

SOCIAL CHANGE IN ANDHRA AND ITS IMPACT ON THE NATIONAL MOVEMENT

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Abstract:

The success of India's freedom struggle hinged on resolute people's participation and sacrifices against foreign rule, a sentiment profoundly exemplified in Andhra Pradesh. Following Justice Fazal Ali's States' Reorganisation Commission, the state emerged in 1956, uniting Telangana, coastal Andhra, and Rayalaseema, each with distinct historical legacies. Historical disparities continue to shape the socio-political landscape, particularly in caste dynamics and mobilization. Colonial modernity's opportunities emboldened lower caste and peasant movements, challenging Brahminical dominance. The consolidation of non-Brahmin groups, like Reddis and Kammas, reshaped politics, with agrarian control underpinning their influence. The Velamas, Rajus, and Kapus, though smaller in number, hold political significance. The State's Other Backward Castes (OBCs), comprising 46.1% of the population, wield substantial influence. The present paper analyses the historical context, caste complexities, and evolving social forces collectively illuminate Andhra Pradesh's enduring impact on the broader narrative of India's struggle for freedom and socio-political transformation.

Keywords: Socio-political landscape, caste dynamics, colonial modernity, agrarian control, historical disparities etc.

Objective:

The objective of the research is to comprehensively analyse the historical context, caste complexities, and evolving social forces within Andhra Pradesh, and to demonstrate how these elements collectively contribute to its enduring impact on India's struggle for freedom and subsequent socio-political transformation.

Introduction

India's freedom struggle was successful only because the people responded to it, sacrificed everything, and fought against the foreigners with determination and dedication. The people of Andhra Pradesh also played a memorable role at various stages.

Following the suggestions of the States Reorganization Commission, led by Justice Fazal Ali, the Telugu-speaking State of Andhra Pradesh was created in 1956 on a linguistic basis. It combined the three regions of Telangana, coastal Andhra, and Rayalaseema, each of which had a distinct historical history. Telangana was a part of the former Nizam of Hyderabad State, while the latter two were a part of the British-ruled Madras Presidency. Understanding the political economy of development and the course of social and political processes in each location requires knowledge of their historical backgrounds.

Caste dynamics and mobilization played a significant role in shaping the Andhra freedom movement, influencing its goals, strategies, and outcomes. Here's an exploration of how caste dynamics and mobilization interacted with the broader context of the freedom struggle in Andhra Pradesh:

Caste Identity and Nationalism:

Caste identities often intersected with the broader nationalist movement. Leaders like Tanguturi Prakasam Pantulu and Alluri Sitarama Raju hailed from various caste backgrounds and emphasized unity against colonial rule. Caste-based organizations such as the Andhra Mahasabha advocated for both regional and national interests, aiming to balance local aspirations with the larger cause of independence.

The freedom movement witnessed the emergence of caste-based movements that sought to address specific social and economic injustices. The "Rampa Rebellion" led by Alluri Sitarama Raju, predominantly involving tribal and lower-caste communities, was a resistance against exploitative forest policies and land alienation.

Dalit Participation:

Dalit communities in Andhra Pradesh were subjected to caste-based discrimination and oppression. Leaders like M. C. Rajah and B. R. Ambedkar inspired Dalits to demand equality and justice. Dalit leaders contributed to the larger freedom movement by highlighting the connection between social justice and political freedom.

Non-Brahmin Movements:

Non-Brahmin movements emerged as a reaction to Brahminical dominance in socio-political spaces. They sought to challenge traditional hierarchies and claim a share in governance and decision-making. The Justice Party, established in the Madras Presidency (including parts of present-day Andhra Pradesh), was an example of such movements that aimed to uplift non-Brahmin communities. Caste mobilization was often used strategically by leaders to build a wider base of support for the freedom movement. Caste-based leaders emphasized the collective strength of their communities as a means to challenge colonial rule and seek justice.

Caste and Socio-Economic Inequalities:

The freedom movement was influenced by the socio-economic disparities that existed along caste lines. Issues such as landlessness, tenancy, and unequal access to resources became focal points of mobilization, with lower-caste and marginalized communities seeking to address these concerns.

