

A Critical Study on the Rise of Regional Party and Weakening of National Party in Tamil Nadu with Special Reference to Chennai

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ABSTRACT:

The political landscape of Tamil Nadu has witnessed a significant transformation characterised by the ascendancy of regional parties and the concurrent weakening of national parties. This research delves into the underlying factors contributing to this phenomenon and its implications for the state's political trajectory. Drawing on a combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies, this study examines historical trends, electoral data, party manifestos, and socio-political dynamics to elucidate the rise of regional parties such as the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) and the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), alongside the diminishing influence of national parties like the Indian National Congress (INC) and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Key drivers identified include linguistic identity politics, regional pride, historical grievances, charismatic leadership, and effective mobilization strategies. Additionally, socio-economic factors such as caste dynamics, welfare policies, and regional disparities play a crucial role in shaping voter preferences and party allegiances. The ramifications of this shift extend beyond electoral outcomes to governance, policy formulation, and federal dynamics. The dominance of regional parties has led to the prioritization of state-centric issues and the articulation of Tamil Nadu's distinct socio-cultural identity within the Indian federal framework. By offering a comprehensive analysis of the rise of regional parties and the decline of national parties in Tamil Nadu, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of sub-nationalism, federalism, and political decentralisation within the Indian context. This research follows an empirical research method and a total of 202 samples have been collected through questionnaire.

KEYWORDS: Regionalism, Tamil Nadu politics, Party fragmentation, National party decline and Identity politics.

INTRODUCTION:

In the realm of Indian politics, the dynamics of regionalism have often played a significant role in shaping the political landscape of various states. Tamil Nadu, a southern state with a rich cultural heritage and a history of political activism, exemplifies this phenomenon vividly. Over the years, Tamil Nadu has witnessed the ascendance of regional parties and the concomitant decline in the influence of national parties within its political milieu. This research endeavors to delve into the intricate interplay of factors that have led to the rise of regional parties and the concurrent weakening of national parties in Tamil Nadu.

Tamil Nadu's political landscape has been characterized by a unique blend of regional identity, linguistic pride, and socio-economic aspirations. The Dravidian movement, which emerged in the early 20th century as a response to perceived North Indian hegemony, laid the foundation for the rise of regional parties in the state. The Justice Party, later renamed as the Dravidar Kazhagam (DK), pioneered the articulation of Dravidian identity and championed the cause of social justice and linguistic nationalism. The ideological underpinnings of the Dravidian movement, including self-respect, rationalism, and anti-Brahminism, resonated deeply with the masses, paving the way for the rise of Dravidian politics in Tamil Nadu. The formation of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) in 1949 by C.N. Annadurai marked a watershed moment in Tamil Nadu's political landscape. The DMK, with its potent mix of Dravidian ideology, populist policies, and effective organizational structure, swiftly emerged as a formidable force, challenging the dominance of national parties such as the Indian National Congress in the state. The DMK's emphasis on Tamil nationalism, social justice, and federalism struck a chord with the Tamil electorate, enabling it to capture power and usher in a new era of regional dominance in Tamil Nadu politics. Subsequently, the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK), founded by M.G. Ramachandran (MGR) in 1972, further consolidated the hold of his regional parties in Tamil Nadu. MGR, a charismatic actor-turned-politician, leveraged his mass appeal and cinematic charisma to cultivate a cult-like following among the masses. The AIADMK, under MGR's leadership, espoused populism, welfare-oriented policies, and a pro-poor agenda, endearing itself to the marginalized sections of society. The party's strong organizational network, coupled with MGR's enduring popularity, propelled it to electoral success, solidifying the trend of regional dominance in Tamil Nadu's political landscape.

While regional parties like the DMK and AIADMK entrenched themselves in Tamil Nadu's political arena, national parties such as the Indian National Congress (INC) witnessed a gradual decline in their electoral fortunes. The decline of the Congress can be attributed to a myriad of factors, including the emergence of regional identity politics, the failure to adapt to changing socio-political dynamics, and the lack of strong regional leadership. The Congress, once a dominant force in Tamil Nadu politics, gradually ceded ground to the DMK and AIADMK, relegating itself to the status of a junior partner in electoral alliances. Furthermore, the phenomenon of coalition politics at the national level exerted a profound impact on Tamil Nadu's political landscape. The proliferation of regional parties and the emergence of coalition governments at the Centre provided regional players like the DMK and AIADMK with greater leverage and bargaining power. By aligning themselves with larger national coalitions, regional parties from Tamil Nadu were able to influence policy decisions at the national level and extract concessions for the state, thereby bolstering their relevance and stature in the political arena.

The rise of regional parties in Tamil Nadu also coincided with significant socio-economic transformations within the state. The implementation of welfare schemes, affirmative action policies, and measures aimed at empowering marginalized communities contributed to the consolidation of support for regional parties among the masses. The DMK and AIADMK, through their emphasis on social justice and inclusive development, succeeded in mobilizing support across caste, class, and gender lines, thereby expanding their electoral base and consolidating their political hegemony. In addition to socio-economic factors, the role of charismatic leadership has been instrumental in shaping the trajectory of regional politics in Tamil Nadu. Leaders like C.N. Annadurai, M.G. Ramachandran, M. Karunanidhi, and J. Jayalalithaa emerged as towering figures who commanded unwavering loyalty and devotion from their followers. Their ability to connect with the masses, articulate their aspirations, and navigate the complexities of coalition politics played a pivotal role in sustaining the dominance of regional parties in Tamil Nadu.

However, despite the ascendancy of regional parties, challenges abound on the horizon. The specter of corruption, nepotism, and dynastic politics has plagued Tamil Nadu's political landscape, eroding public trust and tarnishing the image of political leaders. Moreover, the absence of a strong opposition has led to concerns regarding democratic accountability and institutional checks and balances. The rise of fringe elements espousing extremist ideologies poses a threat to the pluralistic ethos and secular fabric of Tamil Nadu's society. In conclusion, the rise of regional parties and the concurrent weakening of national parties in Tamil Nadu reflect the intricate interplay of historical, socio-economic, and political factors. The ascendancy of Dravidian politics, the emergence of charismatic leaders, and the dynamics of coalition politics have reshaped the contours of Tamil Nadu's political landscape. However, the challenges of corruption, governance deficits, and ideological extremism loom large, posing formidable obstacles to the consolidation of democratic norms and inclusive development.

OBJECTIVES:

- To investigate the historical background, evolution, and key milestones that have influenced the rise or decline of regional and national parties in Tamil Nadu.
- To investigate the evolving voter behaviour and demographics in Tamil Nadu, examining the reasons behind the electorate's preference for regional parties over national ones.
- To analyse the strategies, mobilisation techniques, and organisational structures used by national and regional parties in Tamil Nadu to determine how well they achieve political relevance and support
- To examine how the emergence of regional parties and the decline of national parties have affected state-level development agendas, public service delivery, and interstate relations, as well as the governance and policy consequences.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Adam Folvarcny et al., (2023) proposed a research where the researchers used a three-dimensional vote congruence measure to analyze the decentralization of politics in Czech regional elections from 2000. It contrasts the success of regional parties with national and regional electoral competitiveness. The results demonstrate the strong national character of Czech regional polls, with outcomes resembling those of national elections. National parties are dominant, with limited success for regional parties. There is evidence of the second-order election impact. **Nikita Turov (2021)** proposed a study that investigates the emergence of regional parties (RPs) in early 21st-century European nations, with an emphasis on their historical background, political outlook, electoral viability, and geographic dispersion. In regional and parliamentary elections encompassing forty percent of Europe, RPs garnered more than five percent of the vote. Their programs are diversified, and they frequently join forces with national parties. RPs do not have much power to shape state policy, even though they are represented in national parliaments. It is not the performance of specific parties that is linked to the growth of RPs, but rather patterns in the European political process. **Lalit Kumar Sharma (2021)** proposed a research where it was observed that, aOnce the party of choice for OBC, Dalit, and Muslim voters in India, the Congress has turned its attention to regional parties, believing they can challenge the BJP, which has emerged as the main player in Indian democracy. These parties include the Trinmool Congress Samajwadi Party, BSP, RJD, BJD, JD(S), JD(U), TRS, NCP, and Aam Aadmi Party. Nonetheless, in the absence of a National Party like to the Congress, regional parties encounter obstacles that may impede their capacity to confront the BJP administration about matters of foreign policy, defense, and economy. Leaders of the region including Jagan Mohan Reddy,

