

India's Policy Toward Jammu and Kashmir: Understanding the Use of Religious Ideology as a Political Legitimacy

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to analyze the use of religious ideology as political legitimacy in the case of the abrogation of Jammu and Kashmir autonomy by the government of India. The revocation of Articles 370 and 35A of the Indian Constitution terminated the privileges the Jammu and Kashmir region enjoyed for approximately 70 years. The abrogation is viewed as an attempt by the Hindu nationalist government to achieve the Hindutva agenda, Hindu-based ideals. Thus, the research question of this study is developed as follows: How does India's policy toward Jammu and Kashmir reflect the exercise of religious ideology as a political tool? This study uses the religious legitimacy concept as an analytical framework by exploring and interpreting a range of secondary data sources pertinent to the research question. This study concludes that the ruling party uses Hindutva as a religious ideology by operating the three aspects of religious legitimacy, namely normative, instrumental, and primordial, as justification for its policies towards Jammu and Kashmir. Thus, the Hindu nationalist government accomplished its objectives and garnered people's support using the three facets of religious legitimacy.

Keywords: Jammu Kashmir, Instrumentalism, Normative, Primordialism, Religious Ideology

Artikel ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis penggunaan ideologi agama sebagai legitimasi politik dalam kasus pencabutan otonomi Jammu dan Kashmir oleh pemerintah India. Pencabutan Pasal 370 dan 35A Konstitusi India mengakhiri hak istimewa yang dinikmati wilayah Jammu dan Kashmir selama kurang lebih 70 tahun. Pencabutan tersebut dipandang sebagai upaya pemerintah nasionalis Hindu untuk mencapai agenda Hindutva, cita-cita berbasis Hindu. Oleh karena itu, pertanyaan penelitian dalam studi ini dirumuskan sebagai berikut: Bagaimana kebijakan India terhadap Jammu dan Kashmir mencerminkan penggunaan ideologi agama sebagai alat legitimasi politik? Penelitian ini menggunakan konsep legitimasi agama sebagai kerangka analisis dengan mengeksplorasi dan menafsirkan berbagai sumber data sekunder yang relevan dengan pertanyaan penelitian. Kajian ini menyimpulkan bahwa partai penguasa menggunakan Hindutva sebagai ideologi keagamaan dengan menjalankan tiga aspek legitimasi agama, yaitu normatif, instrumental, dan primordial, sebagai justifikasi atas kebijakannya terhadap Jammu dan Kashmir. Dengan demikian, pemerintah nasionalis Hindu mencapai tujuannya dan menggalang dukungan masyarakat dengan menggunakan tiga aspek legitimasi agama tersebut.

Kata-kata Kunci: Jammu Kashmir, Instrumentalisme, Normatif, Primordialisme, Ideologi Keagamaan

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The revocation of the Jammu and Kashmir (J&K)'s autonomy on 5 August 2019 has been linked to the revivalism of *Hindutva*. This religious ideology is the foundation of the Hindu nationalist political movement adopted by the ruling government. The abolition of articles 370 and 35 A of the Indian Constitution shifted J&K's position from a state with special powers guaranteed by India's constitution to a state with significantly less autonomy than the rest of the Indian federation (Medha 2019). Starting in 2014, following the triumph of Modi from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Hindu nationalism reignited in India's domestic politics and became the cornerstone of the government's policies. As the sequel, the abrogation of J&K's special status in 2019 marked a new chapter in the region's long history of the conflict as it symbolized the victory of the right-wing agenda using *Hindutva* ideology. This movement is claimed to establish India as one nation, culture, and religion to achieve the ideals of restoring Indian civilization based on Hinduism (Frykenberg 2008).

The issue of revoking the particular autonomy of J&K and its relations to *Hindutva* has been the subject of discussion among scholars. A study by Medha (2019) highlighted *Hindutva* as the politics of high-risk maneuvers of Modi's government to demonstrate a more aggressive attitude toward national security issues. Medha argued that the Indian government used depriving J&K of its autonomy as a display of power in the region under *Hindutva*'s dictum, despite the growing discontent among Kashmiris and growing tensions with Pakistan and China as a result of this decision. Farooq & Javaid (2020) link up the suspension of Article 370 of the Indian constitution to *Hindutva* and its impact on the Kashmiris. They highlighted that the effect of Modi's move on Kashmir had generated the violation of the Kashmiri people's human rights to achieve *Hindutva*'s aim of reducing the Muslim majority to a minority. A study by Sheikh (2020) underscored that the move against Kashmir by the Hindu nationalist regime is a threat to India's democracy and secularism since it has inflamed anti-Muslim sentiments in the political sphere. Rather Wani (2020) conducted a similar study, highlighting the revocation of Article 370 of the Indian Constitution as a type of colonialism that exploits the people of J&K socially, economically, and politically. Finally, a study by Dar (2019) found that, rather than enhancing the union of India, the revocation of J&K's status exacerbated communal strife, mainly because this policy treated Muslims as second-class citizens.

