

Indian Federalism with Party system: Changes and Continuity

Tarun Gogoi

Abstract: India as a federal polity is much discussed and debated issue among scholars. To understand the dynamic nature of contemporary Indian politics, it is essential for us to know how India can be seen as a federal polity regarding its nature, structure as well as function. Indian federalism itself constitute a puzzle which can be best understood through adopting a dynamic perspective by looking at the significant difference between constitutional setup and operational reality in its political system. India represents a unique federal model as a parliamentary federation with the combination of two contradictory model, i.e., parliamentarism and federalism. As a parliamentary federation, political parties are playing a very significant role to shape as well as influence the nature and working of India's federal process. This article is an attempt to understand Indian federalism based on some selected literature on federalism and India's context.

Index Terms: Indian federalism; Parliamentary Federation; Cooperative federalism; federal coalition; Party system; Electoral Politics; Coalition Politics.

1. INTRODUCTION

Though India is considered as a federation, the nature and working of Indian federalism become much discussed and debated issue whether India is a federation or not. Federal theorists from different federal approaches have defined Indian federalism in different ways. Among these K.C. Wheare mentioned India as 'quasi-federal,' "[...] a unitary state with subsidiary federal features rather than a federal state with subsidiary unitary features" (1951: 28). Paul Appleby (1953) characterised India as 'extremely federal,' Morris Jones (1960) described it as 'bargaining federalism,' Ivor Jennings termed it as 'federation with strong centralising tendencies' (1953; 1). Edward McWhinney analysed it as 'essentially unitary' (1966: 132), whereas Granville Austin (1966) defined it as 'cooperative federalism.' D.D. Basu remarked, "[...] India is basically federal, but, of course, with striking unitary features" (1985: 50). C.H. Alexandrowicz mentioned 'India is a case of sui generis' (1957: 157-170). Different scholars have a different understanding of the nature and working of Indian federalism, where many scholars from the constitutional perspective refused to recognise India as a federation. In this context, Granville Austin in his work *The Indian Constitution: Cornerstone of a Nation* remarked, "India had unique problem [...] that had not 'confronted other federations in history'. These could not be solved by recourse to theory because federalism was not a definite concept and lacked a stable meaning" (1966:186). Indian federalism can be seen as a unique experimental model of federalism. From constitutional perspective India is a parliamentary federation with republican nature and centralized federation that makes a strong centre by vesting so much power to the union. India is a parliamentary federation with a significant distinction between 'constitutional form and operational reality' (Watts, 2006:202). After 70th years of its thriving political democracy, though there have not been any significant

changes in the constitutional arrangements, India's federal process has evolved and changed along with its political process. The success of federalism in India is the result of federalisation process that has taken place with the changes in the party system (Arora et al., 2013).

2. INDIA AS A FEDERAL POLITY

India is one of the world's largest democratic states with federal political system. As a federal polity, its roots have been found in India's historical, colonial experience and legacy of national movement with constitutional developments along with the role of political parties. India as a multi-national state is historically federal. It has gradually evolved towards "administrative federalist response during the British rule and towards a parliamentary federal polity under the Indian constitution" (Singh, 2002: 553; Khan, 1992). For India, federalism is a means (but not an end like the USA) to provide a "structural arrangement to accommodate India's pluralist socio-political character" (Verney, 1995; Chakrabarty, 2006). India adopts a flexible model of federation to represent as well as accommodate its regional differences and multi-diverse identities of different cultural communities. Thomas O. Hueglin and Alan Fenna (2015) by referring to this existing distinct cultural identity, mentioned India as an example of cultural federalism. Concerning India's vastness in terms of geography, territorial boundary, population and its increasing multi-diversity, Indian constitution has adopted both unitary and federal nature as a form of the hybrid federation to preserve national unity with regional autonomy. By adopting this flexible model, India can take any stand in any situation. During the crisis and emergency, India becomes unitary and in normal time, India remains federal. Although because of this contradictory nature many federal theorists K.C. Wheare, Edward McWhinney, C.H. Alexandrowicz did not want to categories India as federation in comparison with classical federation like the USA. Many federal theorists Carl J. Friedrich (1968), A.H. Birch (1966), William H. Riker (1964), William S. Livingston (1956), Daniel Elazar (1987), Ronal Watts (1998) and John Kincaid (2011) strongly advocate India as federation, a new form of hybrid federation among presently exist 25 federations. The founding fathers of the Indian Constitution crafted a political system in such a way where both elements are present, a federal setup with unitary nature. As a federal political system, India has federal features like

