

A STUDY ON THE ROLE OF OPPOSITION PARTIES IN KARNATAKA POLITICS

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Abstract: Present days Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Indian National Congress (INC) and Janata Dal (Secular)(JDS) are the major political parties in the state. Recently BhatiyaPrajegalaKalyana Paksha added to the list. Marxist Communist Party and Maharashtra Ekikaran Samiti are the other active political parties in the state of Karnataka. The various precursors of the Janata Dal (Secular) such as Janata Party and Janata Dal had also been very influential political parties in the past years. Splinter groups such as Karnataka Congress Party (KCP),Karnataka Janta Paksha (KJP), BadavaraShramikaraRaithara(BSR) Congress, Lok Shakti and Janata Dal (United) have made considerable achievements in a few elections. Erstwhile parties which have been influential in the state include Indian National Congress (Organisation) (NCO), Bharatiya Jana sangh, Kisan Mazdoor Praja Party (KMPP), National Development Party (NDP), Praja Socialist Party (PSP), Samyukta Socialist Party (SSP), Swatantra Party and Communist Party of India (CPI). Parliamentary opposition is the permanent feature of government in party system. It prevents the centralisation of power in a person or a group of people. Without effective opposition party, no democratic government can be alive. Ruling party is essential for taking decisions and to lead the government and even opposition party also essential for confirming that, the decisions taken by the government are through the proper parliamentary discussions. Ivor Jennings Stated "Opposition Party Works as alternative government and it gives its attention on the problems of the people". Functions of the Opposition party are important as of the functions of the ruling party or government. If there is no opposition party in the nation, there is no democracy. This research paper focussed on the study of active political parties, electoral politics and opposition parties in the state of Karnataka.

Key words: Political party, Ruling party, Opposition party, Parliamentary, Electoral politics, government, democratic, party system.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Parliamentary democracy implies the supremacy of the legislature over the executive. The head of the government is the leader of the ruling party in the legislature and every action of the ministry requires the approval of the majority of members in the house. Democracy is said to be a government by criticism. Contrary to totalitarian forms of government, in a democracy opposition to government is legally based. The party which got lesser seats in the legislature is given all opportunities to criticise the government and expose its acts of omission and commission. It has a right to change the government by converting the majority in the house to its policy and programme. Similarly, it has a right to convert the opinion of the electorate in its favour and to get majority in the legislature after a general election. Mandate of the people is the base of ruling party. Democratic principles of government require not only a strong and stable government but also an effective and responsible opposition party. In the absence of such an opposition party, the majority party, however democratic, it may be in the beginning, will tend to become tyrannical in course of time as its power goes unchecked. Thus, parliamentary democracy will be successful in a country where government is formed by political parties which while differing in details agree on certain fundamental democratic principles. The government of Great Britain can be held as a model for this type of political institution. The opposition

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in England has acquired a constitutional status and the Crown Act of 1937 provides a salary for the Leader of the Opposition charged on the consolidated fund.

Political parties generally do not find the requisite climate for healthy development in a newly independent country. The party which has led the national movement successfully will not only have the best leadership and organisation in the country, but also will have a psychological appeal on the minds of the people. Loyalty to that party will be taken as synonymous to loyalty to the nation.

Secondly, as the basic economic or social aspirations of the people are yet to be fulfilled, there cannot be much scope for opposition parties to criticise the policy and programmes of the ruling party, as all parties have to agree on a minimum common programme which is yet to be achieved. Hence, in all newly independent countries we find the dominance of only one party. For example, in India, the Indian National Congress has dominated the political life of the people for nearly two decades after independence. This party provided for a stable government in the country when it was most needed in the early period of transition, and also laid the foundations of democracy. However, the domineering position of the Congress party has prevented the growth of other political parties on a sound basis, and the country was deprived of an effective and responsible opposition party. As a result of this, after the fourth General Elections in 1967 when the monolithic power of the Congress party seems to be breaking, the opposition parties in the country do not appear to be capable of providing an effective alternative government. Thus, democracy seems to be at cross-roads in India today. The future of democracy in our country depends on the organisation of political parties on a sound basis. The opposition parties have to play a vital role in this national build up.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

K.R. Bombwall in his book titled "Major Contemporary Constitutional Systems" published by Modern Publications, Ambala Cantt. In 1986 focused on the growth of Opposition in parliamentary democracy. The importance of "Official Opposition" is also emphasised by Bombwall. The book, reading in the Indian Parliamentary Opposition: Vol. I and II" published by Kanishka Publications, New Delhi studied the growth and importance of Opposition in Indian Parliamentary democracy. The book extensively elaborated the role of the Opposition parties in India, citing examples from the working of Parliament as well as in the Politics of India.

