

## **IBN KHALDUN**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

The great thinker Ibn-Khaldun born in Tunis, 1332 AD and died in Cairo, 1406 AD. His ideas have reflected their importance on the history of universal thought as much as within the Islamic realm. His thoughts are all self-created. He has been affected by savants before him but he is not a continuation of them. He created genuine and innovative ideas. It is due to this fact that although he lived during the 14th century his thoughts still manage to shed light among events of current times. His ideas have not lost their relevance as time has passed. Recognized as the founder of sociological sciences, Ibn-Khaldun been accepted and commented upon by historians, jurists, theologians, politicians, economists, teachers, educators and environmentalists alike. IbnKhaldun 'sgreat work of art, The Muqaddimah has been translated into the world's most common languages

Ibn-e- Khaldun was one of the most talented and versatile person and thinker the world ever saw. Besides being the top Muslim philosopher, he was also a practicing politician and expert historian. In a nut shell he was a person gifted with a great intelligence. His philosophical approach towards the understanding of history gave him a place among the pioneers of philosophy of history. (Ahmad, 1984).

### **Early Life:**

It was the mid of the fourteenth century when Muslims in Spain were facing persecution. Muslims were either expelled from the country, or were forced to relinquish the religion of their ancestors by sword. Owing to the persecution in the hands of the new rulers, Muslim families left Spain and headed towards Africa. Ibn-e- Khaldun belonged to one of those noble Andalusian families who had migrated from Seville to Tunis He was born on 1st Ramadan, 732 A.H. (27<sup>th</sup> May' 1332 A.C.) in Tunis, Africa (Enan, 1986).

Ibn-e- Khaldun was an intelligent man. He was brought up to be a man of great knowledge and wisdom; an expert at the subjects of history and politics. He is the very first scientist who has left a permanent mark on the sciences of historiography and sociology.

Ibn-Khaldun's parents were able to give him a good classical Muslim education. He began what seemed to be a promising political career at the Chancellery of the Tunisian ruler IbnTafrakin with the position of Kātīb al-'Alāmah, a scribe who wrote introductions to official documents. The Marinid invasion (748-50/1347-9) resulted in the arrival in Tunis, of a large number of theological and literary scholars, and he gained instruction in Muslim philosophy and the main problems of Muslim thought. However, the Marinid occupation ended in chaos and bloodshed. Additionally, the Black Plague which ravaged the world in the middle of the century, claimed many victims in the area, including Ibn-Khaldun's parents. These events are reflected in his writings.

### **Ibn-Khaldun's Work**

Ibn-Khaldun's chief contribution lies in developing a method of explaining the dynamics of historical changing and analysing society as expounded in the Muqaddimahhas. The Muqaddimah

was originally conceived, apparently, as a brief introduction, to be tacked on to a history of the Arabs and Berbers. The full title of the entire Kittabu al Ibar means ""Book of Evidence, Record of Beginnings and Events from the Days of the Arabs, Persians and Berbers and their Powerful Contemporaries."

The work grew into a universal history, and the Muqaddimah grew into an elaborate theory of history and society. In some respects, he revived the traditions and method of Polybius and Thucydides. In others, he anticipated 19th and twentieth century writers like Hegel, Marx, Spengler and Toynbee, who sought to find "covering laws" in history. He identified psychological, economic, environmental and social factors that influenced the course history. He devised a kind of dialectic in which group (national or tribal) feelings, al-'Asabiyya, motivate the ascent of a new civilization and political power and subsequently, its diffusion into a wider civilization invites the advent of yet another al 'Asabiyya. He identified rhythmic repetitions in the rise and fall of dynasties and tried to explain them.

### **View of Education:**

Ibn-e-Khaldun conveys that the education consists of the moral as well as the intellectual training and teaching of humans which brings out the potential within a man that helps develop the character and builds up the personality. According to Khaldun, the knowledge can be divided into two parts of streams, one of the subjects pertaining to philosophy depending upon one's mental potentialities and thinking faculties, the other dealing with the religious subject. In the view of Ibn-e-Khaldun both types of knowledge are crucial for mankind as both play a role in the development and progress of any nation.

