CHAPTER - 1
Introduction

Coalition Politics is a phenomenon of a multi-party government where a number of minority parties join hands to run the government. A coalition is formed when many splinter groups agree to join hands on a common platform by sinking their broad differences to form majority.

Coalition government is a product of politics in a parliamentary democracy. It is a development due to the exigencies of a multi-party system in a democratic set up. It is a type of government formed or constituted when no single party is able to secure majority on its own. Thus, in a democracy based upon a majority party system, such a situation enables a number of minority parties to come together and form a coalition government. Coalition of parties may take form either prior to the elections, called as pre-poll alliance, or after elections, called post-poll alliance.

In Indian politics, coalitions reflect an opportunistic power-driven mentality of various political groups. India, being a country of many diversities and pluralities though united, continues to be motivated by parochial and regional considerations. And it is due to this character of Indian society that coalitions are extremely relevant to the country. So coalition is not merely the coming together of various political parties to capture power, it is also reflective of the fragmentation of social interests at the grass root level.

Politics in India is always bound to be coalitional contained within different political parties and functioning within the rules of what Robert Dahl calls as a *polyarchical democracy*. In this land of minorities based on

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caste, language, culture and religion, neither a single group is in a position
to determine the destiny of the entire nation, nor is there a stable
combination of minorities that can retain its decisive role over a long
period of time.  

The study of coalition politics has assumed great importance in
India because of the conversion of dominant one party system i.e., into a
multi party system. The culture of coalition building is not new for Indian
politics, though it is related to the formal institutional aspects of the
government. The Indian constitution possesses an imprint of the 1935
imperial constitution which was committed to serve a useful purpose in
sustaining India’s multi cultural personality.  

Birth of constitutional
institutions was in fact a medium of expression giving a solid institutional
basis for the ancient Indian belief in the idea of universality of mutual co-
existence. The idea shows instrumentality of consensus building as an
honoured value in the country marked with plurality and diversity. It is,
therefore, not surprising that mainstream national response to the British
colonial subjugation was inherited in the Gandhian idea of Swarajya
which in itself was composed of the spirit of coalition building in politics,
economics and the society at large.  

The growth and nurturing of
democratic institutions such as free press, democracy, rule of law, etc.
have aided the idea of coalition to further mature in the new democratic set
up of the country.

After independence, the Indian National Congress was the only

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3 Zaheer M. Quraishi, “Coalition Government: Experience and Prospect,” in: S. Bhatt and V. Mani
5 Granville Austain, The Indian Constitution : Cornerstone of a Nation, New Delhi, Oxford
University, Press, 2007, p.10.
6 Bidyut Chakrabarty, Forging Power: Coalition Politics in India, New Delhi, Oxford University
Press, 2006, p.117.
National Party which commanded popularity and respect of the people. This party undoubtedly had a mass base and grassroots in India. It remained in power both at the centre as well as in the states right from 1947 to 1967 and had a monolithic character. But, it also had a coalition character in the sense that it was a party of the centre with a bias towards the left adhering to a set of ideals shared by other parties and groups, be these the rightists or the leftists. The coalition character of the Congress organization formed a predominant model providing both intra and inter-party competitive-cum coalition model without allowing for the alternation of power as far as possible.

Coalition system has many implications and is formed for the sake of some reward. The principle of a coalition system stands on the simple fact of temporary conjunction of specific interests. It is not static but dynamic affair as coalition players and groups get dissolved, and form new ones. Pragmatism is the hallmark of coalition politics. In making political adjustments, principles are set aside and in this process ideology is the first casualty. The purpose of a coalition adjustment is to seize power. If power is the only motive behind joining a coalition, alignment and realignment is a regular feature. No coalition partner has permanent friends or enemies, but only permanent interests.

The present exercise is devoted not merely in an institutionalized sense to the study of formation, consolidation and functioning of BJP led NDA coalition governments in India; but also aims to lay emphasis upon a variety of factors and forces that are indicated by the increasing relevance and role of regional or state parties in politics of centre.

