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Leaders Who Changed Their Worlds

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Critical Analysis Essay

 Benazir Bhutto was someone with respected morals and important leadership traits, she demonstrated intelligence, self confidence, integrity and sociability during her periods of leadership, although it never ended seeing as her legacy continues to prosper today. Bhutto was the first women Prime minister of Pakistan, she was someone who said “no” to the norm and went against societal stereotypes. She defied the odds of a woman ever being elected for prime minister of Pakistan, and because of this she represented the beginning of change for women, not only in the political compass of Pakistan but also of the world. Bhutto proved herself to be a great leader through any situation, facing any challenge that came her way with confidence and a stable stance on her viewpoints and values such as equality, democracy and United love. She had one goal, and that was to make democracy an important factor in a country such as Pakistan that was not very politically diverse, where women were not politically accepted. Bhuttos commitment to her goal was driven by the values she was taught as a young child by her father, she was taught to look towards the future, to plan where she wanted to be not worrying about what was to come, and she was taught to use the challenges she was to face and put it to help in her success and path to greatness. Bhutto's traits approach method, situational approach method, commitment to her values, focus on the future and her mentality towards challenges all played a critical role in the process of furthering the existence of democracy in Pakistan.

 Bhutto’s first term was from 1988 to 1990, before being overthrown and dismissed from office by -newly welcomed- President Ghulam Ishaq Khan because of alleged charges of corruption. Her second term was from 1993 to 1996 before once again being dismissed due to the same alleged charges. During this extended period of time the situation in Pakistan worsened it was a very dangerous and intense time, the threat of terrorism was evident, everyone was pointing fingers, murder was occuring everywhere and there was a transition of Presidency occurring, due to the sudden death of President Zia-ul-Haq in 1988 from a plane crash. Bhutto in her autobiography spoke about the terrorism that was occurring, she brought this up after mentioning her faith and how nothing was to intervene with that, not even the pointing of fingers, stating “I feel a special personal obligation to contrast the true Islam–the religion of tolerance and pluralism–with the caricature of my faith that terrorists have hijacked.” She continues to speak about the next few years, about having children but not being able to enjoy it because of what was occurring in that time period, stating that there was a “sacking of my government” where “the port city of Karachi was gripped by anarchy and chaos. Terrorism was rampant, and Innocent civilians were massacred while riding in public transport or outside their homes or in their offices.” Situations like this, where safety was taken from the grips of individuals, and no changes were being made is what she was fighting to abolish.

 Apart from terroism being an evident factor that caused Pakistan to be filled with much violence what also added on to the great threat against everyone's safety was the change in Foreign policy. In an informative slideshow created to demonstrate the timeline of Pakistan as a whole by Alexander Ganse, there is a section specifically dedicated to the periods between 1988 and 1999 in which Bhutto was involved in government. In this section it states, “Foreign Policy… The USSR withdrew her forces from Afghanistan… In 1994-1996 the Taliban (with a logistic base in Pakistan) took over most of Afghanistan. Benazir Bhutto similarly supported Kashmir separatists, which resulted in a deterioration of relations with India.” The fact that Pakistan was no longer being protected or supported by the USSR put the country in grave danger, thus called for a strong leader such as Benazir Bhutto, giving her more of a reason not to give up on her goals, values, or viewpoints.

Another factor that was affecting individuals, during this period of time thus putting them on edge was the decision to allow the conducting of nuclear tests. In an article by the Asia Society they state, “May 1998, decision to conduct nuclear tests in response to India's nuclear tests resulted in the imposition of sanctions that stifled the economy even more so” this decision both affected the safety and the comfortability of individuals in Pakistan. It is understood that this decision took place after Bhutto had already been dismissed from office, because of all these bad decisions made by the president, the eighth amendment was stripped of its power not allowing the President to dismiss Prime Ministers or dissolve the National Assembly. In the article by Asia society it states, “By 1999 the eighth amendment was stripped of the constraints that empowered the president to dissolve the National Assembly or dismiss the prime minister.” All of these events and decisions are only a few of the many situations that occurred during the time period of Bhutto's involvement in the government. Through it all, Bhutto kept fighting, not only was she fighting for the future of the country but also for the future of her own family, seeing as many threats were made at her family because of her involvement in the government. She became a strong representation of power and a good leader. Who she was as a person and the approaches she took for her leadership is what made her so great.

 As mentioned before, Bhutto demonstrated leadership traits including intelligence, self confidence, integrity and sociability by the way she reacted to these challenges that she faced, and to the people she encountered along her journey of leadership. She knew what she wanted and no matter the obstacles that were to come at her she would continue to fight and make the goal she had set a reality. In Bhutto's autobiography, “Daughter of Destiny” she states, “At that moment (watching her father's grave) I pledged to myself that I would not rest until democracy returned to Pakistan. I promised that the light of hope that he had kindled would be kept alive.” Through this mere statement made by Bhutto herself you can clearly recognize how devoted and determined she truly was to such a goal, you can also recognize her self confidence by the way she was well aware that she was to stay strong and she was to pull through and succeed. Many in today's day of age give up, but this strong powerful leader made her statement that what was to become of her was not this, under no circumstances, and especially not under someone else's rule. Her trait approach assisted in the existence of democracy in Pakistan by keeping this woman who would play a crucial role in the “rekindling fire” of democracy alive. The traits she had both inherited and developed helped her stay determined, and allowed her to truly keep her mind to the bigger goal which was the return of democracy to Pakistan.

