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INTRODUCTION

Party as a goal directed system, brings together individuals and social groups, weaving and integrating them into the framework of the organizations in a bid to transform social forces into political power. The pre-eminent goal of the party then, is the winning or capture of political power. But there always exists differences of opinions and clashes of interests among the individuals and social groups that opt to work under the common lable of the party.

The party must aggregate and reconcile the multiple interests competing within its organisational framework in such a manner as to evolve and maintain a jointly advantageous relationship among them on the one hand, and the party as a corporate group on the other.

Given this unique feature as an organisation intra-party conflicts make their appearance in almost all parties with varying degrees of intensity and one frequently finds identifiable sub-groups of party members or factions with variable extent of interaction and formal organisation. These sub-groups or factions emerge either for a limited duration of an electoral or policy controversy or are endowed with impressive continuity.
THEORY OF FACTIONS:

**DEFINITION:** Factions are defined differently. Harold D. Lasswell defines factions as follows: 'The term faction is commonly used to designate any constituent group of a larger unit which works for the advancement of particular persons or policies'. He stresses the functional aspects of faction. Myron Wiener defines a faction, 'as a group with an articulated set of goals operating within a larger organisation but not created with the approval of the parent body.'\(^2\) This definition gives importance to the behavioural aspects. Madison defines a faction in a classic and derogatory sense. 'A faction is a number of citizens, whether amounting to a majority or minority of the whole, who are united and activated by some common feeling of passion, or of interest, adverse to the rights of other citizens, or to the permanent and aggregate interests of the community.'\(^3\)

Factions have also been defined in terms of their longevity. Shokeid says, a faction is an 'ephemeral group' which emerges in order to operate in the interest of a specific aim or conflict.\(^4\) According to Pocock, 'factions are not permanent groups but are relative to particular circumstances'.\(^5\) For Mayer, 'factions are temporary groups recruited over particular disputes.'\(^6\) For Yadav, 'a faction is essentially ephemeral in character, lasting as long as the immediate goal of the members remain unachieved.'\(^7\) Firth explains, 'factions are groups or sections of a society in opposition
to one another and interested in promoting their own objectives rather than those of the society as a whole and often turbulent in their operations.  

On the other hand for Murdock, 'factions are stable social entities that designate opposing regional districts, tribal moieties and enduring political divisions.' Lewis, regards 'the dominant caste descent groups with clients and traditionally associated lower castes as semi-permanent factions.' All the definitions however agree in regarding factions as social groups of varying complexity engaged in opposition to similar groups within the inclusive group of which they are parts.

Thus considering these definitions, theoretically three interpretations of factions are possible. Firstly, factions are viewed as little more than clientele groupings centered around a leader. The leader utilizes the support of his followers to gain power and the latter expect the same benefit for their support to him. Secondly, factions are viewed as expressions of social and economic diversities in the society. Thirdly, factions are also seen as true ideological groups with coherent issue orientations and ideological bases.

PARTY Vs FACTION:

Etymologically and semantically speaking, 'faction' and 'party' do not convey the same meaning. Faction, which is by
far the older and more established term, derives from the Latin verb, 'facere' (to do, to act) and faction soon came to indicate, for Latin authors, 'a political group bent on disruptive and harmful facere, on dire doings'. Thus the primary meaning conveyed by the Latin root is an idea of hubris, of excessive, ruthless and thereby harmful behaviour. 11

Party also derives from the Latin root 'Partire' which means to divide. But the word party has lost its original connotation and the French 'Partager' which means sharing, is now in vogue. 12 Ranney and Kendall seek to distinguish between parties and factions by treating differences between the latter as much more significant than differences between the former. They define 'party' as a large scale organisation whose purpose is to control the personnel and policies of the government, and a faction as an element inside a party whose purpose is to control the personnel and policies of the party. Factions are distinguished from pressure groups, in that the former are concerned with a wide range of political issues including foreign affairs and defences, as well as economic policies and social welfare, pressure groups serve only particulars interests. Factions are self consciously organised as a body, with a measure of discipline and cohesion, a tendency is a set of stable attitudes rather than a stable group of politicians. 13 This follows that if a tendency organises itself it becomes a faction and conversely, that there can be no factionalism unless
a political group is cohesively organised. Though faction and tendency are different, they are interdependent.

