

RELIGIOUS CIVIL SOCIETY AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT FROM POLICY TO PRACTICE. SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY AT CAIRO

Dr. Samah Khalil Author

Visiting Lecturer at University of Prince Edward Island, Canada
Lecturer at Faculty of education, Ain shams University, Egypt

Abstract

Does religious civil society actually exist? Is the increasing in number of registered religious civil society organizations an adequate indication of its existence in the reality? Does the increasing reflect the other increasing in expanding their area of interest to include social responsibility, civic engagement, human rights and religious pluralism within Egypt? According to these questions, the research highlights the cultural, social, economical, political and spiritual activities focusing on how these associations' views the "other"? How can it perform an intermediary or role between the individual and the society? For achieving that, this research depends on Sociological study for young men Muslim and Christian associations in Egypt in order to take a closer look at these organizations and their programs potential especially towards civic engagement and religious pluralism, It is concluded that there is a lack of associations capable of making equilibrium between cultural identity and religious plurality.

Keywords: Civil society-Religious organization-Civic engagement

Introduction

In recent years there has been greater awareness of the increasing importance of civil society in assisting governments to push forward the wheel of development. But Although, Egypt have diversified religious associations, professional unions, labor unions, charitable societies, free clubs, religious civil society, cultural and technical associations, neighborhood and area societies, advocacy groups of all kinds, youth and women's organizations, private-sector trade and industry associations, However, many advocacy and community development organizations who are working within civil society lack the capacity to implement genuine and successful community development programs. Additionally, there is a lack

of organizations capable of enhancing the issue of identity and plurality and making equilibrium between cultural identity and religious plurality.

Recently, a new increasing in numbers and varieties of Muslim and Christian young men associations have emerged in Egyptian civil society. They engage in voluntary social development activities focusing on the provision of basic necessities to the poor. Yet more recently, an increasing number of organizations have begun employing longer-term development strategies, as well as involving young people and women in their work.

According to this view this research is considered both interdisciplinary and international academic which join together Sociology of Development, Sociology of Religion and Human rights topics.

Research objectives

1. Provide information on religious civil society, give access to information on what is already done and what not and thus make exchange of experiences possible.
2. To document the activities, scope of work, programs of religious civil society.
3. To compile all information on religious civil society activities especially those tend to civic engagement.

Civil Society and Socialization: Sociological approach

Sociological scientists tried to answer to the question why people contribute to collective work, this question is found in the classical theory of Emile Durkheim on norm conformity, and His theory has been interpreted in at least two ways, depending on the place where the effect of norms is assumed to become visible. In the first interpretation, social norms reside outside the individual, and become visible through the actions of other persons in the intermediary groups and social networks that the individual is a part of. This interpretation is sometimes labeled as a ‘structural’ interpretation, because it emphasizes the role of group structure, in the second interpretation, social norms reside inside the individual, in his beliefs and internalized value system. According to the first interpretation, individuals are more likely to obey social norms when they are more strongly integrated in intermediary social groups such as the church, the family, or the village. According to the second interpretation, individuals are more likely to obey social norms when they have internalized these norms through socialization in intermediary social groups, also when they are no longer part of these groups (Ultee, Arts & Flap, 2003). This interpretation is also sometimes labeled the ‘cultural’ interpretation, because it assumes that individuals carry the beliefs and values that they have acquired through socialization with them throughout their life. ‘Culture’ and ‘structure’ are often used terms for competing paradigms in the social sciences (De Graaf, 2002).

Although the two interpretations lead to different predictions on the conditions in which social norms affect behavior, they are complementary. The ‘cultural’ interpretation is an addition to the ‘structural’ interpretation, claiming that social norms affect behavior in a larger class of situations. The work of social scientists such as George Homans, Peter Blau, Robert Axelrod, and James Coleman can be seen as reinventions and specifications of the ‘structural’ interpretation of Durkheim’s theory of norm conformity. The ‘cultural’ interpretation has been advocated by Talcott Parsons (Ultee, 1976). Religious socialization may also increase the likelihood that people engage in prosocial behavior. A higher frequency of church attendance in youth indicates that people have been exposed to a more intense socialization of altruistic values. The ‘cultural’ interpretation of Durkheim’s theory on norm conformity leads to the prediction that religious socialization increases prosocial behavior also for those who have left the church. So, norm conformity and socialization are essential concepts in this study, and it can interpret many of situations especially when people are asked for a contribution directly, here norm conformity can be observed and can be rewarded with social approval. Psychologists agree with sociologists on the point that people seem to punish themselves with feelings of guilt for a failure to help others and Group cohesion is reflected in members’ positive feelings of belonging to the group and emotional commitments to its duties (Batson, 1998; Schroeder, Penner, Dovidio & Piliavin, 1995). Additionally, the classical answer to this question in sociology is that social values are socialized early in life (Parsons, 1956; Inglehart, 1997). In the socialization period people internalize societal norms: thus, the moral system that exists on a macro-level enters the individual. Once internalized, people take these social values with them from one situation to another. Hence, organizations that are characterized by high levels of cohesion and integration among their members have higher levels of job satisfaction and commitment to the collectivity actions. (Mueller et al. 1994).

Sociologists also put some conditions in youth and adolescence that affect in the internalization of norms. For our research problem, this issue is so important for focusing on the backgrounds of giving and volunteering behaviors of a specific group of individuals, according to Wilson the effect of volunteering activities by parents on children’s volunteering is partly due to the transmission of resources (Janoski & Wilson, 1995). Also, there are a few studies which have investigated the effects of religious socialization on giving and volunteering. One study reported positive relations between religious socialization and giving which indicates that there is link between religious background and volunteering in the US (Independent Sector, 2002). Experiments with religious socialization have shown that people are more likely to provide help when they feel more similar to the recipients (Dovidio,

1984; Schroeder et al., 1995, p. 48. People also feel more empathy for people whom they are more likely to meet in the future (Cialdini et al., 1997). Based on the review of previous research above, a large number of hypotheses can be formulated about the relationships of social conditions with voluntarism in civil society. I will discuss only the main hypothesis of this study assume that the existence and increasing of civic engagement programs will increase the major role of these institutions in securing certain kinds of social unity or cohesion, political awareness and religious pluralism.