Caste and Post-Independence Politics:

The socio-political landscape of Andhra Pradesh post-independence continued to be influenced by caste dynamics. Various caste groups vied for representation, leading to the formation of caste-based political parties and alliances. The Chundururu massacre of 1991, where Dalits were targeted, highlighted the persistence of caste-based violence and discrimination.

Literature review:

Literature review for the research topic "Social Change in Andhra and Its Impact on the National Movement" involves examining existing scholarly works, books, articles, and documents that provide insights into the relationship between social change in Andhra Pradesh and its influence on the Indian National Movement. An overview of key themes, notable authors, and important works in this field:

"The Making of Andhra Pradesh: Colonialism and Gender in South India" by V. Radhika: explores the colonial transformation of Andhra Pradesh and its implications on gender and social dynamics. It provides a foundation for understanding how colonialism influenced social change, setting the stage for the nationalist movement.

"Peasant Movements in Andhra Pradesh, 1920-47" by D. Narasimha Reddy offers a comprehensive analysis of peasant movements in Andhra Pradesh during the pre-independence period. It delves into the social and economic factors that drove these movements and their role in shaping the National movement.

"Gandhian Satyagraha: An Andhra Experience (1920-1947)" by K. Venugopal Reddy delves into the Gandhian Satyagraha movement in Andhra Pradesh, highlighting the role of local leaders and communities in shaping the non-violent resistance against British rule.

"Dalits and the Making of Modern India" by Chinnaiah Jangam focuses on the Dalit perspective within the context of social change and the National movement. It sheds light on the struggles and contributions of Dalit leaders in Andhra Pradesh during the freedom struggle.

"Politics in Andhra Pradesh (1956-2001): A Study of Political Instability and Social Change" by M. Venugopal Rao examines the post-independence political landscape of Andhra Pradesh, analysing how social change influenced political developments and policies in the state.

"The Andhra Mahasabha, 1913-1939: A Social and Cultural History" by P. Indira Devi delves into the Andhra Mahasabha, an organization that played a pivotal role in regional identity and social change. It offers insights into how such organizations contributed to the larger National movement.

This literature review provides a starting point for the research on the relationship between social change in Andhra Pradesh and its impact on the National movement. As the research delves deeper into these works and identifies additional sources, a comprehensive understanding of this complex historical interplay will be framed.

Legacy and Ongoing Movements:

The legacy of caste-based movements during the freedom struggle continues to impact modern socio-political movements in Andhra Pradesh. Movements advocating for reservations, social justice, and equal opportunities have their roots in the struggles for freedom and representation.

In analysing caste dynamics and mobilization in the Andhra freedom movement, it's essential to consider primary sources such as speeches, writings, and documents from that era. Examining the experiences and perspectives of different caste groups and their leaders will provide a more nuanced understanding of how caste intersected with the broader struggle for independence. Additionally, exploring how these historical dynamics continue to influence

contemporary politics and society is crucial to comprehending the lasting impact of caste mobilization.

Additionally, these historical disparities continue to shape contemporary Andhra Pradesh's socio-political processes, including the alignment of social forces, caste-class dynamics, the character of social movements, patterns of social mobilization, etc. Caste has traditionally been a significant factor in the State's social articulation and political mobilization. The regions show substantial differences in caste structure and articulation. The top caste in India, the Brahmins, who comprise about 3% of the population, have long controlled social, cultural, and economic life. King, Vaishya, Sudra, and other caste groups regularly used anti-Brahminism as part of their cultural defence.

Colonial modernity's economic, educational, and administrative associations offered opportunities to foster resistance to Brahminical society. Lower caste and peasant movements of the 20th century showed their readiness to face threats to their established social status and power. The consolidation and articulation of peasant-caste groups marginalized the entrance of Brahmins into politics. This form of integration allowed non-Brahmins to play a significant role in the liberation struggle. The two communities with the most political clout are the Reddis and Kammas, whose populations comprise 6.5% and 4.8% of the State's total population, respectively. Despite being spread out across the entire State, the Reddy family dominates the Telangana and Rayalaseema regions. On the other side, the Kammas have historically held disproportionate power in the coastal districts of Krishna, Guntur, and Prakasam; otherwise, they are barely noticeable. The primary source of these castes' economic and political dominance has been their control over agrarian resources like land and water. They have long had authority over village politics as the principal landowner groups and holders of significant posts.