**Importance and Relevance**

For a student of Indian Politics it is quite important and relevant to study the theory and practice of coalition politics. The end of the Congress dominance on one hand and the failure of the BJP in assuming that status
on the other hand caused the emergence of coalition politics in India. Even the Congress leadership which was earlier reluctant to have alliance with other parties had to change its stand after realizing the fact that it cannot oust the NDA Government without having alliance with regional parties. This explains why it decided to have alliances with DMK, RJD, TRS, NCP and some other regional parties. Earlier, the BJP, was also reluctant to align with regional parties and was aspiring to form a government on its own on the plank of Hindutva but it had to seek the cooperation of regional as well as some national parties like Janata Dal (U) to contest elections in 1999.

The BJP led NDA coalition government was socially broad-based and was dominated by the upper and middle castes, it also gave space to the weaker sections including the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes. Muslims were not fairly included in the coalition government but Muslim dominated National Conference from Jammu and Kashmir was a partner in the coalition government. The Christians and the Sikhs were out casted.

The coalition government had a fairly large inclusion from the national and regional parties from various parts of India. More than twenty parties were supporting the coalition government. Thus the coalition government was the culmination of various segments of Indian political society. These parties were from different parts of India – South, North, East and West. Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), Telugu Desam Party (TDP), Biju Janata Dal (BJD), Janata Dal (JD-U), etc., from the south; the National Conference (NC), Akali Dal (SAD), Indian National Lok Dal (INLD), Himachal Vikas Congress (HVC), etc., from the north; Trinamool Congress (TC), Samata Party (SP), Janata Dal (JD-U), etc., from the east;

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8 Katharine Adeney and Lawrence Saze (ed.), *Coalition Politics and Hindu Nationalism*, New York, Routledge, 2005, p.21
Shiva Sena (SS) etc., came from the west. The BJP, which was the main pillar of the coalition government, was having base in majority of the States. The BJP and its allies had won seats for the Lok Sabha from seventeen states out of twenty-five States. Eight states in which they did not have representation to the Lok Sabha were having only twenty-nine seats. Out of these twenty-nine seats, twenty seats belonged to the Kerala state alone where the Communist and Congress led alliances were dominant.  

The BJP had been successful in consolidating the anti-Congress forces under the banner of the NDA. The former Jana Sangh Party, which transformed itself into the BJP, had been an anti-Congress force since 1950s. The TDP emerged under the leadership of N.T. Rama Rao, a popular film actor and thrived on the anti-Congress policy. The same legacy had been continued by the TDP under the leadership of Chandrababu Naidu, the supremo of the TDP, and the then Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh. The TDP extended its opposition to the Congress party in the State of Andhra Pradesh. Hence, it could never join hands with the INC. It supported the coalition government at the center and its nominee, G M C Balayogi, became the speaker of the Lok Sabha. The Shiva Sena, which had emerged under the leadership of Bal Thackeray, laid emphasis on Hindutva and regional identity of Maharashtra. It posed itself as an alternative to the Congress party in Maharashtra State. As it could not oppose the Congress party with its own strength, it aligned itself with the BJP. The JD (U) also had been an anti-Congress force from the beginning. It had been the inheritor of the legacy of the Congress (O) and the undivided Janata Dal. As it had been the anti-Congress force, it could not join hands with the Congress party. In Punjab also the Akali Dal, a political party supporting the interests of the Sikhs, had been anti-Congress  

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since Independence. The struggle for power in the State of Punjab has always been between the Congress party and the Akali Dal. Therefore the Akali Dal could never align with the Congress party and preferred to align with the BJP.\textsuperscript{10}

In states like Tamil Nadu, political alliances depended on internal political compulsions. The DMK and the AIADMK had been fierce competitors for power in the State. If one of them made alliance at the national level, the other also joined the alliance with some other party. AIADMK left the BJP led alliance and aligned with the Congress party, the DMK was left with no alternative but to go with the BJP-led alliance. The Samata Party led by George Fernandes and Nitish Kumar was anti-Congress and opposed Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) led by Laloo Prasad Yadav, an ally of the Congress party in Bihar State. George Fernandes, who was a great trade union leader and a fiery speaker, had launched several strikes against the Congress governments in the past. Hence, his party joined NDA and he was appointed its convener. The National Conference of Jammu & Kashmir was with ruling party at the centre for various reasons. As the Jammu and Kashmir State, affected by unprecedented violence by terrorists and foreign mercenaries, had to depend on the centre to fight against militancy with limited resources. Hence, the National Conference in Jammu and Kashmir State, had joined the NDA.\textsuperscript{11}

Naveen Patnaik formed the Biju Janata Dal as an alternative to the Congress party in Orissa and was with the NDA. Mamta Bannerji, a political firebrand from West Bengal, not comfortable in the Congress party, formed her own party, the Trinamool Congress. Her main purpose was to defeat the ruling Communist party in West Bengal and to install a


\textsuperscript{11} M.G. Khan, \textit{Op. cit.},n.6,p.185.
non-Communist government there.

