

Comparing other Countries' Civil Society in Terms of Development

Samaneh Shadmand

M.S. in Demographic, Faculty of Humanities, Dehaghan University

Maryam Azar

PhD Student of Social Sciences, Faculty of Humanities, Dehaghan University

TEL: 09133013317

Ali Akbar Shafighi

PhD Student of Social Sciences, Faculty of Humanities, Dehaghan University

Leyla Ghasemi Pirbalouti

M.S. in Social Science Research, Faculty of Humanities, Dehaghan University

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Introduction

Nowadays usually the term civil society is being used by critics and activists as a source of strength and social life area that needs to be protected against globalization. It is because it has been seen that civil society has acted beyond the boundaries and between different domains. However, according to so many definitions, civil society includes the institutions and firms that can be a supporter of globalization, such a use for this statement is controversial. On the other hand some see globalization as a social phenomenon that provides classical liberal values. These values inevitably lead to highlighting the role of civil society and its costs have been derived government agencies. Due to economic, political, scientific changes and expanding communication, globalization has occurred in modern times and countries therefore need to coordinate with them. Based on this interpretation it should be admitted that a particular culture will apply its domination on ethics, the arts, economics, politics, and human individual and collective behavior, and at last the world would have the same culture. But those who doesn't have an aggressive interpretation of globalization, , believe that globalization doesn't mean domination of a particular culture to the world but because human beings are all members of the international community, they must think about the issues that the international community grapples with them, and cooperate to remove bottlenecks that humanity is faced with. While they accept cultural pluralism as a fact, prescribe dialogue among civilizations, cultural understanding, and the pursuit of shared values, mutual respect, the international partnership and tolerance. In this context, some have argued that the formation of global culture does not lead to the decline of the demise of national and regional cultures. Because indigenous cultures have a strong value system and global culture cannot melt in these

cultures. If one culture is going to decline it is due to internal weaknesses of that culture and is not related to the emergence of a global culture.

Civil Society

Civil society refers to the sum of voluntary civic and social organizations and institutions that seek to shed the basis of a dynamic society and in terms of voluntariness character, it is in contrast with the structure imposed by state (outside of government) and commercial institutions and the market. There are numerous definitions of "civil society". Definition of the London School of Economics that is a centre for research on civil society, explains: "civil society is a context of shared non-coercive practices, focusing on interests, goals and shared values. Its institutional forms are different from the state, family and market. However, in practice, the boundaries between state, civil society, family and market are complex, uncertain and controversial. Civil society commonly embraces a diversity of spaces, actors and institutional forms in it that have a variety of grades of formality, autonomy and power. Civil societies are often consisted of organizations such as registered charities, development NGOs, community groups, women's organizations, faith-based organizations, professional associations, trade unions, self-help groups, social movements, alliances and associations.

Developments in the twentieth century through the 1970s entered a new phase and in the middle of 1980s left its traces in almost all areas of its work. In the 1980s to refer to these changes some concepts such as industrial society and the postmodern society were used, but in the 1990s, the concept of globalization became popular and it became the dominant concept in the contemporary era. In such a way that nowadays, everything is discussed and analyzed with reference to this concept. On the face of it, the globalization means moving all societies toward a unified world in which everything is proposed and can be seen on a global level. But in fact, the globalization means absolute freedom of business, removing all obstacles to the easy flow of money and its influence in all areas and the flow of information, financial affairs, services and finally the interaction of cultures toward homogeneity that all of these things happen on a global scale. (Iranzade, 2000:16)

Globalization makes borders and identities more blurred, it considers people, goods, information, habits, norms and institutions and allows displacement of borders. Since impermeable boundaries cannot be created against dissemination of ideas and goods, thus globalization will dominate in the long term; globalization detailed investigation will be more expressive precisely because over the past decades, development of features, benefits and market has provided potential capacity for their epidemic spread. (Ghasemi, 2000:53)

If you have a quick look in too distant past in Iran, we see people who often live in rural areas and few of them live in the city. People in rural areas produced and consumed their agricultural commodities and people of the cities supplied their nutritional needs from agricultural areas around the city that was due to lack of communication. Even when transportation got better in Iran social contacts didn't blossom because of state officials' and bandits' persecution. So we can say that Iran has been in isolation in a given period of time and during the next years Iran situation is somewhat improved after coming different dynasties, especially during the Qajar dynasty that ruled Iran a lot of time and it can be said that almost in this period of time Iran saw the West and its wonders. Iran touched the west and west impacted the economy and the marketplace, intellectuals' ideas and Iran's military. Especially after Russia defeated Iran and

forced two infamous treaties of Golestan (1192) and Turkmen Tea (1207) in Fath Ali Shah Qajar period and the signing of a letter treaty of Paris (1236), some people like Abbas Mirza, Mirza Mohammad Taqi Khan Farahani, also known as Amir Kabir, decided to do some reforms in Iran. Reforms such as a mobile artillery-equipped army and dispatching Iranian students to Europe, establishing the polytechnic school (named Darolfonoon)... these unfortunately failed due to political intrigue.