- **Tarun Gogoi**, Doctoral Scholar at Centre for Political Studies, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University. Email: tarungogoi.jnu@gmail.com

dual polity, written constitution, bicameralism, independence of the judiciary and clear division of power between centre and state governments. At the same time, India also has some unitary natures like strong centre inspired by Canadian constitution, a single constitution (except Jammu and Kashmir), single citizenship, integrated judiciary, central government-appointed governor and All India Service and also in terms of residuary power centre enjoys absolute power. With the help of theoretical analysis of federalism developed by prominent federal theorists Ronald Watts, Charles D. Tarlton, Carl J. Friedrich, William Riker, Alfred Stepan, India as a federation represents a unique experimental model of federation, i.e. parliamentary federation with republican nature. As a parliamentary federation, India is centralised from the constitutional and institutional perspective, holding-together from the source of origin, asymmetrical from the sociological perspective and demos enabling regarding political consequences with the role of people in representation, participation, and policy-making in the legislature (Gogoi, 2016).

TABLE 1
Nature of Indian Federation

Source of Origin	Sociological	Constitutional	Rational	Role of Demos	Structure
Holding-together	Asymmetrical	Centralised	Cultural	Demos enabling	Hybrid

Source: Author's analysis based on Alfred Stepan (1999), Charles D. Tarlton (1965), William Riker (1964), Ronald Watts (1996), Thomas O. Hueglin & Alan Fenna's (2015) theoretical analysis.

From the source of origin, India follows the holding-together principle. India is not the result of any agreement among its units, but it is the result of holding together principle that's why India is described as 'Union of States' in its constitution under article 1. By following holding together principle unlike classical federation USA, any of its units cannot separate and disassociate themselves from federation but remains as an integral, inseparable part of Indian federation. Through holding together principle, India becomes a centralised federation with a strong central government compared to its constituent units. India as a 'union of state' with a strong centre has powerful position in the name of protecting, preserving territorial integrity and national unity. Union government by passing a simple majority in parliament can easily alter the name, political boundary of constituent units i.e. state and create a new state from existing states. As holding together nature in the name of state creation, India's union government delegates its authority to accommodate its various territorially based minorities on language, race basis. As a result, some of its constituent units enjoying a greater level of autonomy under asymmetrical nature (Stepan, 1999). Over the 70 years of independence, India has now 29 states with seven union territories. Indian federation was forged from two types of units, i.e. British provinces and about 552 Princely states. After independence from these two types of units India has four classifications of total 29 states as Part A, B, C, and D. In 1956 by following State Reorganisation Commission's recommendation, the Indian government enacted State Reorganisation Act, 1956 through 7th amendment to create 14 states and six union territories. Again in 1971 through

North-East State Reorganisation Act many North-East India's states were created, and in 2000 through 84th constitutional amendment three new state Uttarakhand, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh was carved out from existing Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. The 29th state as Telangana was formed from existing Andhra Pradesh on 2 June 2014. From the socio-cultural diversity with existing regional differences, India has adopted an asymmetrical model of federalism. With the special arrangements under asymmetrical federalism, India tries to accommodate all identities and balanced its regional differences to protect the cultural, linguistic, religious minorities. From constitutional structure and power relation, India remains centralised federation. Indian constitution made the union strong by vesting so much powerful position over its units. In this context, M.P. Singh and Douglas V. Verney (2003) observed the centralised nature of Indian federation as, The Constitution recognized centralization in several ways. Residual power lay with Parliament, which was able under certain circumstances to invade the legislative and executive domain of the states. It could create new states, alter state boundaries, and even abolish states. It could amend the Constitution. It also could institute "president's rule" in a state, replacing its elected legislature and government. (Singh & Verney, 2003: 2). By creating a centralised federation, it does not mean that states have no autonomy within Indian federation. For inter-governmental relation, India follows cooperative principle among centre-states through various constitutional provisions, formal, informal mechanism like Inter-State Council, Zonal Council, which works as a cooperative body among centre-states. In terms of political consequences, India is one of the most demos-enabling federations where people have a more significant role regarding participation, representation in legislation process in comparison with the most demos-constraining federations like the USA, Brazil, etc. In terms of forms and functions, also India has its uniqueness in comparison with other classical models of federations like the American model, Australian model as well as the Canadian model.

TABLE 2
Forms and Function of Indian Federation

INDIA	Political	Federal	Power	Intergovernmental	Head of
	System	Form		Relation	State
	Parliamentary	Divided	Centralised	Cooperative	Republic

Source: Author's analysis based on works of Ronald Watts (1998), Thomas O. Hueglin & Alan Fenna's (2015), William Riker (1964), M.P. Singh & Douglas Verney (2003).

