

# Max Weber's Theory of the State: An Analysis of Legitimacy, Authority and Political Power

**Dr. V. Mallika Vedantham**

MA., Ph.D., UGC-NET Assistant Professor of Public Administration

Tara Government College (Autonomous), Sangareddy

Mail Id: mallikavvdl@gmail.com

## HOW TO CITE: | ABSTRACT:

V. Mallika Vedantham (2026). Max Weber's Theory of the State: An Analysis of Legitimacy, Authority and Political Power. International Journal of Special Education, 41(23s), 1487 - 1492

The study reviews Max Weber's state theory by developing an integrated model that explains how legitimacy, bureaucratic rationalization, and the monopoly of legitimate violence all lead to the formation of state power. While there is considerable scholarship that studied these concepts separately, their interrelations and the institutional mechanisms linking them to durable political authority are still poorly studied. To fill that gap, the study presents an integrative theoretical literature review based on Weber's original writings and using the league of original literature containing 35 sources that relate to legitimacy, bureaucracy, rationalization, political power, violence, and state authority. The literature analysis employs concept-oriented numerical coding, thematic synthesis, theoretical mapping, and theoretical pattern matching. The findings indicate that legitimacy serves as a moral and social foundation for authority whereas bureaucratic rationalization serves as the vessel for its institutional development through rule, hierarchy, specialization, and impersonal administration. The monopoly of legitimate violence constitutes specific coercive function of the state but its institutional function is based on its legal and legitimate recognition. Finally, the study indicates rational legal governance as a mechanism that ties together all these elements of state authority. By combining these relationships within the single Weber's perspective, the study contributes to the ongoing discussions related to legitimacy, bureaucracy, political power, and state institutionalization and demonstrates an analytical relevance of Weber's theory.

## COPYRIGHT STATEMENT:

Copyright: © 2026 Authors.  
Open access publication under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

**Keywords:** Max Weber; state theory; legitimacy; bureaucratic rationalization; monopoly of legitimate violence; legal-rational governance; state authority; political power.

## 1. Introduction

The section analyzes the Weberian concept of the state in the wider context of the literature on

political authority, legitimacy, bureaucracy, and coercion. The section also pinpoints a theoretical gap that calls for a comprehensive explanation of

the way these three aspects work together to produce stable state authority.

The modern state has been an important topic of political sociological research because it is the main institutional structure by which political power is applied, administrative authority is expressed and collective decisions are transformed into formal rules. The way the states obtain, preserve and formalize power is, therefore, a basic topic in political theory and sociology. Some of the classic theories that have been developed to address this question are particularly influential, such as that of Max Weber, which links political power to legitimacy, domination, bureaucracy, rationalization and institutional control of coercion (Weber, 1946, 1978). Weber differentiates between *Macht* (generally understood as the chance to impose one's will) and *Herrschaft* (legitimate domination wherein obedience is linked to valid grounds of authority), (Weber, 1978; Kalberg, 2005). With his concept of the modern state as an effective entity claiming the monopoly of legitimate physical force in a specific territory, his theory thus shifts the emphasis of the state's relationship with institutional authority to legitimacy (Weber, 1946; Brubaker, 1984). Weber's contribution is important because, in his scheme of things, state power cannot be limited to coercive power. To make political domination institutionally lasting, those to whom the authority is imposed must be aware of their authority's bases for imposing obedience. Later scholarship has therefore focused on legitimacy as a fundamental aspect of political legitimacy, highlighting the fact that the legitimacy of a rule may be provided by both legal and normative reasons and by social recognition, as well (Beetham, 1991; Cotterrell, 1997). In particular, Beetham (1991) advances a multi-faceted concept of legitimacy which extends beyond the formal legal dimension to include the dimensions of legality, normative justification and expressed consent. Likewise, Kalberg (2005) notes the Weberian link between authority, administration, legitimacy and the motives for compliance with domination. The current understandings also emphasize the significance of institutional trust, accountability, and social

acceptance as factors to consider in the process of how formally organized authority can gain greater political legitimacy (Dogan, 2009; Ruibal, 2017; Nikolakakis, 2024). This is why Weber's theory is still relevant, not only as a description of the power of the state but as an explanation of the process whereby power is converted into a socially and institutionally recognised authority.

Bureaucratic rationalization is another aspect of Weber's state theory. The modern state is closely linked to more and more formalised administration with an increasing hierarchical order, specialisation, written rules, expertise and impersonal decision-making (Weber, 1978; Ritzer, 1975). In the era of bureaucratic governance, authority can be seen embedded in firms, practices, and functions performed by organizations but not only in leaders of these organizations. In this respect, rationalization is a satisfying form of organizational reasoning which assures stability and predictability of the state (Turner, 2007; Schluchter, 1981). Nowadays, the scope of Weberian scholarship includes the idea that bureaucracy can be interpreted in a broader context as a tool for domination and political organization (Giddens, 1985; Mommsen, 1984). On the other hand, bureaucratic rationalization can be regarded as a collision between the possibility for the formal administration to provide organizational coherence and state potential and the continuous bureaucratization and complexification of the establishment in terms of organization (Kalberg, 2005; Turner, 2007). This double nature gives rationalisation of bureaucracy as a key element of any explanation of institutionalisation of authority in the modern state. A third element of Weber's conceptualization is that of monopoly of legitimate violence. Weber focuses more on the legitimacy of its use of physical force within a territory than on its political structures and administrative boundaries. This formulation is important not just because of its capacity to possess force but because of its institutional, legal authorization. The state is different from other organisations because it has the acknowledged right to decide who can use coercive methods and what they are for, and to enforce its decisions on

the basis of political and administrative institutions (Weber, 1946; Mann, 1984). Later scholarship has focused on the relationship between coercive capacity, state organization, and political authority in various institutional contexts (Skocpol, 1985; Migdal, 1988; Anter & Bruhns, 2020). Modern Weberian research also stresses that Weber's theory of coercive monopoly is linked to other issues related to legitimacy, law, and the institutional basis of authority (Anter & Bruhns, 2020; Nikolakakis, 2024). The institutional conditions of the recognition and exercise of coercive power, therefore, influence how coercion is related to state power.

Although much research has been written on Weberian concepts of legitimacy, bureaucracy, domination and political power, a significant theoretical issue still has not been resolved. Numerous papers have addressed these aspects individually. The investigations of legitimacy often tend to focus on the normative and social conditions of political acceptance, while the ones into bureaucracy tend to be directed toward rationalization, administrative organization or state capacity (Beetham, 1991; Ritzer, 1975; Kalberg, 2005). Other scholarship has investigated the nature of coercion, state power, or the social geography of power, but failed to link such research to Weber's full sociology of legitimate domination (Mann, 1984; Skocpol, 1985; Migdal, 1988). Similarly, the current Weber interpretations continue to revise the relationship between legitimacy, power and authority, and the institutional arrangements linking these notions are not necessarily always theorized in an integrated framework (Ruibal, 2017; Anter & Bruhns, 2020; Nikolakakis, 2024). This yields a disarticulated understanding that legitimacy is one aspect of the state, perhaps parallel to another aspect, namely the bureaucratic rationalization, or the legitimate coercive monopoly. Theoretically, this fragmentation is of significance because Weber's theory is essentially about institutionalization of domination. In this way the concepts of legitimacy, of political rule being recognized as rightful, of bureaucratic rationalization, of the capacity of the state to organize and reproduce its authority, and of the

monopoly of legitimate violence, can be understood. The concepts of legitimacy, of political rule being recognized as rightful, of bureaucratic rationalization, of the capacity of the state to organize and reproduce its authority, and of the monopoly of legitimate violence can be understood when it comes to the capacity of political rule. These are not conceptually interchangeable dimensions, nor independent. Legal-rational governance creates an institutional environment that links legitimacy and administration to enduring authority (Cotterrell, 1997; Schluchter, 1981). So, more than just having the power, the institutionalization of that authority needs attention as well, including the processes by which political power is made legitimate and reproduced institutionally and enforced on a territorial level. This interpretation fits with the Weberian scholarship that focuses on the relationship of rationalization, domination, legitimacy and political authority (Giddens, 1985; Whimster, 2004; Swedberg, 2005).