The studies above have pointed out the linkage between the removal of Article 370 and the Hindu nationalist agenda. By assessing several aspects, such as national security, human rights violations, threats to Indian secular roots, and potential communal conflict, those findings have provided the foundation of this study. However, this study focuses on elaborating on *Hindutva* as the basis for political legitimacy, which is worth examining to present another point of view and a fuller comprehension of this issue. In particular, this study demonstrates how *Hindutva*, as the source of religious legitimacy, is used as a political instrument to achieve an actor's goals. By referring to religious legitimacy, this study argues that the BJP, as the ruling political party, utilized normative, instrumentalism, and primordialism aspects of *Hindutva* ideology in its political campaign to eliminate Jammu and Kashmir's autonomous status. Through the three aspects of religious legitimacy, the Hindu nationalist administration was able to garner support in achieving its goals.

Religious Legitimacy: Religion as Political Instrument

Religious legitimacy proposes that religion is never the primary cause of societal problems. It is often used as a political tool by a group of elites to achieve their interests. Fox (2018) states that religion can be defined as a social institution that influences human behavior due to its societal roles, including social control, social stability, morality and values, understanding, solace, identity and social solidarity, family institutions, and legitimacy. Religion may be an effective source of legitimacy for governments and political actors, allowing them to achieve their aims and keep their power more effectively. Furthermore, political actors can use religion as a political instrument even though the precision of interpretation and truth of religious principles is often ignored or considered less significant in exercising legitimacy from a political standpoint. The exercise of religion becomes essential because of several aspects, such as normative power, instrumentalism, and primordialism (Fox & Sandler 2004).

The normative power is based on the idea that religion is a substantial source of norms that guide people's behaviors. By associating specific foreign and domestic policies with normative aspects of religion, a quest for support for these policies is frequently propagated throughout society. Political leaders, even if they do not believe in them, could continuously connect

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global norms to religious norms to further their goals. Despite this, frequently referencing an international standard may help it integrate into the national value system. On the other hand, it can occur when international norms often align with political and material interests at the domestic level.

The second part of religious legitimacy is instrumentalism, which holds that politicians may exploit cultural features to further their political objectives. It emphasized that ethnicity and nationalism are essential not because politicians' genuine aims are ethnic or national but because politicians have other goals to achieve and employ ethnic and national sentiments to attain them. These objectives might include finding a means to share a political or economic pie that is too small for everyone and a desire for power for its own sake. The elites use religion to gain power and mobilize support both at the domestic level and on a global scale (Fox & Sandler 2004).

Finally, the influence of religious justification lies in primordialism in which ethnicity and nationalism are essential because they are inextricably linked to identity. Myths often perpetuate the identity (Fox & Sandler 2004). For example, a group of people might be reminded of their origins and the history of their homeland. The myth about migration centers on the quest for independence. Myths about the ancestors will remind the descendants of the honorable traits their forefathers possessed. A myth of the heroic period describes an idealized period when their society and civilization were at their height. Finally, myths about exile, conquest, and social decline explain the group's historical reasons for being in this condition and motivate them to engage in a political campaign of liberation (Douglass 1988). Public belief in myths can mobilize the people in the name of collective identity.

This descriptive qualitative study relied on various data and information from secondary resources to analyze the issue. The discussion of this study will be presented in several parts. The first part will outline the issue of the abolition of J&K's autonomy. The second part presents the discussion on *Hindutva* ideology. This section will elaborate on the foundation of this ideology and its linkage with the BJP as a political institution. The final part examines the three aspects: normative, instrumentalism, and primordialism to analyze the BJP's attempts to exert religious legitimacy.