Numerically, the then coalition government was dominated by the BJP. Out of 291 Lok Sabha seats belonging to the coalition partners, 182 seats belonged to the BJP. In other words, 62.5 per cent of the coalition members of the Lok Sabha came from the BJP. Three coalition partners had the seats divided between them as follows: the TDP with 29 seats having 9.9 per cent share, the JD-U with 20 seats having 6.87 per cent share and the DMK with 12 seats having 4.12 per cent share. The other partners of the coalition government had very few seats in the Lok Sabha. In view of the less numerical strength of the other partners of the coalition government, the BJP served as a common thread to all the junior partners. It also acted as a balancer whenever there were differences among other partners. A.B. Vajpayee was a great balancer in the coalition government.\(^\text{12}\)

The support base of the BJP was strengthened in certain States like Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Orissa, West Bengal, Punjab, Haryana, etc. due to the electoral alliance with the members of the NDA like the DMK, the JD (U), the SS, the BJD, the TC, Akali Dal, INLD, etc. The BJP had not only the largest number of seats in the Lok Sabha, but also a widespread socio-cultural base in the country due to the willing cooperation of the Sangh Parivar like the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, and the Akhil Bharat Vidyarathi Parishad.\(^\text{13}\)

Though the national and regional parties of the NDA had different ideologies and programmes yet they evolved a common agenda for government which covered restructuring of the economy in favour of private enterprises in tune with the globalization process, the regional development, social justice for the weaker sections including women, harmonious relationship between the federal government and the state

\(^{13}\) Ibid.
governments, cautious use of article 356 of the Constitution dealing with dismissal of state government, more autonomy to the states, etc. The common agenda for governance had avoided conflicts among the members of the coalition government and served as a rulebook to them.\textsuperscript{14}

There had been a strong desire to share power in the central government by all the members of the NDA. Many of them impatiently waited for it while in opposition for a longer period. Many of the regional parties were happy to be associated with the decision-making process at the central level. All the important leaders of the NDA were provided with berths in the Union Council of Ministers and other important positions. When all the leaders had their say in the coalition government, they were morally bound not to destabilize it under normal conditions. Many of them, who had a sense of deprivation with regard to sharing of political power in the central government for a long time, were feeling that they had ample opportunities to exercise political power for sectarian and general purposes. With the participation of the regional political parties in the federal coalition government, there was no fear of president rule in the states where some of them were in power. They came to play a vital role at the national level even at the expense of the national parties. Thus, power had shifted from the Union to the states. Hence, the regional parties developed their vested interests in coalition governments.\textsuperscript{15}

The first coalition government led by Vajpayee collapsed during the vote of confidence in the 12\textsuperscript{th} Lok Sabha as the AIADMK withdrew support from the government after its failure to force the government to concede its impractical and politically immoral demands. There was no such partner in the then coalition government with such impractical demands. At the same time, the National Conference of Jammu and

\textsuperscript{14} Katharine Adeney and Lawrence Seaz (ed.), \textit{Op. cit.}, n.8, p.10.

Kashmir had been insisting on greater autonomy for the state. However, granting of such autonomy needed constitutional amendment which was possible only with the support of the opposition parties in the Parliament. Ultimately the NC left the ruling NDA.\textsuperscript{16}

The NDA was a pre-poll alliance, had a common manifesto and fought the elections to the Lok Sabha under the common leadership in 1999. Its members promised the electorates to provide a stable government. Such a promise was a moral commitment on their part. The coalition partners had to think twice before they withdrew their support from the then coalition government and they had to explain why they left.\textsuperscript{17}

