

The Institutional Change and Continuity of the Korean State Administration, 1948-2010[†]

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Abstract

This article illuminates the change and continuity of the administrative structure, procedure and human resources of the Korean state since its foundation of the republic in 1948. The institutional characteristics of the Korean state administration which were driven during the past six decades are categorized into three distinct stages: i.e., firstly, the stage of the state-building (late 1940s-1950s) when the government sought to institutionalize a 'modern bureaucratic state administration,' but in reality the goal was difficult to be achieved because of a wide variety of poor surroundings of the time; secondly, the stage of industrialization (1960s-1980s) when substantial efforts were invested for the institutionalization of a modern bureaucratic state administration, but resulted in being significantly different from the Weberian ideal type, and; thirdly, the stage of democratization (late 1980s-present) when the previous forty year's efforts to institutionalize a modern bureaucratic state administration were revised and replaced by reform efforts to introduce a de-bureaucratized democratic state administration. In each developmental stage, this article also discusses on the related classic issues such as neutral competence, executive leadership, and democratic representativeness of the Korean state administration.

Key words: *Korean state, Korean public administration, Korean bureaucracy, Institutionalization, Historical institutionalism*

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I. Introduction

This article intends to illuminate the change and continuity of the administrative structure, procedure and human resources of the Korean state since its foundation of the republic in 1948. The institutional characteristics of the Korean state administration which were driven during the past sixty years can be categorized into three distinct stages such as the following (Jung, 2006).

The first stage is from the late 1940s to the 1950s, when the government sought to institutionalize a ‘modern bureaucratic state administration,’ but in reality the goal was difficult to be achieved because of a wide variety of poor surroundings of the time. The second is from the 1960s to the 1980s, when substantial efforts were invested for the institutionalization of a modern bureaucratic state administration, but resulted in being significantly different from the Weberian ideal type.¹ The third is from the late 1980s to the present, when the previous four decades’ efforts – both nominal and substantial – to institutionalize a modern bureaucratic state administration were revised and replaced by reform efforts to introduce a de-bureaucratized democratic state administration.²

In each developmental stage, this article investigates firstly the organizational structure of the state administration, focusing particularly on whether the reorganization efforts were made not only to differentiate the administrative apparatuses enough to respond

1. For the concept and institutional characteristics of the modern bureaucratic state, see Weber (1947) and Etzioni-Halevy (1985).

2. For the concept and institutional characteristics of the de-bureaucratization of the state administration, see Pierre and Peters (2000).

effectively to each of the national tasks of the times, but also to integrate them at the same time as to be coordinated functionally for the higher goals of national policy. The procedural aspects of the state administration are analyzed focusing on the degree of institutionalization for procedural repetition, which ensures such elements as impersonality and universality of the modern state bureaucracy and enhance the collective sense of internal unity or cohesion of career bureaucrats (Skowronek, 1982, p. 33). The analysis subsequently moves on to the human side of the state administration in each three stages of development, in particular, the civil service system for mobilization and allocation of human resources needed for the conducting of public policies of the times. The main issues to be focused on include the degree of institutionalization of such elements of the modern bureaucracy as meritocracy and the career civil service system; the composition of human resources according to expertise, gender, age, school and regional backgrounds, and; efforts for building its capacity through systematic on-the-job training, etc. (Bekke, Perry and Toonen, 1996). In doing so, this article also discusses on the related classic issues such as neutral competence, executive leadership, and democratic representativeness of the state administration (Kaufman, 1956; Nigro and Nigro, 1986; Morgan, 1996).

II. Building a Foundation for a Modern Bureaucratic State Administration

In 1945, Korea was liberated from the thirty five years' colonial rule of imperialist Japan, but the peninsula was divided into North

and South under the then international order of the Cold War. The Republic of Korea was established in the southern half of the peninsula in 1948 after three years' transitional government by the American military, but was drawn into the Korean War (1950-1953) just two years after its establishment. Seeking to survive and develop as an independent sovereign state, Korea then devoted itself to post-war reconstruction and also to the institutionalization of a modern bureaucratic state administration. However, due to the poor circumstances of the times, including human and material underdevelopment, post-colonial social instability, the war and the post-war years, and the retained North-South tension under the Cold War, Korea was not able to effectively overcome the various pre-modern elements of the state administration. Nevertheless, during this period of difficulty, the country was able to lay down the groundwork for future efforts to more aggressively institutionalize a modern bureaucratic state administration.

Organizational Structure

During the Syngman Rhee administration (1948-1960), the Constitutional changes led to two major administrative reorganizations (Jung, 2004). In 1948, the Government Organization Law was legislated in accordance with the First Constitution, and in 1954, the Law was revised along with the amendment of the Constitution. The most important norm applied for these administrative reorganizations was the "administrative simplification" for efficiency and economy (Cho, 1966). This norm for reorganization was, for the most part, not respected, starting out as eighteen central administrative apparatuses (including 16 ministries and 2

committees) in 1948 and ending up at the end of the Rhee administration as twenty one (including 13 ministries, 7 agencies, 1 Committee) (Table 1). Despite numerous attempts not to expand the size of staff, the actual number of staff grew 3-fold from 1947 to 1959. Nevertheless, the Rhee administration failed to effectively institutionalize differentiated administrative apparatuses necessary for responding effectively to the state functions called for by the times. A telling example is that even in the face of the Korean War when all national capacities needed to be mobilized, the government did not make any changes at the ministry-level or higher but simply tried to respond to the situation by creating a few new committees.

Table 1. Number of Central Administrative Apparatuses in Korea

Presidents	Year	Ministry	Agency, Admin, or Outer-Bureau	Commission or Committee*	Total (Number of Cabinet Members)
Syngman Rhee (1948-1960)	1948	16	0	2	18(13+1**)
	1949	18	1	2	21(14+1**)
	1955	13	7	1	21(13)
John Myun Chang# (1960-1961)	1960	15	4	1	20(13+1**)
Military Junta (1961-1963)	1961	17	6	1	24(15)
	1962	19	5	1	25(16)
Chung-hee Park (1963-1979)	1963	19	13	0	32(17+2**)
	1966	19	16	0	35(17+2**)
	1967	19	17	0	36(18+2**)
	1968	20	17	0	37(19+2**)
	1970	20	19	0	39(19+2**)
	1973	20	18	3	41(19+2**)
	1975	20	19	3	42(19+2**)
	1976	20	18	3	41(19+2**)
	1977	21	18	4	43(20+2**)
	1978	21	18	5	44(20+2**)
1979	21	19	5	45(20+2**)	

Doo-hwan Chun (1980-1987)	1980	21	19	5	45(20+1**)
	1981	22	17	2	41(21+1**)
	1982	23	17	2	42(22+1**)
	1983	23	17	3	43(22+1**)
	1986	23	16	2	41(22+1**)
Tae-Woo Rho (1988-1992)	1989	25	15	1	41(24+2**)
	1990	25	17	1	43(24+2**)
Young-sam Kim (1993-1997)	1993	23	17	1	41(22+2**)
	1994	21	17	2	40(20+2**)
	1996	22	15	2	39(21+2**)
	1997	22	15	3	40(21+2**)
Dae-jung Kim (1998-2002)	1998	20	17	7	44(19)
	1999	22	16	8	46(20)
	2001	23	16	8	47(21)
	2002	23	16	9	48(21)
Moo-hyun Roh (2003-2007)	2004	23	17	9	49(21)
	2005	23	16	9	48(21)
	2006	23	18	9	50(21)
Myung-Bak Lee (2008-)	2008	18	18	5	41(17+1**)

Source: National Legal Information Center, each year. (<http://www.law.go.kr/main.html>); MOGAHA, 1998.