The following contribution aims at filling this theoretical void, by developing an integrated framework that incorporates the dimensions of legitimacy, bureaucratic rationalisation and monopoly of legitimate violence as antecedents of state power, and places legal-rational governance as the institutional dimension that links them together. This paradigm redefines the Weberian theory of the state as an interdependent institutional configuration instead of a set of institutions. The former suggests that legitimacy helps state authority through its recognized grounds of obedience, the latter that bureaucratic rationalization helps state authority through formal institutionalization of authority, and the last that monopoly of legitimate violence helps state authority through its formally recognized capacity for coercion. Governance is defined as legal-rational, and it is viewed as the channel in which these foundations are embedded in and reproduced over time. Based on this, the study formulates seven hypotheses to be tested on the relationship between the five constructs. From this, the study proposes seven hypotheses that can be tested between the five constructs.

Specifically, it investigates the relationship between legitimacy and state authority; the relationship between legitimacy and legal-rational governance; the relationship between the monopoly of legitimate violence and legal-rational governance; the relationship between the monopoly of legitimate violence and state authority; and whether legal-rational governance serves as an institutional mechanism between the three antecedent dimensions and state authority. These hypotheses are not evaluated as statistical relationships, but from an integrative theoretical synthesis of the foundations of Weber's writings and later research. The analytical framework therefore retains Weber's conceptual distinctions while at the same time making room for subsequent interpretations of his ideas on legitimacy, bureaucracy, rationalization, coercion and institutional authority for a coherent explanation.

The study contributes three significant ways to the literature. First, it makes a theoretical contribution by making Weber's notions of legitimacy, bureaucracy and legitimate coercive monopoly come together in a single account of state power that helps overcome the fragmentation in many accounts of the state. Second, it conceptually contributes by shifting the focus from legal-rational governance as a mere attribute of the Weberian state to an institutional mechanism, and by explaining how the various types of authority become institutionalized in the form of formal rules and institutional offices. Third, it adds to the current scholarship on Weber by showing that a classical concept of the state can be synthesized systematically from the foundational literature and the subsequent literature, and that the theory on Weber's sociology of domination can be linked with the contemporary debate concerning legitimacy, institutionalization and political authority (Beetham, 1991; Cotterrell, 1997; Anter & Bruhns, 2020; Nikolakakis, 2024). The study aims to make a theoretical contribution to the understanding of the process of the construction, institutionalisation and sustenance of modern state authority, by addressing how legitimacy, administrative rationalisation and legitimate

coercive capacity interact in these processes. In general, the study suggests that Weber's theory of the state could well be defined as a theory of institutionalized legitimate domination. The basis of legitimacy is acceptance, the structure of authority is bureaucratic rationalization, the distinctive coercive capacity of the state comes from monopoly of legitimate violence, and the institutional order is legal-rational governance (Weber, 1946, 1978; Kalberg, 2005; Cotterrell, 1997). The dimensions therefore are combined to enrich the analytical utility of Weberian state theory and to offer a framework for the study of the institutional bases of political authority in modern governance.

## **2. Theoretical Framework and Literature Review**

This Section provides the conceptual grounding for this study by linking Weber's fundamental ideas about legitimacy through domination, administration, coercion, and state power. It also surveys the related literature to show how to construe these constructs in a coherent analytical framework.

### **2.1. Theoretical Framework**

This subsection presents the concepts related to legitimacy, the responsibility of the bureaucracy, the monopoly of legitimate violence, legal-rational government, authority of the state, and their interrelation as principles of the institutional theory.

There is an integrated theory that links legitimacy, bureaucratic rationalization, the monopoly of legitimate violence and state authority that can be used to describe the relationship between them in terms of Weber's theory of legitimate domination and the contemporary study on legitimacy. Weber's theory rests on more than just the force of the state; it rests on the successful claim of the state for the legitimate monopoly of physical force in a defined territory (Weber, 1946, 1978). Political authority can therefore just be effective when power is acknowledged by subjects of institutional rules. But, the legitimacy of such authority is essential and lies at the very foundation of the stability of political obedience,

for coercive power is alone incapable of producing enduring political loyalty. Legitimacy, on the contrary, makes political power institutionalized and establishes socially recognized duties of conformity (Kalberg, 2005; Cotterrell, 1997). Legitimacy theory offers additional explanation of this institutional mechanism. Beetham (1991) suggests that there are three related aspects of political authority: legality, normative justification, and expressed consent. Thus, governments with formal legal authority must have stable rule if their institutional structures can be seen as morally justified and publicly acknowledged. The modern understanding of legitimacy also indicates that political legitimacy is no longer just based on legal compliance, but also on trust in the governing institutions and the willingness of citizens to obey the rules of those institutions (Ruibal, 2017; Dogan, 2009). Legitimacy serves as the main mechanism by which political power gains enduring authority, as suggested by these institutional bases. Weber's theory of the bureaucratic rationalization also helps to understand the institutionalization of legitimacy in modern governance. Bureaucratic organization is based on hierarchical authority, written rules, specialized expertise, merit selection and impersonal administration, which permits political authority to increasingly be linked to offices and stations rather than individuals (Weber, 1978). The legal-rational authority is legitimate due to the formal rules that govern the public life of institutions, unlike traditional and charismatic authority. However, the administrative expansion poses a crucial institutional paradox in that administrative rationalization would increase state capacity and also, at the same time, reduce the sensitivity of the state to popular demands through the growth of its organizations (Turner, 2007; Kalberg, 2005). In this sense, the institutionalization of legitimacy takes the form of the bureaucratic rationalization.

Moreover, Weber's theory of the monopoly of legitimate violence sets him apart from other theories of politics by stressing the monopoly of the state, which is its exclusive right to use

legitimate coercive force under specified legal conditions (Weber, 1946). The monopoly of force does not mean that there is unlimited coercion, it means that there must be a legitimate legal order where citizens recognize the power as legitimate. Modern scholarship also suggests that today's states continue to enjoy control through their capacities to coerce, but also to establish and claim a legitimacy in the context of political instability and governance crises (Anter & Bruhns, 2020; Nikolakakis, 2024). This institutional relationship implies that the coercive power of the state is only reinforced where there are legitimate governance mechanisms. To sum up, these theoretical approaches suggest that the legitimacy of state power, the rationalization of the bureaucracy and the monopoly of legitimate violence are three interlocked factors that shape the state, whereas the interaction of these factors is institutionalized in the system of legal-rational governance, which offers a sound theoretical basis for this study.

## 2.2. Literature Review

This subsection offers a review of key Weberian writings and contemporary literature relevant to the institutional basis for political authority. The major literature on the subject has been segregated based on the key linkages between legitimacy, bureaucracy, legitimate force, rational-legal authority, and state authority.

### 2.2.1. Legitimacy and State Authority

This is a topic that has been explored by political sociology, as it has been in the context of political obedience, institutional stability and democratic government (Weber, 1978; Beetham, 1991). Previous scholarship has consistently noted that political authority is not only maintained through coercive force, for stable governance, citizens must tolerate and accept institutional rule as legitimate and appropriate (Cotterrell, 1997; Kalberg, 2005). This recognition makes it easier to understand the difference between legitimate and coercive domination and why states need institutional acceptance along with legal authority. Recent studies also highlight the fact that legitimacy is becoming more and more

multidimensional in the current governance system (Ruibal, 2017; Dogan, 2009). The legal power has been complemented by institutional trust, constitutional rules, accountability and public confidence in maintaining political obedience. But these new findings are still very much in line with Weber's general observation that institutional power must be recognized socially to become enduring. Thus, the most important institutional bedrock of political authority is legitimacy.

