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# The Public-Private Mix in National and International Development

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# The Public-Private Mix in National and International Development

## **Abstract**

Social welfare is a complex, multi-dimensional, field of practice that seeks to promote the well-being of people everywhere. But national responses to social welfare differ dramatically from one society to the next and, often, valid comparisons between different nations and systems of social welfare are difficult to undertake. This paper addresses that issue by introducing an innovative approach to welfare policy analysis using a Private-Public Development Mix (PPDM) model. The PPDM draws on all four of social welfare's core institutions—the State, the family & household, the Market, and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)—as well as four sets of social challenges for which national and international policy responses are needed. The utility of the model is demonstrated through analyses of public-private responses to poverty alleviation efforts in the United States and to advancing compulsory primary and middle school education among rural children living in two of China's poorest regions.

## **Keywords**

public, private, civil society, nongovernmental organizations, voluntarism, model-building

## **Disciplines**

Social and Behavioral Sciences

**The Public-Private Mix in  
National and International Development**

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## Introduction

The role of government as the provider of choice in social welfare has expanded upon significantly since the launching of Lyndon Johnson's Great Society Programs in the mid-1960s (Gilbert 1983; Day 2009). Even so, today, many more stakeholders are involved in social welfare provision including those acting independently (e.g., including such large-scale civil society organizations<sup>1</sup> [CSOs] as Save the Children, Habitat for Humanity, Goodwill Industries) and those working in partnership with local, county, and state governments through various types of purchase of service agreements (e.g., member agencies of the Child Welfare League of America, Family Service Association, the Salvation Army [Anheier & Seibel 1990; NCCS 2010]). Though functioning under private auspices, these organizations are performing services that clearly are mandated public social responsibilities (Gilbert & Gilbert 1989; Salamon 1995). Despite the often complex relationships that characterize the contemporary public-private human service picture, governments continue to be the major providers of income security services to:

- 1) the poor (e.g., Temporary Assistance to Needy Families [TANF], General Assistance [GA], Medicaid);
- 2) persons with disabilities (e.g., Supplemental Security Income programs [SSI]);
- 3)

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<sup>1</sup> "Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) are variously referred to as "non-governmental organizations" (NGOs)," private voluntary organizations" (PVOs), or as the "the third", sometimes, "independent" sector. This paper uses the umbrella term "civil society organizations" (CSOs) to include all private, voluntary, organizations that are established and largely financed by people themselves to carry out some public benefit activity that they either do not want government to undertake (e.g., family planning services) or which government for a variety of reasons cannot or should not undertake (e.g., support for religions and the performance of religious services).

low-income workers (e.g., Earned Income Tax Credit [EITC] and subsidies for health, housing and child care); and, 4) older adults (e.g., Social Security, Medicare).

As significant as is the role of government in social provision, three additional stakeholders provide a broad range of critical social services: 1) the for-profit market sector via subsidized loans, job training, commercial insurance programs, and similar types of for-profit programs (Cawson 1982; Habisch & Jonker 2005; Kotler & Lee 2005); 2) the not-for-profit or civil society sector (Anheier & Seibel 1990; Salamon 1993; Enjolras & Siviesing 2009)--of which more than 1.5 million currently are registered in the United States as tax-exempt public charities (NCCS 2010); and, 3) the tens of millions of families and households to which people turn for social care at all stages of the life cycle (Leira 2002; Naldini 2003; Hughes & Fergusson 2004; Cherry 2007; Blome, Keck & Alber 2009). Today, a vibrant mix of public and private actors exists in the provision of human services. This public-private mix, while not an entirely new phenomenon (Le Grand & Robinson 1984; Johnson 1988; Gilbert & Gilbert 1989), has become a defining characteristic of modern welfare states in both economically advanced and developing countries worldwide (Roth 1987; Esping-Anderson 1999; Ascoli & Ranci 2002; Powell & Barrientos 2004; World Bank 2004; Estes 2010; UNDP 2010).

### Focus of This Paper

This paper explores the nature, functions, contributions and limitations of the four core providers of social welfare: 1) the State; 2) the Market; 3) families and households; and 4) the for-profit sector. Emphasis in the paper is placed on: 1) the role of government or the State as the major provider of income support programs; 2) the changing, but increasing, contributions of the Market or economic sector to social welfare; 3) the continuing contribution of families and households to all aspects of social welfare over the life cycle; and 4) the important contributions

made to social welfare by the growing numbers of development-oriented CSOs. More particularly, the paper presents a conceptual model--i.e., the Public-Private Development Mix (PPDM)--that captures the complexities of the relationships that exist between welfare's four core institutions when acting alone and together. The PPDM model is applied to two representative sectors of social welfare (poverty alleviation and the promotion of primary and middle school education among impoverished rural children) in two large and culturally diverse societies—the United States and the People's Republic of China (hereafter China).

The purposes underlying the use of the PPDM model in these examples is three-fold: 1) to illustrate the conceptual continuity that exist in the use of the model across culturally distinctive societies; 2) to apply the model to a complex set of service issues of central interest to welfare specialists worldwide; and, 3) to identify the inherent strengths of the model for use in conducting international and comparative social research.

## THE CONCEPTUAL BUILDING BLOCKS OF THE PUBLIC-PRIVATE MIX IN SOCIAL WELFARE

The origins of the PPDM model are to be found in a variety of sources. The earliest references are associated with the writings of European political scientist Richard Rose and his colleagues (1986) and social welfare specialists Adalbert Evers and Helmut Wintersberger (1988), Neil & Barbara Gilbert (1983, 1989), Norman Johnson (1987), Ramesh Mishra (1984) and Julian Le Grand & Ray Robinson (1984). Rose and his colleagues offered a conceptual framework for isolating the actors most responsible for welfare provision whereas Evers and Wintersberger provided a preliminary schematic depicting the multi-dimensional interactions that occur

between these actors. Johnson devoted his efforts to understanding the origins, underlying functions, and environmental pressures associated with the model's principal actors in the United States. Political scientist Alexander Davidson (1989) applied the model to an analysis of the origins of the welfare states of Sweden and New Zealand between 1888 and 1988. Economist Gabriel Roth (1987) used more or less the same framework in an analysis of the structure of social provision in developing countries. Gilbert & Gilbert, Le Grand & Robinson and Mishra focused on the changing dynamics of the social welfare systems of Europe and the United States.

All of these scholars agreed that significant changes were occurring with respect to the level of responsibility being carried by welfare's major institutional actors: 1) the role of the State in social welfare provision was shrinking steadily; 2) families, households, and the not-for-profit sectors were expected to pick up a larger share of society's welfare burden; and, 3) owing to a combination of demographic and economic trends, the capacity of societies to respond to new and emerging social needs was likely to decline. More specifically, these scholars suggested that: 1) public entitlement programs were likely to grow more stringent in their eligibility requirements; 2) levels of consumer co-pays and related fee-for-services cost sharing were likely to increase; and, 3) some publicly-financed social programs were expected to cease to exist entirely in response to declining public revenues. Today, many aspects of these anticipated outcomes are coming to pass, e.g., increased retirement ages for workers in France and Germany, increased co-pays for health care throughout virtually all economically advanced countries, and the introduction of tuition and related fees in many rich countries which, until recent years, provided post-secondary education to all eligible students without cost).

Danish sociologist Gøsta Esping-Andersen (1990) used more or less the same framework to identify patterns of social provision among groupings of economically advanced countries.



His analysis resulted in the identification of three welfare regimes (i.e., the Liberal, Corporatist-Statist, and Social Democratic regimes). The conceptual basis of his taxonomy rested on the unique histories, traditions, values, and norms of each society...in addition to the structure of their prevailing approaches to social welfare provision. Swedish social welfare specialist Joachim Vogel (2003) identified a fourth welfare regime...one that consists entirely of the family-centric welfare states of Southern Europe (Naldini, 2003). In subsequent studies, Vogel and his colleagues applied a basket of social indicators to identify the relationship that exists between welfare provision and an overall sense of life satisfaction (Hagerty et al. 2002). Vogel's focus on these two dimensions of social welfare provision was been expanded upon by other scholars all of whom confirmed the existence of a strong positive relationship between adequacy of social provision and levels of perceived personal and national satisfaction with life.<sup>2</sup>

#### Macro- and Micro-Social Institutions in Social Welfare

All societies are made up of four core institutions, i.e., two organized at the macro-level and two organized at the micro-level: 1) the State or governmental sector; 2) the Market or economy; 3) families and households; and 4) Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). These institutions are found in every society, albeit their relative importance will vary depending on prevailing socio-political ideologies, contemporary economic and political conditions, and the extent of human service needs (Dubey 1980; Evers & Wintersberger 1988; Estes 1990; Tracy 1992; Alber 1995; Enjolras & Sivesind 2009).

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<sup>2</sup> "Personal well-being" is a proxy concept for "life satisfaction" and "happiness." These concepts are widely studied and, indeed, many economically advanced countries regularly conduct surveys of their populations to determine time trends concerning levels of societal provision and subjective "personal well-being" (Lemel & Noll, 2003; Shek, et al. 2005; Cummins 2010;).

