

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (NGOS) AS MEANS OF MORE EFFICIENT AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICE DELIVERY ¹

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Abstract

The policies put into practise with 1980s caused comprehensive and radical changes in purposes, values, fields, functions and methods of state and public sector. Aforesaid change that state and public sector had, have deeply been analyzed in literature and the direction of change has been revealed. The effect of the changes on public sector will be dealt in this study rather than dealing with the aforementioned change.

However, the effect of concerning change on public sector is multi dimensional. The concept of public service becomes subjected to re-interpretation with regard to its description, content and application procedures together with the change and also the understanding of traditional public sector based on basic principles and public values that dominate the concept of public service has undergone a change. In this study, only one dimension of this multi dimensional change claimed to be occurred in description, content, basic principles and application procedures of public services and the discussions on who is the suitable subject in public service delivery will be analyzed by bringing the argument of non-governmental organizations into forefront. Discussions on whether the non-governmental organizations are proper subjects in the delivery of public services or not shall be considered on the basis of two basic hypotheses: the first one of the hypotheses is that the rise of cooperation of governmental and non-governmental organizations in the field of public service arises from efficiency/effectiveness problem. The second hypothesis is the necessity of fictionalization of the cooperation of governmental and non-governmental organizations as a democracy problem rather than an effectiveness problem. With reference to these two basic hypotheses, in this study, it will be tried to reveal what the commitments are born as a result of participation non-governmental organizations to the field of public sector regarding effectiveness or democracy or what kind of tensions included in it.

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Introduction

Nowadays parallel with legitimacy loss of representative democracy, taking the stage as legitimacy producer by ngos and becoming actor in economical development process can be explained with the suggestion that they generate and undertake an important function. Function in here is filling/elimination of failure or inadequacy of another element by ngos. More clearly this function which is produced and undertaken has three appearances. (i) in addition to provide economical development and maintaining basic services, ngos also generates response against *governmental and market failures* which is sourced by society. (ii) *gaps* which had occurred since state takes the demands and satisfaction of *average voters* as basis for providing public services are filled by ngos and therefore ngos create functional responses against social diversity. (iii) ngos are able to create *innovative solutions* against unusual problems. With this respect aim of this study is to analyze how the functions which are undertaken by ngos make them more democratic and tool for providing more effective service.

Non-governmental organizations (ngos) as means of more efficient and democratic service delivery

As it was stated by keyman (2005: 99-100), citizenship understanding in modern-democratic nation states, undertakes the function which organizes state society relationships based on "universality" and "acting having equal distance to all and each of social identities" by state. The ideal that all citizens participate to universal rights and positions equally underlies at the background of this assumption. This universal citizenship ideal takes "modern individual/personality" understanding which was founded over the principle that "all individuals should have equal ethical values." . This ideal which takes the public space /private space as a precedent for itself, foresees that democratic states should approach in its space based on "citizen" and "equality" fundamentals and it should have equal distances against them because of "not being discriminative" against group and cultural diversities. According to this understanding, based on "citizenship" position, individuals and groups which have relationship with state, will consider expressing and surviving their differences in private spaces as "rational actors" and will live in public space as any individual having certain rights and liabilities. In this manner, modern democratic nation states based on public ideal which is exclusivist in one side and also homogenizing at other side (young, 1996: 73). This liberal ideal was based on distinction of state and civil society and identification of civil society with private space. Civil society was symbolizing public against private, sameness against difference and social benefit/wellbeing against individual benefit/wellbeing. Denominational, religious, gender, cultural differences which were repressed to private space were being lived individually and civil society level, and it was assumed that this should cause state and public law will consider those differences and will function based on the principle of not being discriminative. With this respect, difference principle is definitive element of economic society primarily at denominative level and "equality" and "sameness" principle based citizenship is the organizer element of political society. Modern democratic states which take this public space- private space which was established by philosophy of enlightenment and legacy of "mind age" makes attribution to homogeneity which was formed by exclusion of many people, groups women and radical groups (keyman 2005:101) and within this perspective, public concept stands on rationality and universality of citizen and were making all desires and demands of individual as secondary. In this structure it

was assume that state will cause disappear of all individuals, and briefly all kind of formation within civil society in their personalities and will provide them to reach maximum satisfaction (young, 1996: 73; çaha, 2007: 28-29). In this classical political model of modernization; politics ideological representation is founded by taking the place of people and participation is considered as only the representation of requests and according to this model, only determination of preferences of group who are the subject of politics will be sufficient. (gümüş, 2007). Public space which is in question for operation of representative democracy is a political public space which covers entire society and parties create a conflicting area while they have competition in this space. Again discourses which try to disqualify opponents out of competition rather than discourses which try to form an agreement in political public space. One of the basic problems of representative democracy is that it strains individuals to be private space subjects and it has closed to be the subject of public space because of its definition. In other words, way of subject of public which gives meaning to life of individuals within boundaries of public spaces and provides satisfaction is closed for individuals who do no deal with politics. With this respect representative democracy provides the only opportunity to citizens to elect who will be the subject of public space and after this selection, citizens consume the products and services which are produced by this public subjects in other words present system with this status; in additions that it closes the for the individuals to be public space without entering a political party, it also constrains them as being majorly consumers that is strains them to be the subject of private space. It does not mean that the ways for individuals functioning as participants is completely closed for active citizens in a democratic society. Participation of individual may diversify by starting to ask questions in a public space, making application and having activities which will make him/her public space by using own sources. In addition to this regardless with activity level of an individual will have limits at their claims against a social system. Because of these reasons present human who want to implement themselves form different associations for doing something for public that is for being public space. Those associations appear as being more stronger than individuals because of consensus which is created in public space. Change and evolvment of business life provides a broad free space for individuals for gaining life for themselves out of time they had separated for work and this provides them the opportunity to be public space. (tekeli, 2000: 112; 2009b: 214; tekeli, 2009c: 241-242; tekeli, 2009d: 319).

