

# Local Administrative Institutions As Development Action Instruments: The Korean Case

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## I. Introduction\*

This paper is an explication on local administrative phenomena. Specifically, it is concerned with administrative institutions (public sector) of the provincial level and below of the Republic of Korea. Such institutions include local governments, field service branches of central government and other special agencies in the field. The capacity (system state or health) of this group of administrative institutions is evaluated (or considered) against such referents as *administrative development* and *management of development programs*. The discussion is centered around the *theme* "lack of capacity for local action" in development administration.

This paper is intended to summarize important characteristics of the local administrative phenomena of Korea in general. The subject is the local administration as a whole. The scope of the subject (problem) is delimited by various criteria. First of all, it is located in the Korean setting. And, the local administrative system is only one subsector of the total administrative phenomena of the country. The problem size is further reduced by such guiding concepts as development and managing development actions. These delimitations notwithstanding, the size of the problem is fairly large, and the perspective of the author's thinking is also very broad. Thus, sweeping generalizations and oversimplifications are unavoidable consequences of the matter of course. The nature of this paper is typically abstract, and it relies upon

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description of aggregative tendencies by employing "more-or-less" terms. This paper is closer to *indication* of problems rather than to *measurement* of them.

This paper is merely a "think paper" or a "soft paper," in the sense that it does not meet rigorous requirements of such "hard papers" as research papers or papers on theory building. It is not closely supported by empirical evidence. Nor is it based on a nearly flawless theoretical model. More often than not, propositions are impressionistic and based on much of educated guesses. Yet, although the notion of "think paper" implies the apologetic posture of the author for his loose treatment of hard facts, his presentation is purposeful in its intent. At least in the mind of the author, there are some justifications for selection and organization of system state indicators, though they may not be explicit in the paper. Explanations on indicators, also, do not come out of vacuum of memory facilities.

The primary intention of the author in this paper is to identify problem areas in a comprehensive fashion. It is a general diagnosis on overall state of health of the local administrative system, thus it may not be immediately serviceable for problem solving or for prescriptive purposes. However, the author hopes that this paper would contribute to building theories, determining research possibilities and priorities, and eventually to developing prescriptions on coherent strategies for improvement. Although this paper is concerned with a unique phenomenon of Korea, the descriptive scheme of the paper would be suggestive for developing a comparative framework for cross-cultural studies.

The author recently participated in a research project titled "A Comparative Study of Local Administration of Two Provinces in Korea (1969-1970)." Observations in the research project supplied valuable clues and hints for this paper.

The author's thinking is probably influenced by styles of studies of comparative public administration, development, organizations, systems, and so forth.

In seeking out for some theoretical meaning and for guidelines of presentation, a loosely fit organizing model is devised. The systems concept provided a perspective in this. The systems concept served as an orienting concept of this paper. This paper is organized under the conception that administrative phenomena constitute a subsector of the total social system. A local (provincial) administrative system is viewed as an integral part of the social system of the area, which, in turn, belongs to the larger social system of the nation. A local administrative system is also a subsystem of the total administrative system of the nation. Although the central concern of this paper is the local administrative system, and although

analysis of infinite permutations of external interrelations is not tried, the local administrative system (the cluster of institutions) is examined (though implicitly) within the context of these overall systemic relations. Such policy-oriented concepts as "development" and "management of development actions" played a guiding role in selecting indicators.

The system state indicators (or health indicators) employed in this paper are divided into six categories. These six categories or criteria are: (1) *production performance* (production output-quantity and quality of output, output-mix; production input; responsiveness of the system in production performance; processes and technologies of production); (2) *maintenance and adaptation* (maintenance inputs and their management; managerial capacity in general; research and planning; control; adaptive coping); (3) *structural design* (goal structure; mode of differentiation and integration; authority structure and communication channels; external relations); (4) *pattern variables* (innovative potentials; rationality; achievement orientation); (5) *potential capabilities* (system reserve; attention from governing elites; popular participation); and (6) *leadership*.

In Korea (and perhaps in any other developing countries), local administrative institutions are expected to, and increasingly forced to, assume the central role of carrying out development programs and other induced change efforts, in addition to that of traditional administration. The local administrative system must be the leading sector of the local society in promoting its development. Local administrative institutions are, and will be in the foreseeable future, the key action instruments of development aspiring elites.

The important role of the local administrative system in managing development, and the necessity for improving its capacity have recently been widely appreciated. Needs and problem of developing local administration became one of the most talked about subjects in and outside the government. It is accepted, at least in theory and doctrine, as one of the highest priority items in administrative development efforts of the government. Much of drumming of and "lip service" to the importance of the local administration certainly had constructive impacts on initiating some reform programs.

This trend of increasing attention to the local administration may be partly attributable to the wide dissemination of knowledge on what is involved, required or preconditioned in developmental enterprises. Particularly, the critical importance of institutional arrangements such as delivery systems for developmental programs or action instruments in the field seem

to be by now well understood by policy makers. And, the relative confidence in the capacity of the central administration and perceived differentials or unbalanced growths between the center and the locality seemed to induce the increasing diversion of attention and energy to the local sector of administration. But, the main impetus comes perhaps from practical difficulties confronting the managerial clusters of development administration. Incapacity of the local administration obstructs development action processes and seriously frustrates development managers. Difficulties and failures in the local sector of governmental action already became practical problems demanding urgent solutions. The need for a better system of local administration is no more confined to the domain of academic interest and of normative contemplation. The problem in Korea is real and practical.

The Korean local administrative system is the backward sector of the overall administrative system of the country. It is a backward sector of a developing administration. The situation has been changing. And, atmospheric conditions have been changing advantageously. However, no substantial changes have been instituted, or remedies made to the age old syndrome of backwardness. Some deliberate changes introduced to the traditional system have largely been fragmental, sporadic or misdirected. Reform efforts were not systematically planned and effectuated. Most of improvement prescriptions were concerned with temporary patchworks on ever-increasing loopholes of the obsolete local administrative system. It seems rather that gradual changes occurring in the system are mostly unguided, and not necessarily constructive, "immanent" changes.

