

SHEIKH MUJIBUR RAHMAN: CHARISMATIC LEADER OF BANGLADESH

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ABSTRACT

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman is one of the most charismatic leaders of the Third World in the twentieth century. We know that Charismatic leaders are the gifts and mercy from God. They are torch bearers of knowledge and revolution. Every nation in one way or the other has been and is endowed with leaders and same is the case of Bangladesh nation which was fortunate enough to have a leader like Sheikh Mujibur Rahman who guided them in the times of freedom struggle, and trusted them into the region which dawned tranquility of mind and unshackled boundaries. It is in fact an old saying that good leaders build good nations which is equally true with the Bangladesh nation for which sheikh Mujibur Rahman sacrificed every breath and blood of his life and mapped a new nation in the world. The paper discusses the main achievements of the leader and particularly the independence of Bangladesh of which Mujib was the pivotal figure. The result revealed that Sheikh Mujib was stimulated people by his charismatic leadership capability and huge political knowledge. From his early life he was demonstrated two key leadership qualities which make him unquestionable leader of the Bangladesh. One key quality was proactive social consciousness and paramount dedication for politics. Sheikh Mujib has so many leadership skills that recognized him as a leader of general people. His aspiration and sacrifice for nation made him an icon of the country. Therefore, it can be concluded that his leadership trait made himself as a father of the nation. The people of Bangladesh had dreamt of an independent nation and that dream was finally implemented in really on 16Th December 1971 under the leadership of a true Patriot Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Bangladesh and its people were blessed with God's will of sending the Greatest Bengali Soul of all time on the soil of Tungipara. That greatest soul was nobody else but it is our "Father of the Nation" – Bangabandhu - Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. He was the greatest politician, philosopher and tourism lover the world has ever produced. He was the kindest person the world has ever noticed, he loved everyone more than he loved his own family and children. This study was carried out by descriptive analysis through the literature review of existing paper

1. INTRODUCTION

Charisma is really a process – an interaction between the qualities of the charismatic leader, the followers and their needs and identification with the leader, and the situation that calls out for a charismatic leader, such as a need for change or a crisis. But when it comes to the Charismatic qualities of leaders, the emphasis is on how they communicate to followers and whether they are able to gain followers' trust, and influence and persuade them to follow. Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman provided a rabble rousing charismatic leadership (Ali, 1973). He was a Bengali nationalist politician and the founder of Bangladesh (William, 2009). He headed the Awami League, served as the first President of Bangladesh and later became its Prime Minister of Bangladesh. He is popularly referred to as Sheikh Mujib and with the honorary title of Bangabandhu. It has been observed that "No man in the entire history of modern world except Mao for different reasons has hypnotized his people as Mujib did" (Bhatnagar, 1971). He was usually dressed in long flowing Punjabi (Kurta), Pyjama (trouser) and a black jacket – used to be called "Mujib Coat". He was a dedicated leader, "a loving father" (Kamal, 1973) and an

understanding comrade. A student political leader, Mujib rose in East Bengali (from 1956, East Pakistan) politics and within the ranks of the Awami League as a charismatic and forceful orator. An advocate of socialism, Mujib became popular for his leadership against the ethnic and institutional discrimination of Bengalis (CSB, 2006). He demanded increased provincial autonomy, and became a fierce opponent of the military rule of Ayub Khan. At the heightening of sectional tensions, Mujib outlined a 6-point autonomy plan, which was seen as separatism in West Pakistan. He was tried in 1968 for allegedly conspiring with the Indian government but was not found guilty. Despite leading his party to a major victory in the 1970 elections, Mujib was not invited to form the government. This was the party that eventually led us to the independence movement in 1971 again, under the leadership of none other than Sheikh Mujib, who was not just a “political colossus, but who, standing tall and with a commanding physical presence, was literally larger than life” (Quayum, 2013). Mujib, who was released from Pakistani jail, finally came back to Bangladesh like a hero in 1972 and became its Prime Minister. Nationalism, Secularism, Socialism and Democracy were Mujib’s philosophy. He gave his nation a written constitution within one year, 1973 and Indian army was withdrawn at his request in 1972. Along with national independence, these were his crowning glories. He started reconstructing a war-damaged country but found it difficult to run. Both national and international conspiracies were hatched to undo him. Finding no other alternative, he introduced the one party rule in 1975 and moved to a socialistic type of both economy and democracy. His stance on secularism was also compromised to placate Islamic elements in Bangladesh. Finally, he was killed by the disgruntled elements of Bangladesh army. Nevertheless, he lives in the memories of Bangladesh as the most famous son of Bengal who made Bangladesh independent and gave Bangladeshis an identity. The core objective of the study is to discover the charismatic leadership characteristics of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman which characteristics brought the independence of Bangladesh.

