Global or Local? The Role of nonprofit entrepreneurship in developing civil society

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Summary: One of the results of globalization is the prominence of what some label global civil society organizations. Defining what is meant by global civil society is difficult and controversial, yet globalization has spurred significant growth in international NGOs and other global organizations. These organizations exist in part to address what some argue are the injustices to globalization. Yet, is global civil society a positive result of global economic integration and the subsequent injustices? This paper argues that local civil society in developing countries, catalyzed by nonprofit entrepreneurs, helps establish the necessary institutions that lead to positive economic development and social change.

Proposal: In this paper I argue that a well functioning, or at least growing, civil society is a necessary part of economic development within the developing world. This case is made by first analyzing the role of nonprofit entrepreneurs in expanding civil society within developing countries, in particular analyzing how these entrepreneurs build the institutional framework whereby development can occur. Second, I differentiate between global and local civil society, and explain how local nonprofit entrepreneurs are the real catalysts to institutional change.

This analysis looks specifically at developing counties in Asia and Africa. As global economic integration occurs throughout the world, some countries benefit more than others from the expansion of global capitalism. Some argue that this opening of markets results in social and economic injustice within certain countries (usually in poor countries by rich ones). Thus, I analyze two countries in Asia and Africa that have experienced change due to globalization and compare the roles of both global and local civil society organizations in these countries.

By understanding the role of civil society, and the entrepreneurs that catalyze the growth of civil society in the developing world, researchers and policy analysts alike can understand more deeply how local versus global organizations benefit these nations.

References


