

AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS OF MYSORE STATE AND THE INDIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT: A HISTORICAL STUDY

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Abstract—An empirical analysis of the national movement in Mysore State reveals a distinct socio-political trajectory shaped by data-driven governance, high literacy, and a unique ‘dual power’ struggle. The history of the Indian National Movement was not confined to British-ruled provinces; it also extended into the princely states, where people increasingly demanded responsible government, civil rights and political participation. Mysore State occupied an important position in this wider political transformation. Although Mysore was a princely state under the rule of the Wadeyar dynasty and enjoyed internal administrative autonomy, British political influence remained significant. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the growth of education, newspapers, political associations and social reform contributed to the emergence of political consciousness in Mysore. The formation of organisations such as the Mysore State Congress and the Praja Party strengthened popular demands for responsible government. The influence of Mahatma Gandhi and the wider Indian National Congress movement also encouraged political mobilisation within the state. Movements such as the Mysore Chalo Movement of 1947 became important milestones in the struggle for responsible government. This paper examines the political, social and historical development of Mysore State, the emergence of nationalist consciousness, the role of political organisations and leaders, major movements, and the integration of Mysore into independent India. The study argues that the people of Mysore made a significant contribution to the Indian National Movement by transforming demands for administrative reform into a broader struggle for responsible government and democratic participation.

Index Terms—Mysore State, Indian National Movement, Princely States, Mysore State Congress, Praja Party, Responsible Government, Mysore Chalo, Wadiyar Dynasty

I. Introduction

The Indian National Movement was a broad-based political and social movement directed against British colonial rule and ultimately culminated in India’s independence in 1947. Although the activities of the Indian National Congress and major movements such as the Non-Cooperation Movement, Civil Disobedience Movement, and Quit India Movement have traditionally been studied mainly in the context of British Indian provinces, the political awakening in the princely states also constituted an important dimension of the freedom struggle. Among the princely states of South India, Mysore occupied a distinctive position. Ruled by the Wadiyar dynasty, Mysore acquired a reputation as a progressive and well-administered princely state, particularly for its achievements in education, public works, industrial development, and administrative reforms. The establishment of the Mysore Representative Assembly in

1881 represented an early institutional effort towards political participation. The progressive policies of the monarchy and the contributions of its Dewans further strengthened the state's reputation as a "Model State." However, despite these administrative and developmental achievements, political authority remained largely concentrated in the hands of the Maharaja and the appointed administration.

The political situation in Mysore was therefore different from that of the directly administered British provinces. The people of Mysore generally retained considerable loyalty and respect for the Wadiyar rulers, while simultaneously becoming increasingly aware of the need for political rights and representative government. As political consciousness developed during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, educated groups, students, workers, farmers, and other sections of society began demanding greater political representation, civil liberties, and responsible government. The growth of Indian nationalism and the activities of the Indian National Congress had a significant influence on the political awakening in Mysore. The spread of Gandhian ideas, particularly through the Non-Cooperation and Civil Disobedience movements, encouraged wider participation in political activities. Mahatma Gandhi's visits to Mysore further strengthened nationalist consciousness and contributed to the expansion of the movement beyond urban intellectual circles into rural areas, educational institutions, and industrial centres. Consequently, the political movement in Mysore gradually developed from constitutional methods and petitions towards broader forms of mass mobilisation.

The nationalist movement in Mysore thus followed a distinctive trajectory. It was not merely a struggle against British colonial influence but also a movement for the establishment of responsible and representative government within the princely state. The demand for political reform increasingly brought together diverse social groups, including students, workers, farmers, intellectuals, and political activists. This process reached its culmination during the Mysore Chalo Movement of 1947, when widespread public mobilisation demanded the immediate establishment of responsible government following India's independence. The political transformation of Mysore demonstrates that the struggle for independence in India had both an external and an internal dimension. While the national movement sought freedom from colonial rule, the people of Mysore simultaneously sought greater political participation and democratic governance within the princely state. The study of Mysore therefore provides an important perspective on the complex nature of India's freedom struggle and the gradual transition from princely rule to representative democracy.

II. Objectives of the Study

The major objectives of the study are:

1. To examine the historical background of Mysore State and its relationship with the Indian National Movement.

2. To assess the contribution of the Indian National Movement to the development of responsible and good governance in Mysore State.

III. Research Methodology

The present study adopts a historical, descriptive and analytical research methodology. It is primarily historical and qualitative in nature and is based mainly on secondary sources. The secondary sources include - books and research works on Mysore and Karnataka history, government publications, historical records, archival materials, biographies, newspapers and periodicals, research articles, academic publications and institutional studies.

