Comparative Analysis of Democratic and Authoritarian Regimes: India and China

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1. INTRODUCTION

The comparative study of political regimes, encompassing both democratic and authoritarian systems, has long been a central focus of political science, particularly in understanding how different forms of governance influence development outcomes, political stability, and civil liberties. While democracy, with its emphasis on electoral competition, civil rights, and the rule of law, is often associated with legitimacy and public accountability, authoritarian regimes are credited for delivering rapid policy implementation, albeit frequently at the cost of individual freedoms.

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 marked a high point for liberal triumphalism, reinforcing modernization theory's claim that economic growth leads to democratization. However, the parallel rise of India, the world's largest democracy, and China, an enduring authoritarian regime, has challenged these assumptions. These two countries provide competing development models that have reopened foundational debates on the advantages and limitations of democratic versus authoritarian governance.

This study focuses on India and China as case studies to examine how regime type influences three critical national outcomes: political stability, economic development, and civil liberties.

Although both nations share structural similarities, large populations, colonial pasts, and economic reforms in the 1990s, they differ significantly in their political systems. India has maintained a federal, multiparty democracy, while China remains a centralized one-party authoritarian state. These contrasting systems create ideal conditions for comparative inquiry using a "most-similar-systems" design, which controls for background variables while isolating the effects of regime type.

In addition to their internal dynamics, the regime types of India and China also shape their respective roles in the international order. India often aligns itself with liberal democratic groupings, such as the Quad, and promotes a rules-based vision for the Indo-Pacific. In contrast, China actively champions state-led development through initiatives like the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), positioning itself as a leader in offering non-democratic models of modernization. These differences in foreign policy posture are deeply rooted in their domestic governance systems and warrant systematic examination.

A unique contribution of this study lies in its integrated focus on all three variables, stability, development, and liberties, rather than treating them in isolation. By doing so, it addresses gaps in the existing literature that often separate political and economic analyses from discussions of civil liberties or foreign policy. Moreover, recent developments such as democratic backsliding in India and institutional adaptation in China further highlight the urgency and relevance of this comparative analysis.

Both regimes are also evolving internally. India's democratic institutions have faced increasing criticism for majoritarian tendencies, institutional erosion, and restrictions on dissent. At the same time, China has demonstrated authoritarian resilience by enhancing state capacity and experimenting with localized forms of participation. These developments challenge binary understandings of democracy and authoritarianism, necessitating a more nuanced, empirically grounded comparative study.

This research contributes to academic scholarship by bridging the disciplinary divide between comparative politics and international relations. While many regime studies focus narrowly on governance performance or civil rights, this study connects

internal regime dynamics with global behaviour, offering insights into how state legitimacy is projected outward. It also

contributes to ongoing theoretical debates around hybrid regimes, performance legitimacy, and democratic resilience in the Global South.

Methodologically, the study employs a comparative case-study design with both qualitative and quantitative components. Data will be drawn from cross-national indices (e.g., World Bank, V-Dem, Freedom House) and primary sources, including legislation, party reports, and court judgments. The post-1990 period marks a pivotal time frame when both countries

undertook major reforms under different regime frameworks, making comparisons more coherent and policy-relevant.

In summary, this proposal aims to investigate whether regime type has an impact on shaping national performance. The findings aim to contribute to academic theory and offer practical insights for policymakers seeking to engage with India and China in a world increasingly

shaped by competing governance models.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The academic discourse comparing democratic and authoritarian regimes spans several disciplines, including political science, development economics, comparative public policy, and international relations. Traditionally, much of this literature has examined democracy and authoritarianism in isolation, using normative or performance-based metrics to argue for the superiority of one over the other. However, recent decades have witnessed a more nuanced shift away from binary categorizations and toward performance-based evaluations across various issue areas, including economic growth, welfare delivery, institutional capacity, and civil liberties. This shift coincides with the global rise of "hybrid regimes," democratic backsliding, and the resilience of authoritarian governments, particularly in the post-Cold War world (Levitsky & Way, 2010).

