

**The Great Charismatic Leader: Pirzada Toha Siddique – A Great Soul and True Protector of Muslim Minority Community and Other Backward Classes of West Bengal**

**Mr. Jagannath Koley**

**Lecturer, the Dept. of Business Administration, Tarakeswar Degree College and Guest Faculty, The Dept. of Business Administration, the Vidyasagar University, West Bengal**

**Abstract:**

*Charismatic leader is one who has capabilities of profound and extra ordinary influence over his followers by his personal abilities. Charismatic leaders are self confident, socially sensitive, and empathetic to followers. They have impression management skill. They are able to arouse confidence and high expectation in the minds of their associates by the use of personal example. The charismatic leaders are able to relate their followers with their mission. Followers identify themselves with the leader and shows extreme loyalty and confidence in the leader. Followers imitate leader's values and behavior and obtain self esteem from their relationship with the leader. For collection of primary data, interview and observation techniques are used. Pirzada Alhaj Moulana Toha Siddique is a pir/saint of Furfura Darbar Sharif of West Bengal, a holy shrine of Muslim. Furfura Sharif is the second famous holy shrine of India after Ajmir Sharif. He has established the Mojaddedia Anath Foundation in 2000. The ideas and objectives with which the foundation was established are to render help to the helpless, needy, poor people irrespective of caste, creed and religion. After independence, Muslims are deprived and cheated by all ruling parties. If the West Bengal Muslim is compared with that of India, they are more poverty stricken, illiterate, and lack of political representation. In this crisis, Pirzada Toha Siddique has appeared to protect Muslim community. He articulated firmly that Muslim should not be deprived. He has pointed out that there is requirement of holistic development of Muslim. They should not be kept underdeveloped. He is very sensitive to the needs of Muslim community. He demanded 20-22% reservation in Government job and education and equal representation in politics. He is a great orator. Toha Siddique raises his voice against ruling parties, it may be Left front govt or TMCP Govt for depriving Muslim community. As a true ethical leader, he never uses any type of favour for personal gain. Lastly, He is a great philanthropist.*

**Key Words:**

Leadership, Charismatic Leader, Pirzada Toha Siddique

### Literature Review

A new concept in leadership theory is charismatic leadership. Charismatic leader is one who has capabilities of profound and extra ordinary influence over his followers by his personal abilities. Charismatic leaders are self confident, socially sensitive, and empathetic to followers. They have impression management skill. (Luthans, 2008) The origin of charismatic concept can be found in ancient Greek and cited in the Bible. The word 'charisma' is derived from the Greek word meaning 'gift'. The sociologist Max Weber is the pioneer of charismatic leadership concept. He has given his concept more than a century ago. According to him, charisma is 'a certain quality of an individual personality, by virtue of which he or she is set apart from ordinary people and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman or at least specially exceptional powers or qualities. These are not accessible to the ordinary person but as regarded as of divine origin or as exemplary and on the basis of them the individual concerned is treated as a leader.' (Weber, 1947) According to Weber, charismatic leadership is an ideal type leadership.

The modern development in term of OB of charismatic leadership concept goes to Robert House. He has done a research on political and religious leaders. The findings of this analysis are that the charismatic leaders are self confident. They have ideological vision. They are able to arouse confidence and high expectation in the minds of their associates by the use of personal example. The charismatic leaders are able to relate their followers with their mission. Followers identify themselves with the leader and shows extreme loyalty and confidence in the leader. Followers imitate leader's values and behavior and obtain self esteem from their relationship with the leader. The charismatic leaders are also characterized by high debating and convincing skill. They are well versed in technical expertise and encourage attitudinal, behavioral and emotional changes in their followers. A Fortune article as cited by Luthans describes charisma in following way: 'He attends some middling college. Does not have an MBA. But he has an aura. He persuades people-subordinates, peers, customers, even the SOS. You both work for to do things they'd rather not. People charge over the hill for him. Run through fire, walk barefoot on broken glass. He doesn't demand attention, he commands it.' (Sellers, 1996) Charismatic leaders are extraverted and self confident. They have an alluring, interesting and dynamic characteristic.

