



Reading the Assistance Process After the Earthquake Through the Phenomenon of Solidarity

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ABSTRACT

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Solidarity in society can be seen in various values. A common belief, a common ideology, and common interests can help solidarity in society become concrete. The concept of solidarity, stemming from daily necessities and varying interests, signifies unity in confronting a societal macro-issue, facilitating mutual support among individuals. Following the earthquake disaster that took place in our country on February 6, 2023, and affected 11 provinces, various examples of solidarity were shown in our country. This study provides a framework for the concept of solidarity. It was prepared with the aim of explaining the solidarity networks that took place after the earthquake in the context of formal and informal.

Keywords: Formal Solidarity, Informal Solidarity, Solidarity

1. INTRODUCTION

People establish a solidarity correlation based on various values and opinions. The foundation of solidarity is shaped by the responsibility indicated by an individual towards others. Solidarity is essential for the constant correlation of society. Solidarity aims at common interests and goals within a society, exhibiting continuity across all social relations networks and often gaining more prominence in exceptional circumstances. It can be seen that with individuals developing solidarity correlations within the framework of their interests and needs in their

daily lives, solidarity correlations are established and spread to a wide range of people in the face of macro-problems emerging within the societal construct. The definition of the phenomenon of solidarity in its most general and simple sense is individuals coming together around a common goal or to solve a problem, helping each other, and acting collectively. Solidarity networks or mechanisms are established in various ways depending on the situation at hand and the general characteristics of societal constructs experiencing this situation. In small societies, solidarity can be established through

close individual relationships, whereas in relatively crowded societies, solidarity is formed through occupational or interest groups. In the related literature, the concept of solidarity is being debated as formal or informal. Based on these debates, informal solidarity is the establishment among individuals sharing a common destiny, personal acquaintance, or blood relation that is similar in every aspect. On the contrary, formal solidarity is an institutionalized establishment including bureaucratic mechanisms, shaped with the contribution of legal rules, and exposed to the intervention of the government. The common ground of both formal and informal solidarity is developing solution mechanisms against a problem. After the earthquake disaster that shook our country deeply in February, intensive aid efforts were implemented. While citizens were making efforts to provide assistance with their own resources, state institutions simultaneously embarked on efforts to struggle with the problem. Civil society organizations have also been among the most important actors in the process. This study will provide a first-outline framework for the concept of solidarity, which is an essential concept among social relationship networks. Subsequently, the aid efforts that were intensively implemented from the moment of the earthquake disaster will be discussed in the context of formal-informal solidarity.

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2. The Concept of Solidarity

Solidarity, in its most basic sense, is defined as the formation of unity among individuals forming society in a common interest and value and sincerely worrying about each other's welfare (1). In addition, common values, beliefs, and ideologies are also cited as valid reasons for solidarity within society. The concept of solidarity is also defined as the unity of thought, feeling, and behavior among members of a community who collaborate with each other in any endeavor (2-3). Moreover, solidarity can be defined as political action seeking solutions to common problems and striving towards a common good, despite individual interests and values. The foundation of solidarity is shaped by an individual's demonstration of compassion, responsibility, and empathy towards others. In moral terms, solidarity is expressed as an individual entering the world of someone outside their own world. It is also defined

as an action carried out within the context of sharing common goals and interests (4).

The roots of solidarity date back to Roman law and the principle of "commitment." This principle entails communities fulfilling their responsibilities and distributing existing debts throughout society. In this sense, the concept of solidarity expresses a sense of unity and belongingness within society (5). The concept of solidarity was first encountered in Western societies, specifically in Roman law. The concept of solidarity was used in communities and guilds to express mutual responsibility under Roman law. With the emergence of Christian belief, the concept of solidarity began to be based on belief in God, the foundation of religious brotherhood, and enhancing societal bonds. With the advent of the Middle Ages, the concept of solidarity began to be used in a local sense. In this period, the concept of solidarity was initiated to include cities and monarchies through fraternity and family bonds. Upon reaching the Age of Enlightenment and the rise of rationalism, the meaning attributed to the concept of solidarity began to be used in a modern sense. In a modern sense, the concept of solidarity in the modern sense, the concept of solidarity bears the meaning of "fraternity," defining the concepts of "freedom" and "equality" as articulated by nation-states. Rationalism, a product of the modern world, has led to the transformation of the concept of fraternity from a religious notion into a fundamental element of society (6).

