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History of boundaries in Rajasthan: An electoral analysis

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Abstract

Boundaries constitute a very important matter to be discussed in political geography because it limits the administration of the region and decides the sovereignty, it affects the politics of the region in general and population in particular. This paper is an attempt to give an overview of the history of formations of Rajasthan and how districts of Rajasthan got

merged because this formation paved the way for boundaries of electoral constituencies of Rajasthan. Prime objective of the paper is to explain the process of delimitation through which electoral boundaries are drawn and what are methods adopted for delimitation and what are discrepancies in it and how it creates a difference in Rajasthan.

Keywords: Delimitation, Constituencies, Electoral boundaries

Introduction

There are a wide variety of different conceptions of the border and these are subject to continual change, as they have been in the past. Traditionally the border concept has mainly been related to topography, and has been the particular domain of geography and law, though philosophers and mathematicians have developed concepts of the border, or more specifically, the limit. The geographical concept of border as first developed in the 19th Century envisages borders as physical and visible lines of separation between political, social and economic spaces, often charged with nationalistic energy.

In recent years the concept of boundaries has been attracting social scientists because of changing dimensions of boundaries in the world and Boundaries are a substantial subject matter of political geography because they contain both geographical and political implications. It has been associated with research because of its social, cultural and political importance. As the population of a region increased and became more dense and the number of human settlements became more numerous, and as the rights and a commitment of the government towards drawing the boundaries with obligations increased (Sudeepta Adhikari, 1999) ^[1]. For the formation of the State population is an important factor and to give the population a defined territory boundaries are necessary because it decides the sovereignty of a region because they mark the limit and gives the state or a region specific identity and geographical entity and it is the prime duty of the government to provide its citizens with best possible well defined territory with the help of boundaries to make the state strong. This paper is an attempt to give an overview of the history of formations of Rajasthan and how districts Rajasthan got merged because this formation paved the way for electoral political boundaries of Rajasthan. Political boundaries are very important because they limit the rule of the administration of that region. Political boundaries are not geographical lines solely because they compress the feeling of nationalism, analogy and performance so it means that these boundaries are a significant component of what is usually understood as a national unit (Anssi Paasi, 2009). Prime objective of the paper is to explain the process of delimitation through which electoral boundaries (constituencies from where representatives are elected) for Assembly are redrawn, these boundaries affect the politics of the particular region ultimately they deeply affect the population that are residing in a region because this process take place on the basis of census every 10 years.

Review of Literature

- Alistair Macmillan-changing the boundaries of Indian Democracy examines the principles underpinning the delimitation process and looks at the practice of implementing the redrawing of constituency boundaries in the light of current attempts to reform the system.
- Anssi Paasi; Political Boundaries. This paper is about importance of political boundaries in geography and for the nation.

- A.K. Verma -Delimitation in India: Methodology issues- he discusses the several methodological issues in current delimitation exercise, under the auspices of fourth delimitation commission that need to be resolved in a partisan, non-contentions manner, in keeping with the necessary specifications.
- Bishwanath Chakraborty Debashis Sen; Delimitation Commission working and impact. This book explains the working of delimitation commission and constitutional provisions, statewise impact of delimitation and delimitation of states.
- Election Commission of India-eco.nic.in/delimitation/paper 1 to 7/ Rajasthanxls-District wise delimitation of constituencies of Rajasthan as per Census 2001 including reservation of SC & ST.
- Mohd. SanjeerAlam and K.C. Sivaramakrishnan; Fixing electoral Boundaries in India; Laws, process, outcomes and implications for political representation. This book is about delimitation in India, its history, outcomes, and constitutional provisions.
- Sudepta Adhikari; Political Geography; This book introduces the theoretical aspects of political geography with traditional and recent approaches.

Study Area

Rajasthan is the largest state of India, comprising 10.4 % of the country’s total area. It lies between 23°03' north to 32°12' north of latitudes and 69°30' east to 78°17' east of longitudes and is situated in the western part of India. On the map, it is an irregular rhombus and bounded by Pakistan from west and north- west, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh States from north and north eastern frontier respectively, from the east and south-east by Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat in the south-west. Nearly 76% of the state’s population resides in rural regions. Administratively, the state comprises 33 districts, 39753 inhabited villages, 249 Panchayat Samities and 9168 gram Panchayats.



Source: Hydrological Atlas of Rajasthan

Fig 1: Districts of Rajasthan with Neighbouring States

Post-Independence: Rajasthan state formation-Rajasthan was known as Rajputana prior to Independence and included 22 small and big Princely states. The decision of merging these 22 princely states with the Union of India was taken on

15th August, 1947 the amalgamation process and their unification were completed in 7 stages/phases in November 1956. 1st stage known as Matsya Union in which four Princely states namely Alwar, Bharatpur, Dholpur and Karauli were included. Rajasthan Union became the 2nd Stage in which Banswara, Bundi, Dungarpur, Jhalawar, Kishangarh, Pratapgarh, Shahapur, Tonk and Kota were included. After the joining of Udaipur State 3rd stage which was known as United States of Rajasthan completed.4th stage Greater Rajasthan Greater Rajasthan was formed with the merger of big states like Bikaner, Jaisalmer, Jodhpur and Jaipur. 5th stage United States of greater Rajasthan was completed by the merger of Greater Rajasthan and Matsya Union. In United Rajasthan Princely state of Sirohi with the exception of Abu and Delwara and 18 states of Rajasthan got merged in this way 6th stage was completed. With the completion of 6th stage Our Rajasthan came into existence it was considered as 7th stage of formation and merging of Rajasthan. This process continued and under the State Reorganisation Act of 1956, in which Ajmer part of C state, Abu Road Taluka former part of princely state Sirohi (which were merged in former Bombay, state and Sunel Tappa region of the former Madhya Bharat) merged with Rajasthan and Sironj subdistrict of Jhalawar district was given back to Madhya Pradesh.

