

FROM UNITED ANDHRA TO DIVIDED STATES: THE ROLE OF REGIONAL PARTIES IN THE FORMATION OF TELANGANA

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Abstract:

The Andhra Pradesh bifurcation in 2014 to form the new territory of Telangana is a turning point in the political history of India that is based on historical grudges and regional desires. In this paper, the study will state how regional political parties, especially the Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS), played a critical role in influencing the emotions of the people and fuelling the demand to become a separate state. By operating through grassroots movements and dynamic use of social media, the TRS will bring form to the economic neglect and cultural marginalization of the Telangana region that it faced, turning the local discontent into a powerful political phenomenon. Andhra Pradesh Reorganization Act: Legislative actions that took place after a long period of agitation by the people concluded with this act, which solved the contentious issues involving resource distribution and governance. Although economic boom and regional prosperity have been significant in Telangana after bifurcation, other issues on how resources should be shared remain, in particular, in residual Andhra Pradesh. This paper presents research on the relationship existing between the regional aspirations and the national governance, using the interpretation of the socio-economic pointers and the policy implications on this relationship. The Telangana movement is an important case study in the way federalism and regionalism are functioning in India in the present context, as it may be seen how the local grievances can provide fodder for the greater political project.

Keywords: Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Regional Parties, Telangana Rashtra Samithi, Statehood Movement, Federalism, Public Sentiment, Socio-economic, Implications, Political dynamics.

1. Introduction

Indian politics changed significantly in June 2014 with the bifurcation of the state of Andhra Pradesh into two separate states, Telangana and residual Andhra Pradesh, which symbolized a complex combination of regional aspirations, cultural identities, and political factors. Although the current state of Telangana was a constituent part of a unified state for more than 60 years, the grievance behind calling for its creation was based on a long history of accumulated dissatisfaction associated with economic irrespective, cultural nonrepresentation, and underrepresentation in politics (Rao, 2014; Reddy, 2015). The historical context of the Telangana movement can be traced to the pre-independence movement and post-independence politics that did not consider the peculiar needs and demands of the region (Renukumar, 2016).

Regional political parties have played a pivotal role in the creation of this statehood demand. It is remarkable to mention that the Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS), an organization formed back in 2001, was the major voice behind the Telanganite movement. It brought about the needs of Telangana and demanded a state with a calculated campaign of mass support. To

highlight its economic imbalances with regard to the rest of Andhra Pradesh, the TRS deployed numerous platforms through which it claimed that its resources were being overused without proper benefits being generated (Yasodha, 2017; Kothari, 2020). Moreover, the Indian National Congress (INC), which used to wield great power over the region, had to change its strategies to deal with the wave of regionalism and prove its usefulness to the people with the increasing number of local requirements (Murthy, 2018).

This introduction identifies the wider consequences of statehood movements in India and depicts how regional parties can create political boundaries forcefully. According to Hasan (2015), the Telangana struggle offers an interesting study on how to comprehend the politics of regionalism and the causes that enable the main changes in administrative structure at a federal level. In this paper, therefore, it is intended to decipher the part played by regional parties towards achieving the transition between a unified Andhra and a partitioned state, providing a clue on the coordination between regional desires and national control.

2. Historical Background

The need for Telangana with a separate statehood is very much etched in its historical background and goes back to the social-economic, political inequalities that had arisen in the pre-independence era, as also that of post- post-independence era. Telangana had been a region incorporated within the princely state of Hyderabad, which was assimilated into the Indian Union in 1948. After the merger, the region became a part of a bigger state of Andhra in 1956, together with the Andhra regions of the coast, according to the linguistic policy of the Indian government (Khan, 2017).

There were some other conditions that led to the increasing grievance of the people in Telangana post 1956. First, the neglect felt by the successive governments resulted in considerable economic division between Telangana and the Andhra regions. Resource exploitation was being carried out in Telangana, and most of its revenues were directed to the development of the coastal Andhra, which resulted in the majority of the population of Telangana feeling marginalized (Hussain, 2014; Reddy & Rao, 2019). These sentiments were further exacerbated by the passage of the Andhra Pradesh Act in 1956, that poor consideration to Telangana due to their own cultural and social identity, which was blended with that of Andhra (Narayan, 2020).