Notes: *: Only law-based 'administrative committees or commissions' with independent organizational infrastructure, excluding various types of advisory committees; **: Ministers without portfolio, and; #: Prime Minister under the parliament government system.

Aside from institutionalizing some minimal and basic administrative apparatuses needed as a sovereign state, the Rhee administration mostly revived the administrative organizations of the old Japanese colonial regime (1910-1945). Meanwhile, the American style institutions that were introduced during the United States military regime (1945-1948) were mostly dismantled. For instance, the committee-type organizations and the staff and planning systems brought in by the Americans were reverted to the more hierarchical monocracy and linear organization of the pre- or post-World War II Japanese government. By eliminating the American

institutions for staff and planning organizations, the Rhee administration eroded its own institutional foundation for plan rationality (Lee, 1968). Also, by replacing the committee-type with the monocacy-type of organizations, the administration resulted in sowing the seeds of strict hierarchical machine bureaucracy in the Korean state administration.

Administrative Procedure

The Rhee administration also retained and revived legal procedures in the state administration which were institutionalized during the Japanese colonial rule (Jung, 2004). The previous US military regime had needed to respond quickly to the almost chaotic situation of the divided nation immediately following Korea's liberation. This made it difficult for the US military regime to reform the norms of administrative procedure, resulting in keeping the procedural norms of the colonial government mostly intact. Even after the launch of the Rhee administration, although many efforts were made to enact new statutes for organizational structure, not much attention was placed on establishing new standard operating procedures of the state administration. As a natural result, the procedures and customs of state administration in this stage were very similar to those of the pre- or post-war Japan (Kim, 1999, p. 217). For example, the Rhee administration kept intact the colonial-era Finance Law and the Accounting Law, and put in place an almost exact copy of the Audit Law of the post-war Japanese government (Yu, 1966). With its low capacity for state budgeting also amidst the post-colonial and post-Korean War social confusion, Korea then practiced much of the so-called repetitive budgeting, the typical mode of budgeting in the

poor countries (Caiden and Wildavsky, 1974).

The legal procedures to ensure impersonality, which is the preclusion of personal interests in decision-making, were not institutionalized in the state administration either during this stage. Most administrative decisions were not reached in a collective manner, but rather determined arbitrarily mainly through the personal charisma of the chief executive or the head of organization (Cho, 1966; Lee, 1968; Ahn, 1986). As the rule of law had yet to be established in the realm of the state administration, it was also very difficult to establish administrative accountability and responsibility. Naturally, the state administration during the Rhee administration was extremely corrupt. In 1948, the Board of Audit was established as an internal control device within the government. As it was under the direct control of the President, however, it faced structural limitations in terms of what it could actually do. The Inspection Committee, which was created also in the same year, was not independent either from the chief executive. In 1955, the institution was abolished and replaced with the Review Committee which was provided with even more limited authority over dispositions and disciplinary actions. Later, the inspection function was placed under the control of the Justice Department, allowing the ruling Liberal Party and the President to more easily exert their political influence over the state administration.

Civil Service System

In addition to organizational structure and procedures, the Rhee administration preserved almost all the personnel systems of the colonial Japanese regime, as did the US military regime before it

(Bak, 1969). Of any American institutions that were introduced by the US military regime, almost all were discarded by the Rhee administration (Jung, 2004). This can be explained mainly by the fact that most of the then public administrators including the framers had background of the former Japanese colonial regime, as will be discussed in detail later.

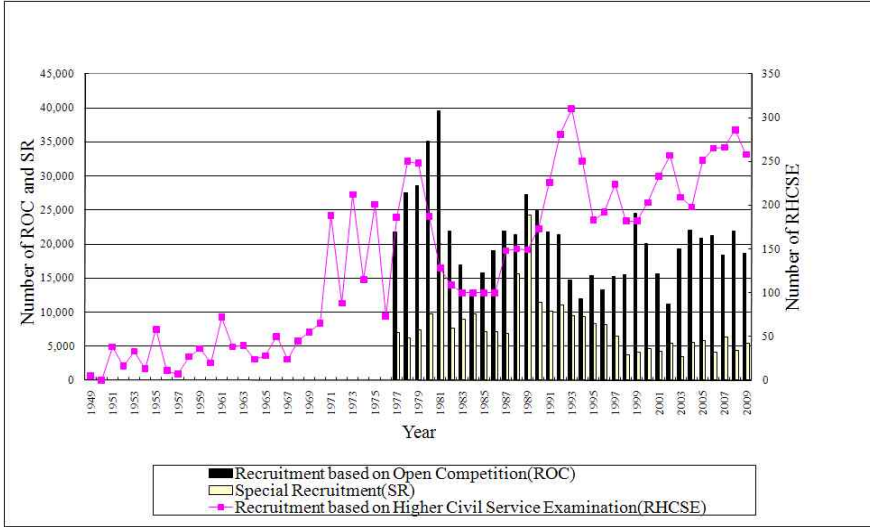
In 1948, a dual personnel system was established with the Examination Committee and the Ministry of Government Administration's Personnel Bureau. The Examination Committee was responsible for setting the criteria for the selection of civil servants, and the Personnel Bureau was in charge of executing the selection process. Of these two organizations, the Examination Committee's actual role was not very large. Meanwhile, the Personnel Bureau was given the authority to replace appointees at their discretion (Cho, 1969, p. 135). In reality, however, it was the head of each administrative organization that had the actual authority to recruit and allocate civil servants, and all that these two organizations were responsible for was just official documentation. Even so, the creation of the two central personnel administration bodies – the Examination Committee and the Personnel Bureau – is significant in that they symbolized at least the Korean Government's underlying wish to institutionalize a meritocratic public personnel administration.

With the 1954 revision of the Constitution and the Government Organization Law, however, the four Central Agencies – i.e., the Ministry of Government Administration (MOGA), the Ministry of Planning, the Government Legislation Agency and the Public Information Agency – were abolished, and integrated their functions into the Cabinet Bureau. In this process, the Examination Committee and the MOGA's Personnel Bureau were merged into

the Examination Division within the Cabinet Bureau. This, in effect, was a return to the administrative system of the colonial Japanese regime (Bak, 1969). At the time, the opposition Democratic Party made a proposal before the National Assembly for the establishment of the so-called “Personnel Administration Board,” a more independent and higher-status central personnel agency, but this proposal was not adopted. It is worthy of note that, regardless of the characteristics of the central personnel agency, the actual public personnel administration was dominated by the President and his secretariat, the head of each administrative body and the ruling Liberal Party.

