



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

THE GREAT DIVIDE - NATIONAL MOVEMENT IN INDIA (PARTITION & INDEPENDENCE)

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Abstract

The Indian national movement was one of the biggest mass movement modern societies has ever seen. It was basically the result of fundamental contradiction between the interest of the Indian people and that of British colonialism. To end to British colonialism in India, National movement came into existence. The British crushed the movement time to time but they could not crush the spirit of nationalism among Indian. At least India got Independence on 15-Aug-1947. Behind this Independence the concept of the Partition has also emerged and the creation of the two dominions, India and Pakistan. Thus, this paper covers the techniques adopted by Indian National congress and Muslim league in the national movement leading towards partition of India.

Keywords: National movement, Pakistan, Muslim league, Gandhi

Introduction:

Indian history is excessively rich. One event that played a major role in the Independence of the country was the national movement of India. The commencement of National movement was not an overnight thing started in 1947. It was a process that took several years to bear fruits. Indian National congress has a great significance in the history of India. It occurred because of the exploitative nature of colonial government colonial intervention occurred in a almost every aspect of life of Indians. That's why India masses started agitations against colonial government by launching national movement under the leadership of Gandhi from time to time such as Salt Satyagrah, Khilafat Agitation, Revolt against Rowlatt Act, Quit India movement and many more. These movement given a fruitful result because all the communities gave their contribution against the British rule. This time Britishers greatly worried over the unity of the two Hindu and Muslim which in every way would adversely affect one community against the other. The ultimate result of these efforts was the foundation of All India Muslim league in 1906¹. British government began to actively support Muslim league and the seed of the Pakistan was sown. Jinnah was the supporter of the separate state for the Muslims. Ultimately on 3rd June Lord Mountbatten announced the plan of partition which was accepted by Muslim league. The British government divested itself of all authority over the dominions with effect from 15-Aug-1947.

Objective of my paper:

1. Know the growth of Indian nationalism.
2. To discuss the importance of national movement for attaining Independence.
3. To study the factor that led to the division of the country.
4. To discuss the causes of Muslim league and hostility towards Indian National congress.
5. This paper tries to analyses the role of Britishers towards the partition of the country.

¹ Syed Umar Hayat; Muslim political ascendance in Bengal, a case study of role played by the Bengal provincial Muslim league krishak proja party (1906-1941) Pakistan journal of history and culture vol, p-112.

Research Methodology

To write this paper, the data has mainly concentrated on textual approach, books written by eminent scholars and articles, papers written on various National and International Journals has been considered to do the framework of this paper. Thus, secondary data has been used to write this paper.

Review of Literature:

There are number of puranic work on “The Great Divide- National Movement in India Partition & Independence” some of the important books and articles are under as under:

1. Bipin Chandra (2016)²: The author had provided in-depth and detailed overview on Indian Independence movement. Indian freedom struggle is one of the most important parts of its history. This book captures the evaluation of India Independence struggle started from 1857-1947, and impact on the Indian people. The author also highlighted the role of the people towards Independence and their sacrifices, fights etc. Their main focus was to weaken the British government through non-cooperation. The peaceful and non-violent techniques of Gandhi formed the basis of freedom struggle against the colonial rule.
2. Narendra Singh Sarila (2009)³: This book gives a different perspective on the Indian subcontinental partition, not from the Indian or Pakistan point of view. The author highlights the role of important political personalities of that era, including Gandhi and Jinnah. He brings to light the secret documents that show the role that united states played in the Indian Independence. The author not only talked about such issues but also discuss about the Muslim league role in partition. Thus, this book provides interesting insight into the India partition.
3. Mazhar kibriya (1999)⁴: Gandhi one of the most prolific writers amongst the figures of world history has left us details of his growth as a thinker and activist. This book speaks about the development of the various aspects of Gandhian movement. Gandhi ji played an important, crucial and pivot role in keeping the Indian freedom struggle predominantly non-violent. The author explores the role of the Gandhi in National movement, and also highlight the Gandhian methods for Independence which is totally based on the principles of freedom, peace, communal harmony and social justice.
4. Madan Mohan Verma (2016)⁵: The author threw a light on the philosophy of M.K Gandhi and his techniques for attaining Independence. The author explains all the movement in systematic manner. How greatest leader launched a revolution and gained influence over the masses. The author outlines all the keypoints of Gandhian ideology and also graphically analyses the major events and burning issues of the times such as Satyagrah, Dandi march, Khilafat movement, the politics of Muslim league and so on. The peaceful and non-violent techniques of Gandhi formed the basis of freedom struggle against the British yoke. The author also talks about INC which was under the leadership of Gandhi which started a series of civil disobedience movement in the whole country.
5. Tara Chand (2017)⁶: History of the freedom movement in India Vol. III this book concerned with preparation of the ground for the emergence of the concept of nationalism and freedom. The author explains about the Nationalist ideas and growth of the urge of self-determination. Moreover, he highlighted British policy of “divide and rule”.
6. Kishwar Sultana (2016)⁷: The book deals with the rise of Nationalism in India and the National Movement which culminated in the Independence of the country in 1947 and Jinnah’s role in the Political development of the Muslim league during 1924-1940. This period remained of crucial importance for understanding the achievement of Pakistan.

