

The Albanian Cultural and Social Welfare

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Abstract *The transition of Albanian society of course that brought a range of changes in all aspects of our life. Some of the major changes are seems in education system, family institution, economy and policy systems. 'Cultivation of mind' is the strong point of social civilization nowadays because the social welfare depends on directly from high culture of society. According to, the sustainable development is a normative concept which involves trade-offs among social, ecological and economic objectives, and is required to sustain the integrity of the overall system. This is usefully formalized in terms of a social welfare function which is based on an aggregate of individual preferences and, as a prerequisite of intergenerational equity and overall system integrity, on a set of sustainability constraints. A 'sustainability-based social value function' is proposed to integrate these issues, and to go beyond traditional conceptions of sustainability that are either based on a value principle of maintaining some aggregate of capital ('weak sustainability'), or stationary-state criteria of maintaining social, ecological and economic assets constant over time ('strong sustainability'). Along with individual preferences and macroeconomic objectives, the proposed welfare function integrates principles of basic human needs ('critical economic capital'), integrity of the ecosystem ('critical ecological capital') and the socio-cultural system ('critical social capital'). This implies restrictions of the social opportunity space within which sustainable development can proceed and the new value function is defined.*

Keywords: *Mind cultivation, Basic needs; Criticality; Distribution weights; Economic development; Population growth; Social welfare; Sustainability*

1. Introduction

Some functionalists deny that paying attention to cultural factors contributes to our understanding of social policy. The idea that moral ideas and debates would have a significant influence on the design of social policies has been equated with the idea that the party and gossip on deck would determine the course of the ship (Schoor, 1984, in Deacon, 2002). Baldock (1999) has argued that culture, as a set of common values, norms and attitudes shared by the majority of a national population, is not a missing variable in understanding social policy.

However, those who deny any significant relation between culture and social policy take a lonely position. Much more often than not one can read opposite views expressed in the literature. It is, for instance, a broadly accepted view that the early development of Western welfare states can partially be understood as resulting from industrial and economic growth (Wilensky, 1975), or from a power struggle between the interests of classes and risk categories (Baldwin, 1990), but partly also from a struggle between various ideologies such as conservatism, liberalism and socialism (Chatterjee, 1996; Fitzpatrick, 2001; George & Page, 1995). In addition, it is acknowledged that religious cultures have had their influence on the formation and design of Albanian welfare (Hornsby-Smith, 1999; Van Kersbergen, 1995), and that a political culture of neo-liberalism has been steering the restructuring of Western welfare states during the last two decades (Bonoli, George & Taylor-Gooby, 2000; Deacon, 2002; Powell & Hewitt, 2002). Recently, it has even been posited that the process of globalization, which urges many welfare states all over the world to adapt, is essentially a cultural process of rationalization (Rieger & Leibfried, 2003).

Many more examples could be given to illustrate that relations between culture and social policy do exist. They exist not only at the macro level, but also, for instance, at the level of the interaction between administrators and their clients; and not only when culture influences social policy, but also the other way round, as is claimed, for instance, by studies of the effects of welfare benefits on the work ethic and civic morality. All this does not mean that the relation between culture and social policy at present has developed into an adequately theorized, coherent field of study.

2. Methodology

The patterns of pathology are estimated by least-squares regression techniques. For each of the six pathologies, two types of relations are estimated: The first relation includes one or more other jointly determined pathologies and a subset of the root causes; this relation is estimated by Institution of family regression where the whole set of root causes is used as instrumental variables. The first relation provides estimates of the relation among the several pathologies and the partial effects of specific root causes given the level of the other included pathologies. The second relation includes only a set of root causes; the relation is estimated by level of education regression. The second relation provides estimates of the total effect of specific root causes that operate both directly on the specific pathology and indirectly through their effect on other related pathologies. All variables in both relations are weighted by the resident population of Korca city. This increases the relative effects of conditions and makes the estimates correspond more closely to the effects of national conditions. Only those variables that are statistically significant at a 95 percent level or more are included in either of the relations; as it turns out, most of the included variable are significant at a much higher level.

3. The basic Welfare factors in Korca city

Welfare is both a consequence and a cause of several conditions best described as social pathologies. These conditions include family institution, urban and rural changes, dependency, poverty, and economic capital, level of education, out-of-wedlock births, no employment population, and violent crime. The basic hypothesis of this study is that welfare dependency and the other pathologies are jointly determined and are derivative of a common set of other conditions.

