

Xi's Leadership Journey And Vision For China's Future: Lesson For Pakistan Leadership 'Void

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Abstract

Xi Jinping is spearheading the third revolution in the history of modern China to earn it a global status. The first revolution led by Mao brought qualitative shift in the political system of China in 1949. The second was launched by Deng Xiaoping when the country grew economically after initiating much required reforms. Xi has brought about shift in China's approach to governance, global affairs, and economic development, presenting new vision for China's future. He initiated internal accountability. He quitted the risk averse approach of his predecessors on foreign policy front and headed China on assertive path. The reasons behind this Change are the personality and leadership which were shaped by his trajectory to power. He rose from the grassroot through the rank of Communist party of China, experiencing resilience pathway. This paper deals with Xi early life, his educational career, his political journey, and his vision for China's future. Furthermore, it provides lessons to the leadership crisis in Pakistan. Though, there is a stark difference between the political system of China and Pakistan, but the leadership role is critical for any state with any system of governance at the time of transformation and take off. Pakistan has been grappled with multiple crisis, calling for dedicated and visionary leadership that can steer the country in time of mounting challenges.

Keywords: Xi Jinping, Visionary leadership, National rejuvenation, Revolution, Political system, lesson, Pakistan.

Introduction

Any society with any kind of political system transits from past to future and, to navigate this transition, leadership role is instrumental as he is the one to lead and inspire his followers toward the desired future. Amidst change, leadership role is critical because decisions are made, trust is built, promises are fulfilled, and future direction is suggested.¹ Few leaders of the world define an era not only due to their prolonged rule but the change they have brought to the way of governance adopted by their predecessors. Reforming the existing style of governance and

injecting new vision make a difference, so massive that brings titanic shift.

In the recent history, Leadership role in China's success story is acknowledged everywhere, awe-inspiring in Pakistan. Famous Pakistani strategic thinker and seasoned Politician, Senator Mushahid Hussain Syed states that China was once a poor nation when people did not have to travel, they were used to travel on cycles, the roads was completely barren. The country was isolated and backward, but their leadership accepted reality and decided course correction and became a reach nation.² China has witnessed

¹ Henry A. Kissinger, *Leadership: Six Studies in World Strategy*, (New York, Penguin Press, 2022)13.

² Junaid Akram, interviewer, "Mushahid Hussain Syed with Junaid Akram," podcast video, 55:38, March 2, 2024,

three times the leadership's role in recent its history when they changed the direction of the Chinese's nation. Mao Zedong led communist revolution, Deng Xiaoping made China economically prosper while Xi Jinping has been capitalizing on the economic clout, China has built over the decades, to make China a global power.

The Xi Jinping rule in China is termed as third revolution in the country's life when the President pursued more ambitious foreign policy, providing Beijing new levers of influence.³ China emergence on the global stage and its impact on world politics is marking an era, unprecedented to the past. Xi's leadership plays vital role in China's global emergence. Xi Jinping adopted various strategies to bring China Economy closer to the US, if continue with same pace, China will over pass the US economy in near future. Driving the world second largest economy, ruling more than billion people, expanding the horizon of China influence and navigating so many challenges on multiple fronts make him unmatched ruler of the China that is going to mark a new period in the history of global politics. The will and the vision required for the bold steps on multiple fronts, that is roaring back China on global stage, are ascribed to Xi's leadership that has built over decades long struggle.

Pakistan has been in search for visionary and dedicated leadership since its inception that bring country out of protracted crisis. Pakistan has not yet been ruled by dedicated and visionary statesman. As a result, the country's economy is being ventilated by IMF bailouts, the security situation is deteriorating with each passing day and society is highly polarized and divided. Leadership either comes from political dynasties or artificially pampered by the Country's establishment, promoting the interests of certain families and individuals. Lacking insight into long-term planning, they are not well prepared to take bold and decisive decisions. The veteran

Pakistani's economist, political analyst and vice chancellor of the national think tank, Pakistan Institute of development economics, Nadeem ul Haq states that Pakistan currently lacks visionary leadership, generating new challenges, and amplifying the existing.⁴ As it becomes obvious the challenges, Pakistan is grappled with, emanates from Leadership void. Chinese leadership career's path that shaped their vision and dedication to the nation provides a lesson, Pakistan can learn from. Pakistan's can learn from Xi's leadership journey to raised national leadership on the same line as China by passing through rigorous training and struggle while choosing for national role.