**H1:** State authority is positively affected by legitimacy.

**H2:** Legitimacy has a positive effect on legal-rational governance.

### **2.2.2. Avoiding Bureaucratic Rationalization and Legal-Rational Governance**

Bureaucratic rationalization is a crucial element in Weber's account of modern government because the formal structure of administrative organization creates legal-rational government (Weber, 1978). Bureaucratic institutions create the predictable governance through the use of hierarchical authority, impersonal decision making, specialized expertise, and written procedures and rules, minimizing the need for dependence upon individual rulers (Turner, 2007; Kalberg, 2005). The growing administrative rationalisation leads to the increasing institutionalization of political power. Most modern research focuses on the effectiveness of the bureaucracy and its institutional performance, and comparatively little on the role of the bureaucracy in generating legitimacy itself (Cotterrell, 1997; Anter & Bruhns, 2020). While the formal structures enhance administrative capacity, they can also produce democratic tensions as they participate in the growth of complexity and the separation of decision-making from citizens. The dual nature of the

**H5:** The monopoly of legitimate violence positively influences legal-rational governance.

**H6:** The monopoly of legitimate violence positively influences state authority.

rationalization of the bureaucracy suggests that it is an institutional mechanism that can reinforce state capacity and alter the bases of political legitimacy. Bureaucratic rationalization has a positive effect on legal-rational governance.

**H4:** Bureaucratic rationalization has a positive effect on state authority.

### **2.2.3. Monopoly of Legitimate Violence and Political Power**

The monopoly of legitimate violence remains one of Weber's defining contributions to state theory because it explains how modern states distinguish themselves from other political organizations through legally recognized coercive authority (Weber, 1946). Legitimate use of force depends on the accepted, institutional arrangements which allows the state to apply coercion within definite legal framework, and due to this fact, coercive force becomes an institutional resource, rather than being a means of oppression. The problem of institutional legitimacy has been renewed in the context of the difficulties experienced by modern democratic regimes characterized by political crises, declining trust in institutions, and broadening spectrum of governing tasks which have to be performed by the state (Beetham, 2012; Nikolakakis, 2024). Nowadays governments are totally reliant on legal institutions, administrative action, and popular legitimacy in ensuring compliance with their authority. Although institutional legitimacy is becoming an increasingly important subject of academic research nowadays, it is worth mentioning that the existing studies do not associate Weber's concept of legitimate monopoly of violence with that of bureaucratic governance and legitimacy (Anter & Bruhns, 2020; Ruibal, 2017). The present research builds the connections between the mentioned points.

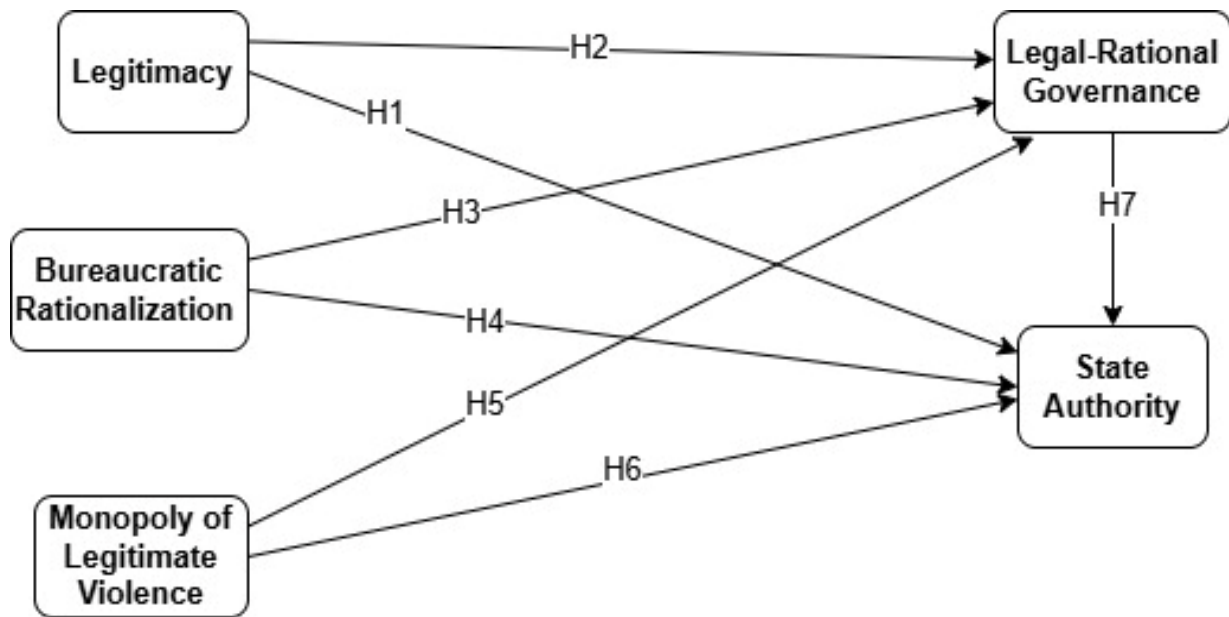


Figure: conceptual framework.

Despite growing interest in legitimacy scholarship, existing studies rarely integrate legitimacy, bureaucratic rationalization, and the monopoly of legitimate violence within a single Weberian explanation of state authority (Beetham, 2012; Nikolakakis, 2024). The majority of previous studies have either examined Weber's authority typology independently or analysed contemporary legitimacy without reconnecting these developments to Weber's broader sociology of domination. By integrating these three institutional dimensions through legal-rational governance, the present study provides a comprehensive theoretical framework for understanding how modern states sustain authority under changing political conditions.

**H7:** Legal-rational governance mediates the relationship between legitimacy, bureaucratic rationalization, the monopoly of legitimate violence, and state authority.

### 3. Data

In this section, the secondary evidence base that was utilized in the reconstruction and analysis of Weber's state theory is described. It outlines the composition, selection, organization, and preparation of the literature corpus for the

qualitative and quantitative analysis of the collected material.

#### 3.1. Data Design and Sample Construction

This study utilizes secondary data drawn from Max Weber's original writings and contemporary peer-reviewed scholarship on legitimacy, authority, bureaucracy, and political power published between 1946 and 2024. This time period allows for the study of significant aspects of Weber's theory as well as its evolution in political sociology, sociology of law, and political theory (Weber, 1946, 1978; Beetham, 1991). In contrast to empirical efforts based on direct observations, this study is based on qualitative conceptual synthesis as it reuses Weberian theory.

Sources referred to in this study are provided in Table 1. Weber's original writings serve as a main theoretical basis of the study while subsequent contributions made in the fields of legitimacy theory, bureaucracy, and Weber's modern followers help provide further angles on establishing relations between legitimacy, bureaucratic rationalization, monopoly of legitimate force, rational-legal rule, and state power. The documents for the study were obtained through public academic databases and university repositories.

Table 1. Categories of Sources Used

| Source Category               | Key Sources                                      | Purpose                        |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Classical Weberian Works      | Weber (1946, 1978)                               | Foundation of state theory     |
| Legitimacy Scholarship        | Beetham (1991, 2012); Ruibal (2017)              | Legitimacy framework           |
| Bureaucratic Governance       | Kalberg (2005); Turner (2007); Cotterrell (1997) | Administrative rationalization |
| Contemporary Weberian Studies | Anter & Bruhns (2020); Nikolakakis (2024)        | Modern interpretation          |
| Political Sociology           | Dogan (2009)                                     | Contemporary state authority   |

The choice of the sources presented here was determined by the significant contribution they made to Weberian studies and their ability to explain how institutional foundations of modern state authority were formed. Peer-reviewed publications such as books and articles and chapters in collections were favored, as being directly involved in studies of Weber's concepts of legitimacy, bureaucracy, political power, and state authority. This method of sampling can be characterized by its focus on theoretical relevance rather than on the number of sources used in theoretical reviews.

### 3.2. Data Collection and Source Selection

In order to achieve a conceptual consistency, literature was gathered through systematic searches done in the academic databases such as Web of Science, Scopus, JSTOR, Wiley Online Library, SpringerLink, SAGE Journals, Taylor & Francis Online and Oxford Academic. The research methodology used included a combination of the keywords: Max Weber, state theory, legitimacy, authority, Herrschaft, bureaucracy, political power, legal-rational authority, and monopoly of legitimate violence. The inclusion criteria were threefold: (i) direct interpretation of Weber's theory of the state, (ii) further development of Weber's legitimacy framework in contemporary political theory, and (iii) an analysis of the aspects of bureaucratic governance or state authority based on Weberian concepts. Sources not related to Weber's theory or with a few conceptual ideas were not included in the final analysis. This systematic selection

process helped to keep the literature reviewed closely related to the conceptual framework of the study and to keep the literature selected within the selected publications coherent from a theoretical point of view.

