

# A Critical Review of New Public Management Reforms in Korea\*

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**Abstract:** This paper argues the limits of New Public Management reforms. More precisely, it examines the process of introducing public service charters in Korean local governments simply benchmarking from western countries. Having elaborated two opposing models, the Jupiter and Hercules models, this paper defines public service charter as a reform based on the Hercules model, which goes against Korean public administration based on Jupiter model. From this theoretical viewpoint, I examine the way of introducing this reform and discuss its questionable cost and effectiveness.

## CULTURAL CONGRUENCY?

Korea's well-documented rapid economic growth was achieved mainly by imitating the western industrialization process and technologies. At least until 1950, there was no other way for Korea, one of the poorest countries in the world, to develop its economy than by learning from developed countries. This learning until 1970's had concentrated on technology from the USA and Japan. As the country's economy grew, the learning area expanded to management techniques learned from more countries than the two aforementioned principal models.

Apparently, public administration was not exempt from this general trend. Since gaining independence from Japan, Korean intellectuals have tried to transplant American administrative techniques. Despite imitating simple office techniques, Korea has had a strong State, a traditional administrative culture that was based on the principle of governing and administering the people. Former president Park especially employed

an export-driven policy in which the state heavily intervened in the economic sector. Therefore, the administrative apparatus in Korea has been larger and the way of administrating has been authoritarian than in other countries. Many people have criticized big and inefficient government. The country's financial crisis in 1997 made people believe public administration was one of its causes and named civil servants as the typical target group to be reformed.

To escape from this difficult situation, international benchmarking is a priority in Korean public administration. Most bench markings Korean government did had its origins in the US private sector practice (Camp, 1989). In western countries, there is a debate on its suitability for public sector applications between optimists (Next Steps Team, 1998) and those who instead stress either its limitation (Talbot, 1997) or the existence of preconditions, which render its usefulness questionable in significant parts of the public sector (Pollitt, Cave and Joss, 1994; Luton, 2001; Bohte, John & Kenneth J. Meier, 2000).

In contrast to western countries(ex. Luton, 2001), there has not been much debate in Korea about the suitability of benchmarking despite large cultural differences. This paper argues from a theoretical

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perspective the suitability of the NPM administrative reforms in a critique of the Korean way of reforming public administration. More concretely, the paper will examine the case for introducing public servant charters in Korean local governments.

## OPPOSITION OF TWO MODELS

The social sciences help people interpret what happens in society. The way of interpreting the society is essential because it is in this way that most people in the society think and behave. Therefore, a shared interpretation by most people is one of the major constraints that reformers should take into account. If a reform is not compatible with this social belief, the reform will fail in its implementation.

From previous literature, I can elaborate two extreme types of social foundation: Jupiter and Hercules.<sup>1)</sup> These symbolize the State, more precisely the role of public servants in the society.

This typology emphasizes the relations between State and society or those between public servants and ordinary people (cf. Rutgers, 2001).

In the Jupiter model, we assume that the society is so hierarchically organized that the State, being omnipresent and omni-potential, plays the role of foreseer, policy maker, problem solver, etc. In a

word, the state is the locomotive of the society. People believe that good and right things preexist in the world and that the state is the principal motor to the society (cf. Sommers, 1986). The truth is to be found, rather than made, and often people share one value system. Elite and state-oriented perspectives underline this model. Public servants, who are better educated and informed than citizens, are responsible for leading society in the right direction. In strictest sense of the term, in this model people are more familiar with the concept of 'governor' or 'administrator' than 'public servant'. Top-down communication and authoritative management methods such as control and oversight prevail not only in state-civil society relations, but also in superior-subordinates relations inside public bureaucracy.

The Hercules model in contrast, is the opposite of the Jupiter model. The state is not the center of the society but a mere actor whose purpose is to serve and satisfy people. People in this kind of society think and behave individualistically rather than collectively. Society is merely the sum of individuals. Lacking any foundational basis, good and right are constituted by the people. Therefore the usual last way of resolving conflicts after the consensus building process is by majority rule because there is no other way if people are equal and no absolute good exists. An elitist role for leaders cannot be relevant, so bottom-up communications prevail inside public bureaucracy as well as with the citizen. Important decisions affecting people's interests are polled by a referendum rather than hierarchical order, while action research is the preferred approach to take before implementing a reform. Most multiracial societies, such as the USA are of this nature (Dickstein, 1998).