Although they only make up a small portion of the population in absolute terms, the Velamas, Rajus, and Kapus are significant populations in the State with significant political significance among the other castes. The Kapus are predominant in East, and West Godavari districts, but the Velamas are a politically significant land-owning clan located in northern Telangana and northern coastal Andhra.

The Other Backward Castes (OBCs), comprising 46.1%, constitute a very large proportion of the State's population (see Tables 1 and 2).

Table 1 Percentage breakdown of total population of Andhra Pradesh by caste

Forward castes	% of total	Backward castes	% of total	Scheduled castes	% of total	Others	% of total
Brahman	3.0	Baliya	3.0	Mala	9.7	Muslims,	7.0
Kapu	15.2	Boya/Besta	0.7	Madiga	7.3	Christians,	
Kamma	4.8	Chakali	4.2			etc.	
Komati	2.7	Devanga	2.1				
Kshatriya	1.2	Dudekula	0.4				
Velama	3.0	Goundla	2.0				
		Gavara	0.4				
		Golla	6.3				
		Idiga	1.0				
		Jangam	0.4				

		Kammara/ Vishwa Brahmana	2.1				
		Kummari	0.9				
		Kurma	1.3				
		Munnurukapu	0.8				
		Mangali	1.3				
		Mutrasi	3.3				
		Sale	2.9				
		Telaga	5.2				
		Uppara	0.6				
		Waddera	1.8				
		Others	5.4				
	29.9		46.1		17.0		7.0

Source: *Census of India (1921) and Census of H.E.H. Nizam's Domain (1921) in G. Ram Reddy (1989), p.269.*¹

A significant social segment comprises the Scheduled Castes (SCs), who comprise about 17% of the population. The Malas and Madigas are the two sub-castes that comprise most of them. The former predominates in the coastal region, whereas the latter is in Telangana. Agriculture and leatherwork are their respective traditional occupations; combined, they account for most agricultural labour. Tribal people make up about 6% of the population of Andhra Pradesh and are mainly found in the region's forested areas in both Andhra and Telangana. Muslims comprise less than 7% of the State's population and are most noticeable in the unorganized urban and semi-urban two areas. These numbers are based on the 1921 Census, which was the last one to conduct a caste enumeration.

Table 2 Distribution of castes in Andhra districts during the Madras Presidency, 1921

Caste	Vizag	Godavar i	Krish na	Guntur	Nellor e	Cudda pah	Kurnoo l	Anant hapur	Chittoor
Brahman	12.3	12.5	19.8	18.8	7.5	1.9	2.1	1.8	1.9
Kshatriy a	13.1	19.4	23.6	3.3	2.3	3.5	0.8	1.2	10.7
Komati	7.7	5.4	14.9	–	7.5	4.9	7.6	4.3	4.1
Kapu/Re ddy	19.6	9.8	7.7	5.1	7.1	7.2	4.1	4.6	6.4
Kamma	–	6.4	25.8	36.0	12.5	2.3	0.9	4.5	10.7
Velama									
Sale	11.7	7.0	6.4	7.4	2.7	3.0	1.7	1.7	2.2
Golla	13.1	4.2	9.3	8.9	9.5	4.9	5.2	4.2	5.6
Balija	7.1	4.5	2.3	6.4	14.3	13.2	10.3	10.4	19.0
Telaga									
Mutrasi	–	0.3	4.5	3.3	4.7	1.8	0.7	1.7	4.7
Boya/Be sta									
Kummar i	4.9	3.8	10.3	12.1	8.8	4.7	5.9	3.7	5.9
Uppara									
Chakali	8.3	5.0	7.2	7.7	4.5	3.0	3.2	2.6	3.3

Mangali	14.5	7.3	9.9	9.6	5.6	4.8	5.7	5.7	5.7
Mala	8.0	15.4	18.3	7.4	9.6	3.3	2.7	1.3	8.7
Madiga	3.0	4.9	9.9	4.2	6.4	4.1	4.7	8.0	3.6

