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Modern challenges for state-building: interaction between civil society and the state

Retos modernos para la construcción del Estado: interacción entre la sociedad civil y el Estado

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ABSTRACT

The involvement of civil society in state-building is a kind of starting point for introducing innovations and active state-building. The novelty of this study lies in its comprehensive examination of the interplay between the state and civil society within the state-building process, particularly in the context of contemporary global challenges. This study shows how technological advancements and socio-political dynamics shape and influence state-building efforts. The article aims to examine the specific interactions between civil society and the state, identify the main directions of influence of globalization, information technology, political, economic, and socio-cultural factors on state-building, and suggest practical recommendations that can enhance state-building processes.

Keywords: Civil Society; National State-Building; Legislative Activity; Globalisation; Institutions.

RESUMEN

La participación de la sociedad civil en la construcción del Estado es una especie de punto de partida para la introducción de innovaciones y la construcción activa del Estado. La novedad de este estudio radica en su examen exhaustivo de la interacción entre el Estado y la sociedad civil dentro del proceso de construcción del Estado, especialmente en el contexto de los desafíos globales contemporáneos. Este estudio muestra cómo los avances tecnológicos y las dinámicas sociopolíticas configuran e influyen en los esfuerzos de construcción del Estado. El artículo pretende examinar las interacciones específicas entre la sociedad civil y el Estado, identificar las principales direcciones de influencia de la globalización, la tecnología de la información y los factores políticos, económicos y socioculturales en la construcción del Estado, y sugerir recomendaciones prácticas que puedan mejorar los procesos de construcción del Estado.

Palabras clave: Sociedad Civil; Construcción del Estado Nacional; Actividad Legislativa; Globalización; Instituciones.

INTRODUCTION

For this research, it is crucial to define features, characteristics, and constituent elements of state-building. In order to understand the concept of state-building better, several definitions are interpreted in this research. According to one of them, state-building is a set of measures taken by international and (or) national actors to strengthen the state's capacity and legitimacy and reform those aspects of individual institutions that prevent them from proper functioning (Von Bogdandy et al., 2005).

A. Whaites (2008) defines state-building as a process that helps states increase their capacity to function effectively. The circumstances that predominantly depend on government priorities can influence the purpose of this functioning. Government priorities, in turn, may or may not include allocating resources to meet public goods (Bereketeab, 2017). This points to the neutral nature of state-building, which takes place in different countries regardless of their economic development, stability, etc. The state's structure should constantly develop and improve for its citizens to enjoy the potential and benefits of the state. A. Whaites (2008) highlights that state-building is a purely national process that does not go beyond the state borders; it is the result of the relationship between the state and society, which can be influenced by external factors (media, trade, etc.).

K.W. Deutsch (1996) holds a similar position. The researcher defines state-building as a unique process of creating, restoring, and strengthening the structure of state functioning in a particular territory aimed at meeting public needs. Sovereign capacity is the basis for state-building, including the monopoly on the legitimate use of physical force. However, the goal of state-building is not to apply physical force but to create a state that embodies, concentrates, and expresses collective power without coercion. The fulfillment of this goal is only possible when both the source of power and the rules established are recognized as lawful and legitimate. The source of legitimacy is the people, while civil society is derived from the will of the people. When the balance between the satisfaction of the needs of civil society and the state is recovered, it ensures a unifying factor for legitimizing state-building processes (Berger, 2006). Therefore, the interaction between civil society and the state is an indispensable process for state-building, and its main goals are as follows:

- to ensure the rule of law;
- to ensure security;
- to develop and established effective mechanisms for the state institutions;
- to ensure the high quality of services and goods provided by the state institutions (Henning, 2017).

Although state-building processes stay within the state borders and address the issues of strengthening state institutions, it cannot be said that the state develops in total isolation from the international community. State-building is based not only on a top-down approach (within the state institutions) but also on a bottom-up approach that involves the interconnection of the state and society (Kohli, 2003; Shevchenko et al., 2023). When it comes to the state, its relationship with civil society should be viewed primarily through the prism of its functions and role. The functions of the modern state are vast, but the principal ones, given the topic of this study, are listed below:

1. The state's primary function is to maintain the peace and security of the population within the state and protect it against the threat of external invasion. For stable economic growth and active development of the state institutions, there must be peace and confidence in the future. Under such conditions, business, trade, and services function without interruption, and every member of society is protected from injustice or oppression by other society members (Functions of Modern State, n.d.).

