

## REGIONAL POLITICAL PARTIES AND ITS IMPACT ON INDIAN POLITICS: AN ANALYSIS

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**ABSTRACT :** India is a democratic form of country that have adopted a representative parliamentary form of government. In which political parties play an important role as a link between electors and representative. After independence, an elected representative parliamentary system has been set up at the union level and the legislative assemblies in the states level on the same pattern. After the analysis of the parliamentary system India adopted a multi party system in the country. Another important feature of the party system in India has been shaped by the federal character of the country; constitutional power has been divided between the central and state government. The Indian party system took its distinctive shape in the context of various factors such as language, tribe, religion and caste, geographical diversity. In the parliamentary form of government, regional political parties have been playing a significant role. Regional political parties that operate primarily within a small geographical area due to various diversity. Regional parties play an important role in Indian politics to develop the federal structure of the county. The new era of coalition politics has increased the significance of regional parties. However, there are some negative effects associated with the formation of regional parties. In the context of the study the rise of regional political parties and its impact on Indian politics is the heart of this study. The study further deals with the positive and negative impact of regional parties in Indian politics.

**KEYWORDS:** Regional Parties, Politics, Parliamentary, Representative, Democracy, Distinctness, Election.

### **INTRODUCTION:**

India is a country that has multilingual, multireligious and multiethnic societies. The constitution of India adopted a representative parliamentary form of government. Political parties are essential institutions for representative democracy. Political parties perform various roles such as formation of government, formation of opposition, political socialization etc. one of the most important political developments in Independent India has been the rise of regional political parties growth due to historical circumstances, certain sections of the population wish to maintain their distinct identities. Some major regional parties DMK, AIADMK, the Akali Dal, AGP, AIUDF and National Conference all have a desire to preserve this distinctness and regional aspirations realizing that a region's developmental needs have been overlooked for a long period may give rise to regional parties. Regional political parties are important for providing better governance at the regional level and especially in neglected areas. It is also important for making democracy more representative by the ambition of participation. Regional parties also have strengthened the federal axis of Indian democracy. In terms of politics, regional parties can be considered as an anti-centralization movement in case of the idea of true federation. But sometimes they have put national interests on the back burner in favor of narrow regional objectives and its move to regionalism which is putting national interest at risk.

This study is an attempt to trace the growth of regional political parties in the context of Indian politics. It further discusses the positive and negative impact of regional political parties in Indian politics.

### **OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:**

The study attempts to fulfill the following objectives –

1. To study the origin and growth of the regional political parties in the framework of different contexts.

2. To understand the reason for the growth of regional parties.
3. To analyze the role of the regional political parties in the formation of government.
4. To understand the various impacts of regional parties in Indian politics.

#### **METHODOLOGY:**

This paper is an attempt to analyze the impact of regional political parties on Indian politics. The methodology used in this study is historical, descriptive and analytical in nature. The data and facts of the study is based on secondary sources like articles, books, journals, websites etc.

#### **DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS:**

##### **Review of the Related Literature:**

Parties and party politics in Indian, edited by Zeya Hasan (Oxford India Press, New Delhi, 2000). This book is important to the study of the politics of India and the party system. It examines the national political parties as well as the regional political parties by their effect on the changing nature of Indian politics in terms of their connection with caste, class, communal and regional politics. The entire book presents a comprehensive description of the transformation of the Indian party system since independence.

Why regional parties? Clientelism Elites and the Indian party system by Adam Ziegfeld (Cambridge University Press, New York, ROIC). In this book authority proposes the two consistent objectives which elucidate on the achievement of regional and state parties and makes an attempt to understand the establishment of party system in these places where the support of the parties is based on clientelism as against the ideology and politics.

On the basis of the above literature review, these two studies focused on the role of the parties in the context of federalism and center state relations mostly. It does not explain the theoretical background of the emergence and growth of regional parties and its impact on national politics. So, this study is an attempt to trace the emergence of regional political parties and its positive and negative impact on Indian politics.

**CONCEPT AND DEFINITION OF REGIONAL POLITICAL PARTY:** A regional political party is a political party that operates its political functions within a small geographical area. The regional political party functions are limited to a single or a few states. Regional parties refer to those cultural, linguistic, ethnic and caste groups within the Indian community which significantly want to fulfill their requirements and also promote the regional interest. Regional parties demand that the regional issues should be handled at the regional level itself, political power should be in the hands of the people of the region and residents of the region should get preference in administration and jobs.

