Telangana Movement: Integration Of Mainstream Media, New Media And Traditional Media

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Abstract
Socio-political movements worldwide were successful irrespective of the media's support, some are more successful and achieved their respective goals, especially with the help of mainstream media, which has a wider reach and impact on people, also we have instances where socio-political and cultural movements have become successful with the help of traditional/Indigenous media and largely supported by the people. The 29th state of India, Telangana, was formed in June 2014 after countless struggles and many decades. The state has a long history of traditional/Indigenous media playing a pivotal role in the socio-political and cultural transformation of the region. The nonviolent movement compelled the union government to concede to the demand for a separate state within the Indian Union. The growth and integration of mainstream, New Media, and traditional media contributed immensely to the Telangana movement and the formation of the state.
Keywords- *Telangana, Socio-political movements, Integration, Traditional media, Mainstream media and New Media.*

Media represents society to a large extent, a fact that may be challenged and has been challenged many times, especially during the upheavals in the socio-political and cultural order; media has become an inalienable part of us dictating every move that we humans make. Socio-political movements worldwide became successful irrespective of the media's support, some are more successful and achieved their respective goals, especially with the help of mainstream media, which has a wider reach and impact on people also, we have instances where socio-political and cultural movements have become successful with the help of traditional/Indigenous media and largely supported by the people.

Media are categorised as Old and New, Mainstream and Alternative; these play a significant role in educating and informing millions of people by providing the required information. The growth of digital media has not only given access to information but allowed the public to be active participants both online and offline, giving a boost to the socio-political change in many countries across the continents, the Arab Spring in 2010 toppled the governments in Africa and the Middle Eastern countries like Egypt, Tunisia, Syria, Yemen etc. also dubbed as Facebook revolution, the Twitter and Umbrella revolutions in Iran and Hongkong followed next, it is to be noted that though people supported these movements and the online media and other apps played a vital role. Socio-political movements explore various means to reach the masses when mainstream media ignores the larger cause.

The 29th state of India, Telangana, was formed in June 2014 after countless struggles and many decades. The state has a long history of traditional/Indigenous media playing a pivotal role in the socio-political and cultural transformation of the region. The nonviolent movement compelled the union government to concede to the demand for a separate state within the Indian Union. The repressive regime under the Nizams of Hyderabad, the erstwhile princely state, was well tolerated to an extent but eventually resisted by the people of Telangana with the first peasant's arms struggle supported by the communist party fought with their might against the Nizam private army the Razakars. Though the people of Telangana were liberated from the rule of the Nizams on 17th September 1948, the freedom that they longed for lasted for another six decades.

The second struggle for free Telangana started the day it was merged with the Andhra region in 1956. Many from the region vehemently opposed this merger as they suspected domination from the other group. The "Gentlemen's agreement" which included various aspects like finances, employment, and sharing of water resources, was disregarded soon after the merger, and millions of rupees from Telangana were diverted to the Andhra region for developmental purposes, ignoring the development of Telangana. The merger fears came true

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for Telangana's people as Andhra's domination over Telangana continued for over six decades in every walk of life until the final phase of the separate Telangana state movement began, under the leadership of KCR and other regional leaders and intellectuals in 2009.

The final phase of the Telangana liberation struggle will be written in the annals of history as it was the people's movement well supported by the indigenous media, and political parties, both regional and national. The huge data of media generated and circulated during the movement will be a case for future scholarship, especially the traditional media/ alternative media and the role it played, as Edward quotes Atton (2002):

Alternative media… are crucial for offering the means of democratic production to the people who are normally excluded from media production. They are to do with organizing the media along lines that enable participation and reflexivity (quoted in Edward 2006:107).

Socio-political movements often become never-ending conflicts between opposing groups and decimate everything if governments do not deal with the proper solutions. For ages, governments and dictatorial regimes across the world have faced the brunt of the public ire for ignoring and crushing public dissent, incidents in Tunisia, Libya and Syria have proven once again that the fight for justice can be delayed, but not for too long. Media has been representing and documenting our struggles and triumphs for centuries, in various forms like geoglyphs, petroglyphs, cave paintings, and pictographs from the bygone eras and now with modern digital technologies. The unbiased media often tends to bias reporting and regularly ignores the genuine struggles under pressure from political, cultural, and economic institutions, media has minimal role if it is a dictatorial regime. When the media fails the public, the public searches for an alternative that represents and supports their cause. According to castellas

If political power lies at least partially in the ability to program and control networks, movements that counter established power or act for social change must base their actions on trying to *re-program* digital media (Castells 2009)

There were many subnational movements in India after independence from the British. These subnational movements were partly successful, but not all the movements achieved their goals for various reasons, one being the political will of the leaders and general public and the other being unsupportive or biased media. People and political leaders of Telangana learned their lessons from their past mistakes they fought the third phase of the Telangana movement by depending on traditional media/alternative media as they knew how government-controlled and private media organisations owned by the Andhra region were biased against the state's separation. The movement has employed every means possible to reach out to the public using mainstream media, traditional media and digital media in the bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh.