It has been observed that the followers of charismatic leaders produce beyond expectation and they have strong commitment to the leader and his/her mission. (Stephen P. Robbins, 2009) The effect of charisma increases when the followers have high self-awareness and self-monitoring. There are number of studies that try to identify the characteristics of charismatic leader. The following characteristics of charismatic leader are identified –

**1. Vision** – Charismatic leadership starts with articulating an attractive vision. Vision is an ideal goal that implies a better future than status quo. This vision produces a sense of upliftment in the mind of followers by comparing the present state with a bright future. A vision is followed by a vision statement. The vision statement is the formal expression of vision. A vision has distinct and compelling imagery which encourage people to change tradition. Vision draws people's emotions and energy. When properly communicated, vision creates enthusiasm in people. (Stephen P. Robbins, 2009)

**2. Communication** – Effective communication is necessary for every leadership style. It is more applicable to charismatic leaders. They communicate not only to distribute information but to involve followers emotionally with cause. Charismatic leaders maintain an aura of charisma by supporting an optimistic view and create enthusiasm in the mind of followers and communicate the whole body with words. They create an emotional bond which compels his followers to obey his view. They articulate an overarching goal and communicate high performance expectations. They use a captive and engaging voice tone. They are able to mesmerize large audience with excitement. (Bell, 2013)

**3. Personal Risk** – A charismatic leader takes high risk. He involves himself in risky situation for high performance and for achieving the mission. Sometimes this behavior leads charismatic leader to incur high cost. He engages in self sacrifice to achieve the vision. The leader's self-sacrifice influences profoundly the behavior of followers for taking high risk to achieve vision.

**4. Sensitivity to follower's need** – Charismatic leader feels the needs of his followers and act accordingly to satisfy their needs. A trust is developed between leader and followers.

**5. Non Conventional Behaviour** – Charismatic leader articulates a vision which is ideological with a promise of better future. He exhibits a behavior which is against status-quo and perceived as noble by followers who want to get rid of contemporary situation

**6. Situational Context** – There is a growing consensus among the researchers that the effectiveness of charismatic leaders may depend on the situation. (J. A. Conger, 1987) Charisma becomes more effective when followers are working on ideological task where the environment consists of high-degree of stress and uncertainty. It has been observed that a life threatening crisis in religion, business and politics facilitates the appearance of a charismatic leader. People are more responsive to charismatic leadership when they are in a crisis, under stress and afraid for their lives

**7. Ethical Consideration** – Charismatic leaders come out as wonderful heroes. But charismatic leaders with self interest do not always work at the larger interest of society. They emphasize personal goals over the interest of organization. The ego driven leaders mix with only 'yes' people and provide privileges to those people who blindly support him. They are intolerant to criticism. Sometimes they lead their followers towards a vision like Hitler which proves destructive. But ethical charismatic leaders are ambitious. They take responsibility for failure and give credit for success to others. They produce extra ordinary result. They channelize their efforts towards the betterment of society.

**Table-1: Comparison between ethical and unethical charismatic leader.**

<b>Ethical Charismatic Leader</b>	<b>Unethical Charismatic Leader</b>
Uses power to serve society	Uses power only for personal gain and profit
Aligns vision with followers' needs and aspirations	Promotes own personal vision
Considers and learns from criticism	Disapproves critical or opposing views
Encourages followers to think freely and to	Commands own decisions to be obeyed without

question the leader's view	question
Open, two-way communication	Restricted, One-way communication
Trains, develops, and supports followers; recognizes others for success	Insensitive to followers' necessity
Depends on internal moral standards for the betterment of organization and society	Emphasizes on convenient, external moral standards to satisfy self-interests

Source: (Luthans, 2008)

### Research Methodology

For collection of primary data, an interview has been conducted with Pirdaza Toha Siddique to know his views. Interviews are also conducted with some followers to realize their impression about leader. Observation is another tool which has been used to identify the behaviour of the leader as well as followers. The secondary data are collected from various books, magazines, newspapers, journals, internet, reports, biography etc.