M.K. Stalin, Uddhav Thackeray, and Naveen Patnaik are content to be part of the region. Similar obstacles might arise in 2024, although general progress might not be supported by coalition governments' past experiences. **Rekha Diwakar (2021)** proposed an article that explores the history and significance of subnationalism and regional parties in India, with particular attention to the perspectives of Purna Singh and Adam Ziegfeld. According to Singh, inclusive subnationalism improves social welfare outcomes by fostering a sense of solidarity throughout the territory. Conversely, Ziegfeld contends that clientelistic ties drive Indian politics, producing particularistic goods as opposed to public goods. The significance of subnational versus national identity and interests versus ideals in influencing Indian politics and public policy is also covered in the article. It also recommends areas for future study. **Yamini Aiyar and Neelanjan Sircar (2020)** proposed a research where it was observed that the Regional party politics in India have been profoundly influenced by the popularity of Narendra Modi and the electoral success of the BJP. There are now differences between regional and national politics as a result of the BJP's concentrated control at the Center. Because of Modi's popularity and the ideological goals of his party, national politics are becoming increasingly centralized and may be easily separated from regional politics. Regional parties' influence and negotiating power in national politics are diminished as a result, but their standing in state elections is enhanced.

Rob Currie- Wood (2020) proposed an essay that examines Canadian campaign financing regulations and raises issues with centralised political parties. It indicates that, instead of downward money transfers from the national office, horizontal relationships between constituency associations in the Conservative Party of Canada emerged between 2008 and 2011. This analysis looks at three regional situations where these connections are common and compares the Conservative party to rivals. The results imply that political parties possessing a solid support base can utilize campaign assets from a particular area to establish a nationwide footprint. **Dishil Shrimankar (2020)** proposed a research where it was observed that in comparative politics, the autonomy of regional branches within parties with a broad base of support affects the party's growth. Growth is hindered by autonomous regional branches, but electoral gains are made by less autonomous ones. In comparative politics, it is crucial to comprehend the relationship between the growth of regional parties and autonomy, as the two variables are not positively correlated with increased autonomy of regional branches. **Mihir Bhattacharya (2018)** proposed a study that looks at three-party elections in two regions and the competitiveness between national and regional parties. The model's regions are classified as homogeneous and heterogeneous in the article. The preferred policy position of the median voter in a homogeneous region is shared by the national and regional parties. The national party does better in heterogeneous regions and can best align itself with the regional party with the greatest number of constituencies in homogenous regions. The outcomes match the data and intuition. **Ramu. G (2017)** proposed a study that looks at India's political developments, with particular attention to the party that spearheaded the statehood movement in Telangana . In line with public expectations, the Telangana Rashtra Samiti (TRS) has handled politics well. The impact of political favoritism on how government resources are allocated and how various party organizations coexist are also covered in the study. It draws attention to how political parties shape states, institutions, and societal divisions. According to the study, focusing on the appropriate people and audiences and defining clear goals for discussions or policies are key to successful political engagement. **Sanmathu Kumar (2017)** proposed an article where it was observed that psychological phenomena known as regionalism prioritizes the geographic region as the analytical unit with the goal of preserving the administrative autonomy of a certain region. If politicians fail to go beyond local allegiance and assert their support for local interests,

it may pose a threat to national unity. Demands for secession, independent states, and interstate conflicts are only a few examples of the different ways regionalism manifests itself in India. Regionalism can pose a threat to Indian nationalism because of sub-territorial loyalty, and there are states where the attitude toward migrants is negative. A region's attitudes and the cohesiveness of the country can be shaped by various factors, including geography, religion, language, historical heritage, expression, and way of life.

Objlapathi M and Ramanjaneyulu C (2016) proposed a research where it was observed that with the rise of regional parties and organizations like the Telegu Desam Party in Andhra Pradesh, regionalism—which encompasses a variety of languages, cultures, and allegiances—has become increasingly prevalent over time. The linguistic restructuring that resulted from Potti Srivamulu's 1956 demand for Andhra Pradesh is credited with the rise of regionalism. Regionalism can be advantageous if people are really proud of their language and culture, but it can also be dangerous to national unity if elected officials do not support local concerns. Thus, regionalism and nationalism do not inherently contradict one another, nor do regional ideals pose a threat to central government. **Adnan Farooqui and E. Sridharan (2016)** proposed a study that analyzes the Congress party's loss in the 2014 election in India, emphasizing its downfall and final drop to third place. The party lost support from social groupings in several states, which was attributed to a slow fall and recoveries. In addition, the research raises the question of whether a Congress-style party can withstand the politicalization of societal divisions like caste, religion, and geography given that these parties typically outbid them in identity-based elections. **Pradeep Chhibber and Ken Kollman (2014)** proposed an article where it was observed that in order to demonstrate how political and economic centralization might affect the number of national parties in single-member simple plurality election systems, the researcher used data from both India and the US. In the past, there have been roughly two parties in each of the two countries' local election districts, but the number of national parties has varied. Centralization occurs during times when there are few national parties in both nations. We contend that candidates have more motivation to affiliate with national organizations and voters have more motivation to defect from locally competitive but nationally noncompetitive parties as national governments consolidate power and enact laws that impact local communities. **Adam Ziegfeld (2012)** proposed a research where it was observed that the transition from single-party majority to coalition rule in India during the 1990s was the primary cause of the swift ascent of regional political parties, rather than any sociological or institutional considerations. It was found that by reversing the causal arrow that links party systems and coalition governance, this shift enhanced the incentives for politicians to form regional parties and illustrated how noninstitutional aspects of the political environment can influence elite incentives. **Devin K. Joshi (2012)** proposed an essay that investigates how regional parties in developing nations can enhance both human development and voting turnout. The theory implies that regional parties can accomplish these objectives in spite of possible challenges, based on the experiences of Kerala and Tamilnadu. Regional parties considerably raised voter turnout, according to the study, and initial conditions, social expenditure, agricultural production, and gender equality all had a major impact on HDI performance. Regional party control and HDI improvement did, however, show a little positive correlation.

Liselotte Libbrecht et al., (2011) proposed an article that applies Meguid's Position-Salience-Ownership (PSO) theory to Spain and the UK in order to analyse the electoral strategies of state-wide parties (SWPs) in regional elections. Given the fierce rivalry from regionalist parties in regional elections, it is expected that SWPs will modify their tactics. The examination indicates that the fundamental presumptions of the PSO theory hold true for regional elections, although these tactics are also influenced by the complex

institutional environment. If the most sensible course of action conflicts with the state-wide SWP plan, regional parties might not choose to follow it. **Atul Kohli (2010)** proposed an article where it was observed that In India's multicultural democracy, the central state has faced numerous ethnic movements over the years. Thus, India offers study circumstances for these movements that are similar to those of a laboratory. In this essay, the researcher examine three such ethnic movements, seeking to explain their emergence and fall: the Tamils in Tamilnadu in the 1950s and 1960s; the Sikhs in the Punjab in the 1980s; and the Muslims in Kashmir in the 1990s. More attention will be paid to drawing some broad conclusions than to the specifics of these movements. **Kanchan Chandra (2005)** proposed a research where it was observed that the regional parties form as a result of the outbidding effect of ethnic divisions, endangering democratic institutions. This has the potential to undermine competitive politics by upending the political structure and inspiring radical bids. On the other hand, an argument that defies logic contends that a democratic system can be maintained by institutionally supporting ethnic parties. The author contends that rather than the inherent characteristics of ethnic divisions, the institutional framework in which ethnic politics is conducted poses a threat to the stability of democracy. Democracy is undermined by institutions that limit ethnic politics to one aspect, but it can be maintained by those that support several facets of ethnic identity. **Elisa Roller and Pieter Van Houten (2003)** proposed an article that examines how the state-wide political parties behave regionally, concentrating on the organisational and policy decisions that regional branches of national parties must make as well as their strategic challenges. As a first test, it examines the Socialist party of Catalonia (PSC-PSOE), demonstrating how variables such the decentralisation of the Spanish state, dual identity patterns, and local party leadership impact these decisions and how they change over time. **Saul Newman (1992)** proposed a research where it was observed that between the late 1960s and the late 1980s, the Scottish National Party (SNP) saw a sharp increase in popularity and a sharp decrease in support due to organizational, political, and economic issues. Dealignment brought about by advancements in social mobility, education, and communication propelled the ascent and resulted in consistent support from all socioeconomic levels. The failure of the devolution referendum, growing division within the SNP, and the party's shift to the left, which offended some conservative backers, were the causes of the downturn. Due to their lack of an integrated social network and flexible political agenda, ethnoregional parties in industrial democracies were predicted to have limited success, as evidenced by their swift emergence and fall.

