

An Interpretative Analysis of Civil Society

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Abstract: The changing social structure and globalization make social institutions imbalance. The buzz word of Civil Society is needed to create balance as well as stable all those. Governmental Policy and our future goals are going to be decided by civil society and its associations. Not only the good governance but the accountability of social institutions are also being questioned by civil society.

Keywords: Civil Society, Religion, Family, Governance.

1. INTRODUCTION

The idea of civil society developed in the western countries in the 18th & 19th Century. The ancient political thinkers analyzed the civil society in terms of the “Individual & Family” and for some it had to be discussed vary widely in relation to the “State” also. Hegel took a somewhat idealized view of the state and his conception of civil society was formal and abstract rather than concrete or empirical. Civil society is temporary phenomenon. It should be transcended when particular and common interest combined. In nutshell, Hegel scheme of civil society express the moment of universal egoism following upon the particular altruism of the family and to be succeeded by that universal altruism of the state.

For some other thinkers, they analyzed civil society in the realm of counter poised to the state. For Gramsci, it was the bastion of class hegemony. He locates hegemony within the role of the private or non-state level of the superstructure. Social hegemony is different from using of force to maintain social order as defined by him.

Defining a civil society is involved with plenty of several competing definitions. Most of the time, state and civil society are defined in alternative manner. But we should put certain things into notice that creating a new society is totally different from creating a new state. Because society is deeply rotted by habits, customs and some old arrangements. But on the other hand, state is created by new structures and subvert the rules prescribed by the authority.

Civil society can be defined with certain attributes. These attributes can be referred to public life rather than private life. It is juxtaposed to the family and the state . Moreover , it exists within the framework of the rule and laws.

In “An essay on the history of civil society “ Adam Ferguson compared between “ Civil Society “ & “ Natural Society” . For him civil society is the place to pursuit of practice of civility rather than pursuit of practice of private interest. The secular tendency or secular outlook in natural societies forced to move it into civil societies.

There is a different analysis of creation of civil society as far as state and political perspective is concerned. When the state failed in terms of the delivery front as expected from people and also not contributing to the development and democracy, people searched for an alternative. That alternative is the motive force, which named as civil society. For many civil society is a rescuer from the state.

The idea of civil society is not static. It is seen as dynamic. As earlier mentioned, it is some extent regarded as motive force . So it involves in social movements also. Social movements are one of the basic elements of a living democracy and may be catalysts of democracy & change in authortian societies. In civil society most authorities seem to have in mind the realm of public participation in voluntary association like mass media &trade unions.

2. INTERPRETIVE ANALYSIS OF CIVIL SOCIETY & SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Civil society can be defined and analyzed as the dynamic side of citizenship. As far as the tradition theory is concerned, citizenship is the combination of achieves rights and obligations. These are practiced, scrutinized, revamped and redefined at the level of civil society. But always there is a changing relationship between individuals, communities and state. The major concern is due to globalization , the sate citizenship will be replaced with truly universal conception of human rights in a world which the nation state is increasingly subject to influence from supernatural institutions. Civil society is featured by the continuous differentiation of institutions and associations. Differentiation does not mean disconnection. Civil society makes an easier way for individuals as citizens to circulate between institutions and associations with more freedom than societies based on caste, community or kinship.

Citizenship and civil society are interrelated To take this discussion further on institutional level, particularly in family front, we should aware of the fact that; family is the cradle of citizenship. Which teaches “ Standards of personal conduct that cannot be enforced by law but which are indispensable traits for democratic civil society “ (Porothea S. Clarke).

The changing nature and types of family is the major concern of civil society and for its advocates. The increasing number of divorce, single parenthood and breaking traditional structure of family and rejection of institution of marriage are considered as causes & worries.

Sociologist regard those as “Break Down” . It is viewed as so serious that it justifies the exceptional treatment of the family. That treatment must be done outside the general paradigm for civil society. We named it as Social Healing for Family.

The role of civil society in governance is a buzz word for discussion always. Most of the states , the role of Civil society is limited and government continuing to dominate the decision making and implementation. But we approach the role of civil society in good governance can be seen in following ways such as ; participant in strategic planning as a service provider and as monitoring agency of government or as a social and moral watch dog of Government.

Civil society sectors falls in a conceptually complex social terrain that lies mostly outside the market and state. For much of the recent history , social and political discourse have been dominated by the two sector models; that acknowledges the existence of only two actors – the market & the state. This is reinforced by the statistical conventions that have kept the Third Sector of Civil society largely invisible in official economic statistics. Civil society is therefore seen as an increasingly important gent for promoting good governance like transparency , effectiveness, openness ,responsiveness and accountability.

Civil society contributes good governance in many complementary domains. First contribution can be analyzed on the basis of individual development. It develops an efficacy , means feeling that one should have on impact on collective action. Civil society can mould citizens for confidence ,political agency and assertiveness. Civil society and its association empower and educate citizens by providing information. Also citizens develop political skills , civil virtues and critical skills .The other contribution of civil society can be discussed in two ways such as contribution in public sphere and contribution in institutional sphere , The public sphere is, in this sense, necessary to the democratic notion that a politically autonomous society can impose its needs, preferences, and will upon a state, while limiting the reach of markets into arenas it does not belong. The contribution of civil society is that publics emerge from its associative relations. Civil society associations may have symbolic functions in the public sphere that do not contribute directly to deliberation, but serve to alter the parameters of the public conversation. Importantly, when associations “go public” they can leverage their influence in ways that can compensate for lack of other kinds of power. Silence serves the wealthy and powerful well, and public argument is a primary means through which poorer and weaker members of society can have influence. This is why a group will often consider it a considerable achievement merely to have placed an issue before the public eye: the influence of the wealthy and powerful is compromised to the extent that their positions, possessions, and actions become subject to public tests of legitimacy. So it is important to identify as a distinct contribution to good governance those activities of associations that alter the parameters of the public sphere representations of commonality can in themselves serve as contributions to good governance. They are, as it were, symbolic preconditions of public spheres. Many associations specialize in symbolic commonality, emphasizing inclusive membership in the polity, and often our common humanity and shared human risks.

International Journal of Novel Research in Humanity and Social Sciences

Vol. 3, Issue 2, pp: (1-3), Month: March – April 2016, Available at: www.noveltyjournals.com

What is important for Civil society? secularization Or religion ? For modern societies the secularization of larger society is vital. It can promote and assure a secular state. But in many countries and its civil society association religion, religious tolerance and secularism are closely associated.

Civil society always creates commitment, personal responsibility and mutual trust: but what is the foundation of these virtues, what persuades men to behave in a responsible and committed way? Religion is the answer because religion creates a sense of unity , sense of fear , sense of motivation to do good to others.

It would be naïve to believe that civil society, simply by virtue of its being a free and open society, is always conducive to the common good. The projects and initiatives that are generated by civil society can pursue the interest of the few instead of justice, create divisions instead of solidarity, intolerance instead of mutual understanding. state that is attentive to the common good cannot but recognize religion’s full liberty to take part, within civil society, in the formation of the public ethos that is indispensable to the life of the state itself.

In conclusion, we need to understand that social change, globalizazion have affected our life in many ways and same to our social institutions also. So, in order to keep these intact and functioning ,civil society must be empowered by knowledge and public support. They feed off each other. The greater the research, so the more convinced the public becomes of the need for action. The greater the public support, so the greater is the influence of Civil Society.

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