### Pirzada Alhaj Moulana Toha Siddique

Pirzada Alhaj Moulana Toha Siddique is a pir/saint of Furfura Darbar Sharif of West Bengal, a holy shrine of Muslim. Furfura Sharif is the second famous holy shrine of India after Ajmir Sharif. He is the son of famous saint Ashiq-E-Rasul Hajrat Julfikar Ali Siddique(R) (Choto Huzoor Saheb).

Toha Pir is very sympathetic, talented and is also very sensitive since his childhood. He gathered his knowledge both from formal education as well as the educational system which was informal in the spiritual Abode of Bengal-Furfura Sharif. He has engaged himself in the socio-political events and exhibited his interest for sports and games from childhood. He has inherited this interest in games and sports from his father Choto Huzoor. Toha Siddique received great blessings from his father, the Choto Huzoor Pak. He moved to Calcutta Madrasah College, the great centre of higher learning to complete his higher education.

After the completion of higher education from Calcutta Madrasah College, he has engaged himself in spiritual world. He has sacrificed himself to the service of humanity and to the nation and dedicated himself for the spiritual and moral upliftment of the people.

He is very much conscious about all socio-political activities whether it is national or international and likes to solve the crisis in the socio-economic arena of the nation. He has joined in modern nation building process by giving emphasis in national integration. In true sense, he is a great educator who teaches new values to people. He is true decision maker and solves problems by considering the strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats of situation and crisis in all possible sectors of life.

He has been considered as the true leader of the contemporary society and he is totally undisputed leader accepted by people irrespective of caste, creed and colour. He is working continuously for the betterment of deprived people.

Pirzada Toha Siddique has great appeal before the masses of Bengal. The attitude and gesture of Pirzada is very gracious and beautiful and his approach is very polite which symbolizes the appearance of a true pir. He is a true pirzada and also a zinda pir because he is selfless human who devoted himself for the betterment of the society. Toha Huzoor is not interested in the materialistic life and own economic gain. He is a true combination of quality, value, devotion, sacrifice. Pirzada is respected by Islam and other religions of India. He is the symbol of religion integration. He is a strong champion of Hindu-Muslim unity and encourages the idea of National Integration. Pirzada is also conscious in defending the rights of Muslim community. He emphasized the development of minority community as a means of national building process. He emphasizes value based education and quality education. He stresses education for women in India. He insists on the moral and spiritual upliftment of Muslims of Bengal.

He propagates the idea of social development and Hindu-Muslim unity with very loud-voice. For the development of backward people, Toha Siddique has been taking initiative to establish different kinds of institutions. It is the initiative of Toha Pir along with other people of Bengal that Aliah Madrasa was raised to the rank of a university in April 5, 2008. He wants Aliah University to come out as one of the leading universities of India.

20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries are the centuries of economic and technological progression. But there is no such progression in spiritualism. There is requirement of people like him who will save people from economic, social and political disorder and help them for spiritual upliftment. He is always calm, tender hearted, merciful and has a great heart for the people. In West Bengal he is revered and respected by people of all spheres of the society irrespective of caste, creed, colour and religion.

Pirzada Toha Siddique is a symbol of idealism. He is a true mediator in case of quarrel, violence and problems. He provides practical solution. His suggestions are always being accepted by all across sections of the society. His patience is very high. Nobody has seen him being harsh to anyone. He never hurt anybody mentally and physically. He is a true man of character and determination with definite mission. He loves all human being and stresses on service for mankind.