### 3.3. Literature Selection and Analytical Framework.

The literature selected was organized into five dimensions of analysis, which correspond to the study's five variables: legitimacy, the bureaucratic rationalization, the monopoly of legitimate violence, legal-rational governance and state authority. Instead of examining the content of each publication in isolation, comparisons were drawn between the interpretations of the causal connections between the concepts as seen in classical and contemporary Weberian scholarship. The analytical framework adopted is a thematic synthesis outlining the same conceptual themes, theoretical arguments, and institutional mechanisms across the literature examined. Special efforts were made to find points of theoretical convergence, points of conceptual difference, and areas of unresolved debate over the institutional bases of political power. By using this comparative approach, the reconstruction of Weber's theory as an integrated explanatory framework is possible instead of as an assemblage of individual concepts.

### 3.4. Data Cleaning and Processing

The selected literature has been screened following a structured approach for eliminating duplication and promoting consistency in analysis

before being used in the conceptual synthesis phase. Elimination of duplicate publications across the different databases was done and older versions of the same publications were merged so far as possible. The analytical sample was stripped off sources that were not directly related to Weber's theory of legitimacy, Weber's bureaucracy, and Weber's authority. The remaining publications were coded after screening in order to differentiate publications in terms of type of publication, theoretical focus, main ideas and contributions to the theory. All coded literature was categorized thematically based on three independent variables in the research (institutional mechanism under consideration).

#### 4. Methodology

This section is devoted to describing the methodological procedures necessary to turn the corpus of literature into a theoretical analysis. The methodology used in the research consists of conceptual operationalization, numerical coding, thematic synthesis, comparative mapping and theoretical pattern matching.

##### 4.1. Construction of the Analytical Framework

The study's analytical framework is formed through a theoretical application of Weber's key principles into five interlinked analytical aspects: legitimacy, bureaucratic rationalization, monopolization of legitimate violence, legal-rational governance, and state authority. Instead of thinking about these principles as separate features of the state, the study analyses the respective relations among them and their mechanisms to reproduce legitimate political authority (Weber, 1946, 1978; Beetham, 1991). This way, the difference between *Macht*, which stands for the ability of having one's will imposed, and *Herrschaft*, which explains legal domination, is preserved while legal-rational governance is defined as the institutional substance of legal domination. The three prior aspects—legitimacy, bureaucratic rationalization, and monopolization of legitimate violence—are analyzed as interrelated elements of the foundations of state authority. Legal-rational governance is described as the formal means of transformation of these aspects into long-lasting institutional authority. State authority is the resulting aspect indicating the durability and institutionalization of legal domination. Thus, the framework goes beyond a mere description of Weber's concept and focuses on their interrelated institutional logic.

**Table 2.** Analytical Operationalization of Weberian Constructs

| Construct                              | Core meaning                                                                | Analytical indicators                                             | Role in framework       |
|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Legitimacy</b>                      | Recognition of political rule as rightful or appropriate                    | Legality, justification, recognition, consent                     | Independent variable    |
| <b>Bureaucratic Rationalization</b>    | Rule-based and specialized organization of administration                   | Formal rules, hierarchy, specialization, expertise, impersonality | Independent variable    |
| <b>Monopoly of Legitimate Violence</b> | State's recognized claim to legitimate physical coercion within a territory | Legal coercion, enforcement, territorial control                  | Independent variable    |
| <b>Legal-Rational Governance</b>       | Institutionalization of authority through formal rules and offices          | Rule-based administration, office authority, proceduralization    | Institutional mechanism |
| <b>State Authority</b>                 | Durable and institutionalized legitimate domination                         | Obedience, institutional stability, durability of rule            | Dependent variable      |

The operationalization delineates precise conceptual frontiers across the five constructs. The concept of legitimacy refers to the legitimacy in relation to which rules are obeyed; bureaucratic rationalization denotes the organizational framework by means of which power is exercised; the monopoly of legitimate violence stands for the special power of coercion possessed by the state; legal-rational governance deals with the institutional mechanism that links the above-authorities; state power indicates the durability of legitimacy as dominance.

#### 4.2. Preliminary Analysis

The section that follows explains the preliminary analysis of secondary literature before deeper theoretical synthesis. The following procedures are discussed: corpus formation and numerical encoding, categorising sources by their type and descriptive statistics.

##### 4.2.1. Secondary-Data Design and Corpus Construction

This investigation uses qualitative secondary data design based primarily on Weber's works and the analysis of legitimacy, authority, bureaucracy, coercion, rationalization, and state theory. This is

an integrative theoretical literature review, unlike the process-based narrative literature reviews. Integrative literature reviews aim to review different pieces of literature to create or refine a theory, but proper literature reviews use explicit mechanisms for identifying, evaluating, and synthesizing the evidence base (Torraco, 2005; Snyder, 2019).

The analysis consists of 35 literature sources in total, including Weber's works, well-known Weberian interpretation, legitimacy and political power theories, as well as the literature dealing with state capacity, rationalization, and bureaucracy. In addition, three more sources of methodology were used to build a justification for the review process, which makes 38 references altogether. The selection of the sources was based on the combination of the terms Max Weber, state theory, legitimacy, authority, Herrschaft, Macht, bureaucracy, bureaucratic rationalization, legal rational authority, monopoly of legitimated violence, and political power. Both original works and interpretation sources were retained in case of their significant contribution to the framework theory.

**Table 3.** Composition of the Secondary Data Corpus

| Publication period | Number of sources | Percentage |
|--------------------|-------------------|------------|
| 1946–1979          | 6                 | 17.14      |
| 1980–1999          | 19                | 54.29      |
| 2000–2014          | 7                 | 20.00      |
| 2015–2024          | 3                 | 8.57       |
| Total              | 35                | 100.00     |

The concept of temporal distribution is indicative of the theoretical nature of the investigation. In a significant share of the study's data sources, established interpretations of Weber, from the time intervals when active discussions on rationalization, domination, legitimacy, and bureaucracy took place, reflect the aforementioned debates. At the same time, it

includes current studies connecting foundational debates with contemporary interpretations of legitimacy, power, and authority. Specifically, while current studies focus on revisiting the Weberian relationship between legitimacy and authority, well-established research has examined Weber's rationality, bureaucracy, and political theory at depth.

#### 4.2.2. Numerical Coding Procedure

Following source selection, each publication is coded against the five analytical constructs. The unit of analysis is the substantive theoretical treatment of a construct, rather than the simple appearance of a keyword. This distinction is important because a source may mention legitimacy or bureaucracy without making it analytically relevant to the argument. A three-

point coding scale is employed: 1.00 = substantive treatment, where the construct constitutes a central component of the source's theoretical argument; 0.50 = qualified treatment, where the construct is meaningfully discussed but remains secondary, conditional, or supporting; 0.00 = no substantive treatment, where the construct is absent or only mentioned incidentally.

**Table 4.** Numerical Coding Scheme

| Code        | Interpretation           | Decision rule                                                       |
|-------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1.00</b> | Substantive treatment    | Construct is central to the source's theoretical argument           |
| <b>0.50</b> | Qualified treatment      | Construct is meaningfully discussed but is secondary or conditional |
| <b>0.00</b> | No substantive treatment | Construct is absent or only incidentally mentioned                  |

The coding does not measure article quality or statistical importance. It provides a transparent descriptive representation of the conceptual coverage of the secondary literature. For each source  $i$ , the overall conceptual coverage score is calculated as:

$$C_i = \sum_{j=1}^5 X_{ij}$$

where  $X_{ij}$  represents the code assigned to construct  $j$  for source  $i$ . The maximum score is therefore 5.00.