This Papers traces the role of naturally groomed leaders in bringing substantial change in nations' lives. And Chinese Communist leadership is the appropriate case study. The paper is divided into different sections including Xi early lifer, Education, Entry into politics, Political training, and Xi emergence as national leader. To answer the questions that how Xi emerged as powerful president after Mao and how does he drive the country with a new vision of global ambition as well as how his career journey effected his thoughts. Xi rise to powerful positions, Including General Secretary of the Communist Party of China, the Vision he presents for China's future and his contribution on multiple fronts are included in the paper. The last part of the paper briefly discusses the lesson, Pakistan can learn from Xi Jinping's path to power and its role in his vision for China's future.

Early life and family background

Exploring Xi's early life, the surrounding environment, and the journey through which he rose to power in China is significant to understand his vision for China's future. Digging out the life of a man who is running the second largest economy with a new vision, encapsulating global ambition. Xi was born in Northern China in the house of an official of CCP as a princeling child.⁵

https://youtu.be/10w8KxmzgPg?si=uu14j_NOsM8Jhzlj

³ Elizabeth C. Economy, *The Third Revolution: Xi Jinping and the New Chinese State* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018)

⁴ Interview with Nadeem ul Haq (Vice Chancellor of PIDE), March 13, 2024, 2:45 pm.

⁵ John Ruwitch, Timeline - The rise of Chinese leader Xi Jinping, *Reuters*, March.16,2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-china->

Being raised in the house of a CCP leader, he was introduced to politics and revolutionary ideas very early. His political learning started from the time when he gained consciousness. He was born on 15 June in 1953, the era very closed to the Chinese Revolution of 1949.⁶ The time when China started its journey under the command of communist revolutionary leader Mao. Xi was the son of a communist leader who served China in defense and propaganda ministry.⁷ Growing up in the house of a man who was ready to lay his life for the defense of the country and ideals of the communist revolution provided an environment where one learned patriotism. Xi's mother was also a member of Communist Party and was working in the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, away from her home leaving Xi to his Father's supervision.⁸ Xi got his political training and education from his parents in early period of life that led him to the quest for power. From very early age, the patriotism and spirit of nationalism were infested in his soul, contributing to the formulation of his Vision for China. Today, China came to the hands of man who were exposed earlier to the Communist revolution, nationalism, patriotism, working class and peasants' condition.

Owing to the son of an official who had been accused in engaging anti-party activities, Xi was exposed to another kind of development. Xi Jinping's father was one of the close of Mao because of his services in military career, he rendered for the country but subsequent events in 1960s made him very suspicious in the eyes of CPC's top leadership. Misfortune befell on Xi when his father was forced to retire to live in rural Shaanxi province where he worked for six years in rural region with peasants on agricultural land.⁹ He lived with the local peasantry, and his vision for agriculture advancement, concerns for farmers and rural development can be ascribed to

the experiences, he got there. The hardship he suffered in Shaanxi province at Liangjiahe village with poor people had prepared him for the future as the famous Chinese saying goes; the harder you work, the better you get.

Formative Experiences

Upon returning from the rural countryside, Xi started a new journey of formal education in addition to stepping into practical Politics. Though he was involved in politics in the time when he lived in Liangjiahe village, working as a party branch secretary, village level tier of CCP.¹⁰ The time he spent in different environments including the elite Beijing and rural Shaanxi with different varieties of people in the era of enormous political development had ignited his political instinct to become a political activist. He applied for membership of the Communist Youth League of CPC which was accepted after thorough scrutiny. The organization was working as a nursery for Communist Party of China as well as for Mao's regime, since it was considered the group of reliable activists as mostly were recruited to it on the bases of advance political qualification and adherence to CPC ideology. As many of the officials were recruited from CYL to CPC and Chinese bureaucracy, so the organization worked as steppingstone for Xi to rise.¹¹ It provided Xi with an opportunity to hone his leadership and administrative skills, making him eligible for another assignment in Communist Party of China.