### Macro-Level Institutions: The State

Among others, the functions of the State include: 1) the creation of a legal and judicial system; 2) the promotion of law and order; 3) establishing a military; 4) negotiating international treaties and alliances; 5) printing money; 6) formulating monetary policy; 7) regulating inter-state commerce; 8) operating specialized public offices and departments that serve the needs of their populations; 9) responding to natural and man-made disasters; and, 10) the performance of such other functions as determined by the will of the people or their representative bodies (Moran et al. 2006).

In democratic societies, the State seeks to promote the fullest possible public participation of people in the creation of the legal and public policy decisions by which they consent to be governed. Thus, the concept of the State is far-reaching and incorporates most of the legal and social interactions that occur between the State, its government, and people themselves.

### Macro-Level Institutions: The Market

The primary focus of the economy, or the Market, is on systems of production, distribution, and consumption. Issues of productivity and efficiency also are major preoccupations of the economic sector. As to be expected, the primary purpose of all economies is to produce goods and services in sufficient quantity to satisfy at least the basic needs and wants of the society-as-a-whole, including those of non-economic actors, i.e., children, disabled persons, the elderly, and other groups of people classified by societies as the socially excluded—persons who cannot participate fully in the social, political or economic life of a nation (e.g., homeless persons,

substance abusers, persons with severe mental illnesses, or persons denied full participation on the basis of race, religion, sexual orientation, or other discriminatory criteria.

The productive processes associated with the market require a steady inflow of resources (including labor), technology to process the resources, and mechanisms for the distribution of the resulting goods and services. Economies also are concerned with issues of boom and bust, i.e., with periods of exceptional economic growth and contraction (World Bank 2002). Problems of shrinking markets, currency devaluation, and unemployment are associated with the latter phenomenon (Stiglitz 2010), whereas, hyper-growth can result in high levels of inflation, over consumption, increased public indebtedness, and unrealistic expectations concerning what the Market can sustain over the long term (World Bank 2010).

Those responsible for the management of a national economy for the most part seek to achieve a moderate, but steady, rate of economic growth. These efforts often require cooperative arrangements with national governments and the results in what is referred to as political economy, i.e., a concern for how countries are managed...taking into account both economic and political factors (Weingast & Wittman 2006). Increasingly, major economic actors also are concerned with the promotion of corporate social responsibility (CSR)--i.e., a focus on the pursuit of not one but three separate bottom lines—productivity, environmental protection, and profit (Salamon 1993; Habish & Jonker 2005; Kotler & Lee 2005).

### Micro-Level Institutions: Families and Households

Families consist of persons who reside together and are related to one another by blood, law or adoption. Families are the oldest social institutions and also are the most enduring systems of social welfare (Johnson 1987; Day 2009). In addition to giving birth to new generations and

caring for their aged and sick members, families engage in a level of social caring, self-help, and mutual aid not found elsewhere in society (Hughes & Fergusson 2004; Blome et al. 2009).

However, intimacy and social caring are only some of the functions carried by families; they also are important economic and political actors (Green & Owens 2004). Families tend to be conservative in their construction but, of necessity, create a variety of flexible structures designed to protect their members from economic uncertainties, political turmoil, and environmental crises (e.g., loss of a bread winner, unemployment, divorce, solitary survivorship, destruction of the natural environment, etc.).

Households differ from families in that their members who also reside together may not be related to one another by blood, law, or adoption. Households may consist entirely of family members but, increasingly, include other persons (e.g., boarders, unmarried partners, foster children, wards, and employees) who, with families, share a portion of their resources--time, talent or money--for the benefit of the larger unit. Increasingly, households, rather than families, serve as the basis for governmental enumerations and public policy formulation (Moran et al. 2006).

In the PPDM model families and households are grouped together as a single sector. The reasons for this are two-fold: 1) families and households tend to share a common set of values and norms that place the well-being of their members at the center of collective life; and 2) they provide a degree of intimacy and emotional continuity not found in society's other core institutions.

### Micro-Level Institutions: Religion and Religious Organizations

Religion refers to

a set of beliefs concerning the cause, nature, and purpose of life and the universe, especially when considered as the creation of a supernatural agency, or human beings' relation to that which they regard as holy, sacred, spiritual, or divine. Many religions have narratives, symbols, traditions and sacred histories that are intended to give meaning to life. They tend to derive morality, ethics, religious laws or a preferred lifestyle from their ideas about the cosmos and human nature (Wikipedia 2010).

Religious institutions, in turn, refer to structured communities in which people worship together, engage in religiously motivated actions, and through which religious beliefs and values are passed on from one generation to the next. In secular societies, the role of religion tends to be less visible than in societies in which religion is more central to collective life, i.e., as in the Islamic Republic of Iran or Saudi Arabia. Whether residual or proactive in public affairs, religion serves as a foundation for offering moral guidance to individuals and larger groups of adherents.

## THE PUBLIC-PRIVATE MIX IN HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY PERSPECTIVE

The PPDM model gives considerable attention to understanding: 1) the role of history, tradition, values and norms in shaping the welfare systems of particular societies at discrete moments in their social histories; and, 2) the contribution of contemporary social forces with which societies must deal in responding to the pressing welfare needs of their population, i.e., population growth trends (such as the rapid rates of population increase occurring in India and China), degree of social chaos (resulting from civil unrest or wars), economic pressures (but especially dramatic shifts in economic expansion and contraction), as well as factors that impact on a nation's physical environment (in response to either natural or man-made disasters, global warming, and so on). Thus, contemporary approaches to understanding the dynamics of the public-private

partnerships in social welfare are both more comprehensive and development-focused (Midgley & Conley 2010; Estes 2010, 2011). They also place increased attention on the broad-based socio-economic development goals of individual nations, world regions, and the world-as-a-whole (e.g., the eight goals—referred to as the “MDGs”—associated with the United Nations Millennium Development Campaign<sup>3</sup> [United Nations 2010]). This appreciably enhanced approach to the public-private mix in social welfare adds considerable depth to our understanding of the dynamics of welfare formation in rich and poor nations alike; it also places national and international welfare development in both a historical and contemporary context.

### The Contribution of Macro- and Micro-Level Institutions to Understanding the Public-Private Mix

Figure 1 illustrates the tri-partite relationship that exists between families and households, the State, and the Market in social welfare provision. The interstitial lines that link each of these core actors to one another are bi-directional and, therefore, indicate the flow of history, tradition, values and norms between and among the three core sectors. Figure 2 introduces Civil Society Organizations (including PVOs and NGOs, but hereafter referred to as CSOs) into the mix. The figure illustrates that CSOs are the direct creations of the interaction that takes place between families and households, the State, and the Market. Religion and religious institutions are subsumed in the CSO box in Figure 2 given the residual role that religious organizations officially carry in secular societies. In societies in which religion and religious institutions carry

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<sup>3</sup> The eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were established by the United Nations in 2005 for the purpose of: (1) eradicating extreme poverty and hunger; (2) achieving universal primary school education; (3) promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women; (4) reducing child mortality; (5) improving maternal health; (6) combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; (7) ensuring environmental sustainability; and, (8) to develop a global partnership for development (United Nations 2010).

a more dominant set of public functions a fourth box, arranged parallel to the families and households sector, would have been drawn.

[INSERT FIGURES 1 & 2 ABOUT HERE]

Figures 3 & 4 add the contribution of contextual and contemporary forces to the welfare mix. Thus, in Figure 3, history, traditional, values and norms form a contextual backdrop for the establishment of the State, the Market, families and households, and CSOs. All four of these core institutions are both shaped by and, in turn, shape the contextual factors. Figure 4 identifies the major contemporary social forces that comprise the structure of modern welfare states nationally and internationally. These forces, in turn, both influence the nature of the welfare mix and, in turn, are influenced by the mix (e.g., pressures associated with rapid population growth stimulate the development of child spacing programs which, in turn, shape the demographic pyramid of the nation over time [as has been the case with China's one child per family policy]). All eight of these contextual and contemporary social forces contribute centrally to the operationalization of the PPDM model and must be taken into account in analyses of the dynamics of welfare state formation.

[INSERT FIGURES 3 & 4 ABOUT HERE]

#### Degree of Formality and the Diminished Role of the State in the Public-Private Mix

Figure 5 bisects the welfare mix into public and private sector actors. Especially noteworthy in this figure is that only one core institution, i.e., the State, falls into the public sector. All three of the remaining core institutions are part of the private sector. Thus, despite the often overwhelming presence of the State sector in welfare provision in many societies (e.g., Sweden, Denmark, Norway, China), families and households, the Market, and CSOs contribute even more to the welfare mix of others (e.g., Australia, Greece, New Zealand, Portugal, Spain, the United

States). This observation is especially significant given the current crisis in welfare that is confronting many countries in which the relative contribution of the State to social welfare provision is shrinking—if not in the absolute number of dollars expended then in the outcomes attained (Moran et al. 2006; Weingast & Wittman 2006).