#### 4.2.3. Source-Level Coding

The complete coding matrix is presented in Table 5. The numerical values represent the researcher's systematic coding judgments using the rules established in Table 4

**Table 5.** Source-Level Numerical Coding Matrix

| No. | Source               | LEG  | BR   | MLV  | LRG  | SA   | Total |
|-----|----------------------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|
| 1   | Weber (1946)         | 1.00 | 0.50 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 4.50  |
| 2   | Weber (1978)         | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 5.00  |
| 3   | Gerth & Mills (1946) | 1.00 | 0.50 | 0.50 | 0.50 | 1.00 | 3.50  |
| 4   | Bendix (1977)        | 1.00 | 1.00 | 0.50 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 4.50  |
| 5   | Beetham (1991)       | 1.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 3.00  |
| 6   | Beetham (1985)       | 1.00 | 1.00 | 0.50 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 4.50  |
| 7   | Cotterrell (1997)    | 1.00 | 1.00 | 0.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 4.00  |
| 8   | Uphoff (1989)        | 1.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.50 | 1.00 | 2.50  |
| 9   | Kalberg (2005)       | 1.00 | 1.00 | 0.50 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 4.50  |
| 10  | Turner (2007)        | 0.50 | 1.00 | 0.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 3.50  |

|    |                                      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|----|--------------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 11 | Anter & Bruhns (2020)                | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 5.00 |
| 12 | Nikolakakis (2024)                   | 1.00 | 0.50 | 0.50 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 4.00 |
| 13 | Dogan (2009)                         | 1.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.50 | 1.00 | 2.50 |
| 14 | Ruibal (2017)                        | 1.00 | 0.50 | 0.00 | 0.50 | 1.00 | 3.00 |
| 15 | Habermas (1975)                      | 1.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.50 | 0.50 | 2.00 |
| 16 | Lukes (2005)                         | 0.50 | 0.00 | 0.50 | 0.50 | 0.50 | 2.00 |
| 17 | Giddens (1985)                       | 0.50 | 0.50 | 1.00 | 0.50 | 1.00 | 3.50 |
| 18 | Mann (1984)                          | 0.50 | 0.50 | 1.00 | 0.50 | 1.00 | 3.50 |
| 19 | Migdal (1988)                        | 0.50 | 0.50 | 0.50 | 0.50 | 1.00 | 3.00 |
| 20 | Evans, Rueschemeyer & Skocpol (1985) | 0.50 | 0.50 | 0.50 | 0.50 | 1.00 | 3.00 |
| 21 | Skocpol (1985)                       | 0.50 | 0.50 | 0.50 | 0.50 | 1.00 | 3.00 |
| 22 | Jessop (2007)                        | 0.50 | 0.50 | 0.50 | 0.50 | 1.00 | 3.00 |
| 23 | Schluchter (1981)                    | 1.00 | 1.00 | 0.50 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 4.50 |
| 24 | Brubaker (1984)                      | 0.50 | 1.00 | 0.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 3.50 |
| 25 | Ritzer (1975)                        | 0.50 | 1.00 | 0.00 | 1.00 | 0.50 | 3.00 |
| 26 | Udehn (1981)                         | 0.50 | 0.50 | 0.00 | 0.50 | 0.50 | 2.00 |
| 27 | Collins (1986)                       | 0.50 | 1.00 | 0.50 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 4.00 |
| 28 | Mommsen (1984)                       | 1.00 | 1.00 | 0.50 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 4.50 |
| 29 | Käsler (1988)                        | 1.00 | 1.00 | 0.50 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 4.50 |
| 30 | Hennis (1983)                        | 0.50 | 1.00 | 0.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 3.50 |
| 31 | Whimster (2004)                      | 1.00 | 1.00 | 0.50 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 4.50 |
| 32 | Swedberg (2005)                      | 1.00 | 1.00 | 0.50 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 4.50 |
| 33 | Kalberg (1980)                       | 0.50 | 1.00 | 0.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 3.50 |
| 34 | Lassman & Speirs (1994)              | 1.00 | 1.00 | 0.50 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 4.50 |
| 35 | Scaff (1989)                         | 0.50 | 0.50 | 0.50 | 0.50 | 1.00 | 3.00 |

**Note:** LEG = Legitimacy; BR = Bureaucratic Rationalization; MLV = Monopoly of Legitimate Violence; LRG = Legal-Rational Governance; SA = State Authority.

The corpus includes sources that directly distinguish power, authority, and legitimacy, sources addressing rationalization and bureaucracy, and contemporary scholarship revisiting Weberian legitimacy and authority. For example, Uphoff explicitly differentiates

Weberian power, authority, and legitimacy; Kalberg analyses Weber's types of rationality and rationalization; Ritzer examines professionalization, bureaucratization and rationalization; Udehn links rationalization to bureaucratic domination; and recent work by Nikolakakis revisits legitimacy, power, and authority from a Weberian perspective.

#### 4.2.4. Descriptive Statistics of the Coded Secondary Data

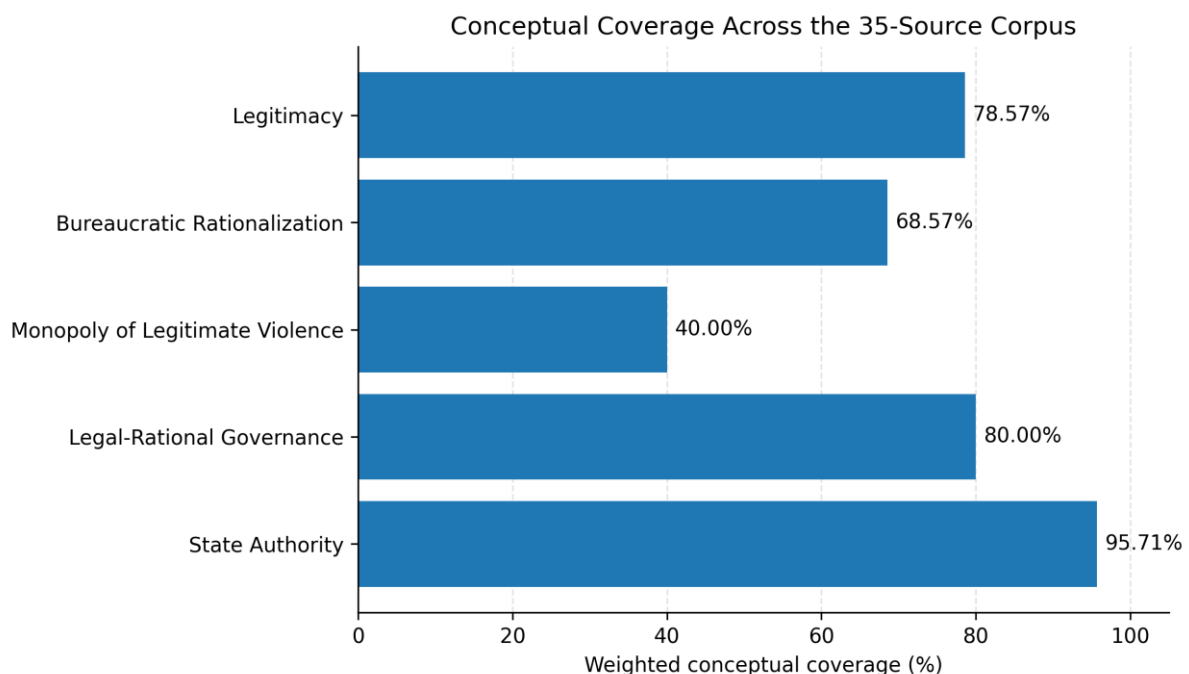
To provide a numerical overview comparable to the descriptive analysis used in empirical secondary-data studies, the coded corpus is summarized using the mean, standard deviation,

minimum, and maximum of each analytical dimension. These statistics describe **coding intensity across documents**, not characteristics of human respondents.

