
COALITION GOVERNMENT AND ITS IMPACT ON THE INDIAN FEDERAL STRUCTURE

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ABSTRACT

The breakdown of the countrywide consensus on a parliamentary majority is a function of the feature of parliamentary governments in growing countries, which has caused a brand new trend that may be a coalition, to perceive the federal department of powers with sub-countrywide pluralism. Coalitions have become an inevitable and fundamental part of countrywide and local politics. The unifying pressure is intense, and It is the pooling of ambitions.

The relationship between the centers and states of federal states worldwide is imbalanced in terms of their resources, power, and function, no matter how detailed and elaborate the Constitution describes it. "Our constitution is like amphibians," according to Judge Mirza Hamedura Beg. Headquarters may temporarily move from the federal level to a single level depending on the circumstances. Since independence, power has been more delegated to the central government. The coalition government is often used as a means of influencing federal politics. India opted for a federal charter with a robust parliamentary middle due to divisive records and the worry of comparable threats to countrywide team spirit in the future. In present-day India, various nearby political events have become an essential part of politics. The middle and the boom of separatist moves are threatening the team spirit of the nation. So, the middle country family members got a brand new measurement and importance.

Coalition politics is taken for granted in India's political system. Today, all Indian citizens must accept that the era of coalition politics plays an integral part in forming a government. Currently, all domestic political parties are fully aware that they will not be able to gain a majority independently, at least in the near future. We have witnessed the hanging parliament becoming an integral part of the greatest democracy of lasting influence in recent decades. Internal relations are more important to the development and free functioning of the federal system because the party members who manage the government structure at the central level are co-authors of the people who work the structure at the regional level. If, at times, the ruling party at the regional level differs from the central one. In that case, the rivalry between

political parties affects to a large extent the legislative, administrative, and financial relations between the central government and the government—regional rights.

The call for Federal structure, principle, and stability of coalition politics, has forgotten all forms of Constitutional ideas and proprieties. Due to this, it has become vital to study the structure, nature, and compulsions of the Indian federal system. In the field of center-state coalition members within the federal shape of India, coalition politics can produce an aggressive cooperative method that can grow the socioeconomic and political boom and improve the nation. On the opposite hand, the principal disadvantage of coalition authorities is their instability. In many cases, slim non-public hobbies bog down super countrywide and local hobbies in maximum coalitions. Coalition politics may additionally result in anxiety among inside-the-center-state relations members. In this, I will explore the topics of Coalition and Federalism embedded in India's Constitution and its phases of development and how it has affected both the center and state politics.

Keywords: The Coalition, one-party authority, multi-party system, regional parties, centre-state powers, and instability.

INTRODUCTION:

*"Federalism isn't about states' rights. It's about dividing power to protect individual liberty better."*¹

~ Elizabeth Price Foley.

The efficient functioning of democracy is dependent on the existence of a party system. The party system can consist of- one-party, bi-party, or multi-party in a diverse society. "The multi-party system is based on the representation of various groups by several political parties. The coalition government is based on a multi-party system."²

The term 'coalition' is acquired from the Latin word 'coalition,' which translates to 'to grow together.' The Coalition, in this sense, refers to the act of combining pieces into a single body or whole. In politics, a coalition is a grouping of several political parties. A coalition

¹ Federalism in India - The Law Express, <https://thelawexpress.com/federalism-in-india> (last visited May 2, 2022).

² Barthwal, C. P. (2012). COALITION GOVERNMENTS IN INDIA. *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, 73(1), 9–20. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41856556>

government is a kind of multi-party administration that consists of several minor parties banding together to administer the government in a way that would otherwise be impossible. “A coalition is created when many groups come to terms with each other and agree on a joint program or objective to cooperate.”³ A coalition government is constantly subjected to pulls and pressures in a diverse country like India.

To understand it, a coalition is established when several breakaway parties in a House agree to work together on a Common Minimum Program despite their ideological differences and form majorities in the House.

