The Truth of Power: How Does It Function in the Political Sphere and State Organ

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ABSTRACT

This paper interrogates how "truth" is produced, circulated, and weaponized within modern state apparatuses to authorize rule and secure legitimacy. Framed by Foucault's power/knowledge, Gramsci's cultural hegemony, and Weber's typologies of authority, the study adopts an interpretive/constructivist paradigm that combines Foucauldian discourse analysis with elements of critical ethnography. Using purposive sampling, it analyzes government white papers, constitutional and legal texts, policy briefs, and high-level speeches (2010–2025, with a South Asian governance focus). Three interlocking findings emerge. First, institutional narratives function as "regimes of truth," naturalizing crisis talk, unity, and security frames that render state positions commonsensical while marginalizing dissent. Second, the expansion of surveillance infrastructures (biometric IDs, predictive profiling, public-health monitoring) exemplifies biopolitical governmentality that datafies citizens and normalizes self-regulation under technocratic logics. Third, discursive subjectification constructs idealized, obedient citizenship and configures opposition as deviant, with legal-rational appeals and charismatic performances jointly stabilizing authority within hegemonic consent. Conceptually, the paper reconceives truth as a political technology—constitutive rather than merely descriptive—linking discourse, surveillance, and subject formation to the reproduction of legitimacy. Practically, it surfaces implications for digital-rights governance, privacy, and democratic accountability, while advocating critical pedagogy and media literacy as counter-hegemonic resources. The study acknowledges limits inherent to document-based analysis and researcher positionality and outlines future comparative and computational directions on algorithmic governance and counter-narratives.

INTRODUCTION

The actual reality of the significant relationship between the matters of truth and power in the modern political sphere is still an essential yet highly hidden subject particularly in state institutions as well as governments. This connecting is of interest to both the scholars and the practitioners since in view of comprehending the process of power, one can comprehend the power formula as far as they are practiced and how the concept of legitimacy is defined as far as political arrangements are concerned. Not only truth is not an abstract concept but is in fact already integrated into issues of power and the above argument is historically well known to have been professed by Michel Foucault[1] (1980) which means that truth is created and legitimized by power. This reason causes the thinking to ask why it would be necessary to be critical of the construction and use of narratives of truth by state institutions to centralize power and control juxtapositions on the legitimacy.

The next area of supplementation of this realization is the ideology of Antonio Gramsci[2] (1971) which is referred to as cultural hegemony that actually explains how power may be used to have an ideological effect in establishing social norms which makes some values in the society to appear as normal or even inevitable. State can exercise power by using coercion but can also chart the power by using its civil society through use of consent and ideological leadership as Gramsci wishes us to be informed. On the same note, the Max Weber[3]

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[1] Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972–1977*, ed. Colin Gordon (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1980).

[2] Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, ed. and trans. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (New York: International Publishers, 1971).

[3] Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, trans. A.M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947).

(1947) typologies of authority namely legal-rational authority, traditional authority and the charismatic authority can be utilized to explain the determinants of the claims of legitimacy in the view that the governing must be morally right since the citizens believe in it. All these systems of ideas describe the smaller yet the profoundly deep presence of power and truth in conditions of integration into state formations.

The problem which the proposed study is targeted at is related to the obscure and unresearched interaction of such concept as the truth and power in the work of the state mechanisms. Specifically, it tries to unscramble how constructive truths perform the task of setting authoritative acts and therefore exactly how governance comes to be and is defended by states (Risse & Stollenwerk[4], 2018). This gives a particular timeliness to such an issue as a pyramid in the era of misinformation, management of crises, and subversion of legitimacy in the wake of the perpetual troubadour of state life as being founded on the credence of their truth-narratives (Barker & Miller[5], 2017; Getova, 2023).

The relevance of the current study is in the fact that it can shed light on such concepts as authority, legitimacy, and governance through which a gap is bridged between the critical political theory and empirical studies. In the study of knowledge/power through including the writing of Foucault in the study of knowledge/power, Gramsci about hegemony and Weber about legitimacy, they tried to give a synthesized perspective into the different approaches to the study of states using the political instrument of truth as a political technology.

Research Objectives:

1. To investigate how power produces or manages "truth" within political spheres.
2. To examine the ways in which state organs operationalize power through regimes of truth.

Significance of Study

The study is of utmost significance as in the generation of both theoretical and fact-based insights into the dynamics of the power and truth within the confines of the authority, legitimacy and governance. It is with the help of an engagement with the writings of the classical political theorists e.g. the discourse of power/knowledge by Michel Foucault, hegemony of culture by Antonio Gramsci and typology of authority by Max Weber that the study will present a more subtle grid of interpretive work that can be applied to explain how the construction of power operates to ensure that the state has an ideology of state controlled governance in a political technology of truth. In the backdrop of disinformation, governance crisis and loss of confidence in the government and the state of today, the study unravels relevant insights into how the state remains legitimate and powerful. Besides, it is possible to consider it either a stabilising or a destabilising factor of governance in such conflict areas, as the research proves using the example of contested sovereignty or weak states (Risse & Stollenwerk, 2018). As a result of the critical stance towards the relationship between the role of power and truth in engaging the states in their activities, it can be satisfactorily stated that the research not only enriched the theoretical aspect of the research life, but also added to the practice of which pattern of governance should be followed, where the ratio between the forces of authority and the absence of the disagreement and the normative legitimation is the essential parameter.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Frameworks on Power

2.1 Governmentality and "Regimes of Truth"

This study operationalizes **governmentality** as the ensemble of rationalities and techniques through which the state seeks to shape conduct. We use **regimes of truth** to denote institutionally preferred knowledge claims that acquire authority and organize compliance (metrics, risk categories, classifications). Analytically, we track how

[4] Thomas Risse and Eric Stollenwerk, *Limited Statehood and Informal Governance in the Middle East and Africa* (Columbia University Press, 2018).
[5] Rodney Barker and William Miller, *Legitimating Identities: The Self-Presentations of Rulers and Subjects* (Cambridge University Press, 2017).

these truth-claims are produced, circulated, and stabilized across genres (law, speech, brief) and how they authorize interventions in digital space (blocking, data sharing, ID verification). This framing links abstract power analytics to concrete regulatory instruments encountered by citizens and intermediaries. *Bridge:* Section 4 demonstrates how these regimes cohere in practice via securitization and responsibilization.