Education should develop social and economic efficiency in man to be usefully absorbed in the society. Education should be a means to bring happiness in life of people. Important aim of education is to develop the power of thinking and reasoning. To him travelling is also a mean to gain knowledge and in receiving education.

### **Contribution in Education:**

Ibn-e-Khaldun was a famous historian, a great philosopher, and also an incredible educationist. His views on education and the deep psychological insight in the educational process and development of human mind and body tagged him as a great educator too. His contribution in education is considered to be worthwhile and valuable across the world in the field of education because he emphasized on the social efficiency as an aim of education and also promoted professional and vocational subjects along with academic subjects in education. The modern education literally advocates the methods provided by Khaldun in teaching.

### **Limitations of the study**

the scope of this study is limited to the study of the concept of education in Ibn-Khaldun's thought through examining the educational principles, the pre-conditions for learning and the quality of education as perceived by Ibn-Khaldun himself.

## **Imparting Information to Students at their Level of Comprehension**

Information should be given to students gradually in stages, lower to higher, which they may understand. If teaching methods are gradually applied to students, the education will prove more effective for them. Initially, the main principles of information and sciences should be taught, and taking into consideration the learning capacity of the students these matters should be explained briefly. The subjects to be taught should be provided with this method until completion. Such a method will result in the students showing more aptitude to the given information. However, the students' aptitude will remain weak and insufficient. The students during this period will have learnt to absorb the given information. Pursuant to this, the teacher should revise the subjects with a little more elaboration and continue to provide the information in a wider aspect until completion. Then the students' knowledge and adjustments shall be enhanced accordingly. The teacher shall then revise the subject three times over from the beginning. During this period, the teacher shall be able to explain more difficult and deeper aspects of the subject. This will result in the students reaching their utmost aptitude. The subject needs revision three times over and then students become well familiar with the subject.

## **Students should not be Forced to Memorize**

Teachers usually explain the difficult and deeper aspects of subjects which students are learning for the first time, therefore, forcing the students to memorize the subject. They accept this as the correct form of teaching. However, the students' brains are not capable of understanding this. It's difficult enough for them to learn a lesson. This results in the students becoming lazy, their mind rejects the information and the period of learning is prolonged

## **Subjects should not be taught in a Broken Sequence**

To teach subjects in a broken sequence is to prolong the term of study for knowledge or the sciences. For breaking up lessons or pausing results in a further period to learn that subject. The connection of issues within a subject will lose its significance. If issues within the subjects of information are applied in an organized manner until completion, these subjects will become more profound and their impression more permanent and students will therefore gain more. The information shall be connected with relative subjects and concretely formed within the brain and the mind.

## **Two Subjects should not be Taught Together**

Two subjects should not be taught at one and the same time or be mixed with another subject. One should not pass on to another subject while the first remains incomplete. For this separates the heart from the mind. Concentration on learning both subjects at the same time unfortunately leads to an incomplete knowledge of both the subjects; the student absorbs neither information correctly.

## **Appropriate Length of Subjects Taught**

According to Ibn-Khaldun, an over-summarized text on certain information as well as an over-extended text will create difficulty in learning the actual information. Furthermore, he separates the sciences into two categories of science-means and science-purposes. He explains the drawbacks of over-emphasizing on science-means. He believes that the wise men of recent times and their emphasis on science-means have led to negative results in the learning of these subjects.

## **It is Harmful to be very Strict on the Student**

During education and teaching, it is harmful to be very strict on the student especially if the student is of young age. This sort of aggressiveness negatively influences the child. It may affect the psychology of the child and create unhappiness as well as corrupt his desire to work and study. This will drive the child to misbehavior and to lie out of fear.

## **Travelling and Conferencing with Scholars is Useful for Education**

People sometimes learn knowledge, ethics, occupation, views and virtues from teachers and also from persons who are masters of their fields or simply others whom they accept as role models. Practical experience usually influences more concrete ideas on certain subjects. The more knowledgeable the teacher from whom information is gained, the more solid the knowledge is acquired by the student. Terminology of subjects usually complicates the learning process. Due to this, some assume that these terminologies are just part of the subject. This incorrect attitude may only be rectified by various means and teaching performed accordingly.