[INSERT FIGURE 5 ABOUT HERE]

Though presented as a general model of social welfare provision in Figure 5, when applying the PPDM model to an analysis of the welfare states of individual countries, the size of circles drawn for each of the core institutions, including those for the State and the Market, needs to be enlarged or made smaller so as to more accurately reflect the relative importance of these sectors to overall national welfare provision. We have done this in Figures 6 to 11 of our analyses of the welfare states of the United States and China in order to illustrate the flexibility of the general model in reflecting the relative contributions made to social welfare policy by each of its four core institutions. Note, though, that the size of the circles also may be enlarged or made smaller to reflect changes in the importance of the four core welfare institutions during earlier historical periods, e.g., the size of China’s Market sector is considerably larger today than was the case in 1978 when the period of the “Four Modernizations” was first proclaimed by Deng Xiaoping (ZHOU 2010).<sup>4</sup>

Figure 5 also divides the CSO sector into two parts using degree of formality and degree of professionalization as the basis for doing so. This division reflects the reality that the vast majority of CSOs are comparatively small, non-formal, and non-professionally staffed

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<sup>4</sup> China’s “Four Modernizations” refer to significant advances in the fields of agriculture, industry, national defense, and science and technology. Today, of course, China is one of the world’s most successful developing countries having achieved a gross national product growth rate ranging between 7% and 13% each year since 1980.



organizations (e.g., neighborhood clubs, cultural and religious organizations, parent-teacher associations, and so on). A much smaller number of CSOs meet the criteria of being large, highly structured, professionally-staffed organizations (e.g., Family Service Association of America, Neighborhood Settlement Houses, Community Centers for the Aged, the Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and so on).<sup>5</sup> Thus, Figure 5 captures the variety of CSOs that make up that sector and which, in turn, make different types of contributions to welfare provision at different levels of professional organization. Along with the distinction between public and private entities that operate within the social welfare field, the necessity to distinguish between more and less formal CSOs also is critical to the analysis of individual welfare states (Ascoli & Ranci 2002; NCCS 2010).

#### THE PUBLIC-PRIVATE MIX ILLUSTRATED:

##### APPROACHES TO POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN THE UNITED STATES

In 2009, approximately 43.6 million Americans (14.3%) lived in poverty (U.S. Census Bureau 2010). The majority of these persons were Black (25.8%), Hispanic (25.3%), children (20.7%), people between the ages of 18 & 64 years (12.9%), or elderly (8.9%). The number of people that fell below the Federal poverty threshold in 2009 was the largest in the 51 years for which poverty estimates had been collected by the U.S. Census Bureau (2010)! The dual problems of income insecurity and poverty persist in the United States despite the fact that the country has the second largest economy (\$14,260,000 million in 2008) after that of the European Union and the 10<sup>th</sup> highest national per capita income level among economically advanced nations (\$47,000 in 2008). The myriad social problems associated with poverty in the United States (e.g., criminal

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<sup>5</sup> For a full discussion of the size, functions and staffing patterns of formally recognized CSOs see National Center for Charitable Statistics (2010).

behavior, drug use, violence) are compounded by the country's mal-concentration of national wealth among a relatively small percentage of its population—the country's Gini Coefficient<sup>6</sup> was 46.8 in 2008 with only 6.0% of its top income earners receiving more than one-third of the nation's total annual wealth (UNDP 2010).

### The U.S. Response to High Levels of Recurrent Poverty

Figures 6, 7, and 8 summarize the approaches taken by the United States in responding to poverty. The summary that follows reflects the statistical picture of poverty in the United States presented above and illustrates the application of the PPDM model to an analysis of the nation's poverty alleviation efforts.

[INSERT FIGURES 6 & 7 ABOUT HERE]

Figure 6 identifies the major poverty alleviation efforts of the nation's four core social welfare's institutions as well as those of a subset of programs that exist along three of the six bi-directional axes that connect these institutions. Central to this figure is the depiction of the major poverty-related programs delivered by the State, Market, and CSO sectors. The character of the programs delivered by each sector differs substantially in that the majority of State programs are needs-tested and not-for-profit (e.g., the Earned Income Tax Credit program, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, General Assistance, Supplemental Security Income), whereas, those provided by the Market also may be needs-tested but are intended to be profit-making (e.g., profits associated with direct purchases, loans, rents, and private insurance programs). CSO programs are rarely formally needs-tested and in every case are organized at not-for-profit entities. Poverty-related services performed by families and households on behalf of their

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<sup>6</sup> Gini Coefficients measure the degree of income inequality that exists in a society. A score of "0" equals perfect equality, whereas, a score of "100" equals perfect inequality. In comparison with Gini Coefficient reported for the United States that of Norway, Sweden and Japan are 25.8, 25.9, and 24.9, respectively (UNDP 2010: Table 3).

members almost always are provided without cost and, in many situations, the extended family may provide financial and other forms of material support to fill in gaps left unmet by the other three sectors. The four sectors also differ in the degree of intimacy associated with service provision, i.e., the State and Market sectors tend to be emotionally distant and indifferent toward the individual poor whereas families and households, and to a lesser extent CSOs, tend to take a deep personal interest in the well-being of individual poor people and do so even under the most extreme circumstances (e.g., situations involving serious illness, drug use, criminal behavior, domestic violence, and so on).

The programs identified as existing along the three interstitial axes depicted in Figure 6 suggest the wide range of privately-initiated programs created in response to the service needs not met by either the core institutional sectors or by the poor themselves. Nearly all of these services fall within a mix of the State and Market sectors in combination with CSOs and, therefore, are programs created by citizens themselves for the purpose of responding to the recurrent income security needs and financial uncertainties of people locally and nationally. Interstitial programs that are identified on the axes as being closer to the Market or State sectors may receive a portion or all of their support from those sectors; programs listed closer to the family and household sector tend to depend entirely or primarily for their support on the free will contributions of the general public (i.e., personal charity or organized philanthropy). Rarely are the poor asked to contribute financially toward the cost of service received with the possible exception of selected services that are delivered in their homes (e.g., child or other types of dependent care, the performance of chore services). In such situations, a sliding scale, fee-for-service, approach typically guides the level of fees assessed. Along with the additional set of

interstitial programs identified in Figure 7 many thousands of other types of programs are provided by the 1.5 million American CSOs (NCCS 2010).

Figure 8 consolidates the core and interstitial programmatic data reported in Figures 6 and 7. The figure identifies all four of America's core welfare institutions and contains examples of the major types of formal and informal programs they offer in promoting local and national poverty alleviation. The figure also depicts the now six axes that exist between the four core welfare institutions and identifies a representative sample of the services provided by all four sectors in support of poverty alleviation efforts. The sheer magnitude of poverty alleviation efforts in the United States is stunning but so, too, is the extent of its poverty! Overall, and despite the efforts of many public and private sector actors, the United States has not succeeded in reducing, let alone eliminating, one of its most enduring social problems (Estes 1999; Rank 2005; U.S. Census Bureau 2010).

[INSERT FIGURE 8 ABOUT HERE]

Through examination of Figures 6, 7, and 8, application of the PPDM model to an analysis of poverty alleviation efforts in the United States has succeeded in: 1) identifying the spectrum of relatively impersonal poverty alleviation programs and services delivered by the nation's State and Market sectors; 2) identifying the range of face-to-face services delivered to the nation's poor by CSOs; 3) identifying the enduring and highly personal contribution made by families and households toward poverty alleviation; and, 4) capturing the complex network of interstitial organizations that exist along the six axes that join the four core social welfare actors to one another.

The analysis also confirms that the preponderance of poverty alleviation efforts in the United States fall under the purview of the private rather than public sector—a fact that is associated with the country’s history, traditions, values and norms (Myrdal 1944; Katz 1989; Axinn & Stern 2004; Day 2009; Fitzpatrick & Lagory 2010). In general, the United States views the causes of poverty to be case- rather than institutionally-based. One consequence of this historic belief is that solutions to poverty generally are assigned to the private sector, albeit the State and Market sectors share a fiduciary role in helping to finance the activities of the private sector. Much of this assistance is provided through grants and contracts between the State, Market, and CSO sectors. Private charity, including foundation grants and cash gifts from wealthy benefactors, are other means for transferring wealth between the private and public sectors and the poor.

Thus, the perceived personal nature of poverty in the United States has persisted despite the fact that more than one in seven American’s falls under the official Federal poverty threshold—including one in five children (20.7%), one in four Black and Hispanic Americans (combined average equals 25.6%) and one in eleven persons 65 years of age and older (U.S. Census Bureau 2010). These nation’s residual, rather than institutional, approaches to poverty alleviation have contributed little toward its elimination (Rank 2005), albeit the complexion of the faces and ages of the individual poor have changed appreciably over the decades (Axinn & Stern 2004). America’s approaches to poverty alleviation differ sharply from those adopted by other economically advanced countries which have experienced considerably better results with poverty alleviation (Estes 1999; Glatzer 2002; Alesina & Glaeser 2004).

We now will turn our attention to the use of the PPDM model in a brief analysis of China's approach to promoting compulsory primary and middle school education among rural children residing in the country's poorest Central and Western regions.