The concept of solidarity is the commitment of individuals to each other around their common ideas, feelings, and interests. The spread of solidarity in the entire society is expressed as "social solidarity." The philosopher Ibn Khaldun, who contributed to the concept, defines the concept of solidarity as "asabiyyah." Ibn Khaldun clarifies the concept of asabiyyah as a source of power binding societies to each other (7). Another social scientist systematically discussing solidarity is Durkheim. Durkheim defines solidarity based on similarity as mechanical solidarity and solidarity based on difference as organic

solidarity (8). Tönnies approached solidarity through the concepts of *Gemeinschaft* (community) and *Gesellschaft* (society). Tönnies likened solidarity in communities to organic solidarity and solidarity in societies to mechanical solidarity (9).

Beginning with the rapid changes and transformations that arose with the Industrial Revolution, philosophers contributing to sociology initiated an interest in the concept of solidarity and started to generate new concepts in response to the changing societal structure (6). The concept of solidarity in sociology is an old and underdeveloped concept. The foundation of the concept of solidarity in sociological literature dates back to Ibn Khaldun. However, until Emile Durkheim and Ferdinand Tönnies, the discussion of the concept of solidarity did not reach a sufficient level; although gaining sociological importance with Durkheim, the concept of solidarity has not shown much development despite being addressed later (10). Sociologically, solidarity varies according to the structure, character, and forms of society. It also attributes importance to understanding individual or group analyses and social relationships (11).

The concept of solidarity, which has various definitions, is used in two forms in the literature. While the first usage is in the general sense explained above in this paper, the second usage is in a varying form, alternating between formal and informal solidarity in contemporary societies. Societal values emerge as a result of the mutual influence of an individual and society (12). The values can be characterized as an instrument of solidarity. Common values accepted in society perpetuate social solidarity by creating it (13-14).

While the concept of solidarity is considered essential to the perpetuation of society, this concept has begun to lose its significance and vary through individualization. The concept of value, which holds a significant place for pressures and social control, is also an approach to preventing unsanctioned actions in society. Solidarity alters between modern societies and traditional societies. With modernization, the

solidarity networks of modern societies also began to differ. Moreover, significant differences emerged in the necessities of societies in the face of the Industrial Revolution and innovations created by technological advances. Migration from rural to urban areas caused by industrialization has significantly led to the exhibition of informal solidarity networks. In this context, the concept of solidarity initiated to form and vary in accordance with the necessities of modern society (15-16-17-18).

Solidarity in modern societies is provided by formal, informal, and semi-formal constructs (19). Formal constructs are organized. Governments and non-governmental organizations take part. Whereas in informal constructs beside relatives and family relations, countryfolk and acquaintances also take place, and official institutions are not mentioned as in formal constructs (20).

The concept of solidarity is typically used interchangeably with cooperation in the literature, but it is also expressed as "social solidarity/cooperation" and "indirect solidarity." While social solidarity is clarified as direct cooperation if it is established among acquainted individuals, if it is established through various agencies and institutions or for the tax benefit of the government, it is clarified as indirect cooperation.

Individuals belong to a group through the social communication networks they are part of. These groups, formed through social communication networks, also constitute solidarity networks. Societal correlations are specified with rights, responsibility, and law in formal solidarity networks (21). Informal solidarity networks do not include a form based on written rules. A typical form of informal solidarity includes unwritten rules and communication networks bound to values and traditions. Informal solidarity networks are significantly formed by family and relative bonds (22). Whereas in semi-formal constructs, the absence of written rules distinguishes informal networks while also lacking the organized and formal institutions

found in formal networks. Semi-formal constructs consist of communication (19).

3. Patterns of Solidarity in the Aftermath of the Earthquake

Turkey experienced its most devastating earthquake disaster in its history on February 6, 2023. The earthquake disaster, which impacted 11 cities and resulted in vast casualties and material losses, created challenges for earthquake victims both financially and emotionally. Besides its psychological impact, other humanitarian needs became a challenge. In our country, the process of meeting the needs of earthquake victims has been carried out through three approaches to solidarity. These are the formal solidarity, informal solidarity, and semi-formal solidarity approaches, as defined above (19).

