The era of coalition politics signified a break with the past. The strain and stresses of coalition politics, which were both narrowly local, entire political sectrum particularly since the Congress plit, constitute the heart of the institutional challenge. It is being questioned whether parliamentary government and federal polity can at all co-exist with coalition politics whether parliamentary government and federal polity operating within the confines of coalition politics are at all conducive to the challenging tasks of nation building. The political and constitutional implications of the coalition politics are enumerated below.

The leadership of the Chief Minister is an accepted principle of the parliamentary form of government but this hardly appears to be empirically tenable in the context of coalition politics in India.

The constitutional headship of the formal executive (Governor) is also an important characteristic of a parliamentary government. It is a highly controversial issue whether the Governor has always successes in living up to this ideal. The Governor’s office; which was so far a gubernatorial assignment, became the butt of criticism as an instrument of Central intervention in the hands of the ruling Congress party. The era of coalition politics in the states expanded the scope of the discretionary powers of the Governors. The conduct of the Governors in exercising their constitutional powers in their discretion became the subject of severe criticism. For obvious reason Governors have found those situations delicate to handle where coalition partners have either been
numerous, where it is heterogeneous, its margin of strength is thin or where parties and groups have been proven to hold the coalition at ransom.

Political homogeneity, which is another characteristic of the parliamentary government, is rooted in programmatic unity. Efforts are made to provide for programmatic unity through minimum programmes under coalition governments. The parties in the coalition have different support structures which militate against minimum programmes.

Ministerial responsibility is still another characteristic of parliamentary government. Coalition politics had its adverse effect on the issue on ministerial responsibility. Most of the ministers acted in a most reckless manner in violation of all norms of parliamentary decorum with the result that the position of the executive came under the dominance of the legislature. Moreover it appears that ministerial responsibility has been more individual than collective in the experience of coalition government.

What undermined the significance of the cabinet in a coalition was the co-ordination committee of all constituent partners, it acted as the super cabinet. It even made the Prime Minister a mere figurehead and the leader of any other party became the one who commanded the strongest position in this committee.

Prime Minister is regarded as the ‘key stone of the cabinet arch; he is taken as ‘first among equal’ or ‘a moon among the lesser stars; above all in the words of Laski, he is centre to the life and death of the Cabinet; such a situation no longer exist. In a coalition system; it is the coordination committee of the constituent elements which sort out matters like selection on the ministers, distribution of portfolios, drafting of a common minimum programme and the like.
Naturally, the position of the Prime Minister becomes very weak, rather pathetic, and he has to work during the pleasure not of the President but of the constituent elements. Facts show that in every delicate situation Prime Minister has to bank upon the cooperation of other parties. In the era of coalition governments, the actions of the Prime Minister’s are constrained, to a great extent, by perspectives of the supporting or participating parties of the government. The major, if not the utmost, concern of the Prime Minister is to ensure the sustenance of the government by avoiding any tough and formidable traits of either his personal or his decision unless he is ready to sacrifice his government. Needless to say, in such circumstances the governance of the country takes a backseat with the Prime Minister just passing off time without any creditable acts of omission or commission. The functioning of the present government of Prime Minister Man Mohar Singh appears to be conditioned by the dynamics of the coalition politics in the country showing signs of subtle weaknesses at certain times. The chief of the coordination committee becomes a centre of power that controls the working of the government and may even peruse confidential without having taken the oath of secrecy.³

Cabinet government is known for its solidarity. All ministers speak in same voice. In case anyone differs from the official line, he should quit. But now ministers may be seen speaking in different voice on any crucial issue. The Prime Minister has no real control over his colleagues and he has to soften the tone or reinterpret the statements so as to satisfy the critics having their place in the opposition parties.

In a democratic system power is wielded as a gift of the mandate of the people. But sharing of power automatically calls for shouldering the
responsibility, those who must be accountable to the Parliament. A new development has occurred in the form of supporting the government from outside. A party having such a stand does enjoy the fruits of power, but it never desires to shoulder any responsibility for a wrong action of the government.

In a coalition set up minor parties having a local or petty regional base manage to hold ministerial posts. Their outlook is pitiably chauvinistic and so they struggle for the pork barrels, they hardly bother for national interest. Not only this, some elements are so mischievous that they threaten to quit and then the Prime Minister has to somehow satisfy them.

Above all, there is the casualty of the principles on which a government works, or it should work. Pragmatism becomes the dominant ideology and all constituent elements throw their commitments to the wind. There is nothing like Rightism, Leftism, or Centrism. It is all a crude hotch-potch of expediencies. The Government functions in a directionless situation. The fear of the tomorrow haunts it and so the power-hunry politicians manage to pull on things as long as it is possible for them by any hook or crook.  