**Table 6.** Descriptive Statistics of the Coded Literature

| Variable                        | N  | Mean  | Standard Deviation | Minimum | Maximum | Weighted Coverage (%) |
|---------------------------------|----|-------|--------------------|---------|---------|-----------------------|
| Legitimacy                      | 35 | 0.786 | 0.251              | 0.50    | 1.00    | 78.57                 |
| Bureaucratic Rationalization    | 35 | 0.686 | 0.366              | 0.00    | 1.00    | 68.57                 |
| Monopoly of Legitimate Violence | 35 | 0.400 | 0.339              | 0.00    | 1.00    | 40.00                 |
| Legal-Rational Governance       | 35 | 0.800 | 0.249              | 0.50    | 1.00    | 80.00                 |
| State Authority                 | 35 | 0.957 | 0.142              | 0.50    | 1.00    | 95.71                 |
| Overall conceptual coverage     | 35 | 3.629 | 0.843              | 2.00    | 5.00    | 72.57                 |

The visual representation of the data from Table 6 is shown in Figure 2. By looking at Figure 2, one will be able to assess how much emphasis each of the Weber's constructs in the case studies has received in the 35 sources of data.



*Figure 2. Weighted conceptual coverage of the five Weberian constructs in the coded secondary-data corpus.*

*Note.* Percentages are based on the numerical coding of 35 literature sources reported in Table 6.

The results from the analysis reveal that the five dimensions are extensively covered in the texts

analyzed although they vary greatly when it comes to how much of the different dimensions is covered. In particular the mean coding for state authority is 0.957, then legal-rational authority is coded at 0.800 and legitimacy with 0.786. Thus, bureaucratic rationalization comes with a 0.686, and monopoly of legitimate violence has the least mean of 0.400. The results are theoretically meaningful as they indicate that the literature of Weber that constitutes the corpus addresses the issue of authority and institutional rationalization in a more consistent way than the coercive monopoly. The lower coding intensity of monopoly of legitimate violence does not mean that this concept is unimportant theoretically but does indicate that many newer Weberian works have changed focus to legitimacy, rationalization, bureaucracy, and institutional authority. The results confirm necessity to include the coercive dimension explicitly into the current framework.

### 4.3. Analytical Methodology

In this part, the writer describes the process of translating the coded data into an integrated Weberian theoretical interpretation of state

sovereignty. The analysis employs thematic linkages, directional codes, and the comparative approach, as well as the theoretical hypotheses.

#### 4.3.1. Concept-Centric Thematic Synthesis

The literature was synthesized thematically after the numerical coding. The intention is to discover the structural mechanisms that connect totalitarianism, bureaucratic rationalization, monopoly of legitimate violence, legal-rational governance, and state authority. The results of the analysis are based on the difference between conceptual co-occurrence and theoretical relations. The presence of legitimacy and bureaucratic legitimacy in the same source does not imply that legitimacy is thus seen as a cause for bureaucratic rationalization. The presence of the relation is registered if the source links legitimacy to bureaucratic rationalization through the mechanism. The methodology used in the research is the one of integrative review, as the main achievement of the review consists in synthesis and theory building rather than mere accumulation of quotations.

**Table 7. Thematic Relationship Framework**

| Relationship                                                | Weberian foundation                     | Analytical mechanism                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Legitimacy → State Authority                                | Legitimate domination                   | Recognition facilitates durable obedience                                  |
| Legitimacy → Legal-Rational Governance                      | Legitimate legal domination             | Recognition reinforces acceptance of formal rules                          |
| Bureaucratic Rationalization → Legal-Rational Governance    | Bureaucratic administration             | Formal rules become organizational routines                                |
| Bureaucratic Rationalization → State Authority              | Continuous administration               | Administrative specialization reproduces institutional authority           |
| Monopoly of Legitimate Violence → Legal-Rational Governance | Legitimate coercive monopoly            | Coercive capacity becomes legally institutionalized                        |
| Monopoly of Legitimate Violence → State Authority           | Distinctive characteristic of the state | Legitimate enforcement supports institutional authority                    |
| Legal-Rational Governance → State Authority                 | Rational-legal domination               | Institutional rules translate antecedent dimensions into durable authority |

The Table 7 provides a link between the coding of literature and the seven hypotheses that have been developed in the second section. The main hypothesis states that the three antecedents are related and their institutional effects take place through legal-rational governance.

#### 4.3.2. Directional Relationship Coding

To differentiate supportive interpretations from those of the contradictory nature, the relationship can be coded with directions +1 = supportive theoretical relationship, 0 = uncertain,

conditional, or no direction relationship, -1 = opposing or negative relationship. The directional score was obtained from:

$$D_h = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{N_h} d_i}{N_h}$$

where  $d_i$  represents the directional code for source  $i$ , and  $N_h$  represents the number of sources that substantively address the relationship.

**Table 8. Directional Coding Rule**

| Code | Interpretation                                                                     |
|------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| +1   | The source presents the relationship as reinforcing or theoretically positive      |
| 0    | The source presents the relationship as conditional, ambiguous, or non-directional |
| -1   | The source presents the relationship as constraining or theoretically negative     |

This procedure allows the literature to contain disagreement rather than forcing every source into a “supporting” category.

#### 4.3.3. Comparative Theoretical Mapping

The following phase involves comparing Weber's initial formulation with further interpretations of his construct. This is important because later scholarship does not only reproduce Weber's theoretical framework; it also enhances it, modifies it, and sometimes opposes it.

**Table 9. Comparative Theoretical Mapping**

| Relationship                                             | Weberian foundation                               | Later interpretation                                           | Analytical implication                                    |
|----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| Legitimacy → State Authority                             | Legitimate grounds facilitate obedience           | Legitimacy includes recognition and justification              | Legitimacy forms a foundation of durable authority        |
| Legitimacy → Legal-Rational Governance                   | Legally structured domination                     | Formal legality may require social acceptance                  | Legitimacy reinforces institutional acceptance            |
| Bureaucratic Rationalization → Legal-Rational Governance | Bureaucracy institutionalizes formal authority    | Rationalization increases specialization and proceduralization | Bureaucracy translates rules into organizational practice |
| Bureaucratic Rationalization → State Authority           | Bureaucratic administration stabilizes domination | Modern states rely heavily on specialized administration       | Rationalization contributes to institutional durability   |

|                                                             |                                                       |                                                              |                                                              |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| Monopoly of Legitimate Violence → Legal-Rational Governance | State claims legitimate coercive monopoly             | Coercion becomes embedded in legal procedures                | Law conditions the exercise of legitimate coercion           |
| Monopoly of Legitimate Violence → State Authority           | Coercive monopoly distinguishes the state             | Coercion alone cannot ensure acceptance                      | Coercive capacity is necessary but insufficient              |
| Legal-Rational Governance → State Authority                 | Rational-legal domination institutionalizes obedience | Formal institutional procedures remain central to governance | Legal-rational governance acts as the transmission mechanism |

The comparison shows that Weberian state theory is a set of interrelated institutions rather than a simple set of distinctive features. This agrees with research that underscores the link between rationalization, power, legitimacy, and political domination.

The hypotheses are evaluated using theoretical pattern matching instead of statistical hypothesis testing. As opposed to an empirical study, this study is interested in finding out if the coded secondary literature provides enough theoretical convergence to substantiate the proposed relationships.

#### 4.3.4. Theoretical Assessment

**Table 10. H1–H7 Theoretical Assessment Protocol**

| Hypothesis | Relationship                                                | Primary evidence required                                               | Decision criterion                     |
|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| <b>H1</b>  | Legitimacy → State Authority                                | Consistent theoretical linkage between legitimacy and durable obedience | Convergence across substantive sources |
| <b>H2</b>  | Legitimacy → Legal-Rational Governance                      | Evidence that legitimacy reinforces acceptance of formal rules          | Convergence or qualified convergence   |
| <b>H3</b>  | Bureaucratic Rationalization → Legal-Rational Governance    | Evidence that bureaucracy institutionalizes rule-based authority        | Convergence across relevant sources    |
| <b>H4</b>  | Bureaucratic Rationalization → State Authority              | Evidence that administrative rationalization reproduces authority       | Convergence with boundary conditions   |
| <b>H5</b>  | Monopoly of Legitimate Violence → Legal-Rational Governance | Evidence that coercive capacity becomes legally institutionalized       | Convergence with qualification         |
| <b>H6</b>  | Monopoly of Legitimate Violence → State Authority           | Evidence that legitimate coercive capacity supports authority           | Convergence, but not coercion alone    |

|           |                                                |                                                                          |                                    |
|-----------|------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>H7</b> | Legal-Rational Governance<br>→ State Authority | Evidence that legal-rational governance integrates the three antecedents | Integrated theoretical convergence |
|-----------|------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|

The hypotheses are therefore interpreted as theory-building propositions supported or qualified by the secondary evidence, rather than as statistically tested causal claims.