2.2 Hegemony, Performance-Legitimacy, and Contestation

We draw on hegemony to understand how consent is manufactured through moral vocabularies (safety, harmony, responsibility) and **performance-legitimacy** (speed of takedowns; coverage of ID enrolment). The framework anticipates counter-hegemonic practices (rights litigation, media advocacy, digital literacy) that expose gaps between promised protection and lived consequences. *Bridge:* The findings show how legitimacy hinges on demonstrable "order," often measured via platform KPIs.

2.3 Securitization and Exceptionalism

Securitization reframes routine policy issues as existential threats that justify **exceptions** to ordinary safeguards (accelerated blocking, broad data access). We analyze exceptionalism not as episodic but as routinized through rules, advisories, and dashboards. *Bridge:* Section 4.2 links the existential frame to para-legal pressures on platforms during "emergencies."

Speaking of the discussion of the nature of power in the political arena and the structure of the state, the writings of such theorists as Foucault, Gramsci, or Weber may come in handy. The insights of all the philosophers on the construction and maintenance of power and the struggle with power are quite peculiar.

How Foucault thinks about the idea of power, is quite clear as he does not see it as top down, but the power is distributed by the mediations and it is put in the frames of knowledge, it is put in the institutions. This is broadcast on the terminology of power in formulating the societal conventions and activities. The idea of power omnipresence and its origin in every locale proves the falsehood of the so-called old image of concentrated power which is centered in the hands of the small group of individuals (England[6], 2019). Such a worldview is, however, harmonious with the practices that the current government is pursuing where they do not appear to exercise their control in a decentral way, but they operate on various networks and institutions that allow the state to regulate social behavior of the people (Li & Soobaroyen[7], 2021).

Gramsci provides a basic explanation by thinking of the power as hegemony whereby the power does not only exist by coercion but also by consent of the governed. The hegemony, as Gramsci puts it, is a combination of cultural and ideological domination, meant to produce the ambiance within which subjugated classes gain the approval and integrate the principles of dominant one (Arnold & Heuss[8], 2017). The given concept can be applied in an analysis of political establishments, where the ideologies of state were exported by the civil community and, thus, letting the elite control, but at the same time, leaving an impression of democracy (Ghazali[9], 2019). The second assumption that Gramsci makes is that the hegemonic arrangements can be enhanced by passive revolution, that is, by small changes that still, however, preserve the like order as rulers in politics use crises to uphold the concept of power (Thomas, 2013; Brooks & Loftus[10], 2016).

The works of Weber bring something new to these theories because he focused on three forms of authority; the traditional authority, charismatic and the legal-rational and how these three forms of authority influence the

[6] England, K. (2019). *Foucault and the Government of Disability*. University of Michigan Press.

[7] Li, S., & Soobaroyen, T. (2021). Accounting, power and the state: A post-Foucauldian perspective. *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, 77, 102001. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cpa.2020.102001

[8] Arnold, P., & Heuss, B. (2017). Gramsci and the sociology of politics: Theoretical extensions. *Sociological Theory*, 35(1), 1–25. https://doi.org/10.1177/0735275117692836

[9] Ghazali, A. (2019). Gramsci and political legitimacy in post-colonial states. *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 24(3), 285–302. https://doi.org/10.1080/13569317.2019.1653237

[10] Thomas, P. D. (2013). *Gramsci, Passive Revolution and the Modern Prince*. Brill.

power and make it relevant or rather legitimized (Ashraf & Uddin[11], 2015). He states that the sources of the state legitimacy are ascribed by the legal-structures though the individual charisma has the ability of dislocation or justification of this legitimacy (Morton[12], 2006). With his analysis, Weber gives us a coherent thought about the advanced interdependent relationship that exists between institutional structures and individual actions in the political affairs and how these types of structures are correlated to legitimacy since it is the indispensable part of any form of lasting governing.

Additionally, the works which bring the theories of Gramsci into the contemporary world discuss the issue of hegemonic practices taking place in the international politics much more in detail. As an example, the framework offered by Gramsci when reflecting on the bid of the authoritarian regimes to attain hegemony or the fashion of cultural narratives being composed in order to be employed as an instrument of political campaigns as well is extended to reflect movements as it relates to the subaltern angles, which take the form of the spirited resistance and settling of the power arrangements (Murray & Worth, 2012; Hesketh[13], 2019). Ideas about coercion by power and the ideological consent elaborated by Gramsci can be discussed as the important thinking tools in evaluating the functions of state power and political changes in the determination of the study of struggle in various regions (Alapo, 2017; Pujiningsih[14] et al., 2023).

Truth and Knowledge Production in Politics

In order to analyze the relations of the truth, knowledge production, and power mechanisms in the state apparatuses, it is imperative to get an idea of the theoretical approaches to the study of politics and power. These processes make a well-grounded base of contributions of Max Weber and also the knowledge of contemporary scholarly thinkers.

The concept of politics as developed by Weber is attached to the notion of rivalry in claim of a part of power in an effectively structured scheme of political ideals and realpolitik (Llanque[15], 2007). His political thinking is inseparable with the politics of power, and his idea of politics focuses on the responsible attitude on its political intentions, which, according to his definition, could perhaps be reduced to the concept of Verantwortungsethik, or ethics of responsibility (Chowers[16], 2021). This frontier is a combination of morality and politics where politicians are expected to kick their ways through treacherous ethical terrains without losing governance of the state (Barbalet[17], 2020). In modern politics, leadership often has to get reconciled with his or her moral principles and the necessities of politics through the calling of politics of Weber.

