

Bringing Down Dominant Parties:

Evidence from Indian States

Adam Ziegfeld¹

Maya Tudor²

January 2013

Abstract

Under what conditions do dominant political parties lose power in democracies? While existing explanations for single party dominance in democracies largely neglect the role of opposition parties or rely on single case studies to assert the importance of opposition parties, we show that opposition coordination—at the stage of winning votes, forming governments, and remaining in power—systematically undermines single-party dominance. Employing an original dataset on the subnational governments of India, we demonstrate that a coordinated opposition consisting of a small number of ideologically similar parties is best equipped to bring down a dominant party. By contrast, when the opposition is highly fragmented and ideologically heterogeneous, coordination is far less likely, and a dominant party is more likely to retain its preeminent political position.

¹ Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of Political Science, University of Chicago. Email: ziegfeld@uchicago.edu.

² Supernumerary Teaching Fellow in Politics, St. John's College, University of Oxford. Email: maya.tudor@sjc.ox.ac.uk.

The authors would like to thank Kentaro Maeda, Michele Margolis, Rachel Beatty Riedl, and participants in the Nuffield Postdoc Lunch Seminar for helpful feedback and suggestions.

Many democracies across the developing world emerged from colonial rule with single parties that dominated national politics. Under what conditions did these political parties enjoy more prolonged periods of uninterrupted power? More broadly, across democracies in the developing and developed world alike, when and how does single party dominance give way to greater turnover? We shed light on these questions by emphasizing the role of an effective opposition in ending single party dominance at three distinct stages: winning votes, forming governments, and maintaining government unity. To undo single party dominance, oppositions must win votes in such a way as to translate their popular support into legislative seats; they must form a government in which the dominant party is absent or occupies a subordinate role; and they must remain in power long enough that they can credibly undermine any lingering concerns that only the dominant party can provide stable government. If, at any of these stages, the opposition fails, then single party dominance is unlikely to end.

By elucidating the dynamics of single party dominance—one of the greatest challenges to democratic consolidation—this article contributes to the study of democratization. Existing literature explains the persistence of dominant parties in competitive multiparty systems largely in terms of the dominant party itself and its successful vote winning strategies. Even scholarship that addresses the role of the opposition in democracies with dominant parties rarely places opposition parties front and center as explanations for single party dominance and its demise. Moreover, it relies almost exclusively on single case studies. Twinning a large-n analysis based on an original dataset with case studies, this article presents systematic evidence that dominant parties do not remain dominant simply because they pursue effective vote winning strategies. Their dominance also rests on the opposition and its ability to coordinate. Moreover, certain kinds of oppositions are more likely to coordinate, namely those that are less fragmented and, to

a lesser extent, those that are less ideologically diverse. Ours is the first article, to our knowledge, that, first, systematically demonstrates the importance of the opposition in influencing the end of single-party dominance in a democracy, second, identifies specific characteristics of a democratic opposition that makes it more likely to undermine single-party dominance, and third, substantiates these claims at the three distinct stages required to undo dominance: winning votes, forming governments, and maintaining government stability. Empirically, we examine the case of India, a country that has received surprisingly little attention in the broader comparative literature on dominant parties.

The remainder of this article is organized as follows. The first section highlights how the existing literature neglects the role of opposition parties and then formulates a series of testable hypotheses based on the literature. The second section quantitatively tests these hypotheses using a unique new dataset on subnational elections in India, providing support for our argument that the opposition influences the dominant party's ability to remain in power. A third section lays out a case study comparison of two Indian states, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh, which underscores the pivotal role of opposition parties in sustaining or undermining single-party dominance. A final section concludes by discussing the generalizability of our findings to other democracies with dominant parties.

I. Single-Party Dominance Within Democracies

A dominant party is one that remains in power, either alone or as the head of a coalition comprised of much smaller parties, for several successive electoral cycles and whose future defeat is believed to be unlikely.³ While much recent literature has focused on dominant parties

³ As a rule of thumb, we take five or more consecutive electoral victories as a sign of dominance.

in competitive authoritarian regimes,⁴ parties can also achieve dominance in democracies, albeit through different means than in authoritarian settings. Indeed, dominant parties have governed in the Bahamas, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Sweden, and Trinidad and Tobago; they continue to govern Botswana and Luxembourg; and new dominant parties appear to be emerging in Namibia, South Africa, and perhaps Turkey.⁵

Identifying the conditions that end single party dominance is important because the presence of dominant parties within a democracy may raise serious concerns about the quality of that democracy. Indeed, if as Przeworski suggests, democracy is defined by parties losing elections, then democracies with dominant parties would seem to lack one of democracy's constitutive features.⁶ Where a dominant party faces little prospect of losing power, free and fair elections may not serve their intended function of promoting accountability. The waning years of Christian Democratic dominance in Italy and LDP dominance in Japan, as well as growing concerns about corruption in South Africa under the ANC suggest that long spells in power can breed complacency and corruption. At the same time, dominant parties may also be better equipped to promote the public good. Dominant parties comfortably ensconced in power may have longer time horizons and be unusually free to pursue long-term policy goals. The Swedish Social Democrats, for example, used their extended spell in power to build one of the world's most comprehensive welfare states, and Congress' long tenure in power in India has been credited with consolidating democracy under highly unfavorable circumstances.

⁴ Magaloni 2006, Greene 2007, Slater 2010.

⁵ Greene 2007, 258 lists the dominant parties in democratic regimes. We also include Botswana as a democracy. His examples of dominant parties in authoritarian regimes include Gambia, Malaysia, Mexico, Senegal, Singapore, and Taiwan.

⁶ Przeworski 1991, 10.

Most explanations of single-party dominance in democracies focus on the characteristics or actions of the dominant party.⁷ Some explanations for single-party dominance highlight the party's decolonization- or democratization-related legitimacy,⁸ their regime-founding roles,⁹ or their monopoly of the ideological center.¹⁰ Other literature suggests that particular strategies of a dominant party are effective in ensuring continued dominance. For example, dominant parties can stigmatize the political opposition¹¹ or use public policy to generate loyalty among beneficiaries¹² or patronage to buy off clients.¹³ Finally, factional conflict within the dominant party has been linked to the end of single-party dominance.¹⁴ In some cases, the overwhelming focus on the dominant party is justified. If a dominant party wins crushing popular majorities, then there is little that an opposition can do so long as the dominant party's strategies remain successful. However, in some of the most iconic cases of dominant parties in multiparty democracies—India, Israel, Italy, and Sweden—the dominant party routinely failed to win a popular majority. In contexts where the opposition actually wins more votes than the dominant party, the relative neglect of opposition parties is especially surprising, as these should be precisely the settings where opposition parties are most important.

Despite the literature's relative inattention to opposition parties, scholars have made one prominent claim about oppositions, which is that an uncoordinated opposition helps enable and sustain single party dominance.¹⁵ Intuitive as this argument may be, research in this area suffers from numerous shortcomings. First, the hypothesis that opposition coordination affects single

⁷ Research on competitive authoritarian regimes or newly democratizing regimes tends to focus more on opposition parties. See Greene 2007, Arriola forthcoming.

⁸ Ferree 2010, Tudor 2013.

⁹ Arian and Barnes 1974

¹⁰ Riker 1976.

¹¹ Levite and Tarrow 1983.

¹² Pontussen 1990

¹³ Chubb 1982, Scheiner 2006, Magaloni 2006, Greene 2007, and Arriola forthcoming.

¹⁴ Sakaiya and Maeda 2011.

¹⁵ Riker 1976, Pempel 1990b, Cox 1997, Greene 2007, Arriola forthcoming.

party dominance has never been subjected to systematic empirical testing. Instead, this claim is most often made in single case studies in which there is little or no variation in levels of opposition coordination or single-party dominance. Second, most arguments about coordination have suggested that specific kinds of electoral systems—namely, proportional representation (PR) and single non-transferable vote (SNTV)—are responsible for coordination problems, without adequately considering the possibility of coordination problems in single member district (SMD) systems. Third, most research focused on oppositions looks either at coordination in winning votes or coordination in forming governments. This work almost never considers the continued coordination necessary to keep opposition governments in power, and certainly never examines coordination in vote winning, government formation, and government maintenance all together. Fourth, the literature largely fails to thoroughly consider whether certain kinds of oppositions are more prone to coordination. We address these four concerns through tests of three specific hypotheses about opposition coordination.

Hypothesis 1: In an SMD system, the opposition more effectively undermines single-party dominance when it coordinates so as to field a small number of district-level in elections.

One important argument concerning dominant parties is that electoral rules enable single party dominance by complicating efforts at opposition coordination at the vote winning stage. Cox credits Japan's single nontransferable vote (SNTV) system with bolstering the dominance of Japan's LDP.¹⁶ Under SNTV, parties can field as many candidates as there are seats in a multimember district, but voters vote for only a single candidate. The candidates with the highest number of votes are elected, regardless of the vote totals for the party as a whole. Consequently,

¹⁶ Cox 1997. See also Christensen 1996.

opposition parties need to coordinate. Fielding too many candidates might divide the opposition vote resulting in few opposition candidates winning enough votes for election. Fielding too few candidates may ensure that some opposition candidates win, but it risks conceding too many seats to the dominant party.

Though different electoral systems may present obstacles to opposition coordination, coordination problems should be pervasive across electoral systems. Wherever an opposition can potentially waste votes during the translation of votes into seats—that is, potentially win seat shares substantially smaller than their vote shares—it must coordinate to maximize its legislative representation. Any aspect of the electoral system that advantages large parties and penalizes small parties should put the opposition at a considerable disadvantage relative to the dominant party. For example, electoral thresholds common in PR systems typically ensure that some share of the vote for small parties is wasted. SMD systems should also present opposition parties with major coordination challenges since the largest party typically wins disproportionately large seat shares relative to its vote shares. For example, 21 members of the British House of Commons won their seats in 2010 with less than 35% of the vote. In each case, they faced multiple rivals who split the remaining vote. Had the opposition parties in any of these electoral districts united behind a common candidate, the winners in these districts would likely have lost decisively. Thus, we expect that at the vote winning stage, opposition coordination is extremely important for undermining single party dominance in democracies with SMD electoral systems.