2. EARLY LIFE OF SHEIKH MUJIB

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was born in a respectable Muslim Family on 17 March, 1920, in Tungipara village under the then Gopalganj district in the province of Bengal in British India (Frank, 2002). He was the third child among four daughters and two sons of Sheikh Lutfar Rahman and Sheikh Shahara Khatun. At the age of seven (1927), Bangabandhu began his schooling at Gimadanga Primary School. At nine, he was admitted to class three at Gopalganj Public School, two years later, class four at Madaripur Islamia High School (Ahmed, 1983). Subsequently, he was transferred to a local Missionary School. Bangabandhu was forced to go for a break of study when, at the age of fourteen (1934), one of his eyes had to be operated on. Two key qualities were observed in his early life, one quality was active social consciousness and other quality was paramount passion for politics. At eighteen (1938), Mujib married Begum Fazilatunnesa. They later became the happy parents of two daughters, Sheikh Hasina and Sheikh Rehana, and three sons, Sheikh Kamal, Sheikh Jamal and Sheikh Russel (Ahmed, 1983).

3. CHARISMATIC LEADERSHIP FEATURES OF SHEIKH MUJIBUR RAHMAN

Charismatic leaders are essentially very skilled communicators – individuals who are verbally eloquent, but also able to communicate to followers on a deep, emotional level. They are able to articulate a compelling or captivating vision, and to arouse strong emotions in followers. Charismatic leadership is focused on a number of defining variables including charismatic leader behavior, characteristics of the followers and charismatic leader-follower relationship, contextual influence and liabilities of leadership (Bass, 1999; Conger, 2015; T & Gardner, 2005). In below here depicted some charismatic leadership traits of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in the view of his political activities:

4. VIRTUES AND PERSONALITY

Sheikh Mujib was the man of rock-solid and pleasing personality (Solaiman & Solaiman, 2013). A man of vitality and vehemence, Mujib became the political Gandhi of the Bengalis, symbolizing their hopes and voicing their grievances. And to do that Mujibur Rahman had to hold varieties of personal virtues which included both boldness and etiquette. It was his characteristic vastness which attracted everyone. Cuban revolutionary leader Fidel Castro once said, "I have not seen the Himalayas. But I have seen Sheikh Mujib. In personality and in courage, this man is the Himalayas. I have thus had the experience of witnessing the Himalayas." He was also very witty. In a conversation with Saudi King, Mujib remarked that I am also a Sheikh but I am poor Sheikh! Out of an enormous number of personal attributes, five significant dominant personality factors can be identified from his characteristics: Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness. All these traits were blended with the essence of fire and ice and he knew where to be soft and where to be impenetrable. He addressed his enemy as his brothers but also made it clear that if they break the norms of justice then he and his countryman will hit back really hard. These entire idiosyncrasies made him Sheikh Mujib himself of that time and nonetheless to compare (Ashif, 2019).

5. VISIONARY

Clear vision is the strong leadership traits of great leader Sheikh Mujib. His vision was independent Bangladesh and he knew that Bangladesh will have independent that is not a long way. From the beginning of 1960, Sheikh Mujib had two objectives, one of those was vision about independent Bangladesh and another one was to build up the Awami League, blowout the organization throughout the country and establish a civil society by going to power on Awami League platform against the West Pakistani rulers (Mamun, n.d.). When leaders Sheikh Mujibur Rahman set clear vision and goals and become determined, backing those goals with unshakable self-confidence, they develop charisma (Ullah, 2018). Official Manifesto of the historical six points which was declared on the 7th June 1966 by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman which is the result of the visionary thinking of Sheikh Mujib for the sovereignty of Bangladesh as well as the East Pakistan (Chowdhury, n.d.). He seeing the independence of Bangladesh, on December 5, 1969, Mujib declared at a public meeting held to observe the death anniversary of Suhrawardy that henceforth East Pakistan would be called "Bangladesh (Bhatnagar, 1971). This is the sign of his visionary leadership.

6. AFFECTION FOR THE PEOPLE

Charismatic leaders also have a sense of humility. They place a lot of value on each employee, and have the ability to truly listen to their concerns. After the independence of Bangladesh, Shiekh Mujibur Rahman was interviewed by British journalist David Frost once and there he said that he loves his countryman more than his family members. After 40 years of that interview, the same journalist interviewed his daughter Sheikh Hasina who is also the current prime minister of Bangladesh. In that interview, Sheikh Hasina played the previous interview of his father and with an emotional voice she expressed that, her father loved his countryman more than his family and she is very proud of it. Everybody understands the depth of such remarks as truly all the countryman believed that Mujibur Rahman loves his country more than his life even the very opposition panel of Mujibur Rahman during the wartime. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman often said that 'My greatest strength is the love for my people; my greatest weakness is that I love them too much.' The tragedy is very unfortunate because his weakness later cost his life at the very crucial period of Bangladesh. On 10th January, 1972, when he first touched the independent country that

he fought for his whole life, he expressed his emotion by expressing that, when he was in jail he said to the oppressor leader that he doesn't have any objection if they kill him but after his death he requested to return the carrion to his fellow countryman. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman never wanted to hold the power for his own benefits. Instead, when he was offered to be the prime minister of Pakistan, he denied and said that "I don't want the prime ministership. We want to establish the right of the people of this country." It was Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, not as a person but something much bigger which made people to believe that there is something more than meets the eyes. It was his vastness of morality in which the 70 million people found the true sense of nationalism, a unity, bondage of kinship. His love and affection knew no bounds for his people and he was ready to die for them and as well as they were ready to sacrifice their life for him (Ashif, 2019).