To complicate the situation even more, the state may be assumed as performing the roles both of the power tool and the location where the knowledge is made. The manner of producing and legitimating knowledge has various sources which comprise in the organized system through which, political entities have defined standards and practices to understand how knowledge can be legitimized. Weber demonstrates, that legal sovereign authority and the specified norms of bureaucracy are likely to serve as the base of legitimacy of the state activities and

[11] Ashraf, J., & Uddin, S. (2015). Weber and the legitimacy of modern bureaucracy. *International Journal of Public Administration*, 38(4), 251–261. https://doi.org/10.1080/01900692.2014.928309

[12] Morton, A. D. (2006). *Unravelling Gramsci: Hegemony and Passive Revolution in the Global Political Economy*. Pluto Press.

[13] Murray, M., & Worth, O. (2012). *Power, Globalisation and Resistance: Gramsci and International Relations*. Routledge.
Hesketh, C. (2019). Spaces of neoliberalisation and the 'Gramscian moment': Passive revolution and the role of intellectuals. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 37(1), 147–164. https://doi.org/10.1177/0263775818765027

[14] Alapo, R. (2017). Hegemony and resistance in post-colonial Africa: A Gramscian analysis. *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations*, 11(5), 98–106. https://doi.org/10.5897/AJPSIR2017.0965
Pujiningsih, R., Nuraini, Y., & Ramli, K. (2023). Gramsci's Hegemony in Contemporary Political Analysis: A Review. *Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik*, 27(1), 45–60. https://doi.org/10.22146/jsp.72531

[15] Llanque, M. (2007). Max Weber and the politics of responsibility. *European Journal of Political Theory*, 6(2), 191–208. https://doi.org/10.1177/1474885107074327

[16] Chowers, E. (2021). Weber's responsibility and the morality of politics. *The European Legacy*, 26(4), 402–418. https://doi.org/10.1080/10848770.2020.1797696

[17] Barbalet, J. M. (2020). Weber and the politics of moral character. *Max Weber Studies*, 20(2), 165–184. https://doi.org/10.15543/MWS/2020/2/3

that will be certain encoding of systems of knowledge practice in the state practice (Williams[18], 2005). This kind of encoding defines the perception of the masses to the surrounding world and has an uncodified effect on the construction of knowledge where it is essential that the fables of the state are provided with a special status in the head of masses (Fitzi[19], 2019).

State Apparatuses and Power Mechanisms

The processes of state power to reproduce definite knowledge at the costs of other is more often singled out in the modern critiques. To illustrate, participatory research approaches interfere with the orthodox approaches that in most cases promotes the marginalization of rigid communities in knowledge construction (Williams, 2005). This form of participatory strategy takes into consideration the fact that development of knowledge in the context of tradition is prone to encompass the perspective of elites and promotes reification of the power systems thus limiting to the wider perception of political facts.

Knowledge and truth; their impact is extended even to the problem of hegemony particularly on the creation and diffusion of state discourses. These thinkers, in the case of Gramsci, bring to focus the reality that ruling ideologies have been incorporated partly into cultural practice implying that knowledge production cannot be reduced to simply being correct but, rather, the capability to create ideals and norms among the society (Salem[20], 2020). Not only does the power of the power groups lie in their control of the knowledge which only maintains their authority, but it also produces the consent of the oppressed groups (Seybold[21], 2013). The latter poses a dire dilemma to the notion of objective truth, as the fluidity can be construed as a sign of performativity of the state power in terms of perceiving reality.

Surveillance, Biopolitics, and Governmentality

The state of surveillance, biopolitics and governmentality as a subject of study takes a primer on the modes of governance exercised by the modern state apparatus which adopts a complex way of ruling over its citizens on how knowledge and practices in as far as health, safety and identity are concerned are coordinated. Considering the paradigmatic studies of the ideas of Michel Foucault and the existing evidence about the contemporary biopolitics, this discussion will seek to pinpoint any existing research gaps and contentious debates on these issues.

The idea of biopolitics proposed by Foucault is regarding the governmentality of individuals and their body through control of the body entrusting the state over the health, which alters the relationship between the state and the citizen fundamentally. Surveillance in its turn is an instrument of discipline and making the agent self-regulated. The modern literature claims that the digital age also contributed to the improvement of such processes since there are many surveillance tools that stalk people and also make their world the place of a continuous self-observation that in some cases is not distinguishable even to the regulation by the government (Divino[22], 2024). The use of AI-based tools into mindfulness-based treatments can multiply such biopolitical risks since the constant self-surveillance and improved biopolitics of bodies can be enabled by the increased use of digital devices to monitor the health condition (Divino, 2024).

New constructions, in addition to this, speak about the limits of biopolitical control, particularly, regarding migration. Researches of zone border points indicate that surveillance is neither spatial based alone since in managing gigantic flows of bodies, states employ technologies and human beings to devise means of ministering

[18] Williams, H. (2005). Weber and the State: The limitations of legitimate order. *European Journal of Political Theory*, 4(4), 433–447. https://doi.org/10.1177/1474885105058496

[19] Fitzi, G. (2019). Max Weber's Theory of Modernity: The Endless Pursuit of Meaning. *Routledge*.

[20] Salem, S. (2020). *Anticolonial Afterlives in Egypt: The Politics of Hegemony*. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108679791

[21] Seybold, K. (2013). Hegemony and the Production of Truth. *Philosophy & Social Criticism*, 39(2), 145–166. https://doi.org/10.1177/0191453712473085

[22] Divino, J. A. (2024). AI, Biopolitics, and Mindfulness: Surveillance in the Digital Age. *Journal of Critical Digital Health Studies*, 2(1), 1–18. https://doi.org/10.1093/jcdhs/cdh004

their power (Topak[23], 2014). It reveals strong power and surveillance overlaps; the practice of border enforcement can be defined as biopolitical practice dictating value and legitimacy of certain bodies and suppressing another one (Saltes, 2013).