Staffing was mostly achieved through internal promotion rather than through new recruitment from outside of the government. In cases where new persons were brought in from the outside, recruitment was done mostly through ‘selection’ rather than ‘examination’ (Bak, 1969). From 1949 to 1960, 96.4% of all appointments were made through ‘higher civil servants selection,’ while only 3.6% were through the ‘higher civil service examination’ system (Figure 1). Only less than 5% of the middle- and higher-level civil servants in central government positions were appointed through examinations (Ahn, 2001). The examinations were also quite problematic in terms of the validity and reliability of the tested subjects and testing methods. The main portion of the examination was a written test on legal statutes. Meanwhile, the tests did not include any portions evaluating substantive knowledge and experience in social sciences including public administration (Bak, 1969). It was only in 1953 that this examination – as incomplete as it was – started to be used in the selection process for civil servants. Before that, appointments were made according to patronage, without any screening tests on the individual’s objective merits (Song, 1998, p. 30).

Figure 1. Number of Newly Recruited Civil Servants by Methods (each year)



Source: Updated version of Jung (2006) figured based on MOGA. Administration Management Yearbook (1978-1980); MOGA. Yearbook (1981-1998); MOGAHA. Administrative Statistical Yearbook (1999-2003); CSC. Unpublished Public Personnel Statistics (2004); MOPAS. Unpublished Personnel Statistics (2005-2009); MOPAS. Public Personnel Statistics (2005-2009).

Note: The data on ROC and SR before 1976 are not available.

In the early stages of the Rhee administration when there was a great dearth in human resources, most higher-level positions went to independence activists, educators and other people with almost no experience in public administration (Yu, 1966; Ahn, 1986). President Rhee placed more importance on the political loyalty of high-level positions than on expertise, and also replaced officials very frequently, so it was quite difficult for these people to accumulate experience in public administration. Lower-level positions were mostly filled by individuals who had worked for the colonial Japanese regime. Later in the Rhee administration, these lower-level personnel were promoted *en masse* into higher-level positions and formed the backbone of bu-

reaucracy during the Rhee administration.

The level of education attained by the civil servants was very low: i.e., among the high-level officials (directors general / directors), only 37 % were university graduates, and; only 25% were two-year college graduates (Ahn, 2001). The average age of higher officials was a relatively young 41 years of age.

Efforts to appropriately assign civil servants and to provide them with training in necessary expertise were also very weak during the Rhee administration (Bak, 1969). The US style of personnel management based on merits and a position classification system met with great resistance from, and was thereafter removed by, those who were used to the rank classification system of the colonial era. On top of this, there was rampant political abuse of the system due to a patronage system influenced by political pressure (Kim, 1999).

With poor financial resources in the post-colonial and post-war era, it was difficult for the Korean government to provide regular payments of salaries – one of the key requirements for the development of modern bureaucracy. Many civil servants received pay that was not sufficient to cover their living costs. Also, many civil servants were employed temporarily under a system of part-time *ad hoc* employment, and payment to these individuals was covered only in part by the government budget, while the rest was paid by private companies (Chung, 1999, p. 147). It was expected naturally by private companies that they would receive something in turn for this financial support for the civil servants, and this led to widespread corruption. In spite of all these negative factors, the turnover rate for civil servants was very low. This reflects Koreans' traditional value for seeking public positions with the high job security, and the special privileges that came with such positions at the time.

In terms of composition, the major characteristic during the

Rhee administration was that there was a very high ratio of persons who had worked as bureaucrats during the Japanese colonial rule. As was with the case of the US military government, the Rhee administration also staffed the government with bureaucrats from the colonial regime. As time went by, these people went on to become the central force within the Rhee administration's civil service. This situation had the four following implications for bureaucracy in the Rhee administration. First, since even those who had engaged in pro-Japanese activities during the colonial rule were recruited by the Rhee administration, national pride and social justice were obscured, causing opportunism in Korean society. Second, because these bureaucrats from the colonial era were insecure about their personal safety, they tended to be overly loyal to the Rhee administration and the ruling Liberal Party. This, in turn, limited bureaucracy in Korea – unlike in the West – from contributing to the development of democracy based on the foundation of rational-legal domination (Etzioni-Halevy, 1985). Third, the former Japanese bureaucrats contributed to preserving and copying the administrative system of the pre- and post-war Japan, as noted earlier. The undemocratic nature of the Rhee administration was caused mainly by the legacy of the strict hierarchical monarchy of the Japanese colonial regime where the Governor-General's absolute power was supported by the bureaucratic institutions and military and other police organizations combined with the long time traditional culture of Confucian governance such as 'putting government above the people.' Fourth, as most of the civil servants who had served in lower-level positions during the colonial era were promoted to higher-level positions rather quickly after the Korean War, they lacked vision and knowledge for national development policies, limiting administrative capabilities as a whole.

In 1949, the National Civil Servants Training Institute was established for on-the-job education and training of civil servants. Some ministries or agencies also created their own training institutions to provide more specific training and education such as post, police, prison, railroad, etc. The content of education and training was lacking without systematic curriculum development or any legal grounds. In such circumstances, training courses were regarded as only temporary holding mechanisms for civil servants who were not assigned to specific positions because they did not have any support from a patron. It was due to such circumstances that even now, education and training for civil servants is thought of in a negative and passive manner.

III. Institutionalizing a Modern Bureaucratic State Administration

From the early 1960s to the late 1980s, Korea pursued a 'condensed industrialization' in order to 'catch up' with the industrialized countries. It was in this period also that more aggressive efforts were made for the institutionalization of a modern bureaucratic state administration. Due to the imbalanced political underdevelopment, however, the end result was not an ideal type of modern bureaucracy, but rather a sort of Asian administrative state type of the state administration (Painter, 2005).

Organizational Structure

From the early 1960s, the Chung-hee Park administration (1961

-1979) pursued a policy for rapid industrialization that brought many changes to the organizational structure of state administration. Efforts for the institutionalization focused on the functional differentiations to support implementing each development policy tasks as well as the functional integration of administrative apparatuses so as to facilitate effective coordination for setting national priorities and strict execution of overall national development policies. First, in order to implement substantive industrial policies effectively, the Park administration established various industrial policy apparatuses, which accounted for more than half of all central administrative apparatuses (Jung, 2007). In order to support these central administrative apparatuses, a lot of public corporations and intermediate organizations were institutionalized. Integration efforts were mostly led by the deputy prime ministerial level Economic Planning Board (EPB) (1961-1994), as the most influential central agency in charge of planning and budget. Also, a wide variety of institutionalization was made for integration functions, so that coordinated decision-making among the differentiated administrative apparatuses, and minimized inputs reflecting the preferences or interests of citizens and interest groups in the state policy process could be ensured.