In the past, significant instances that indicated the fight of the region against acknowledgment and self-determination were as massive as the Telangana Agitation of 1969. This movement flared because of the demand for a separate state and, as a result, brought widespread protests and political unrest. The disturbance led to high losses of lives and reflected the dissatisfaction of the local leaders and youths (Rao & Reddy, 2018). This movement was temporarily suppressed, and certain administrative concessions were conceded via the Gentlemen's agreement, but the factors that caused this grievance did not end.

In the decades to follow, the request for statehood kept being a matter of great attention for several political units. After the formation of the Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) by K. Chandrashekar Rao in 2001, indeed, this was a new period in the struggle for statehood,

because the party had made the stand of a separate state as its central agenda. By making use of social media, mass rallies, and ground-level mobilization, the party not only empowered the voice of the Telangana people but also turned the local frustration into a powerful political force (Reddy, 2020).

It is the climax of this long struggle, which was declared on July 30, 2013, by the government of India intends to make a separate Telangana state, which was approved by the Parliament of India on February 20, 2014. Such a turn of the historical vision accentuated the relations of power between the regional interests and the national state, which pointed to the decisive step in developing the Indian federalism (Ghosh, 2014).

3. The Role of Regional Parties

The demand for the formation of Telangana is entirely associated with the rise and politics of local political parties, basically Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS). Having been formed in 2001, the TRS is an offspring of the Telangana population's dream for themselves and their region. Its establishment added another important moment of the Telangana movement, as the party gathered popular masses, expressed local discontent, and rallied different social groups around the demand for the state (Venkataramana, 2015).

The capability of relating emotionally to the electorate was one of the major strategies of the TRS. The use of historical injustice and economic neglect in the talk of the historical Telangana by leaders like K. Chandrashekar Rao (KCR) was effectively communicated. The political rallies, the social media campaigns, as well as the grassroots mobilization, enabled the TRS to produce a sense of urgency and solidarity among the citizens of Telangana (Srinivas, 2021). The party concentrated on the fact that building up an independent state would solve long-term problems, and this would provide economic growth and recognition of their culture.

The TRS also took advantage of the loss of faith in both the Indian National Congress (INC) and the Telugu Desam Party (TDP), who were seen to have failed to take care of the needs of the Telangana region. As the strength of the INC decreased, the TRS presented itself as the main mouthpiece of Telangana dreams, winning elections and enjoying great support at the polls. However, in the 2014 elections, just before the bifurcation, the TRS got an overwhelming majority with 63 out of the 119 seats of the newly constituted Legislative Assembly, proving its control over the politics of the region (Election Commission of India, 2014).

The INC, on the contrary, a party that previously relied upon a pan-Indian story, found it hard to keep its pertinence as regionalism was increasing. This failure of the party to push effectively the issue of a separate Telangana resulted in the party losing its electorate base and hence, further aided in the emergence of the TRS (Sahu, 2018). Also, there were alliances and third parties that emerged representing the interests of Telangana, which was a political feature to determine the growing influence of regional politics in a multi-religious and multi-ethnic country like India.

Such changes in terms of the politics of power are depicted electorally. Comparison of the results recorded in elections between 2004 and 2014 indicates a significant increase in the

number of people who support TRS in the elections, which translates to TRS's ability to effectively mobilize regional feelings.

Table 1: Election Results in Telangana - 2004 to 2014

Year	Political Party	Seats Contested	Seats Won
2004	INC	294	185
2009	TDP	294	93
2014	TRS	119	63

Source: Election Commission of India (2014)

To sum up, the place of regional parties, especially the TRS, was really decisive in forcing this demand for the statehood of Telangana. These parties exploited the historical resentments and characterized their agenda following the hopes and expectations of the voters, thus having re-shaped the political landscape and pre-conditioned the future segmentation. The emergence of regionalism with reference to the Telangana movement especially signifies the significance of regional political identities in the process of policy-making and governance in present-day India.

