Introduction

In this assignment I will explain how Ethnic identity is socially constructed and politically end. Structure of customary justice system of gamo society and nature, characteristics and significance of indigenous knowledge. Indigenous knowledge is a total of knowledge and practices, whether explicit or implicit, used in the management of socioeconomic, ecological and spiritual facets of life, stored in the collective memory and communicated orally among members of the community and to the future generations.

Questions

1. Discuss how ethnic identity is socially constructed and used for political ends.
2. Conflicts and disputes exist in every society. People across various Ethiopian societies have indigenous institutions and mechanism of conflict resolution and peace making. Explain the structure of customary justice system of Gamo society.
3. Discuss the nature, characteristics and significance of indigenous knowledge.

Answer

1. To say that an identity is socially constructed is to deny that it has the objective reality ascribed to it. Rather, that identity is the result of beliefs and practices in society or specialized segments of society and it may or may not have a factual foundation apart from those beliefs and practices. In emphasizing the politics of culture we are giving less attention to the analysis of electoral politics, although studies of this kind have contributed a great deal to the understanding of contemporary ethnicities. In democratic political systems the ethnic arithmetic of electoral politics can be crucial to the achievement of ethnic political ends and to the responsiveness of the political system.

   Race is an inclusive concept like ethnicity -used in a variety of context and meanings sometimes interchangeably with ethnicity, where the relationship between the two concept remain complex. When the first appeared ethnicity/ethnic identity was used in synonym with race or racial identity, which complicated their relation. The boundary between the two concept is historically variable; what was racial before 1945 maybe more publicly acceptable ethnic today. This sub-section will provide a discussion about race/racial identity as a social construction of group categorization and identification, and come up with the significant distinctions among the races and the major difference between race/racial identity and ethnicity/ethnic identity. But few words should be said initially about race in order to stress that it has dubious descriptive value.

2. There are three structure of Gamo customary justice system. These are:- Dere Woga, Dere Cima and Dubusha.
    - The Dere Woga: it is a comprehensive body of rules and procedures that govern a wide range of issues including inheritance, property ownership, marriage and divorce, conflict resolution and gender division of labour.
    - The Dere Cima: Dere Cima means elder of the land/country. It includes notable and respected elders experienced in resolving disputes. Elders serving in dispute resolution are expected to have a sound knowledge of the customary laws, norms and values of the community.
    - Dubusha: it is customary courts. Dere Dubusha, the biggest customary court in a given Gamo community, has two major functions :1. hearing, discussing and resolving disputes, 2. Revising and making laws. In most Gamo communities, structure of the customary courts has three levels: Guta Dubusha, at the village level; sub-Dere Dubusha, at the kebele level; and Dere Dubusha at the higher level. Cases would be heard at the Guta Dubusha level, if not settled, referred to the second and third level of the structure. According to the indigenous belief, Dere Dubusha is a scared place where supernatural power exists. It is a place where curses are uttered in its name; justice is delivered; and important assemblies are held. Dubushas are places where truth prevails. Misconducts such as telling a lie during Dubusha assemblies are considered as transgression of taboos, which in turn would bring misfortunes to individuals and communities. Customary courts are easily accessible as each gamo community has several customary courts.
3. Nature
    - indigenous knowledge is the local knowledge that is unique to a given culture or society. It is the knowledge that people in a given community have developed over time, and that continues to develop.

    Characteristics
    - Local:- in that it is rooted in a particular community and situated within broader cultural traditions; it is set of experiences generated by people living in those communities. Separating the technical from the non-technical, the rational from the

non0rational could be problematic. Therefore, when transferred to other places, there is a potential risk of dislocating indigenous knowledge.

- Tacit knowledge and therefore not easily codifiable.
- Transmitted orally or through limitation and demonstration. Codifying it may lead to the loss of some of its prosperities.
- Experiential rather than theoretical knowledge:-Experience and trial and error, tested in the rigorous laboratory of survival of local communities constantly reinforce IK.
- Learned through repetition:- which is a defining characteristics of tradition even when new knowledge is added. Repetition aids in the retention and reinforcement of IK.
- Constantly changing:- being produced as well as reproduced, discovered as well as lost; through it is often perceived by external observers as being somewhat static.

Significances

- Until recently, the development of a community's conception of knowledge was influenced primarily by the philosophy and method of western science.
- Indigenous knowledge is important in that people in a community value whatever resource they get from the environment through sustainable production systems. These communities are conscious of the need to self- reliant in capital stocks and management skills.
- The knowledge of local people is an enabling component of development. In this regard a large percentage of the earth's genetic diversity has been maintained and managed through farmer's IKS.
- Indigenous knowledge system enables peoples to develop strategies for handling household and communal activities. Example:- Ethiopia debo and jige are an important uniting forces in communal activities. Members of the community unite to provide essential inputs, including direct labor to operations. "this deployment of manpower is strongly supported by IKS, which is composed of technologies, rules, information, approaches, and relationships that are vital to sustainable development."
- Over the years, IKS authorities (elders) make local rules to protect important resources such as useful plants, water bodies, stone terracing, agro-forestry, watersheds and rivers, food preservations, conflict management, calendar, fallowing

as a soil regeneration practice, etc. According to paula puffer paula (1995), indigenous/ local knowledge can help find the best solution to a development challenges example familiarity is local knowledge can help extensionist and researchers understand and communicate better with local people.

- In general, IK is an important part of the lives of the poor. IK is a key element of the "social capital" of the poor; their main asset to invest in the struggle for survival, to produce food, to provide for shelter or to achieve control of their own lives. Furthermore one cannot overlook IK's ability to provide effective alternatives to western know-how. IK offers local people and their development workers further option in designing new project or addressing specific problems and wider disasters. Instead of relaying on imported western technologies, people in the developing nations can choose from readily available indigenous knowledge or where appropriate combine indigenous and western technology.
- However, it is important to note that not all indigenous practices are beneficial to the sustainable development of a local community; and not all IK can a priori provide the right solution for a given problem. Typical examples are slash and burn agriculture and female circumcision. Hence, before adopting IK, integrating it into development programs, or even disseminating it, practice need to be scrutinized for their appropriateness just as any other technology.

Summary

- The three structure of Gamo customary justice system are Dere Woga (a comprehensive body of rules and procedure that govern a wide range of issue including inheritance, property ownership, marriage and divorce, conflict resolution and gender division of labor). Dere Cima (elders of the land/country. Include notable and respected elders experienced in resolving disputes). Dubusha (is customary courts. The biggest customary court in a given Gamo community).
- Indigenous knowledge is the local knowledge that is unique to a given culture or society. It is the basis for local-level decision making agriculture, health care, food preparation education, natural resource management and a host of other activities in rural communities.

- Local, tacit knowledge, transmitted orally, experiential rather than theoretical knowledge, learned through repetition and constantly changed, these are special features of indigenous knowledge.
- Indigenous knowledge is important in that people in a community value whatever resource they get from the environment through sustainable production systems. Indigenous knowledge system enable people to develop strategies for handling household and communal activities.