**THE PUBLIC-PRIVATE MIX ILLUSTRATED:  
COMPULSORY PRIMARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL EDUCATION  
IN RURAL CHINA**

China is the world's oldest, most enduring, and most populous society. Unified from a chaotic mix of warring states under the Qin dynasty in 221 BCE, today, China has a population of more than 1,339 million persons—20.0% of the world's total population in 2009. Slightly smaller in size than the United States, China is divided into 22 provinces, five autonomous regions, four municipalities (Beijing, Chongqing, Shanghai, Tianjin), and two special administrative regions (SARs) consisting of former colonial territories that were returned to Chinese sovereignty after 1997 (Hong Kong and Macau). China considers Taiwan to be its 23rd province (CIA, 2010). Though describing itself as the "People's Republic" of China (PRC), the country has yet to permit the direct election of its political leaders (Freedom House, 2010). Acting in the name of the people, however, the Chinese government is omnipresent in all spheres of public and private life and, as has the case throughout the centuries, civil servants employed by the central government, i.e., the State, exercise considerable influence over the personal affairs of individuals, families and local communities.

China also is the world's most rapidly developing country having sustained an average rate of economic growth in excess of 8.0% each year since China's period of reform beginning

December 1978 (Feenstra and Wen 2010)<sup>7</sup>. In recent years, China has replaced Japan as the world's second largest economy (\$7.97 Trillion annually) after that of the United States (\$12.26 Trillion annually--CIA 2010). The Chinese economy is built on low-wage manufacturing, albeit the central government is attempting to shift the economy from a high-volume, low-profit, industrial base (currently 48.6% of the national economy) to a more diversified service economy (currently 40.1% of the national economy). Higher levels of human resource development, including increasingly higher levels of more diversified programs of formal education, are necessary for China to achieve her new goal of transitioning into becoming one of East Asia's major financial, educational and other types of service providers. The complexity of this challenge is compounded by the comparatively low educational status of China's existing workforce, the predominance of an economic system that is based on low wages; the enormous disparities that exist in the distribution of wealth between the country's privileged "social haves" and disadvantaged "social have-nots" adds to the country's development complexities, i.e., the top 10% of the country's income earners garner 32% of the total wealth generated by the national economy while the bottom 10% receive only 2.4% of total national wealth (World Bank, 2010). Further, China reported the official rates of poverty and national unemployment in 2009 to be only 4% and 8%, respectively (CIA, 2010)—this despite the fact that these figures do not include the literally tens of millions of workers who returned to their rural villages jobless and, often, homeless after having failed to find suitable employment in the country's prosperous urban centers and Special Administrative Regions (UNDP, 2010).

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<sup>7</sup> China's period of reform and re-opening to the West are closely associated with Zhou Enlai and Deng Xiaoping. Zhou introduced the notion of the "Four Modernizations" as early as 1964 but it wasn't until the emergence of Deng as the country's premier leader between 1978 and the early 1990s that these modernizations were fully implemented (Evans, 1995; Hsu, 2000).

Ironically for a communist state that remains committed to the basic principles of socialism, China achieved a Gini Coefficient score of 47 in 2007 (vs. a Gini Coefficient Score of 45 for the United States during the same time period)<sup>8</sup>. Today, as is the case for the United States, China has developed into one of the world's most unequal societies...a developmental stage that many of China's leaders believe to be a necessary stage through which the country must pass on the way to achieving a truly communist state (Buchholz 1989).

### Primary and Middle School Education in Rural China

Primary and middle school education is assigned great importance in China (Ministry of Education, 2008). As elsewhere in the world, the goals associated with China's primary and middle school education include: 1) the promotion of basic literacy and numeracy skills; 2) building a foundation in science, mathematics, geography, history, and other social sciences; 3) for some, preparing for the world of work; and, 4) for a comparatively few, preparing for admission to secondary and post-secondary institutions of higher learning.

And, thus, since the introduction of the country educational plan 1986, today, approximately 180 million rural children between the ages of six and 14 years attend primary and middle school programs (Ministry of Education of the PRC 2008). Many of these programs have realized impressive achievements. By the end of 2007, the compulsory schooling system succeeded in reaching 99.3% of age-eligible children (Ministry of Education of the PRC 2008); these children, in turn, covered the educational content developed for them by the country's central government. Even so, educational accomplishments in the country's Central and Western

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<sup>8</sup> For an explanation of how to interpret the Gini Coefficient see footnote #6.



regions continues to lag substantially behind those realized by children living in the country's urban centers (Bureau of Theoretical Research 2010; China Development Research Foundation 2005; Hannum, Wang, and Adams 2008). Since nearly half of China's population resides in its rural areas (47.0%), a pressing need exists for improving the quality of rural compulsory education.

But the central government, owing to both the numbers of children involved and the costs associated with financing these programs, now realizes that it cannot carry the responsibility for implementing its rural educational and other responsibilities alone (China Development Research Foundation 2005). Rather, but with some acknowledged reluctance (Yusuf 2010), China's State sector is seeking to partner with Market and Civil Society Organizations in providing more comprehensive approaches to rural compulsory primary and middle school education. Such recognition is one in a series of policy actions taken by the central government regarding the involvement of the private sector in affairs that, previously, were considered to be the responsibility of the State alone.

#### The Contribution of the Core and Interstitial Institutions in Advancing Chinese Rural Education

Figures 9, 10, and 11 summarize contemporary approaches being taken by the PRC directed at improving the nature, extent, and depth of compulsory education among the nation's rural children. The summary that follows illustrates the application of the PPDM model to an analysis of the nation's efforts taking into account the contributions of each sector and its interstitial institutions toward compulsory education. Issues of history, tradition, values and norms figure prominently in the discussion as do the contemporary forces with which the country is struggling

(including population issues, environmental degradation, varying levels of regional social chaos, and economic pressures).

Figure 9 identifies, for example, the major compulsory educational efforts of China's four core institutions and those of a representative sample of interstitial programs that exist along three of the six bi-directional axes that connect the core and interstitial institutions to one another. Major national laws relating to compulsory school education are identified as are representative examples of just some of the many interstitial programs--primarily CSOs--that have formed in support of the efforts of China's core institutions. Central to the figure is the identification of the major compulsory educational programs provided separately by the State, the Market, and the CSO sectors. All are deeply embedded in China's rich history, traditions, and values.

As has been the case historically, the Chinese central government continues to play a dominant role in setting the basic standards for compulsory education. But the State, through its various governmental bodies, also provides face-to-face services to children and their parents directly in support of these mandates, e.g. via the construction of schools, the hiring of teachers, and the sanctioning of a broad range of out-of-school informal programs.

Today, 99.0% of primary schools and 95.9% of middle schools located in China's rural communities are public schools and, therefore, receive the bulk of their financial support from the central government or its intermediate bodies (e.g., provinces, municipalities, etc.). China's system of "Two Exemptions and One Subsidy (TEOS)" program has granted tuition and academic fee waivers to some 161 million students, in the process, providing them with free text books and, in the case of 10 million additional children, boarding subsidies. Between 2007 and 2009, the "Special-Position Teacher" program arranged for more than 104,000 recent college

graduates to teach in the country's Central and Western provinces, thereby, exposing children and their local teachers to more structured learning experiences (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China 2008; Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China 2009).

[INSERT FIGURE 9 ABOUT HERE]

Compared with the size of the role carried by the State sector, the Market and CSO sectors are carrying considerably smaller roles in compulsory school education in contemporary China. They also appear to be less well-organized than the State sector (Hannum, Wang, and Adams 2008). Even so, the Market contributes to the success of compulsory educational programs both directly and indirectly. Direct contribution on the part of the Market sector takes place through the operation of a growing number of private, tuition-assessing, schools, i.e., schools that are referred to as "Minban," or literally, people-run schools. However, Minban schools make up only 0.3% of all primary schools (and include many private academies that serve the children of economically advantaged families) and 0.7% of all middle schools in the country's rural regions (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China 2009). Among the indirect ways that the Market contributes to compulsory education is through the making of cash grants and in-kind donations to individual schools, local school districts, or to larger governmental bodies whose areas of oversight include compulsory education. One example of this latter type of support from the Market to the State sector is a cash gift made by China Mobile, a telecommunications company, in the amount of RMB 30 million (c. \$4.62 million) to the China Education Development Foundation to support the Ministry of Education's rural library and headmaster training programs (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China 2006).

Among all officially registered CSOs in China, approximately 42,000 (or approximately 10% of all registered CSOs), identify themselves as working in the field of education (China Bureau of Management of NPOs 2010). However, due to the lack of systematic research data from the CSOs and the State considerable uncertainty exists concerning the precise nature of the responsibilities currently being carried by the CSOs in rural education (Hannum, Wang, and Adams 2008). Uncertainty exists, too, concerning the extent of CSO involvement in urban rather than rural programs. These entities and their diverse roles will be the subject of a future paper.

As summarized in Figure 9, CSOs carry a major role in providing cash and in-kind donations to individual schools and, in exceptional circumstances, they provide human resources in the form of volunteer teachers to staff selected programs. The activities of “Project Hope” of the China Youth Development Foundation is especially exemplary of the work of CSOs in all three areas given its now 20-year history of providing financial, in-kind, and volunteer support to impoverished rural schools. Project Hope has contributed toward the direct financial support of approximately 2.9 million children, has built over 13,000 primary schools—including as many village libraries (China Youth Development Foundation 2007). Similarly, and since 1999, China Youth Volunteers Association (CYVA) has deployed over 3,000 graduate students from prestigious universities both within and outside China to teach in the country’s Central and Western provinces (China Volunteers 2008).