METHODOLOGY:

The research method followed here is empirical research . A total of 202 samples have been collected out of which all samples have been collected through convenient sampling methods. The independent variables utilised in this study are age, gender, educational qualification, occupation and religion. The dependent variables are voter perseverance level of regional parties, respondents view on effect of social media and regional parties in voters thoughts regarding the regional and national party, economic and cultural specificities role in election, factors that explains the best regarding the rise of regional party and increasing focus on Dravidian ideology among voters of Chennai. The tools used for analysis are pie charts and cluster bar graphs through SPSS.

HYPOTHESIS:

TABLE 1:

Null hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between the age and the opinion on majority of the

voters in Chennai perceive regional parties to be more responsive to their needs than national parties.

Alternate Hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between the age and the opinion on majority of the voters in Chennai perceive regional parties to be more responsive to their needs than national parties.

TABLE 2:

Null hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between religion and the factor that explains the best regarding the rise of regional parties in Tamil Nadu with reference to Chennai voters.

Alternate Hypothesis : There is a significant relationship between religion and the factor that explains the best regarding the rise of regional parties in Tamil Nadu with reference to Chennai voters.

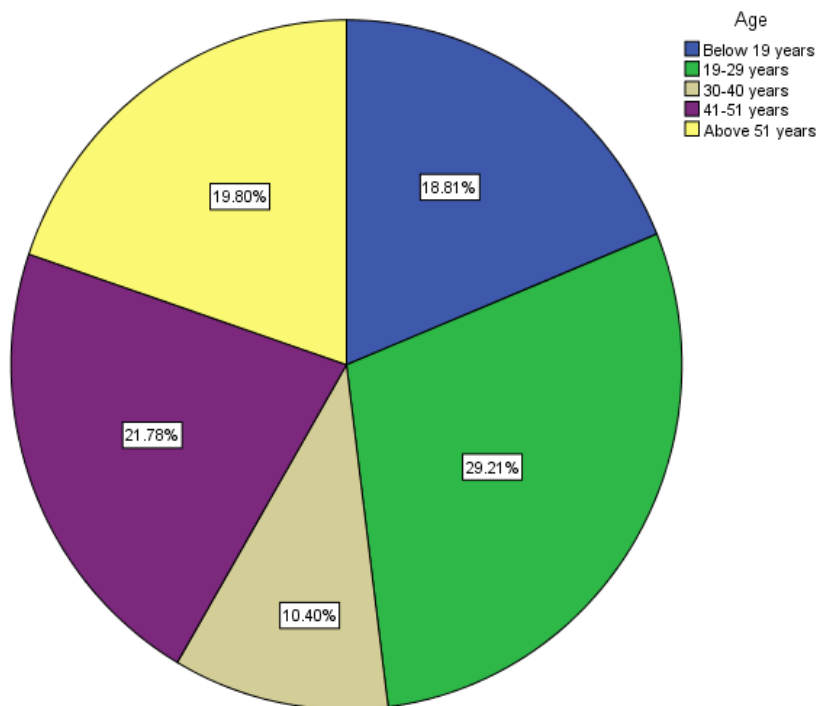
Table 3:

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between educational qualification and the factor that explains the economic and cultural specificities of Chennai as a major metropolitan city make it fertile ground for the growth of regional parties that cater to its unique identity.

Alternate Hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between educational qualification and the factor that explains the economic and cultural specificities of Chennai as a major metropolitan city make it fertile ground for the growth of regional parties that cater to its unique identity.

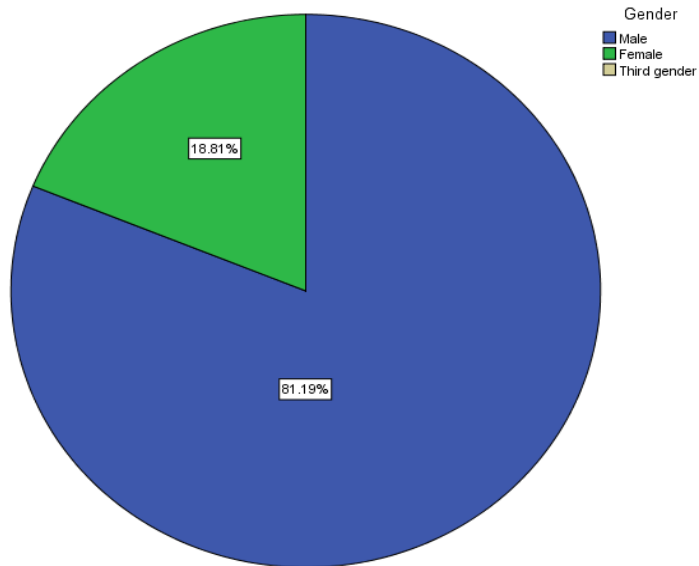
ANALYSIS:

Figure 1:



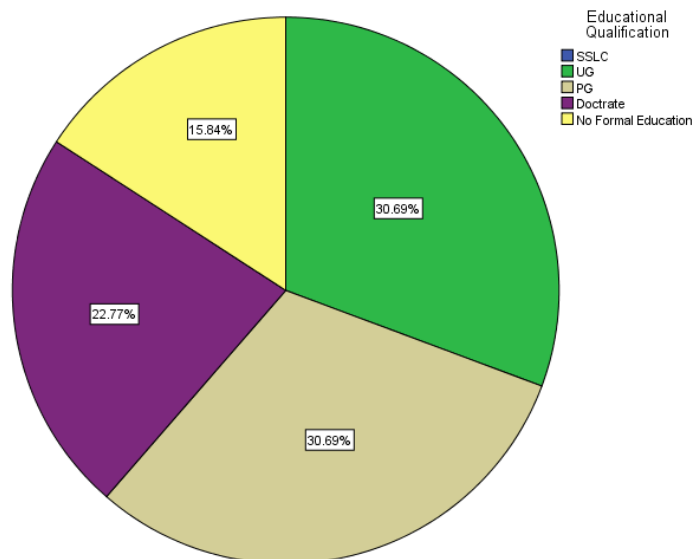
Legend: The above given figure shows the age of the respondents.

Figure 2:



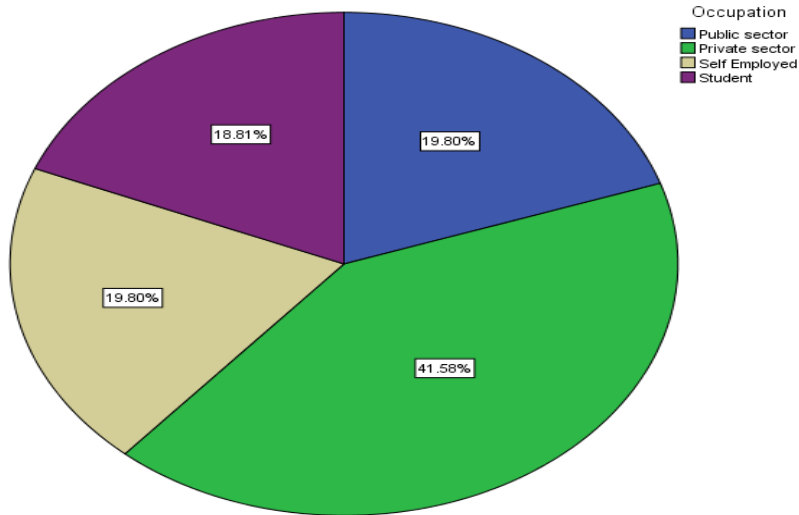
Legend : The above given figure shows the gender of the respondents.