These two models are the ideal type in the Weberian sense of the term, and it is hard to find a typical example in the real world. We can only discern a country's nature by the way the majority

**Table 1.** Contrasting Two Models

Model	Jupiter	Hercules
State-People relations	Pyramid, state-oriented	Reverse, People-oriented
Communication	Top-down	Bottom-up
Truth or Good	A priori, found	a posteriori, constructed
Administrative tools	order, control, oversight	vote, referendum, action research
Example	Asian countries	Anglo-saxon countries

1) This typology is inspired from the judge's role model proposed by Ost (1996).

of the people think and behave. Therefore, it is not surprising that a country has mixed characteristics of the two models. A country's nature is confusing because it is comprised of completely different sub-cultural groups, and in most cases, people do not behave always in logically consistent ways.

However, from a purely logical point of the view, these two models contain contradictory natures and are not compatible. This means that politicians and administrators should take into account these aspects, especially before attempting important reforms.

### **QUESTION OF FITNESS: HYPOTHETICAL PROPOSITIONS**

Korean society, especially traditional Korean society, is a typical Jupiter model as are most other Asian countries where a strong state, often represented by a king, governs people. This hierarchical relation between the public administration and people continues to subsist through the Japanese colonial and rapid economic growth periods. The civil servants working on behalf of the state have been setting national goals, mobilizing and allocating resources to attain the goals, controlling and over-sighting whatever goes against national policies, etc. This does not necessary require only an authoritative and hard-line approach to administration. The government employs implicit or indirect methods such as administrative guidance (Kim, Do-Chang, 1982:398). It is in this context that many studies have characterized Korean administrative culture as hierarchical, authoritative, paternal, emotional, irrational, familial, etc. (Cho, 1994; Paik, 1982)

A question about suitability arises when Jupiter society introduce a reform that originated in Hercules society. If a reform concerns just a minor change such as introducing new secretarial techniques, suitability will not be questionable. In contrast, if a reform, by its nature, is constrained by

the actions and thoughts of the citizens, the question of congruency becomes important. The main theme of this paper is to criticize Korean administrative reform based on the proposition that the nature of a reform itself constrains its method of implementation. Public service charter reform in Korea can be expressed by the following proposition: public service charter reform, to be effective, should be accompanied by Hercules style approach.

This proposition presupposes that the nature of administrative reform originated from one model constrains the way of introduction into the other model society if it is to be transplanted effectively. Public service charter Korean government benchmarked is from British model that the Major government introduced in 1992 for a limited period of 10 years. The Blair government, considering it as a successful reform, decided to continue with it. British public service charter, according to Minogue, et al. (1998), is the most successful example of the New Public Management reforms aiming at making public sector more efficient.

The idea of public service charter came from the private sector's old adage that 'the customer is the king'. It is closely associated with consumer sovereignty according to which consumers have right to be informed, complain, and eventually return a product if they are not satisfied with it. Thus, a citizen's satisfaction is the only criterion on which public organizations should operate. To a certain limit, citizens are those who have the right to chose and decide the range and quality of public services. Civil servants in charge of delivering these services to citizens can be considered as merely a tool. Ideally, they should not produce a service that citizen do not want. These ideas go perfectly with the Hercules model.

From these arguments, we can elaborate the following hypothetical condition for a successful reform.

**H 1:** the success of the reform depends on the degree of participation of citizens concerned with the reform process.

To an extreme, introducing reform is a question of citizen's choice, because no one other than the citizen can tell whether it is good for the citizen in the Hercules model society. This reasoning means that the citizen should participate actively in deciding which public services are included in the charters as well as the way of evaluating the services delivered. The citizen should be the master of the reforming process.