The Removal of Jammu and Kashmir Special Status as India's Policy

Jammu & Kashmir has maintained an autonomous status since its incorporation into the state of India in 1947. Before becoming part of India, Kashmir was one of the largest princely states of British India, and the British did not directly administer it. At the time of decolonization, the princely rulers had the choice of acceding to India or Pakistan (Bose 2007). Maharaj Hari Singh, the last ruler of Kashmir, decided to join India when Pakistan's armed troops invaded Kashmir to conquer the princely state. Maharaj sought military assistance from India to repel the invasion on the condition that Maharaj had to accede to India so that the Indian involvement would be in defense of Indian territory. Subsequently, the Maharaj signed the Instrument of Accession (IOA) to India in October 1947 and codified it in Article 370 of India's constitution (Shah & Shah 2020). As a result, apart from the three subjects, namely defense, foreign affairs, and communications, J&K had special autonomy to administer its territory (Wani 2021), including having its flag and the union flag (Rather 2020).

Later, in 1954, Article 35A was added to the constitution through the Presidential Order. Article 35 A empowered the J&K's legislature to identify specific persons as permanent state inhabitants and appropriately define their rights (Wani 2021). That is to say, Article 35A, complementing Article 370, prohibits non-permanent residents of J&K from permanently living in the state, purchasing immovable property, obtaining land, applying for government jobs, or any scholarship, subsidies, or other public welfare initiatives. Filkins (2019) highlighted that the genesis of the provisions for the autonomy of J&K was also related to the consideration that the territory with the largest Muslim population was able to maintain its demography.

The recognition and codification of Kashmir's right to self-governance by Article 370 was a fundamental assurance of the stability of Kashmir's relationship with the Indian Union until the Indian government unilaterally decided to abrogate the article by an order in 2019 (Hindustan Times 2020). The parliament also passed the J&K reorganization bill, which established the state's bifurcation into the Union Territory (UT) of Ladakh and the Union Territory (UT) of Jammu & Kashmir on 3 October 2019 (Dash 2021). Despite the many criticisms, a two-thirds majority in parliament ratified the constitutional amendments to J&K's status.

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This condition means the decision gained majority support and was considered an essential step from the government's standpoint, the revocation of Articles 370 and 35 A would positively impact the whole of India now that J&K has fully integrated.

However, the unilateral initiatives taken by the Indian government to abrogate J&K's status was a critical period for the Kashmiris. Following the passage of the law, the Indian government imposed curfews and restrictions (Dash 2021). Even Kashmir was placed under severe lockdown, and residents were confined to their homes, with no access to television, internet, mobile phones, or landlines. In addition, more than 8,000 Indian troops were stationed in Kashmir, and armed Indian police were patrolling (Dash 2021). The loss of autonomy without the Kashmiris' consent has enhanced the threat sense regarding their identity, religion, and language among the Kashmiris (Wani 2020). The Kashmiris believed they were being denied their fundamental rights and are now living in a colony. They accused the Indian government of violating the Indian Constitution and democratic values, as well as neglecting Kashmiris' concerns.

J&K's unique position as an Indian state has been a subject of dispute for Hindu nationalists since its formation. Therefore, the abrogation of J&K's autonomy was considered a success for the BJP's agenda based on *Hindutva* ideology. This point of view was based on the belief that Kashmir is a part of so-called unbroken India, a region with a Hindu majority that lies in the philosophy of *Hindutva*, which will be discussed in the following section.

Hindutva as Religious Ideology

Hindutva is commonly characterized in various works of literature as an ideology that underpins the political movement of Hindu nationalism in India. In the contemporary context, *Hindutva* represents the BJP's right-wing ideology, which perpetuates the notion of Hindu nationalism pioneered by intellectuals such as V.D. Savarkar, M.S. Golwakar, and Deendayal Upadhyay, who urged the Hindus to evolve a political movement based on the ideals of Hinduism (Chakrabarty & Jha 2020). Savarkar, who coined the term *Hindutva* in 1923, argued that only by constructing a solid Hindu based on the Hinduness shared by all Hindus would *Akhand Bharat*, or undivided India, be formed (Chakrabarty & Jha 2020). In contrast to the initial concept of