Figure 3:



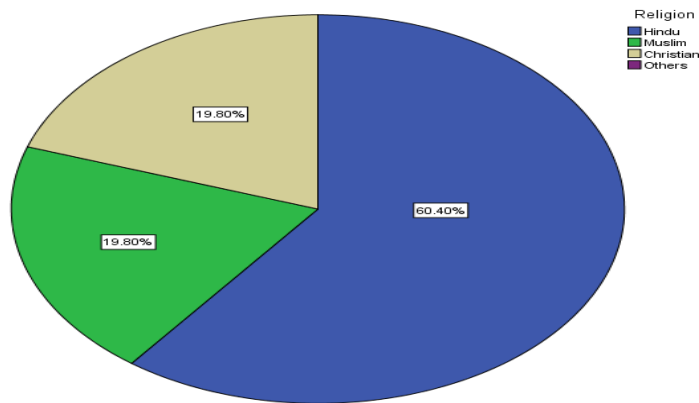
Legend : The above given figure shows the educational qualification of the respondents.

Figure 4:



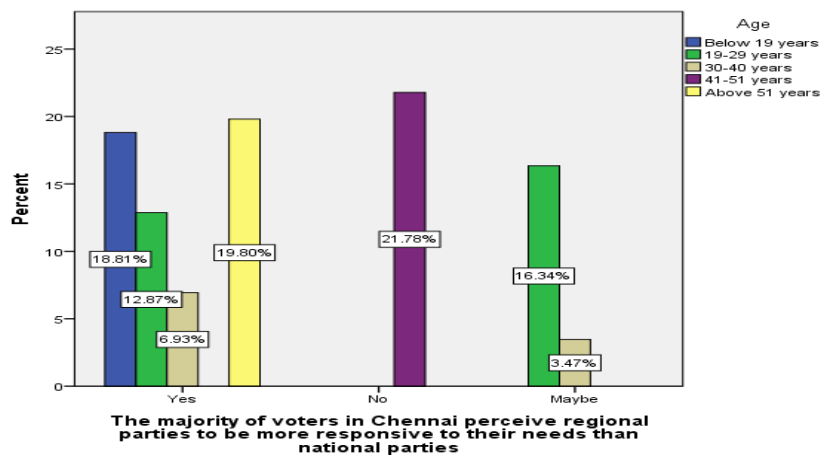
Legend : The above given figure shows the occupation of the respondents.

Figure 5:



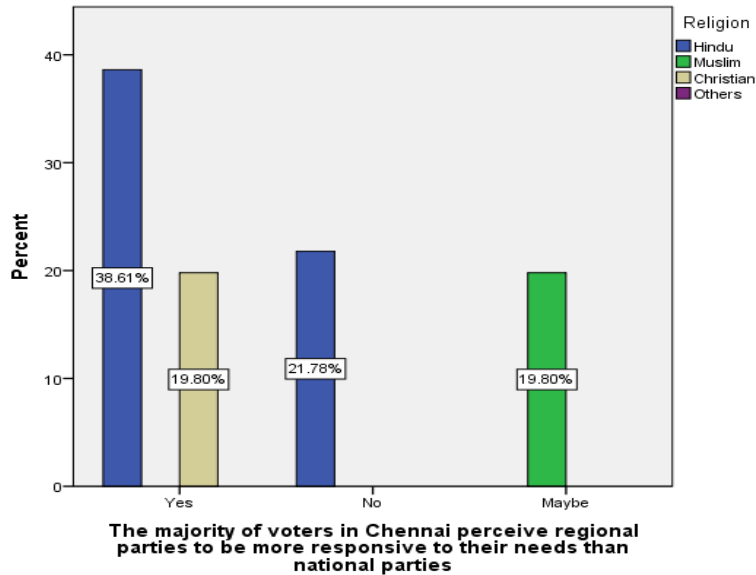
Legend : The above given figure shows the religion of the respondents.

Figure 6:



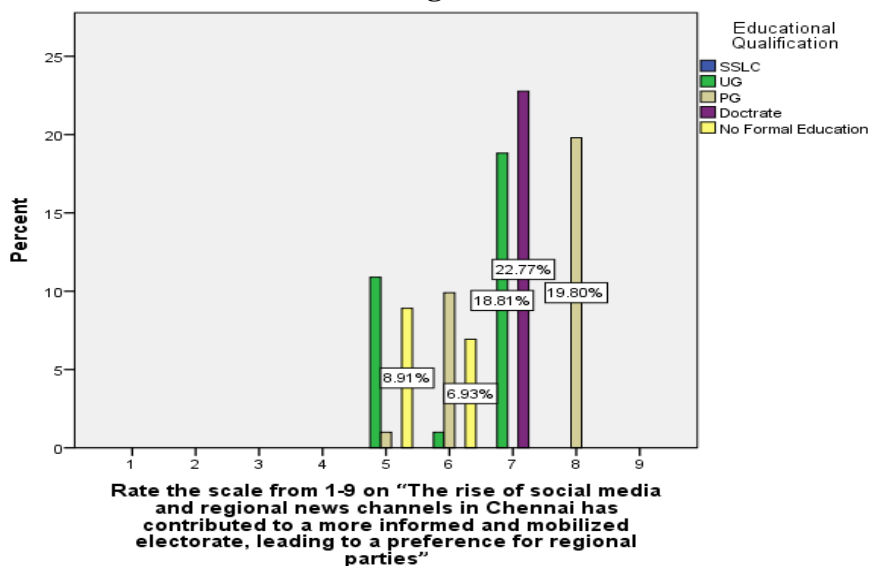
Legend: The above figure depicts a cluster graph being combined and compared with the question The majority of the voters in Chennai perceive regional parties to be more responsive to their needs than national party and the respondents age.

Figure 7:



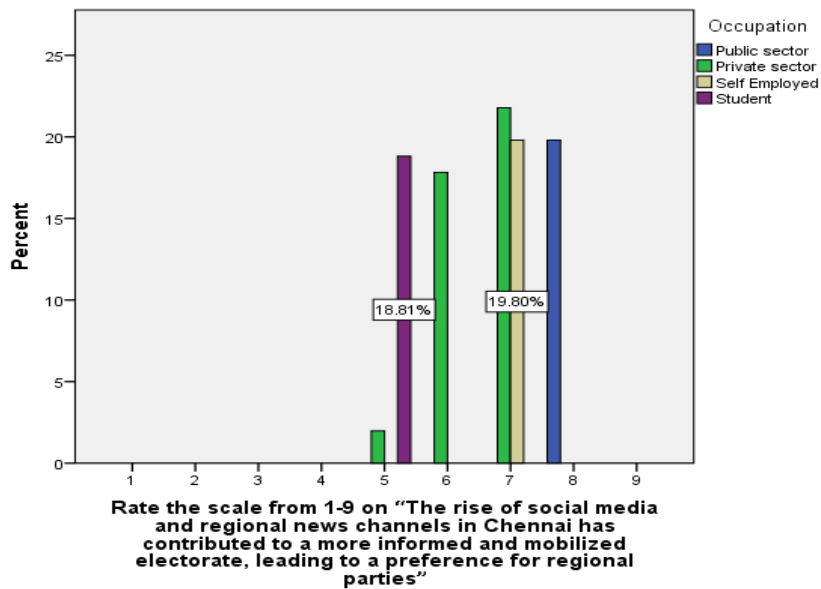
Legend: The above figure depicts a cluster graph being combined and compared with the question The majority of the voters in Chennai perceive regional parties to be more responsive to their needs than national party and the respondents religion.