The following are some characteristics of coalition governments:

- Coalitions are established for the sake of monetary or psychological benefit.
- At least two partners are required for a coalition to exist.
- The Coalition's core idea is a simple truth based on the convergence of distinct interests.
- As coalition members and groups collapse and new ones arise, coalition politics is dynamic.
- Coalition politics is all about compromise, and stiff rigidity has no place in it.

In 1967, India's fourth general elections saw the creation of coalition administrations in northern Indian states. The sixth general election formed a coalition government in the Centre for the first time. The Janata Dal and its partners formed a coalition administration at the Center after the ninth general elections in 1989; however, the V.P. Singh's cabinet only lasted eleven months.

TYPES OF COALITION GOVERNMENT:

Pre-election Coalition: This refers to a reorganization of the parties prior to the election. This form of cooperation is crucial since it takes place before an election. It promotes improved understanding between political parties in general and party members in particular, resulting in a single platform and a shared agenda that attracts voters.

³ Kumar, S. (2008). CONSTITUTIONAL POSITION OF COALITION GOVERNMENT IN INDIA. *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, 69(3), 531–545. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41856443>

Post-Election Alliance: Unlike pre-election alliances, post-election alliances exist only after the parties or the leaders who represent them have completed the general election. It's a group of people that band together to share political power and administer the country. It is a post-election compromise or arrangement. In another way, it is an opportunistic partnership.

COALITION IN INDIA

The eleventh Lok Sabha elections (1996) produced a "hung parliament" for the second time; the President asked Atal Behari Vajpayee, the leader of the single largest party, to form the government. On May 15, 1996, he took the oath of office as Prime Minister. However, he was forced to resign on May 28, 1996, after just 13 days in office, without even seeking a vote of confidence in the parliament. This led to the formation of the wide-ranging Coalition with 13 parties 8 together, known as the United Front. Mr. Deva Gowda, leader of the United Front, became the Prime minister for ten months. The BJP-led National Democratic Alliance won an absolute majority in the 13th Lok Sabha elections, and A.B.Vajpayee was elected Prime Minister on October 13, 1999. In January 2004, the Vajpayee administration dissolved the Lok Sabha and announced elections to the Lok Sabha before the end of its full term.

COALITION GOVERNMENT IN THE STATES:

In the post-independence period, the fourth general elections in 1967 were one of the most significant events in Indian politics. It dismantled the Congress party's monolithic nature of controlling Indian politics through a single-party system. It reevaluated the weaker Congress at the Center and several states, resulting in political instability. In 1985, the Rajiv Gandhi government passed the 52 Constitutional Amendment Act, which included the Anti Defection Act, to prevent political defections. The Akali Dal and the BJP run state governments in Punjab, the National Conference and the Congress run state governments in Jammu and Kashmir, the CPM, CPI, RSP, and Forward Block Parties run state governments in West Bengal, and the DMK and the Congress run state governments in Tamil Nadu, respectively.

COALITION GOVERNMENTS - MERITS:

1. Coalition governments are necessary for pluralistic societies to function.
2. Governments in coalitions promote national rather than regional interests.
3. Coalition Governments Provide Alternative Viable Government

COALITION GOVERNMENTS-DEMERITS:

1. Coalition governments favor power brokers.
2. Coalition governments suffocate the spirit of the federal government.
3. Political defections are encouraged by coalition governments.

PHASES OF COALITION IN INDIA:

THE FIRST PHASE: LATE 1960

During the 1960s, the Congress party saw significant transformations. After the 196 elections, it lost its authority. By the end of the 1960s, the Congress had split into two groups, one led by Kamaraj and known as the Syndicate-Congress (Organization) and the other known as the Congress under Indira (Ruling). Faced with fierce resistance inside her party, Indira Gandhi began to disregard the notion of agreement and disrespect the party's long-serving and established leaders. She assumed complete control of the party's activities. All senior members of the party were required to follow her orders. "This revolutionized the Congress party's working methods, but it also greatly influenced India's democratic federal structure. As a result, significant regional sentiment had grown throughout the states. Indira Gandhi's second administration made a strong argument for decentralization through sharing sovereignty among