Hypothesis 2: Ideologically heterogeneous oppositions are less likely to coordinate at the vote winning, government formation, and government maintenance stages than ideologically homogeneous oppositions.

Some have cited the difficulties involved in forming coalitions of the extremes as reasons for the prolonged dominance of a single party.¹⁷ When a dominant party sits at the center of the political spectrum, opposition parties on the left and right must coordinate, forging a coalition of ideological extremes. In winning votes, forming governments, and maintaining themselves in power, oppositions with ideologically distant parties should have a harder time coordinating—agreeing on common candidates, allocating ministerial portfolios, and governing with a common agenda—than more ideologically compact oppositions. Although this idea of ideological heterogeneity has been invoked in explaining the presence of dominant parties, this insight has never been clearly articulated and then tested as a concrete hypothesis aimed at explaining variation in the presence or absence of single-party dominance.

Hypothesis 3: Fragmented oppositions will be less likely to coordinate at the vote winning, government formation, and government maintenance stages than consolidated oppositions.

Existing literature has obliquely suggested that highly fragmented oppositions help sustain dominant parties. For instance, Pempel contends that PR systems encourage single-party dominance by facilitating a fragmented party system in which parties with as little as 35% of the vote can occupy “a preponderant bargaining position to become the core of any government.”¹⁸ This claim implies that more fragmented oppositions inhibit opposition coordination. Pempel focuses on bargaining power, but other mechanisms might be at work. Surely, fragmentation also matters because coordination is more difficult when the number of coordinating actors is greater.

¹⁷ Riker 1976, Pempel 1990b, Laver and Schofield 1990, Greene 2007, and Scheiner 2007.

¹⁸ Pempel 1990b, 336.

Coordination should also be more difficult when an opposition lacks a focal point for coordination. If the opposition is fragmented, it may be plagued by infighting among rivals jockeying to lead the opposition and therefore lack a party that can spearhead coordination. Pempel's claim focuses on the government formation stage, but the challenges that a fragmented opposition should face ought to occur in vote winning, forming governments, and remaining in power. Just as with ideological heterogeneity, this insight has not yet been clearly articulated as a hypothesis intended to explain why some oppositions coordinate and others do not.

Of course, these hypotheses are not exhaustive; the literature hints at some additional hypotheses as well. For example, Arriola has recently argued that where business is autonomous from state-controlled capital, the opposition can marshal the private resources necessary to buy off a multi-ethnic coalition and coalesce in executive elections.¹⁹ However, we focus on those hypotheses that we can test with our data from India. In India, state control of the economy does not vary subnationally during this period, and India's parliamentary system allows multiple parties to govern together in coalition, thereby eliminating the need to coalesce on a single opposition presidential candidate. Therefore, we leave Arriola's, and potentially other, hypotheses for future testing on other, more appropriate, data.

II. Hypothesis Testing: Evidence from Subnational Elections in India

Testing hypotheses about the maintenance and demise of single-party dominance has long been difficult because the universe of cases is small and diverse, ranging from 1950s Japan to present-day Botswana. Subnational electoral data from India offers ideal testing grounds for the effects of opposition coordination on single-party dominance for several reasons. First and foremost, by focusing on Indian states, we have a sufficient number of observations to conduct

¹⁹ Arriola forthcoming.

quantitative analysis. Second, given concerns about comparability of different countries at different world-historical periods, using Indian election data provides us with comparable observations. India's state governments all have a parliamentary form of government and employ the same SMD electoral system.²⁰ Economically and culturally, India's states have far more in common with each other than do most of the democracies with dominant parties.

Third, despite their similarities on many dimensions, Indian states are sufficiently distinct from one another that they constitute independent observations. Each state has a unique party system.²¹ The same party may have different social bases across states; national parties will frequently gain support in some states while losing votes in others, even during the same election; and state party systems include distinct regional parties with very different origins and social bases. Importantly for this study, Indian states also vary considerably in their experience with single party dominance. Upon independence in 1947, the Indian National Congress (referred to as Congress) was the dominant party nationally and the largest party in every major state. Yet during the following decades, the party's fortunes diverged considerably across states. In Kerala, for instance, Congress never really achieved full-blown dominance, while in the neighboring state of Andhra Pradesh, Congress retained a stranglehold on power until the early 1980s. Finally, Indian states are meaningful political units. They are as populous as medium-sized or large countries, and state-level politics is highly salient. State governments implement policy in areas such as health, sanitation, education, and law and order that affect the everyday well being of citizens, and states operate large bureaucracies that constitute major sources of employment and patronage.

²⁰ Until 1960, some states had a modest number of double-member districts.

²¹ See, for example, Chhibber and Petrocik 1989; Erdman 1967, chapter 6; and Fickett 1976, chapter IV.

The major drawback to focusing on Indian states is that single-party dominance at the subnational level is not perfectly analogous to dominance at the national level, in large part because national governments can actively buttress or undermine single-party dominance at the subnational level. However, subnational single-party dominance need not be all that different from its national-level counterpart. Subnational governments may be subject to intervention by a party dominant at the national level that aims to keep its state governments dominant as well, but one could easily imagine scenarios in which non-legislative institutions or outside forces also intervene to keep a dominant-party in power at the national-level. For example, a military or judicial establishment packed with a dominant party's supporters or even a foreign government sympathetic to the dominant party could intervene in subtle or overt ways to ensure the continuation of single-party dominance in national politics. Thus, while we bear in mind the possibility of differences between national and subnational dominance, the logic of our hypotheses is equally generalizable to national-level politics, and the specter of outside intervention in legislative politics is not unique to subnational governments. Moreover, we are hardly the first to consider subnationally dominant parties as a means to better understand single-party dominance more generally.²² Nevertheless, to guard against national-level political changes influencing our findings at the state level, we focus on period from prior to 1989, during which time Congress was dominant at the national level.²³

The data we employ to test our hypotheses come from India's fifteen largest states,²⁴ which together account for more than 95% of India's population. We examine the period from India's first post-independence elections in 1951 through 1989. Data on state election outcomes

²² See for example Abedi and Schneider 2010.

²³ For a discussion of when Congress dominance ended, see Rudolph and Rudolph 2008. During this period, Congress was out of power at the national level from 1977-80.

²⁴ Subnational studies of India typically focus only on the major states. See, for example, Chhibber and Nooruddin 2004, and Bussell 2008. The states included in our analysis are included in the appendix.

come from the Election Commission of India. However, to test our hypotheses we also need state-level data on 1) electoral alliances, 2) the partisan composition of governments, and 3) government termination. Since no such data previously existed, we combed through dozens of secondary sources on state-level politics in India to collect this information for all 134 subnational elections in major states during the period under consideration.²⁵ Summary statistics for all variables used in our analysis are available in the appendix.

We first test Hypothesis 1, namely, whether the opposition's ability to coordinate on a small number of candidates at the district-level predicts the success of the dominant party.²⁶ Figure 1 plots Congress' vote share (x-axis) against its seat share (y-axis) for each of the 134 major state elections between 1951 and 1989. White circles represent elections in which Congress headed all governments formed after the election while black squares represent elections after which an opposition-led government came to power at some point during the legislative mandate and, as such, undermined or ended Congress dominance. The dashed line has a slope of one and its intercept at zero, indicating a perfectly proportional relationship between Congress' votes and seats. Observations above the line are those for which Congress' seat share was greater than its vote share, whereas observations below the line are those for which Congress' seat share is less than its vote share.

Figure 1 depicts two notable patterns. First, though Congress won less than a majority of the vote in most elections (119 of 134), it frequently translated that minority of votes into a majority of seats or a strong minority that allowed it to form a government. Put another way, even though opposition parties won frequent electoral majorities, they infrequently translated

²⁵ Congress did not contest the 1971 election in Tamil Nadu. We therefore exclude it from all of our analysis.

²⁶ In India, electoral districts are referred to as constituencies. Consistent with the comparative literature on elections, we use the term districts.

such majorities into governments. In SMD systems, outcomes in which the largest party receives a disproportionately large share of seats are common.

Second, although there is a strong positive relationship between votes and seats, Congress' seat share varied tremendously when it received between 32% and 42% of the vote. Within this middling range of vote shares, Congress' seat shares varied between a low of 7% of seats (in Kerala in 1967) to a high of 76% (in Punjab in 1951). Consequently, when Congress won modest levels of popular support, some elections produced exclusively Congress-led governments while some gave rise to opposition governments. This high degree of variation in Congress seat share at middling levels of Congress vote share evident in Figure 1 is entirely consistent with Hypothesis 1. At very low levels of popular support, Congress necessarily won few seats. At higher levels of popular support, opposition coordination was important in determining how efficiently Congress translated its votes into seats. A divided opposition permitted Congress to win large seats shares from modest vote shares; a coordinated opposition did not. However, when Congress won very large vote shares, even a coordinated opposition could not stop Congress for winning large seat shares, even if coordination might have diminished the size of Congress' legislative majority.

Table 1 presents the results of several regressions that explicitly test and affirm our first hypothesis that opposition coordination affects single-party dominance in an SMD setting. At this, the vote winning, stage, the coordination in question is coordination on a small number of opposition candidates, ideally just one, in each electoral district. The dependent variable, *INC seat*, is the percentage of seats that Congress won in an election on a scale from 0 to 100. In all columns, we estimate models using ordinary least squares, reporting robust standard errors clustered by state. The main independent variable of interest is *District OENP*, the opposition

effective number of parties (OENP) averaged across all electoral districts contested by Congress. To construct this variable, we first calculate Laakso and Taagepera's effective number of parties (ENP) in each electoral district that Congress contested, using only votes for non-Congress parties, and then average those figures.²⁷ Higher values of *District OENP* indicate that the opposition is split across multiple candidates in each district.