#### 4.4. Analytical Rigor

The analytic rigor is ensured through the four procedures which include transparent selection of the sources, clear numerical coding, comparative theoretical analysis, and consideration of negative cases. The transparency of source selection ensures that the corpus is theoretically relevant. The numerically coded documents enable reproducible document analysis. The comparative theoretical analysis differentiates Weber's original claims from the

claims that were made later. Negative case consideration prevents contradictory literature from being omitted just because the literature does not fit in the prescribed scheme. The logic of methodology is aligned with the established explicitness requirements for integrative review method. Integrative review has been described by Torraco as a specific research strategy leading to the generation of new knowledge from the existing literature, while Snyder highlights the importance of the systematic procedures over on-the-spot literature reviews (translational medicine, n.d.).

**Table 11. Methodological Decision Rules**

| Analytical issue          | Decision rule                                                     |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Source relevance          | Retain only substantive engagement with the theoretical framework |
| Construct coding          | 1.00, 0.50, or 0.00                                               |
| Relationship direction    | +1, 0, or -1                                                      |
| Duplicate publication     | Retain one authoritative version                                  |
| Incidental citation       | Not treated as substantive evidence                               |
| Competing interpretation  | Retain and code rather than exclude                               |
| Primary Weberian evidence | Given conceptual priority                                         |
| Secondary interpretation  | Used to extend, qualify, or critique Weber                        |
| Hypothesis assessment     | Theoretical convergence rather than statistical significance      |
| Numerical results         | Calculated directly from the coded 35-source corpus               |

The resulting methodology treats the literature as a structured secondary evidence base rather than as a collection of citations. The numerical coding provides descriptive transparency, while the thematic and comparative stages provide the theoretical synthesis required to reconstruct Weber's theory of the state.

#### 5. Discussion

This section focuses on analyzing the results of this study regarding them through Weber's legitimate domination theory as well as with state authority literature that was written after Weber. The discussion concentrates on explaining the role of legitimacy, bureaucracy, legitimated coercion, and legal rationality in making up the elements of the institutionalized political power.

The results of this study offer significant theoretical support for Weber's theory of the state as a unified complex of elements, namely legitimacy, bureaucratic rationalisation, monopoly of legitimate violence, legal-rational governance and state authority. The secondary data analysis suggests that legitimacy always overlaps with enduring and accepted political authority, and legal-rational governance offers the institutional structure for the embedding of political authority in rules, offices and administrative practices. This reading falls in line with Weber's separation of power from legitimate domination, and later on the literature which sees legitimacy as being central to the stability of social and political orders, as embodied in Weber's writings in 1946 and 1978 (Weber, 1946, 1978), and Kalberg's (2005) and Beetham's (1991) work. Beetham's analysis is of special significance because it offers a different way of understanding the nature of Weberian legitimacy and makes it clearer the wider normative and institutional bases of legitimate rule. The results thus support H1, which posits that legitimacy contributes to a more powerful state, and H2, which argues that legitimacy is another factor that leads to legal-rational governance. This is also in line with recent Weberian research, which highlights the connections between legitimacy, law, morality, power and social order stability (Nikolakakis, 2024).

Moreover, the results show that in addition to being an administrative feature, bureaucratic rationalization is also a crucial organizational process that institutionalizes legal-rational authority. The analysis reveals that formal rules, hierarchy, specialization and expertise, as well as impersonal administration help to make the use of authority less personal and more attached to offices and procedures than to individual rulers (Weber, 1978; Kalberg, 2005). The results lend support to H3 (bureaucratic rationalization has a positive impact on legal-rational governance) and H4 (rationalized administration has a positive impact on durable state authority). This is in line with the literature on Weberian bureaucracy, which has described it as a rule-obsessed and professional administrative system, and with the

literature referring to the relationship of the Weberian bureaucracy with the broader process of rationalization (Sager & Rosser, 2021; Langer, 2022). At the same time, an important qualification is being made. Bureaucratic rationalisation can lead to improved predictability, continuity of administration and establishment of institutional capacity. However, it creates tensions in terms of responsiveness and democratic accountability. Therefore, contemporary scholars urge against viewing the Weberian bureaucracy only as efficient technology of administration and regard it as a part of greater process of transformation of modern authority organisation (Kettl, 2022; Rudolph & Rudolph, 2011)

The results also show that, for Weber's theory, the monopoly of legitimate violence is in a special place as it singles out the coercive attribute that distinguishes the modern state from other political forms of organization. The secondary literature, however, suggests that Weber's conception is not to be understood as a legitimization of limitless coercion. Instead, the potential power of coercion is dependent on its institutional and legal legitimization. This supports H5 in relation to the monopoly of legitimate violence and legal-rational governance and H6 in relation to the legitimate coercive capacity and state authority. Weber's formulation and later scholarship focus on the centralisation and institutionalisation of legitimate force as a particular aspect of the process of state formation and the establishment of a coercive monopoly of force (Weber, 1946; Anter & Bruhns, 2020). Recent scholarship also highlights the ongoing relevance of legitimate coercive monopoly to the contemporary state and its connections to the concepts of sovereignty, legitimacy and state-building. However, the results also point to an important theoretical shortcoming, which is that the capacity to coerce is not sufficient for establishing lasting political power. Coercion can account for compliance and/or domination, but it cannot account for the stability of legitimate authority unless it is linked to legitimate institutional arrangements. This separation

buttresses the Weberian dichotomy of power and domination.

An important result of the study is that the institutional mechanism through which the legitimacy, the rationalization of the bureaucracy and the legitimate coercive power are linked with state power is legal-rational governance. The evidence thus strengthens theoretical support for H7 and adds to the traditional understanding of Weber's state theory. A recurring theme of existing scholarship is the discussion of legitimacy, bureaucracy or the monopoly of violence in isolation; the current synthesis, by contrast, reveals that their explanatory power deepens when they are viewed as three mutually reinforcing aspects of the institutionalization of domination. Cotterrell's analysis shows that a proper understanding of law, legitimacy, legal domination, political authority and the modern state are integral to Weber's sociology of law and political power. In the same way, rational-legal authority literature focuses on the linear connection between the authority of the office and the formal rules that form it, stressing that in modernity the command of authority is rooted in the formally established institution of legal authority. Legal-rational governance is not, therefore, a mere feature of the Weberian state, but rather it can be seen as being the institutional transmission mechanism through which legitimacy, administrative rationalization, and legitimate coercive authority become a durable form of state authority.

Overall, the results emphasize the need to understand Weber's typology of authority as a process of institutionalization, and not as an unchanging typology. The traditional dominant conception of domination through tradition, charisma and law is only a part of Weber's theoretical enterprise. The secondary data synthesis suggests that legitimate political power is maintained through the combination of normative acceptance, administrative organization, and institutionalized coercive capacities. Contemporary scholarship confirms this interpretation by emphasizing the Weberian view of domination as a connection between

power, legitimacy, administration, and institutional order, rather than the classification of leadership forms. Thus, the results contribute to the literature that state power is durable not merely because one aspect of it suffices, but because it is recognized by others, it possesses an organizational continuity through bureaucratic rationalization, it has the possibility to be enforced through the coercive monopoly of a state, and it is institutionalized by legal-rational governance. Thus, the assumed integration of Weber's thought makes him relevant to today's discussions of political authority, bureaucracy, and institutional legitimacy.

## 6. Implications

The findings of the current study have theoretical, institutional and policy implications. This study provides useful information regarding Max Weber's state theory by demonstrating how legitimacy, bureaucratic rationalization of social relations, and monopoly over legitimate violence interact in establishing the dominant authority of a modern state in the form of legal-rational governance. Therefore, the research is not limited to the Weberian theory stating that the elements mentioned above are independent phenomena but underlines their interrelatedness in the process of building state power.

