

The Role of Leadership of Imran Khan in the Genesis and Evolution of Pakistan Tehreek-E-Insaf

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ABSTRACT

Leadership plays a pivotal role in the growth of a political party. All India Muslim League flourished under the leadership of Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, Pakistan People Party (PPP) under Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Benazir Bhutto and Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) under the leadership of Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif. This paper discusses the role of leadership of Imran Khan in the genesis and evolution of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf in organizing and popularizing the party. In the genesis of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, Imran Khan played central role. Though he was not interested in politics but in 1996, founded PTI. The main reasons which compelled him to jump into politics can be categorized into two folds. Firstly, the dreams which he wanted to fulfill as a philanthropist in Pakistan after retirement from cricket, and secondly, the hardships created by politicians and political system of Pakistan in his way. To understand it, the efforts he made during his life are necessary to examine which is given below. In order to find out the role of Imran Khan in the genesis and evolution of the party, the descriptive and explorative approaches are used. This article is the case study of role of Imran Khan with reference to PTI.

KEY WORDS: Political Parties, Leadership, Evolution, Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf, Imran Khan.

INTRODUCTION

Imran Khan was born on November 25, 1952 in Lahore in Pashtun family. He got his early education from Royal Grammar School Worcester and Aitchison College Lahore. He graduated from University of Oxford in 1976 in Philosophy, Politics and economics [1] (Sandford, 2009). He started to play cricket for Pakistan in 1971 but joined Pakistani cricket in 1976 on regular basis. In eighties he became to be known as best all rounder in Pakistan Cricket team. In 1982, he became the Captain of Pakistan Cricket team. Imran Khan decided to take retirement from cricket in 1987 but on the persuasion of President General Zia-ul-Haq, he took back his decision and rejoined Pakistan cricket team [2]. Under his captaincy Pakistan won the Cricket World Cup in 1992 against England. In this way he distinguished himself and became the role model for Pakistanis. He proved himself as a charismatic captain of Pakistan cricket team [3]. His cricket career gave him fame, wealth and huge fan following not only in Pakistan but around the world as well.

During last years of his cricket career, he disclosed to contribute as a philanthropist and started efforts to collect funds to construct Cancer Hospital [4]. At Gaddafi Stadium Lahore, On November 10, 1989, when match was to be played between Pakistan and India, Imran Khan appealed people for fund raising to establish a cancer hospital in Lahore [5]. In winning speech at the time of World Cup 1992, he reiterated his mission to establish a cancer hospital in Pakistan [6]. He established a cancer hospital known as Shaikat Khanum Memorial Cancer Hospital and Research Centre. It started to function in 1994 [7].

In field of education, he served as the honorary Chancellor of the University of Bradford, UK. He founded Namal College - a technical college affiliated college of University of Bradford, UK – in Mianwali. He established Imran Khan Foundation which has been working for variety of philanthropist activities [8]. As a cricketer and philanthropist Imran Khan proved himself as a one of the charismatic leader.

Imran Khan also wrote different books. He wrote his biography by the title of Pakistan: A Personal History. Another book written by him is, Indus Journey: a personal view of Pakistan. In this book he gave details of country profile of Pakistan. Else of these he wrote a book, Imran Khan's Cricket Skills which was edited by Peter Ball in which details

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about his cricket skills are given. In his book, *Warrior Race: A Journey Through the Land of the Tribal Pathans*, he gave the description of culture, traditions and way of life of people living in tribal areas of Pakistan. Another book under his authorship is "All Round View".