IV. Historical Background of Mysore State and the Indian National Movement

Mysore State occupied an important position in the political and historical development of South India. The Wadiyar dynasty established its rule in the region in the late sixteenth century, and Mysore gradually emerged as a significant political power. During the eighteenth century, the state came under the influence of Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan, whose resistance to British expansion made Mysore an important centre of conflict between Indian powers and the British East India Company. Following the defeat and death of Tipu Sultan in 1799, the Wadiyar dynasty was restored under British influence, and Mysore subsequently functioned as a princely state under British paramountcy.

During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Mysore developed a reputation as a progressive princely state. The administration introduced reforms in education, irrigation, public works, industries, banking, and local administration. The establishment of the Mysore Representative Assembly in 1881 was an important step towards political representation. The state also witnessed rapid industrial and infrastructural development under progressive Dewans such as Sir M. Visvesvaraya and Sir Mirza Ismail. These developments contributed to Mysore's reputation as a "Model State." However, political authority remained concentrated in the Maharaja and the appointed administration. The growing educated middle class gradually began demanding greater participation in administration, civil liberties, and responsible government. The spread of Indian nationalism and the activities of the Indian National Congress influenced political developments in Mysore, although the movement within the princely state initially followed a more moderate and constitutional approach.

The rise of Gandhian nationalism in the twentieth century gave further momentum to political mobilisation. The ideas associated with the Non-Cooperation Movement, Civil Disobedience Movement, and later the Quit India Movement influenced political activists in Mysore. Organisations such as the Mysore State Congress, established in 1938, played an important role in articulating the demand for responsible government. Students, workers, farmers, and other sections of society increasingly participated in political activities. The political movement in Mysore therefore developed along a distinctive path. It combined the

broader objective of Indian independence with the internal demand for responsible government and greater popular participation in the administration of the princely state. This dual character became particularly evident after India achieved independence in August 1947. The continued delay in establishing responsible government led to the Mysore Chalo Movement, through which widespread public mobilisation demanded democratic governance. Thus, the historical development of Mysore State demonstrates how the Indian National Movement extended beyond direct British territories. Mysore's experience reveals the interaction between nationalist politics, princely authority, social transformation, and the emergence of democratic aspirations, making it an important regional dimension of India's struggle for independence.

Table -1 Historical Relationship: Mysore State and Indian Nationalism

Sl. No.	Historical Development	Period	Contribution to Indian Nationalism
1	Modernisation of Mysore State	19th–early 20th century	Administrative, educational and economic reforms created conditions for political awareness.
2	Growth of Education and Press	Late 19th–early 20th century	Spread of political ideas, social reform and awareness of national developments.
3	Emergence of Educated Middle Class	Early 20th century	Lawyers, teachers, students and professionals became active in public and political affairs.
4	Influence of Indian National Congress and Gandhi	1920s onwards	Nationalist ideas such as Swaraj, Satyagraha, Swadeshi and non-violence influenced Mysore's political movement.
5	Growth of Political Consciousness	1920s–1940s	People increasingly demanded civil rights, political representation and accountable administration.
6	Formation of Political Organisations	1930s–1940s	Organisations such as the Mysore State Congress organised political activities and mobilised public opinion.
7	Demand for Responsible Government	1930s–1947	The principal political demand shifted towards representative and responsible government.
8	Influence of Quit India Movement	1942	Strengthened nationalist consciousness and demands for political freedom and democratic rights.

9	Mysore Chalo Movement	1947	Mass political mobilisation demanded responsible government in Mysore after Indian independence.
10	Establishment of Responsible Government	1947	K. C. Reddy became the first Chief Minister, marking an important transition towards representative government.
11	Integration with Democratic India	1947 onwards	Mysore's transition from princely rule to representative government contributed to its integration into independent India's democratic framework.

The historical relationship between Mysore State and the Indian National Movement was characterised by a gradual transition from administrative modernisation to political mobilisation and democratic transformation. Although Mysore was a princely state and its political circumstances differed from those of British India, the growth of nationalism, the influence of Gandhi and the Congress, and the emergence of organisations such as the Mysore State Congress connected its political struggle with the broader freedom movement. The Mysore Chalo Movement of 1947 represented the culmination of this process. It transformed the demand for political reform into a powerful demand for responsible government. Thus, Mysore's history forms an important regional dimension of the Indian National Movement and demonstrates that India's struggle for freedom was also a struggle for representative government, civil rights and democratic participation.

V. Role of the Indian National Movement in Mysore State

1. Emergence of Political Consciousness

The growth of modern education, newspapers, urbanisation and social reform created a politically conscious section of society in Mysore. Lawyers, teachers, students, journalists and educated professionals increasingly discussed - political representation, civil liberties, responsible government, administrative reforms, social equality, economic issues and national independence. The political developments taking place in neighbouring British India also influenced Mysore. The emergence of the Indian National Congress and the spread of Gandhian nationalism encouraged people in Mysore to participate in political activities. Political organisation was central to the development of the Mysore movement.