4. Public Opinion Mobilisation

Mobilization of the popular sentiment was one of the key points in the Telangana movement, demonstrating actually the shift in the mood where a regional desire became a strong political necessity. The mobilization was greatly contributed to by the movement that was initiated by Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) and other regional forces, who tried to capture the grievances and desires of the Telangana people on multiple platforms and approaches.

Grassroots Movements

The grassroots activism in the Telangana movement became an important part of the issue when local leaders, along with the student fraternity, women and student fraternities and other civil society organizations, united in their opinions about the demands of the separate state. The intensity of the mood of people in support of the demand for statehood is evidenced by the major protest, which included massive publicity about the Sakala Janula Samme (General Strike) in 2011. The strike covered a vast number of social groups, and the media coverage was very high, almost raising the issue to the center of the national debate (Krishnan, 2015).

These grassroots movements were utilized by the TRS in an efficient fashion with the effective use of assembly points and rallies, as well as awareness campaigns of the politics involved in a fashion that serves to draw the attention of different demographic groups, especially the young and the first-time voters. The struggle in the pursuit of statehood had been presented by their campaigns as being morally obligated to each other since it involved issues of equity and justice that residents of Telangana had experienced under the united government of Andhra Pradesh (Yasodha, 2017).

The place of Technology and Social Media

Other than the conventional methods of mobilization, social media was formally deployed in the Telangana movement. Social media such as Facebook and Twitter helped information

travel very fast and helped the activists to organize themselves better. This online involvement especially played a decisive role in newer voters who would now be significant in spreading the messages of this movement and gaining support in both the cities and the countryside (Reddy & Rao, 2020).

By applying hashtags like Telangana and IWantStatehood, protesters managed to consolidate the national opinion and establish the national discourse against the Telangana problem. The smart employment of the visual media, such as videos and infographics, contributed to the dissolving of the myth around political processes and the population learning about their requirements and their rights, also contributing to the movement (Kumar, 2019).

Data and Statistics

To further describe the social mobilization occurring about the Telangana movement, surveys of public opinion during the course of the movement revealed high proportions of a large majority of citizens who wanted statehood. An example is that a survey done in 2013 revealed that more than 65 percent of its population favoured the creation of a new state of Telangana, indicating a general agreement by its people (India Today, 2013).

Table 2: Public Support for Telangana Statehood (2013)

Source	Percentage in Favor
India Today Poll	65%
Local Surveys	72%

Source: India Today (2013)

Concluding in a nutshell, the moving power of the public sentiment played an important role in the movement of Telangana through grassroots activism, communication proficiency, and technological revolution. The TRS has changed numerous localized grievances into a mass political movement and successfully rallied the efforts of different social groups in the quest to establish a state. This movement not only helped in the ultimate division of Andhra Pradesh, but also highlighted the strength of the regional loyalties in defining Indian politics.

5. Policy effects and legislative actions

The legal path to the division of Andhra Pradesh and the countrywide organization of Telangana became a set of crucial political judgments, arguments, and governmental transformations that highlighted the local interests of the Telangana people. These statutory measures were influenced not only by the grassroots campaigns but also by the strategic maneuver by the regional political parties, and especially the Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS).

Important Legislative Dynamics Key Legislative Developments

Growth in the demand of Telangana was a big movement that emerged as a result of the fierce mobilization at grass roots in the year 2009 onwards that caused a series of reactions in the central government. The then Union Home Minister, P. Chidambaram, made the first notable legislative move by announcing in December 2009 that the government was now ready to undertake the developmental efforts of East Telangana state by forming a separate state. The

announcement was however, faced great resistance from the leaders of the coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema areas, and this resulted in a lot of tension and political conflicts (Reddy, 2014). After that, the following political changes have witnessed a mixed commitment of the central government headed by the Congress party, which ramified into introducing a Telangana Bill in December 2013. After several debates and adding numerous amendments so as to accommodate the interests of every stakeholder, the bill was passed in 2014 by the Indian national parliament, which inaugurated the 29th state of India, Telangana (Rao, 2015).