Figure 8:



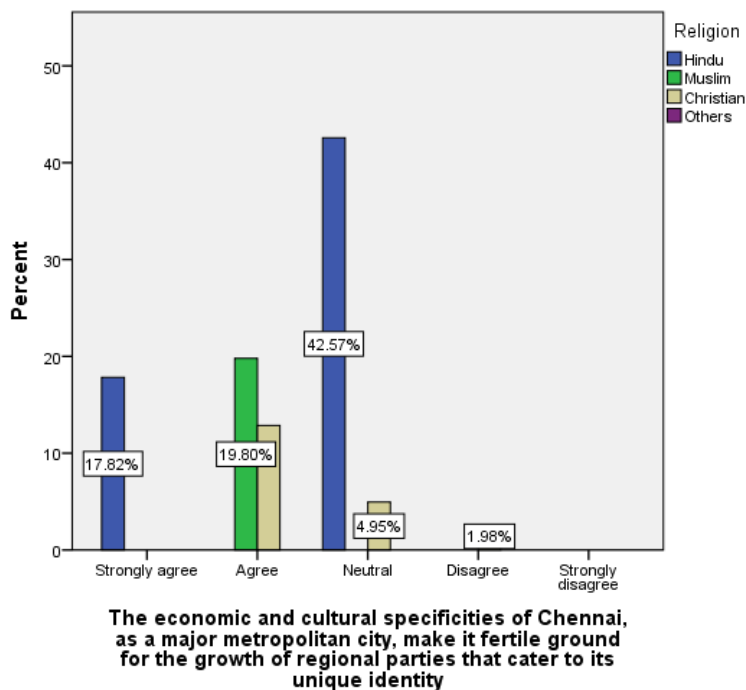
Legend: The above figure depicts a cluster graph being combined and compared with the question rate the scale on 1-9 on the rise of social media and the regional news channel in Chennai has contributed to a more informed and mobilised electorate leading to a preference for regional party and their education qualification.

Figure 9:



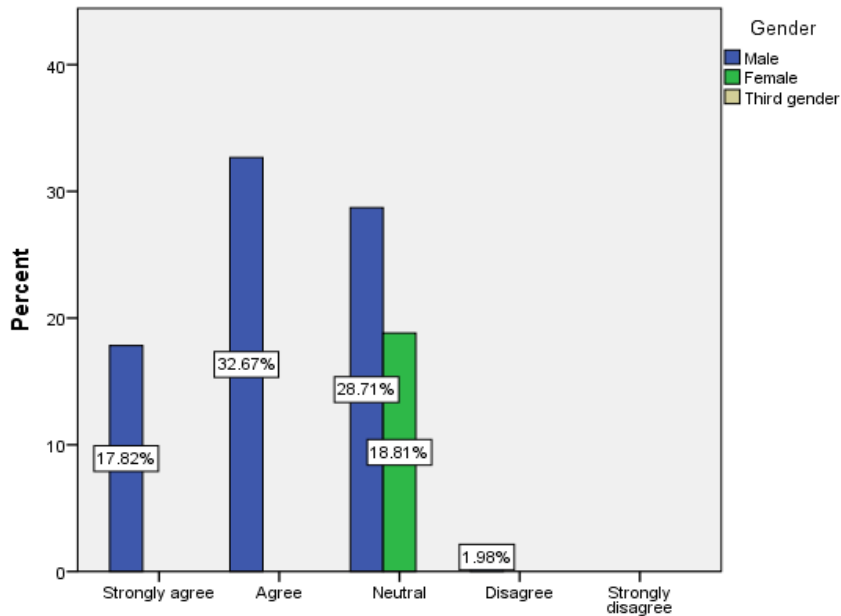
Legend: The above figure depicts a cluster graph being combined and compared with the question rate the scale on 1-9 on the rise of social media and the regional news channel in Chennai has contributed to a more informed and mobilised electorate leading to a preference for regional party and their Occupation.

Figure 10:



Legend: The above figure depicts a cluster graph being combined and compared with the question The economic and cultural specificities of Chennai as as major metropolitan city make it a fertile ground for the growth of regional parties that cater to its unique identity and the respondents religion.

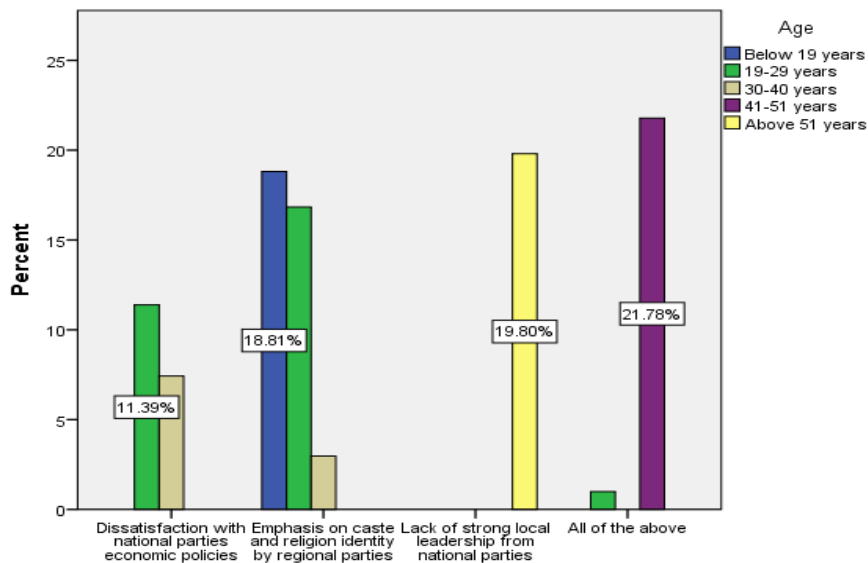
Figure 11:



The economic and cultural specificities of Chennai, as a major metropolitan city, make it fertile ground for the growth of regional parties that cater to its unique identity

Legend: The above figure depicts a cluster graph being combined and compared with the question The economic and cultural specificities of Chennai as as major metropolitan city make it a fertile ground for the growth of regional parties that cater to its unique identity and the respondents gender.

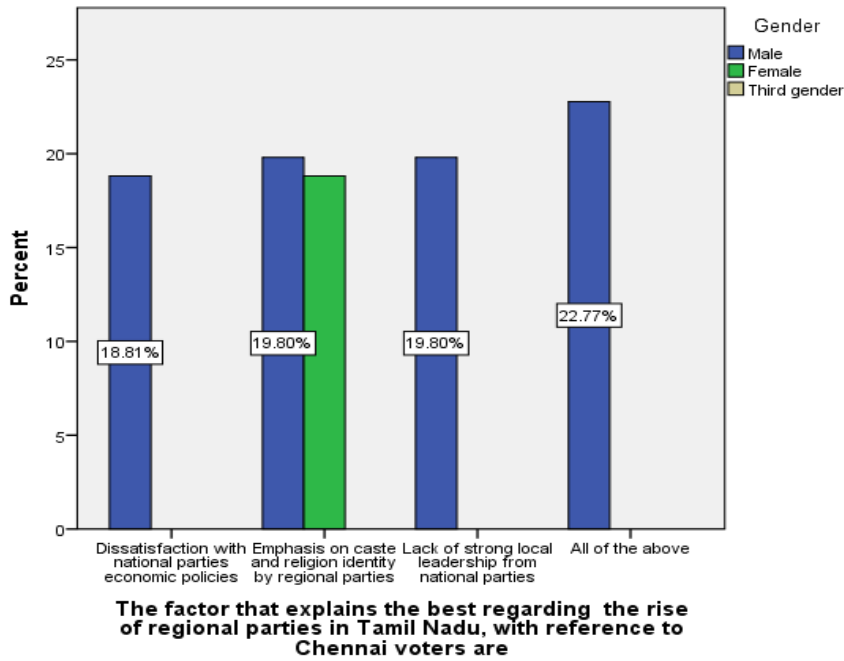
Figure 12:



The factor that explains the best regarding the rise of regional parties in Tamil Nadu, with reference to Chennai voters are

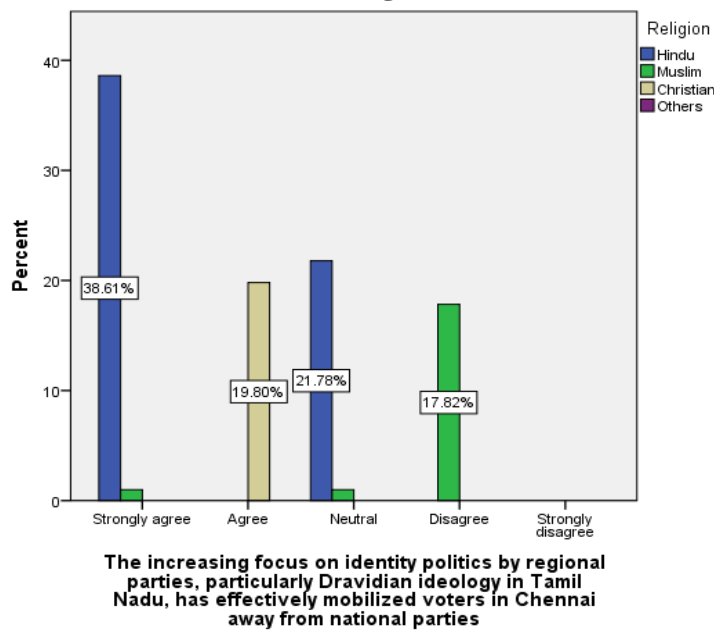
Legend: The above figure depicts a cluster graph being combined and compared with the question The factor that explains the best regarding the rise of regional parties in Tamilnadu with reference to Chennai voters and their age.