"Role of Opposition Parties in Indian Politics" written by D. Sundaram and published by Deep and Deep Publications in 1992 is another book dealing with the role of Opposition in Indian Politics. The author examines and analyses at length the role taken by the Opposition parties like the Samyukata Socialist Party, the Praja Socialist Party, the Communist Party of India, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) etc. in the politics of India.

H.S. Fartyal in his book, "Role of Opposition in the Indian Parliament" published by Chaitanya Publishing House, Allahabad dealt in length the role of the Opposition since 1950s. It is an elaborate study of the Opposition parties in and outside the Parliament of India. The book analyses in depth the electoral performances of the Opposition parties in comparison with the ruling parties.

Maurice Duverger in his book, "Political Parties- their Organisation and Activity in the Modern State" published by Sage Publication, Beverly Hills, London in 1979, evaluated the strength of the political parties in terms of, the parties with a majority bent that are capable of commanding an absolute parliamentary majority; and, the major parties, which cannot normally command absolute majorities but can govern with some external support, in playing a significant role at all, in government or as opposition.

Mary C. Carras, in the “The Dynamics of Indian Political Factions Blackie and Son, Bombay, 1972, analyzed the role of opposition party or parties in a bi-party find multi-party systems and highlighted the support of important socio-economic interest, and sizable segments of the electorate to the opposition parties.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The following are the objectives of the study

1. To analyse the electoral performance of political parties in the state of Karnataka.
2. To study the role and position of opposition parties in Karnataka.

4. METHODOLOGY OF STUDY:

For the study, the secondary sources of data were used from professional magazines, journals, articles, newspapers, internet, books etc.

MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES AND THEIR ELECTORAL PERFORMANCE IN THE STATE OF KARNATAKA:

Karnataka is one of the important states of India. It was established on November 1, 1956 according to the State Reorganisation act of 1956. Then it was called by the name of Mysore and renamed as Karnataka on November 1, 1973. The capital city of the state is Bangalore. It is surrounded by the Arabian Sea on the west, Goa on the north-west, Maharashtra on the north, Telangana on the north-east, Andhra Pradesh on the east, Tamil Nadu on the south-east, Kerala on the south-west. The state covers an area of 191, 791sq.kms. It is the seventh largest Indian state by area. With 61,130,704 inhabitants at the 2011 census, Karnataka is the eighth largest state by population, comprising 30 districts and four revenue divisions, namely, Bangalore, Mysore, Belagavi and Kalaburagi. Kannada is the official language of the state. The State is considerably contributing to the economy of the country. It is rich by art, culture, tourism etc.

Bharatiya Janata Party, Indian National Congress and Janata Dal (Secular) are the dominant political parties of the day in the state. Recently BhatiyaPrajegalaKalyana Paksha added to the list. Marxist Communist Party and Maharashtra Ekikaran Samiti are the other active political parties in the state. In the past, the various precursors of the Janata Dal (Secular) such as Janata Party and Janata Dal have also been very influential. Splinter groups such as Karnataka Congress Party (KCP), Karnataka Janta Paksha (KJP), BadavaraShramikaraRaithara (BSR) Congress, Lok Shakti and Janata Dal (United) had made considerable achievements in a few elections.

Erstwhile parties which have been influential in the state include Indian National Congress (Organisation) (NCO), Bharatiya Jana sangh, Kisan Mazdoor Praja Party (KMPP), National Development Party (NDP), Praja Socialist Party (PSP), Samyukta Socialist Party (SSP), Swatantra Party and Communist Party of India (CPI). Electoral performance of different political parties in the Lok Sabha and Assemble elections in the state of Karnataka has been discussed is as following.