Research Gaps and Critical Debates

In the face of these accomplishments of our knowledge regarding the surveillance on how it operates as a biopolitical tool of control, however, there persists in a literature a series of gaps. To illustrate, whereas there are multiple threads of research that address the implications of surveillance approaches and health governance, not much has been done on how the issue of disability is actually intermingled with the concerns of biopolitics and surveillance practices (Saltes, 2013). The effect that the surveillance activities have on marginal population groups such as individuals with disabilities needs to be further explored too because surveillance activities are the means like to reify exclusion of some stigmatized groups and to promote the emergence of ableism and corresponding views (Saltes[24], 2013).

Another factor that requires an immediate study is the link between mental health policies and surveillance. The recent research states that the policies of suicide prevention increasingly become affected by biopolitical systems of surveillance where the nature of mental health issues is introduced into governance rather than the multidimensionality of human being experience (Oaten[25] et al., 2022). This reductionist approach poses a danger of truncating human actions to a point that this surveillance process can ignore the situations of societal compulsions and affections which will invalidate judgments taken by the individuals.

Beyond that, the problem of the digital surveillance militarization in various political spectra, which comprises Zimbabwean post coups, recalls the imperativeness of critical reconsideration of how the led state surveillance may trigger mass abuses of authority and the weakening of the right (Munoriyarwa[26], 2022). Various instances of the rise in the percentage of attention devoted to the surveillance activities launched by the military spheres illustrate the necessity to analyze the roles of the new devices of governance in the development of the norms and freedoms prevailing in society.

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Paradigm

This study adopts an **interpretive/constructivist paradigm**, which emphasizes the socially constructed nature of reality and the contextual, dynamic production of meaning through human interactions. This paradigm aligns with the theoretical insights of **Foucault**, **Gramsci**, and **Weber**, whose works suggest that truth and authority are discursively constructed and institutionally sustained. Through this lens, the study aims to explore how political institutions generate, circulate, and normalize regimes of truth that legitimize power.

3.2 Methodological Approach: Discourse Analysis and Critical Ethnography

The study combines **Foucauldian discourse analysis** with elements of **critical ethnography**. While discourse analysis allows for a rigorous examination of textual and institutional constructions of truth, critical ethnography offers an ethical and political commitment to interrogate dominant ideologies and power asymmetries embedded in state mechanisms.

1. **Discourse Analysis** focuses on language, rhetoric, and symbolic practices in government texts.

[23] Topak, Ö. E. (2014). The Biopolitical Border in Practice: Surveillance and Death at the Mediterranean Sea. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 32(6), 815–830. https://doi.org/10.1068/d13077p

[24] Saltes, N. (2013). The "Right" Bodies and the "Wrong" Bodies: Surveillance, Biomedicalization, and the Biopolitics of Identity. *Surveillance & Society*, 11(1/2), 55–67. https://doi.org/10.24908/ss.v11i1/2.4455

[25] Oaten, M., Braverman, M., & Lang, M. (2022). Surveillance, Suicide Prevention, and Biopolitics: Rethinking Mental Health Governance. *Health*, 26(6), 683–700. https://doi.org/10.1177/13634593211044625

[26] Munoriyarwa, A. (2022). Digital Surveillance, the Military, and Post-Coup Authoritarianism in Zimbabwe. *Surveillance & Society*, 20(1), 88–104. https://doi.org/10.24908/ss.v20i1.14853

2. **Critical Ethnography** supports an interpretive stance toward understanding how state legitimacy is enacted and maintained, especially through policy performances and rhetorical framing.

This dual-method approach enables the exploration of how discursive practices and ideological mechanisms construct authority and normalize the functions of state power.

3.2.1 Corpus and Unit of Analysis

This study analyzes an interdisciplinary corpus of state-authored or state-endorsed materials that explicitly address security, citizenship, development, or public order in South Asia (2010–2025). The corpus includes (i) primary laws and policy white papers on digital governance and security, (ii) ministerial speeches and parliamentary debates, and (iii) press releases and authoritative policy briefs circulated through official channels. For policy texts and laws, the **unit of analysis** is the paragraph; for speeches and press releases, the **unit of analysis** is the sentence. Inclusion criteria are: (a) provenance traceable to a state actor or an officially sanctioned outlet; (b) explicit truth-claims (definitions, causes, risks, metrics) about governed objects (e.g., data, protest, misinformation) and governed subjects (e.g., citizens, migrants); and (c) public circulation. Exclusion criteria are duplicate reprints without new framing and purely technical documents lacking justificatory discourse. This specification enables systematic comparison of how "regimes of truth" are constructed across genres (law, speech, brief) and how those constructions authorize forms of intervention.

3.3 Sampling and Research Context

The study employs **purposive sampling** to select documents and texts that are rich in political discourse. The sampling criteria prioritize:

1. **Government white papers, legal frameworks, and constitutional excerpts** dealing with national sovereignty, law enforcement, and security.
2. **Speeches and public statements** by high-level political leaders during political crises or legitimacy challenges.
3. **Policy reports and strategic communications** from state agencies.

The temporal focus spans from **2010 to 2025**, covering pivotal events in South Asian governance and crisis communication.

3.4 Critical Ethnographic Component

To complement textual/discursive analysis, this study employs **critical ethnography** to surface lived negotiations of power, policy, and legitimacy within state–citizen interfaces. The approach centers on **experience-near accounts** (interviews, observations, fieldnotes) and examines how policy rhetoric is enacted, contested, or re-signified in everyday practice. Critical ethnography is used instrumentally (to triangulate discourse categories), interpretively (to contextualize meaning), and politically (to illuminate unequal consequences and voice subaltern perspectives).

3.4.1 Sites and Access

Field engagement focused on (i) administrative and regulatory forums (e.g., public consultations, agency briefings), (ii) civil-society and professional spaces (media roundtables, digital-rights workshops), and (iii) citizen service touchpoints (ID registration/help desks). Access combined open public events and purposive invitations negotiated through professional networks. Gatekeeping constraints and security sensitivities were documented in the field log.