For example, the Board of Audit and Inspection (BAI) under the direct control of the President contributed effectively to the chief executive's lead in policymaking not only within the executive branch but also among other branches, which resulted in an extreme case of the executive dominance. In addition to the EPB and BAI, other core executive apparatuses were expanded excessively to ensure that all policymaking authority within the executive branch was concentrated in the President. The Presidential Secretariat was enlarged with more than ten minister or vice-minister level se-

nior secretaries and special advisors. Several ministerial level central agencies responsible for general administrative functions were strengthened in order to ensure effective compliances of the line organizations with the set national policy goals: e.g., the Ministry of Government Administration, the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Public Information Agency, and the Government Legislation Agency. In addition, a strict multi-step hierarchical machine bureaucracy was organized to facilitate administrative leadership of the head of the organization.

With industrialization as the top priority, other policy areas such as social welfare, public health, environment, and labor relations were pushed back. This made it possible to maintain the façade of a ‘small government’, with nevertheless a high portion of it in the area of defense. The political underdevelopment during this period was reflected in the relatively poor institutional apparatuses of the legislative branch. For instance, the finance and budget analysis function of the National Assembly Secretariat was extremely weak when compared to that of the executive branch. Administrative apparatuses in the executive branch mostly took on the form of a monarchy rather than a committee. Even the small number of committee type apparatuses that were given statutory voting rights could not really exert their independence and autonomy. The advisory councils or committees established within each government body did not, for the most part, work.

Administrative Procedure

The procedural aspect of the state administration also underwent drastic institutionalization. An example is the ‘Budget and

Accounting Act' that was legislated in 1962, which institutionalized a modern standard operating procedure for the budgeting cycle including the budget preparation, review, execution, and audit. In the three years right after the establishment of the Republic, there were no statutes at all governing budgeting procedures. The budgeting was later managed according to the 'Finance Act' (1951-1961) that was almost a replica of the Japanese law of the time. With the Budget and Accounting Act, the EPB and the BAI gained more power for tight control over the budgeting process. But even in this era, due to the continued lack of financial resources and the weakness of civil servants' predicting capabilities, Korea was still forced to frequently compile supplementary budgets, or sometimes budgeted excessive contingency funds in the 'repetitive budgeting' style of underdeveloped countries (Caiden and Wildavsky, 1974). In addition to budgeting, as mentioned earlier, strict internal controls over line organizations were practiced by several other central agencies that were in charge of such basic administrative functions as planning, organizing, staffing, legislating, coordinating, public relations, reporting, and central-local relations.

Civil Service System

During the Park administration, the merit-based career civil service system and other core elements of a modern bureaucratic state administration were institutionalized to a considerable degree. In the 1960s, many staff with military backgrounds went into public positions, bringing with them the relatively advanced personnel management systems of the military which was impacted by the allied American Military. Other advancements made during

this period include the introduction of an appointment instead of a qualification system of civil service, the legislation of the Government Employees Pension Act, and the establishment of the Civil Service Appeal Board (Kim, 2007, p. 36).

However, it was in the 1970s that the civil service reforms towards meritocracy and a career civil service system were institutionalized more positively. The past custom of relying more on special appointments and internal promotions was radically replaced with more open competitive employment. In particular, the number of the newly employed through a competitive higher civil servants examination was increased drastically to ensure the recruitment of more young talented human resources needed for the effective execution of government-led industrial policies (Figure 1). This reform of personnel administration was led by the Ministry of Government Administration.

During the Doo-hwan Chun administration (1980-1987) launched in the early 1980s, institutionalization efforts to strengthen the career civil service system continued by introducing grievance procedures, extending the retirement age for government employees, and so on. Even at that point in time, however, it is difficult to say that the status of civil servants was as secure as set forth in principle; for in the early 1960s, the early 1980s, and even the post-democratization era after the 1990s, when the newly launched government conducted administrative reform, many civil servants were dismissed under the name of 'efficient government' (Chung, 1999; Kim, 2007) (Table 2).

Table 2. Number of civil servants dismissed in a time of administration transition in Korea

Administration	Year	Dismissed Staff (Persons)	Ratio (%)
Chung-hee Park	1961	35,767	15.0
Doo-hwan Chun	1981	22,502 (above Grade-IV: 599)	3.4 (13.0)
Dae-jung Kim	1998 [1998-2001]	17,597* [142,359(Planned); 79,000(Achieved)]	3.2* [16.0(Planned); 9.0(Achieved)]

Note: Both the central and the local civil servants are included, except * (only the central civil servants).

Source: MOGAHA (1998); Chung (1999); Kim and Park (2005); Kim (2007).

The legislation in 1961 of the Government Employees Training Act and the Central Officials Training Institute Establishment Act ensured better training for civil servants. An Education and Training Division was created in the MOGA's Administrative Management Bureau to manage the training of civil servants at a pan-governmental level. The revised National Civil Service Act also included provisions to enforce a linkage between training and personnel promotion (Lee, 2008). There were also efforts at the time to introduce the relatively advanced military personnel training system into public administration. Mostly, however, such training efforts took the form of collective ideology education calling for the 'spiritual awakening' of civil servants that focused mainly on purporting 'anti-communist ideologies' and the so-called spirit of the 'May 16th Military *Coup d'état*,' and so on. It was from the late 1960s that, in an effort to more effectively implement the 5-years economic development plans, modern education and training methods were introduced to provide more specialized practical training programs according to the results of demand surveys conducted on each administrative job category (Kim, 2008, p. 250). In 1973, the

Government Employees Training Act was replaced by the new Government Employees Education and Training Act that provided more detailed regulations on managers' duties to train subordinate civil servants in their charge (Lee, 2008). In 1982, a '5-year Plan for the Development of Education and Training for Government Employees' was made to promote the development of a training curriculum for higher civil servants.

IV. Institutionalizing a De-bureaucratized Democratic State Administration

In the 20 years since the democratic transition of 1987, Korea has passed the "two turn-over test" (Huntington, 1991) to prove her successful democratic consolidation, which has been achieved only by a few Asian countries including Taiwan. This period witnessed many efforts to dismantle the bureaucratic state administration that had been pursued during the 40 years after the founding of the Republic. In its place, reforms were conducted to institutionalize a de-bureaucratized democratic state administration.

Organizational Structure

Various reform efforts have been made to democratize the state administration since the democratic transition in 1987. The New Public Management (NPM) model which was diffused among the OECD member countries was accepted because of at least two reasons: It was regarded that it could aid the Korean state administration to be democratized. It was also considered as an appro-

priate reform model for Korea who was seeking policy redirecting from a government-led to a market-oriented economic system. Significant institutional changes were made to the Korean state administration after the democratic transition, but these changes had both similarities and differences with administrative reform carried out in the Western OECD member countries.

