent variables used, which I was not able to discover. Nevertheless, if this is possible in the future, that would provide more data points that can be evaluated.

In addition, it will be valuable to further research on the effects faced by minority populations, especially Muslims, international migrants, and refugees as a result of the rise in these ethnoreligious nationalist parties. Especially given that they face heightened oppression, and they are scapegoated for national crises such as the Covid-19 pandemic.

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