Figure 13:



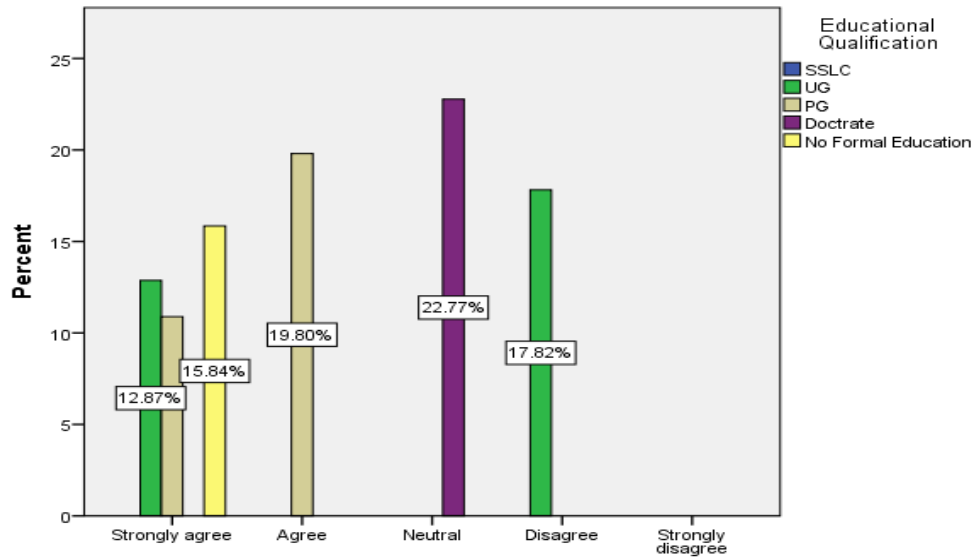
Legend: The above figure depicts a cluster graph being combined and compared with the question The factor that explains the best regarding the rise of regional parties in Tamilnadu with reference to Chennai voters and their gender.

Figure 14:



Legend: The above figure depicts a cluster graph being combined and compared with the question the increasing focus on identity politics by regional parties particularly Dravidian ideology in Tamil Nadu has effectively mobilised voters in Chennai away from national parties and the respondents religion.

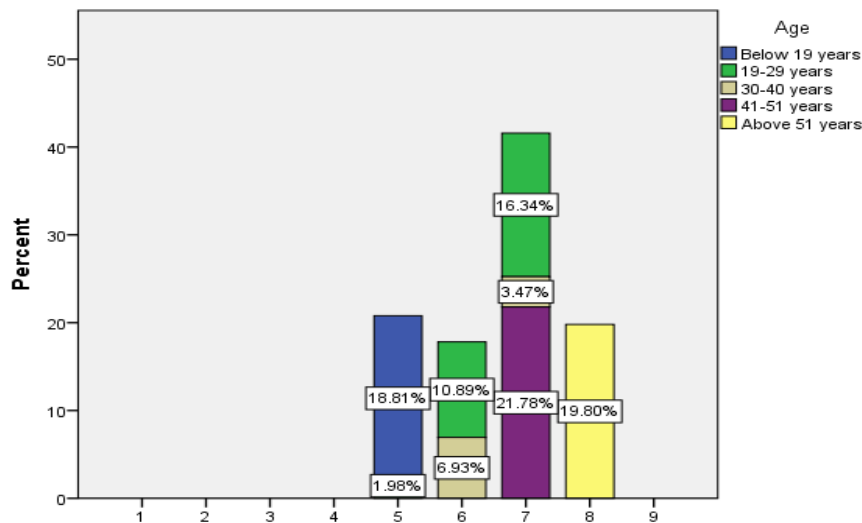
Figure 15:



The increasing focus on identity politics by regional parties, particularly Dravidian ideology in Tamil Nadu, has effectively mobilized voters in Chennai away from national parties

Legend: The above figure depicts a cluster graph being combined and compared with the question the increasing focus on identity politics by regional parties particularly Dravidian ideology in Tamil Nadu has effectively mobilised voters in Chennai away from national parties and the respondents educational qualifications.

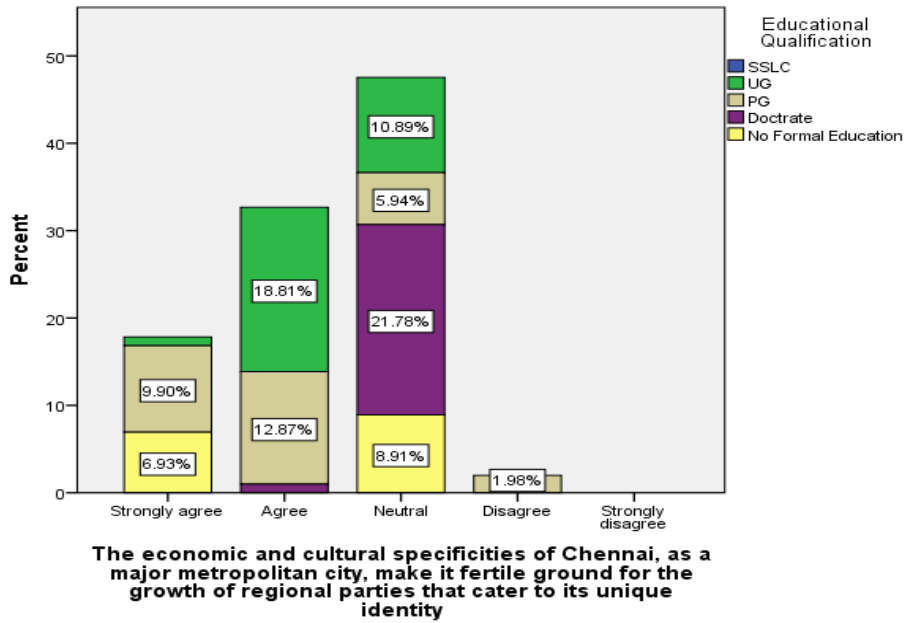
Figure 16:



Rate the scale from 1-9 on "The rise of social media and regional news channels in Chennai has contributed to a more informed and mobilized electorate, leading to a preference for regional parties"

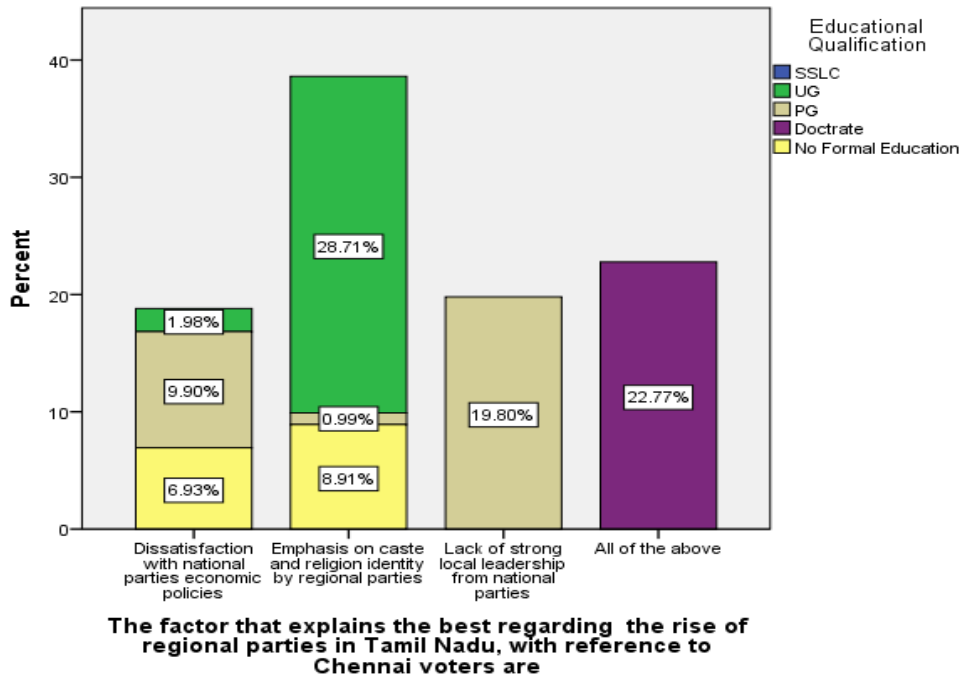
Legend: The above figure depicts a cluster graph being combined and compared with the question rate the scale on 1-9 on the rise of social media and the regional news channel in Chennai has contributed to a more informed and mobilised electorate leading to a preference for regional party and their age.