The basic scheme of the Korean local administration was laid down several decades ago under the Japanese colonial government. Since then, no basic change has been introduced to this scheme. The system thus inherited initial organizational plans, passive and stagnant pattern of operation, and accompanying spirits and habits. Even many of the incumbents are the left-over personnel of the past "law-and-order" administration. Conditions of local, rural society have continuously imposed unfavorable constraints on the maneuverability of the system. The local administrative system has not been "autonomously" sensitive or responsive to the changing demands placed upon it. The system was unable to adapt quickly and effectively. The administrative reform wave of the past several years did not provide sufficient stimulus for large scale reforms in the local sphere of administration.

The local administrative machinery as a whole is so vastly old-fashioned that it is unfit for the role of carrying out new, challenging tasks of development. It is not prepared for

channelling of demands for and supplies of "new" administrative goods. Inevitably, new "things" (tasks) flow through old and obsolete pipelines causing much of frictions, distortions and leakages. The system is intrinsically overloaded; administrative loads greatly outpace the capacity of the system. The lag or distance between the capacity of the system and its work loads has been ever-broadening. The local administrative system is a hard-pressed system. Heavy external pressures come from many sources: impatience of central guidance clusters for national development; growing aspirations of the public; and unprojectionable yet rapid changes of administrative technologies and conditions. The system is extremely stressed, and anxiety lingers over the system.

However, this stress has not been constructively translated into eufunctional responses. In a sense, it is a heavily driven system, but it does not properly understand the direction of driving, to say nothing of controlling it. Therefore, the local administrative system becomes more and more passive, and serves as an "awkward automaton" for central guidances.

Backwardness is manifested, more or less, in every sphere of the system state. Production performance is ineffective; maintenance functions are tradition-bound; self-initiated adaptive efforts are insignificant or negligible; the structural design is obsolete; there are many conditions or signs of non-developmental pattern variables; its potential capabilities are severely limited; its leadership is often inadequate, and instruments and means of leadership are deficient. But, deficiencies manifested in these multiple systems criteria are not uniform or consistent. Effectiveness of indicators is differential and plural. Sometimes, criteria seem mutually inconsistent.

Moreover, different parts or institutions within the system differ each other in their effectiveness. There are some developmental enclaves managed directly by the central government. They may, at their best, serve as dysfunctional or tension-causing elements for the development of the local administration. But, so far, they failed to achieve results. They created a condition for imbalance within the system structure and consequent impediments to concerted and integrated efforts in the local administration. This increases information and energy differentials and barrier conditions between system subparts.

Differential effectiveness of individual system criteria, unbalanced rate of advancement of system subparts, changing conditions, and mixture of symptoms and mixed responses even within the same system criterion, all add up to the complexity of the local administrative system. This complexity creates halo effects in the mind of the observer. At closer observat-

ions, the local administrative system seems to have many faces. It is a really elusive subject to be captured and described in general terms.

The Korean local administrative system is, to be sure, a "complex system." The term "complex" is usually employed when one does not know exactly what is involved in a thing or an event. Then, the author has to confess that he does not know the subject enough to invent any other expressions than "complex."

## II. System State Indicators

### A. Production Performance

The state of production performance is perhaps the pivotal and the most obvious indication of the systemic health. Production performance is the ending as well as the starting point of circularly inter-related multiple criteria of the systemic health. The local administrative system, most of all, exists to produce or to fulfill output goals or basic tasks for which it is created and given societal legitimacy. The end result of the system operation is summarized in the production performance and its output.

Production performance of the Korean local administrative system is gravely ineffective. Judged against its production goal parameters and demands placed upon it, the production output of the system has been deficient both quantitatively and qualitatively. In many cases, production output simply could not reach the quantitative targets predetermined specifically in action plans, or expected by control centers. The prevalent violations of the proportionate arrangement on the *production-mix* or output-mix of production performance are the less obvious, nevertheless serious, cases of defective achievement. Unbalanced achievement of multiple goals must be viewed as defective achievement of output goals. The local administrative system is frequently demanded to devote large energy to often short-sighted or misrepresented but hurried special programs and priority actions, while the system capacity is limited. Thus many other facets of production performance tend to be slighted or under-represented. This cripples the production performance and confuses the effects of production. Violation of legitimate or desirable production-mix seems to be a real problem of the production performance.

However, the quantitative deficiency is less a problem than that of qualitative breakdown in the production performance. Since the quantitative aspects of output are relatively easy to

measure display or control, quantitative standards of performance tend to be overrepresented in planning and implementation. Thus, in many sectors, plan targets are met in terms of quantity or even exceeded. More often than not, however, they are achieved through pathetic drainage of energy and resources from other parts of production performance. This frequently results in violation of production-mix, distortion of production goals, and low quality of output.

The basic reason for this deficiency (especially the low quality) of the production output is the task overload greatly exceeding the production capacity of the system. Confronted with overwhelming overloads, the system responds erratically. Omission, error, filtering and approximation are pervasive in the production performance (in processing production inputs). The lag between demands and systemic responses is large, and delayed responses are not uncommon. Performers are ready to escape from task performance whenever possible, and they are sophisticated in devising evasive tactics for deceptive or nominal performance. If hard pressed by external control centers, performers tend to frantically resort to *any* means, legitimate or illegitimate, under their control.

This built-in overload is not correctable within the local administrative system. The system is by no means autonomous in determining production programs or their targets and intaking production inputs. Production requirements are mostly given by various program initiating centers of the central government. They are often imposed in haphazard fashion without much lateral coordination in the center. The local administration does not possess a substantially independent coding mechanism that would control incoming demands and work flows. There are large temporal and spatial fluctuations of workload. But, queueing and rescheduling of work flow in the local administration seem very difficult. Furthermore, scarcity of resources in the system developed a habit of accepting any action programs associated with resource distribution, regardless of programmatic fitness and desirability to the local conditions. It is simply not prepared to screen or reject resource allocations, and this, of course, aggravates the overload problem.