Furthermore, we have to take into account that Korean decentralization is related to the Jupiter model. Korean government with an extremely centralized tradition, kept close control over local administrative units and introduced, just 10 years ago, a decentralization reform, which consists of forming local governments with, elected councilors and mayors. Many scholars (Im, 2002), however, criticize the continuity of the central government's control over local governments in various ways, and name the actual state of decentralization as semi-decentralization or controlled decentralization model. Therefore, it is necessary to add another hypothesis for evaluating more accurately Korean reform process.

**H 2:** The success of the reform depends on the degree of local governments' and front-line bureaucrats' active participation in the introduction process of the reform.

This signifies that the public service charter cannot be successful if the reform is forcibly implemented by the central government. Because the quality of public services depend on those who have daily contact with the citizen, local governments' initiatives and willingness to reform are crucial for its success.

Even though we use the term hypothesis, this

paper will not rely on empirical testing, because these hypotheses are by nature not verifiable through experimental methods. Rather, we argue them using diverse sources.

## **CITIZEN'S INITIATIVES**

Like other administrative reforms introduced in Korea, citizens have not played an active role in the process of introducing public service charter in local governments. Among over 200 local governments, none adopted a reform of public service charter for themselves. The charters are all introduced by the Presidential Decree Relative to Institutionalizing Public Service Charter (No.70, 1998) This is partly because ordinary citizens have not information about international reforms cases, but also because there is no official way for citizens to force their local government to adopt their favorite reform such as people's initiative.

The presidential decree's clause 12 has clearly stated the process for institutionalizing public service charter. The first draft of the public service charter is prepared after hearing citizens' opinion. This is followed by a public employees' review, and after undergoing another modification process, the improved draft is examined by the Public Service charter Advisory Council. The final public service charter revised after what the Council had advised its adoption. Thus, the presidential decree emphasizes citizen's and public employee's participation in the process of elaborating a charter.

However, there is no evidence to show that this participatory principle was observed. Most notably, there is no evidence that ordinary citizen's opinions were heard at the initial stage of institutionalizing a public service charter. There were no public meetings, active research, or polling data dealing with the question of whether this new institution would be introduced. Consensus building about a new reform cannot be pertinent unless a civil society is developed. Despite the recent emergence of NGO

movement, many Korean scholars believe that Korean civil society is still weak and immature (Ha & Yang, 1998; Son & Ahn, 2002: 197-236).

In sum, contrary to the Hercules model and what the presidential decree has prescribed, ordinary citizen's participation to the initial step of introducing public service charters into Korean society has been absent. More precisely speaking, the actual state of Korean society might not afford more participation. It is hard to prove this finding but, since most citizens ignore this new measure (Ra, 2000; 122), it supports what this paper purports in the lack of participation.

The only way that a citizen has taken part is by being a member of the public service Charter Advisory Council. But this cannot be citizen's true participation as the Hercules model describes because the number of the councilors is very small, and most of its members are local elites, such as professors, lawyers, etc., who lack popular support and whose attitudes favor local governments' policies in general. The councils' members are a mixture of high public employees of the local governments and non-public people. Advisory councils in Korean public administration function not on consensus building mechanism from the bottom but as a 'rubber stamp' legitimating chief's decisions (Cho, 1994: 314-319).

In 2000, Public Service Team belonging to Korea Research Institute for Local Administration (KRILA) conducted an intensive survey to discern the actual state of implementing public service charters in 16 upper level local governments. The basis of this survey was in-depth interviews with the relevant local government public employees and an analysis of divers internal documents of the concerned administrations. This team is the only official organization in charge of promoting this new reform through consulting activities and training programs for the local governments.

The survey found that local governments had formed their advisory councils by selecting public-

private members recommended by the central government. However, on the question of whether their final charters had fully represented advisory councils' opinion was only 87.5% positive. Furthermore, when asked whether the local governments employees were actually consulted, only 50.6% were affirmative, while the question of whether these consultations were reflected in the final charters was 40.3% (Ra, 2000:115). This rating results clearly point out the lack of local government employees' involvement in the introduction of public services charters, which is one of the essential conditions for successful reform. One civil servant working in Customer Service of a District Office in Seoul was not even fully aware of this new institution. To my question to explain the changes that charters have brought about in his work, he answered:

"The Public Service Charter?. I've heard of it, but I do not know it well. I think you can get more information from Bureau of General Administration located at the first floor... None of the citizens visiting here are acquainted with it"

His answer is even more surprising, if we consider that his job is directly concerned with what the charter aims to improve.

