

Contribution of Civil Society: Protection of the Knowledge System, Democracy and Human Rights

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Abstract

According to Ernest Gleaner, "Civil society is both a historical process and a natural state of human freedom." Although civil society is a more extensive and sophisticated concept than democracy, it is related to both democratization and liberalization. There has been a long struggle in India to fight for democracy and civil rights. When citizens of a society form their own organizations at different levels and put pressure on government institutions to make laws for their benefit, only then it becomes "civil". Before and after independence; there was a civil rights effort. Democracy and civil liberties gained momentum throughout India's national movement. Concerns regarding diminished civil freedoms were also raised by the independence movement. A new worldwide force has emerged: civil society. Increased action and demands centered on equality, human rights, electoral transparency, corruption, and fair rights. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have given traditional politics new dimensions in these areas and demonstrated how individuals may resolve global challenges. In both wealthy and developing nations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are crucial. By exerting pressure on the government, they play a vital part in the formulation of policies. They support education and civic engagement. The development and prosperity of democracy depend on a vibrant, varied, and active civil society. It symbolizes the fight for rights between the people and the powers in India. It makes civil society unite to protect democracy and the country.

Keywords: civil society, democracy, government, human rights, state, NGOs

Introduction

In 1910, civil society became a central idea in Western political theory. Until then, civil community and the state were interchangeable. Additionally ignored was the idea that a civil society member is a state citizen, will follow state laws, and would not endanger others. This idea was well-liked in Germany, France, and Britain. According to Aristotle, society is a moral political community of equal, free members who rule and are governed by a set of laws establishing common norms and public processes. At the period, the focus was on the nature

of civil community and governmental activities, and the concept of civil society was formed within the framework of liberalism to eliminate arbitrariness. It generally takes place when productive forces are undergoing a revolution. Political philosophy and traditions serve as the foundation for civil society ideology. Social society was described by Greek thinkers. Aristotle asserted that "man is a social animal." Roman law states that civil society is the source of the king's authority and power. Public discussion is the sole means of resolving the conflict between societal and individual needs. From Thomas Paine to George Hegel, political thinkers have developed the notion of civil society as an authoritative structure separate from yet parallel to the state, to which citizens may choose to adhere (Suchinmyi, 2016, p. 268). Kruk claims that property relations were already taking shape in ancient and medieval societies when the term "civil society" first arose in the seventh century. Only with the emergence of bourgeois society did civil society begin to take shape. It is a state and a society created to counteract bourgeois exploitation. By supporting free markets and individual liberties, civil society is seen by some as a means of lessening the impact of politics on society. It is regarded by some as the only practical substitute for the "totalitarian state" and the "tyrannical market." According to Adam Seligman, the 'new analytical key' that will unlock the mysteries of social order is civil society. The World Bank and the UN consider it essential to poverty alleviation and efficient governance. Development. Global debate has been resurgent since the early 1990s. About the public sphere. Many changes have occurred on a global scale, including the collapse of welfare states, the fall of communist governments, the emergence of oppressive dictatorships in many parts of Asia and Latin America, and the disintegration of the Soviet Union. All of these events have helped civil society become more important and prominent. People from all over the world started to form groups. The community is in charge of protecting human rights. India began to feel the consequences of this as well. Democratic impulses caused the national government to shift toward socialism (Suchinmyi, 2016, p. 282.). The American and French revolutions were sparked by public demands for independence, which gave rise to this idea. Around the middle of the nineteenth century, this idea became more and more widespread. This concept was used by Marxist Antonio Gramsci to characterize civil society as a form of political action against dictatorship. The global trend and inclination toward democracy has led to the emergence of civil society in totalitarian regimes around the world. Civil society has been the driving force behind the Arab revolutions in Egypt, Jordan, and Syria. In the current period, civil society is an essential component of democracy. Its components blended