Households, on the other hand, also play a critical role in the promotion of compulsory education (Figures 9 & 10). In addition to contributing toward the cost of tuition, households also provide informal teachers to staff the village schools, i.e., the so-called “Minban” and “Daike” teachers. These individuals typically are recruited from the community itself which

raises money from its local resources to support the teacher salaries. In recent years, the State has voiced concerns regarding the qualifications of these informal teachers and has established a goal of either eliminating or absorbing them into the public system but, in either situation, over time. Resource and other problems, however, have interfered with the realization of this objective with the result that many rural schools continue to be staffed primarily or entirely by poorly educated and inexperienced teachers (Wang 2002; Zhang 2008).

### China's CSOs and Interstitial Institutions

The programs identified as existing along the three additional interstitial axes shown in Figure 10 reflect the types of public-private and other partnerships that exist between the CSO sector and China's three other core institutions. The programs listed are representative of a much larger array of programs that have come into being in recent years...some with and some without prior governmental approval. Some of the programs identified in the figure, for example, are privately initiated and are designed to respond to needs that are not being met by the core institutions; others are government-initiated programs and, hence, are referred to as either GONGOS (government-organized-non-governmental organizations) or as QUANGOS (quasi-non-governmental-organizations).<sup>9</sup> While not unique to the Chinese situation (NCCS 2010), these types of mixed-aspice organizations reflect the socio-political ideologies of China and the intention on the part of the Central Government to remain in charge of all sectors of society that it judges to fall within the purview of the State (Ma 2006). Inasmuch as CSOs are still relatively new to China, the majority of these programs, including CSOs, GONGOs, and QUANGOs, tend to be less well-organized with the result that detailed knowledge concerning their activities remains unavailable (ZHOU 2010). The existence of these new institutional forms, in any case,

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<sup>9</sup> These types of CSOs are not unique to China and can be found throughout all regions of the developing world.

offers opportunities for a large number of people to participate more fully in helping to improve the quality and outcomes of rural compulsory educational programs.

[INSERT FIGURE 10 ABOUT HERE]

### The Chinese State, Market, CSOs, and Family Sectors in Perspective

Figure 11 consolidates the core and interstitial data presented separately in Figures 9 and 10.

The macro-system perspective summarized in Figure 11 makes clear that the State sector continues to carry the dominant role in the provision of compulsory educational services in rural China. This pattern results directly from China's communist identity and from the country's strong Confucian history and traditions--both of which call for authoritative and paternalistic government involvement in a carefully ordered set of social relationships (ZHOU 2010).

[INSERT FIGURE 11 ABOUT HERE]

Further, China's national educational goals for the year 2020 call for approximately 8.6% of its GDP to be invested in all levels of education with particular attention to be assigned to the needs of impoverished children residing in the country's extensive rural communities (as estimate by Li 2006). Acting alone, however, the State sector will be unable to allocate such a high level of its resources to just one sector, especially as it seeks to further diversify and shift the country's national economy from manufacturing to services. Indeed, and to date, the State has not even been able to generate the 4.0% of GDP pledged each year since 1993 to support the multifaceted activities of the country's educational sector (Tang and Yang 2008). Therefore, to achieve China's ambitious goals of continuing to lift such a large portion of its population (and that of world) out of income poverty through education will require help from all of society's core and interstitial institutions.

Once again, use of the PPDM model of the welfare mix has helped to identify the major actors and their partner organizations responsible for the making and shaping of social policy in another large but culturally distinctive society. Application of the PPDM model to the Chinese situation also confirms the validity of the model in addressing both contextual factors as well as the contemporary social forces that impact on nations at various moments in time in their collective social histories.

## CONCLUSIONS

This paper offers a new perspective on the theory and methodology of comparative social policy analysis. More particularly the authors have re-conceptualized and enriched an earlier model of the welfare mix developed by Rose, Shiratori & Allardt (1986), Evers & Wintersberger (1988), Johnson (1988), and Vogel (2003), and have applied the new model--referred to as the Public-Private Development Model (PPDM)--to urgent social needs that exist in two large but culturally different and geographically distant societies, i.e., approaches to poverty alleviation in the United States and approaches to advancing compulsory primary school education among rural children residing in China's poorest Central and Western regions. The model identifies the four core institutions that make up every society--the polity or State, the Market or economy, families and households, and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)--and places these core institutions within both a historical and contemporary social policy context. The authors believe that a full understanding of the genesis, nature, structure, and dynamics of contemporary social welfare can only be understood through an examination of the interactions that occur over time between and within the four core welfare institutions and their complex networks of interstitial organizations.

Thus, the PPDM model incorporates an analysis of each of society's macro and micro social welfare institutions, the major internal and external factors impacting on the society for

which a welfare response is required, and the range of welfare-related programs and services created in response to those needs. This latter set of social policy responses differs dramatically across societies whereas society's four core institutions and their central public policy challenges remain more or less constant, i.e., population pressures, environmental degradation, social and political turmoil, and alternating periods of economic growth and contraction.

The complex programmatic relationships that emerge within this analytical framework are illustrated through a series of 11 figures. These figures illustrate the bi-directional nature of the interactions that exist between each of the core welfare institutions and a representative sample of interstitial programs that exist along the model's six axes. The listings of the programs included in these figures is by no means exhaustive; rather, they are intended only to suggest a broader set of programmatic responses undertaken by societies at different points in their social histories with the goal of reducing the internal and external risks to which they are exposed.

All of the proceeding socio-political and economic challenges are especially evident in developing and least developing countries (Estes 2011; United Nations 2010; World Bank 2010), but they also constitute the major policy challenges that confront economically advanced countries (Weingast & Wittman 2006; Estes 2010; UNDP 2010). A thoughtful review of each nation's contextual and contemporary social challenges is essential for arriving at an adequate understanding of the responsibilities that are assigned to each of social welfare's major institutional actors. Thus, the model is especially useful in: 1) describing the current state of welfare provision of particular societies at different points in their social histories; 2) describing and explaining the dynamics of public-private welfare provision designed to meet the changing public policy needs of nations over time; 3) suggesting likely future outcomes associated with



different approaches to policy implementation; 4) assisting in the development of more efficient and effective policies designed to respond more fully to national and international human needs; and 5) enabling scholars to gain a richer appreciation for the complex dynamics of cross-national welfare development across time and geo-political regions.

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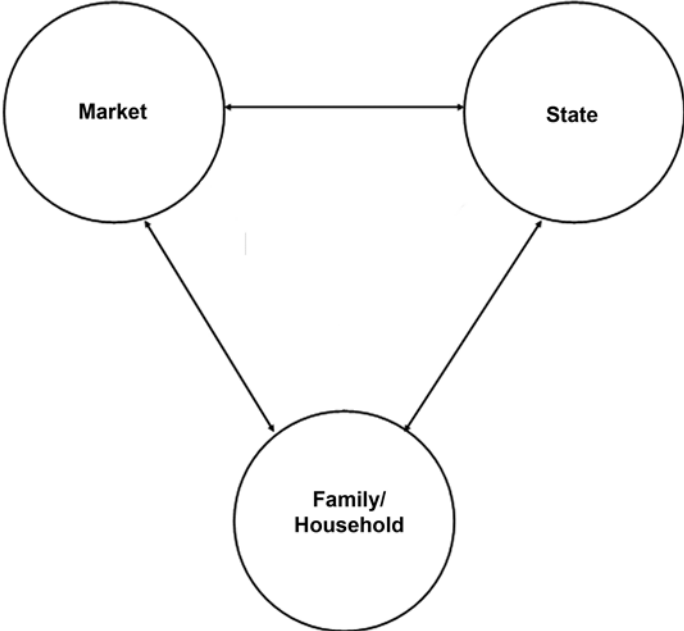
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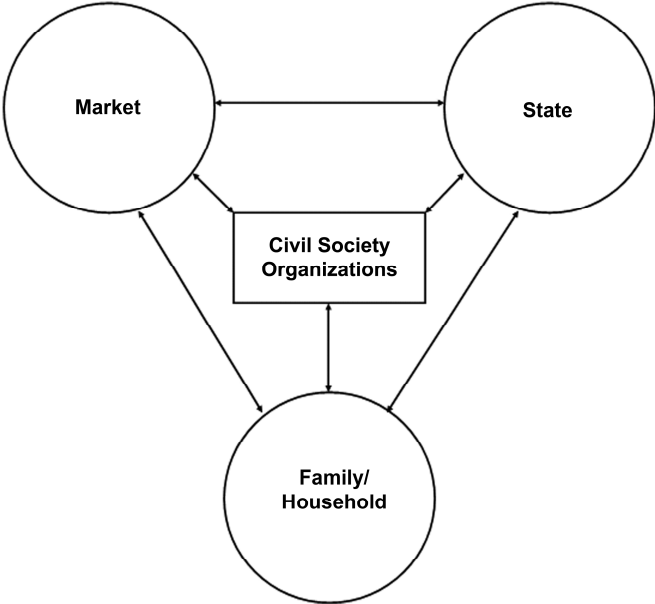


