

Evaluation of Civil Servants and Citizens Relations in Turkey in Terms of Sociology

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Abstract: In the research the relationship between civil servants and citizens which is one of the important social problems of Turkey has been studied and has been evaluated in the light of human rights under four categories. These four categories are; the cultural elements contributing to the appropriate role of a civil servant's social status, elements that turn the negative attitudes of a civil servant into positive ones, negative elements that prevents a civil servant to perform his social status and other elements that affect the role of the social status of a civil servant. The result is the ideal communication between the civil servant and the citizen based on affection, respect, tolerance and sympathy in the light of human rights.

Key words: Turkish civil servant, Citizen, Human rights, Tolerance and social relation

Introduction

The civil servants provide certain needs of a country, which has been assigned by the government. As the head control organization, states turn out to be institution directing the social, political and economical events and also constitute new rules and put them in practice. (Saribay, 1998)

State supports the general abstract interests "what is good for the country" rather than the concrete interests of the society. While the social classes and work distribution constitute one part of the state, civil servants form the other part; bureaucrats like president, parliament, government, police, army, judges, prosecutors (Saribay, 1998 and Sezal, 2002). These people perform their duties in the frame of social perception (For Turkish society that perception is serious, distant and mannered) and public sphere (Giddens, 2000; Saribay, 1998).

Every society provides non-profitable services to its citizens (ones who live in the limits of political system, have common rights and duties and recognize themselves as a part of the nation) through the canals of civil servants or as Max Weber put "administrative class". The increasingly primer duty of the state is to maintain the relationship between its members in justice. So it is again state's duty to prevent any humiliation which may have a negative effect on both sides (Durkheim, 1942). The society that materializes its social organization in the form of a government, perform non-profitable services to its citizens through the canals of civil servants or officers. Civil servants have socially acceptable status to perform what s/he is expected. Citizens expect him or her to maintain his or her social status. Changes and developments in material and moral world propose the interrogation of the status and the role of civil servants. The situation however keeps people sensitive about human rights and democracy, with mutual interaction in the mentioned parts of the society the period of transformation gains speed (Champagne *et al.*, 1999; Durkheim, 1942; Giddens, 2000 and Tosun, 2001).

The productivity that determines the quality of civil servant's service is provided in the short run by civil control and in the long run by political control (Anon, 2001). A political interaction that creates a generally accepted control on people need to be accomplished for that reason, among the sphere of control forms a culture assigning which rights and interests will be controlled (Saribay, 1998). The obvious signifier of the productivity is the social pleasure and it is reflected in passive ways. However individual or common unpleasurabilities are expressed in different ways. The complaints are general where the civil servant delays the routine. To solve the complaints the officer under consideration should have a law sanction (Doğan, 2002; Marshall, 1999; Raelin, 1999).

Routine can't be maintained fairly just by obeying the social rules. Regulations between societies in the globalising world constitute an increasingly more important place and they should be considered as well. The civil servant consciously or unconsciously unaware of these social proceedings is welcomed by the cruel world facts. For not having that kind of a situation "every civil servant as a norm of national and international, in the respect of human rights should know the necessities of his or her duty; and gets identified with the appropriate roles (by transforming the duty into habit) and should work in great care to maintain the routine"(Saribay, 1998). It is indeed helpful to indicate the international norms surrounding the aforementioned attitudes since they form the sphere of the relation between civil servants and citizens.

In the frame of basic universal "human rights", some principles of the relationship between the civil servants and citizens

No humiliating or outrageous punishment or attitude can be practiced for anyone

Apart from some legal compulsions no one's freedom can be abolished.

None can be prosecuted without the right of defending himself or herself, everybody is innocent until the guilt is proven.

The sentence for the crimes cannot be pre-ordered; no sentence can be submitted after the crime, no arbitrary punishment can be performed.

The individual and family life, house and communication of people are private. Official institutions in certain legal conditions may intercept in legal procedure.

Anyone whose rights and freedoms are violated even by the legal officers has the right to apply to a national post to compensate the situation.

In the subject of using rights and freedoms, there can be no discrimination in any respect of sex, race, and language, social or other opinions, and racial or social root, being a member of any minority, wealth, birth or any other situation. Everyone has the right of getting education.