One of the important similarities was the reform efforts towards deregulation on the market and civil society. Regardless of the actual results of such efforts, in terms of policy direction, this deregulation policy has been one of the Korea's most consistent and important reform goals since the democratic transition. Decentralization was also another important reform goal that was similar to trends in the West. With relevant legislation in the late 1980s, the reformation of local councils in 1991 and direct elections for local government heads in 1995, local autonomy – which had been 'deferred' for 30 years since the military coup in 1961 – was resurrected (Jung, 1987). Along with the enforcements of local autonomy, continuous efforts have been made for decentralizing administrative functions from central to local governments.

During this period, however, whereas Western countries conducted reforms to reduce the size of their governments, the Korean government continued to grow in size. This can be explained by Korea's democratization. As democracy proceeded, the citizens' participation in politics, and hence their demand for public services, were expanded, while policy-makers tried to respond quickly to the popular demands to win in the now competitive political market. The end result was that, with only the exception of the period of extraordinary circumstances in the 2 years following the foreign liquidity crisis of 1997, the quantitative size of the Korean government has continued to grow for the past 20 years (Jung, 2008). Each administration that has taken office since the 1990s has considered in-

roducing the so-called ‘super-department system’ to the Korean government. The reasoning was that the super-departments system would contribute not only to realizing a ‘small government’ but also to reducing the policy coordination cost. The Young-sam Kim administration (1993-1998) actually implemented rather wide-reaching restructuring efforts that included the merger of the EPB and the Ministry of Finance into the Ministry of Finance and Economy (Jung, 1996). This effort reduced the number of central government apparatuses to 39, after the number had risen from 41 during the Chun administration to 43 during that of Tae-woo Rho. This number rose again, however, to 48 at the end of the Dae-jung Kim administration and 50 at the end of the Moo-hyun Roh administration (Table 1).

Table 3. The State apparatuses established since 1980s in Korea

Function	Doo-Hwan Chun (1981-1987)	Tae-Woo Rho (1988-1992)	Young-sam Kim (1993-1997)	Dae-jung Kim (1998-2002)	Moo-hyun Roh (2003-2007)
Public Service Provision	M Labor(81); M Sports(82) ^	Meteorological A(90) National Police A(90)	A/M of Environment (80/90) Coast Guard(96)	Food & Drug A(98) C/M of Gender Equality & Family(98/01) Cultural Heritage A(99) C Youth Protection(99)*	National Emergency Management A(04)
Constitutionalism, Democracy, and Human Rights Promotion	<u>Social Purity C</u> (80)#	<i>Constitutional Court</i> (88); <i>Broadcasting C</i> (88)*	<u>Ombudsman</u> (94)*	<i>National Human Rights C</i> (01)*	
Economic Policy Capability Improvement	<u>International Cooperation C</u> (83-86)	Statistics(90)	<u>Fair Trade C</u> (94) M Information & Communication(94)* M Maritime Affairs & Fisheries(96)* Small & Medium Business A(96)	<u>Financial Supervisory C</u> (99) <u>Small & Medium Size Business C</u> (99)	

Administrative Capability Improvement		Government Information Ag(99)*		<u>National Emergency Planning C(98)*</u> <u>C/M Planning & Budget(98/99)*</u> <u>Civil Service C(99)*</u> <u>Independent C Against Corruption(02)*</u>	<i>National Assembly Budget Office</i> (04) Defense Acquisition Program A (06) Multifunctional Admin. City Construction A(06) <i>National Assembly Research Service</i> (07)
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Note: (): Year of establishment. M: Ministry; Ag: Agency; A: Administration, C: Commission or Committee. *Non-executive organization*. #: Abolished in 1989; ^: Merged in Dec. 1994; *: Merged in Feb. 2008.

Source: Updated based on Jung (2007).

The primary reason a super-departments system was not realized in Korea was resistance by the bureaucracy. Another notable reason would be that an ‘organizational pluralism’ was somewhat inevitable, given Korea’s rather short and rapid process of democratization. In other words, various channels, contact points and forums needed to be institutionalized in order to allow the appropriate input and compromise of diverse interests and preferences, emerged with the progress of democracy, somewhere within the government. Due to a lack of experience of democratic compromise within the civil society, it was difficult to expect concerned individuals, civic or interest groups to reach a compromise through mutual adjustments. Had the organizational pluralism as a mechanism to draw such issues into the realm of government not existed, there might have been that much greater conflict in society.

Actually, after the democratic transition of 1987, particularly during the Democratic Government (1998-2008), many new admin-

istrative apparatuses were established, especially as committee type organizations. Whereas there was only 1 committee type central administrative apparatus at the end of the Young-sam Kim administration, there were 9 under the Dae-jung Kim and the Moo-hyun Roh administration (Table 1 and 3). In addition, tens of supporting committees and advisory committees were also created during this period. Although most of these were *ad hoc* organizations, they were still criticized as being the culprits behind the unnecessary duplication of government tasks and government growth.

As explained above, the democratization was the main factor behind the creation of (especially committee type) organizations. The state administration had exercised power over the people during the past period of authoritarian rule, and therefore the people had grown extremely wary, and as an end result, many parallel apparatuses were created to put a system of checks and balances in place among these organizations. The committee type organizations were preferred because of the perceived need of the existing bureaucratic decision-making system to draw from the new ideas and expertise of the civil society. Administrative organizations and committees were also created to address the task of taking care of workers, women and other social groups that had so far been neglected. Another factor leading to create more administrative organizations was the foreign liquidity crisis of 1997 and the resulting distrust in the capabilities of the economic policy apparatuses that had led the government-led 'condensed economic growth' of the past and the recognition of the need for a means to keep each apparatus in check with one another. The push for more democratized administration also led to the establishment of more committee-type organizations. Also, to better keep the Executive Branch in check, efforts were made during this period to institutionalize the Constitutional

Court, the National Assembly Budget Office, the National Assembly Research Service, and the two independent public agencies including the National Human Rights Commission and the Broadcasting Commission (Table 3).

A reversal in the public mindset on government size came about during the election for the 17th President of the Republic. In a landslide vote, Korean voters chose Myung-bak Lee, the opposition party candidate who campaigned for a ‘small government,’ to become the next President. The Lee administration (2008-present) also revamped central administrative organizations as it was launched, and reduced the number of central administrative apparatuses to 41 from the 50 at the end of the Roh administration (Table 1). The number of administrative committees or advisory committees supporting the President and the Prime Minister was reduced to 11 from the existing 19.

Administrative Procedure

From right after the foreign liquidity crisis of 1997, reform efforts seeking to apply the models of NPM or ‘New Governance’ (Pierre and Peters, 2000) were actively pursued under the slogan of ‘from procedure to performance.’ These models were to encourage creativity through decentralization and delegation, but still secure accountability through performance assessments. Decentralization was first attempted in the relationships between the core executive and the administrative bureaucracy. For example, during the early days of the Roh administration, there was an attempt to reduce the number of senior secretaries to the President. Starting from the 1960s, the presidential secretariat maintained de facto the ‘inner

cabinet' with around 10 Offices of Senior Secretaries, but the Roh administration simplified this to a system of 2 chiefs (i.e., the Chief of Staff and the Chief of Policy Staff), 5 senior secretaries (for political affairs, civil affairs, public affairs, people's participation, policy planning) and 6 special advisors (on national security; the economy; foreign policy; national defense; information; science and technology; and personnel management). At the same time, policy coordination on detailed matters pertaining to internal affairs was gradually delegated to the Prime Minister.