Differences in the levels of these conditions among the state provide a basis for estimating the specific effects of welfare benefits, the relations among the social pathologies, and the extent to which the pathologies are based on a common set of root causes.

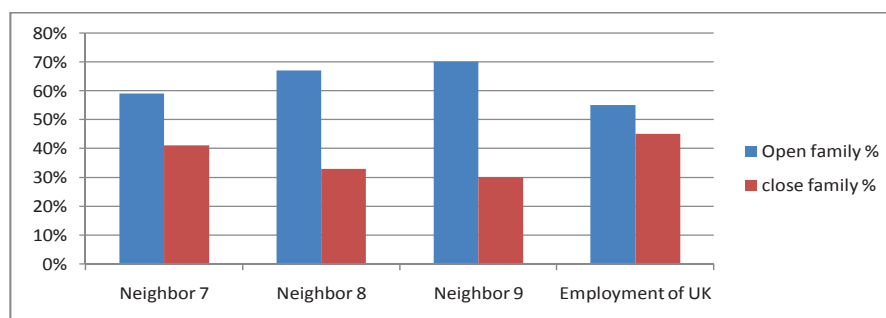
Albania state has a very confuse history so the level of civilization depend from its social and cultural development. So the dictatorial system essentially ignored internationally recognized standards of human rights. This legacy poses a double threat to the future of democracy. It has left citizens unaccustomed to searching for their own values and morals, more comfortable with simply accepting those supplied ready-made by the state. Such people of Albanian society can be easily persuaded to let demagogues do their thinking for them. They want to find new devils to blame for their troubles. They seek harsh measures to restore order to a complex and insecure new world...

Nowadays the development of a democratic culture is hindered by a lack of a sense of personal responsibility and accountability, a widespread apathy, and a deeply rooted expectation that others, the new government or foreigners, would simply step in and solve the country's problems` (E. Biberaj, Albanian Transition 253).

The Albanian society has a very diffusive cultural trashegimi so it is very difficult to give opinions about welfare of cultural and social aspects.

One of the basic aggregations of cultural and social welfare in a state is the institution of family which is based institution of society in general. Nowadays sociologists as Michale Harallambos for example emphasis that nuclear modern family is the core of civilization which establishes the relationship between couple (which usual can go to deep crise or to be dysfunctional and to generate divorce). Also, relation parents-children are under the risk. From recent data, which were based on epirical study of the case through questionnaires with focus group the residents of Neighbors 7, 8 and 9 and some employers of Fan. S. Noli University shows that over last decades, changes in economic, political, social and cultural systems have started to change and to generate better conditions for functioning of close family.

The rate of living in open and nuclear families



Target groups	Open family (living in group)%	Nuclear family (close family)%
Neighbor 7	59%	41%
Neighbor 8	67%	33%
Neighbor 9	70%	30%
Employers of UK	55%	45%

As we can see, Albanian population lives in open families more than nuclear family. So the open family rate is about 70% of those surveyed while the nuclear family core occupies about 30% of the keystrokes. Open family dominates (the living of three or more generation together) which tell as the low level of our civilization in general.

4. Some other causes which influence in these changes are:

Welfare Benefits

The one variable that best reflects the welfare policy in a state is the level of incoming benefits per recipient household. State governments also set eligibility standards subject to federal guidelines, but differences in these standards are not easily measurable. For this study, welfare benefits are defined through rate of employment and unemployment benefits per recipient household as a percent of the pretax personal income per capita in the state. On a national basis such benefits are 23 percent of personal income per capita, with a range from 10.4 percent in Albania.

- a. Conditions of study (nowadays the students have better conditions of study in their school or University. They have different chances to find books or scholar articles because the technology system is developing each year) but the education system is changing the form and the meaning each day. This is another trouble for Albanian students.
- b. The global trade allows us to consume or to have access in different products or events which mean a good ability of human to participate in different labor or professions.
- c. Social capital indeed from community awareness, and community awareness independent directly from level of public and personal culture.
- d. Poverty is another basic factor of welfare conditions. Poverty is primarily determined by the level of economic conditions, education and state policy. Also, the level of welfare benefits dependent from number employment population. Education has a strong effect on employment impact. Unfortunately, the institution of statistics in Albania shows a high level of unemployment people and low welfare level.
- e. The level of violent crime is also related to the composition of the population, reflecting both a direct effect and an indirect effect operating through the level of the welfare dependent population.
- f. Socio-cultural values and norms, learned preferences, human capital and labor force, local knowledge of the environment, social competence and institutions, human health and life expectancy as well as cultural and social integrity and social cohesion.