Political Career of Imran Khan

According to his autobiography he was not interested in politics. The same view is expressed by Hamid Khan. In an interview with researcher, Hamid Khan told that he was not interested in politics. He was much more interested in philanthropist activities in health and education. He established Shaukat Khanum hospital, Namal College and Imran Khan Foundation. But when the government of Benazir Bhutto started to create troubles for Imran Khan, some of the friends advised him that he should establish a political party to provide Pakistan with a new political leadership on one hand and substitute Mian Nawaz Sharif and Benazir Bhutto on the other hand. Different leaders invited him to join either their cabinet or party but he refused. First time, he was asked by General Zia to join his cabinet as a minister [9] (Sadiq, 2017). The information Secretary of General Zia, General Mujeeb ur Rehman also advised Imran Khan to join politics [10]. He also wrote a manifesto for the conceived party but Imran Khan refused [11].

After the World Cup 1992, he was given warm reception by then Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif. According to a documentary prepared by journalist Richard, Imran Khan was invited by different political parties to join but he refused because he was not interested in politics [12]. In 1993, government was removed and Moeen Qureshi became the interim Prime Minister of Pakistan. He also invited him to join his cabinet [13].

At different occasions Imran Khan expressed that he didn't have any intentions to join politics.

Regarding participating in politics Imran Khan once said that "if he felt that by going into politics he would be able to help his country, he certainly would. But at present politics in Pakistan is corrupt and as a result politicians are completely discredited". He, therefore, "feels his strength lies outside politics. I have some credibility and I would like really to do social work, and my next campaign is a mass literacy campaign in Pakistan where the rate of illiteracy is one of the highest in the world." He added that "...in the setup that exists in Pakistan, I certainly do not envisage going into politics". When he was asked that if the setup changed would he change his mind? He replied: "If I could make a difference. I have respect in Pakistan which I think is very elusive. You can have fame but you don't necessarily have respect. I have respect in my country and I don't necessarily want to go into politics and to lose it" [14]. Once he explained that "This assumption that I want to be Prime Minister is complete nonsense. I don't want to get mixed up with politics," he said famously in 1995" [15].

The government of Benazir Bhutto started to create problems for Imran Khan which contributed a lot to think him to jump into politics. He had bad memories regarding the reputation of Asif Ali Zardari in past. In his autobiography he wrote that;

"In 1989, I visited Benazir at Bilawal House to ask her for some funds for hospital. Benazir was busy. So we happened to meet Zardari instead. I was hoping that my companionship with Benazir at Oxford will help me In meeting and I would be listened to. Zardari met me with a smile and talked about my greatness and said good words about me as if he was buttering. But he did not offer any help and instead talked with the other people in the meeting more than me. Especially Tariq Shafi, who was a famous industrialist and Zardari tried to convince him to set up two factories in Sindh. Both Zardari and Benazir did not help me with any funds but wanted me to invite them for the inauguration of the hospital but I had already decided that it will be the 10 year old cancer patient Sumera Yousuf who will inaugurate the hospital" [16].

Another issue which further tense the relations of government and Imran Khan was the creation of a group known as "Pressure Group" consisted of General Retired Hamid Gul, Muhammad Ali Durrani of Pasban and Imran Khan. It was said that this group wanted to bring revolution in Pakistan under the leadership of Imran Khan and to topple down the government of BB [17]. BB was worried about that Imran was being manipulated by a militant Islamic youth organization known as Pasban, "the Defenders", along with Lieutenant General Hamid Gul to recruit him into a "pressure group" to challenge BB and Nawaz Sharif [17]. Regarding this he clarified that;

"In the past he found Lt Gen [Hameed] Gul an inspirational figure, but he resents being caricatured as a puppet dangling from the spymaster's strings. The assumption is that I'm a dumb sportsman who's being manipulated. They're wrong. Nobody orders me around; he says firmly that Islamic militants and Lt Gen Gul were trying to entrap him.... [but] he's discreetly pulling away," [18].