Charismatic leadership plays an important role in a traditional society like India and can bring greater cohesion and dynamism in the functioning of the Council of Ministers and in maintaining stability. Vajpayee, who had been an outstanding parliamentarian, an amiable person, a great orator and a man with a clean image, enhanced the quality and status of the coalition government. The NDA fought the 1999 elections to the Lok Sabha under his leadership. Vajpayee was projected before the nation as an able leader for a stable government, as \textit{the leader you can trust in war and peace}. The Indian middle class saw Vajpayee as an able leader in the era of unstable coalitions.\textsuperscript{18}

Vajpayee had been trying to strike a balance between two sets of forces by ensuring general material well-being of the masses on one hand and by retaining the support of the Hindutva advocates on the other. He was also trying to retain the confidence of the partners of the NDA. Thus he continued to be an unquestioned leader of the BJP, an acceptable chief of the members of the Union Council of Ministers and a charismatic

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\textsuperscript{17} \textit{Ibid}.
\textsuperscript{18} M.P. Singh, Rakha Saxena, \textit{India at the Polls}, Orient Longman, 2003, p. 211.
\end{flushright}
personality to the Indian masses.

The partners of the coalition government had been trying to convince their party workers and the general public that the coalition government had become inevitable in view of political fragmentation of Indian society. They had been cultivating coalition culture by developing negotiating skills to balance their desires for sharing power. They had been successful in the distribution of seats among themselves in the elections to the Lok Sabha held in 1999, in resolving their differences over the distribution of ministerial posts and of the portfolios at the centre and similarly in the States of Haryana and Orissa. They had been able to resolve their differences over certain contentious issues like continuing ban on the Union government servants joining the RSS. Under the pressure from the non-BJP coalition partners, the Union government did not revise the rules of conduct for the Union government servants which asked them not to participate in the activities of the RSS. The partners of the coalition government were able to reconcile their differences over the LTTE and adopted a common policy towards the LTTE and the Sri Lankan government. The other partners of the coalition government were able to moderate the pro-LTTE stand of Vaiko of MDMK and Ramadoss of PMK from Tamil Nadu who were partners in the Union coalition government. Even the champions of state autonomy like Akali Dal and DMK from Tamil Nadu agreed in July 2000 with the Cabinet decision to reject the autonomy resolution passed by the Legislative Assembly of the Jammu and Kashmir. Thus, the coalition partners understood the importance of tolerance and the spirit of give and take in the era of coalition politics.

The earlier coalitions at the center became unstable and short-lived as they were dependent on sizeable and crucial outside support. On account

of unpredictable outside support, the non-Congress coalition governments headed by the prime ministers like V.P. Singh, Chandrasekhar, H.D. Deve Gowda and I.K. Gujral collapsed like a house of cards. Now the situation was different and favorable to the coalition government. TDP extended outside support to the NDA government, but it caused fewer problems in the alliance than some of the parties inside the government.  

There was no viable, attractive and stable alternative alliance to the BJP led alliance then. The parliamentary arithmetic was not in favour of the Congress party whose strength in the 13th Lok Sabha was 112 out of 543 elected seats, the lowest in its parliamentary history. In the then Lok Sabha, the Congress party and its allies had 134 seats; the Communist parties 42 seats; and others 76 seats.

The Congress party could not engineer defection on a large scale from the then coalition government because there were no major cracks in the coalition government at that time. It could not force a mid-term poll because it had no confidence to secure majority if elections were to be held then. A large section of the voters had not forgotten that the leadership of Congress party was responsible for toppling the BJP led coalition government in the 12th Lok Sabha without assessing its potentialities to form an alternative government.

Though Sonia Gandhi realized the erosion in the support base of the Congress party and factional politics in it but she provided unquestionable leadership, but could not prove to be charismatic leader, like her mother-in-law, Indira Gandhi, and could not pose a challenge to the leadership of Vajpayee under the then prevailing circumstances.

There was no cohesive third front to challenge the then coalition government.

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22 Ibid.
24 Ibid.
government. The non-Congress and non-NDA parties like the Samajwadi Party, the Bahujan Samaj Party, the Rashtriya Janata Dal, the Communist parties, etc., were in distress and could not come together. Even if they came together, they would not constitute majority in the Lok Sabha. The People’s Front was too feeble to pose any serious challenge to the NDA.25

Politicization of various social groups and their struggles for sharing power, strong desire to retain social and regional identities, emergence of strong and independent regional leadership, etc. had made coalition government inevitable at the center for some years to come. The BJP had been successful in uniting the anti-Congress forces under the banner of the NDA, in accommodating the interests of the regional parties and in keeping its agenda on Hindutva. The NDA had succeeded in capturing power and in maintaining the stability of the coalition government.26 Taking all these factors into consideration one may presume that the then coalition government at the center was going to be in power for a longer period than any other coalition government in the past.