2.1 Regime Type and Economic Development
Early studies often portrayed authoritarian regimes as economically efficient (e.g., East Asian "tigers" and China's surge), while democracies were supposedly characterized by slower growth. However, recent large-N analyses find *no inherent growth penalty* for democracy. For example, V-Dem research indicates that democratization does not hinder growth, particularly in low-capacity states, and that, on average, democracies exhibit more stable and reliable economic performance. Democracies are "less likely to experience economic crises" than autocracies. At the same time, autocracies display much higher variability: they can achieve spectacular booms (as in China) but also deep busts. This suggests a nuanced view: while China's authoritarian regime unleashed rapid industrialization, India's democratic system delivered steadier (if slower) progress. Some scholars highlight *additional factors*, such as state capacity and institutions, in addition to regime type. For instance, Leftwich's developmental state model argues that strong institutions, not regime form per se, are the key to explaining growth. Nevertheless, the comparative development literature acknowledges that regime type influences how policies are chosen and implemented, with democracies favouring broadly based coalitions and autocracies favouring elite-led investment (e.g., Przeworski et al. 2000; Acemoglu & Robinson 2012). In the context of India and China, analysts note that China's central planning enabled massive infrastructure investment, whereas India's slower reforms reflected its coalition politics. Our review reveals a debate: many case studies attribute China's higher GDP growth rates to its authoritarian governance, but cross-country data suggest that democracy itself is not a hindrance to growth.

2.2 Institutions and Policy Innovation
Beyond economic performance, several scholars have focused on institutional adaptability and policy innovation. Rodrik (2000) argues that democratic institutions may enable more participatory policy experimentation and social learning. For instance, India's state-level experiments with direct cash transfers and decentralized health interventions reflect federal flexibility. In contrast, China's "pilot zone" approach enables technocratic experimentation under top-down guidance, as exemplified in Shenzhen and other Special Economic Zones. The literature increasingly suggests that while authoritarian regimes may be swifter in implementation, democracies may foster more inclusive innovation through local agency and accountability mechanisms. The relationship

between regime form and stability is complex. Democracies can absorb shocks through institutional checks and popular consent, whereas autocracies can enforce order by repression. V-Dem analysts note that democracies enjoy "stable and predictable" development paths, implying fewer sudden political crises. Conversely, historians emphasize that China's authoritarian regime experienced violent upheavals (e.g., civil war and Cultural Revolution) before stabilizing. At the same time, India's democracy, despite its challenges, has seen peaceful elections and no coups. Some scholars characterize India's politics as fractious (with frequent protests and insurgencies), but also resilient: its democracy has survived party turnovers and regional conflicts. Theoretically, democratic theorists (e.g., Dahl) argue that consent-based rule leads to legitimacy, whereas autocrats may face periodic revolts if legitimacy falters. Empirically, India has not experienced a regime collapse, and China's government, following Mao, has been remarkably durable, albeit at the cost of tight controls. In sum, studies suggest democracies trade off some efficiency for institutionalized stability, while autocracies trade freedoms for (sometimes illusory) short- term order.

2.3 Regime Type and Civil Liberties/Governance.

The defining difference lies in the realm of political rights. Democracies grant open speech, elections, and association; authoritarian states curtail them. Research confirms this: democratic regimes feature "expanded civil liberties and electoral competition," whereas authoritarian ones see these "heavily curtailed or absent". Freedom House scores reflect this starkly: as of 2024, India (a multiparty democracy) is rated only *Partly Free* (score 63/100), with growing concerns about press freedom and minority rights. China, by contrast, is rated *Not Free* (9/100), reflecting the CCP's suppression of dissent, religion, and autonomous civil society. The literature on welfare states adds nuance: while democracies are thought to introduce welfare in response to voter demands, autocracies have also launched redistributive programs – often to maintain social peace. For instance, studies compare India's Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee (NREGA) and China's dibao program, showing both were introduced under popular pressure. In democracies, social movements and elections drive policy (with mixed

implementation), whereas autocrats may extend benefits strategically to preempt unrest.

The literature emphasizes that civil liberties are generally higher under democracy, but both regime types can employ similar policy tools for different political reasons.

A newer line of research explores how technology intersects with regime type. Guriev and Treisman (2020) outline how authoritarian regimes, such as China's, utilize digital tools not only for surveillance but also for narrative control and predictive policing. The development of China's social credit system and extensive internet censorship mechanisms stands in stark contrast to India's more open, but increasingly contested, digital space. In recent years, civil liberties in India have also faced challenges, particularly around internet shutdowns, NGO restrictions, and sedition laws, blurring the stark divide. These debates highlight the need for more nuanced and dynamic assessments of liberty in both democracies and autocracies.