Gandhi shaped our Independence by initiating National movement:

Here we discuss some important movement which was mostly started by Gandhi to the welfare of the Indian people to fulfil their demands in front of Britishers. Later on, these movement played an important role towards partition of the country with the Britishers (Divide and rule) conquer tactics. The British government want to crush the spirit of Nationalism among Indians and they use the policy of “counterpoise of native against native” initiated by Lord Curzon.

➤ The Blooming of new chapter in India freedom struggle (Champanan on Satyagrah):

The Champanan Andolon of 1917 was India first civil disobedience movement spearheaded by Gandhi in the Champanan district of Bihar. The main focus of the movement for Gandhi was to address the plight of the farmers of Champanan. The British directed the tenant farmers of the Champanan region to grow crop of indigo on a large scale by force. The result was that the farmers could not cultivate other crops for food. This led to an acute shortage of grains that eventually led to a situation of food crisis.

² Bipin Chandra; *India Struggle for Independence (1857-1947)*, Penguin Random House India, Delhi, 2016

³ Narendra Singh Sarila; *The Shadow of great game (The untold story of India “Partition”)*, Harper Collins Publishers, India, 2009

⁴ Mazhar Kibriya; *Gandhi and Indian freedom Struggle*, APH Publishing Corporation, New Delhi, 1999

⁵ Madan Mohan Verma; *Gandhi’s techniques of mass mobilization*, Partridge Publishing, 2016

⁶ Tara Chand; *History of freedom movement in India Vol III*, Publication Division Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 2017

⁷ Kishwar Sultana; *Politics of the All India Muslim League 1924-1940*, New Delhi Oxford University Press, 2016

Purpose of Champaran movement: It has two important purposes:

1. The first purpose was to challenge the British government of forcefully cultivation of indigo.
2. Second purpose of this movement for Gandhi was to formally materialize his satyagraha by using non-violent means or involving the masses.

Thus, this movement was the imitation of a new chapter in India freedom struggle against British Raj. More important this Andolan was a tremendous symbolic victory of Gandhi.

- **Kheda Satyagraha (1918):** The Kheda peasant struggle is also known as no-tax peasant struggle. Many leaders like Vallabhbhai Patel, Indulal Yajnik, N.M Joshi, Shankarlal Pareekh and other also took an active part in struggle. Kheda, a village in Gujarat was badly hit by floods, the local farmers appealed to the rulers to waive off the taxes. So, Gandhi started a signature campaign where peasants pledged non-payment of taxes. At least with the efforts of their leaders the government relaxed the conditions of payment of revenue tax until the famine ended. The greatest successes of the movement were that it remained non-violent, peasants got apprised about their rights.

Achievement:

1. This movement created awakening among peasants about their demands.
 2. They sought their involvement in the struggle for Independence.
 3. The impact of the success was also realized among the peasant of Gujarat and the neighbouring states.
- **Khilafat Agitation (A landmark movement of Hindu-Muslim unity):** The Khilafat movement was very important movement event in political history of India. Because this movement show the Hindu Muslim unity. ⁸This movement was started to safeguard the Khilafat in Turkey. An issue which essentially belonged to the Muslims. The leaders of the non-cooperation movement went hand in hand with the Khilafat movement and they boycott the bureaucratic, police post. Gandhi along with Ali brothers undertook a nation-wide tour during which they addressed hundreds of meetings. The main aim of the movement:

1. To protect the holy place of Turkey.
2. To restore the territories of Turkey.
3. To restore the ottoman empire.

British government take a step towards this direction. But the government could not fulfil the promises of Muslim leader like Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad, Shoukat Ali, Ali Johar. Thus, Muslim organized a mass movement.