democracy and individualism. Civil society is a nonpolitical group that promotes freedom. It also protects against tyranny by the majority. It creates stronger units by combining the weaker parts. And preserves the diversity of the country. *Takiavli* contends that the idea of equality and freedom in democracy isolates and detaches the individual from society at large. Without civil society, the individual will be cut off from society and the community. State-established law serves as the foundation for civil society's protection and advancement. The self-organization model of society is strengthened by this civil society approach. It creates civil society as a mechanism under the state's control and eliminates the state's dependency on citizens. Ernest Gleaner asserts that "Civil Society is a Natural State of Human Freedom." This is a historical process as well. Liberalization and democratization are associated with civil society. But it is a more profound and expansive idea than democracy. The official institutions of the state have the authority to pass laws that benefit them. A society is only considered "civil" when its members autonomously organize at various levels and pressure the state's official institutions to pass legislation that benefits them (Suchinmyi, 2016, p. 270). It is unacceptable to keep civil society and the state separate because the state is a part of society. Formal power and political control require robust social institutions. Many people consider volunteer organizations to be the foundation of civic society. Because they promote the cooperative ideas necessary for the growth of democratic values. Civil society balances the market's temptations and the overbearing influence of state authority while enabling collective action to oppose individuality.

Traditional knowledge systems and civil society

Civil society helps to the preservation of Indian knowledge in a variety of ways, including translating ancient writings, establishing educational and cultural institutions, and promoting traditional knowledge systems. Civil society, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and community groups serve as grassroots repositories of traditional knowledge. They collaborate closely with local populations on topics such as biodiversity protection, traditional medicine, and sustainable agricultural techniques. Civil society organizations have an important role in shaping and reinforcing government policies aimed at safeguarding traditional knowledge. They advocate for legal systems that prevent the misuse of conventional knowledge. These organizations act as a bridge between current science and traditional knowledge. They contribute to the integration of traditional knowledge into scientific research and its application

to benefit modern society. Civil society assists to the preservation of Indian knowledge in a variety of ways, such as translating old texts, building pedagogical and cultural institutions, and promoting traditional knowledge systems. Civil society, nonprofit organizations (NGOs), and social organizations act as grassroots repositories for traditional knowledge. They work closely with local communities on issues including biodiversity conservation, indigenous healthcare, and agricultural sustainability. Civil society organizations perform a vital role in developing and implementing government policies that protect traditional knowledge. They support legal regimes that prohibit the misuse of traditional wisdom. These organizations serve as a link between contemporary science and traditional knowledge. They help to integrate traditional knowledge with scientific study and apply it in ways that benefit current society.

Civil Society in Indian Democracy

Indian democracy relied on its people for power and control. Equal rights in social, political, and economic spheres; equality before the law; freedom of speech and thought; equal employment opportunities; protection of faith, tradition, and beliefs; freedom of assembly and association; and morality were all pledged by India upon its independence. The goal of creating a democratic, pluralistic, federal, and secular India was decided upon when drafting the Preamble to the Indian Constitution. For Indians, the Constitution is a book. India became free after breaking away from imperialism, capitalism, and colonialism. The Constitution was written by policymakers to protect this autonomy. However, there have been periodic attacks on independence and the constitution. Both organized and unorganized members of the government and non-government groups carried out these attacks. Under the pretenses of radicalism, *naxalism*, religion, casteism, and citizens' rights, the Indian constitution and democracy have been attacked. The Indian Constitution guarantees the rights of common people. But when the state starts to infringe on the rights of common people. For instance, Indira Gandhi proclaimed a state of "emergency." Who will protect common people from this issue? In order to tackle this dire circumstance, "civil society steps forward." Ordinary individuals make up this non-governmental organization. This differs at both the municipal and national levels. Those who defend fundamental rights selflessly (Manoj, 2012. p. 241). After obtaining independence from British colonial authority, protecting its inhabitants' fundamental rights became India's main priority. India had every component that could jeopardize its integrity and unity. The only distinction between India's capitalist power before and after

independence is that the former was weaker. Dominant were monopolies ((Manoj, 2012, p. 262).