Hindu nationalism, which was developed to raise awareness of the degradation of Hindu identity due to colonialism, the ideology *Hindutva* clearly stated that Muslims were also a threat to the *Hindu Rashtra* or Hindu nation (Jaffrelot 2007). The essences of *Hindutva* are the common nation (*Rashtra*), a typical race (*Jati*), and a common civilization (*Sanskrit*) (Sharma 2002). Frykenberg (2008) emphasized that the foundations of *Hindutva* were already embedded inside genetic codes of holy blood and sacred soil, as well as cosmic sacred sound, from whence all existence and knowledge (*Vedas*) originated. Thus, *Hindutva* is a political institution tied by racial affinity, geographic proximity, and cultural resemblance (Jaffrelot 2007). Although *Hindutva* had existed in Indian politics before independence as a political ideology, it gained momentum through the BJP's winning streak in the 2014 and 2019 national elections.

The weakening of the Congress Party's secularism was accompanied by the rise of identity-based regional parties, such as the BJP (Rai & Kumar 2017). The 2014 election result was pivotal for the BJP and the larger *Hindutva* culture. It was a watershed moment when the BJP secured an absolute majority in the lower chamber of the Indian parliament, the Lok Sabha, for the first time. During the 2014 election campaign, Modi, as the candidate, voiced slogans explicitly showing its connection with *Hindutva*, namely "Modi ko vote, Hindu Ekta ko vote" (choosing Modi means choosing Hinduism). In line with this, Modi has gained support for the perception that he is India's savior from all Hindu problems (Kalim et al. 2020).

Hindutva-based policies attracted the BJP and the Modi government to win the 2019 elections. By taking advantage of issues of community, religion, and caste to gain votes, the BJP won the votes from the Hindu majority (Kalim et al. 2020). This victory was marked by the decision to remove J&K's autonomous status, which strengthened *Hindutva*'s agenda. With this decision, Modi finally realized the BJP's wish to revoke Article 370 of the constitution (Aiyar 2020). The BJP's victory demonstrates the viability of *Hindutva* as a political religion. As a result, it serves as a foundation for the ruling government's decisions, one of which is the integration of Hindustan through the abolition of J&K's autonomy.

The Use of Hindutva as Religious Legitimacy

Right after his victory, Narendra Modi utilized his authority to issue an order nullifying Article 370 and repealing the provisions guaranteeing state autonomy. This decision ultimately signified the triumph of *Hindutva's* agenda. By making the politics of religious majoritarianism its main agenda, the BJP not only succeeded in overthrowing India's secularist discourse but was also able to convince 80 percent of Hindus to unite against 20 percent of minority groups that they do not need to share power with others in India (Mutjaba 2022). Through the discussion on the abolishment of J&K's special status, the three factors that interplay in reinforcing the BJP's *Hindutva* agenda will be highlighted in the following section.

Normative Power

Normative power asserts that religion is a significant source of norms or standards that guide actors' behavior. The relation between *Hindutva* and the revocation of J&K's autonomous status has been forged on the perception that India and Hinduism, as its cultural roots, are under threat from foreign invaders. Based on *Hindutva* ideology, India is intrinsically a Hindu nation, and for that reason, Muslims are an entity that jeopardizes this idea of Hinduness. The Hindu nationalist discourse has constructed Islam as "the threatening other" that invaded and crushed Hindu temples, particularly during Mahmud's invasion in the year 1001. Hindu nationalists also hold the view that Muslims coerced Hindus into converting when the Mughals conquered India (Sit 2019). These historical events eventually constructed Muslims as 'outsiders' and 'invaders' of India. Therefore, safeguarding the nation and the culture must be a significant and normative concern. After that, the measures to prevent the emergence of a nation of non-Hindus, particularly Muslims, and to establish a *Hindu Rashtra* becomes an obligation.

On a global scale, the rise of Islamophobia also fueled the anti-Muslim sentiment in India and is used as an instrument to establish *Hindutva's* goals. Islamophobia affected India both in its domestic and foreign policies. The USA's fight against terrorism was responded to by India's move away from international non-alignment towards closer relations with Israel and the USA's policy to support the agenda (Hayness 2013). In the domestic arena, the Kashmir issue became one of the concerns that arose as a result of Islamophobia.

This phenomenon gave a chance for the ruling government to link the idea of self-determination of the Kashmiris with the Islamic terrorism movement. In a campaign to secure support from 80 percent of the votes, the BJP purposefully brought up the subject of Islamophobia, increasingly referred to ancient writings, and downplayed the caste issues that have been dividing India (Biswas 2020). Acts such as the killing of Hindu leaders, destroying temples, rape, and abduction, as well as the involvement of Pakistan in the financing, arming, and training of terrorists (Finnigan 2019; Sheikh 2020). Through this idea, the BJP garnered support from the people in India to make removing J&K's status legitimate.

