

Administrative Reform in Decentralization and Globalization for the Twenty-first Century

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I . Introduction

The structure of government included as central and local government in Asian countries changes constantly, sometimes rapidly and dramatically through administration reforms and reorganization, sometimes slowly and imperceptibly through the interaction social, administrative, global, and political forces. But the results of those changes are often most visible and profound in Asian nations, where the government plays a dominant role in guiding national development approach since 1950s.

One of the most crucial debates in the Asian nations is about the degree of control that central governments can and should have over development planning and administration. Thus, it should not be surprising that as the directions of development strategy shifted over the past four decades; questions about the most appropriate forms of planning and administering development policies should have arisen in so many Asian countries.¹⁾ During the 1990s, many governments in Asia began to experiment not only with new approaches to development, but also with new political, administrative and global managements for planning and managing development programs and projects.

The increasing interest in decentralizing authority for planning and administration to regional and local agencies, local governments and special purpose organizations arose from three converging forces; first, from disillusionment with the results of central planning and control of development activities during the 1950s and 1960s; second, from the implicit requirements for new ways of managing development programs and projects that were embodied in growth-with-equity strategies that emerged during the 1970s; and third, from the growing realization that as societies become more complex, global and government activities began to expand, it becomes increasingly difficult to plan and administer all development activities effectively and

efficiently from the central government during the 1980s and 1990s²⁾.

Globalization of the world economy will require cities and metropolitan areas to adapt their economic bases and cultures to the needs of international competition during the 1990s and the early years of the twenty-first century. The world economy is being restructured not only by technological changes but by the geographic movement of all factors of production. This mobility will change the location of production as well as the direction and volume of flows of trade and investment among urban and regional centers as local autonomy unit.³⁾

The opening of the world economy, the reduction of national government intervention in internal markets, and the expansion of cross-border transactions will not only make nation-states more interdependent, but will require their cities to participate more actively in international competition in order to remain economically viable. In the future, urban economic viability will depend on not only expanding international trade but also using new technology on production system.

The universal ethics is not a question of absolute ethics that transcends the limits of time and space and is applicable to any society at any given time. Asian nations are seeking a solution to the question of universal ethics demanded by our times on the threshold of the 21st century. The universal ethics indicates two basic virtues : autonomy and social order. Asian nations also try to approach the autonomy and social order for achieving the decentralization and globalization in the twenty-first century.

The objective of study is to evaluate and suggest the development strategy on decentralization and globalization in Asian nations for twenty-first century. This paper also describes decentralization and globalization trend in Asian nations. Decentralization and globalization will enforce the individual freedom and human right in Asia nations.

II. Decentralization and globalization trend in Asian nations

1. Asian value for decentralization

Central planning was adopted in most Asian countries, not only because of the Soviet Union's apparent success in mobilizing investment resources but also because international lending agencies insisted that grants and loans be made in conformance with coherent plans for national development. Even capitalist economies adopted planning mechanisms that had once been associated with socialist systems.

Central planning was not only complex and difficult to implement, but may also have been inappropriate for promoting equitable growth and self sufficiency among low-income groups communities within Asian countries.⁴⁾

Central planning and administration were considered necessary to guide and control the economy and to integrate and unify nations that were emerging from long periods of colonial rule. In that time, Asian countries want to achieve the economic growth for national development. Moreover, central control was implicit in the requirement of the international assistance agencies that were providing large amounts of capital during the 1950s and 1960s. They insisted that borrowers have comprehensive and long-term plans for the investment of external capital. Central planning was introduced in most Asian countries in the 1950s as a means of providing rational and coherent policies for using scarce resources effectively to promote rapid growth in industrial output.

The major criticism of central planning now is its failing to achieve the intended impacts—the inability of centralized planning systems to provide for equitable distribution of the benefits of economic growth among regions and social groups within Asian countries.⁵⁾ The value on Asian nation means to achieve individual freedom, growth with equity and social harmony.