##### **Features of Regional Political Parties in India:**

Regional parties of India express provincial welfare and recognize a distinct religious, ethnic, cultural, or linguistic group. The other features of regional political parties in India are as follows:

1. Regional parties are performing within a specific state or specific region. Its voting base is confined to a single region.
2. It is based on local interests and identifies itself with a certain cultural, religious, linguistic, or ethnic group.
3. The regional political parties are disturbed by the exploitation of local natural resources of discontent or preserving the local demands based on language, caste or community, or region.
4. Regional politics focuses on local or regional issues and aims to get political power at the state level. It has no inclination to expand and control the central government
5. It has a political desire for greater regional autonomy of states in the Indian Union.

##### **Themes of Regional Political Parties in India**

Regional parties in India are established based on themes like– Autonomy, Identity, Statehood, and Development etc. Get the complete details of the themes of the regional parties in India and their rise.

- **Autonomy** demands greater potency to the Indian states (for example, the National Conference in Jammu and Kashmir).
- **Identity** consists of opposing the glory of the cultural privileges of a group (like the DMK resisting the originality of the Dalits or the Shiv Sena in Maharashtra).
- **Statehood** consists of battling for an autonomous state within the country (for instance, the Telangana Rastra Samiti requested a different state of Telangana).
- **Development** comprises regional parties considering that they can bring change to the individuals of a certain province.

### **GROWTH OF REGIONAL POLITICAL PARTIES IN INDIA:**

The constitution of India has provided for a parliamentary system of government both at the Centre and the States and adopted multi party system to construct government. One of the most important political developments in independent India has been the rise of regional political parties. The constitution of India has described India as a union of states in the first article of it. Nowhere in the constitution has India been described as a federation.

Indian federation is unique in the sense that it created a space for reconciliation of regional aspiration with the imperatives of national policy. Regionalism and sub regionalism in Indian politics is related to a struggle for the redress of economic and social grievances. It aims to seek social and economic justice within the framework of the Indian constitution. In most of the cases the movement for regional demands have given birth to some regional political parties for their regional interest, parties like the Assam Gana Parishad (AGP) in Assam, Shiv Sena in Maharashtra and DMK in Tamil Nadu have always focused on regional issues in order to be in power. The fear of losing their cultural, political, and socio-economic identity was the main factor behind the growing support base for regional parties in the 1960s; these regional parties in India have made Indian politics diverse. While these regional parties aim to fulfill the regional aspirations of people, it also cooperatively works with national-level parties. Thus, such a system of coordination has strengthened national unity. The central government has begun paying attention to addressing these regional problems. The concept of regional parties is not limited to India. These parties are also found in other countries and have a profound influence over national politics. Some groups may oppose supporting them. According to such groups, regional parties have led to political instability and an increase in the demand for autonomy of regions. Political parties at the regional level have exploited the region's ethnic and cultural factors. Political leaders, it has been observed, feel regional sentiments in order to give shape to their personal ambition of capturing power in the state. They demand the creation of new states often highlighting the issues of protecting the region's distinct identity or to ensure economic development.

The demand of regional autonomy the union government continues to be challenged and this indicates the weakening of the Centre and the gradual strengthening of the states on this Indira Gandhi described regionalism as a very serious threat to the development and unity of the country. The fourth general elections to the Lok Sabha and assembly elections in Feb 1967 radically altered the Indian political landscape with the congress losing its hegemony in many states. The most significant features of its election came from non-congress parties. The gradual decline of congress party and rise of regional political parties in Indian politics are directly responsible for the emergence of coalition politics in India. It is a fact that the growth of regional political parties is directly linked to the decline of congress popular support at the regional level.

**FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE RISE OF REGIONAL POLITICAL PARTIES IN INDIA:** Multiple factors can be attributed to the rise of regional parties in India. Some of them are as follows:-

1. Cultural and ethnic pluralism of Indian society.
1. Economic disparities and regional imbalances in development.
2. Desire of certain section ares to maintain separate identity due to historical factors.
3. Failure of national politics to meet the regional aspirations.
4. Reorganization of states on the basis of language.
5. Charismatic personality of the regional leaders.
6. Factional fights within the larger parties.
7. Centralizing tendencies of the congress party.
8. Absence of strong opposition party at the central level.
9. Role of caste and religion in the political process
10. Alienation and discontent among the tribal groups.

**IMPACT OF REGIONAL PARTIES IN INDIAN POLITICS:** Till 1967, in India there was a single party rule. Even in States also there was a domination of Congress party. But, the scenario changed after 1967. Other parties started coming to power in the states. There will be different parties in the center and in the states. Regional parties started entering the Indian political system. From 1980's we can see the coalition government in the center. Congress lasted its domination and regional parties started participating in the national government. Therefore, the coalition government started

coming up in the centre. Many regional parties like TDP, DMK, Akali Dal, and AIADMK started playing their influential role. Although they have played an essential role in Indian politics, they have also had some negative impact on national politics in India.