FIGURE 1: The Public-Private Mix: The Core Institutions



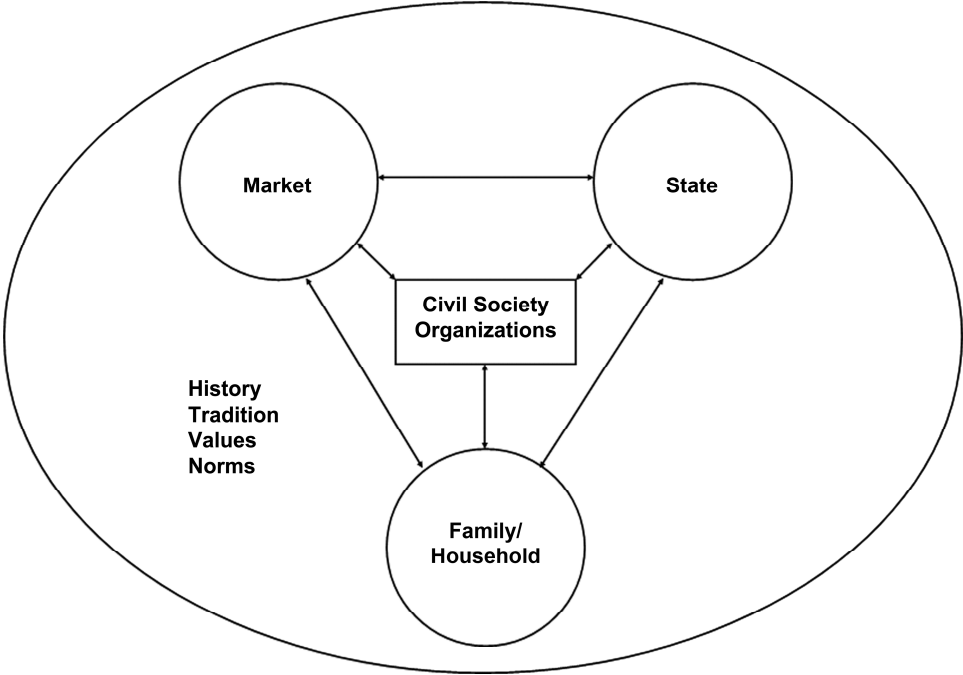
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FIGURE 2: The Public-Private Mix: The Core Institutions and Civil Society Organizations



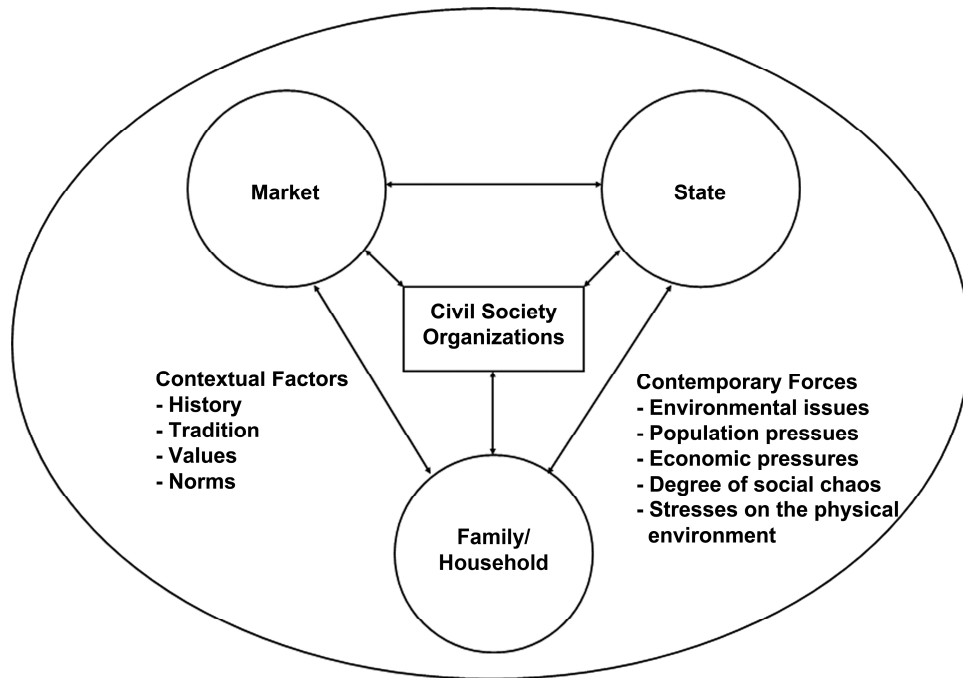
Source: Evers and Wintersberger (1988). Reprinted with permission of the European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research (Vienna).

FIGURE 3: The Public-Private Mix: The Core Institutions, Civil Society, and the Contribution of History, Tradition, Values and Norms



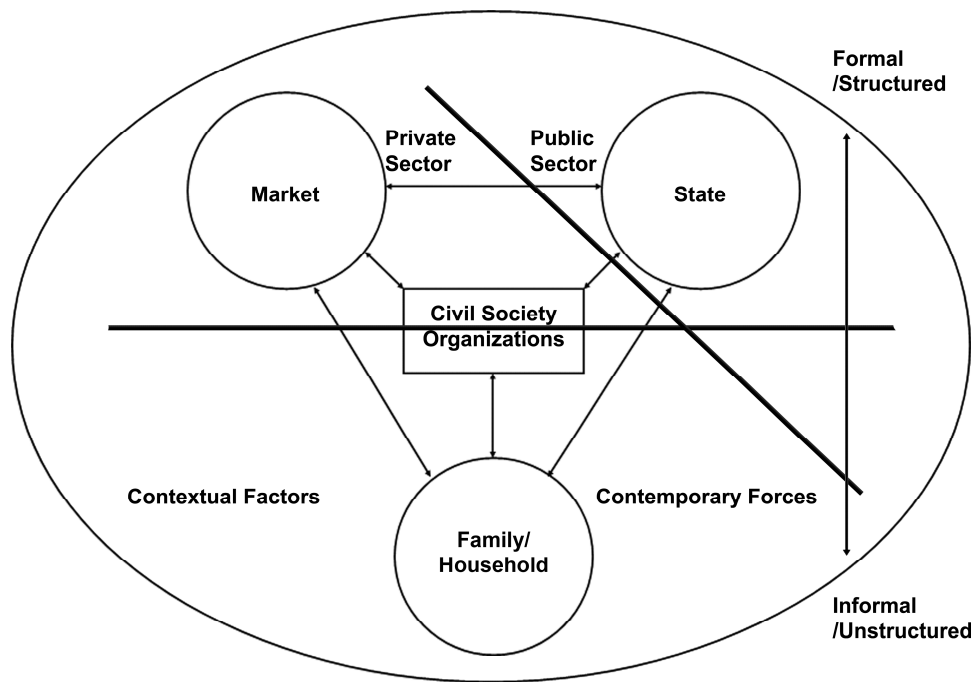
Source: Estes (2010b)

FIGURE 4: The Public-Private Mix: The Core Institutions, Civil Society, and the Contribution of Contemporary Strategic Issues



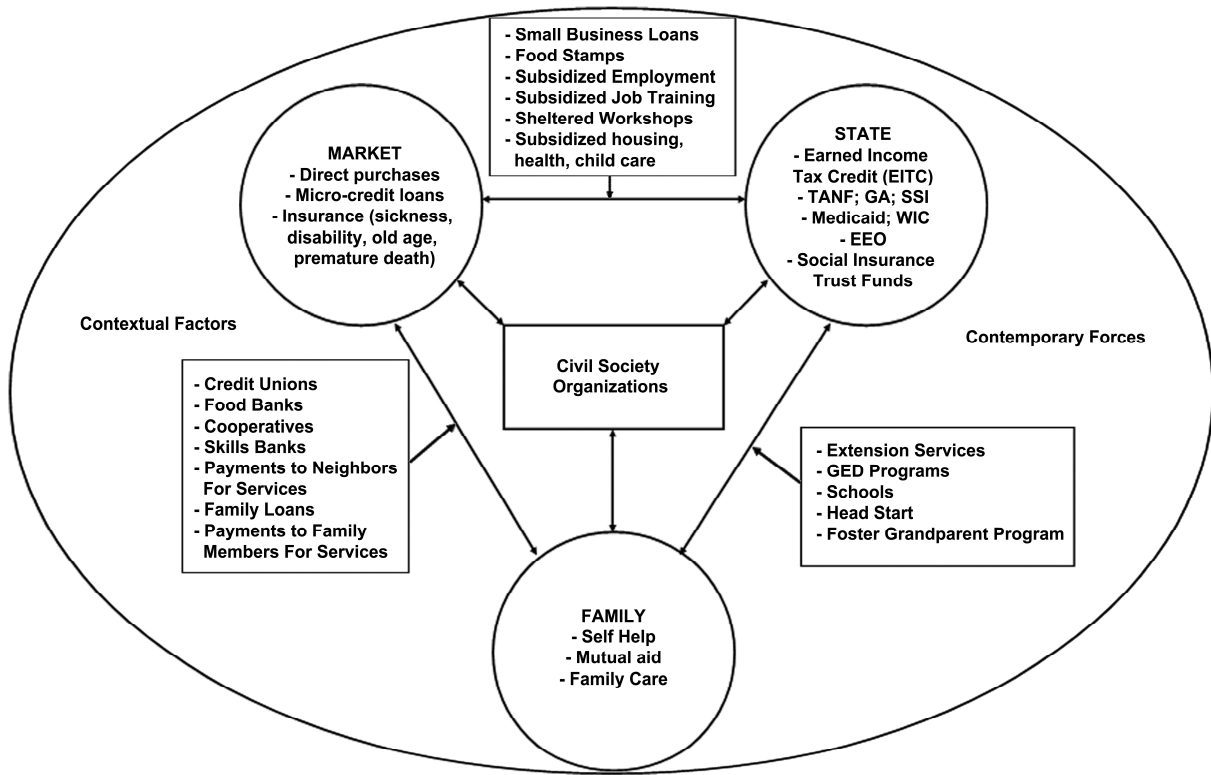
Source: Estes (2010b).