In early seventy, given the easing of the intensity of the Cultural revolution and China's reproachment with the US, the tense political environment started relaxing as the Chinese premier, Zhou Enlai paid a visit to the Xi's father who was still in detention. It created space for Xi, at least, to exploit his natural competence and acquired experiences for his entrance into politics,

parliament-xi-timeline/timeline-the-rise-of-chinese-leader-xi-jinping-idUSKCN1GS0ZA

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Kerry Brown, *CEO, China: The Rise of Xi Jinping*, (London, I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd, 2016), 51

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Melissa Albert, Xi Jinping president of China, *Britannica*, Aug 30, 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Xi-Jinping>

¹⁰ Alfred L. Chan, *Xi Jinping Political Career, Governance, and Leadership*, (New York, Oxford university press, 2022), 51

¹¹ James Townsend and Brantly Womack, *Politics in China* (Boston, Brown, 1986), 289–294

gaining some significant political role. Meanwhile Xi Jinping formally joined CPC after ten attempts as well as got admission in Tsinghua University which was famous for political activism.¹² Though Xi hailed from elite family but the background, he had, never helped him to cross the hurdles that came his way. He remained in hot water due to his belonging to family who was critical of Mao's policies. A period starting from Xi's retirement to the Shaanxi in 1969 and returned to Beijing after six years had huge impact on his personality which made sure his entry to CPC in 1974 as well as his academic career in Tsinghua University. He was himself responsible for the success he had in his early career thanks to his isolation in the rural countryside, his perseverance, and dedication. Thus, the circumstance, Xi had in his contemporary time and his instinct for political role gave birth to his leadership quality later led him to occupy the most powerful position in China.

Xi Jinping started academic career in Tsinghua University in 1975 and ended in 1979. Tsinghua University, famous for political activism, had shaped his political orientation, helping him to rise upward in CPC. The lost generation who missed study between 1947 and 1960 due to hardship incurred upon them in early period of communism, bearing the brunt of Cultural Revolution. Xi made it through Tsinghua University by studying Engineering. Graduated from Tsinghua University, known as incubator of political leadership, given him an edge when it came to his recruitment to CCP. In 1978, with the Mao's death, things got suddenly changed and Xi's father was offered by post-Mao leadership a prominent position in CCP.¹³ The kind of experience, Xi went through and ideological orientation along with leadership and management skills further made him a qualified candidate for position CPC, pushing him further in the leadership role.

With the Deng accession to power, many faces were brought closer to the president who wanted to make the entry of China into moderate era and put to end the radical movements like Cultural Revolution. Xi, who previously went through struggle phase, was given first official position as a confidential secretary to Geng Biao. Geng Biao was a member of the Politburo, deputy premier and Secretary general of Central military command as well as defense minister.¹⁴ Working with such a high official of Communist Party of China and State opened new avenue of opportunities for Xi, preparing him for tomorrow's leadership. Working with the powerful man, Geng Biao like a son who introduced him to most critical tasks: Central meetings, inspecting armed forces, drafting important documents, and accompanying Geng to foreign visits including the US. The time, Xi spent with Geng gave him military experiences also¹⁵. Spending three years with the important official navigating crucial tasks had furnished his leadership skill further. In 1983, he left the job and provided services in other areas to CCP.

Rise to Power

Xi was given opportunities to serve CCP in different capacities in different provinces that prepared him for the next bigger political role. Once spending many years in Liangjiahe where he got experiences as a sent down youth, spending time with locals, he was sent again to grass root level political training as the norm set by CCP for emerging political leadership. Xi was assigned a new job at the county of Zhengding located in the province of Hebei to introduce the reforms launched by the central leadership of CPC. The CPC under Deng initiated reforms and openness in which the rural economy was opened by allowing farmers to sell their surplus. Farmers were once left in a bad situation when the state took control of the rural economy and hindered growth. Xi in Zhengding implemented reforms. Land was handed over to the farmer in return for a

¹² Xi Jinping, "Woshi ruhe kuaru zhengjiedi" [How I Entered Politics], Lingdao wencui, November 2000, pp. 62–67. <http://www.yicai.com/news/2013/01/2392583.html>.

¹³ Geng Biao, *Geng Biao huiyilu 1909–1949*, (Nanjing, renmin chubanshe, 1998)123.

¹⁴ David Shambaugh, "China's 'Quiet Diplomacy': *The International Department of the Chinese Communist Party*," China, Vol. 5, No. 1, March 2007, pp. 38–39

¹⁵ Alfred L. Chan, *Xi Jinping Political Career, Governance, and Leadership*, 77.

small amount of fee to the local government, diversifying the economic crops and leading the peasants to invest in industries and infrastructure. They started earning surplus which marked the era of starting free market economy that incentivized the growth. Later, the land was started allotting to the farmer on contracted bases for thirty years which turned the region from “high yield but poor” to most successful one.¹⁶ In addition to it, the other initiatives, Xi took, were improving the lives of intellectuals, improving the quality of education, and recruiting younger and educated cadre into CPC.¹⁷ Working at local level broadened the horizon of understanding and passed him through administrative and leadership training at the time when China embraced openness.