Column 1 presents estimates of the bivariate relationship between *District OENP* and *INC seat*. Though in the expected direction, *District OENP* does not reach conventional levels of statistical significance. Column 2 adds *INC vote* as a predictor, which measures Congress' share of the popular vote on a scale of 0 to 100. When controlling for Congress' vote share, the coefficient on *District OENP* is large and highly statistically significant. Column 2 suggests that increasing the opposition ENP by one standard deviation would increase Congress' seat share by 6.9%. That the estimate on *District OENP* is statistically significant only when controlling for *INC vote* is not surprising. As Figure 1 shows, vote share is a very strong predictor of seat shares. On its own, a measure of opposition consolidation should have little explanatory power. At very low levels of Congress vote share, for instance, no matter how fragmented the opposition vote, Congress is unlikely to win large seat shares.

With this intuition in mind, Column 3 interacts *District OENP* and *INC vote*.²⁸ At very low levels of Congress vote share, the level of opposition coordination should matter little, as Congress is not in a position for its votes to translate into disproportionate seat shares. But, as Congress' vote share rises, opposition coordination should be increasingly important in determining how effectively Congress translates its votes into seats. Column 3 lends some support to this idea. The coefficient on the interaction term is statistically significant at the 10%

²⁷ Laakso and Taagepera 1979.

²⁸ All of the results in Table 1 are robust to the inclusion of state dummies and dummies for each national election year. The election year dummies control for differences in the national-level government.

level. Since the interaction term involves two continuous variables, understanding the substantive impact of the *District OENP* in a model with an interaction is difficult. Using the estimates in column 3, Figure 2 plots the marginal effect of *District OENP* on *INC seat* as *INC vote* varies, along with the 95% confidence intervals. When Congress wins very small vote shares, the marginal effect of *District OENP* is indistinguishable from 0. However, at modest and higher levels of Congress support, the marginal effect of opposition coordination is much greater. Finally, since Figure 1 highlights how Congress' seat shares vary wildly at middling ranges of Congress electoral support, columns 4 and 5 replicate columns 2 and 3, but restrict the sample to those observations in which Congress won 32%-42% of the vote.²⁹ Despite the smaller number of observations, the coefficients on *District OENP* in column 4 and the interaction term in column 5 are larger, though estimated less precisely.

The fact that opposition coordination strongly predicts Congress' seat shares is critical because Congress' seat shares determined whether Congress or an opposition coalition formed the government after elections. Figure 3 presents histograms of Congress' seat share, divided into two panels. The left panel is for elections that produced opposition governments. The right panel is for elections that produced exclusively Congress-led governments. As Figure 3 makes clear, the overwhelming majority of the elections that produced exclusively Congress-led governments were those in which the party won 50% or more of the legislative seats (75 of 84 elections). Occasionally, Congress won close to a majority and still formed the government, but only once did it fall well short of a majority and still head the government for the entire duration of the legislative mandate (Kerala 1982). In other words, unlike Israel, Italy, or Luxembourg, where the dominant parties never won legislative majorities but were continually the heads of

²⁹ The results are substantively identical if we look at observations in the middle third of the data range for Congress' vote share.

coalition governments, India's dominant party rarely governed without first winning a legislative majority. As the left panel in Figure 3 indicates, when Congress fell well short of a majority, opposition governments usually took office for at least some portion of the legislature's tenure (46 of 55 elections). Since Congress' ability to win a legislative majority played a decisive role in maintaining its rule in state politics and since opposition coordination played a critical role in determining seat shares, we can conclude that opposition coordination affected Congress' ability to remain in power. In analysis not presented here for reasons of space, *District OENP*, the indicator of district-level coordination, is a strong, statistically significant predictor of whether elections produced only Congress government or if they produced at least some period of opposition government.

Up to this point, we have used *District OENP* as an indicator of coordination, with high values indicating poor coordination. However, low values of *District OENP* can be achieved in one of two ways. First, parties can engage in explicit cooperation in which they strategically field candidates so as not to split the opposition vote. In India, this usually takes the form of seat-sharing agreements in which parties agree that only one party in the alliance will contest a given seat and urge their supporters to vote for the candidate from the alliance. This way of achieving low values of *District OENP* is indeed evidence of coordination among opposition parties. But *District OENP* can also take very low values if the party system as a whole is very consolidated behind a single opposition party. For instance, if there are only two main parties, one dominant party and one opposition party, then low levels of *District OENP* do not reflect coordination so much as a highly consolidated party system in which opposition coordination is largely unnecessary. If the results in Table 1 depend on party system consolidation rather than

coordination among parties, then our account of what explains Congress' seat shares would not really reflect opposition coordination.

Table 2 thus examines predictors of *District OENP* to see whether district-level fragmentation of the opposition reflects levels of consolidation of the party system as a whole or actual coordination among opposition parties. It shows that the aggregate state-level party system poorly predicts levels of opposition fragmentation at the district level. Instead, instances of explicit electoral coordination predict *District OENP*. In other words, we can be confident that the results in Table 1 are not driven simply by states with two-party systems in which there is only one opposition party of note, but rather by actual coordination among multiple opposition parties. In Table 2, the dependent variable is now *District OENP*, our primary independent variable of interest in Table 1. We estimate all models using ordinary least squares with robust standard errors clustered by state. The first independent variable of interest is *State OENP*, which measures the opposition ENP at the state-level. Note that the difference between this independent variable and the dependent variable is the level of aggregation. The dependent variable, *District OENP*, is a mean across electoral districts. The independent variable, *State OENP*, relies on the vote shares in the state's party system as a whole. If there is a strong positive association between *State OENP* and *District OENP*, then this means that what we observe in the state-level party system mirrors the party system at the district level as well. A positive association would indicate that *District OENP* is not capturing coordination so much as the broader party system, which is reflected in competition at the district-level.

Table 2 also includes two indicators of coordination. *Coordinated* is an indicator variable taking a value of 1 when all opposition parties with 5% or more of the vote are engaged in electoral coordination. This means that all major parties coordinate with one another so as to

minimize the frequency with which they contest against each other and split the opposition vote. *Alliance* is a dummy variable assuming a value of 1 when there is an electoral alliance between two or more opposition parties with 5% or more of the vote. *Alliance* therefore includes all instances of full opposition coordination plus instances of partial coordination not captured in the *Coordinated* variable. Of the 131 elections, 20 (15%) are instances of full coordination, and 33 (25%) are instances when some form of alliance was brokered. Our expectation is that when opposition parties coordinate, *District OENP* should decrease.

Columns 1-3 enter *State OENP*, *Coordinated*, and *Alliance* separately as the sole predictors of *District OENP*. Columns 4 and 5 then simultaneously include *State OENP* with *Coordinated* (column 4) and *Alliance* (column 5) as well as state dummies and national election year dummies.³⁰ Across all models, the estimate on *State OENP* is always small and statistically insignificant, meaning that the fragmentation of the opposition at the state level does not predict levels of opposition fragmentation at the district level. However, coordination strongly predicts the mean effective number of opposition parties at the district level. Not surprisingly, *Coordinated* is associated with greater reductions in the effective number of opposition parties at the district level than *Alliance*, since *Coordinated* captures whether all major parties are engaged in cooperation. In columns 4 and 5, the coefficients on *Coordinated* and *Alliance* are somewhat smaller than in columns 2 and 3, but they are still large and statistically significant. When all major parties coordinate, the mean effective number of opposition parties across districts decreases by almost a third of an effective party, a substantive effect. The mean value for *District OENP* is 2.0, with a standard deviation of 0.54. Thus, complete coordination of major parties is associated with more than half a standard deviation increase in the dependent variable.

³⁰ The national election year dummy is an indicator variable for the year of the national election that either coincided with or directly preceded the state election.

So far, our analysis has suggested overwhelming support for our first hypothesis that opposition coordination is an important predictor of dominant party success in an SMD context. Congress fares better in districts where the opposition is fragmented and worse where the opposition is coordinated. Since Congress almost always formed a government when it won a legislative majority and rarely kept the opposition out of power when it failed to win a majority, opposition coordination is vital for undermining single-party dominance. Finally, we showed that the consolidation of the opposition behind a small number of candidates at the district-level is the product of coordination among parties, not simply a reflection of a heavily consolidated party system. In short, opposition coordination at the stage of vote winning is crucial to undermining single-party dominance in an SMD electoral system.

Having established that coordination matters, we now turn to testing our second and third hypotheses, which explain the conditions under which coordination is likely to occur. Looking separately at the vote winning, government formation, and government maintenance stages, we test whether ideology and fragmentation predict whether the opposition coordinates. To test Hypotheses 2 and 3 with respect to vote winning, our dependent variable in columns 1-4 in Table 3 is *Coordinated*, which captures whether oppositions with multiple major parties (i.e., winning more than 5% of the vote) are fully coordinated (1) or not (0). We exclude cases in which there is only one major opposition party, since coordination is impossible. Of the 107 remaining cases, 20 are instances of full coordination. We have three independent variables of interest. *Opposition parties* is the number of parties not allied with Congress that won more than 5% of the vote. *Vote margin* is the difference in vote share between the largest and second-largest opposition party. Both of these variables capture the fragmentation of the party system, which, according to Hypothesis 3, should influence whether the opposition coordinates. We expect that as *Opposition*

parties increases, achieving full coordination will become more difficult as more parties will be required to cooperate. We therefore anticipate a negative relationship between this variable and *Coordinated*. *Vote margin* (measured on a scale of 0 to 100) captures the extent to which a sizeable party leads the opposition. Higher values of *Vote margin* indicate that the largest opposition party is considerably larger than the second largest opposition party. We expect that when the opposition has a clear leader in the form of a relatively large party, coordination will be easier because the opposition has a focal point. Moreover, inter-party rivalries among the opposition should be less acute if there are easily identifiable senior and junior partners in negotiations. For these two reasons, we expect a positive association between *Vote margin* and *Coordinated*. Finally, *Left-Right* is a binary variable taking a value of 1 if the opposition includes a major left-wing party and a major right-wing party.³¹ Parties are coded as left-wing or right-wing only when they sit clearly to the left or right of Congress and their left- or right-wing positions are both clearly articulated and constitute core components of their platforms. Parties with vague positions or for whom left-right placement is not a major part of their message are coded as neither left-wing nor right-wing.

