



# SARDAR PATEL AND THE FOUNDATION OF INDIA'S CONSTITUTION, GOVERNANCE AND NATIONAL INTEGRATION

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**Abstract:** The “Iron Man of India,” Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel plays a crucial role in forming the Indian constitution, national unity, and governance. Patel served as the head of the committees that dealt with provincial constitutions, minorities, excluded and tribal territories, and fundamental rights. The study focuses to explore the contribution of the Sardar Patel’s to India’s Constitution, Governance, and National Integration. The study employs a secondary qualitative data collection process through thematic analysis to explore the findings of the study. The finding of the study indicates that Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel contributed to establishing the foundation for democratic democracy and made a major contribution to the writing of the Indian Constitution. He consequently gained notoriety as the “Iron Man,” a sage politician, and the founder of contemporary India. He was a key figure of Constituent Assembly, which is instrumental in integrates princely states in “Indian Union”, and laid the foundation for a strong, better and united nation.

**Keywords:** Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Iron Man, Constitution, India, Government, Rights, Constituent, Assembly

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## **Introduction**

“Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel” is often known as “Iron Man of India,” has played an important part in shaping Indian’s governance, national integration and the Indian constitution (Chakraborty, 2024). The significant leadership performed by him was subjected to be instrumental in consolidating princely states, integrating them towards the India’s Union and establishing a strong foundation to occur a democratic and unified India. One of his contributions towards

constitution drafting and the effective establishment of the key administrative institutions make him Iron man. There are different key contributions made by Sardar Patel in the areas of national integration, constitutional framework, administration and governance and national identity. However, the study is going to evaluate different contributions plates by Sardar Patel in contributing towards India's Constitution, Governance and National Integration. Throughout the study, it will also going to depict the significant understanding of the Indian constitution for creating a strong, unified and prosperous nation. Also, in the national integration, Patel has contributed to the integration of the "565 princely states" in the Indian Union afterward independence.

### **Aim**

The research aim is to evaluate Sardar Patel's contribution to India's Constitution, Governance, and National Integration.

### **Objectives**

- To identify Sardar Patel role in contributing towards India's Constitution, Governance and National Integration
- To evaluate the critical understanding of the Indian constitution for creating a strong, unified and prosperous nation
- To leverage the agitation of Sardar Patel in the national struggle and to influence public support

### **Research question**

- How to identify the significant role played by Sardar Patel in the contribution to India's Constitution, Governance and National Integration?
- What are the remarkable aspects of the Indian constitution for creating a strong, unified and prosperous nation?
- What types of struggles Sardar Patel faced during the development of the Indian constitution and to influence public support?

### **Literature Review**

#### ***Key contribution of Sardar Patel to the Indian constitution***

Patel's one of the remarkable contributions has integrated the princely states with 565 within the Indian Union afterward independence (Taylor and Shrimankar,

2024). Hence, he significantly uses the combination of negotiation, diplomacy and also process with firmness for achieving this and earning the name of "Iron Man". He has also contributed to the constitutional framework assembly and possibly played a remarkable role in shaping the provincial constitution and fundamental rights, which aims to potentially address the recruitment of the diverse community and the establishment of having democratic and strong foundation to make the country free. Sardar Patel has effectively dominated the scenes of Indian political aspects from the year 1917 to the year 1950, which significantly indicates him as a freedom fighter and also reorganized the Congress of Indian National. Furthermore, after the independence, he has managed to depict a sensitive portfolio such as "Home and the States".

However, by following this partition, a restriction was imposed on bureaucracy and also integrated in the princely states. Patel has laid foundation for the political democracy of being a significant member throughout the drafting of the Indian constitution. The potential contribution of Sardar Patel has divides into two main parts and they are "Integration of Princely States" and another one is "All India Service." The integration or implementation of 554 state of princely of union India have made possible considering statesmanship, different administrative skill and also are subjected to be enthusiasm for the Patel to define a unified India (Nirala, 2025). Furthermore, for the plan of Mountbatten, in 1946, of princely states were released from the lease of British paramount and also became free to decide their respective faith. 1. "Join Dominion of India." 2. "Join Dominion of Pakistan" 3. "Remain independent from this dominion." After playing these ambitious rules, it felt that this is an appropriate time for realizing the dream of sovereignty.

Hence, for building a unified and strong India, Patel has used every possible way in the areas of cajoled, coaxed and even threatened to extreme serious conditions. Furthermore, in July 1947, he organized state departments and also had an immediate objective of him is for securing the effective annexation associated with princely states and further invited the corporation to the rulers. Moreover, he has also played a remarkable role in pleading with people that they are in the princely state to provinces closely linked through blood bonds, and no one can be able to divide them into segments.