Imran Khan was not happy with the government of BB because he was of the view that government was not cooperative regarding the cause to develop cancer hospital. Imran Khan was of the view that government should run advertisement for the cause of construction of cancer hospital free of cost like Edhi Foundation and Hameed Khan

Trust but it was not acceptable for the government. The advisor on sport in the government of Benazir Bhutto, Sarfraz Nawaz, the former fast bowler criticized Imran Khan and blamed that Imran Khan himself was responsible to damage the cause of cancer hospital rather than government of BB. He said that Imran Khan has been making efforts to indulge in politics by using the name of charitable institutions. He further blamed that there is no comparison of Edhi Foundation and Hameed Khan Trust with Shaukat Khanum Hospital because former are only and only charitable institutions while the later is a mixture of charitable and politics [19]. The government of BB used Sarfraz Nawaz to defame Imran Khan. He blamed that;

“Imran Khan is a secret agent of some foreign intelligence agencies, since they have proofs and indecent photographs of his exploits; they are manipulating him to their advantage in order to spread unrest in Pakistan.... He also insinuated that the Muslim Zakat charity was being wasted to pay for several English women...employed by Imran Khan to supposedly act as nurses” [20].

The trouble of Imran Khan further increased when Interior Minister Naseerullah Babar declared Shaukat Khanum Memorial Trust (SKMT) as a family trust rather than charitable institution in front of Senate of Pakistan and declined to give it facilities of charitable institution [21]. Imran Khan was blamed that he had misused funds of hospital for his personal purposes. In reply, Imran Khan demanded that a committee should be constituted to probe this issue and challenged that if he was found guilty, he would surrender himself for imprisonment. He also demanded that if these charges proved baseless then government would have to pay 50 million because due to wrong propaganda of government, SKMH couldn't achieve target of Zakat in 1995. He elaborated that;

“... the trust was being run by an independent board of governors, comprising people of integrity like former federal finance minister Syed Babar Ali, jurist Dr Pervaiz Hassan, industrialists Razzaq Daud and Tariq Shafi, banker Shaukat Tareen and Nawab Ashique Husain Qureshi, son of former Punjab chief minister Nawab Sadiq Husain Qureshi”. He further added that “only five members of his family were among the governors of the hospital. He said it was not a family trust, as was being propagated by some quarters. It has been registered as a public trust with all the government organizations” [22].

A most serious incidence happened when a bomb blast was exploded in SKMH on 14th April, 1995 which further intensified situation for Imran Khan. A blame game started. BB visited hospital and blamed that it was done by the allies of Nawaz Sharif because he wanted to win over the support of Imran Khan to induct him in his party. While, it was also blamed that it was done by the government itself because government banned Imran Khan to visit educational institutions for fund raising and had started investigation against him in case of Income Tax. Imran Khan initially didn't blame anyone and said that “I want to tell those who want to scare me that neither I will be scared, nor I will turn back,”... “I will move forward with greater determination” [23]. He angrily said that “By destroying my hospital, they're trying to get at me. Benazir acts like a Moghul emperor. I have to go and lick her boots before she'll leave my hospital alone” [24]. In an interview to New York Times on 2nd April, 1996, he announced to establish his political party. He explained that;

“... He would form his own political party on a platform promising a crackdown on corruption. He feels that the United States is perhaps backing the wrong horse in the hope that it would hold off Muslim fundamentalism in Pakistan. He believes that Pakistani peoples concern about lawlessness and corruption is at the core of the so-called Islamic fundamentalist movement in Pakistan. Most Pakistanis here feel that neither Ms Bhutto nor her main rival Mian Nawaz Sharif, are capable of ending the scourge of corruption” [25].

Although he was not interested in politics but the political development in Pakistan from the reign of General Zia to Benazir Bhutto i.e., 1977-1996 had deep impacts on his personality. He was well aware of political development in Pakistan. In his autobiography he has given details of all those reasons due to which he decided to step into politics. In a nutshell, he said that he became very much disappointed of leadership in Pakistan. In this background he decided to step into politics by “expressing his disappointment with the failure of the political system and of politicians to solve the public problems and lack of commitment on their part to give people their right... to bring about a change within the framework of the constitution” and founded Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf on 25th April, 1996 in Lahore [26].