### 6.1 Theoretical Implications

This study adds to the research of Weberian state theory, legitimacy, bureaucratic rationalization and political authority. The results suggest that the state's power cannot be explained exclusively by the force it is able to muster or its formal institutional institutions. Instead, authority takes root when political rule is seen as legitimate, when it is tied to a rationalized division of administrative authority, and when it is backed by an institutionally sanctioned monopoly of legitimate violence. This is in line with Weber's distinction between power and legitimate domination, and with the later scholarship on the link between legitimacy, legality and authority (Weber 1978; Beetham 1991; Kalberg 2005; Nikolakakis 2024). The study also points to the significance of legal-rational governance as an

institutional mechanism by which these dimensions are represented in stable and predictable forms of state authority. In this regard, the study adds to Weberian theorization by discussing the elements of legitimacy, bureaucratic rationalization and legitimate coercive monopoly, which are not considered as separate features of institutionalized power but as connected components.

### 6.2 Practical Implications

The findings of this research have implications for public administrators, institutional leaders and governance practitioners when it comes to administrative designs, rule-based decision-making and the maintenance of a sense of institutional authority. The results emphasize the need for open procedures, explicit administrative tasks, and formal rule application procedures in terms of consolidating state power. The analysis further implies that coercive power of its own is not sufficient to guarantee lasting control: coercive power has to be institutional and legalized to be compatible with legitimate power. Thus, administrative reform should take into account not only the effectiveness of the administration but also the legitimacy of the rules and procedures by which public authority is exercised.

### 6.3 Policy Implications

This finding indicates that the steps taken to enhance state authority must go beyond boosting their administrative or coercive capability. The policy context should facilitate the legality, procedural regularity, institutional responsibility and public awareness of the governance arrangements. The relationship between legitimacy and legal-rational governance underscores the importance of institutions that can create credible and predictable governance practices from formal rules. For a Weberian perspective, the legitimate exercise of coercive force should be within legally established institutional structures, such as those of the state. All of these implications underscore the need to have a rule-based governance, professional administration and institutional accountability to

maintain legitimate state authority (Cotterrell, 1997; Sager & Rosser, 2021; Kettl, 2022).

### 7. Conclusion and Future Research Directions

In this study, the theory of Max Weber was analyzed and an integrated framework was established between legitimacy, the rationalization of the bureaucracy, the monopoly of legitimate violence, the legal-rational form of government and state power. The analysis suggests that these dimensions are theoretically related to the institutionalisation of modern political power. Legitimacy creates the foundation for the recognition of rule as rightful, whereas bureaucratic rationalisation creates the organisational structure for the continuous administration of rule. Monopoly of legitimate violence is the hallmark of modern statehood, while legal-rational governance links these aspects via formal rules, offices and procedures. In general, the analysis implies that there is a process of authority-legitimization which is institutionalized and not just about political power or about coercive power. This is in line with Weber's view on domination and later literature on the intersections of legitimacy, law, bureaucracy, and authority (Weber, 1978; Beetham, 1991; Kalberg, 2005; Nikolakakis, 2024). The results also show that the institutional aspect of Weber's theory of the state is especially relevant to the study of the durability of authority. The links in H1-H6 are direct theoretical links between legitimacy and each of the other dimensions, and in H7 the role of legal-rational governance in mediating these dimensions into institutionalized authority is stressed. The study makes several contributions to the Weberian literature in this regard, for it unites concepts that are often studied in isolation and highlights the joint effects of these concepts in shaping and sustaining modern state authority.

This study is a theoretically integrated interpretation of Weber's theory of the state, but there are some limitations. First, the analysis is largely derived from theoretical elaborations in Weber's work, and secondly, from secondary scholarly literature, instead of from quantitative

cross-national observations of state institutions. Second, the constructs generated in this framework, especially legitimacy and legitimate violence and state power, are conceptually open and can have multiple forms in institutional and historical settings. Third, the framework doesn't explicitly assess how the proposed relationships differ depending on political systems, developmental levels or different forms of state organisation. The proposed relationships are limited in terms of the extent to which they are empirically generalizable.

Future studies can thus build on this framework by making it operational, by using cross-national institutional and governance indicators, and by exploring the connections between them within a panel-data, structural equation or comparative institutional perspective. Future research could

examine the extent to which legitimacy and state authority are related in different institutional structures, such as democratic, hybrid or authoritarian, and comparative case studies could examine how rationalization of the bureaucracy and legitimate use of coercive power functioned in different historical periods. Furthermore, future research on digital governance could investigate new forms of digital governance, algorithmic administration, and platform-based state capacity to assess whether Weber's notion of legal-rational authority still applies to state capacity in the digital era. A study of these developments could yield additional clues to the ongoing significance and the possible shift in Weber's notion of the modern state.

## References

- Anter, A., & Bruhns, H. (2020). Max Weber and the Weberian tradition in political science. In D. Berg-Schlosser, B. Badie, & L. Morlino (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of political science* (Vol. 3, pp. 233–252). SAGE Publications. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781529714333.n17>
- Beetham, D. (1991). Max Weber and the legitimacy of the modern state. *Analyse & Kritik*, 13(1), 34–45. <https://doi.org/10.1515/auk-1991-0102>
- Brubaker, R. (1984). *The limits of rationality: An essay on the social and moral thought of Max Weber*. Allen & Unwin.
- Cotterrell, R. (1997). Legality and legitimacy: The sociology of Max Weber. In *Law's community: Legal theory in sociological perspective* (pp. 134–159). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198264903.003.0007>
- Dogan, M. (2009). Political legitimacy: New criteria and anachronistic theories. *International Social Science Journal*, 60(196), 195–210. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2451.2010.01722.x>
- Giddens, A. (1985). *The nation-state and violence*. Polity Press.
- Kalberg, S. (2005). Power and authority: When and why do people obey? In S. Kalberg (Ed.), *Max Weber: Readings and commentary on modernity* (pp. 198–212). Blackwell Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470773369.ch11>
- Mann, M. (1984). The autonomous power of the state: Its origins, mechanisms and results. *European Journal of Sociology*, 25(2), 185–213. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003975600004239>
- Migdal, J. S. (1988). *Strong societies and weak states: State-society relations and state capabilities in the Third World*. Princeton University Press. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvzsmazz>
- Mommsen, W. J. (1984). *Max Weber and German politics, 1890–1920*. University of Chicago Press.
- Nikolakakis, N. (2024). Legitimacy, power, and authority: A Weberian perspective. *Sociedade e Estado*, 39(1), e49343. <https://doi.org/10.1590/S0102-6992-20243901e49343>
- Ritzer, G. (1975). Professionalization, bureaucratization and rationalization: The views of Max Weber. *Social Forces*, 53(4), 627–634. <https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/53.4.627>

- Ruibal, A. (2017). Legitimacy. In B. S. Turner (Ed.), *The Wiley-Blackwell encyclopedia of social theory*. Wiley. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118430873.est0210>
- Schluchter, W. (1981). *The rise of Western rationalism: Max Weber's developmental history*. University of California Press.
- Skocpol, T. (1985). Bringing the state back in: Strategies of analysis in current research. In P. B. Evans, D. Rueschemeyer, & T. Skocpol (Eds.), *Bringing the state back in* (pp. 3–38). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511628283.002>
- Swedberg, R. (2005). *The Max Weber dictionary: Key words and central concepts*. Stanford University Press.
- Turner, S. (2007). The continued relevance of Weber's philosophy of social science. *Max Weber Studies*, 7(1), 37–62. <https://doi.org/10.15543/MWS/2007/1/4>
- Weber, M. (1946). *From Max Weber: Essays in sociology* (H. H. Gerth & C. Wright Mills, Eds. & Trans.). Oxford University Press.
- Weber, M. (1978). *Economy and society: An outline of interpretive sociology* (G. Roth & C. Wittich, Eds.). University of California Press.
- Whimster, S. (Ed.). (2004). *The essential Weber: A reader*. Routledge.