Xi's journey of learning, upgrading his skills and political training for a bigger role was continued as he was sent to Fujian, a front-line province in Beijing opening to the world. Spending seventeen years in Fujian not only helped him in exceling to the top position of the central leadership but also gave him an opportunity to fully utilizing his potential in bringing good governance and new political economy to the region located at the important strategic location of China. Xi served in Fujian Province in different levels ranging from locality to provincial governorship that honed his leadership skill, formulated his political vision, and developed his economic foresight. Xi started his career in Fujian as a mayor of Xiamen City which ended in 1988 when he was promoted as secretary of the Ningde prefectural party committee till 1990. These two assignments led Xi to get new exposure of local governance and administrative skills. He was later assigned the post of Secretary of Fuzhou Municipal party committee which is considered equal to the deputy governor of the province and then handed over to him the position Fujian province secretary. Finally, he reached to the position of governorship

of Fujian province and remained till 2002 which was a landmark development in Xi political career.¹⁸ He introduced a new style of governance by speedy administration. It was initially introduced in infrastructure projects and later extended to other departments which facilitated fierce market competition. “Will act immediately”, a style of governance, initiated by him which aimed at enhancing government efficiency got currency and led the region to clean and effective government.¹⁹ Pushing reforms, initiating progress in ecology, digitization and improving food production had made Xi leadership successful.²⁰ The political career in provincial leadership embarked him on journey of leadership development which comes from involving into decision-making process. At locality, he learned administrative skills while at higher level assignment, he was trained with decision-making process.

Xi spent another five years of his political career in the province of Zhejiang. Unlike Fujian, the province was not designated as SEZ. Primarily, the province was purely agrarian, in addition to inventive entrepreneurialism. The Private sector business was vibrant and export oriented. People were not only exporting goods to China but to the other part of the World. Before Xi arrival, China had joined WTO to promote internationalism and Private business owner were allowed to joined CPC which helped Xi in spearheading the development of the region by the collaboration of private entrepreneurs and State. Investors were encouraged to establish companies such as the internet start-up Alibaba, 74 CEO, CHINA created by Jack Ma (Ma Yun). Xi led the region on the path of development. In Xi tenure, the exports rose to 33 percent bringing the province to fourth position nationally. Xi encourages the 2000 local investors to invest in 116 different countries which triggered the huge of foreign exchange reserves to the region.²¹ Xi Jining

¹⁶ Daniel Kellihier, *Peasant Power in China: The Era of Rural Reform, 1979–1989* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992) 89.

¹⁷ Youfei, Wang, “My Encounters with Xi Jinping at Zhengding” *Wenshi bolan*, No. 11, 2015, pp. 46–48.

¹⁸ Brian Hook, *Fujian: Gateway to Taiwan* (New York, Oxford

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University Press, 1996),67

¹⁹ *Ibid.*,100-130

²⁰ Huaxia, “Book on Xi's years in Fujian published” *Xinhua news agency*. October 21,2021.

²¹ Kerry Brown, CEO, China: The Rise of Xi Jinping, (London, I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd, 2016),72,73,74.

played a vital role in implementing the reform and remained successful in deliverance of good level growth which encouraged him further to build China strength on economic growth and effective delivery of services as well as engaging with other part of the world for trade and investments.

Xi Jinping as a national leader of Communist Party of China

In 2007 when Xi was promoted to Politburo Standing Committee of CPC, the powerful body of Communist party, becoming an apparent heir to the top position of the party. He was fortunate to be appointed as secretary to MPC of Shanghai as the secretaries of three MPCs, including Beijing, Shanghai and Tianjin who automatically become part of Politburo. Xi served the Shanghai Municipality for seven month and then promoted to Politburo Standing committee succeeding Hu Jintao, a committee consisting upon five to nine most influential leaders of China.²² Usually the members of the politburo standing committee are given additional charge of vice presidentship, ministerial level positions or vice command at Central military command.

Xi was experiencing the turbulent period in 2008 when unrest in Xinjiang, Tibetan issue in addition to western propaganda on the eve of Beijing Olympics. Terrorist threats were looming in addition to providing billions of dollars at the time when global economic crisis was approaching. Xi Jinping was assigned the task of chairing the coordinating committee for the Beijing Olympics, taking place in 2008. The task was so challenging, but Xi managed it well which added another experience to his political career.²³ Performing challenging task and showing extra-ordinary

competence at the time of crisis help Xi Jinping to compete the competitors like li Keqiang etc.