In the same line of reasoning, Choi, Young-Chool and Ha, Hyue-Su (2002) raised the question of the relevance of the performance evaluation criteria conducted by the central government. This study, based on an analytic hierarchy process method, surveyed 390 local governments' employees in charge of public service charter regarding the importance of 37 items that the central government's evaluation system includes. The survey shows that the differences of weighting these items between actual evaluation system and what the local public employees hope to be are too great to be relevant. This is partly because the central government's criteria applied for evaluating the

performance of charters are uniform for every local government while their socio-economical and political environments are diverse.

These two empirical studies support the contention that the introduction of the reform was not based on the Hercules model, which should be accompanied by active participation of key actors such as concerned citizens and public employees. According to the Hercules model, it is the citizen who has the right to decide whatever the charter reform will be introduced because citizens are sovereign. Thus, Hypothesis 1 cannot be maintained.

## CENTRAL GOVERNMENT'S ROLE

Hypothesis 2 is more important for understanding the basis of the Korean reform model. First, it is worth remembering that the Korean central government, after a long tradition of a strong centralization state, has been learning to accept local governments' autonomy, even to some extent independence from it, since the decentralization reform of 10 years ago. Until the decentralization reform took effect, the central government had treated local authorities as sub-organizations or administrative arms, as in the organization of the military (Cho, 1994; Im, 1997). With official tools such as law, decree, order, directive, regulation, auditing, etc., the central government had been intervening local affairs in diverse and indirect ways. The Ministry of Internal Affairs had played a predominant role in controlling local authorities in these ways. This hierarchical relation between this ministry and local authorities is a typical example of the Jupiter model.

The basis of the Ministry of Internal Affairs' power was the supervision of local authorities in order to accomplish its official mission of protecting Korean people and assuring public security. As local governments' autonomy from the central government increases, this ministry's role dimin-

ishes. In 1998, the ministry's name was changed to the Ministry of General Administration and Decentralization (MOGAD), and it was merged with Secretary of General Administration. This symbolized its changing mission from closely supervising internal affairs to helping local governments to enjoy the effects of decentralization. In other words, the relation between MOGAD and local governments was changed from the Jupiter to Hercules model.

The dilemma for MOGAD is that the more decentralized the country becomes, the more its *raison d'être* is threatened, and in the extreme hypothesis, MOGAD would be a useless organization. Those who work at MOGAD, especially those who have been working in the previous period of the decentralization reform, feel impotent in this new game, and as a matter of the fact, they are trying to keep and recover their influence over local governments.

It is in this context that public service reforms were 'imposed' to the local governments by MOGAD. Mr. Kim (this is a pseudonym) of MOGAD has been playing the key role in introducing this reform to Korean local governments. He is a fifth rank civil servant working longtime at MOGAD employee. Korean civil servant system has 9 ranks in total and usually in the central administration and the 5th rank is the lowest manager rank.

He is too enthusiastic for this reform to listen to criticisms of it. Having listened briefly to what I wanted to learn from him and understanding that my research was critical, he was too angry and nervous to accept my interview request.

Thanks to his initiative, supported by a public services charter team created in Korea Research Institute for Local Administration (KRILA), the institutionalization of this reform has expanded very quickly as the table 2 illustrates. In fact, the Korea Research Institute for Local Administration, despite its autonomous legal status, is a well-

**Table 2.** Speed of Institutionalizing the Reform

Year	1998	1999	2000	2001
No. of new charters introduced	17	568	2,552	237
Total No. of charters	17	585	3,137	3,374

(Public Service Bulletin, Vol. 1 N. 4., 2002, p. 35, Seoul: KRILA)

known think-tank that works on behalf of MOGAD.