Since the outcome of interest, *Coordinated*, is a binary dependent variable, logistic regression is most appropriate. However, one of the independent variables of interest, *Left-Right* perfectly predicts failure. Every observation in which the opposition includes ideologically distant parties is also an instance in which the opposition fails to fully coordinate. Consequently, in the first three models in Table 3, we omit this variable. Columns 1-3 report the results of logistic regressions with robust standard errors clustered by state in parentheses. We begin by entering *Opposition parties* and *Vote margin* separately in columns 1 and 2 as the sole predictors

³¹ Only parties with more than 5% of the vote are included. The appendix lists the parties treated as left- and right-wing.

and then together in Column 3. As expected, when the number of opposition parties increases, the likelihood of coordination decreases. As the margin separating the largest and second largest parties increases, the likelihood of coordination also increases. When entered together, both coefficients shrink somewhat, and *Opposition parties* loses statistical significance. Since the two variables are reasonably highly correlated (-0.45), and we have a small number of observations, the imprecision of the estimates in column 3 is not surprising.

Turning to *Left-Right*, which we cannot estimate using logistic regression, we adopt a number of strategies. First, the difference in means for *Coordinated* when comparing oppositions that include ideologically distant parties (*Left-Right* equals 1) and those that do not is highly statistically significant.³² Complete coordination occurs much more often among oppositions that are not ideologically heterogeneous. Second, in column 4 of Table 4, we present the results of an OLS regression that includes all three variables of interest. OLS is not generally appropriate for a binary dependent variable because it can produce negative probabilities or probabilities greater than one. However, for the purposes of getting some sense for the relationship between *Left-Right* and *Coordinated* we present the results of an OLS regression, with the caveat that they ought to be interpreted with caution. As column 4 shows, we observe the expected large, negative coefficient on *Left-Right*. Third, in column 5, we use an alternative dependent variable, *Alliance*. Recall that *Alliance* takes a value of 1 if any coordination among major parties occurs. This dependent variable is not ideal because we could observe many instances of partial coordination that are picked up in the *Alliance* variable but that take place between ideologically similar parties, even if the opposition as a whole might include ideologically distant parties. Nevertheless, we proceed with this dependent variable in the absence of better options. As column 5 shows, the coefficient on *Left-Right* is very large, statistically significant, and in the

³² The difference in means is 0.206 and statistically significant at the 0.01-level.

expected direction. Finally, in results not shown for reasons of space, using Bayesian inference and the prior distribution suggested by Gelman et al. we find a sizeable and statistically significant negative effect of *Left-Right*.³³

It is worth noting that in Column 5, we observe that *Opposition parties* has a positive, though statistically insignificant, coefficient. Given that the dependent variable captures all instance of coordination between any two parties, we think this makes sense. As the number of parties increases, the likelihood that *any two* parties cooperate should increase since parties have more potential partners with whom to cooperate. However, consistent with expectations, the other models show that as the number of parties increases, the likelihood that *all* parties cooperate decreases.

In Table 4, we turn to investigating whether ideological heterogeneity and fragmentation inhibit the opposition's ability to coordinate and form a government. We find somewhat fragile support for both Hypotheses 2 and 3, though the evidence is somewhat stronger for our indicator of opposition fragmentation. We suspect that these weaker results stem from the overriding importance of the opposition legislative strength in explaining whether Congress forms the government or not. Recall from Figure 3 that nearly every time that the opposition won a legislative majority it formed a government, while it almost never formed a government if Congress won a majority. With this in mind, it is perhaps unsurprising that characteristics of the opposition have only a modest explanatory role in predicting government formation.

In Table 4, the dependent variable is *Opposition rule*, which takes a value of 1 if an opposition party led a government during the legislative mandate. Since the dependent variable is binary, we estimate all models in Table 4 using logistic regression, with robust standard errors clustered by state. We are most interested in two independent variables. *Legislative OENP* is the

³³ See Gelman et al. 2008. Results are available upon request.

effective number of opposition parties in the legislature. Note that other OENP measures have so far been calculated with vote shares; this variable is calculated from seat shares since we are now concerned with coordination within the legislature. The other main independent variable is *Left-Right*, from Table 3. As with Table 3, we expect that fragmentation, in this case *Legislative OENP*, and ideological distance, *Left-Right* are negatively associated with *Opposition rule*. We also include a control variable, *Opposition seats*, which is the percentage of seats (on a scale of 0 to 100) won by the opposition.

We begin by entering the predictors separately in columns 1-3. We then add in the two independent variables of interest, while keeping *Opposition seats*, in columns 4 and 5. Finally, we include all three predictors in column 6. In columns 1-5, we find support for our two hypotheses. As the fragmentation of the opposition increases, the likelihood that the opposition forms the government decreases, while oppositions that include ideological extremes are less likely to form governments. However in column 6, both predictors of interest fail to reach conventional levels of statistical significance. Considering all models, the coefficients on *Legislative OENP* change very little across the different specifications, and in column 6, the variable falls just shy of significance at the 10% level. By contrast, in column 6, *Left-Right* is very imprecisely estimated and noticeably smaller in magnitude than in columns 2 and 4. Consistent with Figure 3, the most robust finding is that *Opposition seats* strongly predicts *Opposition rule*.

Finally, in Table 5, we test whether opposition governments are capable of remaining in power once they form governments. We find that opposition fragmentation is a good predictor of whether an opposition government will collapse. In addition, relying on a splinter from the dominant party also increases the likelihood of collapse. However, we find no real support that

the inclusion of ideological extremes matters. Given the extent to which extant literature suggests that opposition ideological polarization inhibits coordination, this is a noteworthy finding.

The data in Table 5 only concern those elections that actually produced opposition governments. Thus, we have only 47 observations. Our dependent variable of interest captures how opposition governments terminate. From 1951 to 1989, 37% of major state elections in India produced some form of opposition government. Of these, 8% are coded as “stable” because the governments served out their full terms in office or called early elections of their own volition. Another 20% of elections are coded as “collapsed” because the governments either collapsed or was dismissed by the central government amidst considerable instability. Finally, 9% of elections are coded as “dismissed” because they produced stable governments that were nevertheless dismissed by the central government through the imposition of President’s Rule. Article 356 of the Constitution of India allows the President to “assume to himself all or any of the functions of the Government of the State [and] declare that the powers of the Legislature of the state shall be exercisable by or under the authority of Parliament” in the event that “the Government of the State cannot be carried on in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution.” President’s Rule has often been declared in instances of severe government instability—in the face of insurgency or when opposition parties proved unable to form a government. But President’s Rule has also been put to partisan use to dismiss stable state governments on flimsy pretexts—and it is these instances that were coded “dismissed”.

In Table 5, our dependent variable is *Collapse*. This variable takes a value of 1 if the opposition government collapsed and 0 if it is coded as stable or dismissed. Our predictors in Table 5 are similar to those in Table 4. *Legislative OENP* is identical. *Left-Right 2* is the same as *Left-Right* except that it refers to the parties in an opposition government. *Left-Right 2* takes a

value of 1 if an opposition government includes both left-wing and right-wing parties.

Opposition seats is also identical to the variable in Table 4. Our expectations for these variables are the same as in Table 4. As *Legislative OENP* increases, the probability that an opposition government collapses should increase. When *Left-Right 2* takes a value of 1, collapse should also be more likely. As *Opposition seats* increases, the likelihood of collapse should decrease. To this, we add another variable *INC splinter*. *INC splinter* is a binary variable coded as 1 if a major party in the coalition is a splinter from Congress. The expectation is that parties with close ties to the dominant party are unlikely to be reliable coalition members and should be particularly prone to having their legislators defect to the dominant party. If *INC splinter* is 1, then the likelihood of government collapse should be higher.

In Columns 1-4, we enter each predictor separately, observing coefficients in the expected directions, albeit only statistically significant at the 10% level for our two primary variables of interest, *Legislative OENP* and *Left-Right 2*. In columns 5-7, we include *Opposition seats* as a control and enter each of the remaining three predictors separately. The findings for *Legislative OENP* and *INC splinter* are robust. As the opposition is increasingly fragmented, opposition governments are more likely to collapse, and when they rely on a splinter party from the dominant party, they are also more likely to collapse. However, *Left-Right 2* is no longer close to statistical significance. Finally, in column 8, we include all three predictors. Although the sizes of the coefficients for *Legislative OENP* and *INC splinter* diminish, they are still significant at the 10% level. *Left-Right 2* is nowhere close to statistical significance. One possibility for lack of any findings for *Left-Right 2* is that when ideological differences are, in fact, particularly intransigent, parties are unwilling to even consider entering into government with one another. We might only observe instances of ideological extremes within an opposition

government in precisely those instances when parties are not particularly committed to their policies or where they are willing to set aside differences.

III. A Comparative Historical Contrast: Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh

Having tested our hypotheses on data from across India, we now turn to a comparison of two Indian states: Tamil Nadu, on India's southern tip, and Uttar Pradesh, the country's most populous state, which is located in north India.³⁴ These case studies not only illustrate our findings with concrete cases, but they shed greater light on some of our findings—highlighting, for instance, some of the mechanisms that underlie our hypothesis about opposition fragmentation and accounting for our inconsistent findings in support of our second hypothesis about ideologically heterogeneous oppositions. We focus on these two states because they demonstrate the need to pay attention to opposition parties in order to understand single-party dominance.

Based solely on Congress' electoral performance in these two states, one would have expected Congress would remain dominant in Tamil Nadu and not Uttar Pradesh. In three successive state elections (1957, 1962, and 1967), Congress won substantially *higher* vote shares in Tamil Nadu than Uttar Pradesh.³⁵ Yet, Congress' dominance ended decisively in 1967 in Tamil Nadu, when it lost state elections and was forced into opposition. Since then, Congress has never returned to power in Tamil Nadu. Meanwhile, in Uttar Pradesh, the 1967 state elections ushered in a period of instability that threatened but failed to completely undo Congress dominance. Over the next 22 years, the opposition won legislative majorities in three of the six elections, but managed to govern only 18% of the time. Whereas opposition spells in power were

³⁴ Prior to 1969, Tamil Nadu was called Madras. For simplicity, we use its current name.