2.4 India–China Comparative Studies

A more petite body of work explicitly compares the two. Case studies on political economy, welfare, and governance note intriguing parallels and differences. For example, Hoffmann (2011) and others find that, despite regime differences, both countries have developed welfare institutions with some degree of convergence. The Cambridge journal article by Ho et al. (2022) uses India and China to illustrate common social mobilization triggers that lead to pro- poor policies in both regimes. Analysts of foreign policy highlight how India's democracy and China's authoritarianism shape their global alignments (e.g., India's partnerships with other democracies vs. China's strategic relationships). However, most existing comparisons focus on specific sectors or historical episodes rather than a comprehensive, multi-dimensional study.

2.5 International Relations and Global Context

In IR theory, democracies are believed to be more peaceable (the democratic peace theory) and more value-aligned with Western powers. This has some bearing on India–China relations: India has avoided open war with China and participates in democracy-friendly forums, whereas China engages in grand power competition. Recent policy analyses note that

India actively promotes democracy in the Global South as a counter-model to China's authoritarian influence. India's strategic autonomy means it balances its democratic identity with geopolitical interests (often cautiously supporting democracy abroad). This IR literatures suggest that regime type affects diplomatic posture: India's democratic governance is seen as a soft-power advantage against China's "hard" economic power. India and China also represent two competing visions for regional order in Asia. India has deepened its participation in multilateral democratic platforms, such as the Quad (comprising the US, Japan, and Australia), which promotes a "free and open Indo-Pacific." Conversely, China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has extended authoritarian influence across Africa, Central Asia, and Southeast Asia through infrastructure diplomacy. Scholars such as Ikenberry (2018) and Acharya (2014) suggest that regime type influences not only foreign policy but also the normative frameworks that these countries export. While India seeks to promote democratic governance, albeit inconsistently, China champions a development-first model detached from political liberalism.

2.6 Authoritarian Resilience vs Democratic Flexibility

A growing body of literature also explores the question of regime resilience in the face of global crises. Scholars like Nathan (2003) and Levitsky & Way (2010) argue that authoritarian regimes have become more sophisticated in recent decades, often surviving through institutional adaptation, co-optation of elites, and controlled pluralism. China's ability to maintain party legitimacy through economic performance and limited decentralization reflects this new durability of authoritarianism. In contrast, democracies like India often show greater flexibility and responsiveness to crises, particularly through federal structures and electoral accountability. The COVID-19 pandemic, for instance, highlighted China's capacity for centralized coordination, but also drew attention to its lack of transparency. In India, while the decentralized response was uneven, democratic checks and media scrutiny played a role in policy corrections. This suggests that resilience and adaptability manifest differently in each regime type, with trade-offs in speed, transparency, and legitimacy. Another area of inquiry examines how populism and welfare policy trajectories evolve under different regimes. In democracies like India, populist leaders often rely on electoral cycles to roll out high-visibility social schemes, such as Ujjwala Yojana or PM-Kisan, which target key voter blocs. In China, welfare expansion tends to be more technocratic and strategically deployed to curb unrest or strengthen regime legitimacy, especially among rural populations. Scholars such as Wang and Woo (2011) and Barrientos (2013) note that authoritarian regimes may pursue welfare for instrumental reasons, but without necessarily strengthening civil society or citizen agency. In democracies, however, even flawed welfare delivery mechanisms are accompanied by citizen demands, litigation, and social audits. Thus, populism in democracies and paternalism in autocracies reflect different pathways to social legitimacy and public trust.

2.7 Governance Capacity and Regime Performance

Scholars increasingly argue that regime type alone does not determine developmental outcomes; rather, governance capacity, the ability of states to design, implement, and sustain effective policies, is a more proximate cause of performance. Fukuyama (2013) differentiates between the *strength* of the state and the *form* of its government, noting that some authoritarian regimes exhibit high policy capacity (e.g., China), while many democracies (e.g., India or Brazil) may suffer from bureaucratic fragmentation or political gridlock. Studies from the World Bank and UNDP suggest that while democracies often provide more legitimacy and accountability, their complex coalition politics can undermine efficiency. In contrast, authoritarian regimes may deliver rapid outcomes, but frequently lack feedback loops for course correction. This nuance complicates the democracy-autocracy binary, prompting researchers to assess institutional quality and state-society relations in conjunction with regime type.