The cause of decentralization is now being advanced because it is assumed that

a decentralized mode of policy and program implementation is conducive to more effective coordination and consistency, greater access to governmental activities, increased involvement of people in the development process, more efficient delivery of public services for meeting basic human needs and increased accountability of government agencies.⁶⁾

Whatever other questions may have arisen, attempts to decentralize development planning and implementation in Asia were closely associated with increasing concern for reducing regional disparities in standards of living, which were seen as a threat to national stability. In Thailand, a special fund for regional development was created in the Second Five-Year National Development Plan (1967–1971) after the prime minister discovered from his inspection trips the backwardness of the northeastern region. Communist subversion in the region prompted him to take action. In India, the closing years of the 1960s were marked by widespread rural strife. A report to the government of India in 1969 blamed the increasing tensions on inequitable distribution of the benefits of development. With the Fifth Five-Year Plan on the anvil, regional development schemes as well as programs for various social groups began to take shape.⁷⁾ In Malaysia, where ethnic heterogeneity is a crucial social factor in all policies, the outbreak of racial riots in 1969 was an important milestone in national development strategies, which were made more specific and which accelerated government efforts to correct economic imbalances in the country.⁸⁾

Decentralization development planning and implementation in Asia were closely associated with increasing concern for reducing regional disparities in standards of living, which were seen as a threat to national stability. Decentralization became an important policy objective during the 1970s and 1980s as governments in Asian countries sought to create more socially equitable patterns of economic growth and to meet the basic needs of the poor and the increase of individual freedom.⁹⁾

The new debate on administrative reform in Asia is going over decentralization emerged from the failure of centralized planning and implementation to provide for equitable distribution of the benefits of development and from the realization that inequity creates political instabiling and social strife. The administrative reform of most governments in Asia has been to pay greater attention to regional development by decentralizing development administration and planning. Since the early 1950s, control over development activities in most Asian countries has been centralized in national government ministries and agencies.

The world's value indicates decentralization is widely regarded as a necessary condition for social, economic and political development. Decentralist programs and reforms has generally been on democratic decentralization, that is, development is seen as requiring a measure of political autonomy to be devolved to institutions which local people may participate in and control.¹⁰⁾

National development may produce social disorganization, and political instability by encouraging industrialization, urbanization, mobility, education, mass communication and meritocracy. Local government can ease the process of change by providing local leadership to win support for change by involvement.

A principle aim of the administrative reform was to make appropriate services and development activities responsive to local wishes and initiatives by devolving or delegating them to local representative bodies. Thus, decentralization reform is designed to reflect unique local circumstances in development plans and their implementation.

Through out the Asian decentralization has long been regarded as a necessary condition of economic, social and political development. Nowhere in Asia has the conflict over treating local governments as an extension of the center while claiming that they should be autonomous been more prominent than in India.¹¹⁾

The emphasis in decentralist programs and reforms has generally been on

democratic decentralization, that is, development is seen as requiring a measure of political autonomy to be devolved to institution which local people may participate in and control.

The long economic recession of the late 1980s and mid 1990s, accompanied by high of inflation and large budget deficits, weakened the economies of many Asian nations. The International Monetary Fund(IMF) and the World Bank turned to two types of policy reforms : economic stabilization and structural adjustment. Economic stabilization policies - usually requiring economic austerity measures - aim at controlling inflation, the loss of foreign exchange reserves, capital flight and public sector deficits. Structural adjustment policies attempt to remove obstacles to long-term economic growth by promoting economic liberalization, eliminating excessive taxes and subsidies, controlling prices and interest rates, reducing high tariffs and import restrictions, and modifying or eliminating distortions in incentives for private sector investment.¹²⁾ The World Bank's structural adjustment loans also seek to reduce government employment and public expenditures, privatize public functions, and reduce government interference in market activities.

Studies of Korea, the Philippines, India and Taiwan all show local governments with weak local administrative function, weak tax powers and tax effort becoming financially dependent on grants and other forms of transfer. Decentralization programmes, therefore, have not been noted for smooth relations between bureaucrats and elected representatives, and between central government's officer and local government's officer.

Advanced nation of municipal reform in the 1960s also, in theory, was seen as consistent with both local democracy and efficiency. Local government in the advanced nation had to satisfy the two values of "access" and "service". The access, one of important value for national development in the advanced nation, clearly required decentralization. Local government, it is argued, is responsive to the needs

of community. Local self-government will, by definition, preserve the liberty of the local community against centralizing power.¹³⁾ Democratic decentralization in the advanced nation is said to contribute to “the breeding of better societies” and the establishment of social harmony, community spirit and political stability. Asian nations also want to democratic decentralization in order to achieve the establishment of social harmony, individual freedom, and growth with equity.