Federalism in India as a means to provide an institutional arrangement to accommodate its multi-diverse socio-political culture. In Atul Kohli's word "India's democracy was strengthened by crafting a federal structure that gave political power to Indian's who speak different languages" (Kohli, 2001: 19). Despite being conceptually incompatible, India has adopted 'parliamentary federation' as the most suitable institutional, governmental setup for India. In this governmental setup, there is a combination between two contradictory classical models, i.e. 'parliamentarism' based

on centralisation of power and 'federalism' based on non-centralisation of power (Chakrabarty, 2003, 2006). In this context by referring Carl J. Friedrich (1968) who developed the dynamic approach of federalism as a flexible model of federalism by focusing post-world war political development of federalism, we can say India's federalism is created by a process that is still evolving. India's federalism is created by a process that has started after the British left the unitary nature of administrative legacy which reflects in India's constitution along with federal nature. It was continued by Indian National Congress(INC) after independence under its "Congress System"(Kothari, 1964) and it gradually moved towards decentralised federation or more federal polity contributed by various factors like political process, constitutional amendments, reactive role of judiciary and economic liberalisation after 1991 (Singh, 2002: 553; Arora et al., 2013). Among these factors, the political process has contributed a lot to develop, evolve its federal political system. Therefore, there is a profound change in what the Indian federation is now and what was made by the original constitution in the beginning.

3. INDIA IN TRANSITION AS FEDERAL POLITY

India as a parliamentary federation, political parties become a significant intervening variable to influence the nature and working of India's federal polity. The changes of the party system in India from one party dominant system to the multi-party coalition dominant federalisation of party system has not only altered the basic premises of inter-governmental relations. It also creates new dimensions that are impacting on the federal structure which has led to the development of new ways of organising inter-state and centre-state relations (Majeed, 2005). Scholar M.P. Singh and Rekha Saxena while discussing the evolution of Indian federalism, observe,

The phenomenon of federalism in India has historically evolved and it is still in the process of evolution. Its historical trajectory has traversed from the imperial 'revenue and law and order model' to a 'planned development model' to a 'cooperative federalism' model to a federal 'bargaining model' to a 'collaborative model.' It may possibly develop into a 'people's democracy' model founded on decentralization and empowerment of local Government. (2008: 139) To discuss the transition of India's federal process, India has experienced with three phases of development since independence which can be understood as a shift from paramount federalism to cooperative federalism. From 1947-1967 under the one-party dominated system, India's federal process can be considered as paramount federalism. During this period, Congress party was in a position both as centre as well as states by securing an absolute majority in parliament and state assembly elections which renowned scholar on Indian politics, Rajni Kothari (1964) mentioned as Congress System. During this period, Indian states had a minimal role; they had to surrender most of their authority to centre and most of the decision from government formation to administration controlled by the centre. The state had to play as an agent's role to follow the instruction of the centre because of same-party rule both in the centre as well as in states. From 1967 to 1989 period can be regarded as a very crucial point in Indian federalism that manifest different

changes by the first time marked a clear distinction between constitutional structural setup and operational reality in Indian federalism. This period exhibited the contradiction as well as the growing tension between centre and states by highlighting the relation between ruling party states versus opposition party's states in terms of cooperation, bargain with centre (Khan, 2003). This period also saw the growing assertion of state rights, as well as demand for greater state autonomy and economic independence. The states also questioned the centre's monopoly over states through constitutional provisions. In reaction to the centralised federation, states become more active and assertive which reflected when for the first time by overthrowing Congress party's hegemonic one-party monopoly with the formation of non-congress government first at states in 1969 and centre in 1977 through the formation of a coalition government. With the rise of regional parties in India during this period started the trend of bipolarities between congress versus anti-congress and which gradually contributed to developing the multi-party system (Sridharan, 2012a). From 1989 to the present time, India has shifted from centralised federation to more federal polity with the influence of various factors. Scholars have a consensus that India's federal polity has phenomenal transformation after 1990, that can be defined as 'new federalism' where state-based regional parties become the key player. The decline of the Congress system ends the era of single-party majority government and beginning the era of coalition politics. After 1989 and mainly after 1996 to present time coalition become an inevitable part in Indian politics both at the centre and state level which compel the national parties to come closer to regional parties for making alliance to run the government at centre. As a result, it enables state parties to take part at the national level decision-making process as a member of the coalition. In this context, Adam Ziegfeld observes, "Participation in national-level government has enhanced the payoffs to leaders of regional parties by offering them ministerial berths, increased discretionary funds from the central government, and more secure state governments" (2012: 76).

