

Social Solidarity and Its Role in Promoting Ethical Values in Algerian Society

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Abstract:

This article discusses the role of social solidarity in promoting ethical values in Algerian society. It explains the concept of social solidarity and its meaning in communities, as well as the manifestations of solidarity and the value of brotherhood, cooperation, generosity, equality and contentment. The article also emphasises the role of activating these values in the prosperity and happiness of society, supported by a model illustrating the manifestations of social solidarity during the month of Ramadan. The aim is to shed light on the importance of social solidarity in promoting and activating ethical values in Algerian society, and to explain how this can be achieved.

Keywords: social solidarity, ethical values, manifestations of social solidarity, volunteering.

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Introduction:

Islam came with a comprehensive perspective on the universe, humanity and life, aiming to honour and fulfil the full human potential, both materially and spiritually. It called for the use of all possibilities and means to eliminate the destructive effects of ignorance, hunger and disease on society. Islam established a society based on a solid foundation of values, from which emerged a social system that made human happiness and dignity its primary goal.

Throughout history, people have always lived in human communities, whether relatively small, such as families and tribes, or larger, such as villages and cities. Within these communities, however, there have always been various inequalities between individuals, whether in terms of material wealth, knowledge, health and other aspects, which have manifested themselves at all times and on all occasions.

This highlights the importance of social solidarity and support for individuals to overcome difficulties and meet needs in different situations. This concept refers to the social ties and interactions between members of society based on principles of care and mutual support. Social solidarity plays an important role in promoting ethical values in Algerian society. It reinforces the values of cooperation, caring for others and contributing to the well-being of all. It is an integral part of the culture and traditions and reflects the establishment of ethical values such as justice, transparency and concern for the weak and needy.

The question raised in this academic paper revolves around the nature of social solidarity, its types and the benefits associated with it. How does social solidarity promote and activate ethical values in society in different situations?

1/The concept of social solidarity, its forms and benefits:

The linguistic meaning of social solidarity is derived from the root word "kafala", which means help and support. In another sense, it encompasses the notion of mutual coexistence and support among a group of individuals.

On the other hand, social solidarity can be described as the state in which members of a community care for each other in times of weakness and sorrow, and share moments of success and joy. It is what gives dignity to human life. It encompasses a range of actions and initiatives aimed at achieving social justice and enhancing the well-being of individuals. It involves providing support and care to members of the community who are in need, whether at the level of the family, the neighbourhood, the local community or the wider society.

(Mohammed Abu Zahra: Social Solidarity in Islam, Dar Al-Fikr Al-Arabi, Cairo, 1991, p. 15)

Social solidarity is a concept that refers to the participation of individuals in preserving public and private interests and preventing material and moral harm. It embodies an ethical and social value in Islam, where collective action and cooperation among individuals are considered fundamental to achieving well-being and stability in society. Social solidarity is realised through various activities and practices such as zakat (obligatory almsgiving), voluntary charity, donations, insurance, cooperation in charitable works and volunteering. It serves as a foundation for healthy and stable communities by helping to improve social relations and the quality of life for individuals and communities as a whole.

Therefore, it can be said that social solidarity is the cooperation and support of all members of society, their solidarity and mutual assistance, driven by brotherhood and love for the good in this world and rewards in the hereafter. They contribute to meeting and securing one or more aspects of the needs of their brethren or citizens in general who deserve help because of their circumstances.

(Dr. Khaled Ibrahim Al-Daghim, Dr. Abdul Kareem Mustafa Al-Jamous, The Role of Social Solidarity in Activating Ethical Values in Islamic Societies and Consolidating Them, Academic Journal for Research and Scientific Publishing, 14th Edition, published on 5-6-2020)

B/ Types of social solidarity:

* **Scientific solidarity:** In this type, the society engages in solidarity to achieve the goals of knowledge and works towards its dissemination while combating various forms of ignorance. One of its manifestations is the building of schools and universities as a form of permanent charity or as a form of "scientific endowment" (waqf), along with other forms of scientific solidarity.

* **Family solidarity:** This is one of the simplest forms of social solidarity, ensuring cooperation among family members to achieve their common interests, beyond individualism and selfishness. It includes efforts to bring up and prepare children in a healthy way, to take care of their physical, psychological, social and religious aspects, and to maintain family ties and other forms of solidarity.

* **Economic solidarity:** In this type, the wealth of individuals in society is preserved and social justice is achieved in its finest form. Examples of economic solidarity include the payment of zakat (obligatory almsgiving) and voluntary charity, the prevention of monopolies within society, and other forms of economic solidarity.

* **Civilizational solidarity:** This type of solidarity may include various other types of solidarity, but its specific purpose is for individuals to cooperate, unite, and render any service that serves the interests of the nation, whether material or spiritual, scientific or subsistence, economic, religious, or ethical, each according to their available abilities and resources. In this way, the nation preserves its civilisation and advances to new heights with its people.