2. The state's economic function is to ensure freedom of private enterprises, contracting, etc. When the state detects violations of the law, it has the right to intervene in the regulation of economic affairs. Moreover, if state institutions find that private capital does not enter certain industries, it assists private enterprises in creating and managing these industries (Riemer, 2005). At the same time, state intervention in economic activity is justified under the following conditions:

    a. A business monopoly is established in industries that support people's livelihoods, including postal services, railways, electricity or water supply, etc. If these industries are left to private business, the population may experience many problems. Therefore, the government, in the interests of the people, takes control of these enterprises and manages them. In such circumstances, the process of state-building will be much more effective.

    b. Monopolistic associations are created, including the collusion between the representatives of the same industry and, for example, setting high prices. In this case, the state is obliged to intervene and defend the rights of a vulnerable class – the population (Battacharya, 2001).

    c. A particular industry lacks private capital attraction due to the fear of underperformance or unprofitableness. It may relate, for example, to museums, libraries, reforestation, etc. In such circumstances, the state intervenes and provides certain benefits to businesses or allocates funds to finance and encourage business.

    d. There is a need to protect citizens from consuming low-quality products and prevent their

falsification, sale of intoxicants, etc.
  e. There is a need to accelerate economic growth. The state and economic planning includes defining priorities and setting goals, according to which physical resources and human potential are attracted (Chesterman, 2007).
 3. The state's social function is to provide qualitative social services to its citizens, especially to vulnerable groups of the population. Such services include free education, free healthcare, and pensions.
 4. The state is obliged to protect the rights of its citizens by passing laws, ensuring good administration and independent justice, etc.

The described functions are far from all-inclusive. It is important to note that the state cannot develop without the free formation of a civil society that controls the actions of political authorities (World Economic Forum, 2013). The European Union defines civil society as a form of social action carried out by groups or individuals not affiliated with or controlled by the state (Cooper, 2018). The African Development Bank (2012), in turn, interprets the concept of civil society as an expression of the aspirations and interests of citizens who are united on a voluntary basis through common interests, ideas, values, and goals; they are usually mobilized to take collective decisions and actions.

Civil society is by its very nature an important institution and tool for development. It pushes society to act in a certain way, mobilizes its forces and potential to express its positions, formulate demands in areas that are important to society and need to be improved. It is safe to say that civil society is a kind of watchdog, as it monitors and controls human rights; in case of violations, society provides evidence to the relevant national or international institutions and raises awareness of the issue among citizens (Kreienkamp, 2017). Civil society can also complement government programs, such as poverty alleviation programs. It could be the provision of individual assistance to those in need or it could be done at the community level, using well-designed and sustainable solutions. Furthermore, civil society can be engaged in improving the delivery of existing services or advocating for the poor by, for example, lobbying the government. They also ensure that women's rights are expanded and respected (Nazal, 2018).

Thus, the above confirms the complexity of the discussed issue and contributes to the idea of the necessity for active interaction between the state and civil society. Even though ties between the state and civil society are well-established in the 21st century, state-building still faces many challenges that need to be addressed and resolved.

Interaction between civil society and the state: tools and mechanisms
Interaction between civil society and the state is essential for building a coherent society in which state and social institutions do not contradict but complement each other. The relationship between these two phenomena is complicated, as there is a kind of division of organizational and managerial functions. Moreover, civil society often experiences pressure from the state. It can even be said that civil society is independent to the extent that the state supports such autonomy. The state, in turn, cannot develop without a well-functioning civil society that controls political power.

Civil society and the state exist in the form of contradictory continuous interaction and mutual influence, the nature and direction of which largely depend on the level of development of civil society and its institutions. Constant contradictions can only indicate the ineffectiveness of public administration. Thus, it is necessary to establish harmony between public and private interests, so that society is satisfied and citizens' rights are respected (Kreienkamp, 2017).