4. FEDERAL COALITION AND COOPERATIVE FEDERALISM

While discussing the political dimension of Indian federalism renowned experts on Indian federalism Balveer Arora, K.K. Kailash, Rekha Saxena, H. Kham Khan Suan argued that federal coalitions have strengthened the federal political culture of the polity (Arora et al., 2013:114). There is a wide consensus among scholars that 1989 is the landmark in India's federal polity, which introduces federal coalition as a new mode of power-sharing mechanism to accommodate, recognise more extensive federal-state representation through formal, informal institutional mechanism (Arora et al., 2013). In general, the term 'federal coalition' mainly emphasises an innovative power-sharing mechanism of coalition politics in Indian context to articulate and balance the state's interest with national interest. The idea and the term 'federal coalition' first expounded by I.K. Gujral, India's former Prime Minister who led the United Front Coalition government from 1997-1998. For Gujral 'federal coalition is one that trying to create and give space to all those areas and all those aspirations and all those expressions, political expressions which comes from

various state' (Frontline, 1997:22). Gujral's idea of federal coalition mainly emphasised on accommodating, representing India's diversity manifested among different regional state-based political parties and through coalition which able to recognise and respect different identities without attempting to homogenise them (Arora, 2000). After Gujral's conceptualization of federal coalition, many renowned scholars on Indian Politics Balveer Arora (2000, 2015) & K.K. Kailash (2007, 2016), M.P. Singh (2001), developed the idea of 'federal coalition' as a power-sharing mechanism which brings together usually a polity wide party along with numerous single state and multi-state parties and as an innovative device to recognize and accommodate the needs of diversity with promoting national unity (Arora et al., 2013:114). In terms of power-sharing, by comparing Daniel Elazar's (1987) conceptualization of federalism as 'self-rule and shared rule' and Arendt Lijphart's (1996) 'consociationalism', Balveer Arora (2000) defined federal coalition as an innovative institutional design in India's context to bring together representative of India's diversity without attempting to merge the differences. In Balveer Arora's, word federal coalition "seeks to reconcile territorially-based identities within a cohesive frame even in the absence of shared ideologies" (2000: 176). Federal coalition recognise, accommodates regional aspirations and ability to make a stable arrangement in India's federal process to establish a more federal polity. It also facilitates broader federal representation of states through coalition government at the centre which fills the gap created by India's constitutionally arranged centralised federation (Arora & Kailash, 2007; Arora, 2015). Federal Coalitions provide them greater equal space as an equal partner which is not only limited to the government making at centre but also allow them to represent, address their regional, local issues into the national arena through institutionalising the alliance management and governance mechanism (Arora et al., 2013). While discussing the State's influence in national-level decision making under this power-share mechanism of federal coalition, Balveer Arora observes, Through federal coalitions the power and influence of state-based parties is felt on the making of national policy as well as the course of Centre-state relations. More importantly, single-state and multi-state parties have engineered, through the political process, an enhanced degree of participation in national policy-making that they could not achieve through formal institutions of co-operative federalism. In effect, federal coalition have given them participatory opportunities that were earlier denied to them (Arora, 2015:25). By depending on the theoretical formulations of federal coalition developed by Balveer Arora, K.K. Kailash, M.P. Singh, **Table 3** mainly shows the formation of coalition governments at centre since 1989 (excluding 1991-1996 P.V. Narasimha Rao's Congress party's minority government) through the innovative power sharing mechanism of federal coalition. The table mainly shows government formation process at national level with details about its types, its duration and its electoral strength in both executive coalition as well as a legislative coalition with seat share in parliament. It also gives a clear picture about the formation of the federal cabinet by showing state parties participation in an executive coalition to explain the growing interdependence between national and state parties for

government formation at centre because of compulsion of coalition politics in Indian polity. Through this table the author has tried to explain the political dimension of Indian federalism based on William H. Riker's understanding of measuring federalism with party system to examine the locus of power among national and state parties. After 1989, with the wave of 'Dalitization-Mandalization-Hinduization', state based political parties emerged as the dominant player in both states as well as national elections with its popular support base. With the fragmented multi-party system, no national party able to win absolute single party majority to form the government at the centre. In such situation, coalition becomes inherent to form government at the centre where national parties have to come closer to regional parties for government formation process. This compulsion of coalition politics, not only gives more bargaining power to regional parties but also marked a new culture of power-sharing through the new mechanism of federation coalition (Arora et al., 2013; Sharma & Swenden, 2017). So federation coalition is seen as an influencing factor of more federal polity.

TABLE 3
Federal Coalitions in India's Federal Polity from 1989 to 2019

Federal Coalition (FC)- Year	National Front 1989	BJP led 1996	United Front I 1996	United Front II 1997	NDA I 1998	NDA II 1999	UPA I 2004	UPA II 2009	NDA III 2014	NDA IV 2019
Strength	283	195	318	318	285	303	338	322	336	353
Total Parties	10	5	13	13	20	21	27	20	29	23
State Parties	4	3	8	8	18	19	22	16	28	22
Executive Coalition	5	2	9	9	10	10	9	6	6	5
Legislative Coalition	5	3	4	4	10	11	18	14	23	19
Total Ministers	39	12	39	42	43	70	67	79	69	58
Ministers from State Parties	3	1	21	24	13	16	20	16	6	4
Largest Party's Seat & Percent in FC	JD 143 (50.53)	BJP 161 (82.57)	INC 140 (44.02)	INC 140 (44.02)	BJP 182 (63.86)	BJP 182 (60.07)	INC 145 (42.90)	INC 206 (63.98)	BJP 282 (83.93)	BJP 303 (85.83)
Coalitionable parties seat & percent in FC	140 (49.47)	34 (17.43)	178 (55.98)	178 (55.98)	103 (36.14)	121 (39.93)	193 (57.10)	116 (36.02)	54 (16.07)	50 (14.16)
Duration (days)	343	16	324	332	572	1683	1826	1830	1824	-
Type of Coalition	MC	MC	MC	MC	MC	MC	MC	MC	SC	SC