A growing body of literature focuses on hybrid regimes, those that combine elements of democracy and authoritarianism. Levitsky and Way (2002) describe *competitive authoritarianism* as regimes that hold regular elections but undermine fairness through media suppression, voter intimidation, or judicial interference. India, while constitutionally democratic, has faced increasing scrutiny over media capture, suppression of dissent, and the use of laws like UAPA

and sedition to silence critics. Conversely, China has experimented with limited electoral mechanisms at the village level, raising questions about participation without pluralism. Scholars like Diamond (2002) and Carothers (2002) highlight the global rise of such grey-zone regimes, blurring simplistic dichotomies. Therefore, the India-China comparison also provides a lens to explore democratic backsliding and authoritarian innovation, rather than treating them as static opposites.

Authoritarian regimes often lack electoral legitimacy but compensate for this by relying on performance-based legitimacy, where citizens accept state authority in exchange for tangible outcomes, such as economic growth, improved infrastructure, and stability. Scholars such as Gilley (2006) and He and Warren (2011) examine how regimes like China maintain popular support through economic gains, nationalism, and bureaucratic competence. In democracies, legitimacy often rests on procedural fairness and the protection of individual rights. This distinction becomes crucial when assessing policy trade-offs: democracies may tolerate slower results if they are perceived as, whereas autocracies may act decisively but risk backlash if performance falters. The concept of "output legitimacy" versus "input legitimacy" is particularly relevant in understanding why both India and China retain domestic legitimacy despite contrasting regimes.

Beyond domestic policy, the nature of a regime influences its normative posture in global governance. China's active promotion of "development without democracy" through initiatives such as the BRI, the AIIB, and South-South Cooperation reflects a challenge to Western liberal norms. India, in contrast, aligns with the democratic world but practices strategic autonomy, often refraining from overt liberal evangelism. Hurrell (2006) and Acharya (2014) argue that emerging powers use norm localization to adapt global norms to domestic legitimacy needs. This literature offers essential insights into how domestic regime type affects not just bilateral diplomacy but ideational contestation in international institutions, an increasingly relevant topic in IR theory.

2.8 Gaps in the Literature

Despite an extensive body of scholarship on regime type and developmental outcomes, notable gaps persist in the integrated, comparative analysis of India and China. Much of the existing literature treats key variables, such as political stability, economic development, and civil liberties, in isolation, failing to examine how they interact within both democratic and authoritarian regimes. Studies of China's economic success often omit the civil rights trade-offs, while analyses of Indian democracy tend to focus on electoral institutions rather than developmental performance (Fukuyama, 2013; Barrientos, 2013). Additionally, India and China are frequently studied separately or through narrow thematic lenses such as social welfare or foreign policy (Ho et al., 2022; Bajpaee, 2024), with few holistic comparisons that link internal governance models to broader national outcomes. The literature also lacks systematic integration between comparative politics and international relations, rarely assessing how regime type shapes soft power, diplomatic alignments, or participation in global norm-setting (Acharya, 2014; Hurrell, 2006).

Furthermore, few studies take the post-1990 convergence in economic reforms seriously as a baseline for comparative analysis. Most focus on older periods, such as Maoist China or Nehruvian India, without aligning their parallel transitions into the global economy. There is also a lack of empirical work on hybrid regimes and democratic backsliding in both countries, despite increasing evidence of authoritarian drift in India and local experimentation in China (Diamond, 2002; Levitsky & Way, 2002). The connection between domestic regime logic and international behaviour remains under-theorized, particularly in understanding India's positioning as a democratic soft power versus China's authoritarian developmentalism (Ikenberry, 2018; Carothers, 2002). Moreover, existing studies often rely on single-source data, either statistical or normative, without triangulating across institutional, empirical, and discursive evidence. This study addresses these gaps by offering a methodologically integrated, post-1990 comparison of India and China, focusing on how regime type shapes national outcomes and their global implications.

3. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study defines *regime type* using standard criteria of democracy vs authoritarianism. Following Dahl (1971) and Teorell et al. (2019), a democracy is

characterized by meaningful electoral competition and protected civil liberties, while an authoritarian regime features restricted political participation and curtailed freedoms. India is operationalized as a multi- party democracy with constitutional guarantees, and China is a one-party authoritarian state. The research puzzle is to explain how these differing regimes have produced divergent trajectories in political stability, economic development, and civil rights. In other words: *What role has the form of government (democratic vs authoritarian) played in shaping outcomes in India and China since the late 20th century?*

The rationale for this comparative approach is twofold. First, India and China share many similarities (large population, colonial past, 20th-century state-building), but diverge sharply in terms of regime type. This "most-similar-systems" logic allows us to isolate the effect of the political system on outcomes. Second, both countries are now major global players, making it highly significant to understand their internal dynamics. Insights from this study could inform debates on whether democracy is compatible with rapid development or if authoritarianism poses a threat to citizen welfare.

The scope of the study is the post-1990 period (roughly the era of globalization and market reforms), when both India and China undertook major economic opening. We focus on three dependent variables:

(a) political stability (e.g., incidence of unrest, leadership changes);
(b) Economic development (GDP growth, poverty reduction, and inequality); and
(c) Civil liberties (press freedom, expression, and assembly rights). The independent variable is regime type (India's democracy vs China's authoritarianism). The study will draw on quantitative indicators (e.g., World Bank data, Freedom House scores) and qualitative case evidence. We will examine national-level developments, nothing important political and policy events, while recognizing sub-national diversity. This focused scope (limiting to key outcomes and two cases) makes the project feasible as a PhD-level proposal and ensures depth over breadth. By bridging the literature gaps noted above, the study aims to clarify whether and how regime differences "matter" for long-term national trajectories.

The post-1990 period marks a clear departure from prior economic and political strategies for both countries. India's economic liberalization, which began with the 1991 balance-of- payments crisis, ushered in a new era of market reforms, increased foreign direct investment, and service-sector-led growth. Similarly, China's post-Tiananmen political consolidation and its integration into the WTO in the 2000s coincided with its export-led industrial boom. By limiting the scope to the post-1990 context, the study ensures greater comparability in terms of global economic exposure, multilateral engagement, and ICT-driven governance innovations.

While India and China are broadly characterized as democratic and authoritarian, respectively, both regimes exhibit certain hybrid features. India's recent political climate has raised concerns over democratic backsliding, majoritarianism, and institutional erosion. Meanwhile, China has introduced forms of limited electoral participation at the village level and invested in public accountability mechanisms, especially at the local governance tier. Acknowledging these internal complexities avoids binary essentialism and provides a more empirically grounded basis for comparison.

4. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

This study is guided by the following four key objectives, each of which reflects a critical dimension of comparative regime analysis:

1. To assess how democratic and authoritarian regimes affect political stability.
2. To evaluate the relationship between regime type and economic development.
3. To compare the status and trajectory of civil liberties.
4. To analyse how domestic regime characteristics influence international posture and global role.

5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How has the form of governance influenced the nature and degree of political stability in India and China since the post-liberalization period?
2. How have democratic and authoritarian regimes shaped the economic development outcomes of India and China, in terms of growth, inequality, and social inclusion?

3. In what ways do civil liberties differ in the two countries, and how are these differences attributable to the respective regime types?
4. How do India's and China's domestic political regimes shape their foreign policy alignments and international influence in the 21st-century global order?

6. HYPOTHESIS

To test the theoretical linkages between regime type and the outcomes of interest, the study proposes the following falsifiable hypotheses:

1. India's democratic regime contributes to long-term political stability through electoral legitimacy and institutional checks. In contrast, China's authoritarian regime ensures short-term order but is more prone to volatility and coercive control.
2. Civil liberties are more consistently protected in India due to constitutional guarantees and democratic oversight, whereas China's authoritarian system systematically restricts rights such as press freedom, dissent, and public assembly.

7. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a comparative, mixed-methods research design to investigate how regime type, specifically, democratic versus authoritarian, impacts national outcomes in terms of political stability, economic development, civil liberties, and international behaviour. The methodological framework is structured around a most-similar-systems design, allowing for a focused comparison by controlling background variables such as civilizational heritage, demographic scale, state capacity, and post-colonial trajectories. India and China are particularly well-suited for this design, as they share many structural similarities but differ fundamentally in their regime types, offering a natural experiment in comparative politics.