Inadequate production inputs are also responsible for the unsatisfactory production performance. Most of production resources (material inputs) flow through centrally controlled pipelines allowing little discretion in the local administration. The local administration has little autonomous sources of production resources that can be extracted in the production performance. This hurts the effectiveness of allocation and utilization of production resources,

eventually contributing to the "bad" production output. And, the really serious trouble in intaking of production resources is shortage of such resources. In most cases, the central provision of resources is insufficient, and often the shortage is so grave and obvious that only nominal performances are possible. From the beginning, planners seem to expect only diminished results of action programs. Even in priority projects, resource shortages result in quantitative and qualitative deficiencies of output. Usually, production resources are thinly spread to meet overly extensive production goals. In serious cases, the resource shortage discourages the system from sincere commitment to the production tasks; action programs may serve for "display" purposes or for institutional goals of survival. In such cases, production goals are displaced by survival and maintenance goals of institutions. Thus resource shortage results in considerable waste of resources. The poor system incurs losses and wastes because it is poor. It may sound paradoxical, but it is true in "resource-limited" systems.

Production input in the form of demand (information) is also inadequate and systemic responses to it are ineffective. Chief among such demand inputs is comprised of production targets determined by the central government. As mentioned above, goal parameter inputs from the center are often overzealous and irrelevant. The input process is also problematical. First of all, it is overextended from the center to the middle and bottom control points of the local administration, and it tends to distort the content of demands, amplify requirements or shorten deadlines.

Nevertheless, such demand inputs from the center command most of systemic energy and capacity. The operation of the local administrative system is so tied up with such demands that there is little room left for discretion or deviation. The system is almost wholly occupied with the execution of centrally determined policies. Thus, role incumbents tend to cling to legal provisions, policy terms and technicalities. The systemic flexibility and innovativeness in responding to needs and demands emanating from other environmental sources are almost negligible.

Other production inputs such as production data (information), knowledge, technologies, etc. are in short supply, and they are not updating properly the already stored information of the system. Memory facilities of the system are old-fashioned, they are left-overs from the good old days of "law and order" administration. These obsolete memory facilities are, of course, not fit for management of development actions. They are not prepared for unforeseen consequences of technological changes and program changes. Also, modern data and information



processing system is lacking. Except for in some construction works, modern production equipments (especially the office equipments) are almost totally absent. By and large, traditional methods and procedures of the production performance are maintained. Generally, very rigid, legalistic, formal procedures are observed in the production performance. Forms tend to be preferred to substances. The accumulated effect of backwardness in knowledge, techniques and procedures seems to create language and technical or valuational disparity between the central government and the local administration. This non-homogeneity would certainly cause friction in and distortion of the production performance.

Less calculated selection of development projects and the organization-based or legal jurisdiction based criterion of project distribution seem to obstruct concerted efforts in the field. It may reinforce the traditional attitude of self-sufficiency within individual jurisdictions. Some important projects are directly managed by local branches of the central government, often over-stepping existing jurisdictions of the local administration, yet isolating project operation from other activities of the local administration. Little efforts are made for coordination of activities cutting across organizational jurisdictions. Still larger number of developmental programs (mostly agrarian) are integrated into activities of traditional local administrative units which are not initially organized for change management. Autonomous project management capabilities of such traditional institutions are very limited. And there is no meaningful mechanism for lateral program integration within the local administrative system. Lack of effective cooperation and concerted effort in program implementation results in waste of resources.

## **B. Maintenance and Adaptation**

Maintenance and adaptation performances give persistence to the self-steering system. Basically, the local administrative system exists to perform production activities. However, to produce the system must first survive, maintain itself and develop or adapt itself to external and self-initiated changes. Maintenance (largely housekeeping services) and adaptation performances support and sustain the production performance.

The staggering production performance of the Korean local administrative system is due largely to failures and deficiencies in its maintenance and adaptation performances. Maintenance inputs are defective and their management is inappropriate. General managerial processes are molded on "law and order" administration. They are characterized by negative control centered

authoritarianism, and excessively centralized, rigid procedures. The managerial structure is based on inflexible machine model devoid of dynamic elements which are so valuable for the development of the system. The immature managerial cycle is neither sufficiently differentiated nor well integrated. The managerial function seems disintegrated in *programmic terms*. It looks like that the systemic identity is protected only by legal provisions of responsibilities, negative control activities and personnel power.

The manpower input for the maintenance of the system is poor. Shortage of qualified manpower within the system and difficulty of getting them are obvious and serious. Environmental conditions are partly responsible for the manpower deficiency. Basically, the strategic manpower of the society is in short supply. Moreover, urban-centered governmental and private institutions offer better employment conditions. The labor pull from the private sector became particularly evident in recent years for the rapid industrial growth.

The archaic pattern of personnel management is largely responsible for the inability of recruiting and maintaining better personnel. The main body of personnel is comprised of "old timers," the left-over personnel from the era of simple administration. The personnel system is a closed system and the personnel mobility is very low. Nearly all of new recruitments occur at the bottom of the personnel pyramid. The stagnant personnel structure does not allow incoming of heretic or dysfunctional elements into the middle of the personnel hierarchy. Fresh inflow of qualified personnel into the lower and middle management posts is almost negligible. The middle management is the protector of the tradition, and is inevitably a retarded sector of the personnel structure. Sandwiched between relatively fresh and "mobilized" top management personnel and the lower echelon personnel, the stubborn middle management people become the stumbling block to effective development actions. Since the system is closed and chances for internal advancement are limited, overqualification of rank and file personnel and consequent waste of manpower and confusion in the personnel structure appear as inevitable consequences.