Instrumentalism

As explained by Fox and Sandler (Fox & Sandler 2004), political actors can leverage identity issues to advance their economic and political agendas as long as those issues help them win public support. While the BJP pertained to the idea of the ideal prosperous state known as Ram Rajya, an era when the whole of India, including the land of Kashmir, was under the rule of King Rama from Ayodhya, it also has another interest behind it. During its campaign, the BJP took a pledge to reestablish Ram Rajya, which aligns with the idea of *Hindutva*. Ram Rajya, the idea of a welfare state in the present context, is interpreted as the existence of a society without poverty, pain, and grief. As stated by Yogi Adityanath, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister, the definition of the ideal form of government with the absence of discrimination, the connection of the poor to the government's welfare schemes, and the guarantee of public safety are the manifestation of Ram Rajya (Times of India 2019b) From this viewpoint, it is apparent that the concepts of prosperity and development offered by the BJP are inextricably linked to J&K's entire integrity to India and the construction of a prosperous society through the re-establishment of the Ram Rajya.

However, the role of Indian tycoons in winning the BJP in 2019 is another basis for the decision to withdraw J&K's status. Hutchison (2019) wrote that tycoons in India are a crucial factor in the costliest election in the history of the Asian superpower, sponsoring candidates, making covert endorsements, and even becoming controversial topics in and of themselves. The enormous financial backing from India's corporations to Narendra Modi's re-election campaign raised concerns about the integrity of the world's most extensive democratic process. Modi's close connections to

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influential Indian businesspeople like Anil Ambani, Gautam Adani, and Ratan Tata, among others, are a crucial source of money for the 2014 and 2019 election campaigns. As Setyorini & Mukti (2020) stated, the abrogation of J&K's status protected under Articles 370 and 35A was mainly motivated by economic interests. It is also asserted that the significant role of India's tycoon behind the success of Modi's BJP was followed by the demand to improve tax permits on goods and services, abolish domestic regulations that make it difficult for the investor to invest their capital, and remove barriers in Indian states to create a national market without any restriction.

Articles 370 and 35A, which prohibit all forms of investment and property ownership for people outside the Kashmir population, are among the domestic policies thought to impede the interests of these businessmen. Following the decision to remove J&K's status, Narendra Modi took a critical move by meeting with prominent business leaders such as Ratan Tata (Tata Sons), Mukesh Ambani (Reliance Industries), Anand Mahindra (Mahindra & Mahindra), Gautam Adani (Adani Industries), Sunil Mittal (Bharti Airtel), Anil Agarwal (Vedanta), N Chandrasekaran (Tata Sons), AM Naik (L&T), Sajjan Jindal (JSW Group), Baba Kalyani (Kalyani Group) and Venu Srinivasan (TVS Group) to discuss about economic improvement and job opportunities (Kumar 2020). While Modi's activities can be understood as a means of promoting economic growth, they also portray how the state is being used to serve the interests of capitalists. This study elucidates how elements of instrumentalism are employed to advance the goals of the dominant elite. The removal of J&K's special status satisfies both *Hindutva's* needs and Modi's commitment to campaign donors.

Primordialism

Primordialism, as the last aspect, is central to the issue of ethnicity and identity. This primordialism aspect can be seen in the BJP's effort to abrogate J&K's status originating from the idea of *Hindu Rashtra* (Hindu nation-state) and the return of the Kashmiri Pandit to their homeland as stated in BJP's manifesto to achieve the *Akhand Bharat* (undivided India). According to the *Hindutva* idea by Savarkar, India, at its essence, is a Hindu nation. Honoring India as both a fatherland (*pitribhumi*) and a holy land (*punyabhoomi*) determines a Hindu identity (Vaishnav 2019). *Hindutva* distinguished between religions originating in India, including Jainism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Sikhism, and

others that did not, like Christianity and Islam. Hindu nationalists believe that India is a Hindu nation-state because Hindus make up 80% of the population as well as the fact that they view themselves as real natives of the land, in contrast to Muslims and Christians in India, who they believe are only the victims of a deadly foreign invasion (Jaffrelot 2007). Therefore, Hindu culture and tradition should take precedence over all other cultures and traditions on Indian soil.