CONSTITUTION OF PTI

The constitution of PTI was drafted in 1999 by the Committee under the chairmanship of Hamid Khan. Mairaj Muhammad Khan, Abdul Hafeez Khan, Saeed Ullah Khan Niazi, Mahmood Mirza, Farooq Amjad Mir, Dr Arif Alvi, Nawabzada Mohsin Ali Khan, Akbar S. Babar, Fauzia Kasuri, and Khawaja Muhammad Jamil were included as members. PTI's Central Executive Committee, under the chairmanship of Imran Khan approved the constitution on 24th January, 1999. The official name of the party was declared as “Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf” [27].

The second constitution of PTI was drafted by the committee under the Chairmanship of Hamid Khan which was approved by Central Executive Committee in April 2012. Justice ® Wajeed ud din Ahmed, Dr Arif Alvi, Ahsan

Rashid, Naeem ul Ha, Asad Qaisar, Qasim Suri, Fauzia Kasuri, Shamsa Ali, Firdous Naqvi, Saifullah Niazi, Mian Mahmud-ur- Rashid, Chaudhry Ijaz Ahmad, Aamer Kiani, Sardar Azhar Tariq and Shah Farman were included as members [28].

ROLE OF IMRAN KHAN IN POPULARISING PTI:-

Imran Khan, as a cricketer and philanthropist has become very well known in Pakistan and abroad. He founded PTI in 1996 and just after one year contested election. He was offered by Nawaz Sharif for coalition and thirty seats but he declined. Though PTI could not get a single seat in general elections 1997 but despite of it Imran Khan popularized it by doing politics of opposition during Nawaz Sharif Regime. Under the leadership of Imran Khan, PTI became part of Grand Democratic Alliance and became popular in Pakistan.

On 12th October, 1999, when General Pervez Musharraf took over and announced his seven point agenda, Imran Khan supported him and demanded for across the board accountability since 1985, before the elections 2002 [29]. He explained that Musharraf's priorities reflect the agenda of PTI [30].

During Musharraf period the popularity of PTI and Imran Khan increased so much that he was invited to become Prime Minister, but he clarified that he would not become Prime Minister with the help of Musharraf [31]. He explained that he did not support Musharraf but his seven points which were according to his party's manifesto. He claimed that he was not a greedy of power, if he had been; he was invited by Zia-ul-Haq, Moeen Qureshi and Nawaz Sharif in 1996 [32].

General Musharraf invited Imran Khan to join Grand National Alliance but he refused. He contested election from NA-71, Mianwali and became member of National Assembly. He was invited to join King's party but he declined [33]. He served as a part of the Standing Committees on Kashmir and Public Accounts.

After the general elections 2002, political situation get changed and PTI under the leadership of Imran Khan started to highlight the wrong policies of Musharraf. Imran Khan explained that it was his blunder that he had supported General Musharraf's military regime [34]. He opposed LFO and uniformed President. He demanded that there should be election of President in the light of constitution and army should refrain from political process and go back to the barracks [35]. Musharraf should step down as a chief of Army and then contest election for president in Assembly [36].

Imran Khan supported MMA and explained that he supported the policies of Qazi Hussain Ahmed of JI (The Nation, 12 Nov, 2002). He cast his vote in favor of MMA candidate Liaquat Baloch for speakership and Moulana Fazl-ur-Rehman for Premiership [37]. Imran Khan said that he supported MMA because it would work to strengthen democracy but by supporting LFO as a part of constitution, it disappointed him and he decided to withdraw its support to MMA [38]. MMA disappointed by supporting 17th amendment. He said that PTI did not support 17th amendment and consider it complete and clear violation of constitution [39].

He welcomed Charter of Democracy and said that ARD and all political parties should get united on one point agenda to oust Musharraf in order to revive real democracy in Pakistan. He explained that PTI would not sign CoD until the proposed amendments would not be included in it [40].