Civil society and state

The welfare aspects of the state are given more attention in the modern era. To help their citizens, most governments around the world set up social programs. These initiatives ensure that individuals who are less fortunate will always have access to necessities. when people from a particular socioeconomic group cannot afford basic needs including food, shelter, healthcare, and education. As a result, the state has a democratic duty to work toward improving the lives of these citizens. (Tappan, 2017, p. 475). Principles like equal opportunity, fair resource allocation, and providing basic services to the most vulnerable sections of society are the foundation of this kind of state. Villesky contends that the welfare state should be in charge of meeting the basic needs of all of its citizens, including a minimal standard of living, education, food, medical attention, and housing. Neoliberals changed their definition of the welfare state following the Second World War. According to Turner, government involvement in public welfare is not a "service activity," but rather a danger to private liberty. In addition, Hayek shows in *The Road to Serfdom* that state welfare initiatives are not driven by popular preferences, in contrast to the market. The person has become a tool in the welfare state. A false "public good" is promoted by the use of political power. There is no basis for this in reality. Neo-liberals contend that the bureaucratic structure of the contemporary state is ineffective and inefficient. The state has consequently been unable to carry out its welfare policies and initiatives in an efficient manner. (Biswas, 2017, p. 475). The Indian state was established with the goal of preserving democracy. The composition and character of India's democratic state have changed since its independence. This can be done when several domains, including welfare, repressive, and developmental institutions, are undergoing transition. The welfare aspect of the Indian government has changed. (Tappan, 2017, p. 477).

This is a significant feature of the oppressive regime of today. *Kuldeep Mathur* claims that there are two facets to the state's oppressive visage. In the first place, it guarantees the preservation of dominance and order, and in the second place, it destroys those who question the state's authority. In the long run, it also helps to create circumstances where people willingly follow the law. This indicates that the state manages social issues, quells dissent, and maintains social harmony by using its authority. According to Ottwin Mareni, the state is in a paradoxical position when it comes to the use of power since, while it guarantees obedience, frequent use

of it could make the state illegitimate. (Tappan, 2017, p. 494) For all kinds of administrations, maintaining both legitimacy and repression is crucial. The use of coercive measures should reduce the potential of power abuse while bolstering the legitimacy of law. According to *Mathur*, this is the foundation for civic society's security. How he uses forceful methods to address and settle social conflicts. One crucial aspect of democratic government is restricting and controlling the power of the state. Additionally, it establishes democratic values. Rule of law, legitimacy, and human rights. Official operations and measures to secure the state should be kept to a minimum, even in times of crisis. Conversely, the notion of statelessness promoted the granting of unusual or excessive powers to the state in order to preserve its existence. (Tappan, 2017, p. 496) India has a long history of fighting for democracy and civil rights. Before and after independence, there was a civil rights effort. Civil liberties and democracy gained popularity throughout India's national movement. Concerns around "civil liberties" were also raised by the struggle for liberation. In slavery (Abhay, 2015, p. 316) A consciousness of civil liberties started to develop throughout this period. Educated Indians started to demand journalistic freedom, equal employment prospects, and the abolition of racial discrimination in the legal system during the anti-colonial struggle. After independence, it appeared like our people were in charge and there would be no discrimination against anyone. Inequality in society continued even after independence. Movements of violence started. The *Naxalbari* movement was the first. The start of violent extremism in the Northeast, which included *Kashmir's* burning. This posed a direct threat to the Indian government. After this, Indian democracy was threatened by the declaration of emergency. The nation saw the founding of numerous rights organizations to prevent the repression of democracy and civil rights. On a national level, a citizen for democracy was established. People with humanitarian principles took the initiative to start this organization. Bureaucracy, radio, television, the press, the court, and other institutions were to be "independent and autonomous (Abhay, 2015, p. 321) many regional demands were not met by the state in the 1970s. In a democratic manner. Consequently, several drastic changes took place. There were notable movements in many countries. Come out. Tension between the people and the state developed from this. The state widely violated human rights by using its authority to stifle dissenting opinions. This allowed civil society to grow. Simultaneously, the civil-democratic rights movement brought attention to the state's violence and repression of people. But the movement faced new challenges in the late 1980s and early 1990s. In Indian politics, communalism was on the rise during this time.