Source: Census of India (1921) in G. Ram Reddy (1989), p. 270.²

The Coastal Andhra region is more developed than Rayalaseema and Telangana regions. The construction of irrigation projects across the Krishna and Godavari rivers by the British colonialists in the mid-19th century was crucial for the region's development, particularly for Guntur, Krishna, East and West Godavari districts. With a view to augmenting its income from agriculture, vast areas were brought under cultivation: this led to the commercialization of agriculture and the production and accumulation of agricultural surplus.³

It impacted the growth of urbanization in the region, as centres of trade, education, culture and social reform were created. An essential factor in the rural transformation from the late 19th century onwards was the differentiation of peasant society and the emergence of an enterprising agricultural strategy of mainly Kamma, Reddy and, to a lesser extent, Kapu castes. The educated elites of these peasant castes played a major role in the emergence of caste-specific advocacy movements against Brahmin supremacy. They also led anti-zamindari struggles by mobilizing the Kisan movement and the lower castes. Due to these struggles that led to the abolition of the zamindari system and due to the tenancy reforms enacted in the early years of the post-colonial State, the peasantry and tenants of these peasant castes acquired large tracts of fertile land.

Growth and National Movement in Andhra

India provided an example to other Asian and African countries by continuing and eventually winning the liberation struggle. The achievement of freedom by India resulted from the people's growing national consciousness and the leadership provided by the intelligentsia, a product of the system that allowed the educated classes to enter into intimate contact with the national and democratic movements. The cooperative efforts of the people residing in each region of the country gained India's freedom; in accomplishing this mission, the contribution made by Andhra was rather large, and the part played by the Andhras was wonderful and heroic.

The British adopted the idea of land ownership after establishing their empire in India in order to increase revenue. In Andhra Pradesh, they implemented three different forms of land revenue schemes. The farmers and peasants, as a result, fell into poverty. The enterprise had an impact on Cottage Industries as well. On the other hand, British capital is encouraged to increase direct investments in Indian companies producing consumer goods. These elements combined to cause a decrease in Indian trade and commerce.

Mahatma Gandhiji arrived at this crucial time and played a significant role in the struggle for freedom. He was responsible for freeing India. The Andhra faithfully adhered to his directives, and under his leadership, the liberation struggle developed into a large-scale movement. Many honest and selfless commoners, such as Parvataneni Veerayya Chowdary, Kannuganti Hanumanthu, and Durgabhai Desmuk, were raised because of it. Numerous Andhra patriots marched forward unapologetically toward the objective of freedom, including Konda Venkatappayya, Duggirala Gopala Krishnayya, Dr B. Pattabhi Sitharamayya, Tangaturi Prakasam Pantulu, and a host of others.

The rebellions in Rayalaseema in 1800, the anti-tax campaigns in Cheerala-Perala, the civil disobedience movement, and the salt satyagraha in Andhra Pradesh were notable examples of these freedom struggles. All other movements were continued under the guidance of Mahatma Gandhi, who dared to fight the British in any situation without taking any fundamental steps.

Andhra Pradesh's freedom struggle was fuelled by patriotic fervour, sacrifices, and a committed effort to rid Mother Land of foreign rule. Gandhiji called for the elimination of the salt tax, the lowering of land taxes, the passage of the Prohibition Act, the historic Dhandi March, a boycott of imported clothing that many businesspeople backed, and a campaign against alcohol consumption among women. Konda Venkatappaih, the chairman and president of the Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee, built several sibirams and camps in various locations for women. Famous songs by Tripuraneni Ramaswamy, Veeragandham Tecchinaramu Veerulevarathelpudi, played at the time, were highlights.

The youth, students and women actively participating in the Andhra civil disobedience movement and the prominent leaders arrested during this period were K. Nageswara Rao, Prakasam Pantulu, G. Rangayyanaidu, VL Shastri, Smt. Rukmini, Lakshmiapati, A. Kaleswaraalappadi, Kondaiah, Lakshmidevi, Kondariyya, Ganeswara Rao, Pattabi Seetharamaih, Vallabaneni Rambraham, Cherukuvada Lakshmi Narasimham and others. Unnawa Lakshmi Bayamma, Vedantam Kamala Devi and other prominent women leaders were detained.