In order to address the question of whether different types of religious associations foster community involvement, we will identify variations in the structure of these groups to determine how they might produce different levels of member participation in the civic sphere. Following the argument of Fine and Harrington (2004), we will investigate whether structural and cultural background of a member experiences in the group have an effect on broader civic engagement of members. To that end we will examine both the levels of formalization and cohesion integration of groups according to the factors related to participation in voluntary associations and civic affairs and focus on members' status characteristics, such as: sex, age, income, and level of education (Palisi and Jacobson 1977; Williams and Ortega 1986); As Fine and Harrington (2004, p. 344) argue, "Small groups are the incubators of civil society," suggesting that the structure and culture of some small groups may encourage members to become involved in a wider array of voluntary associations. This view centers on how group characteristics influence members' engagement in the community, including a group's type or activities, cohesion and integration, and facilitation of learning experiences for the acquisition of skills that can be expressed in civic participation; thus, an argument may be made that group characteristics are also important for increasing the likelihood of participation in the civic arena.

Persons with more extensive education may be socialized to values making social participation normative. Similarly, persons in some occupations may have the discretionary time to participate or they may be expected to participate in civic affairs because it helps the image of their organization. A second line of inquiry suggests that civic engagement may also be influenced by the structure and activities of the groups to which they belong and this is Previous studies indicate that education and occupational level are positively associated with civic participation (McPherson 1981; Schofer and Fourcade-Gourvinchas 2001; Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980) (Conway 1977; Verba et al. 1995; Wilson and Musick 1997).

Another studies emphasis on the term 'religious organizational discourse' which refers to the structured collections of texts embodied in the practices of talking and writing that bring organizationally related objects into being as those texts are produced, disseminated, and consumed

Consequently. Accordingly, Critical discourse analysis specifically focuses on how discourse figures in relation to other social elements in processes of social change. This includes the integration of detailed analysis of texts into research on social change (Fairclough 2003). But the use of the term "discourse" registers a relational way of seeing linguistic/semiotic elements of social events and practices as interconnected with other elements. The objective of discourse analysis, on this view, is analyzing of the relations between discourse and elements of the social action in order to reach a better understanding of these complex relations (including how changes in discourse can cause changes in other elements). This means that discourse analysis has a doubly relational character: it is concerned with relations between discourse and other social elements, and relations between texts as discourse elements of events and 'orders of discourse' as discourse elements of networks of social practices (and, ultimately, languages and other semiotic systems as social structures). (Foucault 1984, Fairclough 1992). Texts here can be seen as product and as process. Texts as products can be stored, retrieved, bought and sold, cited and summarized and so forth. Texts as processes can be grasped through regarding what we might call 'texturing' (Fairclough 2003), the making of texts, as a specific modality of social action, of social production or 'making' (of meanings, understandings, knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, feelings, social relations, social and personal identities).

The idea here would argue that texts may have such effects, depending on certain conditions. Also this paper elaborates that analysis of organizational discourse should include detailed analysis of texts, both analysis of linguistic and other meaning features of texts. So, the research will focus on ways of representing as having a purely discourse, ways of acting, hence, using the term 'text' in a generalized sense (not just written text but also spoken interaction and social action, social practices).

Redefining youth participation and Civic Engagement: Political and sociological approach

There is a lot of theoretical approaches which call the necessary of developing civic knowledge and skills in order to be prepared to be effective citizens who participate socially and politically by undertaking civic actions, such as participating in community meetings, or political actions, voting, or participating in civil society (e.g., Dudley and Gitelson 2002). These approaches focus on conceptions of organization as an interactive accomplishment in organizational discourse, as 'organizing', the focus on organizing is strongly associated with this 'style of organize thinking'. (eg. Grant, Harvey, Oswick & Putnam forthcoming, Mumby & Clair 1997, Tsoukas & Chia 2002, Weick 1979). The theoretical bases for this tendency have come from ethnomethodology (Boden 1994) and Foucaultian post-

structuralism (Reed 2000). This approach emphasis on organizations as structures to ‘organizing’ or ‘organizational becoming. as a process (i Tsoukas & Chia 2002) .

Youniss (1999) found that youth who take part in service activities are likely to “reflect on these justifications as potential meanings for their (own) actions.” Moreover, many researches of young people participating into organizations that seek to support marginalized youth in developing an integrated and connected sense of self, organizations that include opportunities for young people to assert their voice and engage hands-on with issues important to them, and agencies that do not focus specifically on individual or civic identity, found that young people who participated in either of the first two types of organizations were more likely to experience positive supports and opportunities conducive to the development of their abilities to be contributing members of society (Gambone, et al. 2004).

This conclusion is supported Mumby & Clair (1997: 181) suggest that organizations exist only in so far as their members create them through discourse in order to create a coherent social reality that frames their sense of who they are. According to that this paper will emphasis on organizational action and its communication which have causal effects on how organizations can be activated and reformed. Kirlin (2003) reported that there was a strong correlation between participating in activities and later civic and political participation including involvement in adult political organizations, voting, and feeling politically enfranchised. These relations were moderated, however, by the type of organization in which the young person participated. Young people who participated in activities that involved engagement in a collective goal were more likely to be politically involved than those young people who participated in more individual activities such as chorus, arts, or sports.

As discussed above, how civic participation and civic engagement are defined is of great importance when considering youth, since youth are often excluded from what is typically considered ‘political.’ Thus, many researchers have argued that a broadened definition of civic participation is essential for understanding youth civic engagement (Gauthier, 2003; McLeod, 2000; O’Toole, Lister, Marsh, Jones, & McDonagh, 2003). Thus, the broadened definition of Bell: Children, Youth, and Civic (dis)Engagement civic participation should include those things that youth understand as political or as civic and also those things that may be political or civic in the context of their lives even though they do not recognize them as such. On one hand, it is important to recognize that youth may be developing “new forms of social activism” and “a new type of politics” (Megyeri, 1991, p. xvii), redefining what civic engagement is to them.