Pervasiveness of the seniority principles, diffuse and often ambiguous personnel classification, and irrational placing policies have negative effects on personnel development. Poor remuneration system is responsible for inefficiency and many other administrative wrongs. Some personnel techniques are misused. For example, performance evaluation, transfer and promotion are used more for control purposes rather than for development of personnel and efficiency of performance.

Though limited, there are some signs of change in personnel policies. Exceptional performances in development management tend to be rewarded in personnel movements. And, due largely to the nation-wide attention and emphasis, formalized in-service training programs are fairly institutionalized and producing some effects. But, perhaps the formalized training programs are overemphasized relative to other facets of socialization activities. All in all, renovations in the field of personnel management are merely fledglings and scattered experimentations.

Reflecting the general situation of the economy, the budget provisions for the governmental sector in general and particularly for the local administration have been vastly insufficient. The budget appropriations for system maintenance barely cover the minimum of operation and maintenance expenses. The major portion of the operational budget is allocated to salaries and allowances, building maintenance, procurement of stationeries, etc.

Therefore, in terms of personnel power and money, the local administration could not afford any investment for adaptive coping and future development. The system is badly equipped in working facilities.

The maintenance resources are thinly spread out on organizational units. Moreover, in priority plans on resource distribution, operating units which are directly involved in everyday production activities receive highly preferential treatment at the expense of other units. Consequently, the maintenance (housekeeping) substructures suffer further shortage of resources. Important maintenance functions such as planning and adaptive coping have been seriously underrated in the resource distribution. This phenomenon can be called the rule of "hand-to-mouth." This rule prevails over the system.

The local administrative system has only a token capacity for planning. Often, the formal planning procedures seem reasonably laid down. However, the actual performance of planning activities does not seem to qualify for a programming which involves a search process for new alternatives. The planning in the local administration may be described as a routine rather than an innovative programming. The analysis for planning in the system means clerical compilation of statistics and preparation of briefing charts for visitors. The basic schemes of action programs are determined in the central government, and simplistic, numerical operating targets are largely fixed by precedents. There are little variations between local operation plans year by year. Critical problems arising in the performance do not receive much attention in planning processes. Serious goal deviations notwithstanding, remedial

measures are not studied; new alternatives are not introduced to operational plans. In the analysis of the progress of plan execution, routinized data are dutifully checked and recorded. But, basic deficiencies in the direction of operation as a whole are rarely questioned. Perhaps such problems are out of the domain of the local administration. Meanwhile, planning functions are not sufficiently integrated or coordinated at the center, and centrally determined plan targets do not necessarily reflect local needs and capabilities. The central planning agency of the government plays only limited role in coordinating individual action programs and projects. Ministries and agencies of the central government individually establish local development plans without sufficient lateral consultations. Meanwhile, these central institutions are subjected to various intervening influences. They are apt to yield to such influences; they fail to maintain consistent policies. Local planning units are not directly linked to their counterparts in the central government. Their participation in the centrally initiated planning process is precarious. In the implementing stage, plan schedules are not screened or coordinated by an integrated planning mechanism of the local administrative system. Actually such an integrated mechanism does not exist. For plan implementation, production information and resources are usually passed over directly from central government units to field units under their jurisdictions. Such practices hinder areal coordination and cooperation. Considering all these practices and conditions, mid-term or long-term planning at the local level seems impossible.

Control functions in the local administration are not properly differentiated. Controllers are, most of all, not separated from controllees. Since the control power is concentrated in the central government, the control cycle in the local administration usually extends to the central government, thus lengthening the control hierarchy. This over-extended control hierarchy is ineffective in controlling local actions. Inconsistent or ambiguous performance of control also has a negative impact upon operation of the system. Frequent but ineffective control activities from multiple sources often do not seem to compensate the cost of control.

Control standards are often inconsistent or ambiguous. It may be because of defective goal setting or of changing conditions. By and large, precedents determine standards of control, preserving status quo of the administrative performance. Occasionally and radically, control standards are fixed at the best feasible level of performance, frustrating performers.

Collection of control information is neither sufficient nor timely. It is often unorganized

and sporadic. Selection of control points is not balanced. Controversial matters, matters that create strong feedbacks from external sources, matters getting occasional attention from governing elites tend to be overrepresented in the collection of control information.

The memory facilities against which control information is evaluated are generally old fashioned, and molded by the traditional concept of control. Memory facilities are dominated by the concept of regularity control. Controllers are not properly equipped with necessary skills and resources to engage in positive control activities aimed at the correction of fundamental causes of administrative deficiencies.

In taking corrective measures, belated reactions and over-and undercorrections are prevalent. The *allowable margin* of goal deviation in corrective actions seems very large. It reflects social and bureaucratic norms which are generous to the bureaucratic wrongs. It is also due to the laxity of control processes and to the overly ambitious goal setting. Thus compromise seems inevitable, and the level of compromise is fluctuating. The problem of allowable margin of deviation is concerned with the relative amount of goal deviation which is actually subjected to corrective actions or which is not subjected to corrective actions. This allowable margin is fairly generous in the Korean local administrative system.

Frequency and degree of corrective actions are fluctuating and inconsistent. Fluctuating or oscillatory administrative control and rule enforcement tend to confuse standards of administrative actions, and to foster insecure feelings which induce corruption.

The broad margin of allowable goal deviations, and oscillation or randomness in control processes tend to diminish the effect of control. Internal and external punishment against corruption does not always carry enough social stigma which will prevent future wrongs.

The adaptive coping capacity of the local administrative system is very weak. Especially in terms of self-initiated changes and improvements, the adaptive coping of the system is grossly deficient. There are many reasons for the deficient adaptive coping capacity. The most important reason is the limitation of resources. The resources are already so thinly stretched over production activities that the system can hardly afford any extra-activity for future development. The lack of free-floating resources discourages adoption of change plans or systematic experimentation. And, there is no organizational unit which would exclusively devote its energy to adaptive coping activities. In other words, there is no earnest research and development structure for the development of the system itself.