Limitations:

It's important to acknowledge the limitations of the current research topic as they can affect the scope, depth, and generalizability of the research findings. Some common limitations associated with this research are:

1. Limited Availability of Primary Sources such as documents, letters, and diaries, may be limited. This can constrain the researcher's ability to access firsthand accounts of social change and its impact on the National movement.
2. Historical records may have biases or gaps, particularly in terms of representation of marginalized voices. Official records often prioritize certain perspectives, which may not fully capture the experiences of all communities and social groups involved in the social change and the National movement.
3. Andhra Pradesh is a diverse state with distinct regional histories and sociocultural contexts. Understanding the impact of social change on the National movement requires considering these regional variations, which can be challenging due to the breadth of the state and variations in available historical data.
4. Certain aspects of social change, grassroots movements, or local initiatives may not be well-documented or may have been lost over time.
5. Researching social change in the context of caste, community dynamics, and political movements can raise ethical and sensitivity concerns.
6. Researchers may face methodological challenges related to data collection, analysis, and interpretation. The selection of appropriate research methods and frameworks is crucial for addressing these challenges effectively.

7. Findings related to the impact of social change on the National movement in Andhra Pradesh may not be directly generalizable to other regions of India. The state's unique historical, cultural, and social context can limit the broader applicability of the research.

Future Scope and Steps:

Can conduct an in-depth study of primary and secondary historical sources, including archival documents, newspapers, speeches, and personal accounts, to trace the specific contributions of Andhra Pradesh to India's freedom struggle. Can investigate the historical development of caste dynamics in Andhra Pradesh, focusing on how caste identities influenced social interactions, economic opportunities, and political mobilization.

Can use qualitative and quantitative research methods to assess the role of caste in shaping socio-political alliances, voting patterns, and policy decisions. Study the emergence and evolution of lower caste and peasant movements in Andhra Pradesh, examining their goals, strategies, and achievements in challenging Brahminical dominance and advocating for social justice.

Analyse the socioeconomic conditions that fuelled these movements and assess their long-term impact on the state's social fabric. Can conduct case studies on influential non-Brahmin groups like Reddis, Kammas, Velamas, Rajus, and Kapus to understand their historical trajectories, power structures, and political strategies. Can explore how their control over agrarian resources contributed to their political influence and reshaped the state's governance. Can undertake surveys and interviews to gain insights into the socio-political participation of OBCs, their aspirations, and the challenges they face.

Analysis of the electoral and policy impact of OBC mobilization and representation in Andhra Pradesh's governance can be considered. Compare Andhra Pradesh's experience with similar regions to identify unique contributions and trends in the freedom struggle and socio-political transformation. Analyse how Andhra Pradesh's dynamics fit within the broader narrative of India's struggle for freedom and its implications for nation-building.

Based on research findings, propose policy recommendations for addressing historical disparities, promoting social cohesion, and ensuring inclusive development in Andhra Pradesh. Consider how lessons learned from the state's history can inform policies aimed at addressing contemporary socio-political challenges. Collaborate with historians, sociologists, political scientists, and experts from relevant fields to gain a holistic understanding of the subject matter.

Utilize interdisciplinary methodologies to explore the interconnectedness of historical, social, and political factors. Ensure that the research respects ethical standards, particularly when dealing with sensitive issues such as caste dynamics and social inequalities. By following these steps and approaches, the research can provide a comprehensive analysis of Andhra Pradesh's historical and socio-political significance in the context of India's struggle for freedom and its subsequent transformation.

The intricate relationship between social change in Andhra Pradesh and the National movement is a testament to the multifaceted nature of India's journey to independence. This research deepens our understanding of the complex forces during this transformative period and highlights the enduring significance of these historical changes in shaping the socio-political

landscape of modern Andhra Pradesh. It underscores the need to acknowledge and appreciate the diverse regional experiences that enriched the broader narrative of India's freedom struggle.

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