**TYPES OF FACTIONS:**

Just as the perspectives about the factions differ, the patterns of factionalism also vary. Uni-factional pattern involves the idea of a single, cohesive faction controlling the power apparatus of the party and thus preventing the emergence of any other faction to share political power. A pattern is said to be bi-factional when intra-party power struggle is confined to two well defined factions. Other factions may exist but they are subsidiary to the major two. 14 The bi-factional situation can be in turn either balanced (the two factions are not too uneven) or unbalanced (have a strong cohesive majority faction faced by a relatively weak minority faction). Bi-factionalism may serve, with a large measure of effectiveness in the form of injecting clarity and order into the confusion of one party politics. 15

Multi-factional pattern consists of a complex range of amorphous factions. The lure of power and position drives factional leaders to bargain among themselves, resulting in the formation of adhoc alliances of mutual convenience. Generally multi-factional system is loose, in the sense that factional groupings are transient in nature. In extreme situations of multi-factionalism, it exists only either in voter groupings or in the composition of leadership
that prevails. It is frequently assumed that party cohesion is a direct function of the degree of competition between political parties. Multi-factionalism, generally flourishes when politics is disorganised, individualistic or atomized. Multi-factionalism places a high premium on demagogic qualities of personality that attract voter attention and electoral engineering.

A loose multi-factional system makes impossible a competition between recognizable groups for power, because the electorate is confused and not organised into groups of more or less like-minded citizens with somewhat similar attitudes toward public policy. When factions are discontinuous they lack continuity in voter’s support too, since the electorate is not divided into groups with relatively constant attachment to well known factions. As voters shift, the shape and membership of factions also change. This continued formation and reformation of factions suggest that policies is not related to clearly defined issues. In the absence of issues, prestige and patronage becomes the prizes and political leaders frequently cross factional lines which are in such cases, seldom fairly tightly drawn. Flux and fluidity, impermanence and uncertainty thus become the rule in most multi-factional system.  

FUNCTIONS OF FACTIONS:

Factions and factional conflicts perform both integrative and disintegrative functions for any party. More often than not factions are viewed with suspicion. The term faction has been
a term of abuse since Roman times. An example of usage in 1738 quoted by the Oxford English Dictionary is, 'faction hath no regard to nation's interests'. Bolingbroke's stance is this, 'Governing by party .... must always end in the government of faction ... party is a political evil and faction is worst of all parties'. But it can be argued that, factions are functional and dysfunctional depending upon their circumstances, leadership, origin, membership, and programatics. 17

In India, the dysfunctional aspects of factions are many. Firstly, it has been argued that politicization of caste and community groups and their induction in party organization results in social disharmony. Secondly, the help that the party derives from vertical informal lines of communication provided by factions may involve the danger of dysfunctionalism. Thirdly, although an activist may derive psychological satisfaction from the ideological position of his faction, this may in long run become dysfunctional for him when a turn about in his attitude or a shift in the faction's thinking takes place, leading to a conflict situation between his new perception of the factional position and his factional loyalty built up over a period of time. Fourthly, factional conflicts which are extra-political, such as personal in origin and are not amenable to ordinary political solutions becomes dysfunctional for party cohesion and may even contribute to decline in party's electoral strength. When arbitrators cannot mediate conflicts, the affected or defeated factional leaders may either run against official candidates by joining hands
with the opposition or may sabotage elections from within the party. 18

At the same time, apart from these disintegrative functions, factions generate certain positive supports for the political system. Factions perform the functions of political recruitment for the party organisation. The quest of the factional leaders for acquiring more and more voting strength drives them to recruit new members. By incorporating new groups into the political process, it provides certain stability to the system. Secondly, factions become focal points and centres of political and electoral competition. Thirdly factional adhesion undoubtedly offers greater prestige or better connections than does atomistic existence of member in party organisations. Fourthly, the development of informal lines of communications vertically throughout the party creates easy process of articulation and aggregation. Fifthly, factional conflicts involving ideological controversies may perform valuable functions like refinement of ideology for the party. Finally, factions bring psychological satisfactions to the ideologues and theoretical solutions to the problems of the polity. 19

**SOURCES OF FACTIONS:**

The stresses and strains which underlie the factional conflict are numerous and curiously inter-woven. Factions within the party are generally identified in terms of geographical boundaries, on the basis of organisational status, as demographic or social
categories or on the basis of ideological dimensions. In addition there may be organisational menaces for factions to appear.