³⁵ Congress won 42%, 36%, and 34% in Uttar Pradesh in the 1957, 1962, and 1967 elections, respectively, while in Tamil Nadu, Congress' vote shares were 45%, 46%, and 41%.

usually brief and crisis-ridden, Congress managed to govern from 1970-77 and again from 1980-89. It was, in short, the only party during this period that could credibly remain in power for a full legislative term. Focusing particularly on the late 1960s and early 1970s, it becomes abundantly clear that the divergent outcomes in Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh arose largely because of the differences between the oppositions in the two states. Whereas Tamil Nadu's opposition was highly coordinated, Uttar Pradesh's was not.

Oppositions before the elections

The opposition in Tamil Nadu won a much smaller share of the popular vote than in Uttar Pradesh, but its extensive coordination enabled it to translate its popular majority into a decisive legislative majority. In Tamil Nadu, the opposition parties formed an alliance called the United Front, which comprised the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), Swatantra, Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPM), Praja Socialist Party (PSP), and Samyukta Socialist Party (SSP).³⁶ These parties divided up the electoral districts in Tamil Nadu so that only one member of the alliance contested in each seat. As a result of this electoral coordination, the average number of major opposition candidates per district was only 1.1, and 81% of the seats in Tamil Nadu featured only one major opposition candidate.³⁷ Electoral contests were, for the most part, a straight contest between a Congress candidate and an opposition candidate. For the purposes of fielding candidates the opposition in Tamil Nadu effectively functioned as a single electoral bloc. With a combined electoral strength of 51.5% of the statewide vote, most United Front candidates comfortably defeated their Congress rivals.

³⁶ Only one major opposition party was not privy to this arrangement, the Communist Party of India (CPI), from which the CPM had recently split. However, Barnett 1976, p. 147 and Subramanian 1999, p. 204 also report that another very small party and several independent candidates may also have been part of the alliance.

³⁷ A major opposition party is defined here as any party winning more than 3% of the overall vote.

By contrast, Congress' opposition in Uttar Pradesh was entirely uncoordinated. Only 4% of constituencies had only one major-party opposition candidate and the average number of major-party opposition candidates per district was 3.2. In the overwhelming majority of electoral districts in Uttar Pradesh, Congress faced multiple opposition parties. With the non-Congress vote typically split across multiple parties, Congress won many seats with modest vote shares. Indeed, 30% of Congress legislators elected in 1967 won their seats with less than a third of the vote. Despite winning only 32% of the vote in Uttar Pradesh, Congress came very close to winning a legislative majority.

Congress' opposition was better able to coordinate in Tamil Nadu than in Uttar Pradesh for several reasons. First, the opposition was more highly fragmented in Uttar Pradesh, with 7.2 effective opposition parties, than in Tamil Nadu whose effective number of opposition parties was 2.0. Given the already consolidated party system, the opposition in Tamil Nadu had far less work to do to coordinate in fielding candidates. In Uttar Pradesh, ensuring a decisive edge over Congress would have instead required coordination among at least three major parties. Second, much of the opposition vote in Uttar Pradesh went to independent candidates, who are difficult to include in seat-sharing agreements. Assessing an independent candidate's strength in a district is difficult to do in advance, and involving independents in negotiations would quickly increase the number of seats at the bargaining table.

Third, coordination in Tamil Nadu was also likely aided by the fact that its opposition included a single large party that could lead coordination efforts. From the late 1950s through the mid-1960s, the DMK rapidly gained electoral support, put down organizational roots throughout the state that allowed it to engage directly with voters, and spearheaded major mass agitations,

particularly in the mid-1960s.³⁸ Because its leading position was evident to all by 1967, the DMK served as a focal point for opposition coordination in Tamil Nadu. It bargained bilaterally with its allies over which seats it would “give” to them to contest. Negotiating in this way meant that ideologically distant parties like the CPM and the conservative Swatantra did not actually bargain directly with one another to be part of the alliance. Instead, these smaller parties each independently entered into alliances with the DMK.

Meanwhile, Uttar Pradesh had no such party to lead negotiations. Though the Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS) emerged as the largest party in the 1967 elections, its decisive advantage over the other opposition parties was not obvious prior to 1967. Throughout the 1960s, Congress’ opposition featured multiple medium-sized parties. As such, a leading party was not available to spearhead coordination and negotiate separately with smaller allies. Instead, a comprehensive seat sharing agreement would have required negotiations with a larger set of actors. As each of these medium-sized parties were jockeying to become the state’s main opposition party and hoping for electoral breakthroughs, seat-sharing agreements were risky. Indeed, the BJS refused to cooperate with other parties until after the 1967 election precisely because it hoped for an electoral breakthrough.³⁹ The SSP was more willing to coordinate in principle, but its strategy faltered because its would-be partners could not agree on seat allocations, disagreeing as to “which party was the strongest competitor in the constituency.”⁴⁰ In short, many of the opposition parties in Uttar Pradesh were fighting elections against each other as much as they were fighting against Congress.

Fourth, although the opposition in both states spanned the ideological spectrum, Uttar Pradesh’s opposition had somewhat more ideological distance to bridge. In Tamil Nadu, the core

³⁸ See Barnett 1976 and Subramanian 1999.

³⁹ Fickett 1976, p. 39.

⁴⁰ Fickett 1976, p. 38.

members of the opposition—DMK, communists (CPI, CPM), and socialists (PSP, SSP)—were relatively like-minded on many social and economic issues. The economically liberal Swatantra was ideologically distant from the DMK and the communists but was not especially ideologically rigid, particularly among its state-level units. However, ideological differences remained. For example, the DMK was regionalist party that glorified Tamil culture and language and presented Tamil Nadu as a victim of northern Indian domination, while its allies were national parties. Nevertheless, the opposition in Tamil Nadu was able to overlook such ideological differences in order to coordinate. Uttar Pradesh's opposition was similarly ideologically diverse, but Uttar Pradesh's opposition had a much larger and more intransigent right wing, making cooperation across the political spectrum more difficult. The BJS, which was virtually absent in Tamil Nadu, was a decidedly right-of-center party with strong ideological commitments. Thanks in part to its strong ties to the Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh, a Hindu revivalist organization, the BJS firmly rejected eschewed the possibility of electoral cooperation with the communists.⁴¹

Oppositions after the elections

Achieving electoral victories was the only first step in undoing Congress dominance however. Next, the opposition had to form a government, overcoming differences between coalition partners and the ever-present threat of defection. The opposition's position was further complicated by the specter of intervention by the central government through President's Rule. In Tamil Nadu, forming a legislative majority was straightforward because a single party—the DMK—had won a large majority. It ruled stably through the 1971 election. Even as Congress attempted to undermine opposition governments elsewhere in India during the late 1960s by

⁴¹ Graham 1990, p. 216-217.

inducing defections, the DMK suffered from virtually no defections.⁴² In 1971, the DMK again won elections with the help of allies.⁴³ Despite some internal divisions, the DMK government ruled with a comfortable majority until January 1976, when the central government dismissed the DMK government on charges of corruption. The 1976 dismissal was highly politicized, as corruption charges had dogged the DMK since it first took office.⁴⁴ However, Congress did not dismiss the DMK government until the Emergency—a nineteen-month period that involved the Congress-led national government suspending a variety of civil and political liberties and postponing elections—of which the DMK chief minister, M. Karunanidhi, was a vocal opponent.⁴⁵ In short, until its dismissal by the central government, the DMK led a stable government in Tamil Nadu for nearly a decade.

Again in contrast, Uttar Pradesh's opposition governed briefly and unstably. Despite having a majority of seats in the legislature, an opposition government did not immediately come to power. Congress initially formed a government with the support of independent candidates and defectors from other parties.⁴⁶ But Congress' coalition quickly disintegrated when a peasant leader, Charan Singh, left Congress with several followers to establish the Jana Congress. Once the Congress government fell, it was replaced by an opposition coalition that included partners from across the ideological spectrum: the predominantly upper-caste BJS and Swatantra on the right; the socialist PSP and SSP on the left; the CPI on the far left; the peasant-dominated Jana

⁴² Kashyap 1970; Wallace 1968, p. 91 reports that there were no defection in Tamil Nadu between March and December 1967, a period when defections in other states reached epic proportions.

⁴³ One of these allies was Congress (R), the Indira Gandhi-led faction of Congress that emerged out of the party's 1969 split. Because the smaller faction of Congress, Congress (O), was actually stronger in Tamil Nadu, the DMK allied with the nationally dominant faction, Congress (R). This alliance ended after the 1971 elections.

⁴⁴ Barnett 1976.

⁴⁵ The chief minister is the head of an Indian state government.

⁴⁶ Kashyap 1974, p. 228

Congress; the Republican Party of India, representing the interests of the downtrodden Scheduled Castes; and independents.⁴⁷

The threat of defections steadily plagued this government's stability. However, the most significant threat to the opposition government headed by Charan Singh "was not that of the continued process of two-way defection or of any net depletion in the S.V.D. [the governing coalition] ranks but of many internal stresses and strains caused by the attitude of threats and challenges preferred by some of the S.V.D. constituents."⁴⁸ By January 1968, the CPI and SSP had withdrawn from the coalition because of policy disagreements, though they continued to offer it outside support. Although the CPI and SSP had justified their withdrawal in terms of issues of policy disagreements and dissent over how the government had handled certain issues, Brass suggests that "one persuasive interpretation of their motives was that the public issues were secondary...in the struggle for political influence" among coalition partners.⁴⁹ Just one month later, the head of the government, Charan Singh, resigned after a conflict with the BJS. With no agreement on an alternative government, President's Rule was imposed on Uttar Pradesh, and fresh elections were held the subsequent year.

The 1969 elections and their aftermath played out similarly, with opposition parties continually jockeying for the upper hand. Congress again failed to win a majority in those elections, but this time only by two seats. The Bharatiya Kranti Dal (BKD), the rechristened Jana Congress, was the largest opposition party with 21% of the vote and 98 seats, with the BJS not far behind at 18% of the vote (but only 49 seats). Though Congress once again formed a government, the national split in Congress that took place in November 1969 placed the government in a precarious position. In February 1970, Charan Singh again formed a

⁴⁷ For about a month, the CPM also supported the government, though it had no ministers in the government.

⁴⁸ Kashyap 1974, p. 240.