### **POSITIVE IMPACT:**

#### **Role and Significance of Regional Political Parties of India:**

Regional political parties in India play an important role in the formation of a government. Some of the role and significance of regional parties discuss as below –

1. Regional political parties produce more competitive politics and encourage widespread participation of people in the political process.
2. The presence of regional parties in Indian politics has led to the decentralization of power.
3. These parties challenged the one-party prevalent method in India and led to a reduction in their dominance.
4. They make significant contribution to the smooth functioning of parliamentary democracy.
5. They have played an important role in the times of coalition politics by providing support to other parties in lieu of benefits for their regions.
6. Regional parties also help in preventing tyranny of the party in power.
7. Regional parties produce a ground for the representation of democracy successfully. As democracy aims at equal representation of both the majority as well as the minority.
8. The political awareness of the people has been raised among masses due to the efforts of regional parties.
9. They also have helped in widening the choices for the voters. They can cast their vote to the party representing the interest of his state.
10. Regional parties also have strengthened the federalism of Indian constitution by providing voice and bargaining powers to the state.
11. Regional parties can provide better governance at the regional level especially in neglected areas.
12. They make a strong impact on the nature of Centre State relation with the promote of the interest of region.
13. Regional political parties represent the interest and aspirations of the people of a particular state or regions.

### **NEGATIVE IMPACT:**

The rise of regional political parties of India made politics a cruel rivalry. It encouraged using wrong headed means. Regional parties initiated the trend of decision along with racial lines like caste, tribe, language and some other attributes. It is also used wrong method during elections in various state of India in the form of violence. Although regional political parties have played a significant role in Indian politics however, there are some negative effects associated with formation of regional parties and its working procedures. These are as follows–

1. Regional parties have put national interests at risk by favouring narrow regional objectives more.
2. Regional parties initiated the trend of state division along racial lines like caste, tribe language and some other attributes.
3. As a result of the public's frequent representation by regional parties' separatist sentiments are on the rise among the public.
4. With the rise of regional parties, the government is unstable due to the disintegration of national parties.
5. Regional political parties also make it difficult to implement foreign accords and policies on schedule. For example, the Trinamool Congress in west Bengal has consistently inter warned in the Indian government's water sharing argument with Bangladesh.
6. With the rise of regional political parties, Indian politics has become rivalry, encouraging the use of irrational means during election in many states of India.
7. Regional political parties encouraged regionalism, casteism, linguism and communalism.
8. Another disfunction of regional political parties is that they indulged in corruption, nepotism, favoritism and other forms of misutilization of power.
9. They focused more on the populist policies and schemes measures to expand and strengthen their electoral base. This is harms fiscal balance in the economy of the country.

10. Regional parties also hinder the solution of interstate disputes like water dispute and border dispute.
11. They demand that the regional issues should be handled at the regional level itself and they demand protecting their autonomy these are also challenge for national progress and unity of the country.

Regional political parties have some shortcomings, yet regional parties play an important role in the formation of the government of a country. They have been proud to be helpful in providing representation to diverse cultures of India and also helped in widening democratic culture.

#### **CONCLUSION:**

India is a country that is multilingual, multi religious and multiethnic. So, the constitution of India adopted representative form of government come in to existence due to centralization of power and monopolistic politics of the Congress Party. Regional parties have helped in the development of participatory political culture and they are also source of strengthen for the development of the federal process in India. The political awareness of the people has been raised due to the efforts of regional parties, they brought local issues in front of the public. They have also played an important role in the times of coalition politics by providing support to other parties for their regional benefits. In that case Laski believe that political parties are essential for healthy democracy.

Though regional parties play an important role in Indian politics, they have some negative impacts on Indian politics. They have demanded division of state for their regional interest, it makes national interest at risk. The Indian government also became unstable with the rise of regional political parties. They encourage separation, regionalism which are major challenges for national progress and unity. In the course of this paper it can sum up that there are various factors which are responsible for the rise of regional political parties. Many regional parties like TDP, RJD, Akali Dal, AIADMK, DMK, SP, BSP etc. started playing their influential role. They started participating in government decision making. Unlike earlier, now the regional parties made developmental works come to their states. Whenever, central government is making policies it has to consider the regional parties, which are their allies. However, the presence of regional parties in the central government sometimes creates instability.

In short it can say that regional parties have increased the importance of their region on the one hand, have increased instability on the other. But somehow, the Indian political system has become more democratic. From the above discussion this study paper finds that various regional political parties have played an important role in Indian politics. From that it can say regional parties have various positive impacts on Indian politics. But, the rise of regional parties has various negative impacts, some of them are highlighted in this study paper. But it can be said that regional political parties are essential for a representative and healthy democratic form of government.

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