The research employs a comparative case study approach, treating India and China as most-similar cases, with regime type as the primary independent variable. Each country will be examined through process tracing, focusing on significant events such as elections, economic reforms, leadership changes, and mass protests, as well as their impact on the dependent variables. The analysis will proceed in two stages: first, a within-case study of India and China will be conducted independently, followed by a cross-case comparison to identify broader causal patterns and evaluate regime-specific outcomes.

The quantitative dimension of the study involves collecting longitudinal data from both international and national sources. Economic indicators, including GDP per capita, growth rates, poverty levels, and trends in inequality, will be sourced from the World Bank, the IMF, and the UNDP databases. Political and governance indicators will include Polity scores, V-Dem indices, and the World Bank's Political Stability Index. Civil liberties will be evaluated using Freedom House scores and global press freedom indices. This data will be visualized and compared across countries using graphs, tables, and time-series trends to highlight regime- specific patterns, for instance, contrasting economic volatility or the evolution of HDI scores.

Complementing the quantitative analysis, the qualitative component will focus on institutional, legal, and ideological frameworks. Policy documents, constitutional texts, development plans, election manifestos, and major court rulings will be examined to understand formal institutional design and practice. Contextual depth will be provided through academic literature, think tank reports, and news media archives. Special attention will be given to civil society indicators, using NGO and human rights reports to assess freedom of expression, protest, and association. In India's case, parliamentary debates and opposition dynamics will be examined, while in China, party congress reports and political messaging will provide insight into state priorities and ideological control.

The study will utilize a wide range of data sources, including academic works, policy reports (e.g., Freedom House, UNDP Human Development Reports), online data repositories (e.g., World Bank, V-Dem Portal), and government databases (e.g., Indian Census, Chinese Statistical Yearbooks). Events such as mass protests, constitutional amendments, or foreign policy shifts will be examined using newspaper archives and official statements. To ensure reliability, all findings will be triangulated across multiple sources and types of data.

The analytical strategy emphasizes the structured application of the most-similar-systems logic, with

regime type as the primary explanatory variable. Efforts will be made to control for potential confounders, such as initial economic conditions, regional influences, or external shocks. The study will combine within-case causal narratives (e.g., the impact of NREGA in India or surveillance reforms in China) with cross-case pattern matching to assess whether hypothesized relationships, such as the connection between regime type and stability, hold across both states. This mixed-method approach ensures analytical depth, empirical rigor, and theoretical relevance.

8. TENTATIVE CHAPTERS

The thesis will be structured into six chapters, each building cumulatively on the previous and directly aligned with the research objectives and thematic focus areas. The design is grounded in a comparative political framework, incorporating interdisciplinary insights from political economy, governance studies, and international relations.

Chapter 1: Introduction
This chapter introduces the research problem, significance, and context. It outlines the
research objectives, questions, and hypotheses, and justifies the selection of the India-China case using the most similar systems design. It also defines the scope (post-1990), explains the methodological approach, and presents the structure of the thesis.

Chapter 2: Literature Review and Analytical Framework - Regime Type and Governance Outcomes
This chapter reviews classical and contemporary literature on democracy, authoritarianism, and hybrid regimes. It examines theoretical approaches to regime performance in terms of stability, development, civil liberties, and global role. The chapter concludes by presenting the conceptual framework that guides the empirical analysis.

Chapter 3: Political Stability and Economic Development under Democracy and Authoritarianism
This chapter compares political stability (e.g., protest management, regime endurance, institutional legitimacy) and economic development (growth, inequality, infrastructure,
welfare) in India and China. The analysis draws on indicators and case events to evaluate how regime type affects these outcomes.

Chapter 4: Civil Liberties and Rights Protection in

Democratic vs. Authoritarian Systems
This chapter compares the status of civil liberties, such as freedom of speech, press, association, and dissent, in the two regimes. It analyses legal protections, institutional autonomy, censorship, and surveillance practices, using qualitative sources and rights-based indices.

Chapter 5: Regime Type and Global Strategy - India and China in World Affairs
This chapter examines how domestic regime characteristics shape foreign policy orientation, soft power projection, and participation in global governance. It compares India's democratic diplomacy and strategic autonomy with China's authoritarian developmentalism and global
influence mechanisms.

Chapter 6: Conclusion
This concluding chapter synthesizes the findings from Chapters 3 to 5, evaluates the
hypotheses, and reflects on the broader implications for regime theory, governance models, and international relations. It discusses limitations, policy relevance, and directions for future research.

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