To achieve *Hindutva*'s goal of purifying Indian culture and transforming the country's social structure to establish a Hindu Rashtra, the BJP claims to use anti-minority resentment as a political tool. The BJP has mastered the art of winning elections by conveying the impression that minorities, particularly Muslims, need to be fixed (National Herald 2022). The Babri Mosque controversy, in which Hindus asserted that it was built on the site of the Rama Temple, has historically been used as an example of Muslims seizing Hindu territory. In addition, the safe return of Kashmiri Pandits was reappointed as a basis for revoking Articles 370 and 35A of the Indian constitution in 2019. The suffering of Kashmiri Pandits has emerged as a significant *Hindutva* concern. Here, the aspect of primordialism, which includes dimensions of origin, ancestry, and liberation, can be seen from the manifesto of 'Safe Return of the Kashmiri Pandits' supporting the decision to remove J&K's status.

The Kashmiri Pandits, who are part of India's larger Saraswat Brahmin community, are the natives of the Kashmir Valley who were forced to leave their land due to the emergence of the anti-government movement by Islamic militant groups (NewsNine 2022). Based on history, Kashmir Valley was a safe place for the Hindus until the end of the 14th century, the time when Islam slowly seeped into the society. In 1989, this group of Kashmiri Pandits was forced to leave their land due to the emergence of the anti-government movement by Islamic militant groups. As a result, Indian authorities grew concerned about the existence of 'Islamic guerillas' in the valley, who were believed to be fighting a separatist battle labeled an indigenous freedom struggle. This condition was thought to have put the state of Jammu and Kashmir in the hold of a merciless movement of Islamist extreme terrorism. The valley is reported to have been taken over by an anti-India movement spearheaded by the Muslim majority and supported by various terrorist organizations in 1989 (Rajput 2019). Following the terrorists' attempted ethnic cleansing and genocide, about

64,827 Kashmiri Pandit families left the valley (Krishnan 2022). Furthermore, for over three decades, these Kashmiri Pandits have been struggling to return to their homeland.

The history and the plight of the Kashmiri Pandits have always been brought into concern by the BJP. In the 2014 election, the BJP had promised the return of Kashmiri Pandits to the land of their ancestors with full dignity, security, and assured livelihood. In the 2019 election, BJP used “The Safe Return to Home” referring to its agenda on the Kashmiri Pandits. During his campaign speech, Modi assured Kashmiri Pandits that he would assist them in returning to the valley. The majority of the Kashmiri Pandits supported the decision to abolish the special status of J&K as it will chalk out a road map for their return to the valley. It is essential to highlight that these Kashmiri Pandits’ vote in the election is crucial. Even after more than three decades in exile, Kashmiri pandits keep voting for the candidates in their home constituencies to stay connected to their roots. As Kashmiri Pandits had great aspirations for Modi, the promise of going home has once again helped the BJP win. Through the promise of returning to the ancestral land, the BJP managed 86 % of migrant votes in the Kashmir Valley (Times of India 2019a). This point reveals that the elimination of Jammu and Kashmir’s autonomy was also reinforced by the aspect of primordialism, as shown by the issue of Kashmiri Pandits discussed above.

Conclusion

To maintain its position and mobilize support, the BJP has demonstrated the exercise of normative, instrumentalism, and primordialism aspects of religious legitimacy rooted in the *Hindutva* ideology. The normative element is built on the emphasis on defending the country from foreign invaders, terrorism, and separatism movements led by the Muslims in the territory of Jammu and Kashmir. Instrumentalism is established on two goals: establishing a welfare state by referring to the era of Ram Rajya and fulfilling the party’s promise to the campaign donors that demand the abolishment of Jammu and Kashmir. The last, the primordialism aspect, portrayed the plight of Kashmiri Pandits. The promise to bring them back became an attractive way to gain support from the Kashmiri Pandits. As this study focuses on the issue of revoking the particular autonomy of Jammu and Kashmir, the discussion is limited to the BJP campaign agenda

related to this issue. There are many issues related to the revival of Hindu nationalism under the ruling regime, such as Love Jihad and the Citizenship Amendment Bill, that still need to be studied. It is also important to examine its impact on minority groups in future studies as communal tension increases in the country.

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