Lack of understanding in adaptive coping problems and tradition-bound attitudes are also

responsible for inadequate and disorganized adaptive coping activities. Thus, adaptive coping related activities, if any, are often misdirected. Information gathering activities for adaptive coping are not purposefully carried out. Such activities are often understood as achievements in themselves, and results are not geared well to programming of change. The environmental forces or influences are not particularly eufunctional to the innovative adaptive coping.

Because of unfavorable conditions such as the lack of resources, inertia of tradition, fatalistic attitudes and the lack of knowledge, some of available feedback information from production activities or maintenance activities is not properly analyzed or geared to action programs. Then, the real problem seems to be the lack of sensitivity, resourcefulness or energy on the part of information receptor rather than the lack of information. For all these reasons, remedial measures for even obvious systemic deficiencies are hardly taken, to say nothing of active responses to changing administrative conditions.

### **C. Structural Design**

The structural criterion of systemic health covers all the spheres of production, maintenance and adaptation. As a mode of patterning system components, the structure encompasses the whole area of system state. By employing structural criterion, important problems of the system state can be examined from the structural point of view.

The structural design of the Korean local administrative system is obsolete relative to the expected new roles and production requirements. It is a backward structure within the national administrative structure. The whole structure is not oriented toward the management of development programs. The structure is characterized by a rigid and inflexible pattern of interactions, and it generally is for passive law and order administration. The locus of the structure is not the achievement of the task itself, but the legal jurisdiction of responsibility and authority.

The structure is gradually undergoing peripheral and periphrastic changes due to changing conditions of administration and to the limited but deliberately programmed efforts. In the course of operation of the system, some temporary yet rational arrangements are budding within the archaic formal structure. It may be the reverse case of "formalism." Some heretic organizational units are also introduced. And, newly established field organizations for developmental services deviate, more or less, from the old fashioned general structure.

But so far, these exceptions and heretic elements failed to lead or induce development of other

parts of the structure, instead, they tended to be assimilated or absorbed to the traditional structure. And, much of structural imbalance and ambivalence of internal transactions are attributable to peripheral changes and introduction of partial and often unorganized structural renovations.

Inevitably, as yet, new work flows through old structure (channels and processes) resulting in distorted (non-feasance as well as mal-feasance) implementation of plan standards, errors of administration, waste of efforts and resources, and so forth. Doctrines and policies of governing elites can not be reliably executed by the local administrative structure. Impatient governing elites and central managerial clusters tend to directly intervene in caretaking of individual activities and often trivial matters. They are inclined to create new field organizations under their direct control rather than to commit themselves to fundamental reorganization projects for the old general administration in the field.

Backwardness of the structure is most obviously manifested in the mode of *differentiation* and *integration* of roles, functions, decision-making and organizational units. Generally, structuring of jobs and their distribution are based on formalistic machine model. It is a static and diffuse method fit for a simple administrative system which purports primarily to maintain status quo. It is based on the legal conception of defining duties and powers.

Structural differentiation generally does not seem to meet the bare minimum (or imperative) requirements of specialization in the development administration. It is not uncommon that ever-increasing number of heterogeneous tasks are assigned to a undifferentiated unit or to one person. Decision making phases are not properly distinguished each other, and are not properly decentralized. Controllers are not properly separated from controllees. Functions of control and operation are arbitrarily integrated. Those are examples of structural undifferentiation.

Many, mutually reinforcing conditions exist behind the structural undifferentiation: traditional inertia inherited from inadequate organizational and job designs, limitation of resources; limitation of knowledge; and limitation of trained, specialized personnel. Most of all, traditional and undifferentiated role incumbents do not properly perceive needs for and ways of differentiation.

Haphazard or disorderly pattern of differentiation and imbalance in the structure seem to be more serious problems than those of simple undifferentiation. It may be an inevitable phenomenon in the partly crumbling and less-persistent system whose adaptive capacity is very limited.

There are considerable derangements within the pervasive phenomenon of overconcentration of powers and functions. There are disorderly work divisions, oversubdivisions of functions and unnecessary overlappings of jurisdictions, and unnecessary (and not consciously planned) segregations and partitions between related functions.

A related problem to this unequal or disorderly differentiation is that of unbalanced growth among substructures, particularly between maintenance structures and production structures. Positive role of house-keeping or maintenance structures was neglected in the past. In recent years, hard driven by urgent necessities of achievement in directly productive sectors, the local administrative system could not afford much energy for investment in maintenance structures. This situation is contrasted with conditions of the central government where administrative reform efforts started from the maintenance sector (central agencies for planning, personnel, organization, budgeting, etc.). This sector has ever since been overrepresented in renovation programs of the central government. Some new maintenance units of the local administrative system installed by the determination of the central government have not yet been institutionalized and their influences are minimal. They tend to be degenerated and absorbed into the traditional structure. It seems that there is no house-keeping unit that would be really eufunctional to development management. However, it does not mean that the traditional maintenance structures are powerless in the system. Misdirected, control-centered house-keeping units exert strong influences and command the highest prestige in the official hierarchy. A traditional (non-developmental) unit is most influential in a traditional way. This, of course, obstructs advancements in the production sector.

The integrative mechanism of the local administrative system is fragile. Disintegration rather than differentiation seems to prevail over many areas. It may seem that traditional structures are overly integrated, but it really is a case of undifferentiation. Immaturity of the integrative mechanism is particularly serious in the management of development programs, and in the area of newly multiplying or expanding structures. In such areas, it is not uncommon that functionally interconnected units or programs operate quite separately or self-sufficiently.

Traditional integrative units are ineffective in coordinating system subparts. Their services are not primarily directed to putting together of differentiated development actions, and they tend only to control side payments and organizational slacks. The integrative responsibility usually goes up to the top leaders. But they are already overburdened with other tasks and



do not have adequate staff supports.

