



Assessing the Governance Strategies and Obstacles Faced by Mohammad Bin Tughluq

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ABSTRACT

The reign of Mohammad bin Tughluq in the Delhi Sultanate during the 14th century was notable for the major historical setting and political issues it was defined by. Tughluq instituted ambitious administrative measures with the goal of consolidating control and expanding the Sultanate's authority in response to a variety of challenges, including economic difficulties, regional uprisings, and outside influences. On the other hand, these initiatives often resulted in unforeseen effects and widespread dissatisfaction. Because to the introduction of token money and the capital's move to Daulatabad, the country experienced economic and social upheaval, which eroded public confidence and undermined its capacity to remain stable. In addition, Tughluq's administrative reforms were met with obstacles like as corruption, inefficiency, and opposition, which hampered efficient government. The repercussions of his actions led to economic instability, the uprooting of communities, the exploitation of farmers, and a reduction in the degree to which regions retained their own autonomy. The rule of Tughluq may be seen as a cautionary tale because it illuminates the complex relationship that exists between historical backdrop, political goals, and the results of decision-making. It impacted the historical growth of the Delhi Sultanate and inspired the methods of successive rulers, highlighting the need of giving careful thought to the socio-economic ramifications of decisions and striking a balance between the power of the central government and the cooperation of the various regions for efficient administration.



INTRODUCTION

During his tenure as ruler of the Delhi Sultanate from 1325 to 1351, Mohammad Bin Tughluq was confronted with a great number of difficulties and was responsible for the implementation of various ambitious administrative programmes. The 14th century was a turbulent time in the history of the Delhi Sultanate, characterised by political instability, dynastic upheavals, and regional warfare. These events all took place during this time period. Tughluq inherited a kingdom that was struggling with economic troubles as well as rebellions, and he endeavoured to consolidate control and expand the Sultanate's influence throughout his reign. Nevertheless, his ideas often resulted in unexpected repercussions and were met with major challenges. This introduction lays the groundwork for a subsequent examination of Tughluq's administration by underlining the historical setting, the political problems, and the intricacies of decision-making during this time period. We may acquire insights into the complexities of administration and the influence that choices made by rulers have on the trajectory of a kingdom by analysing the administrative policies that Tughluq put in place, the obstacles he encountered, and the results of those challenges.

Objectives

This study aims to investigate the administrative policies and challenges confronted by Mohammad Bin Tughluq during his reign as a ruler of the Delhi Sultanate. It seeks to understand the historical context and political obstacles that shaped his decision-making. Through a comprehensive analysis, the study aims to evaluate the specific administrative policies implemented by Mohammad Bin Tughluq and their underlying objectives. It also intends to assess the effectiveness and consequences of his administrative decisions, particularly their impact on the stability of the Delhi Sultanate and the well-being of its subjects. Furthermore, the study aims to examine the broader socio-economic implications of Mohammad Bin Tughluq's policies and their lasting effects on subsequent rulers and the overall historical trajectory of the empire. By exploring these objectives, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of the administrative dynamics and challenges of Mohammad Bin Tughluq's rule.

DISCUSSION

While ruling the Delhi Sultanate, Mohammad Bin Tughluq was confronted with enormous historical context and political obstacles. Multiple dynastic transitions and invasions rocked the Sultanate during the 14th century, creating a period of political instability and social upheaval. Tughluq took power in 1325 CE, inheriting a kingdom struggling with economic problems and regional rebellions. His grandiose ambitions often backfired, despite his best intentions to consolidate power and expand the Sultanate's sphere of influence. Tughluq's enormous and varied dominion presented a significant administrative issue.¹ He made a number of administrative reforms, including as introducing token currency and relocating the capital from Delhi to Daulatabad, in an effort to improve government. But these actions were extremely disruptive, leading to a shaky economy and considerable unhappiness. There were several threats to Tughluq from the outside world. He faced threats from the Mongols on the northwestern boundary and wars with neighbouring kingdoms like Warangal's revolt in the south. His efforts to form a stable government were hampered as his resources were stretched even thinner by these external pressures. Mohammad bin Tughluq's leadership illustrates the challenges and complications that



monarchs in this era faced. The Sultanate's political and economic problems were compounded by his ambitious but misguided plans. In sum, Tughluq's rule illustrates how the complex interplay of historical circumstances, political aspirations, and the outcomes of decisions may alter the course of a kingdom.²

