



Analyzing The Political Landscape of Separate Statehood: The Case of Telangana

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to examine Telangana's path to becoming the 29th state of India on June 2, 2014, within the context of sociopolitical struggle, resilience, and regional identity. In comparison to the more affluent coastal Andhra areas, it looks at the historical background, social inequalities, and cultural dynamics that fuelled the demand for independent statehood, emphasizing complaints about economic exploitation and cultural neglect. With its focus on student activism, cultural revivalism, and the Telangana Rashtra Samithi's (TRS) political activities, the Telangana movement became a powerful voice for regional recognition and self-governance. The study demonstrates how the pursuit of statehood was intimately related to more general concerns of social justice, economic independence, and cultural preservation by examining significant occasions, significant personalities, and the movement's ideological underpinnings. In conclusion, this study highlights the significance of local perspectives in the discussion of statehood and autonomy, placing Telangana's fight within the larger context of Indian federalism and illustrating the continuous pursuit of representation, resource equity, and cultural recognition in India's heterogeneous political environment.

Keywords: Telangana statehood, Political identity, Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS), Democracy, Regional Politics.

1. INTRODUCTION

The constitution of Indian states, the historical reorganisation of these states, and the operation of the Indian Federation, particularly in connection to the State Reorganisation Commission, are all covered in depth in this study, which gives a complete background on these topics. In addition to this, it provides a comprehensive literature analysis and outlines the methodology of the study, as well as looks into the distinctive characteristics of Telangana. In addition, the study delves into the aims and study issues that are providing the foundation for this investigation.

In the years after the massive reorganisation of states that took place in 1956, there has been an ongoing desire for the establishment of fresh states that are lower in size. Over the course of the past several years, numerous political parties and social groups have stepped up their efforts to promote the development of smaller states that are carved out of bigger states that communicate in a single language. An important turning point in this discussion took place on August 15, 1996, when H.D. Deve Gowda, who was serving as Prime Minister at the time, made the announcement that the province of 'Uttarakhand' will be established from the Red Fort on Independence Day. A mixture of hope, scepticism, and anxiety was stirred up among the general population as a result of this statement, which not only reignited the discussion that had been going on over the reorganisation of the state, but also took it to heights that had never been seen before.

In this setting, people, political parties, and organisations that advocate for the establishment of new states have mobilised, rekindling the moral and ideological grounds of demands that were made in the past. Through the use of Telangana as a case study, the purpose of this study is to conduct an analysis of the political landscape surrounding the demand for independent statehood. In order to create a detailed knowledge of the difficulties inherent in the pursuit of statehood in India, the purpose of this study is to investigate the historical, political, and social elements that have had a role in shaping the movement.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Srinivasulu (2020) studied the Telangana example, which offered a chance to investigate alternate frameworks of regional autonomy and state reorganization by moving beyond the idea that linguistic nationality should serve as the foundation for state creation. From



highlighting the political marginalization of Telangana leadership to criticising state policies that violated the rights of the Telangana people inside their own territory, discourses on Telangana frequently emphasized the issue of backwardness. The Telangana state movement sparked debates that promised to provide an alternate viewpoint on regional autonomy and identity, despite the fact that there was no substantial criticism of the linguistic nationality premise in the Indian setting. Telangana, coastal Andhra, and Rayalaseema were the three areas that made up the Telugu-speaking state of Andhra Pradesh, which was established in 1956 on the basis of linguistic considerations.

George (2023) explored that after decades of struggle by the people of this region, the state of Telangana was officially established in June 2014. Six years after its founding, the state progressively moved out from the shadow of its parent state and forged its own course for growth. After tracing the beginnings and development of Telangana's quest for its own statehood, this study examined the steps taken to establish the new state. The last section of the study examined Telangana's post-statehood narrative, highlighting a number of issues that the state still faces today.

Pathania (2021) examined one of the longest campaigns for separate statehood—the Telangana movement—invoking Rajni Kothari's theory that grassroots activity for regional formations should be seen as local responses to national issues. It followed this regional movement's long history to its dramatic climax on June 2, 2014, when Telangana became the 29th state of India. An interesting illustration of the many aspects of the fight for regional identity was provided by the Telangana case study. According to the study, the regional and sub-regional movements expanded the opportunity for democratizing regional institutions rather than undermining national integrity and unity.

