

The Role of Political Leadership in Undermining Democracy in Third World Countries

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Thesis Statement:

The vested interests and undemocratic behaviour of political leadership are undermining democracy in the different countries of Third world. However, democracy can be stabilized in these countries if the political leadership adopts certain strategies.

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The Essay

After the inception of humanity, humans felt a dire need of a governing body for resolving their conflicts. For this purpose, they have experienced various forms of governance such as monarchy, aristocracy and oligarchy. After experiencing various forms of authority, they have realized that only democracy can resolve all their ills. As a result, a consensus was built on ensuring democracy in all states. As far as Third world is concerned, it is facing countless problems in adopting a pure democracy due to its ineffective leadership. In simple words, the political leadership of developing worlds is destabilizing the democratic process in various countries. The political leadership encourages dynastic politics, fosters extremist ideology for prolonging their rule, and curbs

the freedom of citizens. Furthermore, the political leaders win elections with unfair means, pass laws that restrict democratic process to flourish in a country, and violate the image of their opponent counterpart. In addition to this, the manipulation of the behaviour of voters and promotion of populism are also the tactics of them that slow down the process of democracy.

The examples of Iran and Bangladesh are prominent in this regard. ~~Both~~

In both the countries, democracy ^{has} ~~have~~ been marginalised by their political leadership. However, the democracy can be stabilised if the political leadership attempts to play its role fairly. The strategies such as initiating the process of accountability and strengthening local governments can ~~to~~ promote democracy in these countries.

Consequently, the vested interests and undemocratic behaviour of political leadership are undermining democracy in Third world. However, democracy can be stabilised in these countries if the political leadership adopts certain strategies.

The political leadership and democracy are inter-dependent in third world countries. Unlike west or developed countries, their democracy is dependent on the ruling leadership instead of people. In developing countries, the political leadership either promotes or destabilize democracy due to having matchless authority. Currently, democracy is facing severe hardships in developing world. According to Democracy Index 2023, the third world countries are heading towards authoritarian rule. It is only because of

despotic political leadership

To begin with, the first method that political leaders use for weakening democracy in developing countries is the encouragement of dynastic politics.

In order to preserve power in their families, the ruling leadership supports dynastic leadership. In

many developing countries, the political parties are dynastic

parties. For instance, Pakistan Muslim League N (PMLN) and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) are dynastic parties.

Similarly, the Congress party in India is more or less a fall

under the category of dynastic party. In this way, democracy is destabilized.

Another facet of political leadership is that it fosters extremist ideologies in for strengthening their rule endlessly. Their extremist supporters

remain always prepared to die for their leaders. under the influence of a particular ideology. Due to this, other leaders are deprived of contesting fair elections and they are not elected. It is very true in India where extremist narrative is constantly destabilizing democracy. Narendra Modi is spreading extremist narrative of Hindutva ideology to prolong his heinous rule. Hence, the democratic process is weakened by promoting extremist narratives.

The next thing that is used by political leaders is that they curb the freedom of citizens. When their freedom is suppressed, they remain unable to criticize the undemocratic policies of the government. This practice is excessively seen in Pakistan. A ban on Twitter, known as X, is an example of curbing

the freedom of Pakistani citizens. In India, all literature that aims at criticizing the rule of Modi is banned. Moreover, India has become a hell for outspoken journalists. To sum up, the political leaders use suppress the freedom of citizens for weakening democracy.

Apart from suppressing the freedom of individuals, the ruling leaders influence elections results in their favor by using unfair means. As a result, eligible people are not elected who are chosen by people. The example of election rigging can be taken from the recent elections held in Pakistan on February 8, 2024. The Free and Fair Election Network, (FFEN) has claimed that the elections of Pakistan were rigged on a massive level. Similar

practice is also adopted in other third world countries. This strategy of political leaders results in weakening democracy in developing countries.

Along with capturing power illegally, the political leaders of developing countries pass certain law that diminish the progress of democracy. These laws are aimed at preserving their interests.

In many developing states, these type of laws have been passed.