Toha Siddique always encourages Muslims for obtaining knowledge in English Education or technical education. He also emphasizes value based education. An amalgamation of value based education and scientific education would help the Muslims to develop as well as to keep Muslims away from corruption and unethical activities. A section of Bengal Muslim Society is preoccupied with many of evil practices. A section of Muslims are involved in anti-social and anti-Islamic activities. They engage themselves in evil practices like drinking wine, taking bribes, playing cards, feasting etc. According to Pirzada, involvement in evil practices is due to lack of knowledge of Islam. He always tries to spread Islamic values among them. He is always fighting to remove evils practices like dowry system, ignorance, superstition and communal violence.(Firdous, 2011)

### Mojaddedia Anath Foundation

Pirzada Toha Siddique always emphasizes service and sacrifice for the betterment of people. To serve helpless people he has established the Mojaddedia Anath Foundation in the year 2000 with 21 other members. The ideas and objectives with which the foundation has established are to render help to the helpless, needy people irrespective of caste, creed and colour. The founder has expressed his motive for establishment of this foundation: 'Helpless, orphan, needy people's cry and water of eyes, the cry of tortured people and the helplessness of deprived minority always make me unhappy. I always think about how I will help them, serve them, and stand at their side to make them happy. With this dream, I have founded the Mojaddedia Anath Foundation with help of few kind hearted friends and disciples. Now it is working constantly for deprived and tortured people of West Bengal.' (Siddique, 2014)

It is purely a non political organization devoted for the betterment of people. The foundation is working in all over of India with branches in every corner of West Bengal.

The affairs of Mojaddedia Anath Foundation have spreaded from social services like providing Ambulance Services to poor patients of rural Bengal, providing shelters to orphans, arrange mass marriages for all communities. In the year 2009, he has arranged mass marriage for poor Hindu-Muslim brides. He not only organizes mass marriages but also provides them of all necessary amenities and accessories required for marriage life.

Pirzada provides required aids for the poor physically challenged people so that they can return in the mainstream society. The Mojaddedia Anath Foundation supported the people of Nandigram violence, engaged in the rescue operation of Alia (cyclone) victims in South 24 Parganas. The foundation provides wheel chairs to physically disabled people. Toha Siddique encourages the poor meritorious students by rewarding them with prizes and books. The foundation is involved in up gradation of deprived people. The organization provides clothes, umbrellas to poor students. The organization also arranges medical camps for poor and needy people in both rural and urban areas where general health checkups are done. Not only that, the organization supplies medicines and drugs to the poor and needy people free of cost. Blood donation camps are organized throughout the year. According to Pirzada, 'Not only service, the foundation is also playing leading role for the freedom of deprived people. It is fighting against injustice, crime, violence.' (Siddique, 2014)

Poor and helpless people are helped with clothes and blankets to protect them from cold in the month of Holy Ramadhan. The Mojaddedia Anath Foundation is also involved in environment protection activities. The foundation organizes events like plantation of trees. (Firdous, 2011)

### Findings

Pirzada Toha Siddique is constantly protecting the deprived Muslim community of West Bengal. His charisma can be analyzed in following way:

**Situational Context** – The total population of West Bengal according to the census report of 2011 is 9.15 crore. Out of this population, 2.46 crore are Muslim minority. They consist of 27% of total population.

(The Govt. of India, 2011) After independence, Muslims are deprived and cheated by all ruling parties. At the time of election, they promise so many things. But after vote, they forget Muslim. If the West Bengal Muslim is compared with that of India, they are more poverty stricken, illiterate, and lack of political representation. (Wikipedia) They are underdeveloped and deprived. If 34 years Left Front Govt thought to maintain the development, this condition does not happen. The new TMCP govt. has come in power by 2011 Legislative Assembly Election with promise to develop minority. The minority Muslim gave their votes to TMCP. After coming in power, they have done something, but it is very little for the development of Muslim community. Muslims in West Bengal are helpless. Muslims are victimized in the politics of Trinamool, Congress and CPI(M). In this crisis, Pirzada Toha Siddique has appeared to protect Muslim community.