Figure 17:



Legend: The above figure depicts a cluster graph being combined and compared with the question The economic and cultural specificities of Chennai as a major metropolitan city make it a fertile ground for the growth of regional parties that cater to its unique identity and the respondents education qualification.

Figure 18:



Legend: The above figure depicts a cluster graph being combined and compared with the question The factor that explains the best regarding the rise of regional parties in Tamilnadu with reference to Chennai voters and their educational qualifications

Table 1:

Case Processing Summary						
	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Age * The majority of voters in Chennai perceive regional parties to be more responsive to their needs than national parties	202	100.0%	0	0.0%	202	100.0%

Age * The majority of voters in Chennai perceive regional parties to be more responsive to their needs than national parties Crosstabulation					
Count		The majority of voters in Chennai perceive regional parties to be more responsive to their needs than national parties			Total
		Yes	No	Maybe	
Age	Below 19 years	38	0	0	38
	19-29 years	26	0	33	59
	30-40 years	14	0	7	21
	41-51 years	0	44	0	44
	Above 51 years	40	0	0	40
Total		118	44	40	202

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	274.111 ^a	8	.000
Likelihood Ratio	282.847	8	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	.882	1	.348
N of Valid Cases	202		

a. 2 cells (13.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 4.16.

Legend: The above figure depicts Chi-Square test conducted between age of the respondents and the question the majority if the voters in Chennai perceive regional parties to be more responsive to their needs more than the national parties.

Table 2:

Case Processing Summary						
	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Religion * The factor that explains the best regarding the rise of regional parties in Tamil Nadu, with reference to Chennai voters are	202	100.0%	0	0.0%	202	100.0%

Religion * The factor that explains the best regarding the rise of regional parties in Tamil Nadu, with reference to Chennai voters are Crosstabulation						
Count						
		The factor that explains the best regarding the rise of regional parties in Tamil Nadu, with reference to Chennai voters are				Total
		Dissatisfaction with national parties economic policies	Emphasis on caste and religion identity by regional parties	Lack of strong local leadership from national parties	All of the above	
Religion	Hindu	36	42	0	44	122
	Muslim	2	36	0	2	40
	Christian	0	0	40	0	40
Total		38	78	40	46	202

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	248.478 ^a	6	.000
Likelihood Ratio	242.345	6	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.896	1	.027
N of Valid Cases	202		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 7.52.

Legend: The above figure depicts the Chi-Square test. Conducted between the respondents religion and the question the factor that explains the best regarding the rise of regional parties in Tamil Nadu with reference to Chennai voters .

Table 3:

Case Processing Summary						
	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Educational Qualification * The economic and cultural specificities of Chennai, as a major metropolitan city, make it fertile ground for the growth of regional parties that cater to its unique identity	202	100.0%	0	0.0%	202	100.0%

Educational Qualification * The economic and cultural specificities of Chennai, as a major metropolitan city, make it fertile ground for the growth of regional parties that cater to its unique identity Crosstabulation						
Count		The economic and cultural specificities of Chennai, as a major metropolitan city, make it fertile ground for the growth of regional parties that cater to its unique identity				Total
		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	
Educational Qualification	UG	2	38	22	0	62
	PG	20	26	12	4	62
	Doctrate	0	2	44	0	46
	No Formal Education	14	0	18	0	32
Total		36	66	96	4	202

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	118.058 ^a	9	.000
Likelihood Ratio	137.417	9	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.795	1	.180
N of Valid Cases	202		

a. 4 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .63.

Legend: The above figure depicts Chi-Square test conducted between the respondents educational qualification and the question the economic and cultural specificities that f Chennai as a major metropolitan city make it fertile for the growth of regional parties that caters to its unique identity.

RESULTS:

It is revealed that 18.81% of the respondents are below 19 years, 29.21% belongs to the age group 19-29 years, 10.40% belongs to the age group 30-40 years, 21.78% belongs to the age group 41-51 years and 19.80% of the respondents are above 51 years. **(Fig:1)** It is revealed that 81.19% of the respondents are male and 18.81% of the respondents are female. **(Fig:2)** It is revealed that 30.69% of the respondents are UG graduates, 30.69% are PG graduates, 22.77% are doctorates and 15.84% of the respondents have no formal education. **(Fig:3)** It is revealed that 19.80% of the respondents are working in the public sector, 41.58% are working in private sector, 19.80% are self employed and 18.81% are students. **(Fig:4)** It is revealed that 60.40% of the respondents are Hindu, 19.80% are Muslims and 19.80% are Christian's. **(Fig:5)** It is revealed that the majority of the respondents I.e 21.78% of the respondents belong to age group 41-51 years and says that the majority of voters in Chennai does not perceive regional party to be more responsive to their needs than national parties. **(Fig:6)** It is revealed that the majority of the respondents I.e 38.61% of the respondents belong to Hindu religion and says that the majority of voters in Chennai perceive regional party to be more responsive to their needs than national parties. **(Fig:7)** It is revealed that the majority of the respondents I.e 22.77% are doctorates and the have rated 7 on the rating scale of 1-9 regarding the statement the rise if social media and regional channels in Chennai has contributed to a more informed and mobilised electorate leading a preference for regional parties. **(Fig:8)** It is revealed that the majority of the respondents I.e 19.80% are working in the private sector and the have rated 7 on the rating scale of 1-9 regarding the statement the rise of social media and regional channels in

Chennai has contributed to a more informed and mobilised electorate leading a preference for regional parties. **(Fig:9)** It is revealed that majority of the respondents I.e 42.57% are Hindu and they stayed neutral regarding the statement that the economic and cultural specificities of Chennai as a major metropolitan city make it fertile ground for the growth of regional parties that cater to its unique identity. **(Fig:10)** It is revealed that the majority of the respondents I.e 32.67% are male and they agree with the statement that the economic and cultural specificities of Chennai as a major metropolitan city make it fertile ground for the growth of regional parties that cater to its unique identity. **(Fig:11)** It is revealed that the majority of the respondents I.e 21.78% belongs to the age group 41-51 years and they chose all the given options as the factor that explains the best regarding the rise of regional parties in Tamil Nadu with reference to Chennai voters. **(Fig:12)** It is revealed that the majority of the respondents I.e 22.77% are male and they chose all the given options as the factor that explains the best regarding the rise of regional parties in Tamil Nadu with reference to Chennai voters. **(Fig:13)** It is revealed that the majority of the respondents I.e 38.61% are Hindu and they strongly agree to the statement , the increasing focus on identity politics by regional parties particularly Dravidian ideology in Tamil Nadu has effectively mobilised voters in Chennai away from national parties. **(Fig:14)** It is revealed that the majority of the respondents I.e 22.77% are doctorates and they choose to stay neutral regarding the statement , the increasing focus on identity politics by regional parties particularly Dravidian ideology in Tamil Nadu has effectively mobilised voters in Chennai away from national parties. **(Fig:15)** It is revealed that the majority of the respondents I.e 21.8% belongs to the age group 41-51 years and they have rated 7 on the rating scale of 1-9 regarding the statement the rise if social media and regional channels in Chennai has contributed to a more informed and mobilised electorate leading a preference for regional parties. **(Fig:16)** It is revealed that majority of the respondents I.e 21.79% are doctorates and they choose to stay neutral regarding the statement that the economic and cultural specificities of Chennai as a major metropolitan city make it fertile ground for the growth of regional parties that cater to its unique identity. **(Fig:17)** It is revealed that the majority of the respondents I.e 28.71% are UG students and they chose dissatisfaction with national parties economic politics as the factor that explains the best regarding the rise of regional parties in Tamil Nadu with reference to Chennai voters. **(Fig:18)** It is revealed that the alternate hypothesis is accepted from the chi-square test performed. **(Table:1)** It is revealed that the alternate hypothesis is accepted from the chi-square test performed. **(Table:2)** It is revealed that the alternate hypothesis is accepted from the chi-square test performed. **(Table:3)**

DISCUSSION:

In **fig:6** it was observed that the majority of the respondents are the older respondents, aged 41-51, may have witnessed the dominance of national parties in politics, believing national parties are more responsive where as the respondents, under 19, may be more attuned to recent developments and shifts towards regional parties addressing local issues more effectively.