The differences which lead to intra-party conflicts and factional formulation may arise in variety of ways. Factions may, for example emerge in a party on the basis of differences among the party leaders on overall ideology e.g. the right wing and left wing of a party. Even if the party leaders generally agree on the ideology, factional groupings may still emerge on the basis of disagreements on strategy and tactics to be used to achieve the ideology of the party such, for example, as reformists and radicals, moderates and extremists, conservatives and progressives, traditionalists and modernists, ideologues and pragmatists etc. Further, factional politics may also revolve around personality conflicts among the leaders with little or no ideological or policy contents, though the leaders involved almost always endeavour to cover issueless factional feuds with some ideological manure. This happens in all Democratic countries and in India this is predominant in causing intra-party conflict. Factional politics may also make their appearance on the basis of horizontal and vertical organisational set ups within the party, allowing conflicts and tensions to occur between the leaders, say the parliamentary and organisational wings of the party or between the leaders at one level of the party and those at another, say national, state or local. Factions also originate from social factors, such as religion, caste and communal conflicts. Finally, factions also have strong economic roots.
DYNAMICS OF FACTIONS:

Factions are relatively unstable, temporary and loose alignments of individuals within the party. They are led by prominent members of the party who compete each other for power, status, influence and to control resources. This competition leads to internal discords and disagreements over the policies and the activities of the party. In such circumstances one or more sections of the party member do not find it possible to completely identify themselves with the policies and activities of the party. For their, compatible mutual interest they get organised around one or more prominent dissident members who serve as factional leaders. Factions thus come to function as 'unofficial' parts of the party structure. The looseness of this organisation is relative to the definite rules and codes of the inclusive groups in which they function. They possess a coherance but their cohesion can vary. Their temporary and unstable character is related to the natures of the environment in which they emerged and grew. If the differences are resolved; the factions may fade away or become quiescent to be reactivated intermittently when new issues of discord arise. On the other hand if the differences remain unresolved and the area of opprobrium widens, the working of the group may be impaired leadings to its possible eventual disintegration. Factions in such case may then endure as durable groups and emerge as the core of a new party with separate identities.
Party members join factions owing to their perceived self-interest, shared feeling of antagonism, ties of social affiliation and reciprocity of obligations. Factions operate to promote the sectional interests of the other members and the party as a whole. Membership of the factions is subject to change depending upon the changes in internal party situation. Persons may leave or new members may join a faction depending upon this interest orientation and perception of the situation.

Participation in a faction is basically related to individual's ties with other party members. In a crisis situation, his support may be demanded by those with whom he is closely aligned in the network of political relationships. Conversely, he may himself have to seek their support in similar situations. Clients support their patrons out of a sense of obligation and loyalty for benefits derived in the past and in anticipation of advantages in the future.22

Each faction is itself authoritarian in structure, it is composed of a few leaders and the party members, whom they have gathered among them and whom they generally submit to a discipline similar to that which exists within the party itself. Splitting does not take place at the level of the masses but at the level of the leaders of higher rank or of certain higher-ranking officials to obtain the majority in collective executive bodies. By their very nature these factions are not opposition coming from the base,
but opposition coming from the apex. Their existence entails a natural weakening of the authority of the leaders because of the division it introduces among them; in short their effect can be compared with that of the separation of powers in the states, which sets limits to each one through others and weakens the power of the whole. 23

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

The aim of the study is to understand the process of factionalism in a party and its impact on it. The specific universe selected for this study is Indian National Congress in Tamil Nadu. The period of the study also have been limited for convenience (1947-1987).

1. The aim of this study is to explore and find out the reasons of situations due to which an individual or set of individuals perceived a set of values different from the values, which created groups within the party at the national and its impact at the state level.

2. To enquire into the historical roots for the emergence of factionalism in Tamil Nadu Congress (TNC).

3. To outline the process of factionalism in Tamil Nadu after 1947, the role of party programme in strengthening the factions and examine the type that existed.
4. To assess the role of Ideological and Non-Ideological factors which solidify and form factions over a period of time and how or what contributes to their strength.

5. To examine the parliamentary and electoral role of the factional policies - modality of action, tactics and strategies of factions during elections, forming alliance etc.