Comparison of civil society of different countries in terms of development

Development by definition or by recognition has actually been one of the most controversial economic issues. Eliminating poverty and inequality endemic to many societies in the '50s and '60s was more noticeable every day and in this period development economists emerged to provide different patterns and feedback to get rid of these problems. The first group of economists defined development with their emphasis on economic growth. Economic welfare approach to development led to the consumption of goods and services is considered as the foundation of economic prosperity therefore, to measure the welfare and development (or consumption of goods and services); national income was considered as a general criteria. In this approach the problem of poverty and income distribution were ignored because of this assumption that everyone will benefit from the increase in GDP and the national income benefits would be for all people. Disagrees with this perception of development since the mid-1970s peaked in many countries, but living conditions of the masses of people and a lot of them did not change. Thus, some new functions of the development, such as "growth with equity" and "redistribution of growth" were regarded by development economists and human and social concepts found their places in the development definitions. Human Development Report 1996, which will discuss the relationship between economic growth and human development, said: "Despite rapid economic growth in fifteen countries over the past three decades, the number 1.6 billion people in the world has gotten poorer and their situation has got worse than fifteen years ago." In fact, the report stresses that if the preventive policies aren't adopted for proper growth, so suitable growth cannot be achieved." The central message of Human Development Report 1996 states that there is no automatic link between economic growth and human development. But when these links were established through deliberate decision and policy making, the two are mutually influence on each other and the economic growth will help to improve human development effectively and rapidly. "(Sepehri, 2000:156)

Development Indicators

A) Life expectancy

The World Health Organization defines health as " a person's good physical, mental and social condition."(Abbaspoor, 1995:252)

State of complete health is physical, psychological and social health and not merely the absence of disease or disability. It can be inferred from this definition that human and his/her health id provided or threatened by the aspects of the trilogy: "body, mind and social relations". The goal of each society is to create the conditions that will ensure the health of society, and mental health is a part of overall health. Mental health is the health of certain aspects of human like his intelligence, mind, mood and thought (scientific health journal, 1995). What endangers health is not just one factor but many factors align with each other that will lead unhealthy behavior. So checking the facts and needs of the community, risk factors and other social factors is necessary to provide the training and evaluation method (Koombes, 1995:48). Since in the

calculation of this index only measure that is considered is life expectancy, so it is equal to the value of life expectancy.

Table 1: Comparison of life expectancy in selected countries

| Countries | Life expectancy index |
|------------------|------------------------------|
| Norway | 91 |
| Japan | 95 |
| Germany | 90 |
| Argentina | 82 |
| Malaysia | 80 |
| Saudi | 78 |
| Turkey | 73 |
| Iran | 76 |
| South Africa | 39 |
| India | 64 |
| Pakistan | 63 |

As shown in Table (1) it is evident that the highest life expectancy in selected countries is related to Japan and the lowest is related to South Africa.

B) Education

Education extensively conducts the society towards goals such as development, skills, behavior modification and increasing competency of guides. Education has always been a sure means to improve the performance and management problems and lack of it constitutes one of the fundamental and acute issues of each organization. Therefore, to mobilize human resources of organization and more efficient development and utilization of this force, undoubtedly education is one of the most important factors to improve the organization affairs. It is worth mentioning that education is a fundamental task in organizations and it is a continuous and constant process. Employees at every level of the organization, whether simple or complex jobs, manager or subordinate, need learning and acquiring new knowledge and skills and they should always gain new information and methods of any type to do their best. Moreover, when employees change their jobs, it is necessary for them to find new information and skills to successful continuation of the duties of the job (Shariatmadari, 2005:122). In terms of education, the rate of adult literacy and the gross enrollment rate of enrollment in combined form include enrollment rate in primary education, secondary and higher education. Literate adults include people over 15 years who can read and write their short simple statements.