The desire to understand youth's civic participation with broadened definitions has led a number of scholars to question and challenge the research approaches and methods typically used. Research concerning youth and civic participation has often focused on the people and institutions seen to have the most influence on youth development and behavior. In his book *The making of citizens: Young people, news and politics*, Buckingham (2000) explains that there are two arguments commonly made about the decline of political participation by youth: the 'conservative lament' position which argues that it is children who have changed in attitude, and the 'postmodern celebration' position which argues that young people have a different relationship to information than their elders (pp. 5-7). This has resulted in a focus on the role of family, school, and peer groups in encouraging civic participation (Annette, 1999; Camino & Zeldin, 2002; Torney-Purta, 2002; Zaff & Michelsen, 2001). O'Toole, Lister, Marsh, Jones, & McDonagh (2003) argue that adequate understanding "can be achieved only by investigating: how young people perceive and experience politics; and the particular experiences of young people as young people, rather than as a subset of the adult population" (p. 59). They conclude by proposing "alternative research designs to investigate the ways that people conceive of politics, how and why they participate, and also why they do not, which draws on a high degree of respondent-led findings" (p. 55). Zeldin Identified five "pathways" to youth civic engagement: public policy, consultation, advising adult, decision makers, community coalition involvement (Zeldin 2002). Also, small but growing body of research suggests that giving young people opportunities to become engaged in civic activities increases the likelihood that they will become healthy, active citizens. This synthesis of civic programs for youths provides specific information on the role that civic engagement plays in helping young people develop a broad array of strengths and capacities. (Hamilton & Fenzel, 1988; Moore & Allen, 1996; Scales & Blyth, 1997; Schumer, 1994; Kraft, 1996; Youniss, McLellan, Su, & Yates, 1999).

Civic engagement is also important because it can educate young people about their rights and responsibilities. Civic participation can help promote social justice for young people and their families. As such, the civic activity of engaged young people is a rich and complex phenomenon. In this paper, we are particularly interested in the process by which the young people became involved in civic activity, and why and how they got involved.

According to theoretical framework, the field study seeks to address the following issues:

- Organizational structures which are reproduce particular power relations based on religion between groups of social agents.

-Strategies for civic engagement including particular discourses and social action which represents in particular ways of social process and seen as change in organizational structures.

Also, the study Seeks to address the following questions: What resources do civic engagement programs provide for promoting youth development? What impacts do civic engagement programs have on youth outcomes? What characteristics of the programs seem to constitute effective civic engagement?

Methodology

The field work examines research literature on the individual and group factors that are most often identified as related to participation in religious associations. For achieving that, This study will depend on:

-Literature review of historical religious civil society in Egypt to analyze the development factors related to the NGO sector.

-Anthropological study to three cases of young men Muslim associations at Cairo and Giza and one case of young men Christian association at Cairo, these cases were selected according to various activities, events, national campaigns and conferences and other civic engagement programs which might be existed and organized in Cairo which have impacts on the intellectual atmosphere and life in general, Therefore, the research assumes that adults and youth react towards social development is very high and it may be included varieties of social activities where the development atmosphere and opportunities are higher at Cairo than other places.

-The Case study Guide for the four organizations and interview guide as an Anthropological tool were based on the open discussion framework for a diverse groups of Muslim and Copts members, administrative sections and professional workers with a range of socioeconomic backgrounds, ages, gender, education, and jobs, Selected interviewers were characterized by being enthusiastic about this study, keen to answer all details related to the questions included in the questioner guide and eager to discuss some critical issue especially the impact of political power on the organization role towards civic engagement program.

-The questioner guide for volunteers inside the forth cases (50 members from young men Muslim associations and 50 young men Christian associations) were identified and invited to participate in the survey, The sample was designed to be representative different kind of Volunteer individual level variables included is seven measures of respondent's status characteristics:(1) age, (2) education, (3) occupation, (4) income, (5) gender, and religious background that may predict engagement in civic affairs.

The volunteer was picked up through their participating in some activities such as sport activity, charity, conferences and cultural and religious meeting organizers. A total of 100 representative sampling were

drawn to be interviewed, the questioner included some questions aim to know how the volunteer (1) became involved in volunteer work at the community; (2) became more interested in social or political issues; (3) changed attitudes on some social or political issue; (4) became more interested in peace or social justice; (5) participated in a political rally or worked for a political campaign; and (6) donated money to a charitable organization.

1-Egyptian Civil society: An overview

Civil Society in Egypt contains a big variety of religious, educational, cultural, political, and charity organizations that are regulated by a variety of laws. There are around 18,000 NGOs in Egypt located in its 27 Governorate; around 30% of them are located in Greater Cairo. Most of those NGOs work in general domains like health, environment, and education....etc; and fewer of them may focus on a specific target group in their work, such as focusing on women, disabled children and marginalized groups. The legal framework of civil society in Egypt allows for four types of organizations: - Non-governmental or Non-profit Organizations: These focus on charity work and are funded by private donations from individuals, the religious associations is considered one of this sector, its private sector entities or international donors. -Professional Associations: These are organizations that represent the interests of a specific profession. They aim to uphold and upgrade the standards of the profession as well as take sides on issues of national concern. This type depends financially on membership fees. Examples of this type include the Physicians' Association, the Journalists' Association, and Association of Engineers. These professional associations are governed by law 100 of 1993. - Labor Unions associations: This type of organization represents the interests of workers. It depends financially on membership fees of their huge base of members; they are hierarchical in structure and also governed by law 100 of 1993. - Business Associations: This is a more recent type of civil society organization in Egypt. In Egypt, there is a notable lack of representation of youth and younger adults in the management of NGOs. Limited opportunities are given to young people to participate in community decision-making and managerial positions in general.

2-young men Muslim and Christian association: An overview

Religious associations represent a minor but growing part of Egyptian civil society. They were all established around 1912 and later, and the majority of them started as student initiatives like young men Christian association. An increasing number of middle class young people have started engaging in voluntary social welfare activities and forming their own programs. These associations being concerned with a certain issue in their society and they decide to devote their efforts and time to Introduce a new approach to the relationship between Islam and Christianity and voluntarism,

to combine conventional social welfare activities with a focus on human development and to mobilize new young people to participate in religious civil society. One of the indicators for the level of stability and professionalism of NGOs is whether an organization has a strategic plan or not and the duration of this plan. Moreover, the existence of the strategic plan in a NGO points to the possibility of future expansion of the activities of the NGO; and of its vision for stronger existence in the community. On the other hand, the absence of a strategic plan in a NGO indicates that it may change its vision or direction at any time.