the states, particularly Punjab and Assam."⁴ During Indira's second term, in the early 1980s, a number of important state-level parties rose to power. Though the original period of coalition politics was brief, it did result in the formation of powerful regional movements and political organizations in states like Tamil Nadu, Kerala C (now known as Odisha), West Bengal Punjab, and others. There was a surge of rural elites and re-groupings in the shape of farmers' lobbies and interest groups prior to the start of the first phase of coalition politics. In the 1980s, Jyothi Basu, N.T. Rama Rao and other opposition Chief Ministers formed a coalition of "Non-Congress CMs" to challenge the Congress party's monopoly and the so-called "centralized state." To discuss these topics, several conferences and conclaves were conducted.

⁴ Pal, K. (2008). DYNAMICS OF PARTY SYSTEM AND FORMATION OF COALITION GOVERNMENT IN INDIA. *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, 69(2), 329–340. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41856420>

THE SECOND PHASE: LATE 1980'S

The second main phase of the coalition era began in 1989, two years before the Economic Reform program. The dominant party system gave way to a multi-party system, and the majority government gave way to a coalition government. In a short period, several unstable regimes emerged. The V.P. Singh government's execution of the Mandal Commission reforms for the OBC quota and the communalisation of the polity by the demolition of the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya boosted coalition politics. In the federal government, the BJP has emerged as a dominant force, but in the states, caste-based, class-based politics of the SCS and OBCs have taken center stage.

PRESENT ERA OF COALITION POLITICS:

1. Without the backing of these regional parties, forming a government at the national level is now impossible.
2. States now played a dominating and decisive role in coalition governments, which greatly influenced the Federal system.
3. Despite winning a majority in the 2014 elections on its own, the BJP opted to create a government with a coalition of other parties.
4. As a result of their growing power in national politics, states are becoming more forceful in federal negotiations with the federal government.
5. The coalition government's impact is not limited to national politics; it also has a considerable impact on the center's neoliberal economic policies.
6. The Center could not implement several critical economic changes due to state government resistance. States now have a voice in how economic policies are directed and modified.
7. National parties are now utilizing coalition politics as well, making the system more crooked.
8. There was a steep competition between national states during the pre-liberalization period; currently, it is horizontal, with competition taking place between regional state administrations.
9. As a result, the Center's policies are now dispersed among the states, and political concerns guide it. As a result, the country's government has been harmed by the fragmentation of the party system and the formation of an unstable coalition.

10. Because of the stability of the coalition administration at the Center, State and regional parties are gaining traction.
11. As a result, states now have more autonomy and attempt to develop their own power at the Centre, which harms the polity.
12. State-level parties are also discussing forming a United Federal Front to fight any attempts at centralization.
13. "In order to preserve the federal spirit and structure, such "centralization" policies elicit disapproval not just from regional and State parties, but also from the National Parties themselves."⁵ Even the BJP-led administration in power since 2014 has placed a greater focus, at least on paper, on addressing the dynamics of the Center-State relationship.

Despite the fact that the Indian Constitution does not utilize the term "federal" but rather "Union of States," it does allow for a governance system that is fundamentally federal in form. The Constitution has granted the federal government overwhelming powers within the core framework of Federalism. The framers' goal of the Constitution was to create cooperative Federalism. On the other hand, national parties are known to lead to power concentration. Even four decades after independence, India was governed by a one-party system regarded as a unitary government. However, it is certain that the formation of regional political parties has aided in the disintegration of the one-party dominating system at the Centre and has aided in strengthening the power decentralization process. Regional political parties have elevated the State to a key position in Indian politics, where it has also played a major role in national policy and helped to further federalize the functioning of Indian Federalism. As a result, during the coalition period of Indian politics, regional political parties' roles inside coalition governments significantly influenced India's federal structure. "India will need a strong, stable, and decisive government for the next 10 years to achieve our national, political, economic, and strategic objectives. A weak coalition will be bad for India,".