**Vision** – Toha Siddique has appeared to protect the deprived Muslim Community. He has come and has provided hope to poverty stricken, helpless Muslim community. He articulated firmly that Muslim should not be deprived. He has pointed out that there is requirement of holistic development of Muslim. (Express News Service, 2015) They should not be kept underdeveloped. He calls all Muslims of West Bengal to be united. He calls all religious leaders of Muslim to work together by sacrificing their self interest. (Siddiqui, 2014) He projected Muslims though minority as the deciding force of Govt. making of West Bengal where Muslims have majority in 70 seats and can influence 35 seats out of 294 state assembly constituencies. (Das, 2015) He is deciding factor for at least 48 Assembly seats. (Ali, 2015) He again and again warns present Govt. not to deceive Muslim community. The promise made before election should be kept. They should not be used as vote bank. (ET Bureau, 2015)

**Sensitive to Followers' Needs** – He is very sensitive to the needs of Muslim community. When Mamata Banerjee govt tries to pacify the minority community by providing them scholarship and cycle, he protested against it and demanded 20-22% reservation in Government job and education. (Ali, 2015) (We won't accept 99% work done lie: Minority leader, 2013) When chief minister Mamata Banerjee claimed that he has completed 90% of minority development, Toha Siddique said that he should not tolerate false statement regarding minority development. He accused the CM and her government of doing nothing for the Muslims and rejected Mamata's claim of fulfilling 90% of her pledges to the community. (Ali, Nahukda Masjid Imam Lied, Spoke under Influence, 2015) (Govt is telling lie, New Uneasiness at the Demand of Toha, 2016) (Banerjee, 2016) (Banerjee F. , 2016) (Representative, 2016) He articulates: "Ruling parties have always used the minorities as their vote banks and deceived them. Mamata Banerjee has done the same. But she appeared to be more selfish than others." (ET Bureau, 2015). He criticized Left Front Govt of doing nothing for minority (Banerjee F. , 2016)

With intervention of Pirzada Toha Siddique, State Madrasa teachers' 40-day-long hunger strike in Haji Md Mohsin Square came to an end. He played crucial role and govt. agreed to some demands. The teachers were on a relay hunger strike demanding the inclusion of 495 madrasas under the state Madrasa Education Board. The teachers were also demanding pay for teaching and non teaching staff of MSK and SSK from government. The madrasas seeking recognition are Madrasa Shiksha Kendras (MSKs), Shishu Shiksha Kendras (SSKs) and Madhyamik Shiksha Kendras. There were 4,500 madrasa teachers teaching 1.5 lakh students across the state. (Express News Service, 2015) If MSKs are not regularised, they would turn defunct on March 31, 2016 as per the Right to Education (RTE) Act. Pirzada Toha Siddique warned the state government "If the government does not keep its promise this time, I will

take it as my personal insult since I have mediated to bring a solution to this problem. (If it happens), I will ask the madrasa teachers to go on a greater movement against the government and I will personally lead such a movement.” (Express News Service, 2015)

Before the legislative assembly election 2016 of West Bengal, Toha Siddique requested high command of all parties to provide seats to Muslim candidates in proportion to their number. (Siddiqui, 2014) The number would be nearly 85-90 seats out of 294 seats. Before election political parties become caring towards minority. They should prove it that they not only speak but also implement it. He directed high commands that they should provide local people ticket for election because people of the locality want to see a local person as their representative. If a person is sent from distance as a MLA, he will take five years only to know corners of his locality.

**Communication** – He is a great orator. He communicates not only by words but by whole body. He speaks in lucid language which can be understood by people of all spheres of society. He involves audience in his speech and asks audience to support a cause. He is able to inspire his followers. Audience listen him with full attention. He has ability to motivate people. He is very confident in his approach. He has ability to build confidence in the mind of his followers. He speaks in colloquial and informal language to inspire people. He speaks so enthusiastically that he is able to transfer his emotion and sentiment to the mind of his followers. When he calls any convocation, lakhs of people come to listen his speech. He has the ability to create bond which is strongly felt by people. An example can be given. In a conference in Nawabpur, he is trying to establish that Muslim should have one principle in such way:

Toha Siddique (asking audience): Tell me, how many Allah we have?