The coalitional experience within the framework of west minister model parliamentary structures. One may say that Coalition governments in a parliamentary system are not necessarily unstable. Stability depends on several factors. Coalition politics compel deviations and innovations in the parliamentary model to suit the needs of the coalition system. The areas wherein coalition politics have made noticeable impact are broadly the Executive, the legislative and the party system.
Since the emergence of coalition politics in India things have undergone a basic change now and any idea of restoration of the past would be like a wishful thinking. And yet we should not take it as a sinister development. Our political system is in a melting pot, new things are coming up. Let us hope that in time to come, India would be able to have a model of its own parliamentary government that may be different from the English or the Continental models on account of the peculiar condition of our country. No model of government can be suitable to another country unless it is carefully chiseled according to the urges and aspirations of its people.  

This history of coalition since 1977 makes it clear that the scope of coalition politics is coalitions may be formed with or without ideological foundations, but a combination of parties having little in common cannot bring about the evolution of norms which would be essential for the stability of the system. The future of coalitions depends on this important factor.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM:

At the institutional level India’s parliamentary federal structure provides the basic framework within which national and state regional political parties can coexist. The distribution of the powers between centre and states offer incentives to set-up state parties. However, as long as India was a centralized federation the Congress dominated it, once the federation began to lose up, a multiplicity of parties emerged in the states. The rise of regional political parties was partly a natural development and partly a reaction to over centralization by crucial national leaders and Congress Government in the 1970s and 1980’s. Over
centralization produced a counterweight, the federalization of the polity and formation of new regional and state based political parties.

The decline of Congress party and one party and with the emergence of various new political parties at various level, regional political parties have gradually assumed a lot of significance in Indian Political System. Coalition Governments have become an inevitable and indispensable part of national and regional politics in the present scenario of India. India has been experimenting with various coalitions at the national level since the last three or more decades. Regional political have been constructed for the purpose of forming the coalition governments and also to oppose and depose the existing governments at the central level as well as state levels.

However, the emergence of strong regional political parties like DMK, TDP and Akali Dal have brought about a significant change in the coalition politics at the national. The strong coalition governments, which came into existence in under the banner of National Front, United Front and NDA led-BJP, UPA I & II governments respectively have done a lot of good in the direction of strengthening the federalism and decentralization of political power.

The United Front Government in 1996 and later installation of the BJP-led government both in 1998 and 1999 the survival of the BJP-led NDA government at the centre had depended on the support of the regional parties. In 2004 UPA-I and in 2009 UPA II governments were formed with the support of regional parties. The regional parties shared power at the centre, which can their outlook. They made the common approach to major policy matter a ‘common minimum programme’ document according to which the central Government was to
operate. Political Scientist and leaders have been debating the possible impact of regional parties Indian political system, but the fact remains that they have come to stay even at the national level and play a very significant role. More than anything the regional parties have demonstrated time and again, that they have come to play a decisive role in the national government.

This shows that, in the recent political scenario regional political parties have been playing significant role in national coalition politics. In this work an attempt will be made to analyze impact of coalition politics on parliamentary democracy in India.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

1. To examine the working of parliamentary democracy in India.
2. To study the impact of coalition politics on the constitutional institutions in Indian parliamentary democracy.
3. To analyze the impact of coalition politics on party system in Indian parliamentary democracy.
4. To assess the role of regional political parties in Indian parliamentary democracy.
5. To suggest measures for effective functioning of parliamentary democracy in Indian coalition politics.

HYPOTHESIS:

1. The polity is not becoming bipolar with smaller parties, including regional parties and caste-based parties, having no choice appendages of either the BJP or the Congress either before or after elections.
2. The process of fragmentation of the Indian polity is not over but continuing.

3. The decline of congress has not automatically resulted in the rise of the BJP— in words, the political tussle between the two largest political parties in India has not been a ‘zero sum game’ in which the losses of one inevitably result in the other gaining by filling a so-called political vacuum.

4. Coalition politics is maturing. Political parties are becoming increasingly adept at managing contradictions and are now even able to co-exist at the Union level with major rivals in the states.

5. Coalition governments in a parliamentary system are not necessarily unstable stability depends on several factors.

6. Coalition politics compel deviations and innovations in the parliamentary model to suit the needs of the coalition system. The areas wherein coalition politics have made noticeable impact are broadly the Executive, the Legislative and the party system.

**METHODOLOGY:**

The whole study involves descriptive and analytical method. Historical approach adopted depending upon documentary sources, the data collected from secondary sources such as the books, articles, national journals, dissertations, abstracts, seminar and conferences papers and news papers etc. Hence the present study depends partly primary and partly secondary sources.
RESEARCH DESIGN:

After the research study, the collected information analyzed and presented in information generated through research work, is research design. The present study is divided into six chapters.