⁴⁹ Brass 1968, p. 1186.

government, this time with the support of Congress (R), the dominant faction of Congress led by Indira Gandhi. Within months, the BKD and Congress (R) were both seeking to form an alternative coalition. President's Rule was briefly declared, after which a new government headed by Congress (O)—the minority faction of Congress—was formed, which included the largest opposition parties: BKD, Jana Sangh, SSP, and Swatantra. Over the next year, this government suffered a series of defections with the result that in March 1971, the government fell. A Congress (R) ministry succeeded it and completed the legislative term in 1974. The 1974 elections provided strikingly similar results to 1969. But this time, the fragmented opposition permitted Congress to win a majority of seats, and established a stable government that served until fresh elections were called in 1977.

In Uttar Pradesh, opposition coordination was fraught with difficulty because the number of parties required to coordinate—both in forming and maintaining a government—was very large. Coordination may also have been complicated by the opposition's diverse ideological leanings, though, as Brass notes, policy debates may simply have been posturing. A final challenge facing the opposition in Uttar Pradesh were the links of many opposition legislators to Congress. After 1969, two of the major opposition parties in Uttar Pradesh were splinters from Congress—the BKD and Congress (O). These legislators had mainly left Congress for opportunistic reasons and were therefore unlikely candidates to form a steadfast opposition to the dominant party.⁵⁰

To summarize, this comparison of Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh provides qualitative support for the hypotheses that we quantitatively tested. Both cases amply demonstrate how the opposition's ability to coordinate at various stages from winning votes to remaining in office can either undermine or sustain single-party dominance. In the case of Tamil Nadu, the opposition

⁵⁰ Kashyap 1974.

decisively ended Congress dominance, whereas in Uttar Pradesh, the opposition could not stop Congress from reasserting its dominant position for most of the 1970s and 1980s. Furthermore, the cases support our hypothesis about the fragmentation of the opposition, as the two states differed not only in the effective number of opposition parties but also on the strength of independents and the presence of an opposition leader. Finally, mirroring our somewhat inconsistent results about ideological heterogeneity, the cases provide modest evidence that an ideologically heterogeneous opposition can also hinder opposition coordination.

IV. Conclusion

Using both quantitative and qualitative evidence, this article has shown that dominant parties often remain in power not just because of the actions of the dominant party. Instead, the actions and characteristics of the opposition greatly affect the dominant party's likelihood of remaining dominant. We found unqualified quantitative and qualitative support for our first hypothesis that levels of electoral coordination among opposition parties strongly predict whether a dominant party remains in power or not. Second, we also found some support that ideological distance among opposition parties predicts coordination, though evidence of the importance of ideology in the formation and maintenance of opposition governments was weak. Although we observed ideological differences among the opposition in our two states, there is good reason to believe that parties may simply employ ideological rhetoric to mask opportunistic behavior. Indeed, the fact that coalitions of ideological extremes formed in multiple Indian states is perhaps a signal that ideological differences only represent a modest challenge to opposition coordination. Third, we found strong support for the hypothesis that party fragmentation among the dominant party's opposition was a major obstacle to coordination.

Of course, we readily acknowledge that the role of the opposition is especially important in places where a dominant party does not win overwhelming popular majorities. If a dominant party's vote winning strategies are so successful that the party cannot help but win a comfortable legislative majority no matter how coordinated the opposition, then the role of the opposition in explaining the continuation or demise of single party dominance may, indeed, be limited.

However, many examples of dominant parties in democracies are ones in which a majority of the electorate frequently—in some cases, always—casts their ballots for the opposition.

Our findings contribute to the literature in at least two ways. Perhaps most importantly, the idea that ineffective opposition coordination helps explain dominant party endurance has never been systematically tested. Our article complements existing research that suggests arguments about opposition coordination by quantitatively testing the opposition coordination hypothesis and complementing this testing with a qualitative comparison that features variation in levels of single-party dominance. Furthermore, this article articulates clear expectations about the kinds of oppositions that should be more likely to coordinate and then tests these expectations at the vote winning, government formation, and government maintenance stages.

Second, by focusing on a case with an SMD electoral system, we show that coordination problems are not simply to be found under PR or SNTV. The literature's inattention to SMD systems is surprising since four cases of single-party dominance employ SMD electoral systems: the Bahamas, Botswana, India, and Trinidad and Tobago. While we show that electoral institutions matter inasmuch as they create a need for coordination, we cast doubt on the idea that any specific electoral system has a monopoly on sustaining dominant parties.

As more countries democratize and heretofore single-party regimes face genuine competition, it will become increasingly important for scholars to understand the conditions

under which single-party dominance is likely to end. In this article, we emphasize that opposition coordination plays a far more important role than previous literature has acknowledged. While the characteristics and strategies of the dominant party is undoubtedly important to explaining single-party dominance, our findings suggest that the researchers ought to do more to bring oppositions to the fore.

In emphasizing the pivotal role of the opposition in ending single-party dominance, our research also suggests an important set of new questions. For one, our data come from a parliamentary democracy. In the past, most dominant parties have been found in parliamentary democracies. But, in Africa, where presidentialism predominates, a better understanding the coordination problems facing oppositions in presidential democracies will become increasingly important.⁵¹ For another, this article suggests the importance of understanding the origins of opposition parties in new democracies. If characteristics of the opposition matter in shaping the likelihood of coordination, then the next step in better understanding single-party dominance is to examine events during the pre-democratic period and the democratization process that may help us to understand the kinds of party systems that emerge.⁵² In India, a number of contingent, historical factors explain much of the variation in oppositions across states;⁵³ however, looking more systematically across newly democratizing countries may suggest conditions and processes that shape opposition parties and therefore the likelihood of single-party dominance.

⁵¹ See Arriola forthcoming.

⁵² Riedl n.d.

⁵³ Tudor and Ziegfeld 2010.

References

- Abedi, Amir and Steffen Schneider. 2010. "Big Fish in Small Ponds: A Comparison of Dominant Parties in Canadian Provinces and German *Länder*." In Matthijs Bogaards and Françoise Boucek, eds., *Dominant Political Parties and Democracy: Concepts, Measures, Cases, and Comparisons*. London: Routledge.
- Arian, Alan and Samuel H. Barnes 1974. "The Dominant Party System: A Neglected Model of Democratic Stability." *Journal of Politics* 36, no. 3 (August): 592-614.
- Aronoff, Myron J. 1990. "Israel under Labor the Likud: The Role of Dominance Considered." In T.J. Pempel, ed., *Uncommon Democracies: The One-Party Dominant Regimes*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Arriola, Leonard. Forthcoming. "Capital and Opposition in Africa: Coalition Building in Multiethnic Societies." *World Politics*.
- Barnett, Marguerite Ross. 1976. *The Politics of Cultural Nationalism in South India*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Brass, Paul R. 1968. "Coalition Politics in North India." *American Political Science Review* 62, no. 4 (December): 1174-1191.
- Brownlee, Jason. 2007. *Authoritarianism in an Age of Democratization*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Bussell, Jennifer. 2012. *Corruption and Reform in India: Public Services in the Digital Age*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Chhibber, Pradeep, and Irfan Nooruddin. 2004. "Do Party Systems Count? The Number of Parties and Government Performance in Indian States." *Comparative Political Studies* 37, no. 37 (March): 152-187.

- Chhibber, Pradeep K. and John R. Petrocik. 1989. "The Puzzle of Indian Politics: Social Cleavages and the Indian Party System." *British Journal of Political Science* 19, no. 2 (April): 191-210.
- Christensen, Raymond V. 1996. "Strategic Imperatives of Japan's SNTV Electoral System and the Cooperative Innovations of the Former Opposition Parties." *Comparative Political Studies* 29, no. 3 (June): 312-334.
- Chubb, Judith. 1982. *Patronage, Power, and Poverty in Southern Italy: A Tale of Two Cities*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Cox, Gary W. 1997. *Making Votes Count: Strategic Coordination in the World's Electoral Systems*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Erdman, Howard L. 1967. *The Swatantra Party and Indian Conservatism*. London: Cambridge University Press.
- Ferree, Karen E. 2010. *Framing the Race in South Africa: The Political Origins of Racial-Census Elections*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Fickett, Lewis P., Jr. 1976. *The Major Socialist Parties of India: A Study in Leftist Fragmentation*. Syracuse, NY: Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University.
- Gelman, Andrew, Aleks Jakulin, Maria Grazia Pittau, and Yu-Suing Su. 2008. "A Weakly Informative Default Prior Distribution for Logistic and Other Regression Models." *Annals of Applied Statistics* 2, no. 4 (June): 1360-83.
- Graham, Bruce D. 1990. *Hindu Nationalism and Indian Politics: The Origins and Development of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Greene, Kenneth F. 2007. *Why Dominant Parties Lose: Mexico's Democratization in Comparative Perspective*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Kashyap, Subhash C. 1970. "The Politics of Defection: The Changing Contours of the Political Power Structure in State Politics in India." *Asian Survey* 10, no. 3 (March): 195-208.
- . 1974. *The Politics of Power: Defections and State Politics in India*. Delhi, National Publishing House.
- Laakso, Markku and Rein Taagepera. 1979. "'Effective' Number of Parties: A Measure with Application to West Europe." *Comparative Political Studies* 12, no. 1 (April): 3-27.
- Levite, Ariel and Sidney Tarrow. 1983. "The Legitimation of Excluded Parties in Dominant Party Systems: A Comparison of Israel and Italy." *Comparative Politics* 15, no. 3 (April): 295-327.
- Magaloni, Beatriz. 2006. *Voting for Autocracy: Hegemonic Party Survival and its Demise in Mexico*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Pempel, T.J. 1990a. "Introduction. Uncommon Democracies: The One-Party Dominant Regimes." In T.J. Pempel, ed., *Uncommon Democracies: The One-Party Dominant Regimes*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Pempel, T.J. 1990b. "Conclusion. One-Party Dominance and the Creation of Regimes." In T.J. Pempel, ed., *Uncommon Democracies: The One-Party Dominant Regimes*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Pontusson, Jonas. 1990. "The Political Economy of Labor-Party Dominance and Decline in Israel." In T.J. Pempel, ed., *Uncommon Democracies: The One-Party Dominant Regimes*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