FIGURE 5: The Public-Private Mix: The Core Institutions, Civil Society, and Degree of Formality



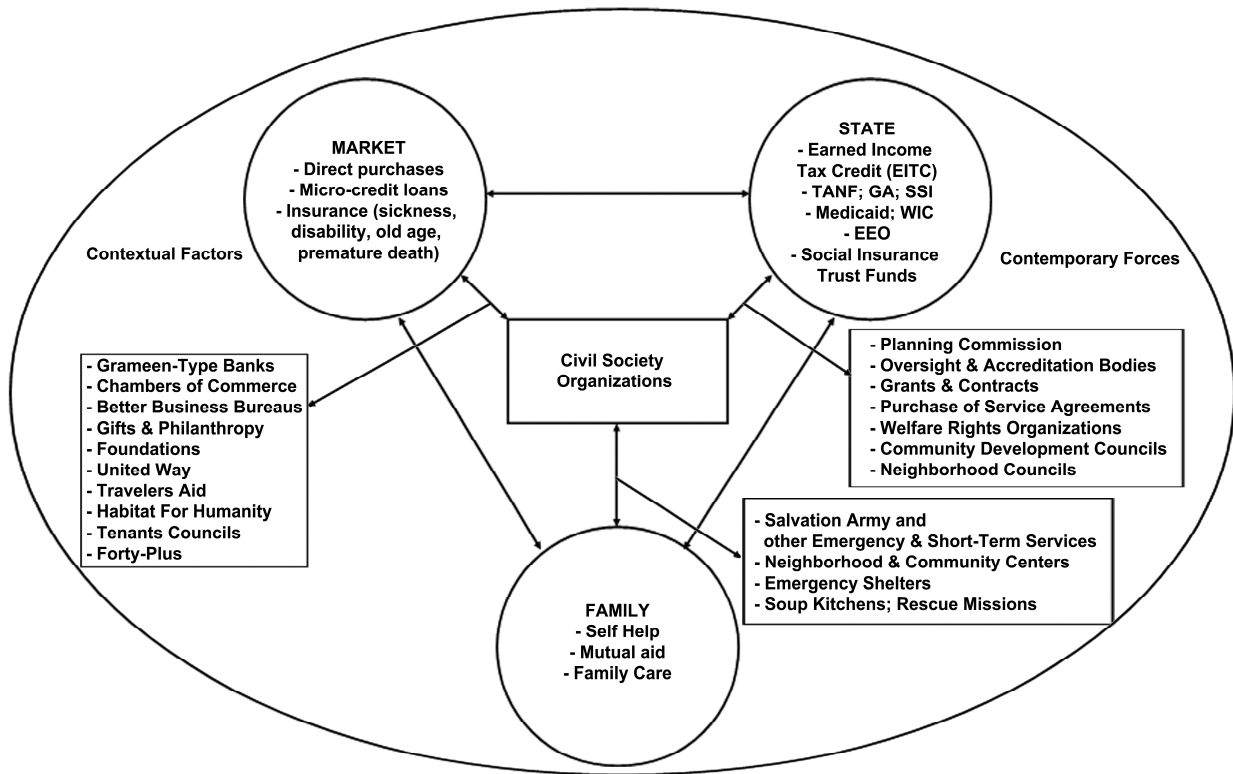
Source: Adapted from Evers and Wintersberger (1988). Reprinted with permission of the European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research (Vienna).

FIGURE 6: Poverty Initiatives of the Core Institutions in the United States



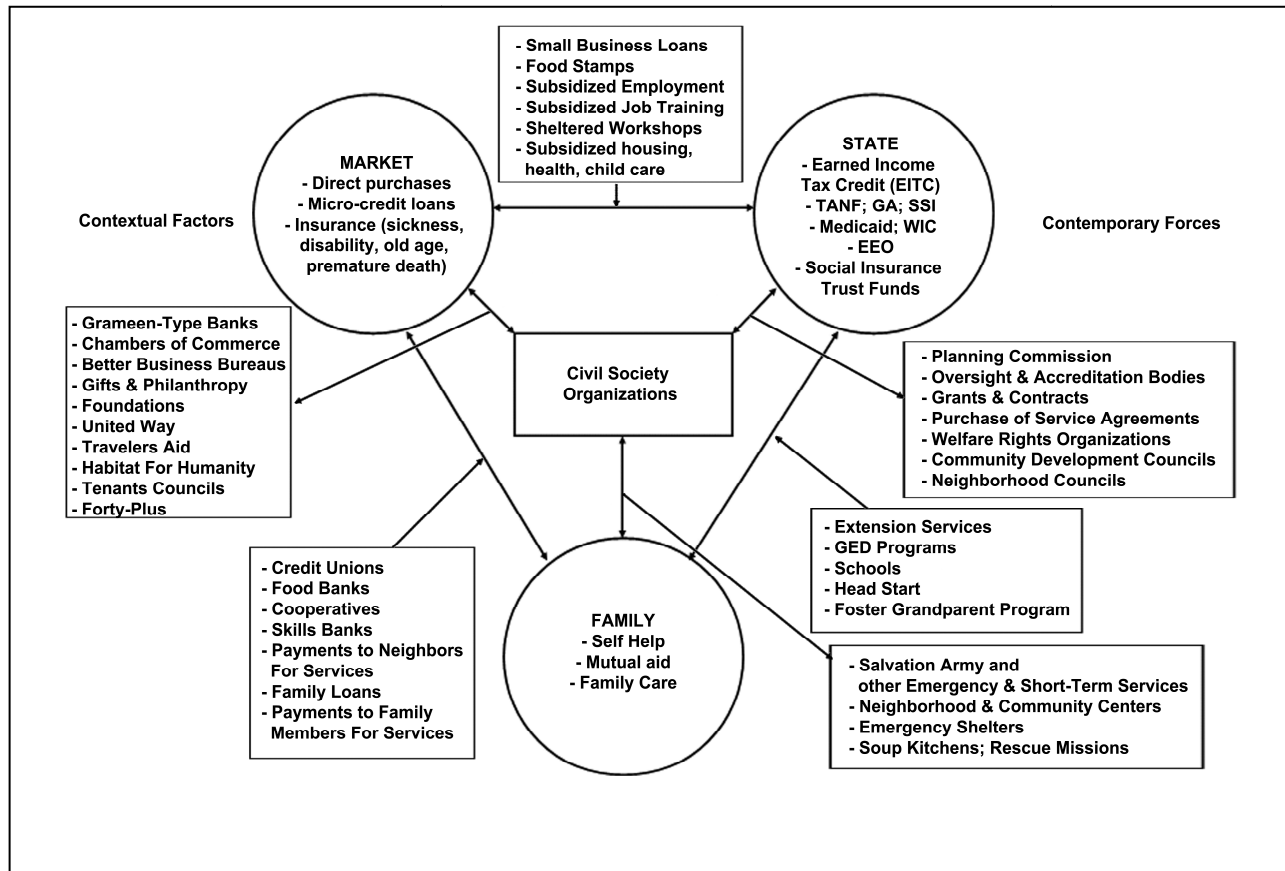
Source: Estes (2010b).

FIGURE 7: Poverty Initiatives of the Civil Society Organizations in the United States



Source: Estes (2010b).