Civil society exists in parallel with the state and is the state's social component by its nature. The manifestation form of this interaction includes elections, referendums, or lobbying mechanisms represented by public authorities. There is also a functional representation, when advisory bodies, consultative committees under ministries, or the government are involved. Even though civil society does not allow the state to interfere in the citizens' private interests, except in circumstances provided for by law, the state is obliged to establish mechanisms to ensure the safety of citizens, their lives, and their health. However, there are legal grounds for the state to interfere in private legal relations and use its power "levers" (Myronets et al., 2020).

Being the guard for the security of civil society, the state serves as an instrument of social compromise and mitigates social contradictions between different social groups. The interaction of civil society and the state is mutually beneficial. Following European traditions, it is appropriate to strike a balance between the interests of the state and citizens but not to seek their correlation and confrontation. The European Court of Human Rights points to the existence of this balance as a guarantee of the legitimacy of the "citizen-state" relationship (Vasylyk & Shturkhetskyy, 2015; Beschastnyi et al., 2019). Regarding the European Union, cooperation with civil society is actively encouraged at national and international policy-making levels. This encouragement is based on the following principles:
 1. The principle of participation involves forming a common vision and ideas, based on the opinions

and proposals of civil society members and groups and then voiced at official meetings. Moreover, the conditions of participation are discussed in advance, and participation is voluntary, accessible, and open.

2. The principle of trust involves building relationships between official institutions and civil society based on mutual trust. Although the focus and roles of these institutions are different, they are united by the same goal – a better life for people. There is no doubt that this goal can be achieved based on trust, mutual respect, and reliability (Karimi, 2012).

3. The principle of transparency defines the basis for activities for social benefit should be transparent and open. This requires accountability for their actions on the part of both institutions, including in the format of reporting.

4. The principle of autonomy and interdependence stipulates the state and (or) international institutions should recognize civil society and its bodies as independent and non-governmental bodies that can make their own decisions and carry out independent activities. Moreover, civil society and its bodies can hold ideas and positions, different from state ones.

The above-described higher level of interaction between the state and civil society is quite important in terms of state-building for the following reasons:

- Active interaction and open dialogue of the state with civil society, where problematic issues of citizens are discussed, build a solid ground for supporting the state's decisions and ensuring its legitimacy.
- Positions, ideas, and proposals voiced by civil society can help the government implement better and more efficient actions for the benefit of the first.
- Cooperation between civil society and the state can be a powerful tool in the fight against corruption.
- Assistance from civil society in designing and improving reforms facilitates their implementation and helps to achieve the expected positive changes for society more quickly.
- The engagement of citizens in political processes helps to strengthen democratic processes and state institutions due to the interaction between the state and civil society.
- Civil society can become a kind of mediator in resolving conflicts or reaching a compromise on a particular issue (Policy paper on government interaction with civil society, 2015).

Civil society organizations perform functions of representative democracy because they convey public opinions and views to public authorities. Joint actions of the state and civil society contribute to an effective and dynamic policy for social benefit and help overcome the isolation of the public from political processes. However, the problematic aspects of the interaction between the state and civil society are not the only challenge for state-building. Other challenges will be analyzed below.

Globalization and its impact on the modern state-building process

Globalization played a key role in state-building processes. There is a constant need for a state to adapt to changes caused by globalization, which poses new challenges for state-building. The impact of globalization processes is manifested in the following way:

1. Globalization promoted economic integration and international trade. Each state was obliged to adapt its economic policies to the requirements of the global economy. Many state institutions were affected by the changes, including market liberalization, the allocation of significant resources to reduce trade barriers, and compliance with obligations under international agreements. Despite indisputable advantages, globalization brought many challenges to the economic situation of a country. State authorities failed to respond quickly to changes, which showed their vulnerability to modern problems (Globalisation and State-Building, 2011).

2. Globalisation became a factor that increased the interdependence of states on each other. Moreover, international organizations and corporations increased their impact on the policies and decision-making of individual states. This may be seen as a positive impact, but these international organizations or other actors may have interests that are incompatible with the state's interests (Zajda, 2009).