Gross enrollment ratio in primary education, secondary education and higher levels equals the average enrollment ratios of pupils in each level of school as a percentage of the population in each age group. Since the UN believes that literacy is the first step in learning and planning for knowledge, therefore in calculating the education Index, rate of adult literacy is given more weight, it means in calculating education index, adult literacy rate and the combined gross enrollment rate is considered with a two-thirds coefficient.

Table 2: Status of Education in Iran and selected countries

| The proportion of women admitted to the University | The literacy rate for women compared with men | The literacy rate for women 15 years and older | Different levels of training in education costs | | | The public cost of education | | Rating human development | countries |
|--|---|--|---|-------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|-----------|
| | | | university | High school | Kindergarten and Primary School | part of the costs paid by government | A part of GDP | | |
| 0.99 | - | - | 5.27 | 0.33 | 5.36 | 2.16 | 6.7 | 1 | Norway |
| 0.47 | - | - | 9.14 | 8.39 | 2.38 | 5.10 | 6.3 | 11 | Japan |
| 0.51 | - | - | 5.24 | 0.49 | 8.22 | 5.9 | 6.4 | 20 | Germany |
| 0.72 | 0.1 | 2.97 | 5.17 | 2.39 | 3.43 | 8.13 | 0.4 | 34 | Argentina |
| 0.33 | 0.93 | 4.85 | 3.33 | 5.33 | 0.32 | 3.20 | 1.8 | 61 | Malaysia |
| 0.30 | 0.80 | 3.69 | - | - | - | - | - | 77 | Saudi |
| 0.24 | 0.85 | 1.81 | 2.32 | 1.30 | 7.37 | - | 7.3 | 94 | Turkey |
| 0.22 | 0.84 | 4.70 | 1.17 | 0.36 | 1.25 | 7.17 | 9.4 | 99 | Iran |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-----|-----|--------------|
| 0.16 | 0.96 | 9.80 | 6.14 | 3.31 | 8.47 | 5.18 | 3.5 | 120 | South Africa |
| 0.10 | 0.65 | 8.47 | 3.20 | 1.40 | 4.38 | 7.12 | 1.4 | 127 | India |
| 0.2 | 0.57 | 2.35 | - | - | - | 8.7 | 8.1 | 135 | Pakistan |

In 2005 Human Development Report of the United Nations again, as in past years, Norway has won the first prize. According to the United Nations Human Development Report, the contribution of the different levels of education (nursery, primary, secondary and university) of the total cost of the education sector in selected countries varies. For example, in Norway, in the years 2000 to 2002 education budget has been divided to the ratio of 5.36, 0.33 and 5.27% between different categories of training: kindergarten and primary schools, secondary schools and universities. However, in our country the contribution of the above mentioned educational categories, are 1.25, 0.36 and 1.17% respectively. It seems in most countries a greater share of the cost is allocated to preschool and primary school education and this indicates the importance of this grade levels.

C) Per capita gross domestic product

Gross Domestic Product or GDP is one of the measures in economy. Gross Domestic Product includes the value of all goods and services during a specified period, usually a year, is produced in a country. Final goods and services are the goods and services that have been produced at the end of the production chains and they are not purchased to produce other production or services.

Table 3: Index of per capita gross domestic product in selected countries

| countries | Index of per capita gross domestic product(GDP) |
|--------------|---|
| Norway | 99 |
| Japan | 94 |
| Germany | 94 |
| Argentina | 80 |
| Malaysia | 76 |
| Saudi | 82 |
| Turkey | 70 |
| Iran | 71 |
| South Africa | 39 |

| | |
|----------|----|
| India | 56 |
| Pakistan | 51 |

As it is shown in Table 3 Norway has the highest per capita gross domestic product and South Africa has the lowest. To calculate the Human Development Index, simple average of the three indicators of life expectancy, education and per capita gross domestic product is taken. The value of this index in the year 2001 was 0.719.

Discussion and Conclusions

Civil society is among issues and discussions that has been considered by many scholars and includes various scientific fields such as law, political science, economics, management, sociology and Civil society is a part of social life that is organized, voluntary, independent of the government and is based on legal system or rules that are acceptable to participants. The present study attempts to evaluate and compare the civil society in various countries in terms of development. In this study, several countries were examined and the rate of their development in terms of various indicators was examined. The rate of development of these countries was reviewed and evaluated from 3 different indicators of life expectancy, education and per capita gross domestic product.

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