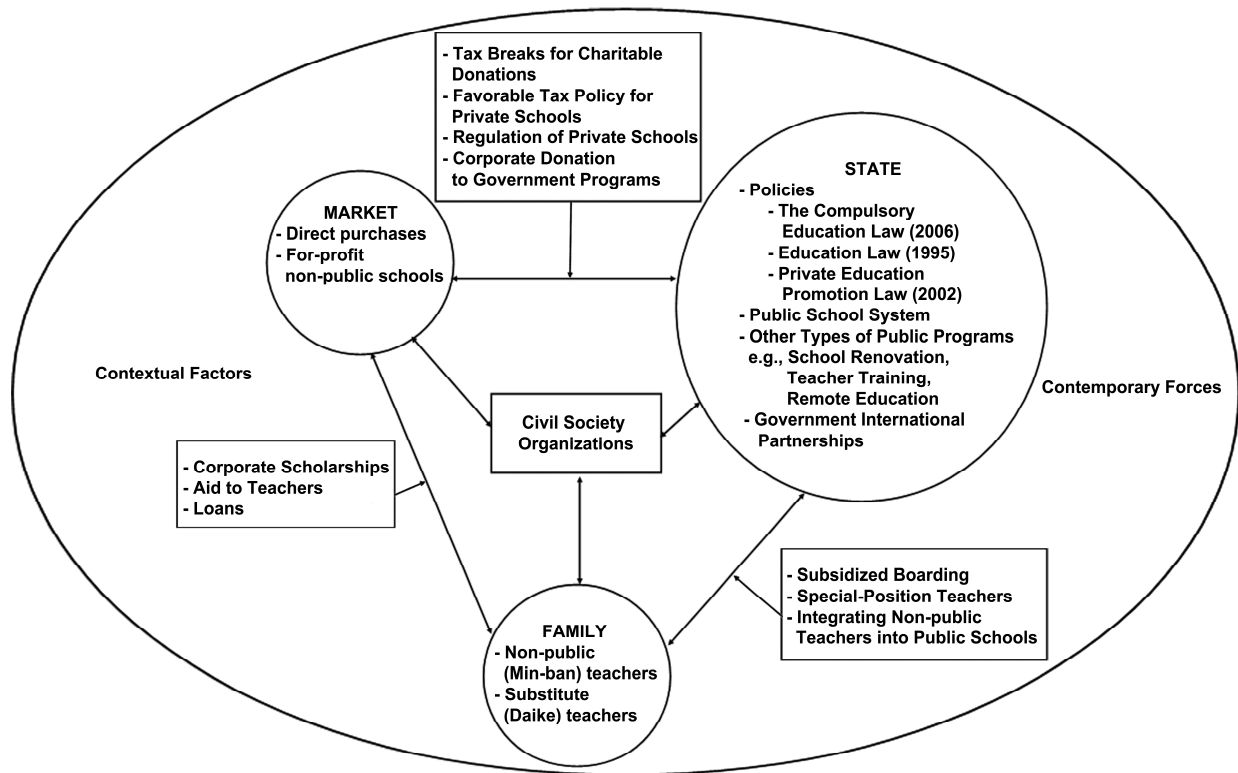
FIGURE 8: A Comprehensive View of the Poverty Alleviation Initiatives of the Core Institutions and Civil Society Organizations in the United States



Source: Estes (2010b).

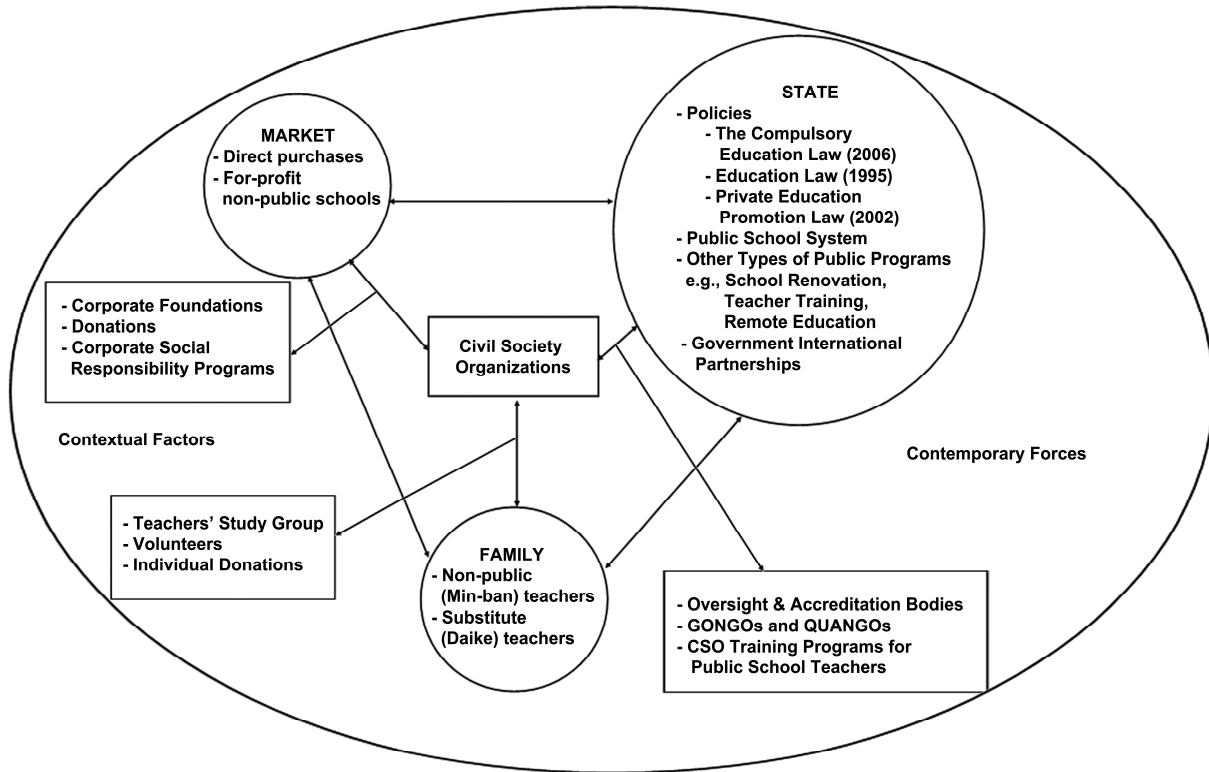


Figure 9: The Contribution of China's Core Institutions in Advancing Compulsory Primary School Education to Poor Children Residing in Rural Communities



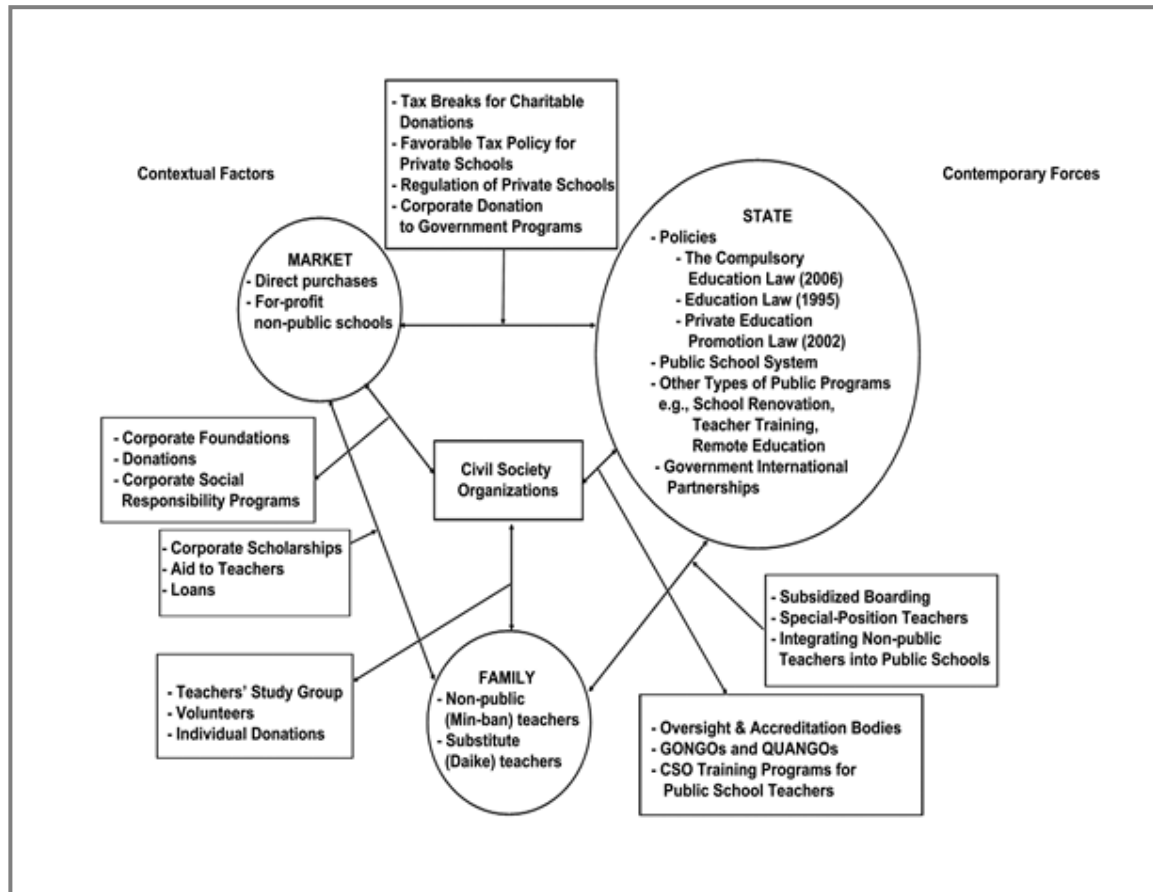
Source: Zhou (2010).

Figure 10: The Contribution of China's Civil Society Organizations in Advancing Compulsory Primary School Education to Poor Children Residing in Rural Communities



Source: Zhou (2010).

Figure 11: A Comprehensive View of The Contribution of China's Core Institutions and Civil Society Organizations in Advancing Compulsory Primary School Education to Poor Children Residing in Rural Communities



Source: Zhou (2010).