Xi was also assigned the task of supervising the Central party school which helped Xi to get involved in intellectual exercise and party building. CPS was established and its network was propagated in the whole country to prepare the leadership confirm with Communist party of China's ideology and principles. As a training Centre, the school was working as laboratory to test new ideas and injected to the mission of communism. Hu Jintao run the school from 1993 to 2002 who were followed by Xi led him to presidency of the world second largest economy.²⁴

In September 2010, Xi Jinping took the charge as the Central Military command and became vice president of China.²⁵ He served the communist party of China as member of the Politburo standing committee of communist party of China and Vice president and vice chair of the central military command till 2012, when the eighteenth national party congress picked Xi Jinping as general secretary of the communist party of China and chairman of the central command of military. In March 2013, Xi was elected as a president by National people congress for the term of five years, later extended to fifteen years by nineteenth and tenth national party congress held in 2017 and 2022 respectively.²⁶ Performing for almost five years as national leaders at CPC and then president of China made him the skilled and ideological statesman .Xi as president of China is not only shaping China but creating a big difference in the global politics.

Vision for China's Future

The exposure, education and political training insight upgrade and reshape the thoughts,

²² Jean-Pierre Cabestan, "Is Xi Jinping the Reformist Leader China Needs?", *China Perspectives* (March 2012):69, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4000/chinaperspectives.5969>

²³ Kerry Brown, CEO, China: *The Rise of Xi Jinping*, (London, I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd, 2016),84.

²⁴ Zheng Yongnian, *The Chinese Communist Party as Organizational Emperor: Culture, Reproduction and Transformation* (New York, Routledge, 2010), chap. 7.

²⁵ Jean-Pierre Cabestan, "Is Xi Jinping the Reformist Leader China Needs?", *China Perspectives* (March 2012):69, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4000/chinaperspectives.5969>

²⁶ "The Constitution of the People's Republic of China," www.npc.gov.cn, assessed November 1,2023, https://www.npc.gov.cn/zgrdw/englishnpc/Constitution/node_2825.htm

perspective and vision of a political leadership which are reflected in Xi's reign over China. Vision is the most important core value of political leaders. It is the dream that guides the leader and inspires his followers. It is the psychological need of human beings combined with political process and societal requirements. Visionary leaders are rare that give a future trajectory of success to nation which inspires the team working under their supervision. Leaders are in conversation with the past and make decisions about the future. The past helps him in setting the future goals which he strives to achieve. Assessment and analysis based on history, mores are done while keeping in mind the capacities and means he has. Direction for future is drawn from the analysis which is based on Past enables the leaders to set objectives and formulate strategies. Strategies inspire the nation.

Chinese Dream and National rejuvenation

In 2013, China had not only witnessed change in the leadership but also started preparing for the new reform package which was announced by Xi Jinping. Right after holding the office, Xi outlined his priorities targeting the endemic corruption and ensuring that the party served the people.²⁷ The reforms package was encapsulated in Xi vision popularly known as Chinese dream. The Chinese dream came to surface when Xi paid an extraordinary visit to the Exhibition "The Road toward Renewal" held at National Museum of China where Xi was talking about Chinese dream and said that "In my view, to realize the great renewal of the Chinese nation is the greatest dream for the Chinese nation in modern history."²⁸ During Xi visit to the Exhibition, he saw historic pictures, chart and other symbolize which depicted China history since opium war. Moreover, he saw the exhibit which told about the opium war, the 1911 revolution and Deng Xiaoping reforms package which made China great again. Looking over the miseries and hardship inflicted upon the Chinese nation which were exhibited, Xi said that the hardship, China's people suffered and sacrifices, they made, were unprecedented while quoting

Mao's poem "dile boast the strong pass is a wall of iron,". The inspiration and motivation, he got to outline his vision in the form of dream from the history of Chinese nation and their humiliation by the west. Mentioning the inner potential of Chinese people which they showed in the face of hardship and difficult time, he said that "But the Chinese people have never given in, have struggled ceaselessly, and have finally taken hold of their own destiny and started the great process of building the nation,".²⁹ Dreaming a desired bright future always requires resilience and inspiration which Xi have been trying to inculcate in his nation. We, this generation of Communism, must take what has been left to us by our predecessors as a departure for forging ahead into the future"³⁰. Xi unveiled his Vision for China in national museum of China which had greater significant as Museum represents, culture, conflict, colonial expansion, and glories past of a nation.

