

## **A STUDY ON ROLE OF REGIONAL PARTIES ON POLICIES OF A NATION**

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### **Abstract:**

India has a multi-party system with parties at the national, state, and district levels receiving recognition. The Election Commission of India (ECI) conducts quarterly evaluations of the situation. Political parties must register with the Election Commission of India in order to run in municipal, state, or federal elections. There are 2,598 parties registered in India overall, of which 8 are national parties, 52 are recognized as state parties, and 2,538 are unrecognized parties, according to a recent release by the Election Commission of India (2018). Based on their party's objective requirements, registered parties are regarded as recognized national or state level parties. A recognized party has access to benefits including a designated party emblem, free airtime on state-run television and radio, consultation on election date selection, and involvement on the creation of electoral laws and regulations. The presence of a significant number of regional parties, which are essentially defined as "parties operating within a limited geographical area and its activities are restricted only to a single or few states," is one of the key characteristics of the Indian Party System, which has the largest democracy in the world. These regional parties work alongside national parties concurrently and will have a significant effect on national policy. These regional parties reflect the interests, demands, and requirements of a specific region in contrast to the broader goals of national political parties. Regional parties must focus on particular concerns, such as the use of river water, the creation of local jobs, the satisfaction of local demands of the populace, etc. Simply put, regional parties are different from national parties in terms of their goals, perspectives, methods of operation, and interests they support.

**Key Words:** Democratic system, Election Commission, Party system, Regional Parties, Regional objectives, Regional demands, Recognised Party system.

### **Introduction:**

The presence of a significant number of regional parties, which are essentially defined as "parties operating within a limited geographical area and its activities are restricted only to a single or few states," is one of the key characteristics of the Indian Party System, which has the largest democracy in the world. These regional parties work alongside national parties concurrently and will have a significant effect on national policy. Operations, goals, and functioning of regional parties are confined to a certain geographic area. These regional parties do not strive to dominate the national government or the management of the whole nation; instead, they just want to seize power at the state or regional level. Regional parties have goals and use a bottom-up strategy. In India, there are many more regional parties than national parties, and in some States, including Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Maharashtra,

Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala, Assam, Jammu & Kashmir, etc., the role of regional parties in local administration or in the formation of governments is crucial. Due to their weak physical condition, they often do not acquire power on their own. But it is a well-known and widely accepted reality that these regional parties were often, if not always, the true king-makers in the political arena.

India is a cosmopolitan, multilingual country. Numerous political parties have emerged in India as a result of the country's vast geographic area, diverse culture, unique fusion of Indian society's defining characteristics, constitutional provisions guaranteeing equal opportunities and adult franchise, as well as other aspects of Indian society. Numerous studies have been done to better understand the function and significance of regional political parties, and it has been shown that, in comparison to national parties, regional parties are in a better position and are better equipped to comprehend regional needs and ambitions. Additionally, India's enormous linguistic and cultural diversity contributed to the growth of separatist aspirations. People who are native to a certain linguistic area have a tendency to identify and identify with that region. Political parties often make an effort to take advantage of local racial and cultural elements. From a different angle, the unequal growth of the regions also resulted in a feeling of exclusion and alienation, which prompted the creation of regional parties.

Numerous regional political parties have developed in India since its independence and have grown significantly in power in various states. Given the increased number of regional parties in India and the fact that more of them are gaining power over time, some political observers believe that this trend is a clear example of the "resurgence of regionalism." This trend is expected to increase the balance of political power between the federal government and the various states. Because of this, India is renowned for having the most regional political parties and the greatest memberships, in addition to having the largest democracy in the world. Regional parties control more than 190 million people in India, according to one estimate.

### **Growth of Regional Parties in India**

Numerous regional and sub-regional political parties have emerged in India's political system since the country's first general elections in 1951–1952. Factionalism in the congress or other political parties often led to the formation of regional parties, which were ultimately disbanded when they were accepted into the ruling elite or absorbed by their parent organizations. Some political parties have no other goals in mind but to win power. Regional parties have played a considerable influence in both state and federal politics, despite the fact that they only operate in a relatively small area and have very specific goals. The regional political parties attempted to give their goals and programs a tangible form by forming administrations in a number of states. The majority of regional parties were led by disillusioned leaders of the main parties and lacked organizational cadres. Most often, the too centrist and monopolistic policies of the congress party have led to the emergence of regional parties.

Following the fourth general elections in 1967, it is notable that regional political parties came to power and had a significant influence in various states. As a result, local political parties that exhibit 'regionalism' began to gain popularity. The idea of regionalism is shared by a group of people who live in a specific geographic area with a distinctive language, culture,

tradition, etc. The idea is that the local population should be given preference over outsiders when it comes to opportunities and that they should be given to them first.

The sense of regionalism may develop as a consequence of the governing authorities' ongoing disregard for a specific area or region, or it may appear as a result of growing political consciousness of oppressed and backward people. Political leaders often promote a sense of nationalism in order to keep control of a certain territory or demographic. It is a political quality connected to people's love of their community, language, culture, etc. in an effort to preserve their unique identities. Positive regionalism is a good thing inasmuch as it fosters a feeling of brotherhood and commonality among the populace based on shared linguistic, religious, or historical roots. The integrity and unity of the nation are seriously threatened by the negative notion of regionalism. The word "regionalism" has often been used negatively in Indian contexts.