3. Globalization was a catalyst for the dissemination of information and cultural exchange. It had different implications for state-building. The positive one was the spread of values and democratic ideals. On the negative side, state identity was in the face of cultural homogenization globalization could lead to. Taken together, this can harm state-building processes and undermine the cohesion and unity of society.

4. Technological advances brought by globalization made it easier for citizens to access various services, especially in the logistics and transport industries. The introduction of digital government was designed to increase the quality of services provided and, as a result, helped to reduce corruption through the automation of many processes (Podorozhnii et al., 2020). However, the threat remains in

terms of privacy and cybersecurity.

5. Globalization became a reason for increased migration flows. These flows, in turn, affect the country's demographic situation and labor market and subsequently change state-building processes. States need to develop policies and establish institutions to manage immigration and meet the needs of foreigners and citizens.

6. It is undeniable that globalization affected international and national security, creating the threat of transnational terrorism and cybercrime. Therefore, states deepen their cooperation to combat these phenomena and prevent future threats efficiently. State-building efforts should embrace internal governance and external security threats (Zajda, 2009).

7. Globalization increased the awareness of actual environmental problems. This prompted states to find alternatives to conventional transport, improve industry equipment, and cooperate with other actors in international law to reduce negative environmental impacts. Environmental sustainability is increasingly seen as a component of responsible state-building (Globalisation and State-Building, 2011; Lohvynenko et al., 2019; Sobko et al., 2023).

Undoubtedly, globalization has made adjustments to the state-building process and created new challenges for all states. The positive and negative impacts of globalization made it clear that states have to adapt and seek solutions to problems in new and unusual ways, often in cooperation with other states.

Impact of information technologies on state-building

It is appropriate to highlight the impact of information technology on state-building processes, as it has a variety of mechanisms and tools that can be useful. Here are some examples of how information technologies have influenced and will continue influencing state-building:

1. The introduction of e-government makes services for citizens more convenient and accessible. Such initiatives are designed to improve the quality of service delivery and reduce the number of bureaucratic processes (Dei et al., 2019). Furthermore, the latest technologies facilitate communication between government agencies and citizens through websites and social media. Such processes are more transparent and reliable and engage even more citizens.

2. Information technologies allow collecting and analyzing data more efficiently. Thus, an improvement in data management is observed. These data include information on education, healthcare, and other areas of life. After analyzing the data, conclusions are drawn that become key to policy-making and the allocation of funding to certain areas. In addition, digital identification systems provide citizens with secure access to public services, financial systems, and voting mechanisms, which are essential for building a modern state.

3. Information technologies also help enhance crisis management and provide for a timely response to disasters. It is crucial for the prevention of natural disasters, military conflicts, or epidemics. Information technologies allow the state authorities to address the above situations more effectively. At the same time, information technology made it possible to alert the population faster.

4. At the state level, critical infrastructure and financial institutions are protected, among other things, thanks to the latest technologies. However, cyber fraud, black hacking, and espionage are flourishing in parallel. Therefore, it is a challenge for the state to protect confidential data from intruders and continue active state-building processes.

5. Information technologies increased transparency and security during elections or referendums, making it easier for citizens to participate in democratic governance.

6. The development of the digital economy entails the expansion of the knowledge economy, the creation of new jobs, and the attraction of investments. (Reese, 2008).

Alongside these positive effects, there are many challenges and concerns. For example, access to digital technologies remains unequal. This inequality is evident between urban and rural areas or between different countries or regions. The issue of cybersecurity also remains open because huge volumes of personal data are being stored, which is quite risky due to various fraudulent schemes. Privacy is at risk, and critical infrastructure often experiences cyberattacks to seize secret information and use it against the state (Policy paper on government interaction with civil society, 2015).

There is no doubt that information technology influenced the functioning of the state and all subsequent processes of state-building. However, along with the enormous potential and limitless opportunities, there are threats and challenges related to data security, access to technology, and privacy. Therefore, states should actively implement the benefits of information technology and develop mechanisms to protect citizens from cyberattacks and other threats. This can be done independently or in cooperation with other states and international organizations.