From 1325 to 1351, Mohammad bin Tughluq ruled as Sultan of Delhi. During his reign, he instituted a number of administrative reforms designed to reinforce the Sultanate's centralised government. These programmes were ambitious in nature, with the goals of improving administration, raising tax income, and expanding the Sultanate's sphere of influence. Mohammad bin Tughluq introduced a token money system as one of his primary administrative strategies.³ To do this, copper coins with a nominal value called "tanka" coins were issued in substitute of silver coinage. The reasoning behind this programme was to limit price increases and maintain economic stability. Counterfeiting and a lack of public acceptance were just two of the many problems that plagued the introduction of the token currency system. The policy ultimately failed, leading to a disturbance in the economy and a decline in public trust. Mohammad bin Tughluq also made a notable policy shift by relocating the capital from Delhi to Daulatabad. The Sultan saw the move as a chance to improve defences against invaders and exert more authority over the southern territories. A second goal of moving the capital was to strengthen the Sultanate's grip on power. However, as a result of being uprooted against their will, the local populace put up fierce opposition. It didn't work out, so they transferred the capital back to Delhi after a few years.⁴

Mohammad bin Tughluq also improved governance and tax collection via administrative improvements. A new method of measuring agricultural land, called "daag," was established by him so that agricultural properties could be more accurately valued and taxed. To further simplify administration, he established regional governments called "diwans," each of which was headed by a governor called a "wazir."⁵ These regulatory changes were made to enhance tax collection, fortify bureaucracy, and guarantee efficient administration. Corruption, poor administration, and a lack of resources hindered efforts to put these policies into action and keep tabs on the huge empire. Mohammad bin Tughluq instituted rules that encouraged people from different parts of his empire to mix and mingle.⁶ He pushed for the relocation of people from other places to depopulating districts, and he pushed for the construction of canals and other infrastructure improvements. These measures were intended to encourage cross-cultural interaction and revitalise local economies. However, results were mixed, as population transfers often met with resistance and practical difficulties. The ambitious administrative initiatives of Mohammad bin Tughluq were aimed at centralising power, expanding the Sultanate's tax base, and expanding its sphere of influence. However, many of these policies encountered serious obstacles and failed.⁷ Token currency and the forced transfer of capital brought to light the negative effects of these measures on the economy and the people. Although the reforms in administration were well-intentioned, corruption and poor management prevented them from being fully implemented. Overall, the administrative initiatives of Mohammad bin Tughluq were ambitious but ultimately unsuccessful.⁸

The administrative measures made by Mohammad bin Tughluq had a major impact on the security and administration of the Delhi Sultanate, but their success and repercussions were uneven.⁹ The effects of Tughluq's efforts to consolidate authority and simplify government were far-reaching. Among his many noteworthy administrative moves was the launch of token currency.



Despite its good intentions, this action led to widespread confusion and economic instability, rather than solving the problems it was meant to address. Since the token currency was worthless and people stopped trusting the currency, business and the economy suffered. The decision to relocate the capital from Delhi to Daulatabad was also pivotal. Tughluq had high hopes that the move would grant him greater influence over the southern lands. Unfortunately, the execution of this bold plan was a nightmare. Death and misery on a massive scale came from the population's forced relocation, and regional rebellions and turmoil weakened the Sultanate's control.¹⁰

Tughluq made administrative decisions including expanding state control over farmland and setting up a complex intelligence network in an effort to strengthen the state's grip on power and make government more efficient. However, local rulers and nobility sometimes resisted these measures due to corruption and exploitation. Local administrators felt neglected and disenfranchised because of Tughluq's excessive centralization of power.¹¹ Despite Mohammad Bin Tughluq's best intentions, his administrative policies had a negative impact on the Delhi Sultanate and did not help enhance its stability or government.¹² The instability of the Sultanate was weakened by the introduction of token currency and the subsequent movement of the capital. Discontent among the public and the introduction of intrusive policies that centralised power too much damaged the Sultanate as a whole. Tughluq's rule is instructive because it shows how crucial it is to think through the real-world repercussions of administrative decisions if we want to keep the peace and get things done.