After a short period of experimentation in 1998, MOGAD's strategy for promoting reform was to compel every local government to have one or two charters for an experimental period in 1999. In 2000, MOGAD's directive recommended that every local government create at least 10 charters, after which the total number of the charters reached 2,552. The number of local governments in Korea varies around 200 depending on their merges or consolidations. The total number of public service charters introduced in Korean local governments by the end of 2001 is 3,374.) The same principle of reform was recommended to the central administrations. Thus, the central government has 2037 charters at the end of the year 2001. The total number of charters in Korea goes up to 5,411.

This rapid growth of the number of charters has been possible due to coercive institutionalization rather than mimic one (cf. DiMaggio, 1991). MOGAD's stepwise strategy which is consisted of experimentation period followed by the expansion period of having more than 10 charters is based on directives whose legal status are less constraint than a law. Like administrative guidance, however, this tool still keeps the strong power over local governments.

The fact that this resulted from coercive institutionalization is an important point to argue about the two models established in this study. Mr. Kim supported by two assistant at MOGAD) From this, we can say that MOGAD's unit for the public service charters is composed of three civil servants plays an active evangelist role in the process of

introducing more than 3000 charters in about 3 years. To obtain compliance from local governments, he employs the hard approach and the soft approach at the same time.

The hard approach consists of 'guidance visit for verifying,' 'performance evaluation', and 'reflecting to the grading of civil servants concerned'. MOGAD visits local governments in order to verify what really has been implemented. It is one of the oldest tools that the central government uses to ensure the success of its policies. Even though this activity is called 'a guideline,' which means it is not compulsory, local governments and administrations are very eager to give full satisfaction to the visiting verifiers who may influence ministry's decisions in other affairs. Mr. Kim, himself, with others, has visited local governments for this purpose.

For obtaining compliance from the local governments, performance evaluation of the charters is a stronger tool than guidance visit. The Korea Research Institute for Local Administration on behalf of MOGAD developed more than 30 evaluation indicators and MOGAD has graded local governments' charters on these indicators. The problem of relevance of these indicators was discussed in the previous section.

Local governments are particularly sensitive on this MOGAD's evaluation, because, unlike the guidance visit, this evaluation gives the local government its ranking, which is then compared with other local governments. This is because most of heads of local governments, especially those to which MOGAD's evaluation would rate in a lower rank than others, are afraid of losing face with their citizens, on the one hand, and of being disadvantaged in the allocation of additional financial resources due to this bad rating, on the other hand. Therefore, the evaluation is not merely for discovering the gap for the local governments to close, but for forcing local governments to comply with

MOGAD's policy.

Reflecting the performance level of individual civil servant to their annual grading is one of the most powerful tools to make civil servants perform because they are very interested in promotion. Promotion in Korean personnel administration, based on the career system, is based on seniority and merit. Since the government's re-engineering undertaken after the country's financial crisis in 1997, merit now carries more weight than seniority. As far as the charters are concerned, since 2001 those who have participated in a short-term training program for the public service charter have earned the same points as other official training programs. In addition, those who receive numerous complaints from the customers and those who have poor evaluations will receive a lower grading from the personnel administration.

The soft approach consists of public relations and training. Mr. Kim has been organizing information-providing conferences in 17 regional districts. At each regional conference, 500-600 local public employees, in most cases mobilized by the hierarchy for the conference, participate. The typical conference lasts 2 hours during which participants listen a professor's presentation about the public charter and watch videotapes showing positive experiences from abroad. The number of the participants in these conferences has reached 12,000 in 2000 and 9,000 in the first half of 2001. Despite the unavailability of statistics in this regard, we can estimate that the participants by the first half of 2002 may be around 25000-30000. This represents a little less than 10% of the total number of public employees (315,370 in 1998) in local governments. If we take into account that the work of every local public employee will not be reformed by the charter system, this record number of the participants, half of whom were mobilized by their authorities, tells how far the new institution is from the basic Hercules model. This method of circular conference organized by the central gov-

ernment is an old-fashioned practice that dates from the authoritarian period in Korea.

Besides this kind of conference, MOGAD employs active strategies to promote the public services charter. Publishing informative booklets, organizing a competition for the best slogans and posts and posting those in public, awarding the best prize of the charter are the typical examples. MOGAD does this kind of activities by itself for some, and for others it encourages local governments to undertake active public relations.