The Young Muslim Association (YMA) is an Islamic organization that is open to Muslim people of all ages. It began as adult's initiative in Egypt from 1927 until now. The YMA regularly schedules programs and events throughout the year. The stated goals of the YMA are to provide an Islamic way of life for Muslim youth by prompting the teachings of Quran. The organization also tries to enhance the leadership qualities of young people within the community through different activities. Beside religious goals; it has been founded for some political goals, and spread rapidly through all places in Egypt. Today, this association is the largest voluntary organization and it has 123 branches in Egypt and more than 50,000 volunteers with activities such as orphanages, educational programmers, hospitals, awareness campaigns and food distribution, it targets poor and underprivileged people all over Egypt.

Most of young men Muslim associations are much smaller in size and reach. But the extraordinary commitment of the youth attached to these groups shows that refrain from political intervention. The philosophy of young Muslim association is notable with an educational concern whose stated main purpose is to establish a platform where Muslim youth can get together in an Islamic environment. Also, it establishes a relationship of dialogue, understanding and appreciation between Muslim organizations and the western societies through doing conferences, symposia, educational workshops and research circles to address youth issues. These associations and their members can be found at various levels of integration within the other Islamic establishment such as al-Azhar leadership and the other Islamic association; hence they have diverse and wide audiences among the Azharite students and they can reach their voice to common people. This is attributed to the traditional point of view of most of the NGOs that youth is a recipient group. They believe that the participation of youth should be limited and that this group should direct its energy to implement some activities - especially the activities which require long time and much physical efforts - rather than to participate in the planning for the future of a youth NGO.

The Young Men's Christian Association ("YMCA" or in the USA "the Y") is a worldwide movement of more than 45 million members from

125 national federations affiliated through the World Alliance of YMCAs. Founded on June 6, 1844 in London, England by Sir George Williams, a farmer lad from Somerset who had been apprenticed to a dry goods merchant in the Bridgewater at the age of sixteen, son after, he joined the congregational church in that town and became at once an ardent Sunday school worker, he was a keen and successful man from the first and as a rose in the commercial world he supported the Association financially as well as his influence and personal commitment. At his goal was to help young men like themselves find God. The first YMCA was concerned with Bible study, although the organization has generally moved on to a more holistic approach to youth work. Around six years after its birth, an international YMCA conference in Paris decided that the objective of the organization should become "Christian discipleship developed through a program of religious, educational, social and physical activities" (Binfield 1973:265).

The movement spread rapidly across North America following the organization of Associations at Montreal and Boston in 1851, its real success was in large commercial cities. Begun among white collar workers themselves, the city of YMCA reminded with few exceptions the creatures of the economic class. In 1997 there was a total of 967 members YMCA operated 1,260 branches, units, and caps. They were run by 57,355 volunteer policymakers serving on Y boards and committees, plus 454,395 volunteer program leaders and uncounted other volunteer, all of whom worked with paid professional staff members. These volunteers and staff members worked not only out of YMCA building and resident camps but also out of rented quarters, parks, and playgrounds, some Y have no building at all. Combined, YMCA had a total operating budget of \$2.7 billion. it came from these sources : 32% fees people paid to take part in Y program,29% membership dues, 17% charitable contribution,7% fees paid for resident camping and for staying in Y rooms and other living quarters,9% government contracts and foundation grants, and 6% miscellaneous(Binfield 1973).

All YMCA programs have a strong importance on the values of caring, honesty, respect, responsibility, and faith. These core values were adopted formally by the YMCA of the United States in the early 1990s. They were developed to help teach children right from wrong.[12] it offers a broad range of programs such as sports, personal fitness, child care, overnight camping, employment readiness programs, training programs, advice services, immigrant services, conference centers and educational activities as methods of promoting positive values. It is very common for YMCAs to have swimming pools YMCA Swimming and weight rooms, along with facilities for playing various sports such as basketball, volleyball and racquetball. The YMCA also sponsors youth sports teams for swimming, cheerleading, basketball and soccer. Now YMCA are at work in more than

130 countries around the world, serving more than 30 million people, more than 60 local U.S Y maintain relationship with Y in other countries, operate international program, and contribute to YMCA work world wide through the YMCA world service campaign. Today half of all YMCA members and program are female and half are under age 18.

The goal of the organization was putting Christian principles into practice, achieved by developing "a healthy spirit, mind, and body." The YMCA is a federated organization made up of local and national organizations in voluntary association. Today, YMCAs are open to all, regardless of faith, social class, age, or gender. The World Alliance of YMCAs is headquartered in Geneva and Switzerland. According to Christian youth organization, like the majority of Christian Egyptians, they feel marginalized and excluded from important decisions taken by both the regime and the older generation. They want to find their own role and position in society.

As for Christian organization at Cairo, the culture, traditions and customs that exist among them allow people to gather in groups and have various social and cultural activities with each other. Youth in Christian organization have very strong sense of belonging, enthusiastic and willing to cooperate with each other for the welfare of Christian's people in Egypt. This atmosphere helped in having different youth informal groups that work for achieving common goal related to the development of their community. This type of NGOs are established and managed by youth even if their activities/ or services are not directed to youth. For example, they may provide services and programs for those who thought that there are marginalized groups of the society like poor Christians or female.

In sum, the absence of youth and younger adults from the board of directors of all religious organization limit the available opportunities for young people in Egypt to get exposed to management experiences and partnerships with people in different ways. This also limits the potential of having youth groups who can work and dream of creating new religious youth organization where they take the lead in management and providing services to other young people.

3-Voluntaries, social change and Modernization: Motivations for Engagement

Volunteer work, membership of voluntary associations and giving to charity are attractive topics of attention for both sociologists and social psychologists. In sociology, association membership and volunteering are studied as indicators of social capital and cohesion in society. In personality and social psychology, volunteering and giving to charity are studied as forms of pro-social behavior with a more or less altruistic character.