Source: Author's calculation based on the main ideas of Arora (2000, 2003a, 2015) & Kailash (2007, 2013, 2016), M.P. Singh (2001) drawing from different sources. Data for total number of political parties in federal coalitions have been taken from Table 1.4-6 in E. Sridharan (2012a, 2012 b) however the data has been updated from different internet sources e.g. <http://www.indiavotes.com> and from Indian Recorder. The information regarding total strength, state parties, largest parties and coalitionable parties seats has been calculated from election commission of India's statistical reports on general election from 1989-2014 available at http://eci.nic.in/eci_main1/ElectionStatistics.aspx. Data regarding total ministers, ministers from state parties, legislative coalition and executive coalitions have been taken from different sources like Ruparelia (2015), Indian Recorder (from 1996-1999), India Year Book (1999, 2004, 2009, 2014) and different media sources (The Hindu, Times of India, The Hindustan Times, The Indian Express) and websites <https://www.rediff.com/election/1999/oct/13portfo.htm> & <http://www.rediff.com/election/2004/may/22man.htm> and Author has

calculated the duration of coalition government at centre from <http://www.pmindia.gov.in/en/former-prime-ministers/>.

Note- **Executive Coalition**-Parties joining the council of minister as governing party, **Legislative Coalition**- parties supporting the government in parliament without joining cabinet. Largest party and coalitionable parties' seat share percentage is based on total strength of federal coalition. **MC**-Minority Coalition (Coalition maker party's does not have single party majority) **SC**-Surplus Coalition (Coalition maker parties have single party majority to form government).

Table 3 clearly shows during the period from 1989 to 2019, India has entered the 'era of federal coalition' where greater involvement of regional state-based political parties in government formation process at national level are playing a very significant influential role which was denied to them through the formal constitutional arrangements. State parties involvement in federal coalition not only limited to joining the coalition as supporting party but also according to their number of seats, they have been given important position in federal cabinet as cabinet or minister of states. From National Front (1989) government to NDA-IV (2019) government, the total number of political parties as alliance partners have increased from 10 political parties to 23 parties and among them number of state parties are in large numbers. In all this federal coalitions, we have found a gradual increase of state based party's involvement from three parties under National Front government to present NDA government with 28 parties. The increasing number of political parties in every federal coalition also impact on the formation of federal cabinet where many state-based political parties get rewarded according to their number of seats. In most of these federal coalitions, many strong regional parties like All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (ADMK), All India Trinamool Congress (AITC), Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), Lok Jan Shakti Party (LJP), Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), Shiv Sena (SHS), Telugu Desam (TDP) etc. hold important ministers' position in federal cabinets. In such power sharing formula, the coalition maker party that usually comes from a national party who has largest seats, adopted different techniques to manage the coalition at both government as well as political level. At the governmental level, the federal coalition has very important role in terms of making a stable government by protecting the interest of both centre as well as the states. Federal Coalition provides a common platform to national as well as different regional state-based political parties where they can participate as being a member of both executive coalition or governing parties and legislative coalition in national decision making as well as gave their opinion, concern on policy-making issues. Within federal coalition as coalition partner they can fulfill these through two means as being member of executive coalition they can take part in federal cabinet, Group of Ministers, Cabinet Committees and as being member of legislative coalition through means of many coordinating forum, formal, informal institutional mechanism like Common Minimum Programme, Coordinate Committee, All Party Meeting etc. (Kailash, 2007). Federal Coalitions become the most appropriate mechanism in holding a stable coalition by protecting the interest of all regional aspiration and national needs. Here we can bring 1999's BJP led NDA federal coalition as first coalition

