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The breakdown of the national consensus on a parliamentary majority in India, a phenomenon which is characteristic of the function of parliamentary governments in the developing countries, has led to a new trend, that is coalition, to identify the federal division of powers with sub-national pluralism. In an attempt to seek legitimacy for the coalition governments, which largely depend upon the support of several regional parties, a phenomenon specified to the Indian political system, many of the political parties, which claimed to have demolished one-party dominance of the Congress, have called for the identification of the federal division of powers with sub-national identities representing the pluralist content of the Indian society. Because federalisation is a political process which underlines a division of powers on territorial basis. Whenever the territorial division of powers was sought to be identified with sub-nationalism, the federal structures disintegrated.

Coalitions have become an inevitable and indispensable part of the national and regional politics in the present politics of India, and coalitions in India primarily owe their existence to a set of determined people, who combine to govern for personal and party ends. The unifying force is power. It is the pooling of ambitions. That at present scenario regional parties are sharing power at the Centre and helping in the process of consensus is not true. In fact, they do not necessarily participate in governance of the country. They
stay parochial in their outlook. Populism is their method to gather support. And they demand the pound of flesh, as Mamata Bannerjee of the Trinamool Congress from West Bengal and the Telugu Desam from Andhra Pradesh did. But no doubt, it is significant to note that, in all the coalitions that have been formed during the past decade or more, the regional parties have played a very important role. Thus the regional parites have come to stay in the Indian political system and their relevance is not only confined to their respective states but it also extends to the national scene.

After the decline of the congress as the dominant force in the political order, the logic of democracy is leading us towards a multi-party system in place of a single party dominance, as an alternative to single party, as a result federal order is now taking shape, markedly different from that of the last five decades.

Participation of many regional parties in the new coalition government at the Center indicates the reinforcement of significant shift from centralized governance towards shared rule and federal governance. Rajni Kothari said in a Seminar (New Delhi) on March 28, "issue of federalism is gaining importance after a along period of ups and downs. For the first time, the BJP led coalition seems to be eager to accept the reality of growing regionalisation in politics."¹

As far as the federal process of India is concerned, the centre state relations during coalition government is healthier compared to one-party system, the main reason behind this is coalition government supported by many regional
political parties, who are owing the importance of their region and seeking populism. In this direction the present coalition government would like to seek a national consensus on electoral reforms, centre-state relations, population policy, resolution of inter-state water disputes and etc. In the words of Vajpayeeji, the national agenda of the government would ensure "peace, unity, prosperity and rid the country of hunger, poverty, disease, fear and corruption." This federal approach in governance is the result of the assertion of the regional parties. Their participation in the coalition government is the reinforcement of the "periphery" and federal governance at the centre. The BJP-led coalition government at the centre today trying to be more federal in its organisation and the minimum use of Article 356, as compared to one-party dominant system in India.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

The emergence of coalitions on the Indian political scene should not as too much of a surprise, by considering the fact that, Indian politics takes place in an ethnically, linguistically, religiously, culturally and socially diverse environment, and political parties tend to be organised along the lines of segmental cleavages. Thus, given the peculiar circumstances of the political system of our country - the presence of multi-lingual, multi-regional, multi-caste and communal groups and the imbalances between the rural and urban populations emergence of coalitions should be viewed as a natural outcome of the evolution of the Indian party system. And the emergence of regional political parties, their growing presence and salience, is undoubtedly, the most
important aspect of political development in India. In fact, the important role of regional political parties in the formation of coalition government and certain changes that occur due to pressure exerted by the regional political parties is interesting to examine.

This positive aspect of Regionalisation leading to coalition building in the federal process of India, has never been given due consideration, though many important works have added to our knowledge. Most of the works covered the one party dominant system, very less interest has been shown on the aspects pertaining to coalition politics and federal process. In order to fill this gap, an attempt has been made to deal with Union State relations during coalition era in India at the centre. We also propose to study the transformation of Indian party system from one party dominant system of Congress to multi-party system, their interactions, attitudes and their role in formation of coalition government at the center.