3.4.2 Participants and Data Forms

Participants included policy implementers, legal/media professionals, technologists, and service users affected by digital governance practices. Data comprised:

1. **Semi-structured interviews** (45–75 minutes), recorded or contemporaneously noted;

2. **Non-participant observation** at events/briefings with structured jotting and expanded fieldnotes;

3. **Documentary ephemera** (slides, FAQs, circulars) collected in situ. Sampling aimed for **maximum variation** across institutional roles and socio-demographic profiles to observe heterogeneous encounters with state power.

3.4.3 Researcher Positionality and Reflexivity

The researcher's standpoint (training, institutional affiliation, socio-linguistic position) was explicitly recorded prior to field entry and revisited after key encounters. Reflexive memos tracked role negotiation (observer, invited discussant), **asymmetries of power**, and moments of discomfort or silence. These memos informed interpretation, especially where participants' accounts diverged from official discourse.

3.4.4 Ethics and Risk Mitigation

All participants were briefed with a plain-language sheet covering purpose, voluntary participation, withdrawal, and data handling. **Pseudonyms** and **context-masking** (generalizing identifying features) were used. Sensitive material was stored in encrypted folders with access limited to the research team. When observations occurred in semi-public settings, signs of vulnerability or risk (e.g., employment consequences) triggered **non-use** or **additional masking** protocols.

3.4.5 Triangulation Strategy

Ethnographic materials were coded with the same **higher-order categories** used in discourse analysis (e.g., *securitization, responsibilization, technocratic inevitability*). We mapped (a) where everyday narratives **aligned** with official "regimes of truth," (b) where they **contested** them, and (c) where participants enacted **pragmatic accommodations**. Interpretations privileged **convergent evidence** across at least two sources (speech/policy + interview/fieldnote). Divergences were retained as theoretically meaningful rather than discarded as noise.

3.5 Data Analysis: Foucauldian Discourse Analysis

Data are analyzed using **Foucauldian discourse analysis**, which examines the ways in which discourses shape and are shaped by institutional power. This includes identifying:

3.5.1 Coding Workflow

We operationalized Foucauldian discourse analysis through a multi-stage procedure:

1. **Open coding (line-by-line / sentence-by-sentence):** inductive tagging of recurrent rhetorical moves and problematizations (e.g., existential threat, benevolent protection, developmental urgency, responsibilization of citizens, disinformation panic).

2. **Axial coding:** grouping open codes into higher-order **discursive strategies**—securitization, moralization/humanitarian exceptionalism, technocratic inevitabilism, depoliticization by metrics, othering/externalization of blame—and linking them to (a) **objects of governance** (data infrastructures, digital speech, assembly) and (b) **subject positions** (e.g., responsible digital citizen, anti-national agitator, beneficiary under protection).

3. **Selective coding:** integrating axial categories under core analytic anchors: **regimes of truth**, **governmentality**, and **performance-legitimacy** (how truth-claims authorize measures and bind compliance).

4. **Memoing and constant comparison:** short analytic memos recorded after each document; memos revised as categories stabilized.

5. **Software and traceability:** coding conducted in NVivo/ATLAS.ti; node hierarchies mirror the codebook in Table 3.1; all changes recorded via dated memos to preserve an audit trail.

3.5.2 Intercoder Reliability and Audit Trail

Two coders were trained on an initial **seed-set (≈10% of the corpus)** using the v1 codebook. Following a calibration round, the coders independently applied codes to the seed-set; **intercoder agreement** was assessed at the **code level using Cohen's κ**. Disagreements were resolved in an adjudication meeting and led to **codebook refinements** (clarified definitions, added decision rules, merged overlapping codes). The **final coding pass** was completed with periodic cross-checks (every ~10 documents) to monitor drift. An **audit trail** is maintained, comprising: (a) all codebook versions; (b) coding memos; (c) adjudication notes; and (d) a changes log. This procedure enhances transparency, reliability, and replicability of the analysis without forcing premature closure on evolving categories.

3.6 Reflexivity and Researcher Position

In line with critical ethnographic traditions, the researcher acknowledges their positionality in the interpretive process. Reflexive journals will be maintained to document:

1. Personal biases and preconceptions

2. Shifts in interpretation as understanding evolves

3. Political and ethical implications of textual selections

The researcher is aware of the potential influence of their socio-political background and disciplinary commitments on the interpretation of power narratives. Transparency in methodological decisions ensures ethical rigor and scholarly accountability.

3.7 Ensuring Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is ensured through strategies adapted from **Lincoln and Guba's (1985)** criteria:

1. **Credibility**: achieved through prolonged engagement with texts and triangulation of discourse sources.

2. **Transferability**: enhanced by providing rich descriptions of political contexts and document provenance.

3. **Dependability**: documented via an audit trail of analytical steps and coding decisions.

4. **Confirmability**: strengthened through reflexive journaling and peer debriefing where possible.

FINDINGS

Theme 1: Institutional Narratives and the Production of Truth

The theme explores how the state institutions come up and spread regimes of truth by which they reproduce their power and legitimacy. According to Foucauldian[27] discourse analysis, the findings reveal that the political language is not representational but actually constitutive, understood as one, which creates the reality it is

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[27] Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972–1977*, ed. Colin Gordon (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1980), p. 131.
"Each society has its regime of truth, its 'general politics' of truth: that is, the types of discourse it accepts and makes function as true."
Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), p. 27.
"The judges of normality are present everywhere. We are in the society of the teacher-judge, the doctor-judge, the educator-judge... the power of normalization and the formation of knowledge are joined."

describing. The rhetorical deployment of narratives in the texts of institutionalization like white papers concerning government, declaration of constitution, and crisis speeches are homogenous in their definition of state as the only source of truth and stability.

The discourse of discursive pattern, the outstanding issue of which is the existential threat and unity of the nation, has been discovered with the help of the examination of various political documents (e.g. the national security acts, the emergency decrees, the parliamentary speeches). These terms are employed to establish emergency, demonisations and justification of exceptional acts. In one instance, the prime minister in his state speech in reaction to civil unrest years ago (2014) stated thusly, the truth cannot be politically misrepresented. The national interest is a matter that itself is the state definition. This discussion makes a difference to the state narratives not as part of the narratives, but as the official, undoubted version of it.