### **Factors responsible for the growth of Regional Parties in India**

As they genuinely want more political autonomy and operational flexibility from the federal government, regional political parties are expanding at an accelerating rate. It appears when states want independence from the Center and work to forge their own unique identities. These local political parties strive for independence from the national government and a distinct political identity. The Center's growing meddling in state governments' local issues has harmed regional sentiments and local interests. Regionalist sentiment has also been stoked by disputes between states over the distribution of river water, the value placed by the states on the language of the majority, and the employment possibilities available to residents of their own states. People who migrate from a developing state to a less developed one in search of job may encounter hostility. Therefore, a fundamental goal shared by all regional political groups has been the desire for autonomy.

However, a number of circumstances contributed to the development of regional parties in India. Among them are:

Regional pride has also been boosted by the growing awareness of discrimination among residents in underdeveloped regions. Local political leaders took full advantage of this circumstance and made an effort to spread the myth among the populace that the Central Government was purposefully attempting to preserve regional imbalances by undermining the social and economic development of certain regions.

The different Indian federal divisions' desire to preserve their subcultural areas and a higher degree of self-government has encouraged regionalism and sparked calls for more autonomy. to express opposition to the central government's policies when it seeks to impose a certain philosophy, language, or cultural norm on all individuals and organizations. For instance, the southern states of India rejected the introduction of Hindi as the official language out of concern that the North would come to dominate. Similar to this, the Assamese started an anti-foreigner campaign in Assam to protect their own culture.

the urge to gain control. Political parties like the DMK, AIADMK, Akali Dal, Telugu Desam, Assom Gana Parishad, Janata Dal (s), etc., are widely known for running in elections by highlighting local issues and pledging to provide solutions if they win.

The desire for decentralization of power and the division of monolingual states has arisen as a result of the governing parties' persistent disregard for a region or area and the concentration

of political and administrative power. Sons of soil theory has sometimes been used to advance the interests of marginalized groups or state regions.

The interaction between modernization and popular engagement has also significantly fueled India's regionalist movement. The sentiment of regionalism has remained because the nation is still far from achieving its aim of being a nation state and because different groups have been unable to link their interests with those of the country.

### **Impact of regional parties on national policies**

Regional political parties have played a significant influence in India's political system. Regional parties are both a source of strength for the growth of India's federal process and have contributed to the creation of a participatory political culture by acting as a check on the central government's tendency toward overshadowing. Regional parties prioritize the interests of certain communities above the overall well-being of the country. The interests of certain linguistic, ethno, or religious communities are identified by regional parties. The most notable element of political evolution in India over the last several years is without a doubt the growing importance and visibility of regional parties. These have sparked a realignment of the political process, and they have had a wide-ranging, multi-directional influence on the way politics is organized and conducted. The character of Center-State relations in India has been significantly influenced by the regional parties. In multi-ethnic, multi-racial, multi-religious, and multi-linguistic nations like India, they are a natural outcome of a democratic system based on adult franchise. Thus, the expansion of regional parties is consistent with the democratic spirit as a whole.

According to observers, regional parties will help redefine government. They cite the emergence of a new class of state leaders who have shown that sound economics can also make for sound politics, like Nitish Kumar of the Janata Dal (United) in the state of Bihar and Naveen Patnaik of the Biju Janata Dal in the state of Odisha.

Foreign policy is increasingly influenced by regional parties. There is no doubt that regional parties have been more influential in foreign policy over time, but it is less certain that recent headline-grabbing disputes indicate a new or more important turn in the quest for a voice in this field. Two notable examples of regional parties interfering with crucial choices made by the central government on foreign policy. Mamta Banerjee, the leader of the Trinmool Congress Party, personally destroyed a water-sharing pact that New Delhi had laboriously negotiated with Bangladesh over the Teesta River. Before Banerjee essentially blocked the action, the pact had been a key element of the central government's aspirations to enhance ties with its neighbor to the east. Similar to this, the Tamil Nadu Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam Party left the governing coalition because the center supported a UN resolution that the party said was poorly phrased and related to how the Sri Lankan government treated its Tamil minority. However, this kind of foreign policy wrangling is not as novel as is sometimes claimed. States have continually used their newly-found economic policy flexibility to design their own approaches to entice international investors since the opening up of the Indian economy in 1991, regardless of New

### **Delhi's outlook.**

Regional parties, such as the Mizo National Front, have made it possible for local problems to be better represented. They convey tribal aspirations. Regional parties have bolstered the

federal axis of Indian democracy by giving the state a voice and negotiating leverage. They have increased political competition and freed the leadership positions from the control of the big parties alone. It has made the One Party Dominant system, particularly during the Congress Era, vulnerable, aiding in the process of dismantling the monopoly of one party. Additionally, it aids in giving voters more options. A voter may now choose the party that represents his state's interests. Regional parties' efforts have increased peoples' political consciousness since they focus on specific, regional social concerns and make them known to the general public. increasing political awareness among the general public. They provide minorities a place to be represented, which helps democracy succeed. As democracy seeks to represent both the majority and the minority equally. Regional parties also aid in avoiding the tyranny of the ruling party. As a party that controls both the federal government and the state may have a tyrannical and biased outlook. They have contributed significantly to coalition politics by supporting other parties in exchange for advantages for their areas.

**Conclusion:**

The shifting political environment has given rise to new regional parties with rising roles. Regional political parties' emergence, expansion, and rising popularity have contributed to a shift in thought that acknowledges the beneficial role that regional parties may play in the process of nation-building. A recent development in Indian politics and federalism has been the involvement of regional political parties in national politics. Regional parties have given local problems a stronger platform for representation. Regional parties have bolstered the federal axis of Indian democracy by giving the state a voice and negotiating leverage. They have increased political competition and freed the reins of power from the control of powerful parties.

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