The problem under investigation that "coalition politics and federal process in India since 1967" is taken with intense inquisitiveness to seek out the socio-political problem. A sincere attempt is made in this work to correlate, and to set up different observations and various views of scholars and correspondent prospects of practitioners who are involved in this particular appearance.

REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE:

We shall only examine briefly the major works in the field in order to make clear how the present study relates to the previous work or in what distinctive manner it contributes to that literature. The following few works on the subject have been referred.
K.C. Wheare's classic "Federal Government" is a comprehensive treatise and a basic book for a beginner to understand the meaning of federal government, prerequisites of federalism and also to know how federal government should be organised? Then how federal government works? So it is valuable contribution to our study.

"Union - State Relations" edited by H.V.R Athre this book is published with great inquisitiveness to dive deep into the controversial subject of 'Union - State Relations', which contains all the available material on the subject, key role of Sarkaria Commission report, distribution of constitutional and political powers between centre and state, planning and changing context of centre-state which help us a lot.

"India: Politics at the Crossroads" edited by Anil Kumar Jana is based on nature and magnitude of India's socio-political problems. It covers wide range of subjects like coalition governments, federalism, regional and social movements in India. On the other hand, it also covers the issues which have influenced and shaped the political process over the years. Thus the two ways of thinking about Indian Politics, descriptive and explanatory have research relevance.

"Rethinking Indian Federalism", edited by Rasheeduddin Khan broadly reflects the macro rubrics of Indian federalism quest for a new federal identity and recasting center-state relations in order to build a co-operative federal polity, is a best supportive document for current work.

"Readings in Indian Government and Politics: politics and the state in India" edited by Zoya Hasan focuses on significant themes in contemporary
Indian government and politics, explores a wide range of problems and issues in specific areas of Indian politics.

"Coalition government and Politics in India", edited by Subhash. C. Kashyap highlights most recent political developments following the electoral verdict, emergence of a 'hung parliament' and formation of minority governments, separate articles are devoted to models of coalition politics at the state level as also to the experience of other countries is very useful to this study.

"Indian Government and Politics", edited by B.L. Fadia critically examines the dynamics of federalism and centre-state relations with special reference to the recommendations of the Sarkaria Commission report. Though this book contains lot of other subjects but this book mainly discusses nature of the party system, regional political parties, coalitions in India and also gives statistical data of these coalitions. Hence it is very useful work of Dr. Faida to our study.

"Struggles of Indian Federalism", by Bonita Aleaz chapter two of this book concentrated on centre-state relations in India with special reference to Sarkaria Commission Report, changing concept of federal relations. Issues of greater state autonomy and concentrated on article 356.

"Indian Government and Politics by S.S Awasthy" this book is very important to know about the meaning of federalism, key concept of federalism, features of federalism, pre-requisites of federalism, nature of Indian federalism, issues of state autonomy, and strong feature of Indian federalism is more relevant to our study.
Federal authority in the Indian political system: A comparative study of structures, process and operational dynamics of federal authority in select federations by Verma S. L. this work consists of Nature of federalism, Theories of federal system, Functions of federalism have research relevance and has helped my research work in all respects.

"Coalition politics and power - sharing", edited by Akthar Majeed, is very good book on coalition politics in India. This book tells about coalitions as power-sharing arrangements, coalition politics in India since 1967 coalitions at the state level and coalitions at the national level in India, emergence of regional parties and emergence of regionalism in India. It has helped me a lot for my research work.

"Contemporary Indian Politics" by S.K. Khanna, is very good book on coalition politics in India, reasons for formation of coalitions, coalition politics at the state level and statistical analysis of different coalitions at the state level and national level, regionalism in Indian politics. Hence it is important work for our study.