Attempts were also made to scale back the control that central agencies responsible for planning, budgeting, organizing, staffing, and audit had over line organizations of different levels. One reform effort involved having the Ministry of Government Administration and Home Affairs – the central agency in charge of organizing – delegate to other lower-level administrative organizations the discretionary authority to re-organize sub-units at the division level or lower. The Civil Service Commission, the central agency responsible for personnel management, also introduced the 'total payroll budgeting system', allowing other organizations to autonomously manage the size of their workforce within the scope of their respective total payrolls. Also, the central agency for budgeting, the Ministry of Planning and Budget, worked to enhance the autonomy of budget management of each organization of all levels through policies to 'convert input-oriented budget management to performance-oriented budget management' and to 'convert budget allocation from a bottom-up individual project expense review approach into a top-down *ex ante* allocation approach.' At the BAI, efforts were made to move from traditional audits based on 'ex ante procedural regulations' to 'ex post outcome-oriented performance assessments.' As such, many efforts were made to expand the au-

tonomy of each administrative organization through decentralization and delegation. At the same time, to ensure accountability through performance evaluation, the Public Service Evaluation Committee was established in accordance with the Framework Act on Public Service Evaluation legislated in 2006.

Another change to the organizational structure was that the 3-layer pyramid-style hierarchy of 'offices, bureaus and divisions' was converted to a more flexible 2-layer hierarchy consisting of 'headquarters and teams.' As can be seen in the attempt to dismantle the 'principle of prosecutors as a single body' that requires all prosecutors to perform their duties as a member of a nationally unified organization in complete obedience to commands from the Prosecutor General at the top, there were various efforts during this period to break down the organizational culture of the Korean state administration that placed such a great emphasis on 'uniformity.'

In short, during the past 10 years, efforts have been made under the slogan 'from procedure to performance' to change the existing top-down hierarchical system of the state administration into a much more participatory and flexible system. Still, however, it is difficult to say that Korea has actually and substantially realized reforms that ensure 'decentralization and autonomy, and securing accountability through performance'. One hindrance to substantial institutionalization of such reforms is the administrative culture of hierarchical top-down control mechanisms, which were embedded in the early days of the Korean state administration. Institutionalization of reforms has also been made difficult because of concerns in the political executive over the possible leakage of 'administrative leadership' through decentralization and the reluctance of the central agencies to reduce their regulatory power

over line organizations. The justification and framework for reforms according to the NPM and the New Governance models are already in place. What is lacking is substantial practice for decentralization and delegation.

Civil Service System

As described earlier, during the state-building period from the 1940s to the 1950s, at least the groundwork was set for the institutionalization of a merit-based civil service system through the legislation of the National Civil Service Act. It was noted that in reality, however, patronage played a very large role in public personnel administration at that time. During the rapid industrialization period from the 1960s to the 1980s, there was the opportunity to better institutionalize a merit-based career civil service system. However, the end result was significantly different from the Weberian ideal type of bureaucracy. Such pre-modern administrative culture as 'familism' and 'personalism' were still prevalent (Paik, 1982), and as a natural result, despite several aggressive anti-corruption measures taken by the government, it was difficult to stamp out administrative corruption. With extreme executive dominance hindering the development of representative democracy and also extreme centralization to the President within the executive branch, the severe politicization of civil servants was also a persistent problem (Caiden and Jung, 1981).

With the democratic transition and consolidation from the late 1980s, various reactions emerged with regard to the way in which the status of civil servants was influenced heavily by politics under the past authoritarian governments. The security of status for mid-

to high-level civil servants was strengthened in the course of promotion reviews, and efforts were also made to adjust salaries to realistic levels, including through the payment of performance-based bonuses (Kim, 2007, p. 37). It is interesting to note that the merit-based career civil service system – the core element of modern bureaucracy – was being strengthened more in Korea during the 1980s and 1990s, when in the West they it was actually being dismantled.

It was a full ten years after the democratic transition that public personnel administration reform started to head in the direction of dismantling the career civil service system in Korea. The reform effort was conducted by the Democratic Government (1998-2008) that came to power right after the liquidity crisis of 1997. Therefore, there was a 10-year gap between the theoretical introduction of and the practical application of the NPM model in Korea. Reform of public personnel administration during this period consisted of the following three policy directions.

First, the NPM model was actively applied to the civil service reform as part of an effort to enhance the efficiency of the state administration. The ‘merit-based, rank-oriented, seniority-based and closed career civil service system’ that had been institutionalized during the past four decades was to be discarded in favor of a ‘performance-based, position-oriented, open recruitment personnel management system.’ The most pressing factor for such policy change was the foreign currency crisis. Reforms were initiated in four areas including economy, industry, labor, and the public sector. Many policymakers and experts (including economists from the IMF) diagnosed that the main cause of the Korea’s liquidity crisis was her inability to respond to the globalized environment in a flexible manner. In the case of the public sector, reform efforts

targeted the rigid career civil service system that might ensure strict protection for the status of civil servants, and aimed to change the paradigm of public personnel management into a more flexible one, including the infusion of outside experts with various backgrounds into the state administration. This change in paradigm was also intended to resolve the narrow-sightedness of civil servants who mostly remain with one single ministry or agency throughout their careers, while also resolving the related difficulty of enabling efficient policy coordination among different administrative organizations. Another favorable factor for the aggressive push for the reform efforts that could affect the existing civil service system was the political intentions of the Democratic Government. Throughout the 50 years since the establishment of the Republic – with the only exception of one single year (1960-1961) – the Democratic Party had never before been in power. So for the political executive of the Democratic Government, reforming the system to allow the easier replacement of existing career civil servants provided an opportunity for them to strengthen ‘administrative leadership.’

In this context, the Democratic Government pursued an open recruitment policy, within which ‘the Open Position System,’ ‘the Personnel Exchange Program,’ ‘the Job Posting Program,’ and ‘the Senior Civil Service’ system were institutionalized. The Open Position System (OPS) was introduced in May 1999, aiming to recruit competent personnel through open competition among applicants from both the public and private sectors. Under the OPS program, each ministry is required to designate 20% of its director general level (Grade 1-3) positions as ‘open competitive positions.’ As of November 15th, 1999, the Civil Service Commission selected 129 positions as OPS positions. Only 16% of the total designated

Open Positions were filled from outside of the ministries or agencies from 2000 to 2003, however, this percentage rose to 43% in the period from 2003 to 2007 (Table 4). The Personnel Exchange Program (PEP), which was initiated in the early 1990s, was expanded in several directions, including exchanges within the central government organizations, between central and local governments and between the government and private sectors. The Inter-ministry Exchange Program for director-generals (Grade 2-3) was launched with the selection of 20 positions in 2004, and that for the division chief level (Grade 3-4) by selecting 34 positions in 2005. The 'Ministry-wide Job Posting Program (JPP)' was institutionalized as a competitive recruitment program within each ministry. The number of posts increased from 48 in 4 agencies in 2000 to 530 in 36 agencies in 2007.