The social and economic conditions of the Delhi Sultanate and its citizens were greatly improved by Mohammad Bin Tughluq's measures.¹³ However, the empire and its people suffered greatly because of these practises. The adoption of token currency was one of Tughluq's measures that had far-reaching social and economic consequences. The decision was made to address the silver scarcity and maintain economic stability. However, since token currency couldn't be exchanged for anything of value, people stopped trusting the currency.¹⁴ As a result, the economy became unstable, which harmed regular people's ability to make a living. Inflation and greater hardships for the populace resulted from the falling value of commodities and services. Tughluq's bold move to relocate the capital from Delhi to Daulatabad was fraught with negative social and economic outcomes.¹⁵ There was a lot of death and destruction caused by the population's forced relocation. As a result, many people fell into poverty and social dislocation as they lost their houses, companies, and means of support. The empire's economy was thrown into disarray, and social order was weakened as a result.¹⁶

Tughluq's policies also had an impact on agriculture, a vital element of the empire's economy. The state action he attempted to use to consolidate control over farmland backfired. Farmers' already dire socioeconomic conditions were made much worse by the state's increased involvement in their lives, which resulted in more taxes and exploitation. Policies that discouraged farming also reduced the amount of food grown,¹⁷ worsening the empire's economic and social situation.¹⁸ The social and economic conditions of the Delhi Sultanate and its subjects were negatively affected by Mohammad Bin Tughluq's policies. Token currency's introduction, capital flight, and centralised state management of agriculture all exacerbated economic stagnation, food insecurity, and social unrest.¹⁹ The agricultural economy was stifled and trade was interrupted as a result of these measures, which also led to inflation and population displacement. Tughluq's rule is a



cautionary tale about the need of thinking through the long-term social and economic effects of decisions before making them.²⁰

The administrative practises and difficulties of Mohammad bin Tughluq affected other rulers and the entire course of Delhi Sultanate history. The political, economic, and administrative dynamics of the empire were all affected by these results. The legacy of Tughluq's centralised, reform-minded policies endured long after his death.²¹ His efforts to centralise power and establish authoritative rule were met with stiff opposition from powerful local groups. Because of this, the empire broke apart and became less united, making way for new dynasties and emperors to take control. Tughluq's²² difficulties in administration exemplified the drawbacks of centralised government, including as inadequate policy implementation and the inability to oversee enormous regions. Successive rulers, wise from these experiences, shifted their approaches to effective control by prioritising the maintenance of regional coalitions, decentralising government, and accepting multiple power systems.²³ The historical trajectory of the Delhi Sultanate was significantly impacted by Tughluq's policies. The empire was damaged and political instability was exacerbated by his intention to move the capital from Delhi to Daulatabad and his numerous reversals. His decisions had far-reaching implications on the social and economic growth of the empire, including inflation, economic decline, and social turmoil.

Tughluq's reign gave insights that influenced the style of administration used by subsequent monarchs. Successive leaders understood the importance of striking a balance between central authority and the needs and aspirations of local governments, therefore they prioritised stability, regional collaboration, and policy flexibility.²⁴ The administrative policies and difficulties of Mohammad bin Tughluq had lasting effects on the history of the Delhi Sultanate and its following rulers. The decline of the empire was impacted by power struggles, administrative mistakes, and the requirement for regional collaboration. Tughluq's reign was a watershed moment in the history of the Delhi Sultanate, influencing the policies and practises of successive sultans and defining the course of the kingdom forever.

CONCLUSION

The Delhi Sultanate under Mohammad bin Tughluq faced considerable hurdles and inconsistent results from his ambitious administrative reforms. Economic crisis, social discontent, and political instability resulted from his attempts to centralise control and expand the Sultanate's authority. Economic instability, a decline in public trust, and population dislocation were all results of the introduction of token currency and the forced shift of capital. Corruption and resistance were just two of the problems that plagued attempts to enact administrative reforms. Tughluq's leadership is illustrative of the challenges that rulers of the time faced and the importance of giving considerable thought to the real-world effects of policy decisions. Successive monarchs drew inspiration from Tughluq's methods of governance, which emphasised stability, regional collaboration, and adaptability.

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