Citizenship and Governance: Some Research Questions

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Outline

- Citizenship: A definition

- Three interconnected dimensions

- Four challenges and their associated research directions

Citizenship: What is it?

- A status

- but also a relationship - between state and citizens

  … in constant redefinition, following from recognition practices and claims-making

What is this Relationship?

It is one that sets the boundaries of the political community:

– that which is public / that which is private

– who is in / who is out

How are the Boundaries Set?

The boundaries are set by the interactive combination of three dimensions of citizenship in a particular time and place:

- rights and responsibilities

- access

- belonging

Rights and Responsibilities

For example:

- rights -- civil, political and social
  - rule of law, right to vote, civil rights, anti-discrimination, basic income, and so on

- responsibilities
  - to obey the law, to pay taxes, to participate in political life, and so on

Access

The conditions that will enable participation and empower citizens:

- – public institutions

- – means to participate

Belonging

- formal membership

  – nationality, rights holders

- plus feelings of belonging

  – national identity, sense of community, political identity

Four Challenges

Currently there are four challenges to the boundaries of citizenship.

Each has a direct impact on governance.

1 - a diversity debate

2 - a locational debate

3 - a debate about social citizenship

4 - a debate about participation

The Challenge of Diversity

Who belongs and what are their rights?

The premises of liberal citizenship:

- Formal equality / cultural neutrality
- With limited institutional recognition (example: federalism)

Increasingly hard to sustain, faced with:

- Cultural diversity from immigration
- Claims by national minorities
- Other categorical claims for recognition
- Integration "failures"

Some Research Directions (1)

Comparisons:

1. What are the consequences of "recognition practices" for the cohesion of the political community?

   – Does recognition of cultural specificity engender a stronger integration into the community or does it foster fragmentation?

   – What about assymetrical citizenship?

2. Identity and belonging: Is "promotion" possible?

   – Can policies create a sense of belonging?

Some Research Directions (2)

Governance:

1. How should forms of recognition be articulated to governance practices?

   – For example, Aboriginal self-government:

   - How is governance transformed by such arrangements?

   - How should federal and provincial governments adapt their practices to Aboriginal self-government?

   – Lessons for federalism and inter-governmental arrangements?

The Challenge of Location

What is the political unit of citizenship?

- In the past, a presumption of a sovereign national state

- In the era of globalisation?
  - Still a national state?
  - Multi-level citizenship?

- In the era of decentralisation?
  - What is the "citizenship" content of actions by subnational units and markets?

Some Research Directions (3)

Location:

If elements of citizenship are being transferred to sub-national or transnational institutions…

1. What is the impact on states' capacity:

   – to generate democratic debate?

   – to generate democratic debate? to foster solidarity and full access to citizenship rights?

   – to generate broad collective policy orientations?

Some Research Directions (4)

2. Is multi-layered citizenship possible?

– European lessons?

– Advantages of federal systems?

3. If decentralisation and semi-privatisation of policy-making and service delivery is occurring:

– Does this process affect people's sense of common citizenship?

– Who can claim to be the legitimate voice for the public interest?

The Challenge of Social Citizenship

- How do we maintain the ties of social solidarity and express principles of equity?

- How should we partition responsibility?

  – What is your right and what is your responsibility?

  – What is the balance between the liberty of market power and solidarity?

- What are the citizenship consequences of socio-economic exclusion?

Some Research Directions (5)

Social Citizenship:

1. Are feelings of belonging weakened by the increasing use of partnership and the decentralisation of service provision?

2. Are social citizenship rights a crucial component of a well-functioning economy?

   – What links are there between the equality associated with citizenship and measures of population health and well-being?

Some Research Directions (6)

3. Is the responsibility to be as self-supporting as possible fostered by social citizenship practices that include the empowerment of individuals and communities?

   – How to do this?

4. Does citizenship education pay sufficient attention to the duties of citizenship beyond voting?

   – For example, ensuring equity and paying taxes

The Challenge of Participation

To achieve a basic principle of citizenship, equality in collective decision-making...

- How can formal equality be made real?
    - for all "categories" of the citizenry

- How can democratic spaces be maintained?
    - In the era of globalisation?
    - In the era of partnerships?

Some Research Directions (7)

Participation:

1. To what extent is formal recognition of diversity translated into real access to citizenship?
   - Which institutions?
   - What kind of participation?

2. If good citizenship practices are also fostered in the institutions of civil society, what can governments do to foster a healthy civil society?

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