The socio-political movements have for long survived on people's media to communicate the cause through various forms, like songs, dance, cultural symbols, iconography and slogans, while much of Telangana was illiterate during the first and second phases of the movement, the third phase under the leadership of KCR popularly know as KCR and intellectuals were successful in reaching out to the masses both literate and illiterate by generating information on various issues that were plaguing the region under the dominant Andhra rule through several forms of media especially depending on oral forms. Hamilton J says,

Alternative media, in particular, have been seen to be fundamental in providing diverse content to democratic societies. Alternative media, which are situated outside of the mainstream, have been said to articulate a social order different from and often opposed to the dominant (Hamilton 2000: 362)

Traditional media rely on other media for their existence however certain knowledge forms and media are passed down from generation to generation, and oral media forms are limited and confined to a geographic area. Such media thrive in conditions where pluralism is more common and deeply rooted in the region and people, especially concerning religion, culture and customs. The local media forms and traditions like Burrakatha, Golla Suddalu, Harikatha, Bairagi Patalu (Bairagi Songs), Pakeer Patalu (Bowl Songs), Chuttakamudu, Vuyyala Patalu are huge crowd pullers, people across the villages come to see the performances that not only disseminate information but make the public think, act and react to such information, the third phase of the Telangana movement has employed this media when government and mainstream media was turning a blind eye to the events that were unfolding during the peak movement. Though the initial phase of the movement especially the political parties, notably the Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) in every meeting that it had over the years had the song and dance performances called Dhoom-Dham, this later became a model for other political and non-political organisations to have Dhoom-dham performed by singers, poets and other artists of Telangana, these performances became hard to control for the state as they were not able to censor the information from the people as it is peoples media. Innaiah in a personal interview, says "The traditional media, because of its free nature, questions the state when the mainstream media ignores issues or at times when it loses its credibility".

Alternative media have historically been defined by their ideological difference from the mainstream, their relatively limited scale of influence in society, their reliance on citizen reporting and their connections with social movements (Kenix 2011: 3).

The Traditional media sustained and became a powerful tool in the Telangana movement in the final phase also, many art forms were revived because of the movement, these art forms and media were well connected with the common man. The revival of the Telangana art forms and media became a boon for the local public, especially the spoken language, the slang and the traditional attire and cultural shows were the biggest crowd pullers at meetings, protests and various other forums including political and non-political rallies. This revival of old media challenged the mainstream media (electronic and print), which started to ignore the movement once it realised the imminent bifurcation of the state, the media controlled by Andhra, began to frame the movement as negative, bowing to the political and economic pressure. According to Edward and Chomsky

Among their other functions, the media serve, and propagandize on behalf of, the powerful societal interests that control and finance them. The representatives of these interests have important agendas and principles that they want to advance, and they are well positioned to shape and constrain media policy. (Edward and Chomsky 1998: xi)

Dhoom-Dham (the song and dance show), which became the face of Telangana during the final phase, draws its inspiration from erstwhile popular groups like Jana Natya Mandali, Praja Natya Mandali and Arunodaya Samskritika Samakhya. The three groups were largely associated with left-wing ideologies, highlighting several socio-political, cultural, caste, and economic issues prevalent in the region (songs and dance performances), especially atrocities committed by the state. The Dhoom-Dham countered the false propaganda pushed by the mainstream media controlled by the Andhra capitalists and politicians across the Telangana region during the movement, Dhoom-Dham also informed and educated people by exposing the lies and other narratives disseminated through popular media outlets.

The Dhoom-Dham shows were very popular and were able to win the hearts of people and encouraged them to protest in large numbers during calls given by the political parties and other organisations of the Telangana region, the songs performed in Dhoom-Dham reflected the people's aspirations, these songs and performances were widely shared on social media accounts, of Facebook, and WhatsApp and YouTube reaching far and wide audiences across the world made a difference to the progress of the movement and has revived old forms of media that were dormant for the last few decades, Telangana art forms, language and culture was considered as low class and stereotyped by the mainstream media in the united Andhra Pradesh. The same art forms, language, and culture showcased in Dhoom-Dham brought a new cultural revolution and galvanised the younger generation towards the movement. balladeers like Rasami Balakishan Gorenti Venkanna, Gaddar, Vimalakka, Desapathi Srinivas, Maa Bhumi Sandhyakka, Nernala Kishore, Murli Madhu, Madhu Priya and many other poets, writers and performers of the Telangana region infused a new zeal to the movement and people, ordinary people doing extraordinary events during the protests across the Telangana region drawing inspiration from the Dhoom-Dham events. Michael Real believes "the media has the power in transforming spectators into active participants of everyday dealings and events affecting their lives" (Tracy2007:272) The Telangana movement was a lifeline for many art forms, they not only got revived by becoming popular among the public for information and entertainment.

Local and traditional communication systems refer to all organized processes of production and exchange of information managed by rural communities. Their tools, like traditional theatre, masks and puppets performances, tales, proverbs, riddles and songs, should be seen as a cultural and endogenous response to different community needs for information, education, social protest and entertainment (Chiovoloni 1994).

The growth of mainstream, New Media, and traditional media contributed immensely to the Telangana movement. Television channels, newspapers, and numerous websites supported the movement. These media highlighted injustices meted out to Telangana in the last few decades. News channels like HMTV, T News, Raj News, V6 TNN news, and Newspapers like The Hansindia, Namasthe Telangana and others have played a pivotal role in countering the negative arguments put forward by other media outlets controlled by Andhra politicians and Industrialists. While the counter-protests in the Andhra region were highlighted in the media controlled by the Andhra politicians and Industrialists, media from Telangana only highlighted the facts with figures, and the injustices meted out to Telangana people. The people of Telangana will be forever indebted to New Media and social media for taking the movement forward and to a logical end of achieving statehood for Telangana in 2014. Everyone who was involved with the movement had a Telangana struggles-inspired song as a ringtone, people shared countless images and videos on Facebook, WhatsApp and YouTube, these media made the ordinary public into active participants, as lakhs of people and groups were able to share information about the movement's every move and acted on the calls given by politicians, NGO's, civil society organisations and Telangana Joint Action Committees formed by numerous governmental and non-governmental groups.

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