There are two kinds of participation in all religious organization: professional members or paid members, and unpaid members (volunteers), for professional members, It seems there is, for the most part, a positive correlation between occupation and hiring professional members, The higher the occupation an individual holds, the more likely she/he is to be involved in organization work or activity. This is mirrored in the interview which showed that most of volunteers occupied white collar professions, such as doctors, engineers, accountants in addition to businessmen. Most of Copts and Muslim leaders justify choosing this kind of members because those members will be responsible to work in the field of development ,or deal with funds from abroad, or deal with other NGOs, or involved with government organizations and are updated about current activities embraced the idea. Also, they prefer to hire employees from their same religion except YMAC which accept all religious background in their organization as professional members or volunteer members.

According to the other kind of members (Volunteers) which constitute the vast majority of participants in the Muslim and Copts organizations. Furthermore, voluntarism is seen as the right approach to social welfare, because it helps to involve young people in society and at the same time makes activities both more cost-effective and more sincere. The volunteers are all in their 20s or early 30s, and women count for between 10 and 20 percent of the total number. They are college students or recent graduates from private and public universities in Egypt, and the vast majority belongs to the middle class.

Also, it has been noticed that the Copts and Muslim organizations focused on charity activities which depend on a bigger number of volunteers that ranges between 50 and 100 volunteers for each and all the research cases depends on more than 1500 volunteers to implement its activities. This is attributed to the rooted beliefs inside the Egyptian communities that voluntarism is related to charity work that allows the volunteer to strengthen a good relation with God and to contribute to the welfare of his/her community. Both Copts and Muslim organizations assign volunteers with tasks that do not require planning or management skills. Volunteers just get involved in implementing the activities of the NGO without taking a real opportunity in the planning or management of this NGO.

To transfer the membership from being volunteers to be a professional member, the individual should pass through some steps; a more demanding form of participation is to be an active member such as taking part in activities of the organization such as attending meetings. This form of participation takes more time than simply being a member. Obviously, this form of participation creates the largest obligations for the individual and the largest benefits for the organization.

Both the young people from middle-class families and those from poor families showed that they were connected, that they were present, that they cared about the state of society, and that they struggled to make their dreams and aspirations for society come true. When asked to describe what they remembered about how they started to become involved, most of the young people had interesting stories to tell. One group of respondents seemed to have a natural inclination to be active and to mobilize and lead others. Some of them began their involvement in church activities when they were still children. One young man stated:

“I have always been very engaged, always enjoyed participating in church service. I was only ten when I started engaging and now I am a positively engaging in many activities in YMAC.” A 35-years man, who was active as an organizer to cultural activities in YMA, declared, “I always wanted to organize myself to participate, to be part of the struggle, mobilizing students until I had a chance, I got involved and since then I spend all day out in organizing cultural activities.” Two young activists who were interviewed together declared “We started participating together when we enrolled in the same school and attended religious lessons in the same mosque, then we felt that it is time to start engaging together in Islamic association much larger in its goals more than mosques, We had met these other guys from the other mosques who had good ideas and they guided us to be involved in YMA, and then we decided to participate effectively because we trusted and convinced about its targets.

Four adults in YMA stated that attendance YMA meeting and congress pressed us to participate in this association to help many others, and that is how it most of adults started.” According to their responses, most of the young people 90% in the sample became engaged out of a desire or a real urgency to participate in society, to do something concrete, to be useful, or to help others. These responses seem to come out of a sense of restlessness, and indignation motivated by a deep sense of social awareness. A young man of 22 years said, “This is what I think: society is the most important thing one has. So to participate in society is to work so that this society becomes a bit more just, less unequal.” Similarly, a young woman in YMA stated: if we don’t work or act together in favor of the communal, if we don’t take this step, if we don’t have the perspective of the community, of the demands of solidarity, we don’t deserve to be an Egyptian or even asking for economical reformation”. Another young woman of the same age reported, “When you do something good for others, you feel good for yourself, it is not just a favor you are doing, but it is a duty you have to do as Egyptian.

From all other Voluntarism responds, the research discovered two words were appeared through survey and interview: The word “help” and the word “Egyptian”. But these words had different meanings according to the

age , For many old adults , helping had a religious meaning, the old male 40 years who declared, “To participate is to build religious bond with others in the same religious”. Moreover, some old volunteers stated that they felt that they have a mission and responsibility toward poor people. some of them stated he thinks that members of this charity organization in Egypt have a better chance of getting into heaven because of their love for the poor which they express physically by visiting them in homes or meeting with them in the organization, For youth and adults the word of help appears to carry social and cultural meaning and sometimes political meaning, some of them stated that to help means to help the process of constructing equal society, to reach your voice to political authority”.

Also most of the coordinators of adults shared in their incentive towards being Volunteers, they all trusted “the saints and Imams who were guiding them, the most numbers and the most important predictor of volunteering are the frequency of church attendance and this is accord with some results of religious NGO (Bekkers, 2002a; Putnam, 2000). It is often argued that church attendance is an indicator of social capital (Putnam, 2000, p. 67). Also, previous researches show that Religious participation increases the chance to be asked to volunteer for religious organizations (Becker & Dinghra, 2001; Bekkers, 2000, 2003a; Dekker & De Hart, 2002; Jackson, Bachmeier, Wood & Craft, 1995; Lam, 2002; Wilson & Janoski, 1995).

For several of young volunteers, the act of participating gave them a meaning in life and a place in their society, This was particularly reacting for those who felt that they are neglected and discriminated from power structure in their society. A young man of 24 said “The participation gave me a direction in my life regarding the marginalized issue, an understanding of what I want from my own and from my society”. So, the results found that 70% of volunteers responds to the real reasons of their participations are going to empathy for others; the present argument is that some people are more likely to feel empathy and experience stronger feelings of empathy than others. Empathy is believed to be the key aspect of the ‘altruistic personality’ (Eisenberg & Miller, 1987). Empathy has two dimensions, an affective and a cognitive dimension. Both consist of two sub-dimensions (Davis, 1994, 55-58).