- Przeworski, Adam. 1991. *Democracy and the Market: Political and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Riedl, Rachel Beatty. N.d. "A Theory of Political Party System Variation in Democratic Africa."
- Riker, William H. 1976. "The Number of Political Parties: A Reexamination of Duverger's Law." *Comparative Politics* 9, no. 1 (October): 93-106.
- Rudolph, Susanne Hoeber and Lloyd I. Rudolph. 2008. "Congress Learns to Lose: From a One-Party Dominant to a Multiparty System in India." In Edward Friedman and Joseph Wong, eds., *Political Transitions in Dominant Party Systems: Learning to Lose*. Abingdon, UK: Routledge.
- Sakaiya, Shiro and Kentaro Maeda. 2011. "Intraparty Conflict and the Breakdown of Dominant Party Systems." Unpublished manuscript.
- Scheiner, Ethan. 2006. *Democracy without Competition in Japan: Opposition Failure in a One-Party Dominant State*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Slater, Dan. 2010. *Ordering Power: Contentious Politics and Authoritarian Leviathans in Southeast Asia*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Subramanian, Narendra. 1999. *Ethnicity and Populist Mobilization: Political Parties, Citizens, and Democracy in India*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Tudor, Maya. 2013. *The Promise of Power: The Origins of Democracy in India and Autocracy in Pakistan*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Tudor, Maya and Adam Ziegfeld. 2010. "Subnational Democratization in India: Colonial Competition and the Challenge to Congress Dominance." Nuffield College Working Paper in Politics, 2010-04.

Wallace, Paul. 1968. "The Dispersion of Political Power." *Asian Survey* 8, no. 2 (February): 87

96.

Figure 1. Congress Vote Share, Seat Share, and Government Formation

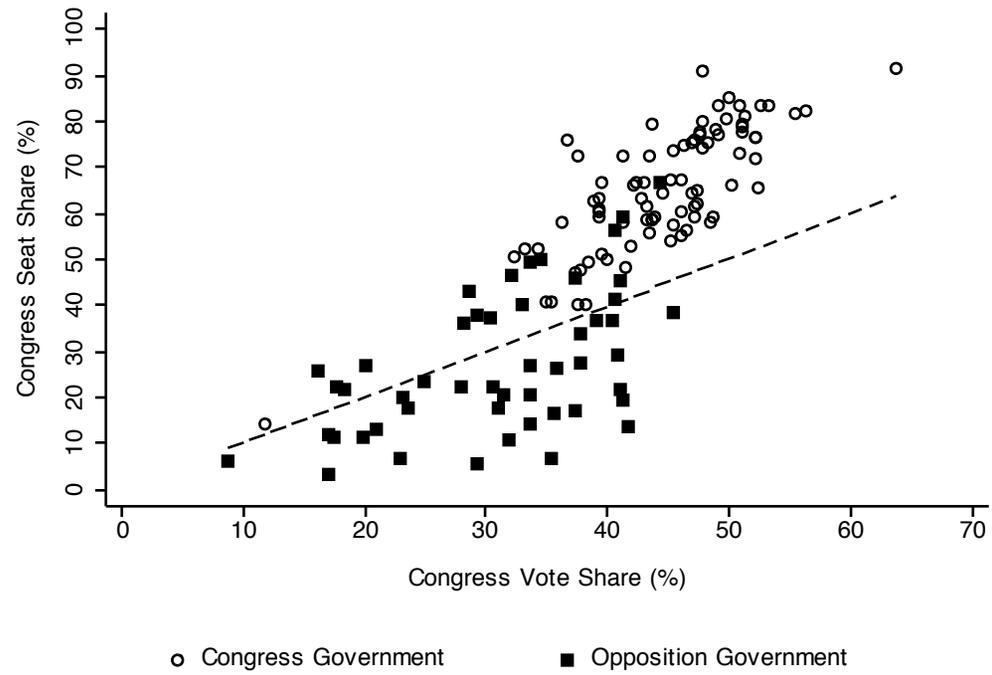


Table 1. District-level Opposition Coordination Predicts Congress Seat Shares

	DV: INC seat				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
District OENP	6.139 (4.948)	13.864*** (3.230)	-6.112 (11.882)	22.408*** (3.007)	-34.058 (29.866)
INC vote		2.076*** (.250)	.926 (.699)	2.327*** (.503)	-.913 (2.099)
District OENP X INC vote			.585* (.289)		1.523* (.818)
Constant	38.952*** (11.725)	-58.645*** (16.888)	-27.803 (18.759)	-90.730*** (19.468)	-30.218 (77.411)
N	134	134	134	49	49
R ²	.0208	.7863	.8114	.6615	.6905

Notes: Ordinary least squares regression coefficients with robust standard errors clustered by state in parentheses. Columns 4 and 5 only include observations in which Congress won between 32% and 42% of the vote. In the construction of the *District OENP* variable, districts where Congress did not contest are excluded since the opposition should not consolidate behind a single candidate in these seats. For multimember districts in elections prior to 1960, the opposition ENP is divided by the district magnitude so as to ensure comparability with figures from single-member districts.

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Figure 2. Marginal Effect of Mean Opposition ENP as Congress Vote Varies

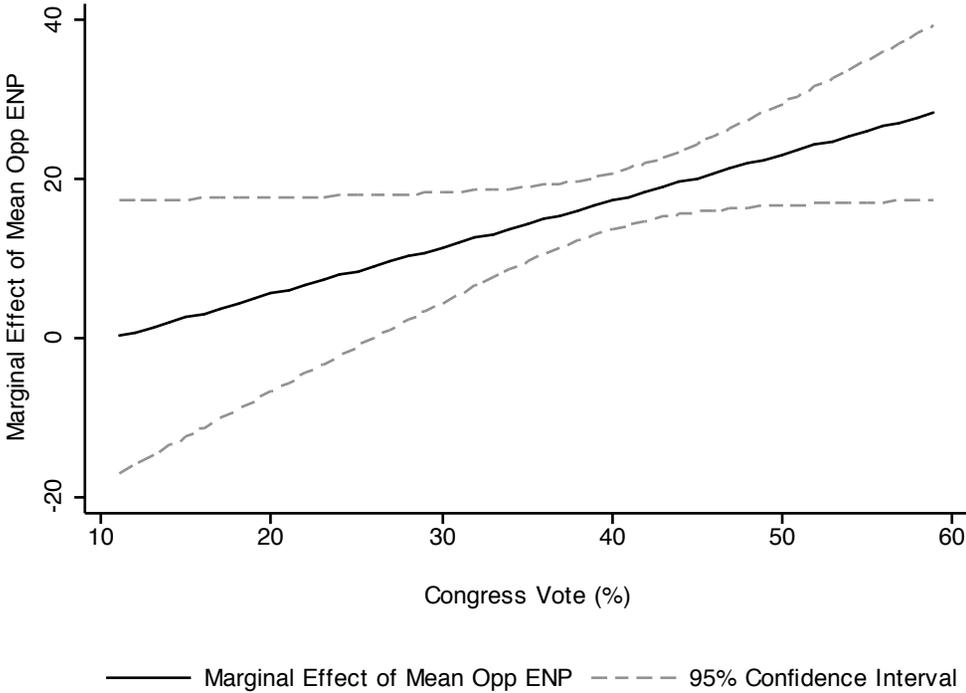


Figure 3. Congress Seat Share and Government Formation

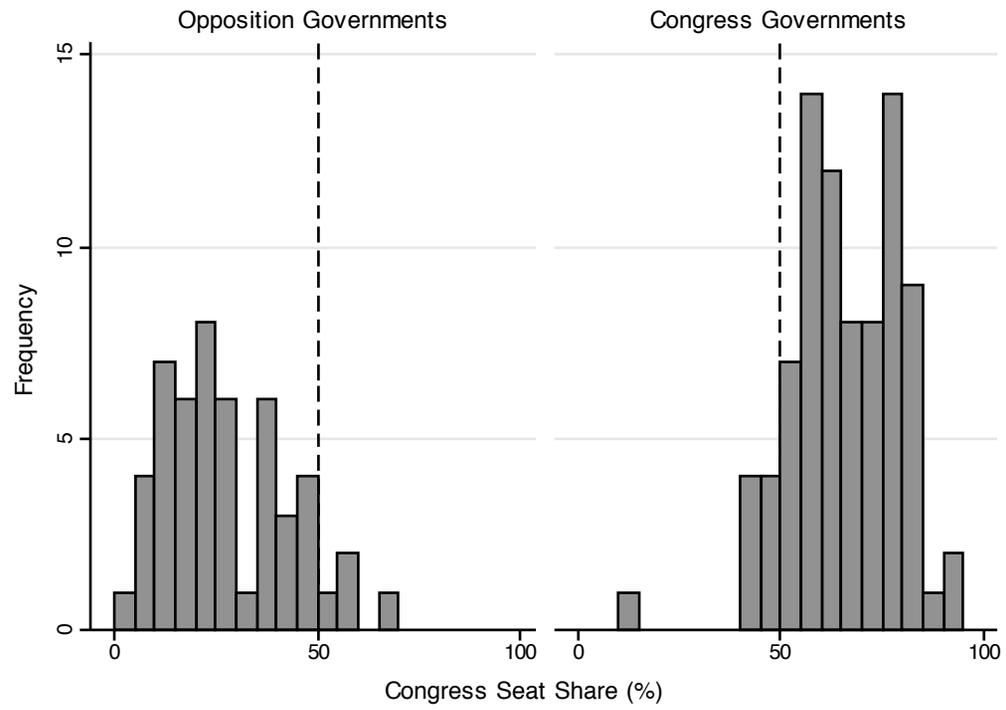


Table 2. Predictors of Mean District-Level Opposition ENP

	DV: District OENP				
	(1)	(2)	(2)	(4)	(5)
State OENP	.012 (.008)			.009 (.008)	.009 (.009)
Coordinated		-.512*** (.132)		-.320*** (.067)	
Alliance			-.408** (.140)		-.156** (.058)
Constant	1.911*** (.120)	2.077*** (.115)	2.102*** (.121)	2.317*** (.232)	2.288*** (.244)
State dummies	N	N	N	Y	Y
National election year dummies	N	N	N	Y	Y
N	131	131	131	131	131
R ²	.0143	.1117	.1034	.6240	.6002

