

LEADERSHIP CRISES IN PAKISTAN

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THE ESSAY

During the rule of Aurangzeb Alamgir, Mughal Empire marked its Zenith. It expanded to the north and south of the sub-continent. His period is considered as the glorious period of Mughal Empire. Then he made a serious mistake. He never allowed his successors to enter the court fearing a rebellion. So his successors did not have leadership skills necessary to run such an empire. After his death, his incompetent successors acceded the throne but none of them was able to deal the state affairs efficiently. Alas, the glorious Mughal Empire fell a prey to incompetency and leadership crises and was ultimately taken over by the British. History is full of such examples where leadership crises led to fall of empires, city~~ies~~ states, civilizations and even modern day nation states. This shows that leadership crises plays a vital role in making and breaking of states. Pakistan is among few modern day nation states which faces the issue of leadership. Leadership crises of Pakistan is not new and

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is as old the history of Pakistan itself is. Death of father, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, marked the birth of an orphan nation. Afterwards, Pakistan was not able to produce the leaders like those who guided the Pakistan movement. The causes of leadership crises in Pakistan are numerous and are deeply rooted in its political system like dynastic politics, no democratic culture within political parties, lack of guidance in educational set ups, brain drain, sidelining the middle class by elites and keeping women out of leadership steers. The leadership crises has costed Pakistan's foreign alienation, political unrest and worst economic conditions.

To begin with, one major cause of leadership crises is deeply rooted in ~~Pakistan~~ dynastic politics. It is highly unfortunate that dynastic politics prevails in Pakistan in one or other form. From party leadership, core party positions, MPA or MNA tickets to chief and prime minister slots, dynastic politics is all pervasive in Pakistan. Not even a single major political party is completely free from this menace. Due to dynastic politics, the talented youth does not get on

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opportunity to come forward and fill the leadership gap. Youth has a potential to lead by front. Take the example of Hasina Wajid regime in Bangladesh. Hasina Wajid promoted the dynastic politics and ministries and key slots were given to her family. This kept the talented youth out of the public and governmental affairs. But the lava erupted and youth overthrew her regime. The overthrow of Hasina's regime by talented youth is a manifestation that youth holds the ability to run state affairs and provide leadership if dynastic politics let it to do so. Same is the case of Nepal. In Nepal, Maoists overthrew the government manifesting the leadership abilities impeded by dynastic politics in Nepal. This manifests that dynastic politics is major hurdle in ^{solving} leadership issues in Pakistan.

Apart from dynastic politics, undemocratic norms prevailing in the political parties also leads to leadership crises in Pakistan. Democratic parties in Pakistan show undemocratic norms in one or other way ultimately causing a leadership gap. Firstly,

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Nepotism and favouritism impedes the way of candid and talented leadership. Secondly, the inter-party elections are heavily influenced by politicians in provincial and national assemblies of Pakistan. Thirdly, the feudal lords influence the democratic system of political parties undermining the democratic norms. For example, Tehmina Durrani, in his famous book, "my feudal lord", exposes the influence of feudal lords on key decision making and policy formulation of political parties. These prevailing undemocratic norms in political parties undermine the leadership potential by virtue of hurdles created due undemocratic culture within political parties.

Not only the political factors, but educational factors plays a key role in leadership crises of Pakistan. It is said, that Today's learner is tomorrow's leader. Education has a key role in development of leadership skills in an individual. Leaders are made by educational institutions. Development of leadership attributes is a continuous process requiring a number of means. Leadership development starts at primary level, ~~primary~~ ~~at~~

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developed at secondary level, polished at college level and mastered at higher educational level. But development of leadership attributes is undermined at all levels of education from primary to higher level. Our education system has failed due to its inability to focus on critical skills. Race for higher marks and ~~rote~~ Ratta culture in educational ~~and~~ institutions impedes the personal growth of an individual. Having 2.5 million out of school children, infrastructure issues and institutions lacking basic necessities, ^{and educational institutions} are struggling to cope with basic issues. Without solving these fundamental issues, these institutions cannot work at critical and interpersonal skills development, necessary attributes for effective leadership. Like educational crises, brain drain of young talent is another issue responsible for leadership gap in Pakistan. According to reports 1.8 million young people left Pakistan in 2015. The social, political and economic discrepancies leads to brain drain in Pakistan. Due to brain drain, potent leadership is lost. For example, Sadiq Khan, Mayor of London is an Anglo-Pakistani, whose forefathers migrated to London along with him. He is equipped with leadership attributes

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and his repeated success in elections is an evidence of his leadership skills. Likewise, according to a report by New York Times, more than 30 Pakistan born politicians are serving in various political slots alone in England. Some is the case of many European states. This proves that brain drain has aggravated the leadership crises in Pakistan.

Likewise, Elite capture is another problem confronting Pakistan which leads to aggravate leadership gap in Pakistan. Whether it is politics or economics, all decision making process are influenced by elites like feudal lords or industrialists. Hence politics becomes elite centric and sidelines the middle class. History is evident that most creative leadership emerged from middle class.