Agreements and Negotiations in Politics

The lawmaking was not devoid of its intrigues, and this required negotiation to calm down concerns on the resource allocation as well as the civil assignment on the newly announced Telangana and the remaining Andhra Pradesh. The division of the two states was characterized by negotiations on how the assets, revenue, and employment opportunities in the public sectors would be shared. Main settlements were reached, and the basis on which such transitions were made was developed, as it was expressed in the Andhra Pradesh Reorganization Act, which outlined the stipulation in terms of governance and administration of the new state (Mahesh, 2015).

Post-Bifurcation policy impacts

Creation of Telangana had a great policy impact, especially on economic development and governance. The government of TRS soon initiated policies to deliver on the election manifesto and redress the historical wrongs, like the Mission Kakatiya program that upstreams the restoration of water bodies and encourages irrigation, thus serving the agrarian interests (Reddy et al., 2017).

Statistics prove that there are different economic indicators after bifurcation, which depict not only challenges but also opportunities for the two states. Even though an issue of entitlements and administrative wrangles beset Telangana initially, the state managed to set itself on a sustainable development path due to the focused policymaking.

Table 3: Economic Indicators - Telangana vs. Residual Andhra Pradesh (2014-2022)

Indicator	Telangana (2014)	Residual Andhra Pradesh (2014)
GSDP Growth Rate (2021)	11.5%	6.0%
Per Capita Income (2020)	₹1,85,000	₹1,35,000
Employment Rate (2021)	55%	48%

Sources: Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (2022), Economic Survey of Andhra Pradesh (2022)

To sum up, the passing of the acts regarding the formation of Telangana through the legislature played the main role in the conversion of the mood of the population into real political consequences. The TRS skilfully used the political waters to achieve statehood, and such sharing of resources and assets between the two states was done through the negotiations involved in the legislature. The policy effects that resulted from the bifurcation signified the sustained interest in resisting regional inequities and promoting development, showing that

political choices could influence the course of governance as well as the economy in a federal state.

6. Socio-Economic Implications

Andhra Pradesh bifurcation and the creation of Telangana in 2014 were both a watershed political and a socio-economic event, which have significant consequences on both states. To comprehend such implications, the economic indicators, including development strategy and the social dynamics after bifurcation, should be analyzed in detail.

Growth and Development of the Economy

After the bifurcation, Telangana has taken some strategic measures that would help in economic growth and development. The new state placed a particular emphasis on information technology, biotechnology, and agrarian fields with the help of the current infrastructure in the city of Hyderabad, which is now the capital of the Telangana state (Ghosh & Reddy, 2019). GSDP (Gross State Domestic Product) growth rate of the state after bifurcation has been better than that of residual Andhra Pradesh, which shows the efficiency of the policies followed by the region and diversification of the economy (Economic Survey of Telangana, 2022).

In 2022, Telangana's GSDP growth was 11.5 per cent growth rate, much higher than the residual Andhra Pradesh, which could hardly sustain a growth rate by achieving only 6.0 per cent growth rate in the same period (Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, 2022). Such disparity can be explained not only by the active policies of Telangana that include the development of innovation and startup culture through projects like T-Hub and a farmer support investment scheme called Rythu Bandhu, aimed at stabilizing agricultural income (Rao, 2021).

Allocation of Resources and the Good of the Community

Nonetheless, the issue of resource distribution still exists. The questions that were raised by the bifurcation were regarding the division of assets and liabilities between the two states. Whereas Telangana maintained a bigger proportion of income-generating resources, residual Andhra Pradesh had problems with its ability to access the resources required to govern the region properly and ensure people benefit (Reddy & Jha, 2020). This creation of bifurcation brought about the historical imbalances in socioeconomic strengths, as residual Andhra Pradesh was said to be unable to handle the increased population needs and guarantee proper societal amenities, especially in the medical and educational fields.