After the completion of Reorganisation of State there was still the formation of new districts from time to time. For example Dholpur was created as a 27th District, after that Bara became the 28th District, Dausa, Rajsamand and Hanumangarh were crafted as 29th, 30th, 31st Districts of Rajasthan respectively. Karauli, a 32nd District and Pratagarh, a new 33rd District was created.

During the final phase of the integration of Rajasthan the process of the formation of a Legislative Council had started. This process continued upto the beginning of 1952. The Rajasthan Vidhan Sabha came into existence in March 1952. The House of Representatives and the Vidhan Parishad were to be set up on 1 June, 1944 as per the Jaipur Government Act, 1944.

With the commencement of Assembly in Rajasthan electoral constituencies start redrawing by the Delimitation Commission. By the Constitution with article 82 Delimitation Commission had been established which delimited the electoral boundaries on the basis of census in every 10 years. Delimitation Commissions have been set up 4 times in the past in 1952, 1963, 1973, 2002 on the basis of census 1951, 1961, 1971, 2001 respectively after 2002 boundaries were frozen by the commission till 2026.

Table 1: No of constituencies (1951)

Type of constituency	GEN	SC	ST	Total
No. of constituency	139	16	5	160

Source: Statistical Report on General Election, 1951 to the Legislative Assembly of Rajasthan, Published by Election Commission of India

Table 2: No of constituencies (1961)

Type of constituency	GEN	SC	ST	Total
No of constituency	130	27	19	176

Source: Statistical Report on General Election, 1961 to the Legislative Assembly of Rajasthan, Published by Election Commission of India.

Table 3: No of constituencies (1961)

Type of constituency	GEN	SC	ST	Total
No of constituency	130	27	19	176

Source- Statistical Report on General Election, 1971 to the Legislative Assembly of Rajasthan, Published by Election Commission of India.

Table 4: No of constituencies (2001)

Type of constituency	GEN	SC	ST	Total
No of constituency	143	33	24	200

Source- Statistical Report on General Election, 1990 to the Legislative Assembly of Rajasthan, Published by Election Commission of India

In Rajasthan, a draft proposal for the last delimitation which was held in 2008 on the basis of 2001 census for 200 Assembly seats was issued on 8th August, 2005. Four public sittings took place and after considering objections and suggestions relating to the draft proposal for delimitation of constituencies, a final order was passed by the Delimitation Commission on 12th January, 2006.

Table 5: No of constituencies (2011)

Type of constituency	Gen	SC	ST	Total
No of constituency	141	34	25	200

Source Management of Election and Statistical Information, Election Department, Rajasthan

Methodology

The process of delimitation of boundaries has major

Table 6: Population-Assembly Seat Ratio

	Census Year	Population	No. of Seats allocated in Assembly by Commission	Ratio of Population (in lakhs)
Rajasthan	1971	25,765,806	184	1.40
	1981	34,261,862	200	1.71
	1991	44,005,990	200	2.20
	2001	56507188	200	2.82
	2011	68,548,437	200	3.42

Table 1.6 shows an increasing population ratio per seat with every census.

Discussion

From last 4 decades Assembly seats are not increasing, above table is clearly indicating the increasing trends of population, if population is one of the important factor in delimitation process, how far it is justifiable not to considered this increasing population, so it's showing that Rajasthan has facing either gerrymandering or problem of methodology adopt for redrawing of Electoral Constituencies. Our constitution made the delimitation process mandatory for equal participation but a gap of decades in delimitation is creating discrepancies among districts, it is creating an imbalance between seats and population the concept of one vote one participation will no longer exist. This increasing population with every census changes the Geopolitical dimension of Constituencies in Rajasthan.

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methodological issue:

- a. Selection of correct and satisfying method for reallocating seats
- b. The method they opted for delimiting the electoral constituencies done in that manner is not considered as gerrymandering because it balances the population so well that it is contemporised with law and rules of delimitation.

For Eg: Total population of Rajasthan in 2001 =56507188
 No. of Assembly Seats =200.
 Average population of Assembly Constituencies=

$$\frac{\text{Total population of Rajasthan}}{\text{No of Assembly Seats}} = 282535.94$$

So if we divide this = Total population of State with average population per constituency we get total number of seats for that delimitation.

$$- 56507188/282535.94 = 200$$

Total population of Rajasthan in 2011 =68,548,437
 No. of Assembly Seats =200
 Average population of Assembly Constituencies=

$$\frac{\text{Total population of Rajasthan}}{\text{No of Assembly Seats}} = 3,42,742.185$$

The Delimitation Commission, trying to give equal presentation for all, freezes the delimitation till 2026 but as we can see above mentioned examples population is increasing with every census we still have 200 seats.

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