For example, Lenin, who led the Russian socialist revolution ~~he~~ belonged to middle class. Likewise, Napoleon Bonaparte, who led France by front and expanded its borders from East to West was a middle class citizen. Story does not ends here. French revolution, American revolution and Bolshevik revolutions were led by middle class. According to Hegal, Empowering middle class is key to a successful state as

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checks the elite and bridges the gap between lower and elite class. But unfortunately, middle class in Pakistan is sidelined by elites, industrialists and feudal lords. Since 1947, elite ruled the state, it was overthrown and replaced by elites using middle class as a mean. Middle class was never given a chance to polish the leadership attributes. This is also manifested in reserved seats for women and minorities. According to a special report published in dawn in 2022, "more than 90% reserve seats in Pakistan are granted to privileged class like industrialists. This undermines the leadership attributes present in middle class.

Like the middle class in Pakistan, women are also sidelined. Women do have excellent leadership qualities, which are not cashed by Pakistan due to patriarchal norms and hurdles to women in politics. Take the example of Finland, which is ruled by women. According to UN report on governance, Finland is the most well governed state and topped number 01 with 0.1% crime

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crime rate. Some is the case of Newzealand. According to the some UN reports, Newzealand is also among top 5 well governed states. Both the newzealand and Finland share a commonality that these are governed by female leaderships. According to a research published by Nature, women are equipped with more attributes than men in terms of leadership. These attributes include cooperative and humble nature and tendencies toward peace over conflict. The reports argues that, "states with more women leaders are expected to have more stability. But the prevailing stereotypes and patriarchy in Pakistan leads to leadership gap in Pakistan.

The leadership crises in Pakistan has far reaching consequences for Pakistan. Due to leadership crises, Pakistan has failed in presenting and defending its stance in most of foreign affairs. For example, Pakistan lost its case in Neelum-Jhelum project against India. This was because the Pakistan was not able to defend its stance due to

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Leadership crises. In the same way, Pakistan failed to successfully defend its principle stance on the issue of Kashmir. Thus leadership crises caused Pakistan its ^{national} ~~national~~ glory at international level.

Likewise, Pakistan has also failed in ~~the~~ solving its economic issues. Since independence, Pakistan is facing a number of economic problems like debt crises, trade deficit and balance of payment crises along with currency devaluation. Economic issues also arose

due to low industrial base and shift of capital from the ~~country~~ ^{to resolve}.

But Pakistan substantially failed its economic crises due to lack of

leadership. China which got independence after Pakistan, has become a global power due to leadership of

Mao Zong. Same is the case of South Korea and Japan. After the

devastation of Nagasaki and Hiroshima, leadership build the Japan from

ashes and is now one of the developed state of global south.

Similarly, Singapore, which was once a colony, is now one of the most

developed state in global south. But Pakistan, newly emerged yet had opportunity

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in form of natural resources, was not able to solve its economic issue and became IMF dependent.

The case studies of China, Japan and Singapore demonstrates that major cause of Pakistan's economic decline are not due to its resources but due to leadership gap.

Likewise, due to leadership crises, Pakistan has faced military interventions in politics. Leadership crises was one of the major reasons of military interventions in Pakistan.

Ayub Khan in his book, exposes the leadership issues that led to first martial law in Pakistan.

In this book, he blames the leadership gap that caused him to interfere in state affairs. Similarly, General

Pervez Musharraf in his book "The line of Fire", admits that political crises was the major reason that led to ~~most~~ emergency imposition in 1999. In an interview he also admits as

Interviewer: General, you were to defend the borders, who guided you to power corridors
Musharraf: Your leaders guided me to power corridors

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Now take example of Turkey. Turkey, like Pakistan had faced martial law issues. But the leadership of Erdogan led to a halt of military intervention. His ondemocratic nature might be a debatable issue ~~yet~~ his governance and delivery along with his leadership attributes are acknowledged widely at national and international levels.

~~Let~~ Similarly, the leadership crises has led to governance crises in Pakistan. Leaders in Pakistan are not able to ~~del~~ interact in an efficient way and hence they are not able to deliver the services in a proper way.

According to global governance index, Pakistan stands at 148 out of 156 countries. The index demonstrates that rankings according to service - delivery and good governance. Due to lack of competent leadership, the flagship projects of governments failed. For example, Benazir's Incompe support and Ihsas programs failed due to lack of implementations. This show that though good initiatives of government flopped due to lack of leadership.

To conclude, a number of factors are responsible for leadership crises in Pakistan. Prevailing dynastic politics and undemocratic practices are few among the many causes of leadership gap in Pakistan. Brain drain and sidelining the women adds salt to the injury. By taking practical steps like empowering women, middle class and youth, the leadership crises of Pakistan can be solved in a significant way.