As a matter of fact, the social diversities that prevailed in India have made it almost impossible for any political party to form a government on its own. Time has gone when declarations of Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi on the one hand and the historical role of the Congress in the Freedom Struggle on the other hand helped the party in acquiring dominance in Indian Politics. The processes of modernization, politicization and economic development have enhanced the expectations and aspirations of all the social groups, which could not be accommodated either by the Congress (I) or the BJP. So, the coalitions are essential for the purpose.

In the given political scenario, the study of coalition politics in India

is a timely proposition and academically attract specific attention. Bruce Bueno De Mesquita has aptly remarked that India has ethnically, linguistically, religiously, culturally and socially a diverse environment. This diversity has made India an excellent laboratory for studying coalition politics.27

While studying coalition Politics of India at the National Level, there arise a need to get an insight into the causes of successive break downs in governance due to instable coalitions and change of political labels by defectors. It is equally necessary to make an endeavour towards laying down certain principles which could provide valuable guidelines in the process of the formation, maintenance and termination of future coalition governments. The proposed study seeks to examine these very problem areas of coalition politics and provide pragmatic answers with some suggestions for the same.

**Review of Existing Literature**

While making review of existing literature we find enough work on coalition politics.

William Riker’s work, *The Theory of Political Coalition*,28 seems to be almost exclusively process pied with the outcomes of coalition formation, but not with theoretical explanations of how coalitions are formed. The literature on coalition was over loaded with historical facts. A pattern of analysis, however, was missing. The development of game theory and its introduction into the area of political science has led to the belief that political science can now offer distinguished selection of testable hypotheses on the formation of coalitions.

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Barbara Hinckley, in work *Coalition Politics*, has presented a different angle to study coalition by making an appreciable attempt to distinguish game theory and coalition theory.

Lawrence C. Dodd, in his work *Coalition in Parliamentary Government*, has dealt with formation, durability and problems of coalition governments in multi-party parliaments.

A Lijphart, in his book *Democracy: Patterns of Majoritarian and Consensus Government in Twenty One Countries*, has described large difference between the durability of minimal winning one party cabinets and oversized cabinets. He has also discussed the types of legislative processes in democratic states.

Bruce Bueno De Mesquita in his book *Strategy, Risk and Personality in Coalition Politics: The case of India*, has studied the formulation of various theories of coalition. Behaviour in coalition has a direct bearing on the participants future influence and future access to new coalition. The work also provides a critical and insight analysis of Indian coalition politics.

Ajay K. Mehra, D.D. Khanna, and Gert W. Kueck, in their work *Political Parties and Party System*, have explained the developments of the Indian party system at four levels. Firstly the status, strategies, interaction pattern, processes of political parties, issues and key questions governing the party system in the country have been discussed. Secondly, the patterns of political alliances from the national perspective, i.e., how alliances with the regional parties are viewed and made from the

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perspective of the national parties have been traced. Thirdly, the processes of making alliances from the perspective of the regional parties have been discussed. In the fourth part, party politics in small state politics at local level have been examined.

Dasarthi Bhuyan and Simanchal Muni, in their work *Dynamics of Coalition Politics*, have described that the coalition politics has become an essential feature of Indian democracy and in present state of affairs there can hardly be any escape from coalition governments.

Katharine Adeney and Lawrence Saez (ed.), in their work *Coalition Politics and Hindu Nationalism*, have explained the emergence of the BJP and way in which its Hindu nationalist agenda has been affected by the constraints of being a dominant member of coalition government, the party’s full term in power presiding over the diverse forces of the governing the NDA coalition, and the 2004 elections, BJP’s performance in relation to its stated goals, and more specifically how it has fared in a range of policy fields centre state relations, foreign policy, defence policies, the second generation of economic reforms, initiatives to curb corruption and the fate of minorities.

Manfred J. Holler’s edited work, *Coalition and Collective Action*, contains contributions by important thinkers like Mesquita, Niemi, Owen, Grof, Holler, etc.  