Everyone can use their wealth freely; yet for public interests interventions can be, in that situation the loss is covered.

Everyone's thought, conscience and religion is free. These fundamental rights can only be limited to protect security, health, morality or other people's right and freedom.

Apart from legal restrictions everyone can tell his or her idea, take information or opinion.

Apart from legal restrictions everyone has the right to live, to travel wherever s/he wants, and right to leave his her country.

If anyone whose rights are violated, and despite his or her attempts in the civil laws, can't solve the problem has right to apply to an international court.

The abovementioned rights are the basic human rights. The subject of these rights is people. The satisfaction of ones who interact with the civil servant constitutes the object. A civil servant can arrange his personal relations as friend, close friends or in any other different forms but in his or her official sphere s/he has to treat people (citizens) in the respect of human rights. So civil servants as Max Weber indicated should play the role, which is necessity to differentiate the personal and social spheres and perform his or her duty as a habit. Otherwise conversation becomes primary instead of the service expectation. The unpleasantness of the condition is reflected on the quality of the service and also the quality of the life in the public office. Gölcüklü, 1997; Kızılcelik, 1994; Marshall, 1999 and Sillars, 1995).

The Principles of a Relationship Between Civil Servants and Citizens: There are some certain elements in the relationship of a civil servant with people (citizens) for approving his or her social status. These are the main norms, which shape the relationship called individual's fundamental rights between state, and citizen and they shape the relationship between a civil servant and a citizen. These norms are divided into four categories; the cultural elements contributing to the appropriate role of a civil servant's social status, elements that turn the negative attitudes of a civil servant into positive ones, negative elements that prevents a civil servant to perform his social status and other elements that effect the role of the social status of a civil servant. These norms are also approved by Turkish society (Anon, 2001; Anon, 2002, Bilen, 2000; Durkheim, 1942; Marshall, 1999; Pieper, 1999; Sezal, 2002 and Saribay, 1998).

The Cultural Elements Contributing To The Appropriate Role Of A Civil servant's Social Status: In a relationship with a civil servant citizens have a confused and hesitant manner due to the lack of information. So they can't give their message clear and concrete or they don't show the tolerance or patience (limitations about security) in the public sphere (Priority to some people, insufficiency of the physical location, misuse during the performance of social roles). In a similar condition a good civil servant should evaluate the message of a citizen clearly then though it is not her or his duty, should act like a guide.

Citizens may apply to a civil servant for various reasons (Incomplete, wrong documents or confusion of the departments in a public office). That kind of an attitude is not usually intentional. Since these people have shortage or wrongs in their daily life due to their adaptation of fast busy business life, they wouldn't like to correct themselves according to the bureaucratic principles. Even they insist on to keep the incomplete and wrong parts instead of solving problems in bureaucratic necessity (ration). The determiner of the repetition and level of insisting is the level of a civil servant's having his or her role as a habit. Besides it is not ethical for a civil servant to be sarcastic directly or indirectly with a citizen who has abstractedly came to the wrong department. As soon as the citizen perceives the situation both the civil servant's status and personality and also the social status of the office gets harmed.

The citizen shouldn't be questioned or counseled when he makes a demand. A civil servant has to explain the legal bureaucratic process in respect of the citizen's personality. If there is any "periodic" bureaucratic process (renewing, declaration of the change), which may cause any negligence by the citizen, the civil servant should remind him or her

the condition.

Elements That Turn The Negative Attitudes In The Role of A Civil Servant's Social Status Into Positive Ones: A civil servant who doesn't give any importance to the applicant's qualities like age, sex, education and economical level and evaluates the application seriously comforts the citizen by presenting his/her serious image in direct or indirect (mild, calm and respectful) ways. The comfortable social mood of the situation on the citizen will reflect as a consolation to the civil servant.

A civil servant that has identified and turned his duty into a habit never hesitates to direct any complaint about him or her to the upper parts of the hierarchy (mostly introducing the toppers unit of the hierarchy). The same civil servant doesn't change his or her attitude if the complaining citizen would come back without a result to his complaint. Besides the negative condition of the complainer at first loses its sharpness.