Political, economic, and socio-cultural factors influencing state-building

The above provides a solid ground to assert that state-building is a complex process that requires significant resources, thoughtfulness, and consideration of all important aspects. Political, economic, and socio-cultural factors are crucial in state-building processes, and they are inextricably linked and actively interact.

Political factors

The basis of political leadership is its effectiveness and ability to create high-quality and stable governance structures. At the same time, the rule of law is an integral principle for establishing such structures. It helps to ensure political stability and provides the basis for further innovations and developments. It is also crucial to establish international cooperation and attract international experts to develop the right policies and achieve the desired results of state-building. Political turbulence and conflicts are real challenges that can undermine the internal situation in the state and halt the state-building process (Balian & Shorjian, 2018).

Economic factors

Important components of effective state-building are the state's economic development, the structure of the economy itself, and access to economic resources. After all, a stable economic situation facilitates attracting investors, improving the labor market, and building the state (Balian & Shorjian, 2018). Economic policy, including fiscal and monetary policy, trade policy, and investment regulation, can shape the economic environment and the trajectory of a country's development. However, the existence of income inequality significantly undermines the mechanisms of state-building. Therefore, government agencies should develop foundations and tools to deal with various unforeseen situations in the economy.

Socio-cultural factors

The diversity of cultural preferences and orientations has a positive impact on state-building, bringing more people together. Such cohesion builds trust and encourages people (including through civil society) to participate in state-building. At the same time, the national cultural identity should be preserved. In general, the state's policy in this area should address issues of the whole society, while reducing ethnic tensions and regulating all problematic issues. Religious institutions also influence the state-building process; thus, relations between the state and the church should be based on the principles of respect. In the context of socio-cultural factors, the state should ensure access to basic social services, such as healthcare, social security, education, etc. All this affects the people's lives, and the state's activities are perceived through this prism (Vasylyk & Shturkhetskyy, 2015).

The above factors exist in close interaction with each other and thus are interdependent but can impact state-building efforts in a different manner. A holistic approach that considers all the nuances and challenges is the basis for successful state-building.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above, it can be concluded that state-building is a set of measures taken by international and/or national actors to strengthen the capacity and legitimacy of individual institutions, reforming them in those aspects in which they are undermined and unable to function properly. It is important to note that the state cannot develop without the free formation of civil society, which controls the actions of political authorities, and this may halt the process of state-building. Civil society is an important institution and tool for development by its very nature. Interaction between the state and civil society is quite important in terms of state-building for the following reasons: ensuring the legitimacy of the government; efficiency of governance; reduction of corruption; implementation of reforms; strengthening democracy; and conflict resolution.

Civil society organisations are a direct complement to representative democracy, as they do their best to convey the opinions and positions of the broad masses of society to the direct leadership of the state. And joint actions of the state and civil society contribute to a much more effective and dynamic policy for the benefit of society and aimed at overcoming the concern of modern democracies about the alienation of citizens from political processes.

The findings of this research allows us to suggest the following recommendations:

Firstly, fostering an environment that supports the independent growth of civil society organizations (CSOs) is crucial. This can be achieved by implementing policies that facilitate easier registration and operation of CSOs, such as streamlined bureaucratic procedures. Secondly, promoting transparency and accountability in governance can enhance public trust and reduce corruption. Regular public audits of government expenditures and independent oversight bodies can monitor the implementation of reforms. To manage globalization challenges, strategies that mitigate its negative impacts while maximizing benefits should be developed. International agreements that protect local industries from unfair competition and foster beneficial trade relationships are key.

Lastly, strengthening national security frameworks to address emerging threats, such as cyber attacks and environmental risks, is essential. Investing in cybersecurity infrastructure and collaborating with international partners on climate change adaptation can build resilience against external threats. Implementing these practical recommendations can support effective state-building, enhancing governance structures, and fostering a dynamic society. By addressing the challenges and opportunities identified in the study, policymakers can create a more robust and resilient state, capable of meeting the needs of its citizens and adapting to a rapidly changing global environment.

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