## **DISCUSSION: TIME AND COSTS**

### **Is it Successful from the Long-term Perspective?**

Citizen's charters, which are reforms intended to improve customer service, public service delivery, have been introduced throughout the world with a different names such as the Government Service Charter in Australia, the Customer Service Standard in USA, and the Carta dei Servizi in Italy (Mcquire, L. 2001; LoSchiavo, L. 2000). These countries have modified the reforms to fit their local culture.

Korea has benchmarked the British citizen's charter in a coercive and rapid way of achieving reform without considering its suitability. Some studies conclude that citizen charters are one of the successful NPM reforms (Ra, 2000; Chung & Joo, 2000; Kim, In & Kim, Ki-Sik. 1999). However, after only two and half years in addition to the experimentation period, it is too early to evaluate the effects of this reform and to judge whether it is successful.

I discussed above to what extent the way of introducing this reform in Korean local governments has been a Jupiter styled reform, while the citizen's charter itself is based on the typical philosophy of Hercules model. This incongruence between the nature of the reform and its method of implementation will be a critical obstacle for



establishing reform in Korea. Some pro-reformers argue that the reform aims to fundamentally transform Korean public administration and its environment into a Hercules model. They may say that to accomplish this, a Jupiter style method of implementation is necessary at least until the impact of the reform arrives at a point where the incompatibility of the two models will be a major hindrance to reform. This logic -- a 'shock method' for a transitory period -- is important and arguable, but it is hard to empirically test because a through study would require research compiled over at least a decade. Particularly in Korea where everything changes fast, it is possible that government will abandon the reforms, and the people who are always seeking something new will forget about NPM reforms after several years of implementation of the reform. The ephemerality of administrative reforms is well known in Korea.

### **How Much Does it Costs?**

Even if our discussion confines to the short-term effect, the success of the public services charter reform is not obvious, contrary to the previous studies (for example, Ra, 2000; Chung & Joo, 2000; Kim, In & Kim, Ki-Sik. 1999). This is because the previous studies have never mentioned the cost that the reform required, on the one hand and they appreciate its positive effect based on very superficial and partial surveys, on the other hand.

First, I will try to estimate the costs. Ignoring the invisible costs such as the consumption of psychological energies for conflict, resistance, etc., I will approximately estimate costs both in terms of public servants working hours and of public expenditure spent for the reform.

As far as official budget documents are concerned, it is hard to know the exact amount of money spent for this reform, because the budget structure is too complicated and in some cases, local governments spend discretionary money or

transfer from other budget items. Therefore, I will estimate the total expenditure from the concrete two cases.

According to the Public Service Bulletin (Vol.1 N.4: 15-16), for this reform program Yeongdongpo-gu, a lower level local government located in Seoul, in 2001 allocated 141,695,000 won and 222,100,000 won in 2002. Besides usual administrative spending, a large portion of this budget was spent for training civil servants and surveying clients' satisfaction. We can guess that the other 25 gu in Seoul spend a little less than this amount for the reform. From the same source, we find that North Gyeongsang Province allocated a budget of 54,000,000 won in 2000 for the similar purposes. The amount of the expenditure may vary depending on the total budget, and leaders' commitment to this reform. Because this estimation cannot be more than an approximation due to the unavailability of exact information, I will estimate it on the maximum least expenditure hypothesis. If we multiply 24,000,000 Won, the equivalent amount to about half of the North Gyeongsang Province's expenditure by 200, which reflects a number less than the total number of local governments, the total spent for this reform is 4,800,000,000 won. That is the equivalent of about US\$4,000,000.

The public expenditure for this reform after the two and half year since its first introduction may be more than double of this, although this does not include the money spent by the central government for managing this reform program.

