

Maheen Qureshi
(319)

Sociology Mock

Question 2

Ibn-e-Khaldun's Theory of Asabiyyah and its relation to current scenario of the country.

Answer

Introduction:

Ibn-e-Khaldun, a famous philosopher of the Muslim World and father of sociology has extensively discussed human society in his works. The concept of society discussed in his Theory of Asabiyyah holds great significance in understanding social change, the rise and fall of civilization.

Theory of Asabiyyah:

Asabiyyah refers to social solidarity with emphasis on unity and sense of shared purpose. According to Ibn-e-Khaldun, Asabiyyah is a bond of cohesion among humans in a group forming community. ~~Asabiyyah~~ This bond is most strong in nomadic phase and decreases as civilizations advance. As this Assabiyyah declines, a more compelling one may takes its place. Thus, civilizations rise and fall as cycles of Asabiyyah play out.

Characteristics of Asabiyyah:

Ibn Khaldun describes the characteristics of a strong and cohesive group or society. Some key characteristics include,

1. Group solidarity and collective identity

Asabiyyah is characterized by a strong sense of unity and loyalty among members of the group. Members are defined by shared identity, culture and history.

2. Power and prestige in Society

The formation and maintenance of a society is heavily dependent on the power and prestige it holds.

3. Influence on polity of society

A dynasty evolves with the cohesiveness of Asabiyyah in society. It guides and manipulates a king or a strong and effective leadership which helps to further unify.

4. Intertwined with economy

The economy changes proportionately with change in asabiyyah. The dynamics of Badwa society evolves as society evolves to a Hadara status (urban dwellers).

Causes for decay of Assabiyah

It is important to note that collapse of Assabiyah is a complex and multifaceted process. According to Khaldun, it is majorly influenced by the following three factors:

1. Misuse of power by Rulers

In a society, when power is used as an instrument of exploitation, bonds of unity are weakened. It corrupts and demoralises the system where assabiyah cannot survive.

2. Plague of social weaknesses:

Assabiyah disappears when a group is plagued with injustice and hypocrisy. This produces disorder and shatters the trust between rulers and ruled. Ibn-e-Khaldun states this eradicates ~~restlessness~~ ^{assabiyah} and inculcates restlessness.

3. Accumulation of too much wealth:

According to Khaldun, too much wealth makes people comfort seeking and deprives group feeling needed in struggle for survival. This weakens the assabiyah and creates social and economic chains.

Theory of Assabiyah in Current Scenario of Pakistan:

It is astounding that over 600 years later,

The concepts introduced by Ibn Khaldun still hold great relevance to understanding the world and society today. In context of Pakistan, many of the country's challenges can be analysed using this concept:

Increased Militant Groups

A rise in ethnic and sectarian conflicts indicates a weak *assabiyah* as the sense of unity is low within the country. This has brought a rise in militant groups that are attempting to further weaken the solidarity among the country.

Political Leadership

A strong *assabiyah* required a strong leader for the country to bring the people together. However, the recent vote of no confidence for Prime Minister Imran Khan indicates that there was a lack of belief among the society.

Increased Polarization in Politics

The instability caused by the change in power shows the division in the parliamentary system and streets of Pakistan. This has also resulted in a lack of trust among the people, weakening the *assabiyah*.

Increased Awareness ^{in People} ~~and duty~~ :

The political instability has caused an economic crisis in Pakistan which has gravely impacted the people. However, the community has joined together demanding for help. This shows the weakness in one sect characteristic of assabiyah has strengthened the society against joint foe.

Aide during Natural Disaster:

The recent flooding in Pakistan has caused 33 million Pakistanis to be affected. However, at the time of stress many Pakistanis joined hands to raise funds and donation drives to help the affected. This also shows a strong sense of community is still present in the country.

Assabiyah among ~~China~~ neighbouring countries:

Pakistan has always shown strong support and affection for its neighbouring countries. In Afghanistan after the War of Terror operation, Pakistan welcomed millions of Afghan refugees and provided ~~the~~ aid to the families.

Moreover, Pakistan's relationship with China is also immensely strong, 'Iron Brothers' as called China's CPEC initiative under BRI has been of immense economic and social support to the country showing a strong unity among neighboring countries too.

Conclusion:

To conclude, Assabiyyah can refer to the sense of unity and identity within the country. Despite having ethnic diversity, Pakistan's community is still quite strong. This theory highlights the importance of comradeship to overcome any challenges being faced by the country.