Recently, Defamation Bill has been passed in Pakistan which is a balantant violation of democratic ideals. According to this law, any person who ^{dares to} will speak against government would be imprisoned without fair trial. Consequently, these despotic laws of political leaders create hurdles in the way of democracy.

Building on the previous idea, another method of political leadership for restricting democracy is the violation of image of opponent leader with the use of technology. The opponent leader is presented as an evil who is against the cultural, social, and political norms of the country. Many conspiracies theories are spreaded with the use of technology. As a result, people get bad impression and they do not vote him. For instance, "An Israeli agent" is a popular term for violating the image of opponent. It is popularised on social media for diverting the support of people. Therefore, the violation of an ^{image} ~~opponent's~~ ^{of opponent} ~~image~~ leader also play an important role in ~~we~~ undermining democracy.

The last but not the last tactic of political leadership is the promotion of populism by arousing the emotions of people. The leaders make fiery speeches with a single aim to arouse the emotions of common people for gaining mass support. The example can be taken of Narendra Modi who is exploiting the emotions of people by making religious speeches. World Economic Forum has also noted that populism has become a major issue in Third world countries. On the whole, political leaders exploit the emotions of people in order to restrict democracy.

In this regard, the case studies of Bangladesh and Iran are very important. Both countries are victims of weakened democracy due to despotic rule of their leaders.

In Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina has eradicated the party of opposition w. For Stabilising its role. Moreover, the Opposition party was not allowed to participate and contest elections against Sheikh Hasina, a serving Prime Minister of Bangladesh.

Similarly, Iran has eradicated democracy by bringing a revolution. Although, its people demand right, they are denied. Mansa Ameen case Brian brilliantly exposes the tyrannical rule of Iranian regime. The democracy is the need of hour but Iran has completely denied to provide democratic rights to their people. All this has become possible due to political leadership of Iran. Consequently, the case studies of these two countries make it abundantly clear that the political leadership is denying democratic right of their people.

The above paragraphs have summarized the role of political leadership in bringing down the democratic process in Third world countries. The following paragraphs will describe strategies for political leaders in regarding ensuring democracy.

First of all, the political ruling of the countries of undeveloped world should ensure political accountability of leaders. In third world countries, the leaders get impunity for their crimes. This encourages them to protect their vested interests. When they have fear of facing accountability they would remain away from pursuing their interests. In this regard, an example of US can be taken. Donald Trump, a former president of US is facing accounts charges against him. In the same manner, the leaders of developing

world should establish and follow the process of accountability.

Secondly, the political leaders should strengthen local governments for strengthening democracy.

These local ~~are~~ political nurseries can flourish democracy in developing

countries. World Bank Study has also revealed that local governments

can increase the strength of democracy in third world countries.

Therefore, the political leaders should develop a framework of local

government for strengthening democracy in third world states.

The third and ^{the} most important factor for stabilizing democracy in developing countries is that the leaders should leave undemocratic behaviour and corrupt practices. This will strengthen democracy automatically. The leaders instead of pursuing their interests should work for the welfare of country.

The leaders of Denmark prefer to work for their countries over pursuing their vested interests. As a result, their country has become a role model for ~~democracy~~ ensuring democratic ideals. In this way, the leaders can strengthen democracy by leaving their vested interests.

To conclude, it becomes undeniably clear that the political leaders of developing countries play a significant role in weakening the democratic process. They prefer to pursue their vested interests instead of working for the welfare of country. They are indulged in corrupt practices that create a myriad of hurdles in the way of democratic process. Moreover, the leaders derive power through unfair means, and use this power illegally. All these steps of the leaders bring

a plethora of issues for democracy. Since these issues are not descended from heaven, they can be resolved easily if the leaders display their ~~eagerness~~ eagerness.

By developing local government, and strengthening political accountability by ~~the~~ political leaders can help in restoring democracy into its pure form. Moreover, the leaders of developing world can follow their western counterparts for strengthening democracy. But the day is not far enough when these political leaders will promote democracy in their concerned countries.

Now, the technological advancement and globalisation have increased the access to information. The people of Third world are also getting influence. Therefore, the day is imminent ~~when~~ when the people will force political leaders to ensure democracy in its pure form.