Audience: One

Toha Siddique: Please tell loudly

Audience (loudly): One

Toha Siddique: How many Nobi?

Audience: One

Toha Siddique: How many Quran?

Audience: One

Toha Siddique: How many kahaba?

Audience: One

Toha Siddique: How many principal we should have?

Audience: One

Toha Siddique: Speak loudly

Audience: One (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dv9953n1mwU>)

In such way, he established that Muslim should have one principle given by Dada Huzoor Pir.

**Personal Risk** - It is very common practice that a person who points out the mistakes or limitations of ruling parties, they humiliate him and dishonor him and try to attack him physically and mentally. Toha Siddique raises his voice against ruling parties; it may be Left Front govt or TMCP Govt for depriving Muslim community. The both parties try to humiliate him. Urban development minister tried to dishonor him and said: ‘Toha did not represent all Muslims in Bengal’. Faruque Ahamed humiliated Toha Siddique. He said that Toha Siddique could not even ensure a Trinamool win in the local panchayat. Trinamool MLA candidate and previous Left Front Minister, Rezzak Mollah demanded that Minority would not give vote according to the direction of Toha Siddique. (Sen, 2016) Nothing has able to stop



him. He is not afraid of ruling government. He has not tolerated deception and raises his voice again and again. When Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said that she could recognize Madrasses but did not able to pay, Toha Siddique pointed out “What is the point of giving recognition if teachers are not paid? I have also demanded reservation for Muslims in terms of education and jobs. If madrasa teachers start a movement, I will be glad to be a part of it.” (Indian Express Service, 2015)Pirzada Toha Siddique said that Muslims have been deprived of jobs and that the government was yet to fulfill most of the promises made to Muslims. Claiming that Muslims have been deprived for years, Siddique said: “Muslims have always been treated as vote bank. We don’t want alms or favours. We would be happy if we get our rights. A holistic development for Muslims is definitely required. They don’t get proper opportunity in terms of education and jobs.” (Express News Service, 2015)He cautions Govt that he will not tolerate incorrect statement regarding the development of Muslim. Siddiqui said that he would stand by the side of teachers whenever they need him and warns govt. boldly “If nothing is done for these teachers, they will reply through ballot in 2016.” If govt. doesn’t keep their promises, Toha Siddique cautions “We managed to uproot the Left Front despite their 34-year run in the government. It will be comparatively easy to uproot the Trinamool government after five years.”(We won’t accept 99% work done lie: Minority leader, 2013)

**Ethical Consideration** – Leaders of all parties, whether TMCP, CP(I)M or Congress meet Toha Siddique as a religious leader. They all try to develop good relationship with him. Govt. always tries to keep him in smile. Toha Siddique can enjoy it. He can use this for his personal gain and profit. As a true ethical leader, he never uses this type of favour for personal gain. He sacrifices his whole life for the betterment of Muslim community. According to him “My only concern is people. I will speak for them till my last breathe. Whether people like it or not, it’s fine.” (Sen, 2016) He can break any relationship with any person including chief minister for the development of minority. His charismatic influence on his followers is so far reaching and intense that they can even sacrifice their lives for him. And he is also dedicated for their development.

Lastly, Pirzada Toha Siddique is a great personality who is respected and revered by people irrespective of religion, cast, creed and colour. He is the king maker in West Bengal. He has no attachment for material things. His behavior and thinking are different from others. When narrow minded religious leaders are involved in conversion, his philosophy is ‘the people who don’t respect the religions of others, he will not be able to respect his own religion.’ His heart bleeds for the poor people irrespective religions. When people whether Muslim or Hindu come to him for help, he doesn’t refuse any one. He says to his followers to involve in good work for the betterment of people irrespective of religion. He says his disciples, ‘If you see that a Hindu child is sinking in water at the time of Namaz, you should leave Namaz and save the child.’ He is a great philanthropist who will remain in the mind of people till human race lasts.

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