In March 2013, Xi further spelled out his vision for his nation when became the 5th president of the new China. He stressed upon the revival and rejuvenation of China in global community and earning it the prestige which he desired and which China had in past. Addressing his nation, Xi said that rejuvenation is the dream of whole nation and every individual, and every must strive to achieve it with collective struggle and strength. He made nation the realization of the great dream and the struggle which was required by saying that "'bear in mind the mission, unite as one, and gather into an invincible force with wisdom and power" while building broader consensus among people and making them committed to the greater rival, he invoked "Chinese spirit" and patriotism among his compatriots to work harder for the big goal. Showing his loyalty and dedication to the rejuvenation of China, Xi said that "I will always be loyal to our Motherland, be loyal to the people and dedicate all my time and energy to my duties and responsibilities to serve the people". He further stated, "I will never let you down and will

²⁷ Elizabeth Economy, *The Third Revolution: Xi Jinping and The New Chinese State* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 20

²⁸ "Xi Pledges 'Great Renewal of Chinese Nation" *Xinhua*, November 29, 2012, [Xi](#)

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[Jinping pledges 'great renewal of Chinese nation'- China.org.cn](#), accessed December 1, 2023.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*

live up to the trust and expectations of people of all ethnicities”.³¹

Primarily, apart from his past experiences, the driving forces behind Xi vision for China, which is termed as a Xi dream for China, are the Confucious thoughts, his reading of China history, Marxist-Leninist communism, and Deng Xiaoping reforms. Commemorating Confucious 2556th anniversary, Xi said that “Do not do others what you do not want others to do to you.” Xi further said while quoting of the Confucian maxim that “The rule of virtue can be compared to the polestar which commands the homage of the multitude of stars without leaving its place”³². His reading of China history both the ancient past while the era which they called the “era of humiliation” have profound impact on Xi thoughts which led him to formulate a dream that bring China to powerful and dignified positions in the global community. Addressing the nation on 100th anniversary of CCP, Xi said that China had glories past then witnessed the miseries and humiliation of colonial, semi colonial and feudal systems. The Chinese civilization had been plunged into darkness which made the dream of rejuvenation, the greatest dream of Chinese people.³³

Vision for China’s role in global challenges

Another vision, Chinese president Xi Jinping presented to the globe and that was the building of a community with a shared destiny based on the idea of creating a world where people and

countries across the globe can work together, address the mounting global challenges, and promote development that could benefit the humankind. Presenting an alternative world order, Xi Jinping has announced the Vision for a Community with a shared future in 2013³⁴ and has been repeated the stance multiple times subsequently. The aim and objectives of the doctrine was to create a peaceful and stable world order that could benefit the entire world by addressing the challenges, the world had been facing and to promote common development for all.³⁵ The vision envisaged three major initiatives; the global security initiative, the global development initiative and global civilization initiative, increasing China’s global leadership role. The idea was rooted in Xi’s thinking that the world is connected and interdependent in which all nations share interests and responsibilities. Through this vision, China was suggesting the world how to deal with security challenges by promoting dialogue over confrontation and alliance over partnerships. In the area of development, China was presenting a view that how address the global development challenges. Xi stressed upon a novel approach in his vision to global development by launching mega infrastructure projects, aiming at targeted development programs like health care, jobs creation, trade, connectivity, environment, and sustainable development. The third initiative of the Xi vision encapsulated the promotion of mutual learning, dialogue, and inclusiveness of Civilization.³⁶ Xi’s vision for new global order

³¹ Zhao Yanan “Chinese dream’ is Xi’s vision”, *China Daily*, last updated, March 18, 2013, https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013npc/2013-03/18/content_16315025.htm

³² Prashant Kumar Singh, *Xi Jinping’s ‘Chinese Dream’ China’s Renewed Foreign and Security Policy*, (Routledge: New York, 2023) 44

³³ “Full text of Xi Jinping’s speech on the CCP’s 100th anniversary”, *Nikkei Asia*, July 1, 2021, <https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/Full-text-of-Xi-Jinping-s-speech-on-the-CCP-s-100th-anniversary>

³⁴ “Community with a Shared Future for Mankind,” China Internet Information Center, May 2021, http://www.china.org.cn/china/2021-05/25/content_77470543.htm.