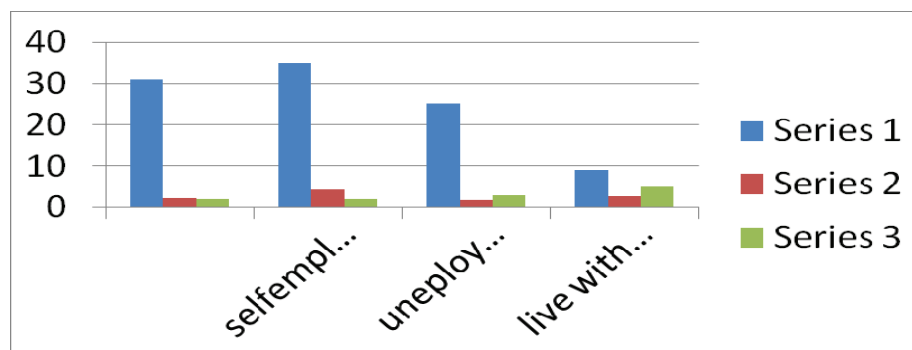
5. Poverty and morals

One of the direct consequences of the economic crisis was the rise of the number of households living below the poverty line. The so-called 'new' poverty attracted many scholars to study its extent, social distribution, determinants and dynamics in a large number of quantitative and qualitative studies. But it also put the relation between social policy, on the one hand, and normative images of the poor and perceptions of the causes of poverty, on the other, back on the research agenda. It is usually the case that elderly people and people with disabilities can rely more strongly on less stigmatizing benefits than, for instance, unemployed people. In many European countries widows are usually better protected by national benefit schemes than divorced women; core workers can generally rely on more generous and comprehensive social insurance schemes than peripheral workers can and job seeking obligations attached to benefit receipt are usually more relaxed for older people and single parents. This common Albanian deservingness culture may have a long history in that the deservingness dimension coincides strongly with the chronological order in which different types of schemes have been introduced in these welfare states from the end of the 19th century onwards. First were the schemes for the most deserving categories of old, sick and disabled people, then family benefits and unemployment compensation, and lastly (if at all) social assistance for the 'least deserving' (Kangas, 2000). It should be noted that in Albania studies on the relation between the social images of target groups and the social policies directed at them have been focused more on unemployed people than on the poor. In Albanian society less favorable images of unemployed people also exist (Biberaj, Albanian in transition, 1998) There are doubts about their willingness to work, but they are also

seen on average as irresponsible and unreliable, less intelligent and less persevering. The social image of young unemployed people is more negative than that of older unemployed people, but this might be due to the fact that generally older people have a more positive social image than younger people (Dekker & Ester, 1993). Studies have shown that differences in the degree of negative imaging of unemployed people depend on personal characteristics: more negative, for instance, are rightist people, authoritarian people and conservatives.

- The rate of employment people in the public administration is 31%
- The rate of self-employment is 35%
- The rate of unemployment is 25%
- The rate of people who lives with social help is 9%

The community is very altruist and the number of nonemployee population is lower than other Albanian cities. Private economy system is in middle level of development and dominates the public administration employment.



6. Conclusion

In conclusion, I can say that we are a transition society (between traditional and modern recourses) as a result we do not have great level of cultural and social welfare. So the institution of family, education system, economic capital and other social pathologies are in transition too. We need to develop social policies to generate the value and standard norms in our modern society.

Farther more, sustainable development is a normative concept which embraces social, ecological and economic dimensions of conservation and change.

In addition, priority must be given to a transition process for initial states outside the sustainable development region. This study suggests that the state governments may be best advised to focus welfare on the quality of system education and a strong general economic climate appear to be the most effective policy-responsive conditions to reduce the remaining pathologies. Albanian government should be work new strategies for high level of civilization which has a basic impact in social and cultural welfare. To generate sustainability economy and better income for Albanian residents and to stimulate the higher level of education system.

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