Before the general election 2008, PTI has become a well known party in Pakistan. Imran Khan was acknowledged as a one of the important political leader in Pakistan. He launched anti-Musharraf campaign [41]. In December, 2006, he met Shabaz Sharif and Nawaz Sharif. He convinced Nawaz Sharif to bring ARD and Qazi Hussain Ahmed for MMA to start anti-Musharraf Movement with one point agenda of ousting Musharraf. He also demanded for collective resignation from the parliament to put pressure on the government [42]. He challenged Musharraf in Supreme Court that being government servant, Musharraf could not contest election for President of Pakistan [43]. In protest Imran Khan resigned from Parliament Musharraf imposed emergency in Pakistan on 3 November, 2007 and implemented PCO. He got himself elected as a President of Pakistan by Parliament for second term on 6 November, 2007 [44].

Against the policies of Musharraf, Imran Khan started to mobilize people especially youth. He was arrested from Punjab University when he was busy to mobilize students against the emergency imposed by Musharraf. He was misbehaved by the student of IJT and arrested by the police [45]. He said that emergency and PCO were unacceptable and went on hunger strike until death in order to restore the judiciary to its November 3 position [46].

Imran Khan decided to boycott general elections 2008. The main reasons were APDM – consisted of PTI, PML (N), JI, and PMAP – declared to boycott the general elections [47]. Secondly, he decided to boycott general elections because these elections to be held under PCO. Imran Khan declared that it would be fraud elections. Imran Khan was of the view that all political parties should boycott general elections. He explained that Musharraf has enforced emergency and put the Judges under house arrest. We should first get rid of Musharraf and then go for the general elections. He said that "If the politicians don't take a joint stand now by boycotting the up-coming elections, there will be tantamount to treason with the masses" and betrayal to judiciary [48].

The general elections were held on 18 February, 2008, in which PPP became the leading party in centre [49]. PTI under Imran Khan played active role of opposition. Imran Khan demanded for restoration of Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry and end of PCO. He declared NRO as unconstitutional and illegal. He said that ruler would not accept independence of judiciary due to the fear of NRO [50]. He opposed the candidature of Asif Ali Zardari for the office of the President. He said that he did not accept Zardari as a constitutional President [51]. He demanded that President Asif Ali Zardari should tender resignation on moral basis because his name was also in the list of NRO beneficiaries [52].

The popularity of PTI reached to its climax in 2011 when it started campaign known as Tsunami and New Pakistan (Naya Pakistan). Imran challenged that PTI's Tsunami would wash away PPP and PML (N) and asked people to support him to get rid of unfair system [53].

According to on line survey Imran Khan became the most popular personality of the Asia in 2012. He got 87.78% votes. He is the only Pakistani personality who is invited by World Economic Forum to be held in the city of Switzerland, Davos in 2012 [54]. Imran Khan ranked third after IMF DG and US President in the list of top nine global leaders in 2012 [55].

In the general election 2013, Imran Khan won election from three constituencies NA-1, 56 and 73. From of the votes point of view PTI became the second largest party while from seats point of view the third largest party in Pakistan.

CONCLUSION

Pakistan Tehreek Insaf founded in 1996. It participated in the general election 1997 but could not get a single seat. In the general election 2002, PTI got only one seat from NA-71, where Imran Khan became successful. PTI boycotted the general election of 2008 because it was held under emergency proclaimed by General Musharraf. In the general election 2013, PTI emerged as the second largest party from vote's point of view and third largest party in the National Assembly. In KPK, PTI emerges as the largest party and formed government in KPK.

The charismatic Leadership of Imran Khan played pivotal role in the evolution of PTI. He refused to form electoral alliance with Nawaz Sharif in general election 1997. He refused to become a Prime Minister with the help of General Musharraf. He proved his leadership charisma by making PTI the third largest party of Pakistan.

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