Table 4. Outside appointments to 'Open Position System' positions in Korea

Period	Total positions appointed	From within the ministry	From outside of the ministry		
			Subtotal	Civilians	Other ministries
Kim administration (2000-2003)	180 (100%)	151 (83.9%)	29 (16.1%)	22 (12.2%)	7 (3.9%)
Roh administration (2003-2007)	348 (100%)	190 (56.6%)	158 (43.4%)	132 (34.3%)	26 (9.1%)

Source: Kim (2007); KIPA (2008).

Based upon the experiences of the OPS, PEP and JPP, the Roh administration initiated its reform agenda in April 2003, secured the legal grounds for such reforms by revising the National Civil Service Act in December 2005, and launched the Senior Civil Service (SCS) on July 1st, 2006 for the first time in Asia (Table 5). The SCS is a government-wide personnel management system for

selecting, preparing, paying and managing a differentiated group of senior civil servants, composed of central government officials at the director-general level or higher, covering approximately 1,500 positions. This system is managed by combining the open competition system (20%), the government-wide job posting program (30%) and the agency-level flexible management system (50%).

Table 5. Senior civil service systems compared

Country	US	Australia	New Zealand	Canada	UK	Korea
Name (Year Established)	SES (1979)	SES (1984)	SES (1988)	EG (1993)	SCS (1996)	SCS (2006)
Legislation (Year)	Civil Service Reform Act (1978)	Public Service Reform Act (1984)	State Sector Act (1988)	Public Service Reform Act (1992)	Civil Service: Taking Forward Continuity & Change (1995)	National Civil Service Act (2005)
Central Personnel Agency	OPM (Setting standards and approving client organizations selection)	Public Service Commission and the SES Office (Support self-operation of each client org.)	Treasury, and then the State Service Commission	Public Service Commission (Approving each organizations self-selection)	Cabinet Office-Corporate Development Group (Approving each client organization's self-selection)	Civil Service Commission (99-07), and then MOPAS (08-) (Setting standards & approving each client organization's selection)

Notes: SES: Senior Executive Service; EG: Executive Group; SCS: Senior Civil Service
 Source: Nigro and Nigro (1986); Halligan (1996, 2003); KIPA (2008); MOPAS (2009).

Upon the launch of the Myung-bak Lee administration in 2008, some elements of the SCS program were revised, including the position grade system and performance evaluation. The original SCS system had replaced the former system of three-rank grade (i.e., Grades 1-3) vested in personal seniority of senior civil servants with a system of five-position grade based on the degree of job difficulty in SCS positions. This new five-position grade system was only in-

troduced as a means to conveniently manage the performance-based pay. However, this system was operated *de facto* as a new 'rank' system, undermining one of the key purposes of SCS institutionalization which was to abolish the concept itself of 'rank' vested in (not positions but) persons within the group of senior civil servants. Under the Lee administration, therefore, the position grade system was simplified from five to two grades, and it has been insisted that the position grades should not be regarded as any sort of 'ranks' vested in persons but simply as 'evaluation criteria on job difficulties.' Another issue raised on the SCS with the two years' practice is the tendency of leniency on qualification reviews or performance evaluations. In response, a 'comparative evaluation system' has been enforced with a maximum allocation of 20% in the "very good" category and a minimum allocation of 10% in the "very poor" category (Table 6).

Table 6. Performance ratings and performance-based pay for Senior Civil Service in Korea

Evaluation category	S	A	B	C
Distribution	20%	30%	40%	10%
Pay rates in 2006	7%	5%	3%	0%
Pay rates in 2007	15%	10%	5%	0%

Source: KIPA (2008); MOPAS (2009).

With regard to criticism that the conventional seniority-based appraisal and reward system was one of the main causes of the poor competitiveness of Korean civil servants, the Democratic Government introduced the performance-based pay and the performance agreement programs in 1999. The performance-based pay system consists of an annual salary scheme, where the level of com-

compensation is differentiated within each pay-grade band depending on individual performance. The performance-related pay portion of the salary for senior civil servants was set at a maximum of 7% in 2006 and increased to a maximum of 15% in 2007 (Table 6). The Lee administration has been planning to apply further this performance-based pay system to all the civil servants in addition to the SEC group. The performance agreement scheme is an appraisal system for civil servants at the level of section head (Grade 4) or higher. Under this scheme, an individual agreement is made between the agency head and civil servants regarding performance objectives and measurement indicators, thereby building a link between performance evaluation and rewards. This scheme, however, has not been very effective.

Second, reform efforts also focused on the so-called 'balanced personnel management' applying the norms of representative bureaucracy. Following the lead of the Kim administration (1998-2002), the Roh administration (2003-2007) also sought to conduct reforms that enhance democratic representativeness in the Korean state administration. The Roh administration initiated affirmative action programs for such 'minorities' in the public sector as women, the disabled, science and technology experts and those from outside the Seoul Capital Region. The administration's official reasoning was that, by diversifying the composition of civil servants with this policy, the productivity of the state administration could ultimately be increased. Another causal factor might be the political intention of the then incumbent government who hoped to gain more political support from these minorities.

The Roh administration actually did promote the representativeness of the civil service by actively recruiting those minority groups who were previously under-represented within the civil

service. The Target Quota Program (TQP) in examinations for Grades 5-9 positions was launched on the grounds of gender equality in 1996 and the quota was raised to 30% in 2005. While the goal of the TQP has been overachieved in practice in that the ratio of females to the total number of civil servants increased from 27% in 1995 to 38% in 2005, some feminist groups have asked the government to apply a target quota program even to such higher positions as Senior Civil Service, political appointees, and so on. The administration also reinforced the legal obligation of 1990 for central and local government agencies to recruit at least 2% of their total employees from the disabled. Increased target ratios were set for the new employment of scientists and engineers, up to 40% in 2008. They were previously under-represented in the Korean civil service as can be seen by the fact that occupational groups accounted for only 25% of the total civil servants in 2003. Several reform initiatives were also put into place to increase the participation in civil service of 'regional talents' from outside of the Seoul Capital Region.

Third, there was an effort to decentralize the public personnel administration system. As mentioned before, this effort was part of a reform initiative to decentralize basic administration functions including organizing, budgeting and staffing, from the powerful ministry-level central agencies, by delegating these functions to the line agencies. In the case of public personnel administration, reforms were led by the Civil Service Commission (CSC, 1999-2008) during the Democratic Government. The CSC was established in 1999 as an independent agency working exclusively on human resources management, after first having the Ministry of Government Administration that was acting as the central personnel agency merge with the Ministry of Home Affairs in 1998 into

the Ministry of Government Administration and Home Affairs. According to the plan for decentralization, reform efforts focused on reducing the internal regulations of the central personnel agency, while delegating the authority to manage personnel to the head of each administration organization.