### *The architect of Indian's political unity*

"Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel" was born in in year of 1875 of 31st October in a farmer's family in Gujarat. Nadiad was potentially known as the key figure

of the Independence of Indian and also for the integration of its effective architect. The political journey of Sardar Patel began through the association with Mahatma Gandhi at the time of Kheda Satyagraha in 1918 (Kakadiya and Vala, 2024). He had potentially peasants for reducing of plying the taxes for the prospect of famine-induced hardship, and it marked as his first victory against the colonial authority. The respective experience solidified his commitment towards Gandhian rules or principles about civil disobedience and non-violence. His effective leadership at the time of the 1928 Bardoli Satyagraha against the hike in adjusted tax, he have earned him the name “Sardar”, and he recognizes it as one of his key roles. Furthermore, Patel has played a pivotal role in the moment of freedom, participated in the non-cooperation movement and also led the protest against the repressive policies of the British.

It made arrested at different times, he endured imprisonment at the time of the “Civil Disobedience Movement” and also participated in the “Quit India Movement” in 1942. Hence, as a lieutenant trusted by Gandhi, he presided over the “Congress Karachi Session” in the year of 1931 and also contributed towards organizational efforts for Indian’s Independence. On the integration of states by Sardar Patel, and the reason the making him the architect of India is due to the key aspects performed by him in the development of the Indian constitution (Akhtar, 2024). The integration of the Princely states has leverage to post-independence, as the country has faced several issues in integrating the Princely states under the rule of the British. However, Sardar Patel has skillfully negotiated with the rulers based on these states with the use of both diplomacy and firmness to persuade them to join the India Union. He has employed a combination of firm action and diplomacy to effectively address the resistance and also ensure the integration of the process to make him earn the title of the “Iron Man of India,”.

## Methodology

The study follows a methodology for conducting qualitative research by using an interpretivist research philosophy and an exploratory research design segments of methodology. Qualitative research is a form of scientific inquiry methodology which places a strong emphasis on the complexity and richness of voice and context of the social phenomena (Lim, 2024). The present research has selected a “*secondary data collection method*” for the accumulation of secondary qualitative data findings. Data has already been gathered by another

party and subjected to analysis is referred as a secondary data collection method (Mazhar *et al.* 2021). Secondary data methods are used to collect from the qualitative sources, including reports, articles, websites, journals, news, etc.

As this study follows the strategy of qualitative research, it would also integrate a procedure of secondary qualitative data analysis through thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a useful analytical technique for a qualitative research which assists exploration of a studied phenomenon (Christou, 2022). Thematic analysis offers a rich and organised format for evaluating the research data through interpreting different aspects of the topics (Majumdar, 2022). Thematic analysis is a form of qualitative research method which is comparatively simple, making it a feasible choice for studying data analysis techniques and procedures. The collected data was initially evaluated based on the objectives of the research for generating themes for exploring findings of the research, with the generation of thematic codes.

## Result

### Thematic Coding

**Table 1: Thematic Coding**

No.	Thematic Code (Objective-based)	Associated Keywords	Concept of Theme
1.	Role of Sardar Patel in contributing towards India's Constitution, Governance and National Integration	Constitution, Patriotism, nation, Iron man, social evil.	Sardar Patel was a key contributor to the constitution's creation. Only he can make the Indian Constitution's First Article, which stipulates that "India, that is, Bharat, shall be a Union of stipulates," a reality. The rules and values of Mahatma Gandhi's moral fortitude, ahimsa, discipline, and spirituality had a significant impact on him. He joined the "All-India Freedom Struggle" and took part in several campaigns protesting the British government's exploitation strategies (Saroj, 2022).
2.	Critical understanding of the Indian constitution for creating a strong, unified and prosperous nation	Unified, India, Bharat, Patel, political	Before India's independence, Sardar Patel worked to create a powerful, unified India. He had always advocated for "Ek Bharat and Shreshth Bharat" for India, and the Interim Government's independence and state responsibility gave him greater freedom to carry out his plan (One India, Complete India). Patel and "V.P. Menon" united India after realising the significance of the territorial integration of these scattered and interspersed princely states. Patel began negotiating with the state rulers to get them to accept their states under Indian dominion (Mishra <i>et al.</i> 2022).

No.	Thematic Code (Objective-based)	Associated Keywords	Concept of Theme
3.	Agitation of Sardar Patel in the national struggle and to influence public support	Agitation, Gandhi, freedom, patriotism, leader	Following Satyagraha, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel took part in numerous agitations. And he became closer to Gandhi as a result. Sardar Vallabhai Patel made numerous contributions to the fight for freedom. He was imprisoned multiple times for his active involvement. His repeated incarcerations did not deter him from his goal. Patel's main goal was to drive the British out of the nation. He had a powerful and intense sense of patriotism (Balasubramanian and Venkatraman, 2022).