## **Education should be Practical**

Ibn-Khaldun also emphasizes the teaching of arts and crafts. He states the importance of practical application such as to observe, to feel and to apply the knowledge gained as much as possible. He places emphasis on the fact that these sorts of subjects cannot specially be taught only in theory

## **Learning Science requires Skill**

Ibn-Khaldun believes that learning science requires skill. Tradition is important in teaching. Tradition must be upheld for the progress of science. Otherwise, science and education will recede. Tradition of science and education only prevails in places which have progressed in prosperity.

### **Discipline:**

Sociology is such a broad discipline. It can be difficult to define, even for professional sociologists. One useful way to describe the discipline is as a cluster of subfields that examine different dimensions of society. For example, social stratification studies inequality and class structure demography studies changes in a population size or type; criminology examines criminal behaviour and deviance; political sociology studies government and laws; and the sociology of race and sociology of gender examine society's racial and gender cleavage.

Sociology By definition, Sociology is the study of society and human social action. It generally concerns itself with the social rules and processes that bind and separate people not only as individuals, but also as members of associations, groups, institutions and includes the examination of the organization and development of human social life. The sociological field of interest ranges from the analysis of short contacts between anonymous individuals on the street to the study of global social processes.

### **Methods of Teaching:**

Ibn-e-Khaldun discouraged the method of teaching which did not provide any opportunity to the students to interpret lessons and solve problems on their own. Also consequently reducing their inventiveness, originality and power to create, invent and develop. He said that the traditional method of teaching was just emphasizing on the memorization of notes and interpretations which were made by others. This led to less opportunity to struggle and did not develop the habit of putting effort to think and interpret which was highly required for the learning and teaching of Islam. In his opinion the students had become just the passive listeners and that the methods of teaching did not motivate their learning and discouraged their participation in discussions In his opinion the process of teaching should comprise of the following three stages:

- **Stage 1 (Introduction)**

A brief introduction of the topic should be given to the students followed by explanations and concrete examples to support the teaching topic.

- **Stage 2 (Development)**

The topic should now be explained in great detail for the better understanding of the students. The points briefly discussed in the first stage should now be discussed thoroughly and critically.

- **Stage 3 (Recap)**

In the end of the lesson the topic must be revised again in order to know if the students have really understood the topic and has their learning enhanced.

## **Curriculum:**

Ibn-e-Khaldun criticized the books of that time which were referred to as the text-books and reference-books. The students had to study these books and their explanations and commentaries in order to attain the graduation diploma. In the view of Khaldun, too much explanation is very harmful and difficult for the students as every scholar has their own view and perception of presenting. Ibn-e-Khaldun says that there is nothing new expect for the repetition of contents with some variations of words and phrases, then why should students be compelled to memorize and learn books.

Regarding the content of education Ibn-e-Khaldun says that religion instruction should be the corner stone of the curriculum as it helps in formation of the good character and habits. According to him logic is very important for students as it enables one to think and also analyze critically. Khaldun emphasizes on the learning of language as it helps to study different subjects and also mathematics as it sharpens the mental power and increases the power of reasoning. He felt a need of professional and vocational subjects along with academic subjects.

## **Contribution in the field of History:**

Ibn-e-Khaldun has achieved an eternal place among the great historical philosophers and is considered to be the best of all as he was the first one to treat history as a science and not merely as a narrative. Before him the history was just a record of events in a disorganized manner. Khaldun gave a new approach to history by providing new methods of explaining and reasoning also developing it as a social philosophy.

## **Conclusion**

Ibn-Khaldun has emphasized the importance of science, education and teaching. He foresees science and education as an inseparable part of prosperity. According to him, the real difference between mankind and other beings is the power of thought. Science and art are born from open-minded thought and the intricate learning of the principles of all issues. Ideas emerge from those who have the curiosity and desire to investigate what is unknown. From this situation, the issues of education and teaching arise. He advises teachers to teach in a comprehensive manner and to gradually teach subjects in stages, moving from easier to the more difficult. Memorization should be avoided. He emphasizes that teaching methods should be simple and not complicated. He states that the teaching of subjects should not be in broken sequences or else the subject will become scattered and forgotten. Also, aggressive behavior towards children will turn them off from lessons, create laziness, making them unwilling learners as well as negatively affecting their behavior.

## References

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