Praja Party: The Praja Party emerged as an important political organisation representing demands for greater popular participation in Mysore's administration. It sought political reforms and increased representation of the people. The activities of political associations helped transform individual demands into organised political action.

Mysore State Congress: The Mysore State Congress became an important organisation in the struggle for responsible government. It connected political activity in Mysore with the broader nationalist movement. Its major demands included - Responsible government, Representative institutions, Civil liberties, Greater participation of people in administration, Political rights and Democratic reforms. The organisation became an important platform for mobilising people during the final phase of the freedom struggle.

2. Mysore State and the Indian National Congress

The Indian National Congress played an indirect but important role in influencing political developments in Mysore. Since Mysore was a princely state, the Congress's relationship with the political movements of the princely states evolved gradually. The Congress increasingly supported the demand for civil liberties and responsible government in princely states. The All India States Peoples' Conference also became an important platform for political movements in the princely states. Nationalist ideas entered Mysore through political workers, newspapers, students, lawyers, teachers and educated groups. Gandhian methods such as non-violence, peaceful protest, public mobilisation and constructive work influenced political activists.

3. Role of Mahatma Gandhi

Mahatma Gandhi's influence extended beyond British India and affected political developments in princely states such as Mysore. Gandhian principles of non-violence, satyagraha, constructive work and mass participation influenced political activists. Gandhi also maintained connections with political leaders and social reformers associated with Mysore. The spread of Khadi, constructive programmes and nationalist ideas contributed to the growth of political consciousness. Gandhi's emphasis on responsible government and people's participation also strengthened the political aspirations of Mysore's population.

4. Civil Disobedience and Political Mobilisation (1930)

The Civil Disobedience Movement of the 1930s had an influence on political consciousness in Mysore. Although the political circumstances of a princely state differed from those of British provinces, nationalist activists sought to connect local political demands with the wider struggle against colonial domination. Political meetings, public campaigns, demonstrations and organisational activities helped create a broader political awareness. The state administration sometimes responded to political mobilisation through restrictions and arrests. These confrontations contributed to the growth of organised political activity.

5. Struggle for Responsible Government

The demand for responsible government became the central political issue in Mysore during the later phase of the national movement. The basic demands were that the administration should become accountable to the people through representative institutions rather than remain primarily under the control of the Maharaja and appointed officials. The movement reflected a transition from demands for administrative reform to demands for democratic governance. The struggle involved - political organisations, students, lawyers, teachers, workers, farmers, journalists, social reformers and educated middle classes. The demand for responsible government therefore became a broad-based political movement.

6. Quit India Movement and Mysore (1942)

The Quit India Movement of 1942 further strengthened nationalist sentiment throughout India. Political activists in Mysore also responded to the wider nationalist environment. The political atmosphere created by the Quit India Movement intensified demands for democratic rights and political participation. Although the nature and intensity of political action differed from those in British provinces, the movement contributed to the strengthening of nationalist consciousness within Mysore. The period also witnessed increased political repression and restrictions on political activities.

7. Mysore Chalo Movement (1947)

The Mysore Chalo Movement of 1947 was one of the most important events in the political history of modern Karnataka. Following India's independence in August 1947, the demand for responsible government in Mysore became more urgent. Political leaders and the Mysore State Congress demanded that the Maharaja introduce responsible government. The movement called upon the ruler to establish a government responsible to the people. Demonstrations, protests and political mobilisation took place across the state. The movement represented the culmination of decades of political awakening. It demonstrated that independence from British rule was increasingly understood not merely as national independence but also as the establishment of democratic government within the princely states.

8. Transition to Responsible Government (1947)

The political pressure generated by the movement eventually resulted in important constitutional changes in Mysore. K. C. Reddy became the first Chief Minister of Mysore under the responsible government arrangement in 1947. This represented a significant transformation in the political system of Mysore. The traditional princely administrative structure gradually gave way to a representative form of government. The transition also demonstrated the relationship between the Indian independence movement and the democratisation of princely states.

9. Role of Press and Education

The growth of newspapers and education played an important role in developing political awareness. Newspapers provided information about Indian nationalist activities, Political reforms, Civil rights, Social reform, Economic issues, Events in British India, and Political developments in Mysore. Educational institutions created a new generation of politically conscious students and intellectuals. Teachers, lawyers, journalists and other educated professionals became important participants in political organisations.

10. Role of Students, Workers and Women

The political movement gradually expanded beyond educated elites.

Students: Students participated in political meetings, demonstrations and nationalist campaigns. Educational institutions became centres of political discussion.