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Subhash C. Kashyap in his work on *Coalition Government and Politics in India*\(^{37}\) has focused on the events of changing politics of the country. He attempts to highlight the unavoidable need of the coalition model. The study focuses on the one party majority and the multi party minority coalition government and discusses the merits and demerits of coalition politics. The study is useful contribution towards understanding the nature and scope of coalition Politics in India.

Rajni Kothari in his book, *Politics in India*,\(^{38}\) has described that a country as vast and pluralistic as India can be effectively united only through a participative and accommodative model of politics. He has also attempted to analyze all possible explanations of the interaction between the society and politics.

Subrata K. Mitra, in his, *Governmental Instability in Indian States*,\(^{39}\) has focused attention on the application of factional model and variables like lust for power, opportunism, defections, factionalism etc for explaining coalition behaviour and party competition. He has applied ideological framework for understanding the coalition politics in terms of polarization, ideology and policy differences amongst parties.

N. Jose Chander in his work on *Coalition Politics: The Indian Experience*,\(^{40}\) has explained coalition politics at the National level which highlights Janata Party experiment in 1977, National Front Government, United Front Government formation and its working, BJP led coalition Government formation in 1998 with alliance partners, election results, formation of Cabinet and Coalition management, its instability and the


government defeat. It also explained the BJP led second coalition in 1999, and formation of the NDA etc.

K.P. Karukaran's edited work, *Coalition Government in India: Problem and Prospects*, is a collection of more than forty articles presented by different scholars at a seminar organized by the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla from October 13 to 19, 1970. These articles have touched almost every aspect of coalition politics. A few of these deal with coalition politics in some foreign countries, such as Lebanon, Ceylon, China, U.K. and France. The bases and Impact of Coalition Government in India have also been examined.

In N.C. Sahni's edited work, *Coalition Politics in India*, an attempt has been made to assess, the working of chief ministers heading the coalition governments, the Role of Governor and the wide implications of such governments on the question of centre-state relations, relationships between various parties in a coalition and out of it, defections and other related problems and prospects of coalition government before 1970.

M.P. Singh's edited work *Coalition Politics in India: Problems and Prospects*, is a collection of a number of articles presented by various scholars in a Seminar on Coalition Politics in India organized by Rajendra Prasad Academy. The book focuses on the working of Coalition Governments of Union and states, various structures of the Polity and Society and their relationship with Coalition Government. The book also deals with the process of Policy making in Coalition Government.

Bidyut Chakrabarty in his work *Forging Power: Coalition Politics*

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C.P. Bhambhari, in his book *Coalition Politics in India*,\(^{48}\) has focused on description of multiple issues faced by coalition government in power at the centre where in many questions regarding the actual functioning of parties, institutions and actual role played by the leaders of coalition have been raised and answered.

C.P. Bhambhari, *Bharatiya Janta Party: Periphery to Centre*,\(^{49}\) has divided the work in three parts. The first part is the genesis of the Sangh Parivar and its ideological and political paradoxes. The second part deals with the investigation of success of the Parivar to expand its social and political bases. Finally, the foreign policy of the BJP government has been critically examined.

C.P. Bhambhari, in his another work *BJP-Led Government and Election 1999*\(^{50}\), has focused on important phase of political process of India during BJP led government leading to 13\(^{th}\) Lok Sabha Election.

C.P. Bhambhari, work on *Coalition Experiments: The marriage of Inconvenience*,\(^{51}\) has focused on coalition governments, naming them as an unfortunate and destructive 'Marriage of Inconvenience'. The main villain is the BJP led coalition government, which extended the agenda of aggressive Hindutva. The leading parties and its so called secular communal allies as, he believes were fully responsible for this communalization of the state and society.

C.P. Bhambhri in his work *Indian Politics: 2001-2004, Political Process and Change of Government*,\(^{52}\) has focused on the NDA and the UPA Government at the centre. The facts of Indian politics from 2001 to

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2004 have been expressed, and the major events of politics and activities of the parties in government and in opposition have also been explained.

Again C.P. Bhambhari, yet in his another book *Indian Politics since Independence*,\(^{53}\) has described the history of Indian democracy since last sixty years. This book completes the history upto 1998 dealing with all major issues of Indian politics like Mandal, Mandir, Globalization and other related issues.