C/The benefits of social solidarity are as follows:

- Social solidarity helps to promote stability and social equilibrium in the community.
- It contributes to improving the quality of life of individuals by providing social protection and support in cases of vulnerability, accidents and natural disasters.
- Social solidarity strengthens social ties and promotes trust and cooperation between individuals in the community.
- It contributes to the provision of health care for individuals and the promotion of public health.
- Social solidarity strengthens unity and cooperation among community members by supporting joint social and economic projects.

- It works to alleviate poverty and invest in improving the living conditions of the most vulnerable groups in society.
- Social solidarity helps to promote social and economic sustainability by improving living conditions for all.
- It works to increase community participation and individual social responsibility.
- Social solidarity contributes to improving education and providing learning opportunities for all members of the community.
- It acts as a mechanism for the fair distribution of wealth and opportunity among individuals in the community.

(What is the rôle of solidarity in national and global community developement , brilliantio,retrieved 12/07/2022.edited)

2/The concept of values, their types and their meaning:

A/ Definition of values: Values are things of high value or worth. In the terminology of scholars, they are defined as a set of noble qualities that individuals develop and acquire through social interaction with those around them. These qualities shape one's personal values. The expression of values is not limited to words alone, but it is the person who embodies values that cannot be separated, as their actions are consistent with their words.

Many sociologists define values as "a level or criterion for selection among the available social alternatives presented to the individual in a social situation". The criterion is the measure by which a person evaluates things in terms of their effectiveness and role in achieving his or her interests. This measure is linked to their social consciousness and the social influences that affect them, as well as the society in which they live. Selection, on the other hand, is a cognitive process in which individuals compare and weigh different options in the light of the criterion they have set for themselves. These options consist of means and ends that are oriented towards the diverse and multiple interests of human beings.

(Fawziya Diab, "Values and Social Customs with a Study on Some Social Customs," Dar al-Nahda for Printing and Publishing, Beirut, 1980, p. 20)

Values are a set of principles, standards and criteria that govern a person's thoughts, beliefs and attitudes. They influence one's life and are manifested in one's practical behaviour and actions. Values are considered an accurate indicator of maturity and understanding of life. In Islam, values are aligned with ethics, judgements and guidelines derived from the Qur'an and Sunnah, and they form the fabric of an individual's Islamic personality. Values help to guide and direct social roles and determine the duties and responsibilities of each role, leading to coherence and harmony of roles within the social system.

Values are classified into several types based on the domain to which they belong, including:

*Behavioural component: This is determined by practice and experience, through the application of specific values in different situations and circumstances.

* Emotional dimension: This includes values related to the management and regulation of human emotions such as anger, contentment, love, hate and others.

* Social dimension: This includes values related to the social existence of individuals and their social behaviour systems with people and the surrounding society.

Values are considered relative, as they vary from one person to another, depending on time and place.

Values are also seen as a kind of determinants or goals, and achieving them is seen as a form of success.

(Source: Hamid Khrouf, "Values from a Social Perspective: A comparative theoretical study", *Journal of Humanities*, Issue 20, December, Algeria, 2003).

B/The types of values can be divided into several categories:

* Ethical values: These include values related to ethics and right behaviour, such as honesty, justice, integrity, humility, respect for others, helping others, piety and patience.

* Global values: These include values related to the world and the environment, such as respect for the environment, cultural diversity and peaceful coexistence between cultures.

* Humanistic values: These include values related to people and their rights, such as freedom, justice, equality and human dignity.

* Cultural values: These include values related to culture and heritage, such as celebrating heritage and traditions, and learning from other cultures.

* Social values: These include values related to society and social relations, such as justice, cooperation, solidarity and social responsibility.

* Religious values: These include values related to religion and religious beliefs, and these values may vary according to religion and sect.

* Family values: These include values related to family and family relationships, such as respect, solidarity, help and responsibility.

* Core values of modern industrial society: These include values related to modern society and industrial development, such as individual achievement, personal and material happiness.

* Educational values: These include values related to education and upbringing, such as respect, learning, commitment and cooperation.

* Core Work Values: These include values related to work and social change, such as respect, equality, cooperation, solidarity and social responsibility.

(Source: Majid Al-Ziyoud, "Youth and Values in a Changing World", Dar Al-Shorouk, Egypt, 2006, p. 25)

C/The importance of values: lies in their role as principles and standards that govern the behaviour of individuals and guide them in society. They represent the beliefs and principles that individuals consider important and worthy of respect and appreciation. Values play a crucial role in building communities and achieving inclusive development. Their importance can be seen in the following aspects:

The importance of values:

*Guiding behaviour: Values help to guide individual behaviour and make informed decisions. When we have strong and consistent values, it becomes easier for individuals to make decisions based on ethical and positive principles. For example, if we have the value of honesty, we will be committed to always telling the truth and not lying.