- **Rowlatt Act:** The Anarchical and revolutionary crimes act of 1919 popularly referred to as the 'Rowlatt Act' was enacted by the British to discourage Indian and their political activities. This act was termed as the 'Black Act' by the Indian public because of its injustice and restrictive nature. The Act also severely curbed the freedom of Press. The Act was described as "No Dalil, No Vakil, No Appeal". Against this act Gandhi ji start Rowlatt Satyagraha. It was the first all India struggle against the British government.

To suppress the Rowlatt Satyagraha on 13th April the British opened fire on a peaceful group of people who had gathered at Jallianwala Bagh to protest against the Rowlatt Act. The Jallianwala Bagh massacre sent shock waves throughout the nation.

- **Salt March:** Salt march got national and international recognition and shook the Britishers with its non-violent nature. It got massive press coverage and drew the world's attention towards the Indian Independence movement.
- **Cripps mission failure:** In 1942 the British government sent Cripps mission to India to secure Indian cooperation and support for British war efforts. Indians were given promise of liberty to frame their own constitution. But the Cripps mission which was rejected by Muslim league and Indian states. Gandhi wanted an undivided India. Muslim league wanted a separate Pakistan. Thus, the mission failed.

1. Muslim league said there were inadequate representation of Muslims
2. Sikhs rejected because of non-accession of province
3. Hindu Mahasabha rejected because the Pakistan Virus was alive.
4. The Dalits and depressed class also rejected because there was nothing new for them.

- **Quit India Movement:** In 1942 Gandhi ji started Quit India movement. It was officially launched by the Indian National congress. Gandhi ji gave a call for Do or Die. Gandhi also gave a call to all sections of the people, the princes, the jagirdars, the zamindars. On the other hand, the British too were equally determined to crush any movement of the congress.

How the Partition of India happened: The British government tried to introduce various reforms in Indian government through the acts⁹. But the spirit of nationalism cannot be removed in hearts of the freedom fighters. The

⁸ Pratiyoguta Darpan; Indian polity and governance, Upkar prakashan, Agra, 2011 p.19

⁹ Amerdeep, Dr. Ved Kur; creation of Pakistana, jinnah and role of Muslim league, international indexed and referred research journal June 2012 vol Issue 41.

Muslims of Bengal supported the partition scheme¹⁰. The British pitted these two groups against one-another and eventually the Muslim league was forced to demand the creation of separate state, to be called Pakistan. Because it felt its interest would not be represented in a Hindu majority India. Jinnah efforts to promote Hindu Muslim unity reached a climax¹¹. Jinnah rejected Nehru report 1928. In 1940 it had passed a resolution aiming at Independence from both British rule and also Hindu majority dominance of India. On 3rd June Lord Mountbatten announced the plan of partition, which was accepted by Muslim league. The British surrendered power India and Pakistan two sovereign nations. M.A Jinnah whose powerful agitation for a separate homeland for Muslims had led to country's partition and shattered the Gandhi's dream of free and united India.¹²

India Independence: After the Quit India movement the freedom struggle got even more intense and passionate. Entire India was united together in the movement for freedom. Everyone contributes what they could do in the freedom struggle. After much sacrifices and efforts India gain its Independence on 15-Aug-1947.

Post impact of India Nationalist movement:

1. Indian national movement influenced the progress of women movement.
2. Indian national movement encouraged the countries like Africa to fight for their rights and Independence.
3. The movement influenced Bengali people to become conscious about their rights and finally in 1971 they were free from Pakistani clutches.
4. It had also enriched the Indian literature and culture most of the Nobelists, writer, poets and painters. The reflection of the national movement found in their creations.

Conclusion: In summing up we can say that Indian national movement brought independence to India. To make this movement fruitful and successful of the Indian leaders are inevitable. They lost many of their dynamic leaders such as Gandhi, Jinnah, Iqbal soon after the partition. Many years after partition, the two nation are still trying to heal the wounds left behind. Present day circumstances offer a clear proof that partition was not successful. India and Pakistan have been to war multiple times since the partition and they are still deadlock over the issue of possession of Kashmir.

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¹⁰ M.P Ajitkumar; the India Pakistan relation, the story of fractured fraternity, p-25.

¹¹ Jamal-ul-Din Ahmad; (1970) historic document of Muslim movement, Lahore Publishing House, p-122.

¹² C D Philips & M D Wainwrigth (1970) Partition of India, policies & perspectives, 1937-47.