I. : Introduction.
II. : Working of Parliamentary Democracy in India.
III. : Impact of Coalition Politics on Constitutional Institutions.
IV. : Changing role of political Parties in Indian Parliamentary Democracy.
V. : Measures to Strengthen the Parliamentary Democracy in Indian Coalition Politics.
VI. : Summary and Conclusion

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE:

A good number of scholarly works have been written on political parties and coalition governments during the 20th century based on the experiences of Britain and the European countries. But the classical works have been mostly based in favour of single-party majoritarian governments and they have regarded multi-party. More objective and comparative transnational studies appeared towards end of the century and they seemed to take the coalition phenomenon as natural and related to political culture. The growth of the scientific interest in the study of European Coalition politics led to the development of two approaches; the European politics tradition and the game-theoretic tradition. The Chief Contributor to the latter tradition has been William Riker whose Theory of Coalitions (1962) has become the source of the theory of minimum winning coalition
Lawrence C. Dodd challenges the time-old theory that a durable Cabinet (Coalitions in Parliamentary Government, 1976) requires a majority party government and argues for a fundamental alternation in the existing conceptions. Vernon Bogdanor (Coalition Government in Western Europe (ed), 1983) describes the working of coalition governments in the democracies of Western Europe. The influence of coalition politics on Cabinet, Parliament policy outputs, etc. are studied here in the context of countries like West Germany, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium, Italy and Ireland. Lan Budge and Hans Keman (parties and Democracy-Coalition Formation and Government Functioning in twenty States, 1990) analyze the actual behavior of some four hundred governments in twenty post-war democracies and try to find questions relating to the formation of governments, distribution of portfolios and how parties influence policy. Michael Laver and Norman Schoefield (Multy Party Government the Politics of Coalition in Europe, 1990) have tried to reconcile the theoretical approaches to the study. Their work offers an accessible approach that bridges the distance between the `European Politics' and `game theory' tradition of political science. Five basic themes are examined the identity and motivation of actors in the game; the eventual membership of the coalition they form; their durability; the pay offs that are shared and the impact of constitutional, behavioral and historical constraints on the process of coalition bargaining. Jug Steiner's comparative analysis (European Democracies, 3rd edition, 1995) is another major contribution this area. Joseph M. Coloma's edited volume (Political Institutions in Europe, 1996) contains several sections on the individual nations and Europe. Jan – Erik Lane and Svante O. Ersson (European Politics : An Introduction, 1996) explains the character and trends of European politics and devotes a major part of the work for the analysis of
European populations. Bradley Richardson’s work (Japanese Democracy, 1997) pays attention to the recent positional developments in Japanese politics and thus takes a look towards Asia.

About politics in India, innumerable books and articles have been published. But specialist work on coalitional aspects, theory or practice have been limited in number. A few works deserve mention. K.P. Karunakaran’s edited volume (Coalitional Governments in India: Problems and Prospects, 1975) analyses some theories and concepts about coalition making and gives brief report about some states in India. S.C. Kashyap’s edited work (Coalition Government and Politics in India 1997) broadly examines the question in the context of the United Front coalition at the Centre. D. Sunder Ram’s work (Indian Parliamentary Opposition ed., 1996) contains two reprinted articles on coalition politics in India, by Iqbal Narayan and Rankrishna Hegde written much before coalition’s appeared at the centre. Indian Politics at the Cross roads (1998) edited by Anil Kumar Jana presents three chapters dealing with different aspects of coalition politics. Many articles have published in various journals dealing current politics of the country. There are a few works on coalition in the Indian States including Kerala, West Bengal and Karnataka, John P. John (Coalition politics in Kerala, 1983) examines the working of the coalition ministries of the 1950’s and 1960s K.V. Varges (UF Government in Kerala 1967, 69, 1978) makes an exhaustive study of the coalition led by E.M. Sankarn Namboodripad in 1967-69. E.J. Thomas (Coalition Game Politics in Kerala after Independence, 1994) looks at coalition politics from the game theory point of view. A Balkrishnan Nair (Government and Politics of Kerala, 1994) makes a comprehensive study of Kerala Politics including coalition phase. There are
others, too like T.J. Nossiter (Communism in Kerala : A study in Political adaptation 1982), N. Jose Chander (Dynamics of State Politics – Kerala (ed.), 1986) who have paid attention to some aspects of coalition politics in Kerala. It may be noted here that some Ph.D., dissertation have been submitted to the University of Kerala which related to some major aspects of coalition politics. Among the A.A. Sebastain’s work (role of Chief Minister in Coalition Governments: A Study of Kerala, 1994) and Raju Abrahma’s thesis (Role of Political Parties in State Legislature, 1990) are outstanding contributions.

Anjali Gosh (Peaceful Transition of power, 1981) makes a detailed and perceptive study of the coalition game played by the Communists during 1966 – 1977 in West Bengal. P.R. Choudary’s work (Left Experiments in West Bengal, 1985) deals with the political history of west Bengal during two decades 1960s and 1970s. Surabhu Banerhee’s biography of Jyoti Babu (Jyoti Basu : The Authorized Biography, 1997) covers the political developments of West Bengal from a Biographical perspective. A number of articles have been published on Kerala and West Bengal in current journal and dailies, in addition. However, no comprehensive and scientific analysis of impact of on the working of parliamentary democracy Coalition Politics has been attempted so far and the present work aims at filling this gap.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:

The present study limited to the study of working of parliamentary institutions in Indian coalitions politics. The Study restricted to the impact of coalition politics on the working of parliament, executive and party system in Indian parliamentary democracy.
NOTES AND REFERENCES


5. Singh M.P. and Saxena., *Indian Politics : Contemporary issues and Concerns*, PHI, New Delhi, 2008, p. 40