Table.1.Seats Won by Different Political Parties in The Lok Sabha Elections From Karnataka

Year	Lok Sabha Election	Party-wise Details
1952	First Lok Sabha	Total: 11. Congress: 10, KMPP: 1.
1957	Second Lok Sabha	Total: 26. Congress: 23, PSP: 1, SCF: 1, independent: 1.
1962	Third Lok Sabha	Total: 26. Congress: 25, LSS: 1.
1967	Fourth Lok Sabha	Total: 27. Congress : 18, Swatantra Party: 5, PSP: 2, SSP: 1, Independent: 1.
1971	Fifth Lok Sabha	Total: 27. Congress : 27.
1977	Sixth Lok Sabha	Total: 28. Congress: 26, Janata Party: 2.

1980	Seventh Lok Sabha	Total: 28. Congress(Indira): 27, Janata Party: 1.
1984	Eighth Lok Sabha	Total: 28. Congress: 24, Janata Party: 4.
1989	Ninth Lok Sabha	Total: 28. Congress: 26, Janata Dal: 2.
1991	Tenth Lok Sabha	Total: 28. Congress: 23, BJP: 4, Janata Dal: 1.
1996	Eleventh Lok Sabha	Total: 28. Janata Dal: 16, BJP: 6, Congress: 5, KCP: 1.
1998	Twelfth Lok Sabha	Total: 28. NDA: 16(BJP: 13 and Lok Shakti: 3), Congress: 9, Jananta Dal: 3.
1999	Thirteenth Lok Sabha	Total: 28. Congress: 18, BJP: 7, JD(U): 3.
2004	Fourteenth Lok Sabha	Total: 28. BJP: 18, Congress: 8, JD(S): 2.
2009	Fifteenth Lok Sabha	Total: 28. BJP: 19, Congress: 6, JD(S): 3.
2014	Sixteenth Lok Sabha	Total: 28. BJP: 17, Congress: 9, JD(S): 2.
2019	Seventeenth Lok Sabha	Total: 28. BJP: 25, Congress: 1, JD(S): 1, Independent: 1.

Table.2. Seats Won by Different Political Parties in The Assembly Elections OfKarnataka

Year	Vidhan Sabha Election	Party-wise Details	Chief Minister	Party
1952	First Assembly	Total: 99. Congress: 74, KMPP: 8, Independents: 11.	KengalHanumanthaiah. KadidalManjappa S. Nijalingappa	Congress
1957	Second Assembly	Total: 208. Congress: 150, PSP: 18, Independents: 35.	S. Nijalingappa B.D. Jatti	Congress
1962	Third Assembly	Total: 208. Congress: 138, PSP: 20 Swatantra Party: 9, Independents: 27.	S.R. Kanthi S. Nijalinappa	Congress
1967	Fourth Assembly	Total: 216. Congress: 126, PSP: 20, Swatantra Party: 16, SSP: 6, BJS: 4. Independents: 41.	S. Nijalingappa Veerendra Patil	Congress
1972	Fifth Assembly	Total: 216. Congress: 165, NCO: 24, Independents: 20.	Devaraj Urs	Congress
1978	Sixth Assembly	Total: 224. Congress(I): 149, Janata Party: 59. Independents: 10	Devaraj Urs R Gundu Rao	Congress
1983	Seventh Assembly	Total: 224. Janata Party: 95, Congress(I): 82, BJP: 18, Independents: 22.	Ramakrishna Hegde	Janata Party
1985	Eighth Assembly	Total: 224. Janata Party: 139, Congress: 65, BJP: 2, Independents: 13.	Ramakrishna Hegde S.R. Bommai	Janata Party
1989	Ninth Assembly	Total: 224. Congress : 178, JD: 24, BJP: 4, Independents: 12	Veerendra Patil S. Bangarappa M. VeerappaMoily	Congress
1994	Tenth Assembly	Total: 224. JD: 115, BJP: 40, Congress: 34, KCP: 10, Independents: 18.	H.D. Deve Gowda J.H. Patel	Janata Dal
1999	Eleventh Assembly	Total: 224. Congress: 132, BJP: 44, JD(U): 18, JD(S): 10, Independents:19.	S.M. Krishna	Congress
2004	Twelfth Assembly	Total: 224. BJP: 79, Congress: 65, JD(S): 58.	Dharam Singh H.D. Kumaraswamy B.S. Yadiyurappa	Congress JD(S) BJP
2008	Thirteenth Assembly	Total: 224. BJP: 110, Congress: 80, JD(S): 28.	B.S. Yadiyurappa D.V. Sadananda Gowda Jagadish Shettar	BJP
2013	Fourteenth Assembly	Total: 224. Congress: 122, BJP: 40, JD(S): 40, KJP: 6, BSRC: 4.	K. Siddaramaiah	Congress