How much time the civil servants have spent in preparatory activities for the reform instead of doing their regular jobs is an important question in estimating costs. At different levels of the hierarchy, those who initiated this reform have been organizing meetings, workshops, training sessions, etc. to encourage the target group of public servants. I mentioned the information conferences organized by MOGAD where the total

number of the participants was 12,000 in 2000 and 9,000 in the first half of the year 2001. The total number of 'mobilized' public servants by the first half-year of 2002 can be estimated as around 25,000-30,000. Because the conferences last two hours, the total working hours spent for these conferences may be as much as 50,000-60,000 hours, the equivalent of 6,250-7,500 working days. This is not included the time and money spent on transportation. There are additional meetings, seminars and training sessions organized at each local government. In addition to this, there is a three day-training program offered at Korea Institute of Local Administration, which is the only MOGAD official training course for the public service charters. Unfortunately, there is no information to help us of conjecture the time spent for these preparative activities. We can carefully guess that this might be more than double the 100,000-1,200,000 hours estimated for MOGAD's conferences.

### **What is Reform's True Effect?**

In sum, we have to accept that this reform has consumed a considerable amount of money and preparation time. The previous studies supporting the introduction of this reform (for example, Ra, 2000; Chung & Joo, 2000; Kim, In & Kim, Ki-Sik, 1999) have neglected the aspect of cost. Therefore, even if we confine our argument to the short term, we are not sure whether a cost-effective analysis will arrive at a positive conclusion. Furthermore, the empirical evidence why the previous studies estimate this reform as positive is not sufficient. They are mainly based on interviews with a few people or partial surveys about clients' satisfaction.

However, Ra's study (2000:117) discovered that local governments' ways of maintaining their charters since their introduction can be evaluated as 56.3 points out of 100. The finding means that local governments are too preoccupied with

introducing charters to ensure that they produce the desired effects once introduced.

Many scholars argue that the positive effect this reform is that it has changed civil servants' attitudes from regulation oriented to service oriented. Even though it is hard to empirically measure this attitudinal change, we can say that the overall democratization of the country since the collapse of military regimes may also effect civil servants' attitudes. MOGAD's pressure on local governments may have also changed local employees' attitude change to a certain extent.

Even accepting this reasoning, it is hard to prove that the public services charter reform is the only cause of the attitude change of the civil servants, because besides public service charters, the central government regularly evaluates local governments' performances in other ways. There are 94 kinds of regular evaluations undertaken by diverse ministries, which include 32 policies evaluated by the Ministry of General Administration and Decentralization (Kim, H. and Park, 2000:6). If the public service charter had the positive that effect its advocates claim, this would be merely one of the ministry's controls over local governments - just like the other 31 evaluations. In other words, it is Jupiter models' effect rather than Hercules model. This paradoxically means that the central-local relations become farther away from the reform's intended model.

### **CONCLUDING REMARKS**

This study questions the reform's short and long-term effects. These problems can be explained by the incompatibility between the content of the reform, which is based on the Hercules model and Korean society, and the foundation, which remains a Jupiter model. In other words, this reform is not suitable because Korean civil servants and citizens are not fully ready to assimilate Hercules model's way of living.

I propose that those who want to introduce a reform deeply imbedded in the opposite model, such as citizen's charters, have to take note of the pace of implementation. It is only to the extent where social relations among principal actors established on the Hercules model that the reform will produce its positive effects. Each society has its optimal point for introducing the reform. Beyond this point, the cost will exceed the benefits.

The fault of Mr. Kim, known as an evangelist for the public service charter, is that he tried to introduce this reform beyond the acceptable point. The lowest approximate costs that are not directly related to customer service, is 4,800,000,000 won and 100,000-1,200,000 working hours, let alone intangible costs such as loss of psychological energy. The local governments' strategy to respond to MOGAD's excessive pressure in favor of the reform is to be formal, which means to make official documents satisfactory to what is required without their true commitment to the reform. This strategy works because the Jupiter methods that MOGAD uses are the 'guidance visit', evaluation, etc. Evidence for supporting this is that the public service charters in their contents, as well as their method of introduction, are not diverse enough to reflect local governments' differences (Choi, Young-Chool & Ha, Hyue-Su. 2002).

These kinds of important reforms have wide press coverage. This means that politicians are favorable of introducing the reform. A populist and scheming politician can take advantage of unsuitable reforms in order to overcome dissatisfaction with the present situation. Employing seductive rhetoric, he or she may introduce radical reforms, because they know that these will encounter strong resistance and end without strict implementation. It is possible that politicians can play a role where they appear to ordinary people who lack full information as ambitious reformers.

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