In the arguments between civil servants of equal or different ranks, except legal compulsions citizens shouldn't be asked to witness or act like an arbitrator and it shouldn't turn out to be like "None is working, so I'm not working, too." Because citizens' perception of the dispute will be in natural evaluation in which parties turn out to be good one who have turned his duty into habit and unsuccessful one who couldn't turn his duty into a habit.

The Negative Elements That Affect The Role of Civil Servant's Social Status: Any criticism by civil servants against their offices, in the instance of any negative aspect like bureaucracy or personnel, damages both the respectability of both the institution and the officer.

The good civil servant who has turned his duty into habit should act according to the fact that everyone has different physical, mental and spiritual qualities. Otherwise the citizen creates a negative manner against the civil servant and institution. For instance as a result of the incomplete transfer of the problem due to wrong pronunciation or diction, if the civil servant makes the last sentence in the name of the citizen, the result would be something different then demanding. That kind of an act, which makes the citizen to interrogate the role of the civil servant, is harmful rather than being useful.

If the civil servant reflects negativity of his or her own life, even by his or her body language, would find himself or herself in a negative interaction and encounters increasingly negatives.

The civil servants' act of addressing individuals is very important. Civil servant who neglect or humiliate the identity, age, status levels of citizens' cause to effect both the institution and the himself or herself in negative ways.

The ideological based attitudes and external ties which are observed on some of the civil servants would be punished a day by ones who don't share the same ideology.

The conveyance of special requests or institutional problems by civil servants to citizens even by way of alluding sounds of various benefits.

A civil servant should give great care to the sentences, which can be received as commitment. An unlike behaviour would harm both the institution and the civil servant.

Every civil servant should absorb his role and get identified with that; should turn the role into a small part of his or her personality. If s/he doesn't do that because of the body language, s/he will be faced with the negative assessment of the citizen.

None of the civil servants should react negatively behind (in a way that other people can hear or understand) of a citizen who has bothered or argued with the civil servant. This situation affects either her personality or her role negatively.

Other Elements That Affect the Role Of A Civil Servant's Social Status: The problems between civil servants and citizens are usually sourced from bureaucracy rather than personal disputes. So in these kinds of situations instead of creating defensive mechanisms the civil servant should try to understand the bureaucratically reasons of the conflict and should tell to citizen what is required. If the civil servant is insufficient at explaining, s/he shouldn't hesitate to ask for help who is higher in rank than him or her and can explain the situation.

It shouldn't be forgotten that the attitudes, which bother citizens most, are the judging, inspecting and humiliating ones. Everyone should be treated in the way, which makes citizens equal to the civil servant.

Civil servants should give great care to citizens and shouldn't neglect them. The citizens usually remind the civil servant that s/he is a valuable person.

If the civil servant in his or her dialog with the citizens would form a investigating, researching, interrogating attitude instead of seeming brave, tough and make mistake, citizens respect and trust both the institution and the civil servant.

Civil servants who should keep in mind that "People at the first encounter make the impression of a person whom they are communicating" give great importance to a face, which has a harmonious, peaceful, plain and serious image.

Civil servant, who regards "Everyone has different pleasures and opinions" as a principle, serves without considering physical appearance, mentality or clothes of the citizens.

If the civil servant has to warn citizens in a public sphere (not to smoke, getting in the queue), s/he should do warnings short, clear and politely (Please, I request you, I'm sorry, thank you).

When a civil servant communicates with citizens either face to face or by indirect communication vehicles like telephone, fax, s/he should inform the citizen about the service and expectations in a concrete, incomplete style and at once. So the citizen develops a positive attitude about the civil servant and his institution.

Conclusion

No matter which status a civil servant is a member of, to respond well and communicate at the highest level, s/he should adapt the role appropriate to his or her status and transform his role into an automatic process. So that the routine doesn't harm the personality and s/he serves with pleasure. As Durkheim has indicated state is the only social organization, which keeps the civil servants to treat fair everyone in the light of equalance, while, it equips its citizens sufficient to organize in ideal social relations. The way to accomplish that is to correlate the relationship between a citizen and civil servant with affection, respect, perception and tolerance in the light of human rights.

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