*Encourage cooperation and solidarity: Values help to promote cooperation and solidarity between individuals in society. When individuals share common values, they have a common vision and goal to work towards. This leads to greater cooperation and solidarity between individuals and strengthens social bonds.

* Building trust and respect: Values play a crucial role in building trust and respect in society. When we have strong values such as honesty, justice and tolerance, it becomes easier for individuals to trust and respect each other. This creates a positive and healthy environment in society where individuals feel safe and belong.

*Encouraging development and innovation: Values help to foster development and innovation in society. When we have values such as creativity and critical thinking, it becomes easier for individuals to explore and develop new ideas and innovative solutions to the challenges facing society. This contributes to the progress of the community and the achievement of inclusive development.

*Fostering leadership and responsibility: Values play a crucial role in promoting leadership and responsibility in society. When we have values such as courage and patience, it becomes easier for individuals to take responsibility and demonstrate effective leadership in various areas. This helps to build a proactive community capable of change and development.

In general, values play a crucial role in building strong and thriving communities. They guide individual behaviour, promote cooperation and solidarity, build trust and respect, encourage development and innovation, and strengthen leadership and responsibility. Communities should therefore focus on promoting positive values and embedding them in the fabric of society. (Reference: Majer El-Jalad, "Learning Values and Teaching Them", Dar Al-Maseera, Amman, 2nd edition, 2007, pp. 39, 44, 46)

3/Manifestations of social solidarity and the promotion of ethical values - Ramadan as an example:

During the holy month of Ramadan, manifestations of cooperation and solidarity increase as many people rush to help vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. Both individuals and organisations engage in this act of helping others. This is mainly due to the unique nature of the holy month, which creates an unprecedented willingness to come to the aid of others. Strengthening social relationships between people is perhaps one of the lessons of Ramadan. It serves as a real test of these relationships and an annual opportunity to support the work of solidarity that individuals naturally undertake, leading to increased compassion.

In Algerian society, as in many others, many young men and women rush to prepare Ramadan meals for fasting people in need and travellers passing through. These people come from all walks of life and respond to the call of the Maghrib prayer. A beautiful example of solidarity and social cohesion, the aim of these volunteers is to ensure the comfort of those fasting. A prominent form of charity work during the month of Ramadan in Algeria is that of the "restaurants of mercy"

In addition to charitable organisations, which are known for their active support from benefactors and their important role within the social fabric, they also have human resources and the ability to play a positive role for the benefit of various segments of the population. Some of these organisations choose to work on a voluntary basis by collecting donations and distributing them to needy families during the days of Ramadan. These donations are collected in the form of cash and distributed to disadvantaged families. In addition, the Algerian Red Crescent is involved in various activities such as providing aid, making donations and visiting patients in hospitals. It has also been observed that some village council members organise blood donation campaigns for patients after each Iftar, accompanied by visits to the homes of disabled people to provide them with Ramadan baskets and financial assistance.

It can therefore be said that manifestations of social solidarity and the promotion of ethical values are essential elements in Algerian society. These manifestations reflect the spirit of solidarity and cooperation among individuals and promote the values of justice, fairness and mutual respect. By strengthening these manifestations, social solidarity and ethical values can be further strengthened in Algerian society, contributing to the building of a more stable and prosperous community.

Conclusion:

On the basis of what has been said, it can be said that voluntary work plays an important role in consolidating the aspects of cooperation and collaboration between people, in facing the elements of nature and coexisting with them. This is rooted in the principle of the constant need of one human being for another, which has made volunteering a fundamental pillar in building the values of solidarity, mutual support and cohesion among individuals in different societies. In addition, volunteering has an important ethical function because of the spirit of initiative that emanates from the community itself.

In conclusion, social solidarity is a fundamental element in promoting ethical values in society. It works towards building strong social relationships and enhancing solidarity and cooperation among members of the community. It also helps to protect and support those in need and promotes justice and equality in the fair distribution of resources and opportunities in society. The role of social solidarity is not limited to an individual or a small group, but extends to the national and global levels. At the national level, social solidarity improves the social and economic conditions of individuals and families, thereby promoting stability and prosperity in the country. At the global level, social solidarity serves as a means of addressing global challenges such as poverty, hunger, discrimination and conflict, thereby contributing to building a more humane and positive world. By relying on social solidarity and activating ethical values, we can build a society characterised by cooperation and harmony. Therefore, the promotion and support of ethical values requires the participation of all members of society. If we can achieve this, we will be able to build a more humane society and spread happiness and well-being throughout the community.

Proposed recommendations:

- * The need to promote a stronger culture of volunteering, especially among the younger generations, by raising awareness of its importance in society.
- * Support charitable organisations in fulfilling their role by helping them to overcome obstacles and challenges they face with the support of community members.
- * Government support for this type of collective and voluntary activity, by providing dedicated premises for volunteers.
- * Encouraging the continuity of social solidarity and cooperation throughout the year, rather than limiting it to seasonal efforts.

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