Although Many of the young Volunteers affirmed having frustration of being intensive force for changing society , However they have a dream of being able to contribute to changing the things that offended them in their society. A good example was given by a 20-year man who said, “When you participate you are helping in some way, you are helping to change something may be now, may be tomorrow, I think I will do something difference not only for myself but also for the others, I cant judge now on the coming results but I know that is the right way to say and act”. Here, the

responds were not limited to social and religious motivation but it expended to evolve some political desires, three of young volunteers stated “To participate is a form of transforming society and political movement”. Moreover, most of responds showed a several passion for what they did, speaking about a personal commitment to participate in civil society in general. Most of them stated that “to participate is to give of your best so that what you are engaged in works out well; to do all that you can and to give totally of yourself.” These responds are accorded with previous research which shows that the following psychological characteristics are typical of donors and volunteers: empathic concern, perspective taking, pro-social value orientations, agreeableness, extraversion, emotional stability, self-efficacy, and self-esteem (Allen & Rushton, 1983; Cohen, Vigoda & Samorly, 2001; Penner & Finkelstein, 1998; Smith, 1994)

As a result, Young people felt that they can make little difference in solving the problems of their community through participating inside these organization, they are willing to get more involved in society development. In some cases, young adults might seek the support to be members with leaders on the board management or simply an advisory committee but unfortunately, it is not easy for younger to integrate in the organization policy. This is due to the fact that most of young volunteers or members haven't the opportunity to be provided the acquired knowledge about managerial positions; and leaders, on the other hand, still lack the confidence that youth could handle these positions correctly. Actually, the results found that this attitude to marginalize adults from management roles can be attributed to several reasons, such as youth lack the knowledge and skills, limitation of resources and time and lack of flexible systems. However, many young adults are eager to become actively involved in changing the rules and systems that impact them. They reported through the survey that they just need encouragement and support from the surrounding community and from elder in their associations. In sum, all the young adults of volunteers declared that the need to change cultural representation included the awareness that the young people were part of a larger community and that they needed to represent that constituency. One respondent stated, “I think I have responsibility to show people that young people are more than just the kind that slack off “.

According to the impacts of voluntarism action on volunteer's personalities, the survey indicated that the entire sample 100% stated that there are many beneficiations from this process of participation, They became better able to express themselves in public, better prepared to act, and their voices were heard and respected. But 60% of the sample is also aware that they face discrimination precisely because of their age, race, and gender. Most importantly, they are keenly aware of how they are portrayed

in popular culture and feel misrepresented because of their age. Young women face special stereotypes especially in Muslim young men association, for some of the young women, gender inequities within their society were a barrier to become full members of society. One of the young woman stated, “I need to be a decisive maker, I feel strongly that my responsibility is to change the image that others have of young people.” For others, their representation was based on their gender and religious background. One person stated, “I have responsibility to represent women.

Finally, 20% of sample joined their organizations to gain social recognition because they had a strong need to strengthen their identity by receiving positive feedback from their social circles and some of the young people had internal motivations for joining their group that could be variously described as obtaining the favorable opinion of others, legitimizing their identity, and gaining social recognition. They felt empowered by presenting themselves as part of an organization and, in return, the organization became an extension of them. So, through their participation, they became visible by attracting attention to themselves .one of them stated “I believe I can organize people, I have the initiative, I am conscious of this,” These responses accord with theories in sociology and political science that explain societal involvement stress the importance of opportunity structures (Keeter, 2002). The motivations for getting involved and staying involved reflect two theories that we quoted earlier: Bordenave’s twin bases for participation (the instrumental and affective), and Clary and Synder’s altruistic and egoistic concerns. On the instrumental side, the young activists want to change the world; some of them choose to do this by being involved directly in political activity while others are involved in activity aimed at social or civic change. The argument is that a young person’s potential for societal involvement is strongly influenced by the availability of meaningful and desirable opportunities for action in their community. It is important to remember that opportunity structure includes more than settings and roles—it includes people in an organization that recruit and mentor those who might not otherwise become involved. Community psychology has long understood the importance of opportunity structure as a feature of schools and other social environments (Trickett, Kelly, & Todd, 1972).

4-Young men Muslim and Christian association: Activities and strategic plans

According to Muslim youth organization, it has been noticed that the strategic plans of most of their plans are developed by the management unit of the association. It was rarely mentioned from the interview and through participant observation that young men as members of the association participated in developing the strategic plan for young men Muslim association. At the same time activities that require strategic thinking and

planning is kept aside for elders. This limited point of view to the capabilities and role of youth, undoubtedly, limits the opportunities of young people in acquiring new skills that would impact their self-esteem and their confidence. In general, the research found that young men inside religious civil society are not perceived as efficient human cadres capable of sharing responsibility with elders in planning, management and decision making.

Young men associations, even those have a strategic plan, are incapable of formulating their mission and vision in a correct way. According to the interview, Most of them have weak expression to their mission or vision, main programs and objectives, which caused confusion in analyzing and identifying the actual content of their strategic plan, so they mentioned many activities and considered it as their plane, The field data showed that the religious young men haven't a clarified picture towards a strategic plan. Sometimes they stated that they have a plan for one year only, which means that the plan is an action plans not a strategic one. This indicates that there is an overlap and confusion among most of the religious young men regarding the meaning and content of a strategic plan as many of them describe their yearly action plan as strategic plan. Some others gave the name strategic plan to the action plans of specific programs inside these associations. Also although they insisted to deny that they have an ideology such as Islamic ideology or Christian ideology, however all their actions, program, materials and buildings contain clarified marks of their ideology such as a lot of religious pictures, symbolic, staff and so on. This indicates that those who developed the strategic plan lack the special skills necessary for undertaking or even identifying this task.

According to Christian youth organization, although we can find decision makers can formulate some plans for the future, however, Most of the plans are not based on clear and detailed information related to the target group they serve, especially in the case of young men. The plans used to be formulated according to all Christian visions and points of view towards themselves as a minority inside Egypt society.

According to religion activities at these organizations, all interviewers of scholars are convinced that Islam has answers for every aspect of life and science and can offer a viable framework for social order. Some voluntaries speak out on political issues but the ultimate objective is control over the social order. They advise more forcefully on social matters such as birth control, female circumcision, marriage, divorce, and the veil. Similarly, the organization has a monthly newsletter, an annual magazine and several publications that reflect on the organization which have articles by their members and others.