Chippa, R. (2020) Routledge examined how language, dialect, and culture shape identity and identity politics. It looked at how Indian states were linguistically formed and showed how culture, language, or dialect influenced identities, emphasizing the significant role these identities had in political movements. The study examined Telangana's pre-bifurcation history, as well as the movement's use of mass persuasion, identity, and language politics. It has been demonstrated that language serves as both a linguistic indication of social identification and a potent instrument for social control. One of the great powers in the globe that confronted the difficulty of integrating different national and linguistic groupings was the Soviet Union, which was successful in doing so.

Roy et al. (2022) examined that in Pathalgadi, a movement for "self-governance" by Adivasis in Jharkhand's Khutkatti districts, used local languages and symbols to reiterate constitutional clauses and defend customary land rights. In order to mark the boundaries of their villages, people in Jharkhand and other states like Chhattisgarh put stone slabs beside roadways. In the same way that a sovereign nation-state would regulate and oversee admission into its territory, the villagers "guarded" these limits. The Fifth Schedule, which acknowledged Adivasi administrative autonomy in scheduled regions, and the Panchayat Extension into Scheduled regions Act of 1996, which needed gramme sabha approval for acquiring tribal land, were among the constitutional clauses that were engraved on the Pathals. By using constitutional language to express their "self-governance" claims and imitating "state-like" aspects of sovereignty, the Adivasis brought competing logics of the state to these areas. In situations where "weak statehood" prevailed, the state's existence and power were concurrently asserted—not because the state didn't exist, but rather because it took on forms that the Adivasi people didn't recognise.

Philip (2023) investigated the dominance of religious and agrarian populist beliefs among various backward caste groups in Telangana in order to outline the ideological terrain for the Hindu right-wing's infiltration into the state. The RSS Brahmantva Versus Dalit-Bahujans. Countercurrents.Org, April 26, 2016) noted that scholars had pointed out that the current speculation of hegemonic Hindu nationalism was yet another shifting form of Brahmanism, the socio-religious and ideological engine of caste, and the matrix of domination in Indian



society. The majority of the "lower" castes had to agree to this project of domination by "upper caste" elites or be politically "incorporated" in order for it to succeed given the electoral politics framework in which it operated.

3. The Movement for Telangana Statehood

This study examines how the Telangana movement started, what provoked the movement, and how the Telangana section of Hyderabad state was combined with Andhra to establish a new state called Andhra Pradesh. The objective of this study was to broadly outline the important events such as the Telangana Armed Struggle, Gentlemen's Agreement, the Telangana movement, different agreements, and other important events that happened along the way. It also portrayed some advantages and disadvantages of the Telangana movement while fighting for liberation. The Movement for Separate Telangana State was born from long desires for political autonomy, socioeconomic fairness, and regional identity, thus becoming a defining moment in Indian political history. Originating from a sense of marginalization and neglect of the Telangana region's residents, this movement was an attempt to finally resolve longstanding complaints regarding political representation, resource distribution, and cultural acknowledgement. This would reflect in the passage of decades through military conflicts, negotiations, and popular mobilizations in the intricate plays of regional politics under the federal system of India. The creation of Telangana as the 29th state of India in 2014 was a result of the ultimate victory of the movement and more importantly reflected on the intricacy of the relationship between regional ambitions and national politics. In an attempt to address the wrongs that occurred in the Telangana region, students and those from the armed forces formed the first protest movement culminating into agitation for the formation of a separate state called Telangana, and political parties later utilized this instability to take the agitation. Regardless of the safeguards that were in place at the time, the offenses were plentiful, and large portions of Andhra officials illegally took the places of such persons in the region, and this resulted in large-scale migration of the people of Andhra into the districts of Telangana. Also, in violation of the directives of the Gentlemen's Agreement, wealthy Andhra officials began proclaiming their kinsmen's names for key political as well as administrative positions in the region.