³⁵ Xu Xiujun, “China’s Vision for Building a Community of a Shared Future for Mankind,” *CGTN*, October 30, 2022, <https://news.cgtn.com/news/2022-10-28/China-s-vision-for-building-a-community-of-a-shared-future-for-mankind-1es053cjoYg/index.html>.

³⁶ Rabia Akhtar, President Xi Jinping’s Vision of Building a Community with a Shared Future for Mankind: A Review of the Past

was all encompassing that covered the solutions to global challenges and suggestions for common development.

Lesson for Pakistan's leadership void

Pakistan has been grappled with multiple crisis since its inception, making country vulnerable to the External influence and internal strife. The Country is being run on foreign aids, so for Pakistan has borrowed twenty-four times from IMF. IMF helps those states which are facing severe economic crisis.³⁷ Pakistan faces \$77.5 billion in debt repayment obligations in the next few years while the inflation rate has touched the figure of twenty-eight percent.³⁸ Furthermore, the other indicators of development are very bleak. The Human Capital Index of the Country value of 0.41 is very low in both absolute and relative terms. It is lower than the South Asia average, which is 0.48.³⁹ In a nutshell, Pakistan is at crossroad in its history. Persistent victim of climate change, insurgency, and terrorism, infested with political instability, yearning for good governance, and impacted by heavy debt burden, Pakistan desperately waits for committed and abled leadership that return the country to a resilient, sustainable, and prosperous development pathway.

In term of leadership development, the China's success story and particularly the Xi's trajectory to power that shaped his vision for China's future offers a lesson to Pakistan as both entered a new phase at the same time. China was poorer in 1950s and 1960s when Mao was the president. The nation was backward, poor, and isolated but made rapid progress.⁴⁰ But then a question strikes one's

mind that why is Pakistan still crawling while China showed impressive economic growth that provided a launching pad to become global geo-political player in the era of Xi Jinping by initiating Geo-economics and assertive foreign policy. The one among most probable answers is the abled and trained leadership who ruled over China. Pakistan has been either ruled by dynasties or artificially made leadership in the last seven decades. The political leaders that run the country are either handpicked of the powerful corridors or the apparent heir to political families. They have never been through the experiences, through which the Chinese leadership has gone through. The country's most populous Province is headed by a Chief Minister who has no prior administrative or legislative experience in any tier of the government.⁴¹ Political dynasty is a predominant phenomenon in Pakistan where dynast heir has electoral advantages as compared to non-dynast candidate due to transfer of Political capital from their Parents. They inherit brand name, loyal voters and linkages while lacking much required leadership skills. Khurshid Ahmed, who teaches Politics and Psychology at higher education department KPK, Pakistan, states that: "The children of the Political dynasties, who are going to be their apparent political heirs have little experience of the thick and thin due to pampered environment. They do not go through the tough and hard time which is much needed in the refinement of leadership skill. In luxurious elite culture, they have little exposure of the hard ground realities and masses' miseries,

Decade, *Pakistan Research Centre for Community of Shared Future*, July 31, 2023.

³⁷ Haq, interview.

³⁸ Adnan Aamir, "Pakistan's economic crisis looms over last days of election campaign", *Nikkei Asia*, February 5, 2024, <https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/Pakistan-elections/Pakistan-s-economic-crisis-looms-over-last-days-of-election-campaign>

³⁹ "Pakistan Human Capital Review: Building Capabilities Throughout Life", World Bank, last modified by May 1, 2023, [https://www.worldbank.org/en/region/sar/publication/pakistan-human-capital-review-](https://www.worldbank.org/en/region/sar/publication/pakistan-human-capital-review-building-capabilities-throughout-life#:~:text=Pakistan's%20Human%20Capital%20Index%20(HCI,average%20HCI%20value%20of%200.40)

[building-capabilities-throughout-life#:~:text=Pakistan's%20Human%20Capital%20Index%20\(HCI,average%20HCI%20value%20of%200.40](https://www.worldbank.org/en/region/sar/publication/pakistan-human-capital-review-building-capabilities-throughout-life#:~:text=Pakistan's%20Human%20Capital%20Index%20(HCI,average%20HCI%20value%20of%200.40).

⁴⁰ Akram, "Mushahid Hussain Syed with Junaid Akram.