government at centre for maintaining a stable government by completing its full term with the help of 21 regional and national political parties through adopting various formal, informal institutional mechanism at both governments as well as political level. Scholars Balveer Arora (2002), M.P. Singh (2002) & Douglas Verney (2003), Lloyd I. Rudolph and Susanne Hoerber Rudolph (2002, 2010) see the emergence of federalism coalition after 1989 as the shift from old federalism to new federalism and this process is still going on. By defining 'new federalism', they mainly emphasise on the development of centre-state relation from centralised federation to a more federal polity by empowering states more power with greater involvement in the national decision-making process through federal coalition. This has also reduced central intervention regarding using anti-federal articles, i.e. Art-356 (President's rule in states) and the office of governor. It is believed that after 1989, the central intervention through using Article-356 and using the role of governor against the state governments (mainly state governments of the opposition party) has declined (Arora 2002; Singh 2002). Here, federal coalitions work as an effective barrier against central dominance (Sadanandan, 2012). Regarding using this anti-federal article, i.e. Art-356 and the post of governor against the state governments has declined after 1989. Mainly two factors made these changes, the participation of state-based regional parties in the coalition government at centre and the Bommai versus Union of India, 1994 judgment which made Article 356 under the preview of the judicial review. During the one-party dominance from 1947 to 1989 (excluding 1977-79 Janata Party's rule) central government use this anti-federal element, i.e. Article 356 and the office of governor as a political weapon against states and mainly for the state governments of opposition parties. The era of federal coalition also brings a new change regarding the composition of Lok Sabha continuously after 1989 election shows a complex picture in terms of representation of different parties from national parties to state parties in a very fragmented way (Arora, 2003a) which lead to the compulsion of coalition politics in national as well as state level. This fragmented multi-party system led to the emergence of 'Binodal' party system led by NDA and UPA with the gradual rise of regional parties (Arora, 2003a), it's become very difficult to form a single-party majority government as a result it lead to the non-hegemonic position of national parties and dominating role of regional parties which lead to maintain a balance of power with this decentralized federal party system and now state can now able to use legitimate control in central governments over national decision making and also they can protect their own state's interest from the encroachment of central governments. In a federal coalition government, union government not in a position to dictate the state government at their own will. The state government now in a place to abandon its dictatorial role and in opposite state-based parties who are in part of federal coalition can controlled union government through various mechanisms like Common Minimum Programme and Coordination Committee which reflect the more bargaining power of states over Centre (Arora et al., 2013; Arora, 2015; Kailash, 2007). After 1989, with the federal coalition, inter-governmental interaction has gained more importance, and now central government is playing a

coordinating role through the different mechanism at executive level dealing with common agenda on specific issues (Arora, 2000). Federal coalition set up a balance of power between state and centre, which led to cordial and harmonious centre-state relations. According to Balveer Arora, "the complexity of the electoral federalism and the presence of a large number of single-state parties in federal coalitions make it virtually impossible to eliminate state-level concerns from parliament, even if it were considered desirable to do so" (Arora, 2003b: 33). It is believed that the transformation of party system influences the orientation of India's economy. Since 1989 there has been a lot of changes and development in Indian political system which Lloyd I. Rudolph and Susanne Hoeber Rudolph (2002) referred to as 'federalisation of party system with federalized market economy' where state governments get space for decision making through coalition government which introduced greater economic and political decentralization and this will lead to a path of greater co-operative federalism.

5. CONCLUSION

While discussing the general conditions for successful functioning of India's federal process, Subrata K. Mitra (2014: 156) brings up Ronald L. Watts's (1998) four general conditions or aspects based on the works of Wheare (1951), Friedrich (1968), Riker (1975), Dikshit (1975), Watts (1981), and Elazar (1987). The first and foremost is "[...] the degree of elite accommodation and public involvement in the process" (Watts, 1998: 128). Second, "[...] the importance of competition between federal and state governments and among state governments" (Watts, 1998: 130). Thirdly, "[...] the complexity of intergovernmental administrative and fiscal relations" (Watts, 1998: 130) and fourth based on Riker (1975)'s analysis, Watts has mentioned "[...] the role and impact of political parties, including their number, their character, and the relations among federal, state, and local branches, to understand the dynamic relationships within federations" (Watts, 1998: 130). From the perspective of party politics, this article has tried to understand the nature of Indian federalism through theoretical analysis provided by renowned scholars on federalism. As a federal polity, India represents a unique model of federation in comparison with other classical models which distinguish itself as Indian model of federalism. India as a federal polity with parliamentary political system, political parties are playing a very crucial role as a significant intervening variable to influence the nature and working of India's federal process. Political parties have not only altered the basic premises of inter-governmental relations by creating new dimensions that are impacting the federal structure but also it has strengthened India's participatory democratic political culture. So, it forces us to think in India's context; if the federal experiment has succeeded in India, then it is not because of its laid out constitutional provisions but because of its nature of democratic politics.