Lack of coordination in the management of development programs is largely due to the absence of the effective general coordinative or control structure for the system as a whole. It is also due to the limited interactions and information interchanges, and limited common storage of information among structural units and institutions. Legal responsibility centered conception and perception of tasks, passive attitudes of role incumbents, and lack of surplus energy in the system are some other factors which hinder effective integration.

The goal structure is the pattern-setter for patterned interactions of the system. Structural arrangements and performances of the system must derive their rationale and standards from its goal parameters. Goal parameters must, ideally, guide all the movements of the system.

The goal structure of the Korean local administrative system seems ambiguous and internally inconsistent. Formal goals often seem to be dissociated from the system structure. Production goals are often overly ambitious, inspired by inflated aspirations for development. There are considerable ambiguity and inconsistency in the means-and-ends hierarchy of goal parameters.

In the operation of the system, formally established basic goals are not questioned. However, there are substantial goal deviations in the lower echelon of the goal hierarchy. Even higher subgoals often depart from the intention of the basic goals.

Inflated or ambivalent goal setting, build-up of newly emerging subgoals, mismatched structural arrangements, and lack of proper understanding by actors, are some of the important factors which contribute to the perplexity of the goal structure.

The goal structure stretching vertically and horizontally throughout the system structure is not systematically identified or analyzed. With the expansion of conscious national development efforts, general, abstract goals have been occasionally pronounced by the government. But, the goal structure as a whole has not been seriously questioned.

The authority structure of the system is patterned by the upward concentration of powers. Supportive clusters (house-keeping units) are turned into control and policing masters. Productive sectors or operating structures do not have enough authority to perform their duties. Decision making points are not properly distributed throughout the system.

Since the decision making powers are concentrated in the center and the central government controls local institutions directly through functional lines, upward and downward channelling of information is the principal pattern of communication. This vertical line of communication is typically an one-way path: flowing down of orders and instructions. Upward communica-

ations consist in legally required reports, passive yielding of other information, and not much of voluntary input of ideas. Upward participation in administration tends to be formalistic. Lateral communication lines are not actively exploited.

Due to the upward concentration in authority structure which stretches out to the central government, communication channels are usually over-extended. Official communication channels are frequently clogged by overloads; bureaucratic delays in communication are prevalent and serious. Impatient bypassings through informal channels tend to confuse receptors as well as effectors of information processing, and it may obstruct stable, orderly communications.

The external structural links of the local administrative system are generally inadequate. We can distinguish three throngs of external relations. The first group of external relations is comprised of linkages and interactions with central government organizations which supervise the local administration. Linkages between the center and the locality are usually partitioned horizontally, and they are not properly coordinated at both ends. Interactions are often self-serving and one-sided. Communication loops fail to balance the communication needs of both ends. Forces are dominantly flowing downward.

The important question to be considered in the discussion of external relations with the central government is that of "autonomy" of the local administrative system. Autonomy of the system is not isolation or self-sufficiency of the system. The question of autonomy is related to the strengthened influence of an open system in relation to its environment and the better capacity of self-steering. First of all, the problem of autonomy of the local administrative system in relation to the central government power centers and the problem of the mode of power distribution between two systems, should be judged against the administrative philosophy and the total systemic orientation of the political system. Next, it may be evaluated against the practical needs of development action management.

Judged by both standards, autonomy of the local administrative system stands well below the optimal level. The central government is almost exclusively endowed with responsibilities and powers for establishing general policies and development plans. Local administrative institutions are only passive agents in this policy formation process. There are formal arrangements for participation from below, but, in actuality, this participation is not allowed to be positive or effective. The local administrative system is practically deprived of facilities and motives to participate positively in or take initiative in planning and control processes of the central government. Even within the narrow domain of local determination of programs,

decision processes are closely screened and sanctioned by the central government. Local freedom or discretion in program implementation is also strictly limited. Restrictions are most apparent in financial resource dispositions.

Some kind of vicious cycle seems to be working behind the sagging autonomy of the local administration. Externally imposed restrictions and interferences reduce the autonomy and self steering capacity of the system. Shortage of disposable energy and diminished system capacity, in turn, invite external prompting and guardianship; again external interferences limit the autonomy of the system, and so forth.

Another group of external relations is comprised of linkages and interactions among local administrative institutions. It is concerned with integration (lateral coordination) of local activities. It covers transactions between substructures within the system. Lateral coordination of activities is generally unsuccessful, and its importance has been neglected. Development action management requires active coordination and cooperation between local administrative institutions. Yet, local administrative institutions are dwelling in the traditional, isolationist formats of interinstitutional relations. They are reluctant, inactive, and incapable in interinstitutional cooperation.

Formal or informal mechanisms and techniques for interinstitutional cooperation are often nominal and deficient. They are not properly and positively exploited in such a way as to ensure successful functioning of individual institutions, and to ensure creative and coordinated management of action programs.

Cooperative activities are carried out reluctantly only to the extent required by law. Interinstitutional relations are perceived in terms of legal powers and responsibilities, not in terms of the substance of tasks and their achievement.

Unbalanced and disproportionate distribution of resources and tasks between institutions, limited common sharing of information between them, lack of overall coordinative mechanism in the system, and failures in central coordination are some of the important effects as well as causes of incoordination.

The third category of external links is concerned with those relations with the general public and non governmental intermediaries. These linkages enable the system to intake legitimate demands and receive supports from the people. The need for intimate contacts and transactions with this environmental sector is greater in development action management. However, understanding of this problem is inadequate, and the approach to the problem is unorganized.

Linkages and communication loops are established by the administrative machinery and given to the public. Thus the emphasis in the operation of such linkages is placed upon solicitation and extraction of supports for administrative actions, and upon cooptation of dissident elements in the environment. The need for channelling self-initiated demand inputs from the public is considered secondary. Creation and control of various community organizations, training of voluntary workers and dissemination of propagandistic information, exemplify the nature of the government initiated outward linkages with the public.