According to charitable activities: It was obvious that both young men Muslim and Christian associations are a charitable nonprofit, each is

independent, all their decision are local choice, including program offered, staffing, and style of operation. Charitable activities represent 64% of all voluntary work undertaken by this small group of youth. Other interviewees describe having a direct relationship with God; usually the same people describe practicing rituals because they understand the meaning and significance of them, going to church and communicating with the priests as a reference and educators, and considering the Holy Spirit to be their spiritual guide, For example, the survey indicated that the first goal for voluntary is to develop the spirituality of the poor by not only connected them with a church which was done in the past but also by providing tools at home such as a bible or Coptic channels through providing a television and a satellite for the cases that severely need them. This result fits nicely with previous research on the effect of church involvement on giving and volunteering (Bekkers, 2000, 2003a). Empathic concern, however, led to a greater willingness to give time, the larger the distance to the beneficiary.

Most of interviewers indicated that charity should be disbursed discreetly and privately, to be seen only by God and second, to avoid social embarrassment for the recipient. The study confirms that the most popular type of charitable giving is making in-cash donations, followed by in-kind donations especially in some religious occasion such as the donation for making “Mouaed El-Rahman” in Ramadan and last, volunteer work. Moreover, organization members suggested that a careful distinction must be made between voluntary work and making in-cash or in-kind donations, the latter being much more non-common than the former. The activities are framed in terms of religious obligations of charity and da’wa (missionary work). Also, there are another kind of charitable activity of religious organization is to provide the poor with the tools to become economically independent. For example, instead of giving them monthly payments to help their income, the organizations would cooperate with them in a small business or a project that will provide a steady income. The organization would buy them the materials needed for the project and by asking them who is eligible for giving, they confirmed that they prefer to provide monthly payment for poor how are youth to start his or her own business or paying monthly for elder and the sick who are not able to work and They knowing them through their connection with organization centers where they connected with employers.

Support families : religious organizations are embracing families of all kinds and are more flexible in responding to their needs , sometimes they doing training program for its staff for increasing being trained to help families in need or in crisis or to find other community support that can help.

Doing meeting and conferences are also considered important part of religious organization activities, during the monthly general meeting,

Carefully chosen speakers are invited to deliver a spiritual word. The overall mission of the Muslim youth organizations is aiming to assist the poor and underprivileged in the Egyptian society, and they wish to engage young people in this process. Apart from poverty-related problems, such as illiteracy, unemployment and illness, participants in the youth organizations see apathy and indifference among the younger generations as one of the major challenges facing the Egyptian society. Also they arrange many international and national conferences which promote pluralism, diversity, and tolerance in society while protecting and strengthening cultural, ethnic, religious, linguistic, and other identities. Through this activity religious organization wants to highlight the importance of transition from being a charity organization to becoming an NGO that reflects a global process and the majority of members expressed their needs of modernization tools such as physical material, like computers, cameras, projectors, etc. They also stressed their needs for technical assistance on different levels and in different subjects. According to this point Huang (2009) highlights this idea by pointing out that here are two identities where a civic organization is viewed in the local and global contexts as a grassroots group and as an NGO on the global stage.

Reports and Journals, organization's publications have to be linked to the audience which could be represented by its members, they report all the organization activities and competitions, also calling for the coming meeting and conferences. According to pro-social behavior, its classes, advices, courses and training, the religion organizations has an important role or main target in helping youth learn "pro-social behavior" that emphasizes concern for others' welfare. Such pro-social skills may give youth a greater sense of empathy toward others and teach youth to behave in less self-serving ways and this is accord with A majority of these studies which report some positive association between religious involvement and greater happiness, life satisfaction, morale, positive affect or some other measure of well-being. Researchers have found, on the whole, a positive relationship between measures of religiosity and hope²² in a varied clinical and non-clinical settings.²³ similarly; studies show that increasing religiousness is also associated with optimism²⁴ S. Sethi and M. Seligman (1993).

Take a role at Socialization process: this activity is a prevalent in YMAC, it is primary unit for raising children, they support kids through program to be concerned with the physical, emotional, and spiritual health of their children, the YMAC supplies a safe area and wholesome environment in which parents and children can learn to communicate, cooperate and care about each other.

5-Religious Civil Society and Trends to Civic Engagement

In this section, the research emphasis on two questions: How have faith-based organizations been so successful in mobilizing and sustaining civic engagement activities? And how can religion or religiously motivated workers and organizations promote political awareness? Here this section particularly interested in examining contemporary approach to issues such as how youth are conceptualized; how citizenship, civic participation, and civic (dis) engagement are understood with respect to youth; and, what roles media and internet technologies are perceived to play in youth civic engagement, finally focuses on discovering how to develop the appropriate skills for their future roles as citizens.

According to the survey, young volunteers have a strongly desire for social change and social justice: for activism in a political movement; youth indicated that they can play an important role in the realm of civic society in Egypt, this role could be more effective if youth were integrated in the management part where they could create and design the activities in a way that is closer to other young people. if we compare the relation between religion and society, we can find some traits of civic engagement inside these organization according to the kind of religion found in it especially inside the Islamic organization which include members who have many similarities with the “Islam light” of the Egyptian lay preacher Amr Khaled, who does not dwell on meticulously detailed rituals and regulations, but focuses instead on how to reconcile Islam with modern life styles. Similarly, making Islam a natural part of their target groups’ daily lives is a central concern for the volunteers in these Egyptian youth organizations.

It is noted that young women were as active as young men across the range of civic activity especially in YMAC. Gender issues were of concern for many of the young women and men and several of them were particularly concerned about women’s rights. Several of the young people were concerned about other forms of exclusion and injustice, especially discrimination by religion. Some were concerned about unfair treatment against low-income youth, particularly those who lived in low-income neighborhoods.