REFERENCES

- [1] Alexandrowicz, C. H. Constitutional developments in India. Bombay: Oxford University Press, 1957.
- [2] Appleby, P. H. Public administration in India: report of a survey. Delhi: Manager of Publications, 1953.
- [3] Arora, B. "Negotiating Differences: Federal Coalitions and National Cohesion". In Zoya Hasan & Francine R. Frankel (Eds.), *Transforming India: Social and Political Dynamics of Democracy* (pp. 176-206). New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- [4] Arora, B. "Political Parties and the Party System: The Emergence of New Coalitions". In Zoya Hasan (ed.), *Parties and Party Politics in India* (pp. 504-533). New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- [5] Arora, B. "Federalisation of India's Party System." In Ajay K. Mehra, D.D. Khanna & Gert W. Kueck (Eds.), *Political Parties and Party System* (pp.83-99). New Delhi: SAGE, 2003 a.
- [6] Arora, B. "The Indian Parliament and Democracy." In Ajay K. Mehra, W.Kueck (eds), *The Indian Parliament: A Comparative Perspective* (pp. 369-404). New Delhi: Konark, 2003 b.
- [7] Arora, B. and Kailash, K.K. "Policy Making in India's Federal Coalitions: The Group of Ministers Device." In Hoshiar Singh, P.C. Mathur & Pankaj Singh (Eds.), *Coalition Governments and Good Governance* (pp.167-225). Jaipur: Aalekh, 2007.
- [8] Arora, B and Kailash K. K. "The New Party System: Federalised and Binodal." In Ajay K. Mehra (Ed.) *Party System in India: Emerging Trajectories* (pp.235-261). New Delhi: Lancer, 2013.
- [9] Arora, B., Kailash, K. K., Saxena, R., & Suan, H. K. "Indian Federalism." In K.C. Suri (Ed.) (Series Editor: Achin Vanaik) *Indian Democracy, ICSSR Survey of Research Surveys and Explorations in Political Science Vo-2*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- [10] Arora, B. "Foundations and Development of Indian Federalism: Lessons Learnt and Unlearnt." *Yojana*, 59 (February), 22-26, 2015.
- [11] Asian Recorder & Publications. *Indian Recorder: A Weekly of Events & Happening*, Vol. III (25-33), New Delhi: Asian Recorder & Publications, 1996.
- [12] Asian Recorder & Publications. *Indian Recorder: A Weekly of Events & Happening*, Vol. IV (21--23), New Delhi: Asian Recorder & Publications, 1997.
- [13] Asian Recorder & Publications. *Indian Recorder: A Weekly of Events & Happening*, Vol. V (14-16), New Delhi: Asian Recorder & Publications, 1998.
- [14] Asian Recorder & Publications. *Indian Recorder: A Weekly of Events & Happening*, Vol. VI (45-46), New Delhi: Asian Recorder & Publications, 1999.
- [15] Austin, G. *The Indian Constitution: Cornerstone of a nation*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1966.
- [16] Basu, D. D. *Introduction to the Constitution of India*. New Delhi: Prentice Hall of India, 1985.
- [17] Birch, A. H. *Approaches to the Study of Federalism*. *Political Studies*, XIV (1), 15-33, 1966.
- [18] Chakrabarty, B. "Parliamentary Federalism in India: The Constitutional Inputs and the Process of Imagining." In Ajay K. Mehra, W.Kueck (Eds), *The Indian Parliament: A Comparative Perspective* (pp.369-404). New Delhi: Konark, 2003.
- [19] Chakrabarty, B. *Forging power: Coalition Politics in India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- [20] Dikshit, D. R. *The Political Geography of Federalism: Inquiry Into Origins and Stability*. New York: Macmillan, 1975.