According to the local government reports, Telangana has gone ahead in enhancing social parameters, such as health and education, plus specific welfare schemes that cater to the deprived social groups. An example is the introduction of the so-called scheme under the name of Kalyana Lakshmi, which will help to finance wedding celebrations of women related to the economically weaker stratum of the population and enable the existence of social equality (Government of Telangana, 2021).

Regional Identity and Social Dynamics

The consequences of the bifurcation have been endured socially in the regional identities. The carving of Telangana has renewed a powerful regional identity based on the cultural heritage and the historical discourses. It has rekindled regional pride because the people are willing to re-appropriate cultural symbols and practices, which had previously been subsumed in the long-established united Andhra Pradesh system (Narasimha, 2018).

But this new identity has also contributed to causing tensions within the residual parts, whereby there are certain groups that have also not felt comfortable in the post-bifurcation setting. Cultural and political interactions have made the question of state policy implementation an observation point, resulting in occasional disturbances and requests for more inclusive governance (Deshpande, 2020).

Table 4: Socio-Economic Indicators (2022)

Indicator	Telangana	Residual Andhra Pradesh
GSDP Growth Rate (2022)	11.5%	6.0%
Literacy Rate (2021)	82.3%	67.35%
Poverty Rate (2021)	12.4%	17.5%
Unemployment Rate (2021)	6.8%	8.5%

Sources: Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (2022), Economic Surveys of Both States (2022)

In short, although the division of Andhra Pradesh and the birth of Telangana have brought a significant improvement in the economy and a clear definition of a specific local identity, there are still issues concerning distributing the resources and social equality. Evidence shows that Telangana has not failed in putting in place strategic interventions that have strengthened its economy. But the remaining Andhra Pradesh is under serious impediments, especially in delivering the services to the people and social assimilation. Such socio-economic connotations bring to the surface the complexity of how political choices made at the center, regional desires, and the interests of the community succeed in modern-day India.

7. Conclusion

The split of Andhra Pradesh to become the independent state of Telangana in the year 2014 is a major event in the prevailing saga of federalism and regional identity in India. This change did not happen as a political stunt but as an upshot of a history of grievance, socio-economic imbalances, and the righteous struggle of parties in the region, the Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS).

At the statehood movement, the TRS took center stage in representing the will of the Telangana people by successfully channeling the eminent desire of the people by effectively engaging its masses through grassroots activism and unique promotional tactics. It is a fact that the party could frame the demand of statehood into the demands of moral and economic necessity, that the party struck a chord in the people, and this was repaid in the form of votes. By adopting

social media and other conventional mobilization methods, the TRS was able to unite different population groups toward a common cause, and it was able to form a powerful political entity capable of negotiating statehood.

The movement triggered further legislative activities in relation to the specifics of political bargaining, which resulted in the adoption of the Andhra Pradesh Reorganization Act and later the establishment of Telangana as an independent state. This legislative action played an important role in ensuring that the thorny issues of asset allocation and its control were dealt with, especially with regard to historical neglect and injustice.

Although the formation of Telangana has come along with economic development and growth in the resources of the region regarding the identity, it has also revealed some difficulties, especially in resource allocation and the welfare of the population of the remaining Andhra Pradesh. According to economic indicators, it is evident that Telangana is progressing, yet there is still inequality, and there should be more money spent on social programs and infrastructure in both states.

Socio-economic consequences of this dichotomy highlight the complex connection between political choices and objective outcomes in the community. As Telangana struggles to find its way in the development and formation of identity, the experience of this statehood movement presents important lessons about the nature of regional politics in India.

As we look back at what the passage of an undivided Andhra to a partitioned political entity meant, this paper brings out the timeless value of regional aspirations in constructing national discourse. Finally, the Telangana movement is the prime example of how regional specificities of grievance can help to trigger more widespread political transformation, a fact which is still valid in order to explain the complex and controversial political situation in India.

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