4. Telangana Statehood and the TRS Party's Role in Its Effect on Election Politics

This study discusses the Telangana statehood movement and the participation of political parties in electoral politics. The people of the region have always wished for Telangana to be a state, even before Telangana and Andhra merged to become United Andhra Pradesh. Many political parties and organizations have contributed to the movement's steady growth. The majority of people in Telangana were on the side of this cause at this point of time, and most of the political parties have availed themselves of Telangana sentiments to garner more votes. With the exception of the Communist Party of India and the Communist Party of India (Marxist), most parties tried to ride the Telangana wave to gain votes. After discussing the reasons for the independence of the Telangana movement in the previous study, this study mainly focuses on the electoral politics of Telangana and the contributions of the Telangana Rashtra Samithi (T.R.S.) to the cause of statehood.

The election politics and the demand for Telangana statehood have been closely intertwined; the policies and tactics of the Telangana Rashtra Samithi, or T.R.S., have had a very crucial role in this regard. This study examines the intricate connection between the Telangana state movement and the political environment surrounding it. Call for statehood is used by various political parties, as it is derived from historical grievances and ambitions of regional identity, to win elections and garner support. The T.R.S., especially founded to support Telangana, has been of immense importance to this process. The T.R.S. has emerged as the key force in shaping the debate over statehood, for it has successfully tapped popular emotion and coordinated its political agenda with the agenda of Telangana citizens. This study examines the strategies of the T.R.S., how they impact the greater political landscape, and how electoral politics impact Telangana's aspirations for independence and self-governance.



The base of the T.R.S. party consists of members from a wide range of political parties and organizations in the Telangana region, which is particularly diverse. Although many of the MLA candidates of the T.R.S. have affiliations with other political organizations, such as the Indian National Congress and various Communist groups, the party's founder and president, K. Chandrashekar Rao (KCR), had originally belonged to the Telugu Desam Party. The T.R.S. enjoys considerable support from a wide cross-section of people, including middle-class self-employed people, metropolitan employed people, and rural jobless adolescents. A significant section of the party's supporters are students since many active student leaders joined the Telangana movement that led to the killing of several student organisations.

As the Telugu Desam Party and Congress policies have posed a threat to their age-old mode of livelihood, artisans and laborers engaged in a variety of crafts also flocked to the T.R.S. The T.R.S. has also got support from teachers at the college level as well as universities. Under the aegis and guidance of KCR, the Telangana Rashtra Samithi Vidyarthi Vibhagam, that is the student wing attached to the T.R.S., serves as a pivotal agent for change in this freedom movement of the separate state of Telangana.

In the words of Narasimha Swamy, the cause of separate Telangana State has not been motivated by any sort of separatism or fanaticism but survival instincts and minimum living. He stated that their ancestors left them a responsibility for protection of their rights regarding money, job, education, and waters. They represent a separate Telangana as right, not as demand; they are willing to sacrifice all in this process for the state. They convey an urgency to be a state now, right now; they don't want burdening future generations with that effort. And in such a Telangana free of prejudice and exploitation, perhaps the next generation would then proudly be citizens of one and only one just state. Therefore, it presents the movement as an attempt to give people in the Telangana area a brighter future.

5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the journey of Telangana towards statehood is a profound narrative that encapsulates the complexities of regional identity, political aspirations, and socio-economic disparities within the Indian federal framework. The movement, deeply rooted in historical grievances and cultural distinctiveness, emerged as a powerful force advocating for self-governance and equitable resource distribution. The Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) played a pivotal role in channeling public sentiment and mobilizing support, effectively intertwining electoral politics with the demand for statehood. The culmination of these efforts led to the establishment of Telangana as the 29th state of India in 2014, marking a significant milestone in the country's political evolution. This case study not only highlights the unique challenges faced by the Telangana region but also reflects broader themes of democracy, regional autonomy, and the ongoing dialogue about identity and governance in India. Ultimately, Telangana's story serves as a testament to the resilience of its people and their unwavering quest for recognition and justice within the national landscape.

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