⁴¹ Adnan Aamir "Pakistan's Nawaz Sharif passes torch as daughter Maryam elected Punjab chief", *Nikkei Asia*, February 26, 2024, <https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/Pakistan-elections/Pakistan-s-Nawaz-Sharif-passes-torch-as-daughter-Maryam-elected-Punjab-chief>

resulting in lack of empathy, strength, dedication, and leadership skill."⁴²

The rulers of the Country lack the required skills, ideology and commitment which come from arduous political training, consisting of lengthy periods. Since Jinnah's death, the ruling elite has either been produced by the established political families, feudal background, or military's handpicked, providing transactional Leadership to the country who are managerial in nature rather than transformational. In fortunate societies, at the time of economic crisis, technological shift, ideological upheaval, war, or another crisis, call for the later one becomes essential.⁴³ Farsighted statesmen and visionary leadership come from competitive environment while in Pakistan case, the hierarchical progression of leadership is completely stopped. With the ban on Student Unions, intimidation of other associations, dysfunctional local government system and no mechanism of hiring, recruitment, and training of fresh leadership cadres in political parties have let the state to be dominated by certain families. The military thinks that they are unable to run the country, so it assumes extra constitutional status.

If Pakistan turns to China for everything ranging from investment, trade to debt so why we can't learn lesson from Beijing's leadership progression. The Xi Jinping's journey to power provides lesson to Pakistan to open competitive nurseries that provides nation with dedicates leadership. Zahid Hussain, veteran journalist, and political commentator said that Pakistan should learn lesson from China's dedicate leadership who has farsighted vision for the country. Further, he states that China's leadership turned China into economic hub by keeping low profile globally and safeguard the country's independent status. He said that there is a difference between the political systems of both states but Xi who headed country on more assertive path has entered China into Phase of revolution which can be called the third revolution of China. Commenting on Xi's intention for China's future, Hussain states that

⁴² Interview with Khurshid Ahmed (Teaches Politics and Phycology at Higher Education department), March 15, 2024, 2:45 pm.

⁴³ Henry A. Kissinger, "Domestic Structure and Foreign Policy," *Daedalus* 95, no. 2 (Spring 1966): 503–29

China under incumbent president became one of the superpowers, ascribing to Xi's leadership. He said that the dedication of the present Chinese leadership for the Country provides lesson to Pakistan.⁴⁴ In China, Xi was among sent-down youth in which the young aspirants of political leadership were sent to rural side of the country to work and get exposure of working classes. In Pakistan, Students Unions and grassroots politics can bring tomorrow leadership closer to the public. In Communist youth league, Xi further educated and cultivated with values and ideology. Political parties in Pakistan can establish a mechanism on the line of CYL to inculcate principles and values in young generation of leadership. Xi working in devolved local government system and provincial position has further refined his skills and ideology and prepared him for the greater Job to take off the country on global ambitions. Pakistan must stop the launching of political leadership through Parashoot. Engaging the coming leaderships stepwise in different tiers of governance for extended period, prior to national role, will make them dedicated and visionary, inculcating effective insight of long-term planning and governance.

To cut the long story short, the lesson, Pakistan must learn from Xi's career and his dedicated visionary leadership, is to expose its political leadership to the rigorous political training by open competition. Going through stepwise progression and merit based upward mobility infuse perseverance, determination, and insight into effective and long-term planning, making them eligible for onerous and challenging jobs ahead in. Homegrown, committed and mass leadership who come to power due their personal solid achievement while getting effective training during their struggling career know that how to turn the country on resilient and development pathway.

⁴⁴ Interview with Zahid Hussain (Veteran Journalist, Author, and Political commentator), March 8, 2024, 5:00 pm.

Conclusion

The success story of China, where leadership role has been instrumental, provides lessons to Pakistan's leadership void. The case of Xi which is the recent one provides a recipe for the leadership crisis in Pakistan. Visionary and dedicated leaders take their countries on the path of development from the most incredible positions with long-term vision, clear goals, and effective governance. Leaders are prepared by hard time and rigorous political training. Taking lengthy route to national politics through different grassroot level and provincials' positions had injected in Xi Jinping, the spirit of patriotism, statesmanship and unparalleled administrative skill.

Going through so many challenging assignments and responsibilities has shaped his distinct view and style of governance that have been guiding him in running the second big power on the globe. Pakistan is in dire need of homegrown, naturally raised, and competent political leadership that bring country out crisis by prioritizing national interests over self, short-term and parochial concerns. By opening leadership nurseries: Reinstating Student Unions and establishing Local governments that give opportunities to fresh talented aspirants to come, groom and lead the nation, Pakistan would be able to generate learned, articulated, visionary, committed and mass political leadership in near future.