In *Kesavananda Bharati v State of Kerala*,⁶ This case not only talks about the "Doctrine of Basic structure which was propounded, but also held that all the machinery of government, legislature, and executive and judiciary are bound by the constitution, and nobody is above the

⁵ Sadanandan, A. (2012). Bridling Central Tyranny in India: How Regional Parties Restrain the Federal Government. *Asian Survey*, 52(2), 247–269. <https://doi.org/10.1525/as.2012.52.2.247>

⁶ AIR 1973 SC 1461

constitution.”⁷ The Kesavananda Bharati talks about and establishes the Basic Structure theory, which limits Parliament’s ability to make radical changes that may jeopardize the Constitution’s basic principles, such as secularism and federalism.

EXAMPLES OF THE COALITION GOVERNMENT IN INDIA:

“For 20 years, there was instability. There was no majority government. There used to be alliance governments. The growth of the country had come to a halt. But now we are progressing,”⁸ he said, as quoted by Hindustan Times.

Manmohan Singh (UPA I - 2004 to 2009): “The Congress emerged as the single largest party in 2004 and won 145 seats, while the BJP won 138 seats. The Congress then went on to form the UPA (United Progressive Alliance) with the support of regional parties and outside support of Left parties, under Manmohan Singh's leadership.”⁹

Manmohan Singh (UPA II - 2009 to 2014): “As the elections were held in 2009, the UPA came back to power. The Congress also improved its tally from 145 to 206 seats, while the BJP could only win 116 seats. Manmohan Singh was elected as the prime minister for a second term.”¹⁰

“The **BJP**, for the first time, secured a clear majority individually in both the 2014 and 2019 elections. Led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the BJP leads the **Coalition of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA)**.”¹¹ The current NDA government is composed of 19 parties and one independent candidate for the Lok Sabha 2019 elections including AIADMK, Janata Dal (United), Pattali Makkal Katchi, Shiv Sena, Tamil Mahila Congress, Shiromani Akali Dal, etc. as the major parties.

CONCLUSION:

As a result, the growth of coalition politics has a considerable influence on the relationship

⁷ Kesavananda Bharati ... vs State Of Kerala And Anr on 24 April, 1973, <https://indiankanoon.org/doc/257876/> (last visited May 2, 2022).

⁸ Many Kochhar Goel Kritika, *India Is Set to Return to Coalition Politics: What Does That Mean?*, TheQuint (2019), <https://www.thequint.com/explainers/coalition-governments-history-explained> (last visited May 2, 2022).

⁹ Bhaskar Dutta, *Coalition Governments and Policy Distortions : The Indian Experience*, 23.

¹⁰ Coalition And Power Sustenance Game In Indian Parliamentary Democracy: With Reference To Karnataka Context, <https://legalserviceindia.com/legal/article-5387-coalition-and-power-sustenance-game-in-indian-parliamentary-democracy-with-reference-to-karnataka-context.html> (last visited May 2, 2022).

¹¹ Federalism in India - The Law Express, <https://thelawexpress.com/federalism-in-india> (last visited May 2, 2022).

between the Centre and the states. The central government's involvement in state matters has now been severely diminished. The usage of Article 356's President's Rule has also decreased. State governments are no longer dismissed at the whims of the federal government, and legislative involvement through the Governor's right to reserve a measure for the President's approval has also altered. As a result, analysts claim that the inclusion of regional state parties in coalition administrations has resulted in the 'refederalization' of Indian democracy. The current period is going toward more decentralization, refederalization, and regionalization of politics, and institutions must adapt to these changes in the political landscape to ensure successful power-sharing.

In conclusion, while the coalition system of government allows many socio-cultural and economic groups to participate in the country's governance, it also creates much turf between the Center and the State. The regional parties in the Center try to express and aggregate regional interests that are unrelated to the national interest, which impacts the country's overall growth. In order to ensure the coalition government's stability, the most crucial office that is vital for the appropriate preservation of center-state ties, the Governor's Office, is likewise politicized.