Workers: The growth of industries and urban centres created a working-class population. Labour organisations increasingly raised demands relating to wages, working conditions and political rights.

Women: Women gradually participated in nationalist and social reform activities. Their participation broadened the social base of political mobilisation and reflected the wider transformation of society during the national movement.

Table-2 Major Leaders Contribution of Indian National Movement in Mysore State

Sl. No.	Period	Major Development / Movement	Important Leaders / Personalities	Major Role and Contribution
1	1880s–1900s	Emergence of modern political consciousness	M. Venkatakrishnaiah, educated intellectuals and journalists	Promoted political awareness through journalism, education and public discussions.
2	1900–1920	Growth of education, press and public associations	M. Venkatakrishnaiah and other public intellectuals	Encouraged social reform, political awareness and discussion of constitutional issues.
3	1920–1922	Influence of the Non-Cooperation Movement	Mahatma Gandhi and local nationalist activists	Spread Gandhian ideas of non-cooperation, Swadeshi, Khadi and national consciousness in Mysore.
4	1920s	Expansion of nationalist and social reform activities	K. T. Bhashyam, Congress workers and reformers	Strengthened political mobilisation and linked Mysore's political aspirations with the wider national movement.

5	1930–1934	Influence of the Civil Disobedience Movement	Mahatma Gandhi and Mysore nationalist activists	Encouraged Satyagraha, civil rights and opposition to restrictive political practices.
6	1930s	Growth of organised political activity	K. C. Reddy, K. T. Bhashyam and other political leaders	Organised public opinion and strengthened demands for representative government.
7	1937–1938	Mysore Congress / Mysore State Congress movement	K. C. Reddy and other Congress leaders	Demanded responsible government, political representation and civil liberties.
8	1938	Vidurashwatha incident and political mobilisation	Mysore political activists and Congress workers	Became an important episode in the struggle for civil and political rights in Mysore.
9	1942	Influence of the Quit India Movement	Mahatma Gandhi, Congress leaders and Mysore activists	Intensified nationalist consciousness and demands for political freedom.
10	1942–1945	Continued struggle for political rights	K. C. Reddy, K. T. Bhashyam and other activists	Continued mobilisation for responsible government despite restrictions on political activities.
11	1946	Intensification of the demand for responsible government	K. C. Reddy, H. Siddiah, K. T. Bhashyam and Mysore State Congress leaders	Organised political activities and negotiations for representative government.
12	1947	Mysore Chalo Movement	K. C. Reddy, Mysore State Congress leaders and activists	Led a mass movement demanding the immediate establishment of responsible government.
13	1947	Establishment of responsible government	K. C. Reddy	Became the first Chief Minister of Mysore under responsible government.
14	1947 onwards	Political integration with independent India	Jayachamarajendra Wadiyar, K. C. Reddy and other political leaders	Facilitated the transition from princely administration to democratic government within independent India.

VI. Major Findings

The study reveals the following major findings:

- Mysore State experienced significant administrative and educational development during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.
- The spread of modern education and newspapers contributed to political consciousness.
- The Indian National Movement influenced political developments within Mysore despite its status as a princely state.
- The demand for responsible government became the central political issue during the later phase of the movement.
- Political organisations played a crucial role in mobilising public opinion.
- Gandhian ideas of non-violence and mass mobilisation influenced political activism.
- The Mysore Chalo Movement of 1947 represented the culmination of the struggle for responsible government.
- The transition to responsible government marked an important step towards democratic governance in Mysore.
- Mysore's political movement formed an important regional component of the wider Indian struggle for independence.
- The political developments in Mysore contributed to the formation of modern democratic Karnataka.

VII. Concluding Remarks

The Indian National Movement played a significant role in the political awakening and democratic transformation of Mysore State. The spread of modern education, newspapers, nationalist ideas and Gandhian principles encouraged people to participate in political activities and demand greater representation. The efforts of leaders such as M. Venkatakrishnaiah, K. T. Bhashyam, K. C. Reddy and H. Siddiah, along with the influence of Mahatma Gandhi, strengthened the movement for civil rights and responsible government. Political organisations, particularly the Mysore State Congress, provided an organised platform for these demands. The Mysore Chalo Movement of 1947 marked the culmination of the struggle. It transformed the demand for political reform into a decisive demand for responsible government and democratic participation. The subsequent establishment of responsible government under K. C. Reddy marked an important transition from princely rule to representative government.

Thus, Mysore State's contribution to the Indian National Movement was distinctive and significant. It demonstrated that the struggle for independence was not limited to ending British rule but also involved the establishment of democratic rights, responsible administration and people's participation in governance. The political awakening in Mysore therefore became an important foundation for the emergence of modern democratic Karnataka.

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