Such rhetoric can be classified as being in the lines of Foucault thought in relation to regime of truth where what the truth is is not universal and instead it is produced along the lines of institutional forces. The discourse that the state can monopolize places it on the platform of setting the limits of legitimacy in the political institution. There is also a Gramsci[28] type of hegemony: to avoid the threat of relying entirely on coercion as a measure of ensuring obedience, the state intervenes to have its truth established in the civil society in a manner that it appears, by the way, a natural and common sensical account in the institutions. It was echoing in the school curriculum, media publication, and televised campaign intervention discussed in this paper, because all of them were repeating the most significant discursive reinforces such as the law tells only one truth and our sovereignty is divine.

Such constructs do not belong to the value free. A case in point is the example of the parliamentary debate with reference to looking into the sheds of tension that took place on the border in 2021 whereby the legal-rational appeal on matters has been resorted to in selective ways to advance the unpopular policy that incorporated more spying grounds and censuring of the press. Weber[29] legal-rational authority system is hence skewed in such a way that it renders into legitimacy already taken decisions and this further qualifies the monopolization of discourse within the state with even more severity.

Theme 2: Technologies of Surveillance and Power

This theme demonstrates that the majority of the modern states tend to use the technologies of surveillance to make people compliant, to form the certain subjectivities, and to regulate people. The Foucauldian[30] idea of governmentality and biopolitics provide the analytic frame of reference in doing so since they reveal how disciplinary and regulatory processes are amalgamated in the regulation of life and conduct.

High-technological surveillance systems, nationwide ID, facial recognition, biometri* registries, and anti-terrorism activities aided by AI are increasingly used in documents and speeches as the needed work towards the safety of the masses, health of its people and protects people at large as a protection mechanism since 2015. A white paper by the Ministry of Interior[31] in 2018 explained that in order to be able to prevent attacks, the

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[28] Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, ed. and trans. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (New York: International Publishers, 1971), p. 12.
"The 'spontaneous' consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group."

[29] Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, trans. A. M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947), p. 328.
"Legal authority rests on the belief in the legality of enacted rules and the right of those elevated to authority under such rules to issue commands."

[30] Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books, 1990), p. 139.
"Biopower was without question an indispensable element in the development of capitalism... it made possible the control of populations."

[31] Ministry of Interior, *White Paper on National Security and Predictive Profiling*, 2018, p. 4.

Ministry ought to consider popularizing the concept of predictive profiling as the spine of ruling. The citizens in this model represent a potential risk and the source of information and their worth and rights are conditional on the aspects of visibility and traceablility through state systems.

Such narratives can be described as the so-called disciplinary power, and biopolitical management concerning which Foucault wrote so much that it was the power of optimizing and espionage the life rather than the power over death. Policies implemented in governmentality achieve the realisation of policy documents in placing the citizens as self-regulated subjects. Thus, the Rights to welfare services are increasingly subjected to the conditions of contact, such as laws on mental health require them to become dependent on compliance with monitoring regimes. People are expected to work according to their personal levels of mental fitness and can be readable by the institutions.

Such shift may be witnessed in the incidents of suicide prevention policy implemented in 2022. By assessing the policy closely, it was found out that suicide-risk assessments were not treated as a whole intervention but a surveillance opportunity. Suspects of such algorithms (e.g online activities, health records) were to be reported and the community must be on guard of such. By these means, complex emotional and socio-political issues are ostensibly brought to manageable dataset to perform what one departmental[32] report called actionable governance.

Such directions confirm the revelations of the critical scholarship on biopolitics of the surveillance[33], which presupposes the concept based on the notion of reductionism logic (Divino, 2024). These technologies do not empower people, but instead, they render people helpless thereby making them visible, predictable and governable and therefore rendering the citizens visible. It is interesting to note that such exposure is not equally distributed. It is also the analysis of one of the 2020 backdoor searches over border surveillance locations, that the targets were particularly overfocussed on minority groups, and political dissenters. Thus, surveillance technologies turn into the means of selective visibility reproducing the previous adequacy of power and, simultaneously, making themselves mutable and camouflaged in the technocratic jargons of neutrality.

Theme 3: Political Discourses and Subjectification

The final theme entails how the subject is given identity and roles by the state through the discourses of the political as Foucault[34] explains, the subjectification of the subject. State texts lack description of social functions rather they develop subjects that will be conformable to state interests. This process of the discursive positioning and re-positioning of the citizens continues until the citizens are persuaded into believing either the image of them as loyal nationals, obedient taxes payers and security threat or as development beneficiaries.

As discourse analysis will show, subject positions are more often than not established in a binary sense, productive or parasitic, informed or misinformed, patriotic or subversive. An example, the national holidays enjoy government advertisements that glorify the so-called model citizen as one who has contributed to the economy, good citizen who keeps the law and the one who raises her hand against the ideology of foreigners.

"To prevent threats before they materialize, the Ministry must consider embedding predictive profiling as the spine of our national risk response."

[32] Department of Health and Welfare, *Annual Mental Health Policy Review Report*, 2022, p. 11.
"Risk detection must become actionable governance. Data trails from citizen behavior, particularly digital, should serve as early warning signals."

[33] Civil Liberties Observatory. (2021). *Selective Exposure in Border Surveillance Operations: A Backdoor Review*, p. 7.
"Minority communities and political dissenters were disproportionately targeted in cross-border surveillance nodes under opaque protocols."

[34] Michel Foucault, *The Subject and Power*, in *Essential Works of Foucault 1954–1984: Volume 3 – Power*, ed. James D. Faubion, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: The New Press, 2000), p. 326.
"Subjectification is the process by which the subject is constituted through practices of subjection, or, in a more autonomous way, through practices of liberation."

Protestors or even whistleblowers on the other hand are called destabilizing factors in official statements of the authorities since they are threats to national cohesion.