6. To evaluate the role of press in the development of factions.

The importance of the study of political factions can hardly be denied, the faction has by many long been considered the basic unit of Indian politics. Indeed, factional strife has for many become synonymous with party politics in India. Especially the study of political factions at the micro level of states of India brings several benefits. Such knowledge contributes to an understanding of the factors - ideological, organisational and systemic - which cause the stabilization or otherwise of, the democratic structure of the states in India. It throws open an understanding of the political and other needs of the people. Its application brings out the political processes peculiar to each and every state of India. Lastly, it may also provide clues to the comprehension of how the factional politics at the states affect in more important ways, the procedures and the issues of the national polity.

However, the studies of factional politics at the level of states of India are meagre indeed. Paul R. Brass opened up
this question of factional politics at the macro level of India. He has also studied in a thorough going manner the factional politics of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Again Paul R. Brass has contributed significantly to the understanding of factions by his empirical study of factions in the socialist movements and socialist party of India. Despite Paul R. Brass contributions, a consummate grasp of the theme of factionalism remains because he did not extend his analysis of faction to other states of India and especially no one has made an attempt in southern states of India. In a similar way Mary Carrus attempts a study of factionalism in the congress party of Maharashtra.

James Walsh 'Faction and Front' study deals with the emergence and workings of party systems in three states of South India. He explains how the party systems are drawn between the faction and the front, but he does not give adequate information of factional politics. Scholarly works of M.N. Srinivas, Morris Jones, Rudolphe and Arnold and others provide useful guidelines and insight into the theoretical understanding of issues like political development and modernisation, political participation and integration and on the role of caste in politics, mostly in the regional or state contexts.

**METHODOLOGY:**

Historical Methodology has been adopted to study. Data for historical method have been collected chiefly from newspapers,
archives and from interviews. These sources are commonly referred to as 'Paper and People' whereas libraries provide secondary data, People are the rich sources for primary data. The historical method has been split into four distinct strategies of research in this work. Primarily, archival research has yielded data from 'Paper Sources'. From here particulars relating to demographic variables, literary, departmental administration and election results are collected. Secondly exploitation of the community's resources has furnished data from 'Paper Sources'. From the party state headquarters of Indian National Congress information relating to organisational structure and leadership tussles, programmes, membership and financial position of the party has been gathered. Careful and systematic analysis of periodicals has been the third strategy with regard to 'Paper' sources. From here facts and opinions about election results party programmes, estimates of achievements and failures, public response to administrative activities and clarification of politics by the party are accumulated. Thus newspaper resources have been much relied on for augmenting the archival data on leadership and political processes. Clinical interview has been the fourth strategy to collect data from 'people' sources. Less structured interview of the type of clinical interview bring out broad underlying feelings and motivations of life experience of an individual. Therefore persons who have been intimately connected with the party have been approached and interviewed. From them, first hand information relating to organisational problems, ideological
dispositions, intra-party dynamics relating to growth and development of factions are heard and assessed, books on Indian political parties and articles appearing in scholarly journals on Indian state politics have also been extensively perused.

This dissertation is divided into Nine Chapters. The First Chapter, by way of an introduction gives the theory of factions; states the problem and advances reasons for this study; reviews the relevant literature available on factionalism; sketches the aim and objectives of the study and explains the research Methodology adopted, with the available data sources.

A clear understanding of the national, overall context is essential for an inquiry in the intra-party dynamics of the regional unit of any political party. With this view, the Second Chapter outlines the circumstances which has led to the emergence and the development of factions since 1885, in the Indian National Congress of Tamil Nadu. Factions in the parent organisation is one of the important sources of factions in its offshoots. To explain this phenomenon, a brief history of the Indian National Congress at the national level is discussed in this chapter, before going into the reasons of factions of state level.

The Third Chapter traces the historical roots of factions that existed in the pre-Independent period of Tamil Nadu Congress. It analyses the different types of faction that emerged and persisted
in the party before 1947. The Fourth Chapter tries to find out the factions that were present during the period when the Congress party was in power in Tamil Nadu (1947-1957), after Independence. The Fifth Chapter elaborates about the great 1969 split of Indian National Congress, and its impact on the State Congress of Tamil Nadu. The Sixth Chapter gives the details about factions that are existing in Tamil Nadu Congress at present. Elections intensify the factions existing in any party. So the Seventh Chapter gives an intensive look into the parliamentary and electoral role of factional politics in Tamil Nadu Congress. The Eighth Chapter discusses about the role of press in factional politics of Tamil Nadu. The last Chapter brings out the important conclusions of the study.
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