Prem Shankar Jha’s article “Coalition Politics and Economic Decision Making,”\(^{54}\) highlights the pulls and pressures within the coalition government.

Nalini Kant Jha in his article “Coalition Government’s and Indian’s Foreign Polic,”\(^{55}\) has described the changing pattern of foreign policy during the coalition era. The centralized pattern of decision-making during the congress rule gave way to a decentralized process of foreign policy formulation during the coalition governments.

Yoginder Yadav in his article “The Elusive Mandate of 2004,”\(^{56}\) has described fundamental concept of Coalition Politics in India by analyzing the 2004 General Elections.

E. Shridran, in his article “Unstable Parties and Unstable Alliances: Birth, Splits, Mergers and Deaths of Parties, 1952-2000,”\(^{57}\) has described the phases of inter party electoral alliance and coalition in Indian Politics, generalization about stability or instability of coalitions and working of


coalition governments at national and state levels.

E. Sridharan, in another article “Coalition Politics in India, Types Duration, Theory and Comparison”, 58 has compared the types and duration, of coalition and minority governments in India with those of other democracies. He has explained why only the single party government has been in majority, while all other governments have been in minority. He then describes India’s coalition consisting of nine to twelve government parties and examines their stability. The paper concludes the Indian case of coalition actually confirming the rational choice theory.

E. Sridharan, in his work “Electoral Coalitions in 2004 General Elections: Theory and Evidence” 59 has explained that coalition helps in pooling the votes. He says that different political parties can poll their votes by entering pre-poll alliances. This is because a small addition of votes has the potential benefit alternatively to decimate a party or coalition in terms of seats.

In his article "Coalition Politics", 60 E. Sridharn looks at the evaluation of the Indian party system from the stand point of coalition theory, Comparative experience and recent history. According to the author, these governments were not likely to develop and implement coherent public policies, especially economic policy and were not able to do structural adjustments needed for an efficient, and internationally competitive economy.

K.K. Katyal in his article, “Coalition Politics : The Latest Phase”, 61 has described the conduct of United Front government. He observes that the period of single-party government has come to an end. The author is of

the opinion that European coalitions which are pre election alliances are more stable. In India we generally have post-poll alliances and that is why these are fragile.

S.H. Patil in his article “Indian’s Experiments with Coalition Government at the Federal Level” 62 has explained the main stabilizing factors of the NDA government. Except Muslims, all other communities were participants in this government. It analyses role of the BJP having national and regional parties under one banner and a common and equal programme. On the other hand in the history of Congress, it was greatest defeat in 13th Lok Sabha elections. At the same time the lack of proper participation of Third Front was the major cause for defeat.

Though enough work has been done on coalition politics, present study would further make an attempt to analyze the formation and working of NDA coalition, various problems and prospects of coalitions politics in India.

**Objectives of the Study:**

The major objectives of the study are:

1. To examine the conceptual and operational dimensions of politics of coalition governments.
2. To examine the evolution and development of coalition politics in India.
3. To study the structure and functioning of National Democratic Alliance (NDA).
4. To study various problems it faced and tried to resolve.
5. To assess the future prospects of coalition governments in India.

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Research Problem

The term *Coalition* is derived from the Latin word *Coalescere* which means to grow together. According to the dictionary meaning, coalition means an act of coalescing, or uniting into one body, a union of people, states or an alliance. It is a combination of body or parts into one whole. In the strict political sense the word *coalition* is used for an alliance or temporary union for joint action of various powers or state and also of the union into a single government of distinct parties or members of distinct parties.\(^{63}\)

Coalition refers to a group of people who come together to achieve some goal, usually on a temporary basis. In politics, it signifies a parliamentary or political grouping of different parties, interest groups or factions for making and/ or influencing policy decisions or securing power.\(^{64}\) According to William A. Gamson, it is the joint use of resources to determine the outcome of the decision in a mixed situation involving more than two units.\(^{65}\)

Coalition, commonly denotes a co-operative arrangement under which distinct political parties or all members of such parties unite to form a government or ministry.\(^{66}\) N.C. Sahni, has pointed out that the coalition is a product of politics in a parliamentary democracy. It is an astonishing course of discords, though outwardly a coalition appears to be on solid mass, inwardly it is ridden by party foibles and frantic party fervous bickerings.\(^{67}\)

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\(^{67}\) N.C. Sahni, *op. cit.*, n.42, p.17.
So coalition politics is that politics in which distinct political parties combine their resources on the basis of the some minimum joint common programme to capture the reigns of power to achieve some desired goals. The experiment of the coalition politics in India, is a product of the circumstances created by the result of the fourth general elections, when the congress party failed to get majority on its owner with the help of the Indian states where the elections were held.

