Sociological Explanation of Social accommodation among the Ethnic Groups of Afghanistan

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Extended Abstract

1. Introduction

Differences caused by inter-ethnic and extra-ethnic relations and conventions or social accommodation are one of the sociocultural distinctions that influence solidarity and cohesion in human societies. The significance of this subject relates to the fact that these differences can play a prominent role in both shaping social cohesion and placing the society under social rupture and conflict. In this study, variables including social distance, social tolerance, sense of social deprivation, social trust, social support, social indifference, and social participation are taken into account as independent variables; the relations between these variables and social accommodation is assessed to find out whether they affect social accommodation . Unquestionably, accommodation is a social issue that is present in all societies. Here, it is attempted to put forth a sociological argument on accommodation i.e. an examination of social accommodation in different social contexts. The connection between social accommodation and ethnicity can be made through the sociological outlook. The assumption here is that ethnicity leads to social conflict; subsequently, the conflict would not be mitigated and social accommodation would not take shape until the issue of ethnicity is resolved as a cultural element. Therefore, in this study, it is attempted to explain the important factors that reinforce social accommodation in the Afghan society so as to provide the means for tolerance and coexistence, guiding said society from chaos to optimal organization.

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2. Review of Literature and Theoretical Framework

Examinations into the existing literature show that despite the considerable importance of the subject at hand, there has been no consistent studies conducted on ethnic groups in Afghanistan and social accommodation among them. Horowitz's theory on social accommodation is employed in editing the theoretical framework and drawing the theoretical model. This theorist has conducted many studies on social accommodation in various countries, particularly in African nations among various ethnic groups. He believes that in order to control and resolve a variety of social problems in different countries, especially in African nations, it is of utmost importance to promote social accommodation among the ethnic groups living in these countries. Horowitz defines accommodation as an attempt to mitigate differences through accepting the interests of one another within societies where there are discrete dominance-centered interactions. Allport has also carried out numerous studies on the benefits and dynamics of social accommodation and inter-ethnic and interracial interactions. He demonstrates that multilateral interactions can lead to positive outcomes, yet gaining the highest benefits from such interactions depends on suitable conditions; without these conditions, inter-ethnic contact and connections may even increase racial prejudices. David Meyer's theory is also considered for editing the theoretical framework. This theorist has conducted many inquiries on ethnic prejudice and identified numerous factors that affect the extent of increase or reduction in ethnic prejudices.

3. Method

The present study was conducted using the survey method and data were collected via questionnaires. Total population of the study included the adults between the age of 20-50 living in Kabul, from four major ethnicities of Pashtun, Tajik, Hazara, and Uzbek. Sample population was indicated as 1055 individuals using multi-stage random cluster sampling.

4. Results and Discussion

Results of the study show that the respondents are at an average social accommodation level (49%). It appears that this finding supports Allport's theory (1954) based on which multilateral interactions result in positive outcomes; Based on the two-variable analysis, variables including social trust, social participation, social belonging, social support, sense of relative deprivation, social tolerance, social distance, and social indifference has a significant correlation with social accommodation ; among these variables, variables including social indifference, social distance, and sense of relative deprivation had a significant inverse, negative correlation with social accommodation .

5. Conclusion

According to Horowitz's theory and based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that the promotion of social accommodation is a suitable strategy to achieve national unity and social solidarity in Afghanistan, given the country's ethnic, tribal structure. It can also be concluded that if different groups and ethnicities become devoid of any sense of deprivation, then desirable social interactions among ethnicities can flourish; according to Allport's theory (1954), these interactions and connections can pave the way for social accommodation among ethnicities and prevents ethnic divergence.

Keywords: Social accommodation, Ethnic Diversity, Social Deprivation, Social Indifference, Social Participation

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