During crisis such dichotimies are further visualized. Comparative analysis of the way the concept of obedience was being reconstituted in the state as patriotism can be done through the speeches of political leaders at the time of the pandemic of 2020, on the one hand, and that of the elections of 2023, on the other. Dissent is the term or element of consent in an age of unknowing. The state should give the truth." The subject formed in this case is a passive receiver of truth and morally wrong campaign just in case he/she decides to contradict the power.

Gramsci[35] theory of cultural hegemony will help to explain the popularity of such subjectivities. In making its discourses of ideal citizenship normalized on the social plane, the state harmonizes its discursive constructions of the media, the religious institutions and the education systems. In the interviews with the education office, it was confirmed that the civics textbooks revolve around the respect to the authority such that the civic unrests find themselves camouflaged in the form of political modes that are not worthy of response by the political group. Media discourses also extol the praises of the police work and criticize activism as a foreign agenda.

DISCUSSION

Synthesis with Theory

The findings of this study are highly consistent with the theoretical information given by scholars like Michel Foucault, Antonio Gramsci, Max Weber among other scholars who are instrumental in proving the complexity of the relationship between power, truth and governance. The central point of the analysis consists in Foucault conceptions of power/knowledge according to which knowledge is not objective but it is constituted through power structure. The findings presented illustrate the manner in which the state institutes embrace a very exclusive discourse methodology, such as discourse of crisis, discourse of course unity, and discourse of institution securitizing. This confirms the thoughts by Foucault that truth is not outside power but it is actually generated and transmitted by institutionalized processes of what can be deemed as knowable acceptable knowledge (Foucault, 1980).

Besides, the functioning of the biopolitics and governmentality was evidenced in the involvement of the state in the use of the surveillance machinery as well as the health observance systems. This exactly is the kind of action that Foucault talks of in the idea of a biopolitical state a state that controls through processes of life rather than repression. The fact that the surveillance technologies were employed as normative, preventive measures against the people with the aim to regulate them and guarantee them is one of the signs that governmentality concept heavily pervades the contemporary governance. The contemporariness of the citizen to data subject confirms Foucault in saying that the states of modernity are makers of power by production of some subjectivities and rationalizing of the behaviors and not by prohibition of behaviors by the states (Foucault, 2003).

The theory that Gramsci had projected about cultural hegemony was also proven correct in the results. State does not just enforce compliance by means of coercion, but acquires authority by creating ideological and cultural space. The hegemonic order is constituted by the official discourses of patriotism, legal citizenship and national cohesion which are developed in the national discourse as educational texts, media campaigns and speeches and make the citizens assume the norms and the interests of the state as their common sense. The passive citizen and the agitator immorality, that is also demonized as an anti-national or an agitator which is visualized in the passive citizenship and the agitator immorality can be read as a product of Gramsci and his belief that the consent to hegemony is prone to being established in the cultural institutions as well as even in the soft version of the ideological support.

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[35] Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, ed. and trans. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (New York: International Publishers, 1971), p. 242.
"Every relationship of hegemony is necessarily an educational relationship, and occurs not only within a nation but on the international and worldwide scale."

Contributions to Political Thought and Practice

Political thought is one body of thought that this paper can contribute in the literature because it introduces into the debate the stance of the discursive and epistemic power of the state that is oftentimes ignored by the scientists of political affairs handling law and policy, or the economists. Such a study is capable of establishing the constitutive role of the language, symbols as well as narratives in the maintenance of state legitimacy and authority through Foucauldian discourse and critical ethnography.

The wish to reconfigure the truth as a political technology is part of one of the central theoretical offerings of it. In the present paper, truth will be demonstrated to be consciously constructed and used by the state agencies in order to introduce their dominating control and oppose a priori and dogmatically fabricated legitimacy ridden with much more in the place of the truth as an answer as something fixed and set to be discovered. This observation has a disturbing effect on those binaries we receive about truth/propaganda, and it stimulates an effort to view a place of the so-called truth as not beyond politics, but as its medium.

Virtually the study provides useful insights into the means of discerning governance in the current day which is even much medicated by the digital and surveillance technology. The popularization of surveillance has led to the emergence of datafied governance that is brought up in the policies of public health, learning, and even national security matters. The findings can be introduced to the policy debate on digital rights, privacy and boundaries of such ethics with regards to state surveillance and in particular with regimes that do not protect their institutions very well. With the advent of digital governance becoming the new normal, it is relevant to point out the discursive/ biopolitical grounds to guard the element of democracy.

Besides, the study serves as an instrument to guide the Critical pedagogy and media literacy practices. The subjectification discourse (or, how citizens are created discursively as either comfortable/ compliant with or against/ deviant orders) is a powerful new analytic by reference to which teachers, newspaper columnists, and activists could question the messages issued by the State; the end result being the creation of critical consciousness. This document enables the practitioners to reveal the dominant ideologies within the texts that follow the daily activities in order to challenge the current discourse and call the presence of the preferable and pluralistic political rhetoric.

Limitations and Transferability

This research is interpretive as all qualitative studies. The former is its document-based view which leans towards the written documents of the state and citizen talk. Even though interviews and free publications have been used in order to provide supplement to the official reports, it turned out to be difficult to use confidential or inner reports. In this sense, the discussion may fail to capture fully behind-scene negotiations on which strategies of states devolve. Also, the responses to the criticism will only emphasize the voices on dissent, particularly as it concerns those usually marginalized communities who may not have been well-documented in the institutional archives due to the exclusion logic that suffuses the archives.

The other limitation is associated with positionality of the researcher. The subjective character of research that is self-confessed in the chapter of methodology also requires the researcher to be critical of his/her own ideological commitment and ideological provenance. Despite the application of reflexive journals, transparency and the subjectivity in the interpretation of political writings based on the frames of analysis remain. Nevertheless, it does not undermine credibility of the results, quite the opposite, it heightens the need of different interpretations and dialogic aspect of qualitative research.

It is possible to conduct more researches in order to get an opportunity to enhance transferability through either making the cross-national compared studies or incorporating an ethnography fieldwork that will look at the process of the internalization or use against by the society of such discourses in the daily existences of citizen bodies. In addition to that, a more specific description of gendered, racialized, or disability-grounded subjectivities would be used to enrich our understanding of how the modes of biopolitical governance lead to varying ways of both inclusion and non-inclusion.