## Thematic Analysis

### *Theme 1: Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel: The Architect of Unity and Modern Governance in India*

Sardar Patel played an crucial role in India's Constitution, National Integration and Governance. He was involved in integrating princely states in Union of Indian, which further helped him in earning the moniker "Iron Man of India". His contributions to the Constitution include advocating for a strong and unified nation, while his governance includes establishing of an efficient and functional administrative system. He unified the princely nations into the Indian empire without overthrowing their monarchs, thanks to his unwavering will and political acumen (Singh, 2023). Jawaharlal Nehru acknowledged Patel as the man in charge of creating and fortifying the new India, despite their differences on some dynamics. A key figure in the Constituent Assembly of India, Patel played a significant role in drafting the country's constitution. Patel served as the head of the committees that dealt with provincial constitutions, minorities, excluded and tribal territories, and fundamental rights.

Patel believed that a federation would be the future of India. He wrote: "Federation is a fascinating idea. But it introduces new embarrassments" (Chereshneva, 2023). Sardar Vallabhbhai took over as India's "deputy prime minister" shortly after the country gained its independence, overseeing several departments, including the Department of Home, State, Information, and Broadcasting. Additionally, he was appointed chair of the Provincial Constitution, Minorities, and Fundamental Rights Committees. Sardar Patel drafted the constitution with provisions for princes' privy purses, the right to private property, and constitutional protections for the public services.

Additionally, he participated in the partition committee and assisted in dividing up the responsibilities and shares between India and Pakistan.

Because of the partition, he was fully aware that the newly independent India needed a robust system to manage its administrative, military, and civil bureaucracy. Vallabhbhai Patel reorganised the Indian bureaucracy. He believed that the civil service should strengthen the nation's unity and solidarity. When speaking to the inaugural class of IAS officers on April 21, 1947, Vallabhbhai Patel shared his thoughts on the significance of the civil service for an independent India (Saroj, 2022). He said, "...you are the pioneers in the Indian civil service, and the future of this service will depend much upon the foundation and traditions that will be laid down by you, by your character and abilities and by the spirit of your service. You can look forward to your future with trust and confidence, and if in the true spirit of service, I am sure you will have your best reward".

### ***Theme 2: Constitutionalism and Its Impact on India's Development***

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, called "Iron Man of India," played an important role in shaping the Indian Constitution and its influence on the development of the nation, mainly through a focus on the national unity and the establishment of a strong and unified civil service. He also championed idea of "All India Services", which was enshrined in Article 312 of the Constitution, for ensure a competent and consistent administration across the country, promoting efficiency and unity. His influence are extended to other aspects of the Constitution, like state-union relations, fundamental rights and directive principles. Prior to becoming a leading figure in the independence struggle, Patel was a skilled barrister who practised law with honesty and accuracy. In addition to bringing him respect and financial security, his legal job honed his analytical and persuasive abilities, which were later crucial in his political career (Jerath, 2024). Patel's steadfast dedication to justice throughout his career as an attorney was evident in the several cases he took on that emphasised his sense of justice and compassion.

Sardar Patel used tool at disposal, from force of persuasion by amicable gestures, to realise his goal of unifying India. When Sardar Patel believed that using the terms saam, daam, dand, and bhay would entice and persuade rulers to join India, he did so with faith in the larger national and even popular goal. Through promising them glory and stroking royal egos with payments to royal families or believable rulers, he fostered a widespread fear

of rebellion. He incited fear of a major uprising, warned the rulers of chaos, and evoked patriotism. The three states of Hyderabad, Junagarh, and Kashmir posed the biggest challenge during the merger process. As per Shahabuddin (2021), When Sardar Patel told the Assembly that all protections for religious minorities would be eliminated, he was echoing the goal of secular India: "This Constitution of India, of free India, of a secular India will not hereafter be disfigured by any provision on a communal basis".

Patel simultaneously held the positions of military commander, diplomat, and politician during a time when ideological disagreements were tearing apart the leadership. He was a realistic politician. In an attempt to include separate princely kingdoms into India and stop the nation from further fracturing, he employed a "carrot-and-stick" policy (Mishra *et al.* 2022). His efforts to bring the princely realms of "Hyderabad", "Junagadh", and "Kashmir" into the Union of India have been the only ones to be successful. Patel favoured the notion of a strong Indian state. Furthermore, he was the designer of the "Indian Civil Services", which he called the "steel frame" of the country. He concluded that for the political objectives of the new India to be realised, India needed an administration which was knowledgeable and effective.

