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Role of Civil Society in Health Systems

Rukhsana Gazi (MBBS from Bangladesh, MSc from London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, UK)

**Scientist & Co- coordinator, Urban Health Research Group,
Centre for Equity and Health Systems, icddr, Bangladesh.**

Field of interest: Health Systems, Reproductive health

Work experience: Over 20 years in the field of public health

Publications: Over 30 publications in peer reviewed journal

Trained in Systematic Reviews

What is meant by civil society?

- # Is the arena of collective action around shared interests, purposes and values
- # It embraces a diversity of actors, institutional forms, power, and autonomy
- # Often populated by organizations like public charities, foundation, NGOs, professional/business associations
- # Autonomous

Origin and transitions

- # The term originated with Adam Ferguson, an 18th century Scottish philosopher- there was no distinction between state and society
- # The 19th century German philosopher made this distinction
- # Elaboration of the concept of society as an autonomous sphere
- # Perspective of civic organization for democracy and good citizenship

Functioning

- # Act collectively in a public sphere
- # Express interest, exchange information to achieve mutual goals
- # Make demands on the state
- # Protects rights of the social, political and economical organizations
- # Fosters democracy

Three concepts by Michael Edwards

Civil society as **associational life**

- ⊕ criticisms; values and beliefs are fostered where we grow, thus family, school, workplaces are very important

Civil society as the **good society**

- ⊕ Informed decision making is a challenge

Civil society as the **'public sphere'**

- ⊕ where citizens argue about issues and negotiate public interest

Other perspectives

- # **Civil society and state**
- # **Civil society and voluntary spirit**
- # **Civil society and democracy**
- # **Civil society and globalization**

Measuring civil society

- # Several attempts made to measure the concept of civil society;
- # Civicus, the World Alliance for Citizen Participation has established a survey instrument for national level use
- # Johns Hopkins University Centre for Civil Society developed another instrument

Shared decision making of consumer groups for health care

- # Traditionally physicians took sole responsibility
- # Now, patients are involved in shared decisions
- # Cultural and cognitive variability
- # Decision aids are developed, used, evaluated

Community and informed choice

- # Little is known
- # Democratic or equal participation is challenging
- # Effective partnership between different groups
 - ⊕ Community people in Tanzania examined linkage between agricultural practices and malaria (Mlozi et al 2006)
 - ⊕ Consumers contributed in rural West Africa designing health insurance schemes (Allegrri et al 2006)
 - ⊕ Shared decision making on contraceptive method use improved quality of care in Nicaragua (Meuwissen, 2006)

Different forms of involvement of the community groups(Cornwall and Jewkes, 1995)

- # **Contractual**-People are contracted into projects by the researchers to take part in experiments
- # **Consultative**- People are asked for their opinion and consulted before intervention
- # **Collaborative**- Researcher and community work together on project designing which is initiated and managed by the researchers
- # **Collegiate**-Scientific group and community work together with different skills to offer in a process of mutual learning when local people control over the process

A community university partnership model with 3 generation of partnerships(Spoth,2007)

- **1st generation**-For this they hired and worked with local key persons (relevant to the targeted intervention group) who performed as coordinators and link persons between community and university.
- **2nd generation**- they knit group of local residents who helped with organization and implementation of the intervention but these groups did not function as core local groups.
- **3rd generation**- they incorporated local teams designed to be strategic with very focused intervention goals, expectation is these groups would select specific intervention from a range of possible evidence based intervention options.

Way forward

- # Ensuring/creating pre-conditions for healthy civil society
 - ⊕ giving people the means to be active citizens, more participation by political reforms, guaranteeing independence, structures of public communication
- # Strong institutional partnership
- # Networking, linkages with media
- # Making rooms for innovation

Acknowledgements

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Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews

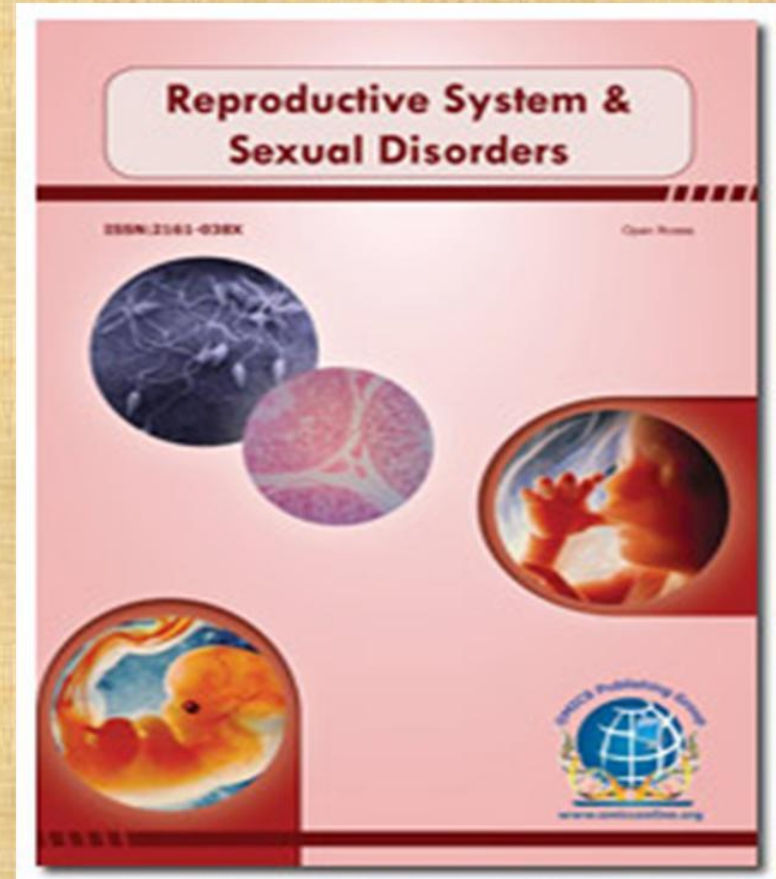
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Thanks

Reproductive & Sexual Disorders Related Journals

- Andrology
- Journal Of Pregnancy And Child Birth
- Journal of Women's Health Care
- Gynaecology & Obstetrics



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