The state was viewed by the civil-democratic rights movement as a means by which capitalists and landowners could manipulate and take advantage of their populace. Since it seemed to be against the state, the civil-democratic rights movement was doomed from the beginning. Therefore, all of these capabilities are considered anti-state and anti-national by the state (Abhay, 2015, p. 324). When examining the civil-democratic rights movement, the nation's broader democratic framework must be taken into account. The goal of this civil rights campaign was to increase public awareness. People's rights were explained to them. The core tenet of the democratic rights movement is civil society. It shows the struggle for rights between the people and ordinary powers against the backdrop of India. How people defend their rights. As a result, civil society comes together to defend democracy and the country. Because civil society has faith. The state's coercive authority is increased by these extraordinary capabilities, and this law permits the state to violate individual freedoms and human rights while taking advantage of the vulnerable and neglected populations (Tappan, 2017, p. 497). Early on, members of the lower classes started banding together around their economic, social, and political philosophies. But communalism, regionalism, and casteism started to spread. Simultaneously. Civil society organization was made possible by a quantity of circumstances, including increased unemployment and poverty. In the 1990s, there was a contentious debate. Over the state's actual purpose. Because of the link to socialism, societal growth began to accelerate. On the other hand, corruption and bureaucracy hampered socioeconomic advancement. A welfare, reformist, and development-oriented civil society were cultivated. Civil society's formation brought social, economic, and political elements back to life. In India, the government was becoming more and more involved in the growth of capitalism. Social justice emerged as the primary political concern in India in the 1990s. The need for social identity was stoked by the rise of new social forces. Indian politics and democracy underwent a transformation with the rise of Dalit, backward, tribal, and other groups. Social transformation is meant to be fueled by watchful citizens. A group of informed and watchful citizens who work tirelessly for the advancement of their nation is known as civil society. It casts doubt on the government's strategy. The government and civic society can occasionally clash. Many facets of society are represented by civil society. Regionalism, caste, and religion are all transcended by civil society. Its only goal is to provide the government the voice of the community's suffering citizens.

Civil society and democracy

A new worldwide force has emerged: The civil society. There has been an increase in demand and activism for public interest issues such as the environment, women's and gender equality, human rights, electoral integrity, corruption, and proper rights. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have shown how to address global issues and given traditional politics a fresh perspective in these fields. In both wealthy and developing nations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are crucial. By exerting pressure on the government, they play a vital part in the formulation of policies. They support education and civic engagement. The development and prosperity of democracy depend on a vibrant, varied, and active civil society. It supports civic and political engagement, citizen welfare, and state discipline. The needs of civil society cannot be met by a weak political entity. Many organizations thus switch to other nationalist organizations. This suggests that a robust democracy is facilitated by civic society. Economic policy and development can benefit from an engaged civil society. It is evident that civil society and economic development are related (Suchinmyi, 2016, p. 276). Civic society and economic prosperity are unrelated. However, in a market economy that is effective, civil society can be a natural partner. Political governance, human interactions, and economic transaction are all connected to civil society. Civil society is formed through economic engagement. Political governance is frequently linked to the development of civil society. The emphasis on involvement defines the social interactions of civil society. Civil society protects the amenities and rights of citizens. When the law is respected, citizens and social groups have constitutional legitimacy and authority. Resources are used and traded through the natural and economic systems in the society and community system (Suchinmyi, 2016, p. 279). Only when citizens participate in the political system and carry out their civic obligation to self-government is civil society deemed advanced. It also suggests that power and authority are distributed. Civic involvement in political governance requires equal access to opportunities for every person of the community. Only when citizens freely and actively participate does civil society develop power. In a range of social networks, associations, groups, and organizations for social change and self-government. After it, civic society is characterized as advanced. A civil society is mature when its members are able to make decisions. The local and regional economies are to be developed and strengthened. Civil society has the right to take part in all facets of political power and governance, enabling them to influence public policy. The parts of human life outside the sphere of political authority and governmental