"The purse and the power aspects of centre state relations in India", by Arie De Ruijter, is good book on centre-state relations especially deals with constitution and centre-state relations, about Sarkaria Commission Report about office of the governor and Article 356.

"Coalition Governments in India: problems and prospects" by K.P. Karunakaran, this book throws light on the concept of coalition, features of coalition, theories of coalition, types of coalition, Governor and coalition
governments, coalition governments socio-cultural and culture - historical factors of coalition politics is no doubt a useful book for my research work.

"Coalition politics in India: Search for political stability" edited by Sundar Ram is a very relevant book relates to coalition politics all its chapters are devoted to coalition politics -like coalition politics trends and problems, parliamentary democracy and coalition government in India, statistical analysis of coalition governments in India at the national level, critical analysis of coalition politics. So this is a best supportive document for my research.

These books were of use in the current work undertaken especially in matters relating to understanding the concept of federalism, concept of coalition, centre - state relations and federal process in India after emergence of coalition governments at the central level in India.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The present study deals with the following objectives:

1. The 1990's have witnessed the collapse of one - party dominant system and transition towards a new "region - based" multi - party system in which state and national party system interact with each other.

2. Emergence of the regional political parties and their important role in the formation of coalition at the centre.

3. While forming the coalitions, parties will minimize the diversity of ideologies represented.
HYPOTHESIS:

In order to explore the potential for research, the present study has set up the following hypothesis.

Coalitional trend has led to a shift in the balance of power in an Indian Federal system.

METHODOLOGY:

In order to find out the truth involved in a problem certain steps have to be taken in a certain order, and the ordered steps are called a method. If a research follows a wrong method, the truth cannot be found out. So unless right methodology is followed, truth cannot be arranged in correct order. Hence in order to discover the exact truth, the following methodology has been employed in this study:

1. Documentary Method:

Documentary sources wherein the expressed thought embodied is systematically analysed and useful issues are taken into consideration. The documentary sources include the primary sources, secondary sources and the tertiary sources. Accordingly, the data collected from primary sources are various Commissions, Committees, Reports and so on, and from secondary sources, viz., books, articles, etc.

2. Historical Method:

Past knowledge is considered to be pre-requisite for present knowledge. This method was used to trace the origin of some of the institutions such as,
Federalism, Parliamentary Democracy etc. Without the knowledge of the past institutions, it is difficult to understand their true nature at present.

3. Descriptive Method:

This method is used for collection of data, since mere collection of data does not constitute research, unless the data are properly interpreted to find the causal connections and relations. Thus, this method is employed for the interpretation of the data.

4. Comparative Method:

In this method the outcome of the issue and its practical relevance to the existing political environment is weighed and subsequent issues are raised. With the help of this method it is possible for the researcher to come to some important conclusion.

The bibliography given at the end of the thesis is quite exhaustive and gives the full idea of the sources consulted. There is a list of abbreviations of some of the terms used in the thesis.

The thesis did not involve any problem of computerization or language. Since the main language of the documents is English and since Non-English material was easily available in English translation, so we did not have any problem of language to deal with. Hence a sincere attempt is made in this work to correlate and to establish vivid observations and views of scholars and writers who are greatly involved in the particular aspect.
CONSPECTUS:

The thesis is systematically divided into six chapters.

CHAPTER - I

This chapter deals with introductory part. It starts with statement of the problem, objectives of the study, review of the literature, objectives of the study, hypotheses and methodology.

CHAPTER - II

This chapter examines the concept of coalition and its theoretical perspective.

CHAPTER - III

This chapter deals with the concept of federalism and its theoretical dimensions.

CHAPTER - IV

This chapter examines the brief historical survey of Indian coalition government at the central level.

CHAPTER - V

This chapter deals with federal process and coalition politics in India.

CHAPTER - VI

The last chapter presents the conclusion, findings of the study and some suggestions for further research.
REFERENCES


2. Ibid.