Under the present regime type, organs and procedures for local self-government are either abolished or reduced. Local legislatures and other popularly elected organs have been abolished for around ten years. Thus the public has lost an important means of upward participation.

Private-public relations are perhaps governed by the age old concept of *benevolence* from the government. To that extent, the political or representative role of the local bureaucracy is diminished.

If we over simplify the situation a little, it may be said that, in the local sphere of administration, centrally ready-made (often inappropriate) administrative goods are mechanically delivered to the people, and that linkages are open for the forceful selling of administrative goods and for guaranteeing acceptance of such goods on the people.

To recapitulate, the general deficiency of external relations of the local administrative system is attributable to the following six factors:

First, it is due largely to the tradition and habit inherited from the past. It is a tradition of isolationism and self-sufficiency formed in an era when administrative tasks were simple, static and dominantly legal.

The second factor is the limitation of available resources. Since the energy in the system is very low, it cannot afford extra energy for investment in activities (such as external cooperation) which require positive exploration, yet not required by the law.

Thirdly, the importance of external linkages are not properly understood by role incumbents. Also, officials tend to show passive attitudes toward this problem.

The fourth factor is the inadequacy of coordination at the central supervisory agencies. Inconsistent or vague policies of the center and failure of coordinative action among central government institutions hinder effective coordination at the local level. This problem is serious in Korea because powers are concentrated in the center.

The fifth reason may be the immaturity of the participation potential of the population to

administrative processes. The public cannot form effective forces which may externally facilitate cooperation between local administrative institutions.

Finally, there are many technical difficulties. Sometimes, smooth cooperation between substructures is hindered by inadequate schemes of functional division and of resource allocation. Imbalance between institutions may cause friction rather than cooperation. Different spatial jurisdictions may obstruct expedient coordination. Inflexible and cumbersome official procedures are also responsible for diminished transactions.

#### **D. Pattern Variables**

Pattern variables define not only perception and attitudes of actors but also the setting or situational conditions of actions. Often, pattern variables are measured or explained in terms of values, motivations or attitudes of actors. However, one should not forget that they are always connected with situational variables. The state of mind reflects its situation; the situation tends to be defined by the state of mind. In fact, available empirical evidence on pattern variables is mostly the situational surrogates.

If we want to diagnose a system state comprehensively, examination of pattern variables seems indispensable. However, for all arguments and theorizations on the subject notwithstanding, the real character of pattern variables remains elusive and controversial. Explanatory schemes on identification and measurement are mostly speculative. Surrogates for indicators of pattern variables are generally indirect; correlations between indicators and surrogates are not sufficiently proven. Anticipations and prescriptions on pattern variables tend to be assertive statements on hopes and wishes. The author is going to fumble on this subject. He can only present some simplistic statements on negative or non-developmental traits of pattern variables of the Korean local administrative system.

Rationalism does not seem to prevail over the patterned interactions and attitudes of role incumbents. Rationality or tendency for correctly calculated search and choice of alternatives is restricted by many attitudinal and situational factors. The pattern of interactions in the system is traditionally inflexible and legal prescriptions (laws, orders, formal technicalities) are highly respected in the systemic operation. Mechanical acceptance of precedents and established routines or path-ways is an obstacle to the rational search for new alternatives. Externality of the system and necessary knowledge are insufficient. Irrational forces intrude into the system from diffuse surroundings. Adoption of new, optimal alternatives is often

prohibitive because of limited recombinable resources. Undifferentiated role incumbents are ambivalent or even hostile to the development of efficiency standards and scientific technologies.

The propensity for innovation is constrained by various obstacles. Role incumbents lived so long under the imposed "givens" and authoritarian behavioral patterns that they tend to be status quo oriented. They are largely passive agents in the change process and insensitive to change needs. Thus, stresses and tensions are neither properly perceived nor translated into innovative searches. Inflexible rules and regulations and rigidified behavioral patterns restrict the freedom of action or the room for deviation from the established pattern. Inconsistency or ambiguity in performance standards and the lack of "developmental professionalism" obstruct constructive channelling or guiding of innovations. System openness is limited: dysfunctional inputs may be blocked from incoming and heretic elements may be absorbed into traditional inertia; necessary knowledge and information for innovation are not adequately supplied. In recent years, externally imposed, deliberately programmed stimulus or stresses have been increasing. But the systemic responses have often been insignificant and its innovations have not necessarily been constructive.

Achievement oriented drive in the system is not very strong. Achievement principles are not pervasive in the system. Formally proclaimed achievement-based criteria or principles (such as merit principles) are frequently violated in the actual operation of the system. The stagnant bureaucratic culture seems to tacitly approve ascriptive tendencies, and is not inductive to enhancement of the need for better achievement. Recently, externally imposed heavy pressure (with the threat of negative sanctions) and administrative overload seem to produce better achievements. But, coerced, short-term achievements may have negative effects in the long run. Coercion of achievement tends to diminish potentials for self-actualizing achievements, and to foster evasive tactics and attitudes.

The societal environment does not seem to provide positive influences for developmental propensities in pattern variables of the local administrative system.

### **E. Potential Capabilities**

(Support Aspects or Advantageousness in Environmental Relations)

The local administrative system operates with little energy reserves. Continuous overload and limited resources force the system to operate at its margin of capacity drawing upon all the reserves it can muster. There is little to spare for future development of the system.

Except for some encouragements from "symbolic" commitments of the governing elites, environmental advantageousness and supports are precarious and even negative. The participation potential of the people in the administrative process is inadequate.

Little reserve resources are stored within the system. The possibility of extracting increased resources from the environment by the autonomous initiation of the system is bleak. The local administrative system is dependent upon the provision of resources by the central government. Almost all resource inflows are pipelined through the central government. Discretion on resource disposition is also limited. Self-initiated mobilization of resources, if any, is closely controlled by the center. Chances for getting surplus resources from the center through requests and influences of the local administration are very small. The potentiality of extracting more resources can be gradually improved with the growing capacity of the national economy.

