A New Government-Citizen Relationship: Towards a People-centered and Productive Government

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Various Government Activities and Increasing Interests and Demands of the People

Major roles and activities of government and the public sector (classified by the nature)
- activities to address what private organizations and individuals cannot solve
- activities regulating private organizations and individuals
- activities assisting private organizations and individuals
- activities supplementing private organizations and individuals

(specific examples)
- defense, diplomacy, maintenance of social order and safety, disaster prevention and management, maintenance of state property
- construction and maintenance of social infrastructure
- levying and collection of tax
- regulation of economic and social systems and activities (economic regulation and social regulation)
- delivery of public goods and services
- conservation and production of natural resources and manufacturing basic industrial products

Increasing interests, demands and participation of the People
- higher education, interests and demands as tax payers and recipients of public services
- increasing (availability of) information on government and public sector activities
- decentralization (closer to the people), globalization (influence, comparison), etc.
- Increasing participation of the people in government activities
Flow and Stages of Government Activities and Public Administration

Policy Making → Policy Implementation → Policy Evaluation
- problem recognition - dissemination - progress monitoring
- agenda setting - direction and guidance - performance measurement
- policy consideration - involvement, participation - evaluation of results and
- policy formulation of those concerned with or impacts of policy
- policy decision interested in policies

- Citizens participate directly or indirectly in each stage of the policy process (policy making, implementation and evaluation) as shown above.

- Conceptual framework of policy process shown above is applicable to most of government activities and public administration (including internal administrative or management activities).
Increase of People’s Participation in Government Activities

- National and local governments have various direct and indirect relations with citizens in various government activities. Citizens’ demand to participate in various stages of government activities has increased.

- As is shown in the UN-ESCAP’s definition of good governance, participation is regarded as an important component of “good governance”. Components of “good governance” defined by UN-ESCAP: participation, rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, consensus oriented, equity and inclusiveness, effectiveness and efficiency, and accountability

- While there are various statutory or official systems for citizen’s participation in politics and public administration such as election and urban planning, governments also provide various non-statutorily based opportunities for citizen’s participation.

- While there is an increasing demand of citizen’s participation in politics and public administration at both national and local governments, it is more so at local government level where government is closer and accessible to residents and where various policies and programs related to the lives of residents are implemented and specific public services are provided to them.
Existing Systems and Practices of Citizens’ Participation in Government Activities (1)

In the Political Process
- election
- submitting a petition, request, proposal and others
- making a statement as invited speaker (speakers) at public hearing of parliamentary and local assembly committees and other meetings
- “participating” as observers of deliberation of parliament and local assembly
- meeting and having discussions with members of parliament and local assembly
- others

In the Administrative or Policy Process
- submitting a petition, request, proposal and others
- submitting “public comment” or “public opinion”
- participating in advisory councils, study groups as their member(s)
- making a statement at advisory councils as invited speaker(s)
- participating in open meeting with responsible government officials on specific issues of concerns
- meeting and having discussions with executives and other officials of governments
- others
- working as voluntary administrative counselors to solve citizens complaints and grievances.
Existing Systems and Practices of Citizens’ Participation in Government Activities (2)

Systems for Direct Participation of Residents in Local Government in Japan

- petition to enact, review or abolish local ordinances
- petition to audit government activities
- petition for dissolution of the local assembly
- petition for removal of assembly members
- petition for removal of the chief executive
- referenda concerning autonomy special laws
- petition by resident for audit and lawsuit (even a single resident may take an action)

In response to the demand of residents or to confirm the opinion of residents as to the policy proposed by the chief executive or for various reasons, non-statutorily required “referendum” may be carried out in local governments in Japan. Even though the chief executive is not legally bound by the result of the “referendum”, the chief executive is expected to respect the result of “referendum”.

Activities “coproduced” by the Government and Citizens Groups and Other Organizations

- citizens, citizens groups and other organizations cooperate with government, especially with local governments, to carry out various activities such as social, cultural, sports and other events and campaign to promote traffic safety, fire prevention, crime prevention, garbage collection and recycling usable resources, cleaning public parks, rescuing people from disaster, etc.

These activities are called cooperation, collaboration, coproduction, etc.
Various Faces and Roles of Citizens

- Citizens have various faces and play various roles on various subjects and issues in various contexts and situations in government and public administration.
- To pursue “a people-centered and productive government”, it is necessary to consider the roles of the public in the government and public administration.

-N. Roberts distinguished seven roles of citizen;
- subject in an authority system,
- voter in a representative system,
- client in an administrative state,
- interest group advocate in a pluralist system,
- consumer/customer in a political/market economy,
- volunteer/coproducer in civil society,
- colearner in a social learning process.