When speaking about situational approach what is in reality being spoken about is the characteristics that one withholds. Leaders are ranked in slots of being a delegating, supporting, coaching or directing type of leader. When reading Bhutto's autobiography, “Daughter of Destiny” one can see that she was a coaching type of leader, someone with high directiveness and high supporting behavior making them a force to be reckoned with. Bhutto was always direct with whoever she encountered, she was direct to her followers, and to politicians in higher power. In her autobiography she makes a statement saying, “I’m not on anybody’s side,’ I’d insisted. ‘If the party presented a united front instead of the factions undercutting each other, we’d get more done.” At this moment she is speaking with confidence and strength to powerful men that could end her career but it is visible her goal is greater than any threat that may erupt, thus she does care. Bhutto was a leader that knew exactly what she wanted and recognized that nothing was to come easy. Her situational approach assisted in the furthering existence of Democracy in Pakistan by, as stated before, making her a force to be reckoned with, anyone with eyes and a brain could recognize that taking her on as a challenger was not going to be easy, making many respect her as both a democratic leader and women.

Values drive commitment. In the short but well lived life of Benazir Bhutto this was true. As children entering a new class every year we are given a pen and paper, told to write down our long and short term goals both in life and in the classroom, and then we are told to write what we are going to do to lead us to a success in those specific goals. We are reminded that one can only successfully complete a goal if it is extremely important to ourselves, so much so that we are committed to it. Bhutto was a perfect representation of values driving commitment, she was committed to bringing democracy back to Pakistan and furthering it. Her reasoning was simple and emotionally attaching. Her goal was not only hers but her deceased fathers as well. As she thought of how she could fill that empty feeling inside of her she decided it was her destiny as put in the title of her autobiography to make the goal they both had a reality. In the autobiography Bhutto stated, “a sense of peace and a new certainty had settled over me. Stand up to challenge. Fight against overwhelming odds. Overcome the enemy… ‘What you make of your destinies is up to you.” These were her father's words, his legacy was making her feel stronger, with determination, and commitment. This all helped in the furthering of democracy in Pakistan by keeping this great leader focused and without fainted faith.

Focusing on the future sets leaders apart. When one thinks about the term future as a whole what comes to mind is plans and commitment. All things involve commitment including Marriage, buying a house, starting a family, and being a leader as Bhutto had done. Having set and stone plans influences determination to get to where one wants to be, Benazir Bhutto had this. Her plan came about because of the death of her father. As mentioned before after her fathers death she planned to accomplish his goals stating, “I promised that the light of hope that he had once kindled would be kept alive.” This refers to the hope of democracy in Pakistan. Bhutto knew what future of Pakistan she wanted to see, apart from being a leader she was also a mother so she had to have one foot in the present in order to watch her kids grow, but the rest of her body and soul were in the future. She was hopeful, determined, and ready to see the result of her fight against chances and because of this, because of looking to the future she was able to further the existence of democracy in Pakistan.

Greatness, the common goal between every leader, and challenges being the common crucial aspect in the journey of all leaders to greatness. Challenges allow oneself to come face to face with who we are, with what we want. Throughout Bhutto's autobiography we can recognize that she faced many challenges, she suffered through so much but through every suffering she learned more of herself. For example, when threats were made against her and her own family she found herself to be a loving person that would do anything for her loved ones. The threats that had been made against her family also made her in part more determined to bring democracy back to Pakistan. With the inclusion of her family's/ loved ones' safety being threatened, her goal broadened to the hopes and wishes of an environment in peace to be created. An environment where her kids wouldn't have to grow up worrying for their safety like she did growing up, where she suffered a lot merely because of the background and family she came from and had no choice in choosing. Speaking back to the threats that existed in Pakistan, the threats not only consisted of physical threats but also of health wise threats, Pakistan as spoken before was not yet as advanced in medicine and many other aspects as other countries or nations.. Bhutto stated in her autobiography, “Shocked to learn that one in five children born with polio were from Pakistan, my government began a massive volunteer-based programme to provide polio drops to all the children of Pakistan. I personally led the campaign” Here we can see that Bhutto was determined to abolish this challenge and bring a better future to the people and kids of Pakistan. This only goes to show that the challenges faced by these strong women in history only made her a stronger person, leading her to play a critical role/ part in further the existence of democracy in Pakistan.

 Thanks to Bhutto's traits approach method, situational approach method, commitment to her values, focus on the future and her mentality towards challenges she was able to get through the many difficult years in which she was in the position of a leader. She survived and pushed Pakistan through the threat of terroism known widely in their history, the sexism that existed within the political cabinets, the stereotypes that lived within the culture of Pakistan, and the strict societal view of women and people in general in Pakistan. Benazir Bhutto was a fighter and will always be known as such, the first women prime minister of Pakistan, a mother, a daughter, a wife, but more knowingly a true leader. Bhutto pushed for the furthering existence of democracy in Pakistan, and accomplished that goal, she completed the destiny that her father left behind, making her the *Daughter of Destiny*.

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