. Recently, nongovernmental organizations had become effective within participating democracy practices as new actor in public space out of political parties, individuals had found the way to become public subject by producing public service via these organizations. With this respect it is possible to consider nongovernmental organizations as small or partial public spaces. According to this individuals or other actors who have similar desires, worries come together for living what they desire which they have agreement over them, creates a small public space and try to realize the subject which they agree on it by bringing their ideas, sources and labor together. Those individuals who have freedom to spend their earnings in private consumption goods; come together in these small public spaces and spend their earnings in such small public spaces and have public activity. As a result ngos open the way for the individuals to serve the society that is producing public goods and services.

Within this structure role of state at producing public goods is related with social preferences that is with elections. State which is the basic means of collective tool in democratic political systems will only meet the collective needs which are sounded by only majority and will not consider the demands which are requested

by sub groups of society. In other words in representative systems, states generally have to maintain public good and services universally and uniformly without considering the distribution of preferences which are directed to those goods and services. Moreover almost always states encounter with budget restrictions which confine supply. In this case state has the tendency to follow the preference of average voters, or the choices of ruling governments related with providing, quality and type of public services. However citizens have personal preferences about the type, quality and level of public services. That is life tastes, income differences, tax loads will bring different opinions about ideal spending level of state. In this case if the citizens have preferences whose quality and quantity are higher which are different than the ones which are mentioned by average voters and which are not homogenous or if they believe the validity of alternative solutions they will not satisfied and their demands and needs will remain as not satisfied. That is in the case which state provides the goods and services according demand and expectations of average people but if he can not meet the expectations of citizens who have different and higher expectations it will have failure. In failure case this demand for public goods which were not met will be covered by nongovernmental organizations which are founded by voluntary citizens for improving the quantity and quality of public goods. It is assumed that democracy quality will increase with non governmental organizations having role together with states that is having production of public goods based on two legitimacy

However, ngo's taking place in providing public service is not only the result for the effort for improving the quality of democracy. In addition to this, and rather that most important reason considering ngos as an important actor in providing public service is the search for effectiveness in service providing. With this respect because of the aspects such as 'flexibility, working with base, pluralism, sensibility, learning by experience and capacity development'(turner and hulme; 1997: 207- 208; tvedt; 1998: 2) which ngos have leads them to advantageous when they are compared with bureaucratically state structure and this causes addressing ngos in search of effectiveness. When ngos enter into economical filed. It is assumed that people participation can be promoted and economical costs may decrease

Because of these reasons, with a gradually increasing manner states come together with private sector organizations and non governmental organizations and perform providing service together. (brandsen ve van hout, 2006: 538). For whatsoever reason, (development, service providing helping poor people); it is considered that partnerships between states and non governmental organizations "will provide participation" and participation will increase effectiveness formation of public services politics and actualizing them. Brinkerhoff (1999:127-128) and smith (2001: 7), formulate the relationship between participation and effectiveness as following:

- (i) Such cooperation will provide the opportunity to determine public services politics more properly, participation will provide to learn about the needs and demands of people who are utilized from service more clearly.
- (ii) This will increase compliance between needs and demands of people who are utilized from service and political procedures.
- (iii) so public services will realized with less cost and more effectively.

- (iv) cooperation between public and civil institutions will create embracing feeling of political issues by people who get benefit from service and this embracing will have an effect which will decrease both operational and maintenance costs.
- (v) Also participation is also considered as useful for creating synergy and increasing the problem solving capacity of state about social issues.
- (vi) . Again said cooperation will increase the sustainability of program and politics in time.

Thus according to relationship between participation and effectiveness; participation of nongovernmental organizations to formation of public services politics and service providing process have the assertion of not considering the state as the only actor and aims to make other actors in society as “can do it. With this respect a different appearance of democracy which is called as governance, appears; and emergence of non governmental organizations as an actor in public services area brings promises such as transparency, accountability, responsibility together with it. (brinkerhoff, 1999:127-128).

Conclusion

Whether it is sensed effective or as a tool for providing more democratic public service, public-ngo cooperation will not lead same results in every country. According to brinkerhoff (1999:135-139), four main variables such as regime type of country, legal framework and regulations, aspects of service(s) where cooperation will be implemented and security level in country will determined both the occurrence of public-ngo cooperation and success level cooperation. Therefore based on different countries’ experience it is impossible to express clearly that this cooperation is a way for providing “more effective” or “more democratic” public service.

However when it is consider that state’s decisions and attitudes influence society with great extent and since that those decisions and attitudes are taken by officials who are not assigned by elections; it is inevitable for the governments who wants to be more democratic to use all opportunities about “participation”. In our opinion although it does not guarantee to provide providing public service more effectively; public-ngo cooperation will be on agenda since it has the participation opportunity and will be a method which will be applied more frequently.

Brief biography

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reserach fields: network-ties, ngos, social capital, civil society and public service.

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