The CSC, however, wielded much more centralized regulation than expected in the course of implementing reform in personnel administration. In the course of designing a new personnel management system that would encourage decentralization and autonomy, and in ensuring that this new system would be implemented by the line organizations, the CSC became involved in far more regulations. This activism on the part of the CSC was a major factor in bringing about a sort of 'reform fatigue' among the constituents of the Korean state administration. Administrative reform was criticized for creating even more complicated and cumbersome internal regulations within the state administration, when it should have been working to overcome the rigidity of Korea's personnel management system. In the face of such criticism, the Lee administration dismantled the CSC as it took office in February 2008. The Lee administration is currently working on a personnel management reform plan that will allow more autonomy for the line organizations to recruit civil servants.

Forth, investment in education and training for civil servants has increased continuously since the late 1980s. The budget for the Central Officials Training Institute (COTI) has continued to increase since the 1980s. There was a brief drop (1998-1999) in the training budget immediately following the liquidity crisis, reflecting not only the financial difficulties at that time, but also the government's execution of an open recruitment system that would favor recruiting qualified experts directly from the private sector over

having the government enhancing the capacities of existing civil servants. With the exception of that period, many efforts were invested to facilitate civil service training and education. Examples include the creation of an advanced policy course (1-year duration) in 1993 for senior officials (Grade 2-3), basic education expanded for all civil servants at the Grade 6 or lower levels, more specialized training according to job type, and cyber education launched with the establishment of cyber education centers. In addition, long- and short-term overseas training programs that were first implemented in 1977 were continuously expanded, with efforts to diversify the host countries for overseas trainees as there had been a heavy bias toward the United States. One issue that has yet to be resolved is that almost all trainees opt to acquire an academic degree in graduate school during their 2 years of overseas training, thereby limiting their own opportunity to accumulate practical knowledge.

The Roh administration considered that the closed career and rank classification system made it difficult to foster specialized expertise in civil servants. The administration therefore invested in efforts to develop competency, and turn generalists into specialists by institutionalizing the Career Development Program (CDP), and by working to improve training programs. Introduced in 2006, the CDP called for each ministry to classify its work into several professional categories and to assign staff based on their specialized categories. An ‘I’ type career path is applied to administrative occupational groups, while a ‘T’ type career path is applied to science and engineering occupational groups. The minimum length of service in one position has been extended from one year to one and a half years for the Grade 4 (division head) level, and to two years for staff at Grade 5 or lower levels, to ensure that civil servants have the opportunity to acquire experiential knowledge.

V. Conclusion

The institutional change and continuity of the Korean state administration during the past sixty years can be summarized as following. First, during the period of the state building from the 1940s to the 1950s, the Korean government laid the groundwork for institutionalizing a modern bureaucratic state administration so as to build an independent sovereign nation state, and prepare for more positive further developments in the next stage. However, the end result was far from a Weberian ideal type of modern bureaucracy, in that many pre-modern institutional characteristics persisted.

Second, during the period of rapid industrialization from the 1960s to the 1980s, the government managed to institutionalize many elements of a modern bureaucratic state administration, including a more merit-based career civil service system. The Korean government's efforts to institutionalize a modern bureaucratic state administration during this stage, however, resulted in the creation not of a genuine Weberian type of state administration, but an Asiatic form of administrative state that contributed to establishing strong stateness (Jung, 2007).

In the third stage, the period of democratization from the late 1980s to the present, the Korean government changed reform directions and sought to establish a de-bureaucratized democratic state administration. Triggered not only by the democratic transition of 1987 but also by the liquidity crisis of 1997, the government invested many efforts to deconstructing various bureaucratic elements of the state administration by adopting the reform models that were initiated and diffused mostly by the English-speaking

OECD member states of the time. Unfortunately, however, there still exists substantial formalism, with considerable gaps between the nominal reform goals and the actual level of institutionalization in terms of taking solid root in practice.

During the first stage, the Korean civil servants were very low in terms of neutral competence in that they lacked administrative expertise and experience, and were highly politicized by the President and the ruling party. Based on a strong political tie between the charismatic President Rhee and the civil servants with low legitimacy due to their colonial regime background, the former was able to exercise a strong executive leadership. However, the degree of democratic control over the government was extremely low, along with poor democratic representativeness and responsiveness of the political executive and the civil service. The policy capability of the state administration as a whole in the first stage was not high enough to respond effectively to the chaotic situations in the state-building period.

By acquiring more accumulated expertise and experience, the civil servants substantially enhanced their neutral competency during the second stage. They became more autonomous in their relationship with the political parties and the National Assembly, but were still highly politicized by the President, who was able to enjoy a strong executive leadership based on the institutional support of the well-organized core executive apparatuses. There was still a strong sense of solidarity between the President and the civil servants, while democratic supervision over both of them was not enough to be responsible to civil society. Meanwhile, the policy capacity of the state administration as a whole was very high, contributing to achieving the simplified national goal of rapid industrialization.

In the third stage, while civil servants had accumulated much more expertise and experience, they were not flexible enough to adapt and respond to the rapidly changing environment such as globalization, democratization, the information technology revolution, postmodernism, and so on. Experiencing the two turnover tests, the sense of a strong political nexus between the President and civil servants weakened considerably, while the control of civil society over both of them increased exponentially, thus further enhancing democracy within the state administration. The decentralization and pluralization of the state and society led to concerns by the President over his executive leadership or control over civil servants. Meanwhile, civil servants were also concerned about the weakening of their status that came with the reforms dismantling the career civil service system. As a natural result, a substantial gap has appeared between the nominal administrative reform goals of decentralization and autonomy with performance-based accountability, and the actual degree of institutionalization of these goals. As a whole, the last two decades have witnessed a significant decrease in the policy capacity of the Korean state administration in terms of its positive driving on initiating and implementing national agenda.

The state administration and society will continue to become more pluralistic in Korea in the future, and this might well keep on causing some confusion in the state administration. Especially in light of the global economic crisis triggered by the American financial crisis of 2008, there is even more confusion due to questions being raised as to the appropriate role of the state and the appropriate model of administrative development (Peters and Pierre, 2009). As many specialists confess, existing theories of social sciences including economics, can hardly explain today's global economic

crisis or predict such crises in the future. It seems inevitable, therefore, that each country may have to find solutions to a crisis through trial and error. Only after getting out of the depths of the crisis, might it be possible to review these past traces and to theorize about them (Jung, 2010). This might suggest that each country must reconsider and reform its institutionalized paradigm of public administration and governance. One thing that we might be certain about under these chaotic and complex circumstances, is that it would not be appropriate to define a uniform and rigid set of rules or standards for the role of, and methods for, the state administration and governance.

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