Marshall considers solidarity as a source of strength and resistance and therefore indicates solidarity as encompassing the formation of unity towards a purpose, which is why it is valued (4). In this sense, earthquakes not only cause social, economic, and psychological outcomes but also bring about the process of solidarity and cooperation. Such solidarity relationships can also reach global dimensions (23). After disasters such as earthquakes, people provide support with the goal of solidarity and mutual assistance without making ideological, religious, or cultural distinctions (24).

After an earthquake, one of the most important issues that arises is solidarity among individuals. Solidarity, mostly carried out through cooperation and philanthropy, demonstrates the strength of social solidarity bonds and emphasizes a sense of unity among individuals, characterized by informality and civil behavior. At this point, the importance of voluntary civil society organizations is significant. This is because the solidarity initiatives of civil society organizations contribute greatly to identifying social needs. In situations like natural disasters, civil society organizations and citizens can be more effective than formal institutions. It is important for these civil initiatives to be pursued with common goals that strengthen the relationship between individuals and

the state. This understanding highlights that the solidarity networks formed after natural disasters are shaped by semi-formal and informal solidarity networks, while efforts are made to ensure that institutions and the state, which also include formal solidarity networks, remain effective in the process (25).

After the earthquake disaster, many civil society organizations, especially "AHBAP," emerged as key actors in the aid process. In some cases, it can be said that such civil formations are more effective and even more reliable than government institutions. The main reason for this is the delay of the state, which forms formal solidarity, in intervening in solidarity. In a natural disaster situation, formal solidarity networks cannot be expected to intervene with full control over the situation. At this point, informal solidarity networks and semi-formal solidarity networks, together with formal solidarity networks, should also advance the process in the face of a situation. However, when formal solidarity networks fall behind in these processes, trust in formal solidarity networks in society is lost. In this context, it can be clearly stated that the constructs that form the informal and semi-formal solidarity networks, which play a leading role in solidarity patterns during the earthquake process, can contribute to the healthier functioning of the process by including formal solidarity networks in the solidarity process.

Trust is an essential factor within solidarity networks, especially between formal solidarity networks and society. This is because formal solidarity networks include the state element. Similarly, trust is also a significant factor in families and relatives, which are part of informal solidarity networks. What is meant here is that maintaining the process well through informal and semi-formal solidarity networks can undermine trust between society and formal solidarity networks. Distrust towards formal solidarity networks directly leads to distrust towards the state. This situation shows that civil society organizations like AHBAP in the earthquake process should collaborate with formal institutions in the later stages

of the process to avoid undermining trust within solidarity patterns.

Result

Our country experienced a major disaster on February 6, 2023, which was recorded as the disaster of the century. As a result of the earthquake, many losses and hardships were experienced, both financially and emotionally. Throughout this process, there were great examples of solidarity from all corners of the country. Examples of solidarity were observed both at the group and individual levels, alongside the support of both state and civil society organizations. Forms of solidarity, including support from official institutions like the government, are defined as formal solidarity; forms of solidarity, including relational support such as family and relatives, are defined as informal solidarity; and forms of solidarity involving support from strangers through communication are defined as semi-formal solidarity. Undoubtedly, the most prominent form of solidarity during the earthquake process was informal and semi-formal solidarity. However, to maintain the relationship between society and the state, it was important for forms of solidarity to incorporate formal solidarity. Indeed, the progress of public institutions and organizations, along with many civil society organizations, in social solidarity and cooperation during the process clearly explains this situation. In this context, the emergence of concepts such as solidarity, cooperation, and a sense of Our country experienced a major disaster on February 6, 2023, which was recorded as the disaster of the century. As a result of the earthquake, many losses and hardships were experienced, both financially and emotionally. Throughout this process, there were great examples of solidarity from all corners of the country. Examples of solidarity were observed both at the group and individual levels, alongside the support of both state and civil society organizations. Forms of solidarity, including support from official institutions like the government, are defined as formal solidarity; forms of solidarity, including relational support such as family and relatives, are

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