### ***Theme 3: Iron Will and Practical Leadership of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's***

Sardar Patel's life has been one of inspiration and drive. First of all, he accomplished his career objectives with minimal assistance from the others before playing a crucial and pivotal part in uniting Indian populace to fight for the independence. He became known as the Iron Man of India because he supported the common cause of independence of Indian and his conviction that there can be unity in diversity. Sardar Patel, which translates to "leader Patel," is the title that has been bestowed upon him. Sardar Patel was a dynamic leader who spoke from the heart, accepted the viewpoints of those who disagreed with him, and firmly felt that Indians could move from "Swarajya" to "Surajya" by uniting in their fight against the British (Balasubramanian and Venkatraman, 2022). He advocated for women's empowerment and quick industrialisation to achieve self-sufficiency, and he was a fervent supporter of equality.

His plans for the economy were not well received by the socialists. Sardar was the subject of numerous socialist grievances. Because of the policy

of Sardar's, the Sanghadis were compelled to leave the Congress. Sardar established the "Mahamandal Indian National Trade Union Congress" (INTUC (INTC)) in opposition to the left-leaning Kamdar Mahamandal "All India Trade Union Congress" (AITUC). Sardar was criticised for supporting him. Socialists viewed the military as the capitalists' ally and the workers' enemy. They also viewed him as a king's ally. "It is challenging for me to be friends with kings, landlords, and businesspeople, but I assert that the poor and labourers are always friends," Sardar continued (Chauhan and Patel, 2023). "I knew I did not want to possess property and that I did not have any when I decided to follow Gandhiji's example, but I also knew I was not prepared to cave in to the current trend of behaving like a leader or acting like a leader by mocking capitalists and monarchies". Given all of the previously listed considerations, Sardar was severely criticised by several socialist intellectuals.

## **Discussion**

Sardar Patel is often known as the "Iron Man of India" due to his crucial contribution towards the Indian Constitution and also unifying the country post-independence. However, he has masterfully integrated his plan over the 500 states for promoting the Indian Union and the approaches to preventing potential fragmentation. Furthermore, beyond the unification, a foundation has been laid by him for achieving an efficient and strong civil service and a contribution towards Indian modern governance. His critical contribution to the unification of the princely states depicts a decisive diplomatic and leadership attitude or skill of his for persuading and compelling rulers of about 565 princely states to join the Indian union potentially. However, this phenomenon helps to make the people of the country stay united and perform untimely against British rule.

The constitutionalism emphasizes law rule for power separation and also for the approaches of protection of fundamental rights for people, and it also has with significant impact on India's development concerning fostering with stable manner. A significant amount of framework comes under the constitution to ensure governance accountability, protecting the individual's liability and also promotes economic growth; these phenomena lead towards a more prosperous and inclusive society. However, the key impact of constitutionalism is a system where citizens and institutions are subjected to be accountable under rules and laws to prevent arbitrary action to boost fairness. The Indian

constitution brings fairness in the country for each perform to avail themselves in their steps towards a crime and another aspect. The constitution guarantees the fundamental rights in the areas of “freedom of speech”, equality, religion, and also positively empowers the citizens. Hence, this has been identified from the above data analysis that the Indian constitution delivers freedoms to each person of the country to make their own decision and allows them to work in a legal way to mitigate arbitrary action.

Separation of powers is also subjected to be one of the key aspects that comes under constitutionalism of India, as it benefits people of India to have a democratic country and divides the power among executive, legislative and also judicial branches to ensure balances and checks, to prevent single party dominance through the dominating government. A judicial review has also been conducted by the Supreme Court and the government law to ensure of making they are in line with the constitution and uphold the supremacy in a remarkable manner. The Constitution has fostered a democratic system wherein the citizens of India can positively participate in the political process to hold the government accountable. Furthermore, it has also created issues of challenges to enforce and implement despite the constitutional framework.

However, it has been found that constitutionalism has been practiced with an instrumental approach for Indian development through serving the framework of good governance, to protect fundamental rights of people and also to effectively foster an equitable society. On the other side, the challenges remain to ensure its adequate implementation and also to address an emerging issue, the remarkable principle of maintaining it as a vital approach for the development of India.

## **Conclusion**

From the above study, it can be concluded that Sardar Patel has played an important role in the development of India’s Constitution, Governance and National Integration. The integration or implementation of 554 states of princely fiefs into union India has made it possible, considering statesmanship, and also subject to enthusiasm for the Patel to define a unified India. The Constitution has fostered a democratic system wherein the citizens of India can positively participate in the political process to hold the government accountable. The constitutionalism has a process with both positive and negative impact; mostly the positive impact enables Indian citizens to maintain laws with an

instrumental approach for Indian development through serving the framework of good governance, to protect fundamental rights of people.

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