The coalitions are not only formed for forming the government but also for capturing power. These may also be formed for doing the role of opposition. It is also pertinent to state here that the nature and composition of opposition in coalition government differs from one party government. In coalition government there are large number of parties on the government side and a single national party with small parties in opposition, whereas in a single party government only one party has power, the opposition plays spoil a negative role by trying to wean away some of the members of the ruling coalition. A Coalition Government has to face not only the parliamentary opposition, the attempt of ruling coalition trying to allure the opposition by offering some influential post position.68

In India one-party dominance emerged, we had single party governments of the Congress from 1952 to 1977 in the centre. The coalitions emerged at state level after the 1967 elections to the state Legislative Assemblies but single party governments continued in the centre. In 1977 in the form of the Janata Party, a coalition of parties was formulated by anti-emergency sentiments. The fragility of this coalition lacking in ideological programme became visible immediately after the death of Jay Parkash Narayan. The combine eventually split up in 1979.

This led to the restoration of the single party government of the congress (1) in the 1980 parliamentary elections. However, V.P. Singh led National Front Coalition Government was formed in center after the 1989 parliamentary elections with the outside support of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on the one hand and the Communist Parties on the other. Though the basic plank of the government was social justice, yet it was soon out powered in 1990 due to the ideological contradictions of the participating political outfits. On the other hand, succeeding Chandrashekhar led coalition government which succeeded was one party minority government supported by the Congress (I). It was replaced in 1991 by P.V. Narsimha Rao led minority government of the Congress (I) having issue based support from the AIADMK. The eleventh Lok Sabha elections of 1996 repeated the story of the ninth Lok Sabha elections of 1989. With the outside support from the Congress and the Communist Party of India (Marxist), H.D. Deve Gowda of Janata Dal constituted a working majority consisting of 13 political parties in the Parliament. This United Front government could not complete even two years (even with the changed leadership of I.K. Gujral) and came down crumbling in 1997. The next coalition Government formed by the BJP in 1998 was better than the preceding political coalition as it was formed after more sustained interaction between parties, which ultimately joined it. It was, however in 1999 after the withdrawal of support by All Indian Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK), the General elections were held in 1999 which returned the BJP led National Democratic alliance (NDA) back to power with an expanded majority which remained in office till the 2004 parliamentary elections.

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Research Questions

1. What were the factors which contributed towards the genesis of coalition politics in India?
2. Which were the factors leading to the formation of NDA?
3. What type of coalition was NDA?
4. Which strategy was adopted for power sharing in NDA?
5. What was the role of the coordination committee of NDA?
6. Which were the achievements of NDA coalition?

Methodology

Both primary and secondary sources have been used in the present study. The primary sources include first hand information in different forms like government reports, parliamentary debates and other related government documents.

Secondary data has been collected from books, journals, articles and newspapers etc.

The study has made use of a number of methods, such as the historical, comparative, descriptive and analytical.

Chapter Scheme

The study is divided into the following six chapters:

The first chapter, Introduction it deals with importance and relevance of the study, review of literature, objectives of the study, research problem, methodology and chapter scheme.

The second chapter, Coalition Politics: A Theoretical Overview presents a detailed analysis of the various theories and approaches of coalition politics.

The third chapter, Coalition Politics in Pre- National Democratic Alliance Era deals with the formation, maintenance and termination of

The fourth chapter, *Formation of National Democratic Alliance and 13th Lok Sabha Elections* discusses the political scenario, sharing of seats between BJP and its alliance partners, election and issues raised by the various political parties, electoral performance of NDA.

The fifth chapter, *Working and Achievements of National Democratic Alliance* discusses socio-economic and political performance of NDA.

The last chapter, *Conclusion* it discusses the major findings of the study and the prospects of coalition politics in India. Various suggestions have also been made regarding favorable conditions in which coalition government can work.