2018	Fifteenth Assembly	Total: 224. BJP: 104, Congress: 80, JD(S): 38, KPJP: 1, BSP: 1, IND: 1 Fifteen MLAs from Congress and JD(S) resigned in 2019, forcing a major bye-poll. After the bye-poll, BJP added 12 seats to go to 116 MLAs in the assembly. BSY became CM.	H.D. Kumaraswamy B.S. Yadiyurappa	JD(S) and Congress BJP
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5. ROLE OF OPPOSITION PARTIES IN KARNATAKA:

The opposition has to play a very important role in a democratic form of government. Its importance has increased tremendously with the introduction of democratic form of government by the countries which became independent after the Second World War, 1939-

1945. The successful working of the democratic government largely depends upon the effective role by the opposition.

The word 'Opposition' is derived from the Latin word 'Oppositio' which means to oppose. The origin and emergence of Parliamentary Opposition can be traced in the 17th century following 1688. The modern concept of Opposition in a democratic form of government had its origin in the British Parliament. During the second half of the last century, the forms and conventions associated with such opposition took something like their present shape. With the development of political parties, the opposition has been transformed into a distinct entity. Quintin Hogg in his book, "Purpose of Parliament" has described the Opposition as "an integral and indispensable part of the working of British Constitution". Dictionaries and books on political philosophy define the opposition mainly as a party that oppose the Government or party in power. The Grolier International Dictionary defines it as a political party or organisation opposed to the group, party of Government in power.

The Karnataka Legislative Assembly is the lower house of the bicameral legislature of Karnataka state in south India. Karnataka is one of the six states in India, where the State legislature is bicameral, comprising two houses. The two houses are the Vidhan Sabha (lower house) and the Vidhan Parishad (upper house). The members of the Vidhana Sabha are directly elected by the people through adult franchise.

Official Opposition is a term used in Parliament of India and State Legislatures to designate the political party which secured the second largest number of seats in either upper or lower houses. In order to get formal recognition in either upper or lower houses, the concerned party must have at least 10% of the total Strength of the house. A single party has to meet the 10% seat criterion, not an alliance. Many of the Indian State legislatures also follow this 10% rule while the rest of them prefer single largest opposition party according to the rules of their respective houses.

6. ROLE OF OPPOSITION PARTY:

The opposition's main role is to question the government of the day and hold them accountable to the public. This also helps to fix the mistakes of the Ruling Party. The Opposition is equally responsible in upholding the best interests of the people of the state. They have ensured that the Government does not take any steps, which might have negative effects on the people of the state.

The role of the opposition in legislature is basically to check the excesses of the ruling party, and not to be totally antagonistic. There are actions of the ruling party which may be beneficial to the masses and opposition is expected to support such steps.

IN LEGISLATURE, OPPOSITION PARTY HAS A MAJOR ROLE WHICH IS:

- (1) Constructive criticism of government.
- (2) Putting restriction of arbitrariness of ruling party.
- (3) Safeguarding liberty and right of people.
- (4) Preparation to form government.
- (5) Expression of public opinion.

In Karnataka the Indian National Congress, BharatiyaJanta Party, Janata Dal (Secular) have been mainly playing their role in the state politics both inside the floor and outside the floor. As a opposition party in their term they have constructively worked as the voice of the mass. The Position of opposition parties are as following.