In the other hand the leaders of religious organizations concern about the lack of engagement in the current generation of youth, but our findings about their engagement do raise the issue of how to encourage such participation, The organizations to which the youth in the study were connected didn’t give them the opportunity, the space, and the training to engage. So the problem here is between the old generation and the young generation in the same organization, and this unsolved problem has an effect on promoting new kinds of civic engagement activities among both youth and leaders or old adults. According to Copts organization, all leaders of it

do not envisage change on the structural and political level and there is no desire to engage in formal politics or engage in activities which encourage the political actions, some of them refused strongly for Copts organization to take part in the political life , also the Muslim organization leaders refused to engage political activities into their organization , they stated that they have sensitive feeling towards political activities according to the public view towards them as people want to establish Islamic state.

On the other hand, young people in both kind of these organizations refused to be apart from political activities , they want strongly to engage some political activities because They view their present society as both unjust and ineffective and they don't believe that their role is only providing people with services without real consideration to the importance of integrating youth in the political activities, planning for activities, which limit the opportunities available for youth to acquire different skills in management, planning, decision- making and leadership.

So most of young volunteers having the desire to engage in different kinds of political participation, but this desire couldn't expand to the real life because they don't believe that they will influence in their society , so when they have asked about voting , they stated that the young men and women did not have to vote and didn't have the opportunity to encourage voting or doing any political actions, one of them stated "It was when I got my voting card and when I voted for the first time in 2003 for the presidency. I was so emotional and I felt that I was truly taking part in society but what was happened in the voting action got me disappointed and I decided not to vote again" .These results are matching with some results of studies which indicated that the type of activity in which young people participate is more important than mere participation in an activity. Activities that require the skills of cooperation, interaction, and collective decision-making, and which provide opportunities for individuals to have an active voice, may be the most likely to result in civic identity development. Such development diminishes feelings of alienation and marginalization which, in turn, fosters feelings of integration that may facilitate social cohesion (Kirlin 2003).

Some volunteers referred to some barriers for engaging in political activities such as lacking a place for activism and skill development, including surveying, lobbying, and writing press releases. Also, the hardly connected with the other organizations especially political organization across the city, this is according with a researches have shown that a disconnect exists between patterns of youth voting and volunteering, where there are low voting levels but high levels of volunteer activity (Bucy, 2003; Keeter, Jenkins, Zukin, & Andolina, 2003). This has led a number of researchers to ask questions about how civic participation in the form of volunteering and community engagement is related to more direct

involvement in the political process (Jenkins, Andolina, Keeter, & Zukin, 2003; Keeter et al., 2003; Sherrod, 2003; Sherrod et al., 2002, Jenkins 2003, and Keum, Devanathan, Deshpande, Nelson and Shah 2004). For Jones and Wallace (1992), by exploring how the citizenship and civic participation of youth is affected by various structures of inequality, researchers can better understand how those inequalities are affecting not only how children and youth can participate in their communities, but also how they conceptualize their activities and their own identities in relation to their communities.

In addition, young people of members (professionals and volunteers) referred to some issues which may affect on lacking of civic engagement activities such as lacking of social network, electronic database and all the modernized tools which help them to conceptualize the political awareness and political actions within their organizations, but they stated also that this problem belongs to the generation gap between the old generation who are not realizing the importance of these tools in promoting civic engagement activities and the new generation of Egyptian youth who have awareness that they couldn't achieve this kind of activities without the existence of some technological tools which help to connect their message to different social and political associations. So, all young groups admitted that the religion organizations should develop an electronic database that includes all the information related to civic engagement and its activities, also they mentioned that It would be also beneficial to link these databases to a central database of each organization and to a central database of NGO in general to facilitate the coordination among NGOs that are located in one geographical area or that have similar activities. In addition, having a database would assist NGOs to exchange the experience regarding voluntarism and volunteer management practices. This challenge is supported by some studies which clarified that resources embedded in social networks denoted as social capital (Coleman, 1990; Putnam, 2000). Social networks may increase membership and volunteering because they are used for the mobilization of new members and volunteers (Knoke, 1990) Furthermore, social networks may motivate civic engagement and charitable giving when a social norm to give time or money is present in the network.

Moreover, the majority of the members interviewed showed their willingness to exchange their experience with other religious NGOs. However, these experiences are not documented and applied on national base. The research results have also clarified that religion organizations do not pay enough attention to the development and training of staff. Most of them do not have a specific plan, which is updated yearly, for the capacity building of their staff. In sum, what distinguishes these organizations from more traditional social welfare organizations is their emphasis on voluntarism, their distinct constituency – namely educated upper middle

class youth and their new and somewhat different understanding and application of Islam. On a larger scale, those who participate in the Muslim youth organizations wish to contribute to development and change in their country. In this process, most of them stated that Islam should play an important role. Inspired by Amr Khaled, some even aim to a renaissance of the Arab and Muslim worlds, wishing to take part in and contribute to build the foundation of their own future and that of young people in Egypt in general.

6-Challenges of Civic engagement activities at Religious Organization

-Lack of Leaders awareness of the importance and the role of the NGO in community development.

- Lack of resources and technological tools.
- Religious organization considers themselves as charity organization or a social service more than a development organization.

-More consciousness of the need to address key social development concerns, environmental protection and human rights.

Recommendations

-The concept of voluntarism and volunteer work needs to be linked to the concept of civic engagement.

-A new vision to the role of volunteers and ways of properly integrating them inside the real work of the NGOs, planning and decision making, should be formulated.

-Creating opportunities for religion NGOs to exchange their experiences among each other, especially those that are working in the same field or have the same interests. This would help to build on the experiences that already exist and not to start from scratch when planning for future projects. These gatherings can be through forums, unions, internet and portals.

Conclusion

This research depends on Sociological study for young men Muslim and Christian associations in Egypt in order to take a closer look at these organizations and their programs potential especially towards civic engagement and religious pluralism, As a result, Young people felt that they can make little difference in solving the problems of their community through participating inside these organization, they are willing to get more involved in society development. In some cases, young adults might seek the support to be members with leaders on the board management or simply an advisory committee. The organizations to which the youth in the study were connected didn't give them the opportunity, the space, and the training to engage. So the problem here is between the old generation and the young generation in the same organization, and this unsolved problem has an effect

on promoting new kinds of civic engagement activities among both youth and leaders or old adults.

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