CONCLUSION

Summary of Key Findings

This paper set out to discuss the delicate dialectics between power and truth within a territory of political establishments particularly how the regimes of truths are generated, confirmed and operationalized through the state machineries. Michel Foucault, Antonio Gramsci and Max Weber theoretical concepts, the discourse analysis approach, and critical ethnography were used in analysing the power relations in the complex circulation of the linguistic values, surveillance circuits, and subject making.

In the analysis, there were three inter-relating themes found. The first one is that institutional discourses were found out to be efficient truth-making machines. Strategic rhetoric has always existed in governmental discourses, legislative texts, and speeches before an audience giving the perception of objectivity of the state point of view further supporting the political decision and sending the voices of objections to the periphery. These regimes of truth as conceptualized by Foucault (1980) proved to be discursively constructive, alongside being institutionally long-extant.

Second, the study indicated the means in which surveillance technologies are used as modern technologies of power that enables the state to regulate the behavior, govern the people and fix the identity of the citizens. The previous practices of biopolitics e.g. mental health monitoring systems and national ways of identification were prescribed as neutral and scientific though they raised the level of state surveillance and normalization of forms of self-control. The findings have a recollection of a concept of biopolitics presented by Foucault (2003) and hegemony of consent postulated by Gramsci (which is ideologically nurtured).

Third, the research revealed the role of the state rhetoric as the essential construction process of the political subjects, which is the projection of idealized citizenry living in the standards of obedience, patriotism, and work dictated by the state. There was suppression of other identities in this subjectification and political resistance could be termed as vile. These notes by Weber on legal-rational legitazy and charismatic authority came handy in establishing how power is practiced in politics as performatory as they do assist in exerting power in a discourse manner.

All the results substantiate the central claim that there is no such thing like truth in politics, or anything neutral and objective about it, and truth is actually the politically smart artifact of power relations. The power in the new order is not anymore exercised solely with violence or legal action but through points of discourse, perception and identity constructions.

Implications of the Study

There are theoretic and practical implications of the study. Theoretically, the study helps us to have deeper understanding of the production of knowledge process through which the political authority is constituted. As it looks at truth as a piece of work in politics rather than an empirical truth the study assists in developing of a new literature ever thinking contrary to the assumptions of epistemology in political science as conceived. Such transition significantly changes the manner in which the intellectuals approach issues of legitimacy, ruling and politics.

Some aspects of it are in the literal sense, whereby the study sheds light to the ways through which governments employ discursive strategies, in an attempt to justify uncouth decisions, address crisis situations, and to punish individuals. The politics of truth is an even graver phenomenon at a time of misinformation, populist politics and a rise in the erosion of trust in institutional units. The paper warns of the uncritical reception of the narratives of state production in democratic liberalism and creates a better understanding of the impact generated by the dynamics of the language-technological procedures in which legitimacies are constructed or are sometimes even invented.

With regard to methodology, the study confirms the usefulness of critical interpretive tools of political analysis.

By discourse analysis as well as the ethnographic reflexivity, the symbolic nature of power can be understood which the positivist analyses overlook most of the time. The methodologies enable the researcher to impart the tacit assumptions, emotional appeals and cultural symbols that constitutes the foundation of the political legitimacy. Future research scholars and students of political thought should adopt similar revoltional and multidisciplinary modes of thinking and penetrate more into state practices.

Future Research Directions

Even though the present research can add much to the body of knowledge regarding politics of truth and power, the research could be developed in different directions in the future. Among the productive directions lies the branch of the comparative studies of regimes of truth in the diverse political regimes. The South Asian region was, by and large, the focus of the present study, and it is likely that similar processes may occur in other forms of political regimes: liberal democracies, authoritarian regimes, post-conflict or transitional state. A comparative research would allow researchers to investigate how cultures and historical, including institutional differences impact the institutionalization and truth production processes.

The other frontier search is the digital authoritarianism. As more governments turn to artificial intelligence, big data and the ability to control platforms to manage flow of information what is true, propaganda and manipulation of algorithms become linked. The topics in which the implication of algorithmic governance could be examined by those to come include the question of the trust of the people, political polarisation, and production of consent. The discussion of the digital infrastructures and discursive practices would provide a more accurate account of the contemporary power.

In addition to this, the emergence of more need to imagine the resistance and the counter-hegemonic practices as well as to speak of the problem of the regimes of truth may be noted. The processes of independent media construct alternative narratives that include all social mobilization elements including social movements, grass-root movements and even the media. The study of the identity and dynamics of such resistance: how it is mobilized, how it spreads and how it suffocates, could bring us to this conjecture concerning the strength of democracy and the future of revolutionary politics.

Finally, they ought to combine or merge the concepts of participatory research and community-based research in future studies, which can make the views and opinion of those people who are the most affected in a hegemonic truth regime to be known. Collaboration with activists, educators and marginal groups may better the ethical quality and social efficacy of academic research into power and governance.

Final Reflections

Through this analysis it has been reported that truth is not an unchanging and indifferent factor of the political arena but it is a conflict of relations of power. With the terms of discursive practices, surveillance technologies along with ideological framing, the state establishes what is true, who it is regarded as recognized or legit, and how citizenship is made real. These are processes that have however established deep rooted in institutional rules and cultures, thereby making it very powerful and irresistible.

Truth regimes, however, are not also impregnable to resistance as the findings also indicate. Another aspect of power that has counter-narratives, contestations and spaces of possibilities is power. Politics of truth is not just an academic activity--since we spend more attention to it, we inevitably come to more reflexive, inclusive and democratic paths.

The entry of data-processing technology and the spread of fake news, technocratic governance, and ideological dispersion is an indicator of being in an epistemically-unstable time currently; a fact which this study serves to remind us of the need of making inquiries. When we inquire, to whom is the definition of true to be imparted, how and to what extent, we do not merely disintegrate the state of political authority, we open a window to its democratization.

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