Table.3.Leaders of the Opposition of Karnataka Legislative Assembly since 1962

Sl.No.	Name	Date From	Date To	Party
1	Sri S. Shivappa	22-03-1962	28-01-1967	PSP
2	Sri S. Shivappa	15-03-1967	22-02-1970	PSP
3	Sri S. Shivappa	23-02-1970	22-12-1970	SVD
4	Sri H. Siddaveerappa	23-12-1970	14-04-1971	Congress(R)
5	Sri H.D Deve Gowda	24-03-1972	17-03-1976	Congress(O)
6	Sri H. T. Krishnappa	18-03-1976	25-10-1976	Congress(O)
7	Sri H.D Deve Gowda	18-11-1976	31-12-1977	UOP
8	Sri S.R. Bommai	18-03-1978	17-07-1979	Janatha
9	Sri R. Gundu Rao	17-12-1979	22-01-1980	Congress(I)
10	Sri D. Deveraj Urs	23-01-1980	11-06-1981	Congress(U)
11	Sri A. Lakshmisagar	10-02-1982	08-01-1983	Janatha
12	Sri M. Veerappa Moily	24-01-1983	02-01-1985	Congress(I)
13	Sri S. Bangarappa	18-03-1985	11-06-1986	Congress(I)
14	Sri K.S. Nagarathnamma	29-01-1987	21-04-1989	Congress(I)
15	Sri D.B. Chandre Gowda	18-12-1989	17-08-1992	Janatha Dal
16	Sri R.V. Deshpande	18-08-1992	16-12-1994	Janatha Dal
17	Sri B.S. Yediyurappa	27-12-1994	18-12-1996	BJP
18	Sri Mallikarjuna M Kharge	19-12-1996	07-07-1999	Congress(I)
19	Sri Jagadish Shettar	26-10-1999	23-02-2004	BIP
20	Sri B.S. Yediyurappa	09-06-2004	02-02-2006	BJP
21	Sri Dharam Singh	08-02-2006	28-11-2007	INC
22	Sri Mallikarjuna M Kharge	05-06-2008	28-05-2009	Congress(I)
23	Sri Siddaramaiah	08-06-2009	12-05-2013	Congress(I)
24	Sri H.D Kumaraswamy	31-05-2013	22-01-2014	JD(S)
25	Sri Jagadish Shettar	23-01-2014	17-05-2018	BJP
26	Sri B.S. Yediyurappa	25-05-2018	Till Date	BJP
27	Sri Siddaramaiah	10-10-2019	Till Date	Congress(I)

7. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY:

At the very beginning in Karnataka politics, the Indian National Congress have shown its dominance. However, other political parties namely, Bharatiya Jana sangh, Kisan Mazdoor Praja Party (KMPP), National Development Party (NDP), Praja Socialist Party (PSP), Samyukta Socialist Party (SSP), Swatantra Party and Communist Party of India (CPI) have gradually been increased their strength and made a remarkable contributions. At present Indian

National Congress, Bharatiya Janata Party and Janata Dal (Secular) are the dominant parties in the state. All the three parties are enjoying the power in the state sometimes with absolute majority and sometimes with alliance of two parties.

From the beginning, opposition parties were also made the constructive functions inside and outside the floor. Moreover, we have witnessed that, the opposition parties brought the failures of government before the people and have got majority in the next election and formed the government.

8. SUGGESTIONS:

Opposition parties should not oppose the government only for political reasons, but, should work actively and constructively on issue based and fact based. It should find out the demerits of government and have to create awareness among the public. Moreover, the main duty of opposition party is to protect the democratic values and principles.

9. CONCLUSION:

As we know, the political parties are the pillars of representative democracy. Without them we cannot imagine the existence of it. So, political parties are very essential ingredients to form an elected government. Likewise, INC, BJP, JD(S) and some other minor parties are politically active in the state. The function of the Opposition is to oppose and criticize the government. The opposition seeks to expose the errors, the omissions and the commissions while asking questions and rising debates on adjournment motions in the legislature. Through the general debates on the budget and through the motions of censure on other occasions, the opposition subjects the policies and actions of the government to constant and often vehement criticism. The implementation of the policies of the government is always influenced by the impact of the opposition. It offers a secured guarantee for the successful democracy.

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