Attention from the governing elites to necessities of local and rural development is substantially increased. This has some multiplying effects and inspires improvement efforts. There has been some improvement in the priority of the local administrative system in the resource distribution. However, support from governing elites is often merely symbolic and not properly programmed. And, in many cases, more attention from governing elites is not necessarily an asset to the system. It may result in more work load, heavier pressure and direct intervention from the center. Impatient governing elites tend to bypass traditional administrative clusters in the field, and build new institutions for the management of development enclaves, large industrial projects or special services in local, urban centers. Thus, general local administrative institutions, especially those for rural and agrarian sector receive less of renovative attention. Though temporary it may be, the pressure generated by increasing attention from the governing elites tend to bias the performance of the system toward short-sighted, display-centered, formalistic achievements.

Support from the public is rather weak; sometimes negative. This weak receptivity on the part of the public does not seem to pose serious or immediate threat to the survival of the local administrative system. However, it certainly has negative effects on effectiveness of production activities, and constrains long-term development of the system.

Participation potential of the people is related to the tradition and attitudinal tendencies of the society. The Korean society has inherited a series of traditions from the historical past. Traditional forces are all inextricably interwoven and lend themselves to no easy separate

analysis. However, for analytical purposes, we can still identify a few distinct social heritages. One basic element in the tradition is the extended family system. The family-attached (primary group oriented) behavioral tendency is still strong in social life.

Spiritual and ethical aspects of the Korean society have long been influenced by Buddhism and Confucianism. Buddhist beliefs are basically founded on the concept of reincarnation in the future world. It helped form a mentality of fatalism, dwelling in passive resignation and retreat from problems of reality rather than active participation in secular life to solve human problems. As a politico-ethical secular religion, Confucianism contributed to a non-productive, status oriented pattern of life. Accompanying emphases of form over substance and of cumbersome ceremonies and ethical standards resulted in waste of human energy in non-productive activities.

In the economic sphere of life, Korea has been a poor agrarian society reliant on traditional ways of cultivation. The majority of the population has been comprised of peasant families. The agrarian nature of the economy fostered conservatism among the people and restricted mobility and differentiation in the social structure. They learned submissiveness to the external authority and human fate.

Until the end of world war II, the Korean society has long been subjected to the rule of feudalistic kingdoms and a colonial government. To the masses, the government and the bureaucracy were inaccessible, alien entities. To them, only one way of unconditional submission was left open. The people held apolitical attitudes toward the state.

This syndrome of historical heritages formed gradually a cult of social tendencies. First of all, there is a strong tendency of paternalistic and authoritarian pattern of behavior. This attitudinal tendency increases dependency of the population on authoritarian leaders, consequently obstructing the cultivation of self-consciousness and participation potential of the people to political, administrative processes. The poor agricultural economy, centuries of exploitation and the influence of Confucian teachings deprived the people of innovative drive and adaptive capabilities. They are not responsive to the introduction of new ways of doing things or new institutional arrangements.

Of course, the Korean society has been undergoing rapid changes; the change process has been particularly accelerated in recent years. Traditional forces have been substantially compromised. Modernization of behavioral tendencies of the society can be construed dysfunctional to the development of participation potentials of the public. However, change processes pose



many other problems before the development administration.

## **F. Leadership**

Top leaders of the local administrative system are appointed by the central government and they are frequently replaced. Their backgrounds and conditions of service differ widely. Political appointees are not necessarily drawn from the ranks of professional administrators. Many of them are unfamiliar with the intricacies of administration. They are not trained in strategies and techniques for development administration. However, generally, they seem highly motivated for successful achievement in development administration. Picked by the governing elites, they are *dispatched* from the center, and they are usually under heavy pressure for better achievements. Leadership styles tend to be divided into two extreme types. One is the reconciliatory, status quo type. The other is the coercive, militant leadership patterned after styles of "hard driving task masters." Sometimes, adoption of militant leadership styles seems inevitable because leaders are forced to carry out formidable tasks with incapable machineries below them. And, in less-rational settings, the militant leadership (with much of pushing but less of consultation and calculation) seems effective in the forceful muddling-through. In fact, such methods produce results, and in a sense, better achievements. Thus, this kind of leadership is often praised for its results, regardless of whatever means it has employed. Governing elites seem to tacitly approve such forceful leadership types. However, this militant leadership tends to have only short-term effectiveness. More often than not, its achievements are formalistic or superficial. The negative effects in the long run should be grave.

The major role of the top leaders is to serve as executive machines in charge of managing centrally determined local programs. Their political role is secondary and limited. Their participation in the important policy formulation process of the central government is formalistic, and they have an intense feeling of isolation in major policy determinations. In the execution process of action programs, the central government frequently intervenes, and the central control is pervasive. Thus, local leaders are often placed in an awkward situation. Actually, the domain of their leadership is very limited. The freedom of action is not sufficient for necessary innovations and deviations.

The official role of the top leaders is not precisely defined. Their actual functions seem diffuse and fluctuating. In a sense, their functions are not properly differentiated. It may be

the result of overconcentration of decision making powers, which is common in the central government and in the local administration. Their responsibilities are over-extensive, and their work load greatly exceeds their span of attention. Sometimes, they are more occupied by social activities and contacts with power centers, leaving other areas such as program coordination, innovation and resource mobilization leaderless. Meanwhile, their managerial arms are generally ineffective, and they do not receive adequate staff support.

Despite the concentration of official powers in their offices, top leaders are often placed in a weak position in relation to the machinations below them. It may be because of frequent leadership changes or of their undifferentiated roles. But, the most important reason seems to be the lack of valuational commonality between top leaders and middle management personnel. Usually traditional figures man the upper echelon of the middle management. They are old-timers in the system and have mastered traditional techniques of administration. They are deeply identified with the traditional structure and subtly resistant to the innovative leadership at the top.