- [21] Elazar, D. J. Exploring Federalism. Alabama: The University of Alabama, 1987.
- [22] Friedrich, C. J. Trends of Federalism in Theory and practice. London: Pall Mall Press, 1968.
- [23] Frontline. Interview with Prime Minister I.K. Gujral (By Editor. N. Ram), Vol.14, No.9, (May 3-16), pp.21-24. 1997.
- [24] Gogoi, Tarun. Transition of India's Federal Process and Coalition Politics: A Comparison of NDA Regimes. (Unpublished M.Phil. Dissertation), Centre for Political Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India, 2016.
- [25] Hueglin, T.O., & Fenna, A. Comparative federalism: A systematic inquiry. University of Toronto Press, 2015.
- [26] Jennings, S. I. Some characteristics of the Indian Constitution. London: Oxford University Press, 1953.
- [27] Kailash, K. K., & Arora, B. Federal Coalitions in India: Strategic Calculations and Revolving-door Partners. *Studies in Indian Politics*, 4(1), 63-76, 2016.
- [28] Kailash, K. K. Middle game in coalition politics. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 42(2), 307-317, 2007.
- [29] Khan, M. G. Coalition Government and Federal System in India. *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, 64 (3/4), 167-190, 2003.
- [30] Khan, R. Federal India: a design for change. New Delhi: Viking Publishing House, 1992.
- [31] Kincaid, J. Federalism (Vol. I). (J. Kincaid, Ed.) London: SAGE, 2011.
- [32] Kohli, A. (Ed.). The success of India's democracy (Vol. 6). Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- [33] Kothari, R. The Congress' System' in India. *Asian survey*, 4 (12). 1161-1173, 1964.
- [34] Lijphart, A. The puzzle of Indian democracy: A consociational interpretation. *American political science review*, 90 (2). 258-268, 1996.
- [35] Livingston, W. S. Federalism and Constitutional Change. London: Oxford University Press, 1956.
- [36] Majeed, A. Federal India: a design for good governance. New Delhi: Centre for Federal Studies, 2005.
- [37] McWhinney, E. Federal Constitution-making for a Multi-national World. Leyden: AW Sijthoff, 1966.
- [38] Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India. India 1999: A Reference Annual. New Delhi: Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, GOI, 1999.
- [39] Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India. India 2004: A Reference Annual. New Delhi: Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, GOI, 2004.
- [40] Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India. India 2009: A Reference Annual. New Delhi: Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, GOI, 2009.
- [41] Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India. India 2014: A Reference Annual. New Delhi: Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, GOI, 2014.
- [42] Mitra, S.K. Politics in India: structure, process, and policy. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2014.
- [43] Morris, J. The Government and Politics of India. Delhi: Universal Book, 1960.
- [44] Riker, W. H. Federalism Origin Operation Significance. Boston: Little Brown & Company, 1964.
- [45] Riker, W.H. "Federalism." In F.I. Greenstein & N.W. Polsby (Eds.), *Handbook of Political Science: Governmental institutions and processes*, Vol.5 (pp.93-172), California: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1975.
- [46] Rudolph, S. H., & Rudolph, L. I. New dimensions in Indian democracy. *Journal of Democracy*, 13(1), 52-66, 2002.
- [47] Rudolph L.I., & Rudolph. S. H. "The Old and New federalism in independent India." In P. R. Brass (Ed.), *Routledge Handbook of South Asian Politics: India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Nepal* (pp. 147-161). New York: Routledge, 2010.
- [48] Ruparelia, S. Divided We Govern: Coalition Politics in Modern India. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2015.
- [49] Sadanandan, A. Bridling Central Tyranny in India How Regional Parties Restrain the Federal Government. *Asian Survey*, 52(2), 247-269, 2012.
- [50] Sharma, C.K. & Swenden, W. Continuity and change in contemporary Indian federalism, *India Review*, 16(1), 1-13, 2017.
- [51] Singh, M. P. India's National Front and United Front coalition governments: A Phase in Federalized Governance. *Asian Survey*, 41 (2), 328-350, 2001.
- [52] Singh, M. P. Towards a More Federalized Parliamentary System in India: Explaining Functional Change. *Pacific Affairs*, 74(4), 553-568, 2002.
- [53] Singh, M. P., & Verney, D. V. Challenges to India's centralized parliamentary federalism. *Publius: The Journal of Federalism*, 33(4), 1-20, 2003.
- [54] Singh, M. P., & Saxena, R. Indian politics: contemporary issues and concerns. New Delhi: Prentice-Hall of India, 2008.
- [55] Sridharan, E. (Ed.). *Coalition Politics and Democratic Consolidation in Asia*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2012 a.
- [56] Sridharan, E. Why are multi-party minority governments viable in India? Theory and comparison. *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics*, 50 (3), 314-343, 2012 b.
- [57] Stepan, A. Federalism and Democracy: Beyond the U.S. model. *Journal of Democracy*, 10(4), 19-34, 1999.
- [58] Tarlton, C. D. Symmetry and Asymmetry as Elements of Federalism: A Theoretical Speculation. *The Journal of Politics*, 27(4), 861-874, 1965.
- [59] Verney, D. V. Federalism, Federative Systems, and Federations: The United States, Canada, and India. *Publius*, 25(2), 81-97, 1995.
- [60] Watts, R.L. "Federalism, regionalism and political integration." In David Cameron (Ed.), *Regionalism and Supranationalism: challenges and alternatives to the nation-state in Canada and Europe* (pp.3-19). Montreal: Institute for Research on Public Policy, 1981.
- [61] Watts, R. L. Comparing Federal Systems in the 1990's. Ontario: Institute of Intergovernmental Relation, 1996.

- [62] Watts, R. L. Federalism, Federal Political System and Federations. *Annual Review of Political Science* (1), 117-137, 1998.
- [63] Watts, R. L. "Origin of Cooperative and Competitive Federalism." In S. L. Greer (Ed.), *Territory, Democracy and Justice: Regionalism and Federalism in Western Democracies* (pp. 201-223). New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006.
- [64] Wheare, K. C. *Federal Government*. London: Oxford University Press, 1951.
- [65] Ziegfeld, A. Coalition government and party system change: Explaining the rise of regional political parties in India. *Comparative Politics*, 45(1), 69-87, 2012.