In **fig:7** it was observed that the regional parties often have a more direct connection to local issues and concerns compared to national parties, allowing them to tailor their policies and agendas to better address the specific needs of the people in Chennai. Additionally, regional parties may also have a stronger sense of cultural and linguistic identity, resonating more with the local population.

In **fig:8** it was observed that the majority of the respondents I.e doctorate respondents likely have a deeper understanding of the nuances of media influence on society, recognizing that while social media offers

diverse perspectives, regional news channels may provide more localized and in-depth coverage, thus influencing political preferences towards regional parties.

In **fig:9** it was observed that the rise of social media and regional news channels in Chennai has allowed for more targeted and localized political messaging, which resonates with the unique concerns and identities of the electorate. This personalized communication fosters a sense of connection and trust with regional parties, leading to a preference for them among respondents working in the private sector.

In **fig:10** it was observed that many indus in Chennai may choose to remain neutral on this statement because they prioritize the economic and cultural development of their city over political affiliations. They might believe that regional parties focusing on Chennai's unique identity can better address local issues and promote growth, regardless of their personal religious beliefs.

In **fig:11** it was observed that many male respondents may agree with the statement because they perceive regional parties as better equipped to address the nuanced economic and cultural needs of Chennai, fostering a sense of regional identity and responsiveness that resonates with their interests and concerns.

In **fig:12** it was observed that the age group of 41-51 years often experiences a combination of factors such as career stability, family responsibilities, and a deeper understanding of socio-political dynamics. They may perceive dissatisfaction with national party economic policies as they are more likely to be affected by them directly. Additionally, they may feel that the emphasis on caste and religion by regional parties resonates with their cultural identity and local concerns. Finally, their perception of a lack of strong leadership from national parties might lead them to seek alternatives in regional politics, where they feel their voices are better heard and represented.

In **fig:13** it was observed that many male respondents may choose all the given options because dissatisfaction with national party policies on economic matters, an emphasis on caste and religion identity by regional parties, and a perceived lack of strong leadership from national parties are all interconnected factors influencing the rise of regional parties in Tamil Nadu. This combination of grievances resonates with Chennai voters, particularly males, who seek alternative political avenues that address their concerns more effectively.

In **fig:14** it was observed that Dravidian ideology in Tamil Nadu has historically emphasized linguistic and cultural identity, resonating deeply with many Hindus in the state who feel a strong attachment to their Tamil heritage. As a result, they may prioritize supporting parties that promote Dravidian ideology over national parties, especially if they perceive the latter as not addressing their local concerns adequately.

In **fig:15** it was observed that the highly educated individuals, doctorate respondents may prioritize objective analysis over personal biases, preferring to assess political movements based on empirical evidence rather than emotional or identity-based affiliations. They may choose to stay neutral to maintain their impartiality and integrity in evaluating complex socio-political dynamics.

In **fig:16** it was observed that individuals in this age group have likely experienced the transition from traditional media to social media firsthand. They may recognize the impact of social media and regional news channels in providing diverse perspectives and real-time updates on local political issues, leading to a more informed electorate. Additionally, they may perceive regional parties as better representing their specific interests and concerns, thus leading to a preference for them over national parties.

In **fig:17** it was observed that many respondents with doctorates may choose to stay neutral on this statement because they understand the complexity of economic and cultural dynamics within a metropolitan area like Chennai. They might see the growth of regional parties as a multifaceted issue influenced by historical, social, and economic factors rather than a simple matter of identity alone.

In **fig:18** it was observed that the emphasis on caste and religion identity by regional parties resonates strongly with many UG graduates in Tamil Nadu, particularly in Chennai, because it addresses historical and societal inequalities, providing a sense of empowerment and belonging to marginalized communities. This focus on identity politics allows regional parties to mobilize support among diverse voter bases, tapping into deeply ingrained social structures and fostering a sense of solidarity among voters who feel neglected by mainstream political parties.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY:

A Convenient sampling method has been used in this study. The limitation of this study is that it is one time research conducted over a short period of time. Another limitation is that the research data collected was from a small size population of 202 samples. The data collected may not be completely accurate. However the responses were collected from people who have good awareness about this matter.

SUGGESTION:

Tamil Nadu's political landscape has experienced a significant rise in regional parties, such as the DMK and AIADMK, leading to the decline of national parties. This trend is fueled by historical, socio-cultural, and political factors, particularly the Dravidian ideology, which emphasizes Tamil pride, linguistic identity, and regional autonomy. National parties often fail to address the specific needs and aspirations of Tamil Nadu's diverse population, resulting in voter disillusionment.

To increase support for national parties in Tamil Nadu, several strategies are recommended:

1. **Localized Manifestos:** Adapting party platforms to address Tamil Nadu's specific issues and preferences.
2. **Strong Regional Leadership:** Developing leaders who can connect personally with voters and address regional issues.
3. **Inclusive Governance:** Involving Tamil Nadu stakeholders in decision-making processes.
4. **Development Programs:** Focusing on infrastructure, healthcare, education, and job creation to regain voter confidence.
5. **Coalition Building:** Forming strategic partnerships with regional players to broaden electoral support.
6. **Promoting inclusivity and understanding among Tamil Nadu's electorate involves:**
7. **Education and Awareness:** Helping voters understand the roles of regional and national parties.
8. **Promoting Dialogue:** Bridging ideological divides and fostering mutual respect.
9. **Celebrating Diversity:** Enriching democratic discourse through cultural events.
10. **Cross-Party Collaboration:** Demonstrating a commitment to transcending partisan divides through joint initiatives.

National parties should respect regional autonomy, avoid imposing centralized agendas, and embrace diversity and pluralism. A consultative approach with local leaders, focusing on common issues, and demonstrating cultural sensitivity can enhance the credibility and relatability of national parties. By adopting inclusive strategies, fostering dialogue, and navigating sensitively, national parties can expand their influence while respecting regional sentiments, promoting democracy, pluralism, and effective governance in Tamil Nadu.

CONCLUSION:

The research focused on the rise of regional parties and the decline of national parties in Tamil Nadu,

particularly in Chennai. It explored historical background, voter behavior, party strategies, and governance implications. Key findings revealed that Tamil Nadu's rich history of regional identity, linguistic pride, and social movements laid the foundation for strong regional parties like DMK and AIADMK. Voter preference for these parties is driven by factors such as linguistic pride, perceived neglect by national parties, and effective addressing of local issues. Regional parties have leveraged grassroots mobilization, social welfare schemes, and Dravidian ideology to maintain their dominance. The weakening of national parties is attributed to their failure to connect with grassroots concerns, address state-specific issues, and form effective alliances with regional players. The study highlighted that the decline of national parties has implications for state-level development and representation at the national level. Regional parties have been able to push for state-centric policies and initiatives, but concerns about Tamil Nadu's representation at the national level persist. The research suggests that the success of regional parties in Tamil Nadu is due to their articulation of socio-economic and cultural aspirations, charismatic leadership, and strong organizational structures. Conversely, national parties' lack of credible leadership, coherent messaging, and contextual understanding has led to their marginalization. Future studies could focus on the role of media, socio-economic factors, and emerging political trends in shaping voter behavior and party dynamics. Comparative analyses with other states experiencing similar dynamics could provide valuable insights. The study concludes that the rise of regional parties and the decline of national parties in Tamil Nadu reflect broader trends of regionalism, identity politics, and evolving governance dynamics in Indian politics. Understanding these dynamics can help policymakers navigate state-level politics while striving for inclusive development and effective governance.

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