control are referred to as civil society. Structurally organized are cultural organizations, religious institutions, economic relationships, and so forth. Civil society cannot exist without political power, and political power cannot exist without civil society. Civil society is strong in developed nations. However, civic societies find it difficult to survive independently in developing nations. Civil society organizations may join forces with the government and political parties. They must, however, continue to be independent and refrain from vying for political power. How can civil society groups that are independent, voluntary, law-abiding, pluralistic, and tolerant contribute to the establishment and maintenance of democracy? Controlling and limiting the power of the state is the main and most basic goal of civil society. Of course, an effective and powerful state is fundamental for every democracy. But after decades of oppression, a nation must also establish systems to check, monitor, and limit the power of state officials and political leaders. Civil society activists ought to keep an eye on how public workers use their power. They ought to educate the public about any misuse of authority. Corrupt practices by advocates and government officials are exposed by this civic society. For the reform of good governance. Promoting political participation is the aim of civil society. In addition to encouraging people to listen to political campaigns and cast ballots, NGOs can achieve this by educating people about their rights and responsibilities as democratic citizens. NGOs can also help residents improve their capacity to work together to address common issues, discuss public issues, and express their viewpoints. Other democratic traits like tolerance, moderation, compromise, and respect for different perspectives can be promoted by civil society organizations. Democracy is inherently unstable. Unless a strong culture of compromise is in place. These values cannot be merely imparted. Practice is also necessary to learn them.

Challenge of civil society

Populism: Human rights are rejected by populism, a powerful political ideology. Populism can have either a left- or right-wing agenda. By partnering with mainstream parties, populist groups frequently join democratically elected administrations. When they become more involved and continue to move forward until they become dominant. The more harmful forms of populism are all characterized by the polarizing message they spread. People are further separated into two groups as a result of it. Polarization and division: To gain support, populist politicians frequently employ contentious rhetoric. Contrasts the general populace with "elites" or other

alleged adversaries (Eatwell, & Goodwin, 2018, p. 123). This exacerbates political and social tensions. Democratic norms being undermined. In their pursuit of power consolidation, populists may jeopardize democratic norms and institutions, including freedom of the press, judicial independence, and checks and balances. Authoritarian inclinations are frequently seen by populist leaders. Included limiting civil liberties, consolidating power, and eroding political opposition. Promote political education. Encourage broad political education to assist individuals in understanding the intricacies of issues and the importance of democratic institutions. Promoting inclusive conversation. Establish venues for polite and inclusive conversation to reduce polarization and promote understanding amongst groups. Protect and preserve democratic institutions and norms, including a free press, an independent judiciary, and checks and balances, in order to thwart authoritarian tendencies. Address the fundamental political, social, and economic resentments—such as lack of representation, inequality, and corruption—that give rise to populist movements (Judis, 2016, p. 231). Support and elect leaders who put the common good first, encourage responsible leadership, and engage in ethical governance. And encourage harmony instead of discord. By concentrating on these tactics, the justifiable worries that feed populism can be addressed.

Digital surveillance: Governments and corporate businesses use digital surveillance to monitor people's whereabouts, internet activity, and personal data. Which is a breach of their privacy? Biased data is frequently the foundation of surveillance programs. Which may have discriminatory repercussions, particularly for underrepresented groups? Digital surveillance can be used to stifle dissent and regulate social behavior. Journalists, human rights advocates, and others are intimidated by surveillance tools; access to and utilization of digital surveillance are unequal. Because of this, some persons might be watched more than others. Strong privacy regulations, openness, and appropriate monitoring systems are required to reduce these detrimental effects of digital surveillance and stop misuse. A democratic state must have political freedoms; they are not an extravagance. If the right to free assembly and association is not protected, promoted, and upheld, a democratic society cannot be created or maintained. Any democratic power must be restrained by these political liberties. The fundamental tenets of democratic security are freedom of association and assembly.