-J.C. Thomas distinguished three major roles of the public;
- the public as Citizen
- the public as Customer
- the public as Partner
* These three roles are not exclusive to each other and may overlap in various ways.
(“Citizen, Customer, Partner” by J.C. Thomas, 2012)
Three Major Roles of the Public (1)

-The discussion below (pp. 8~11) is mostly based on the discussion by J.C. Thomas.

The Public as Citizen

- The public’s role as citizen is the most important role of the public as it involves citizens in the core democratic function of the government. It is not limited to participating in election and other political activities but to participating in various activities in public administration.

- Public managers invite citizens to contribute their ideas on an issue, and share at least some decision-making authority with them.

- While engaging the public in joint decision making promises a number of possible benefits, public involvement in practice brought problems, too.

- Public involvement in making decisions will be desirable under some circumstances, but not others, and the extent of involvement desirable will also vary with the circumstances.

- Public involvement also requires choices about specific techniques such as public meetings, advisory committees and the like.
Three Major Roles of the Public (2)

The Public as Customer

- In New Public Management, governments were advised to view the publics they served as customers and to aim for “customer-driven government”.

- More people may interact with government as customers than in any capacity (either citizens or partners).

- Individual expects to be treated like a customer, meaning with courtesy, friendliness, promptness, and as much help as possible. This treatment can be as important to them as whether the request is actually granted. The process by which government treats people exerts much more influence on the trust in the government than does the actual outcome people receive.

- Taking the customer perspective leads to an interest in getting better information on customers. What services does the public want from government? How good a job does the public feel government is doing in providing specific services? Government should attempt to learn more about the preferences of their public through the use of customer relations management systems, citizen surveys, focus groups, and other vehicles, and then put what they learn to work in shaping programs and services.
Three Major Roles of the Public (3)

The Public as Partner

- Public managers should think about how to involve the public as citizens in decision making, should seek to provide high-quality service to the public as customers, but should also consider what they need from the public to achieve government’s goals.

- Across a wide range of public services and programs, effective production and delivery requires contributions from members of the public. Without those contributions, without the public partnering in service production, services stand to suffer or fail.

- “Coproduction” is the idea that many public services can be effective only if produced jointly by government and citizens or citizen groups.

- Government needs the public to partner even in public information campaign.

- For public administrators, the idea of citizens as potential partners implies a need to define for specific services what assistance is essential or would be helpful from the public.

- The task for citizens should be simplified as much as possible. Efforts should be made to get the word out to the public, both to explain why assistance is desired and to educate on how to provide the assistance.
The Debate over Public Involvement (J. C. Thomas)

The Case for More Public Involvement
- better information
- greater acceptance of public programs
- improved program implementation
- better fit for public policies and programs to citizen preferences
- better governmental performance
- protection from criticism
- increased trust

The Case against More Public Involvement
- imperfect participation
- increased costs
- interference with managerial performance
- threats to decision quality

Finding Common Ground
- Crucial step toward finding common grounds requires adopting a contingent perspective, viewing the merits of public involvement as varying by situation.
- The ultimate goals of public managers should be to achieve both an effective process of decision making and effective decision outcomes. Involvement should be to involve the public in the manner most likely to promote both process and outcome effectiveness.
Mutual Understanding and Trust between the Government and the People (1)

Importance of Trust

In the lecture at GRIPS (in March 2016), Geert Bouckaert emphasized the importance of the trust in three dimensions.

(dimensions of trust)
- trust of citizens and organizations in government and the public sector
- trust of government and the public sector in citizens and organizations
- trust within government and the public sector

(direction of public sector reform)
- open, responsive, transparent
- co-design, co-decide, co-produce, co-evaluate

(models of performance and trust)
- push-pull model of trust
  \[ \text{INPUT} \rightarrow \text{ACTIVITY} \rightarrow \text{OUTPUT} \rightarrow \text{OUTCOME} \rightarrow \text{TRUST} \]
- driver model of trust
  \[ \text{TRUST} \rightarrow \text{INPUT} \rightarrow \text{ACTIVITY} \rightarrow \text{OUTPUT} \rightarrow \text{OUTCOME} \]
- circular model of trust

[Diagram showing the circular model of trust]
“Trust is considered as a crucial issue at all levels of governance. An effective democratic society depends on its confidence citizen have in their government for designing and managing public policies and public sector (citizens/users trust) but also on the trust civil servants have in the public sector reforms (inner trust, within the public sector).

During the recent decades, with the economic and other crises and with the current developments in the governance systems, we observed a decrease of the trust in the governments and in public administration. The distrust is alarming and questions the models of governance, the democratic system and calls for innovations to improve the performance, efficiency and effectiveness in responding to the citizens’ needs and to the challenges of our society. Restoring trust requests several measures/actions to strengthen integrity, transparency, accountability but also the engagement/involvement of all the partners/stakeholders of this interaction.”