Notes: Ordinary least squares regression coefficients with robust standard errors clustered by state in parentheses.
 *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 3. The Predictors of Opposition Coordination

	Logit (1)	DV: Coordinated Logit (2) (3)		OLS (4)	DV: Alliance Logit (5)
Opposition parties	-.757* (.399)		-.515 (.358)	-.040 (.029)	.560 (.360)
Vote margin		.065*** (.020)	.051*** (.019)	.007* (.004)	.038* (.020)
Left-Right				-.241*** (.048)	-1.545*** (.481)
Constant	.520 (1.063)	-2.256*** (.406)	-.730 (.998)	.304** (.109)	-2.360** (1.008)
Pseudo R ² /R ²	.0434	.0599	.0772	.1588	.0973
N	107	107	107	107	107

Notes: Logistic regression coefficients with robust standard errors clustered by state in parentheses in Columns 1, 2, 3, and 5. Ordinary least squares coefficients with robust standard errors are clustered by state in parentheses in Column 4. To measure the number of parties we do not use *State OENP* because that variable depends too heavily on independent candidates who are rarely included in attempts at electoral cooperation. Even though coordination takes place before elections, our two party system measures are the outcomes of election. We opt for this strategy, rather than using the results of the previous elections as our indicators for two reasons. First, given the party system's fluidity, much happens in between electoral periods in terms of party splits and mergers. Lagged values of these independent variables are therefore poor good proxies for the actual number of parties at the bargaining table or beliefs about the parties' relative bargaining power. Indicators from a couple of months after coordination should be better proxies than indicators from as much as five years prior to coordination. Second, we lose a great deal of data if we use the results of prior elections.

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 4. The Predictors of Opposition Government Formation

	DV: Opposition rule					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Legislative OENP		-.380*** (.122)		-.441* (.254)		-.419 (.270)
Left-Right			-.868** (.345)		-.870* (.527)	-.617 (.780)
Opposition seats	.153*** (.032)			.161*** (.031)	.153*** (.033)	.161*** (.030)
Constant	-8.503*** (1.707)	1.036*** (.381)	-.413 (.282)	-6.972*** (1.702)	-8.270*** (1.683)	-6.893*** (1.803)
Pseudo R ²	.6242	.1423	.0165	.6763	0.6319	.6797
N	131	131	131	131	131	131

Notes: Logistic regression coefficients with robust standard errors clustered by state in parentheses. The coding of *Left-Right* differs slightly in this table than in Table 3. We code *Left-Right* as an instance in which the legislative opposition included a left-wing party with more than one seat and a right-wing party with more than one seat. Although this procedure differs from how the variable was constructed in Table 3, the results of these procedures produce identical variables.

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 5. The Predictors of Opposition Government Collapse

	DV: Collapse							
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Legislative OENP	.636* (.347)				.525** (.235)			.291* (.176)
Left-Right (2)		1.473* (.773)				.609 (.634)		.909 (.882)
INC splinter			3.632*** (1.137)				3.600** (1.547)	3.098* (1.604)
Opposition seats				-.092*** (.034)	-.083*** (.030)	-.097** (.041)	-.081*** (.029)	-.078** (.040)
Constant	-1.638* (.851)	-.799** (.332)	-.375 (.423)	7.058*** (.2475)	4.781*** (1.839)	6.595** (2.934)	5.976*** (2.102)	4.034 (3.010)
Pseudo R ²	.1596	.3246	.0871	.2302	.3221	.4503	.2393	.4737
N	47	47	47	47	47	47	47	47

Note: Logistic regression coefficients with robust standard errors clustered by state in parentheses. In Columns (1)-(8), the dependent variable is whether the government collapsed (1) or not (0). In Column (9), the dependent variable is whether an opposition government collapsed (1) or was stable (0). Cases of dismissal are not included.

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Data Appendix

Table A1. Descriptive Statistics

Name	Description	Mean	S.D.	Min	Max	N
Alliance	Whether <u>any</u> major opposition parties coordinated electorally (1) or not (0)	0.25	0.44	0	1	131
Collapse	Whether an opposition government collapsed (1) or not (0)	0.55	0.50	0	1	47
Coordinated	Whether <u>all</u> major opposition parties coordinated electorally (1) or not (0)	0.15	0.36	0	1	131
District OENP	Mean district-level ENP for non-Congress parties in districts contested by Congress	2.00	0.55	1.09	3.70	131
INC seat	Seat share won by Congress	51.53	23.20	3.33	91.67	131
INC vote	Vote share won by Congress	39.70	10.03	8.78	63.78	131
INC splinter	Whether an opposition government included a recent Congress splinter (1) or not (0)	0.38	0.49	0	1	47
Left-Right	Whether the opposition contains major parties of the left and right	0.28	0.45	0	1	131
Left-Right (2)	Whether an opposition government includes parties of the left and right	0.43	0.50	0	1	47
Legislative OENP	ENP for non-Congress parties in the state legislature	5.09	4.68	1.05	41.29	131
Opposition rule	Whether an opposition government forms during the legislature's tenure	0.36	0.48	0	1	131
Opposition parties	Number of major opposition parties not allied with Congress	2.44	0.99	1	5	131
Opposition seats	Percentage of seats won by the opposition	48.47	23.20	8.33	96.67	131
State OENP	State-level ENP for non-Congress parties	7.20	5.45	1.82	37.18	131
Vote margin	Difference in vote share between the largest and 2 nd largest opposition parties	13.54	11.57	0.12	49.28	131

Notes: Means exclude observations that are dropped in the analyses in Table 2, 3, 4, and 5. Major parties refer to parties winning more than 5% of the vote.

Table A2. Elections Included in Analysis

State	Elections
Andhra [Andhra Pradesh]	1955
Andhra Pradesh	1957, 1962, 1967, 1972, 1978, 1983* , 1985 , 1989
Assam	1951, 1957, 1962, 1967, 1972, 1978 , 1983, 1985*
Bihar	1951, 1957, 1962, 1967 , 1969 , 1972, 1977 , 1980, 1985
Bombay [Maharashtra]	1951, 1957
Gujarat	1962, 1967, 1972, 1975 , 1980, 1985
Haryana	1967 , 1968, 1972, 1977 , 1982, 1987
Hyderabad [Andhra Pradesh]	1951
Karnataka	1957, 1962, 1967, 1972, 1978 , 1983 , 1985 , 1989
Kerala	1957 , 1960 , 1965, 1967 , 1970 , 1977 , 1980 , 1982, 1987
Madhya Bharat [Madhya Pradesh]	1951
Madhya Pradesh	1951, 1957, 1962, 1967 , 1972, 1977 , 1980, 1985
Madras [Tamil Nadu]	1951
Maharashtra	1962, 1967, 1972, 1978 , 1980, 1985
Mysore [Karnataka]	1951
Orissa	1951, 1957, 1961, 1967 , 1971 , 1974, 1977 , 1980, 1985
Patiala and East Punjab State Union [Punjab]	1951 , 1954
Punjab	1951, 1957, 1962, 1967 , 1969 , 1972, 1977, 1980, 1985
Rajasthan	1951, 1957, 1962, 1967, 1972, 1977 , 1980, 1985
Sourastra [Gujarat]	1951
Tamil Nadu	1957*, 1962, 1967 , 1971** , 1977 , 1980 , 1984 , 1989
Travancore Cochin [Kerala]	1951, 1954
Uttar Pradesh	1951, 1957, 1962, 1967 , 1969 , 1974, 1977 , 1980, 1985, 1989
Vindhya Pradesh [Madhya Pradesh]	1951
West Bengal	1951, 1957, 1962, 1967 , 1969 , 1971 , 1972, 1977 , 1982 , 1987

Notes: Elections in bold are included in our analysis of government termination in Table 5. Two of these bolded elections— Kerala 1960 and West Bengal 1971—produced governments headed by opposition parties but that also included Congress. Although these are not strictly speaking opposition governments, they are also not elections that sustained Congress dominance, given the primacy of non-Congress parties. For each state that no longer exists, the state cluster in which it is included is listed in brackets. In 1956, India redrew many of its internal borders. Major states were also created in 1960 and 1966. For the purposes of clustering in our regression analysis, we do not wish to create separate clusters for states that existed for only one or two elections, particularly when their borders overlap considerably with those of subsequent states. We therefore cluster states into 15 groups based on India’s major states after 1966. (In 2000, major states were again created, but this post-dates our period of analysis).

*These elections are dropped in Tables 2, 3, and 4 because we do not have reliable data on opposition fragmentation. In these elections, major political parties contested the election that were not registered with the Election Commission of India (ECI). These were the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam in Tamil Nadu 1957, Telugu Desam Party in Andhra Pradesh 1983, and Asom Gana Parishad in Assam 1983. Their candidates appear in ECI reports as independents. As a result, unusually large shares of the vote in these elections officially went to independent candidates who were really party-based candidates. Consequently, values of *State opposition ENP* for these states are extremely high (between 43 and 141, as compared to a mean of 7.2), when in fact fragmentation was relatively low. It is impossible to know from the election reports which independent candidates were truly independents and which were from these major parties. In other states and other elections, smaller parties similarly fielded candidates as independents, but these observations are not dropped because they were not major parties and therefore had little substantive impact on independent variables of interest.

**Congress did not contest this election. It is therefore not included in the data except in Table 5, since that analysis refers to duration of opposition governments.

Table A3. Party Codings

Left Parties

Communist Party of India
Communist Party of India (Marxist)
Forward Bloc
Forward Bloc (Marxist)
Kisan Mazdoor Praja Party
Peasants and Workers Party
People's Democratic Front
Praja Socialist Party
Revolutionary Socialist Party
Samyukta Socialist Party
Socialist Party

Right Parties

Bharatiya Jana Sangh
Bharatiya Janata Party
Ganatantra Party
Hindu Mahasabha
Ram Rajya Parishad
Swatantra