The Youth Advisory Council (CCJ) has received alerts from a number of youth civil society organizations in recent years on alleged growing abuses of their freedom of association,

assembly, and expressions. Reduced space for civil society the "shrinking space for civil society" that was mentioned briefly was viewed as "insidious actions to restrict the freedoms of civil society." Rallies and public protests are essential components of pluralistic democracy. As a result, any limitations on these types of meetings must adhere to the standards outlined in Article 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights. Those NGOs should be allowed to apply for and receive funding from donors, other states, and multilateral organizations in addition to their state's government. This is solely governed by the standard rules pertaining to money laundering, foreign exchange, customs, and election or political party finance. No justifiable reason should be used to exert control over NGOs or limit their capacity to carry out their missions. Furthermore, this shouldn't lead to efforts to stigmatize or exclude particular civil society organizations based only on their foreign funding. Employees are untrained and unprofessional. There is a severe lack of qualified and experienced personnel in the nonprofit sector. The great majority of employees are unqualified and untrained. Hiring talented people is hampered by inadequate compensation. Civil society does not have access to sufficient financial resources. Because the people they serve cannot afford to pay, civil society organizations lack sufficient funding and must rely on assistance from international organizations, governmental bodies, and non-governmental organizations. At the moment, overseas financing has decreased, but the challenge of financial inadequacy is being made worse by the need to actively participate in CSR efforts. Between civil societies groups. Employees are untrained and unprofessional. There is a severe lack of qualified and experienced personnel in the nonprofit sector. Most of the employees lack experience and qualifications. Hiring competent personnel is discouraged by inadequate compensation. In addition, those with professional skills and credentials favor urban areas over rural and impoverished areas. Government-Civil Society Interface The government and civil society organizations have worked together to successfully implement numerous welfare and development initiatives.

The government and civil society Groups have worked together to create many national-level policies. However, the haughtiness and indifference of government officials and bureaucrats have created a rift at this interface between civil society Groups and the government. Civil society organizations often face obstacles that prevent them from fully achieving their goals, including inadequate finance, staff that lack education and skills, a lack

of accountability, and conflicts with the government. However, these issues can be resolved by creating avenues for communication between the government and civil society organizations, as well as by conducting social and performance audits of civil society organizations and offering training and refresher courses. Notwithstanding the many issues civil society faces, it can aid in the creation of democratic civic education initiatives. As a supportive partner and advocate for democratic and human rights education, civil society ought to be involved. Civil society is more than just the voice of the organized and resourceful. By encouraging new types of interest and solidarity that transcend traditional religious, linguistic, tribal, and other identification ties, civil society can advance democracy. Until then, democracy is stable. Civic life becomes more tolerant when individuals from different religions and ethnic backgrounds unite around shared interests, such as those of women, human rights activists, artists, physicians, students, laborers, agricultural workers, attorneys, and environmentally. Public education on important problems can be aided by civil society. This is what non-governmental organizations and the media do. When it comes to mediating and settling conflicts, civil society organizations can be quite helpful. When it comes to monitoring election processes, civil society institutions play a critical role. To guarantee that voting and vote counting are entirely free, truthful, and calm and transparent, a wide coalition of groups that are not connected to political parties or candidates must set up unbiased observers at every polling place. Without the participation of civil society organizations, it is very difficult to have fair and credible elections in a fledgling democracy.

Conclusion

Notwithstanding the myriads of issues civil society faces, it may help create democratic civic education initiatives. As a beneficial partner, civil society should promote human rights education and democracy. Until then, civil society is not seen as developed. By taking part in the political system, citizens carry out their civic duty of self-government. Additionally, it exhibits dispersed power and authority. Fairness in opportunity for all members of the community is a prerequisite for community-based civic engagement in political governance. Only then is civil society empowered. For self-government and social change, citizens freely and voluntarily engage in a range of social interactions, groups, networks, and organizations. The term "developed" is then used to describe civil society. India's top priority after gaining independence from British colonial rule was safeguarding the fundamental rights of its citizens.

Every factor that could jeopardize India's integrity and unity was present. For this reason, the state prioritizes welfare issues. A key element of democratic government is the presence of checks and balances on the state's authority. At the same time, principles such as democracy, human rights, legitimacy, and the rule of law dictate that even in emergency situations, government actions and operations must be limited in order to protect the state. In order to help their citizens, the majority of governments worldwide set up social programs. These programs guarantee the continued availability of necessities for those who are less fortunate. The state has a democratic obligation to improve these citizens' quality of life. A nonpolitical organization that supports democracy is called civil society. It also protects against tyranny by the majority. It preserves the diversity of the country while bringing together the weaker sectors to form strong organizations.

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