7. SMART ORGANIZER

Sheikh Mujib's organizational capacity was unique. He had the two qualities of tolerance and flexibility, which were needed for making the Awami League bigger (Mamun, n.d.). He was also a brilliant coordinator. Through his unbreakable mentality, uniting talent and pleasant behaviors, he constructed up an exceptional political figure as a charismatic leader. He has surprising talent that he could remember the name of every political worker or non-political person he met (Shahnawaz, 2015; Solaiman & Solaiman, 2013). We all know that to conjugate the common people is very difficult for any leader. No leader can conjugate the whole people except Sheikh Mujib (Reza & Yasmin, 2019). In 1971 Mujib convinced the whole population to fight against West Pakistan (Trisha et al., 2017).

8. CONFIDENCE & COURAGE

It goes without saying that charismatic leaders are truly confident. They are the glass half full kind of people, and are comfortable with who they are. They understand themselves well and do not try to be anyone else. Charismatic leaders are secure and confident enough to be comfortable in their own skin. In Sheikh Mujib, he also had incredible self-confidence and courage. The prospering of the party had also raised his confidence in himself as well as the people. That was why he could transform the 6-points into a 1-point. And this was his vision or dream, an independent Bangladesh (Mamun, n.d.). Another example of Sheikh Mujib's courage is On December 5, 1969, he declared at a public meeting that East Pakistan would be called "Bangladesh and his declaration heightened tensions across the country, especially amongst West Pakistani politicians and the military, who began to see him as an openly separatist leader (Bhatnagar, 1971; Foundation, n.d.). Sheikh Mujib never gave up any of his mission to make the country independent from an impossible environment of torture, discrimination, punishment, and detention by the Pakistani government (Mahabub Alam, 2016).

9. BODY LANGUAGE, PUISSANT VOICE AND SPEECHES

One of the first things that notice about a charismatic leader is their warm, open, and body language. They make eye contact with were that they are talking to, smile, and introduce themselves to strangers with the genuine joy of making a new contact. They have an endearing swagger, and they are authentic. In Sheikh Mujib, he had a capability to attract people with his voice and discourse in both Bengali and English languages which often evoked with enjoyment and melancholy (Solaiman & Solaiman, 2013). According to British Journalist Sir Mark Tully, he had a magnificent voice that could mesmerize the crowd and his voice was redolent of thunder. He motivated and inspired people by his mesmerizing and enthusiastic

speeches. Sheikh Mujib's historic speech with a powerful voice at the Racecourse Ground in Dhaka on March 7, 1971, was the declaration of independence of Bangladesh. The voice of Sheikh Mujib had a strong power that destroyed the anarchy of Pakistan and today his voice considered as the most powerful and influential all over the world (Trisha et al., 2017). By his flaming oratory convinced the poverty-stricken people that they had been broken evil policy of West Pakistan (Kokab, n.d.).

10. IDEOLOGY AND BELIEFS

Nationalism, socialism, democracy and secularism were the core of Mujib's philosophy in that these four pillars of his philosophy guided his eventful life. As told above, he sought to define and implement them. Now it is our turn to delve into his philosophy one by one. Nationalism is one of the most important forces that changed history in the twentieth century in that most of the countries of the South which, under colonialism, staged the nationalist revolution against Western imperialism and colonialism and finally became politically free (Spanier, 1967). Nationalism has turned out to be one of the defining philosophies of Mujib, one of the most charismatic nationalist leaders of the twentieth century. The primary sources of Bengalee nationalism have always been language and culture.(Rahman,2019).

11. CONCLUSION

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman will always remain in the history as the savior of his fellow countryman, an enthralling leader, a caring family man, a loving father and most importantly a true patriot. He is not just a name for any Bangladeshi! It is an accumulation of emotions, a word to express Bengali nationalism. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman became 'Bangobondhu' and 'Father of the Nation' in overnight or in a quick way. It took him three decades, 12 years in prison, torture of ruler, love of millions, and sacrifices all comforts, to become a Father of the Nation. Only he is the leader in the world who can conjugates seven core people united in a body psychologically and physiologically. Sheikh Mujib's charismatic leadership is the merging of so many traits as the immensity of his heart, humanity, patience, liberalism, discourse, personality; all of these had confirmed his purpose to uphold the eternal and emotional bond with enormous inhabitants. Finally we say that, Mujib was one of the stellar charismatic nationalist leaders of the Third World in the twentieth century. He is a Bengali nationalist leader without any parallel. And that is why Ananda Shankar Ray had written:

“As long as the Padma, Meghna, Gouri, Jamuna flows on,
Your accomplishment will also live on, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.”

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