2. Globalization and global city

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the world will stand at the threshold of a new era of economic and social political and of new opportunities for human progress. At the same time, globalization has brought-and will continue to bring-new problems, complexities, and challenges for developing and emerging market countries. In the twenty-first century participation in the global economy will be the key factor affecting the wealth of Asian nations. Countries that successfully integrate that productive activities into the global economy are likely to prosper; those that cannot are likely to be marginalised, creating new economic, social and political cleavages between developed and developing nations.

The global mobility of factors of production and the driving force of technology are altering the structure and the location of employment, use of technologies, patterns of trade and investment and the economic opportunities in urban and regional centers as local autonomy units.¹⁴⁾ Global cities is defined as strategic sites for the valorization of leading components of capital and for the coordination of global economic processes. Global cities are also sites for the incorporation of large numbers in activities that service the strategic sectors.¹⁵⁾

Behrman and Rondinelli point out that globalization of the world economy will require cities to make significant cultural changes: to develop a sense of purpose and direction: and to create a sense of community and a quality of life that will attract

the managers, scientists, technicians, and bankers and investors that form the backbone of international knowledge-based industries.¹⁶⁾ Progressive globalization will thus not only alter growth rates in various cities but will alter the structure of their economies on urban hierarchy settlement system. Urban and regional centers that are inward-looking will offer different opportunities than those stimulated by foreign direct investment or by exports. Foreign direct investment will flow to those urban centers that openly seek it and that create a physical environment, a quality of life, and a sense of global community in which transnational management and labor can flourish.

Behrman and Rondinelli explain that technologically driven growth will require global cities not only to expand their transport and communications infrastructure as speed becomes a more crucial factor in competition, but to improve their educational systems as more career opportunities open and training education center in transnational companies.¹⁷⁾ Global cities will have to diversify their recreational, artistic, and cultural facilities, and improve and develop their health programs and concepts of health maintenance to accommodate a culturally diverse labor force. Attitudes toward the concept of community itself will have to shift to encompass the more open society required to attract foreign investors. Such shifts will have to prepare urban residents for a greater understanding of the extent to which the world is tied together in opportunities and problems that are becoming more common to all nations and peoples.

It is considered that the governing capacity of local governments forces attention to very basic issues. It has been long recognized that the place of the local autonomy unit as the site of social and economic elite competition, public sector service delivery, and citizen participation, civil education and leadership training. But in a recent years, global city on globalization of the world economy has required to adopt their economic bases and cultures to the needs of international competition.

Economic integration - through freer trade, payments, and investment across national borders - has been the goal of the advanced nations since the end of World War II.¹⁸⁾ Technology on global society - reflected in new production techniques, products, communication, transportation, telecommunication, environment, human living life, living and energy sources - has been a major force in opening and expanding international markets. New technologies enhance mobility. And the technologies also create new varieties of products. New technologies, therefore, change the relative costs of production and distribution and the comparative advantages of corporations and urban centers. The process of technological change on global economies continues to enhance specialization, leading to stronger economic linkages and further integration.

The ability to make similar products through the diffusion of technologies and the flow of information about products has increased the similarities in demand for consumer and industrial goods. The waning of national government interference in economic interactions will mean that substantial decision-making authority will move to the city and metropolitan levels. The decentralization of power and authority to local autonomy unit will be reinforced by a fundamental feature of an integrating world economy. It is indicated that the increasing mobility of capital, labor, management, and technology is largely uncontrollable by national governments unless they wish to isolate themselves from the globalization and informatization process.¹⁹⁾ Global cities must prepare for and adjust to the changes brought by the increasing mobility of transnational industries. The core industrial and service sectors bring greater contributions to urban and regional development by establishing related services and production.

Cultures are the imprinted behavior of peoples, stemming from long traditions, similar concepts of life and its meaning, and similar belief systems. They are affected by climate and geography, and by the advancement of the arts and sciences.²⁰⁾ The

movements of production factors under foreign ownership and control probably will alter the economic structures and lifestyles of cities involved in international transactions more profoundly than growing similarities in consumption patterns. National governments are not likely to be the most effective source. Therefore, global cities will inevitably become more important centers of dynamics economic and cultural change on global society.

It is noted that the major force for change is technology, which is generating new industries and new products, opening new markets, eliciting new locations for production, and giving rise to mobile industries that are able to relocate fairly quickly among cities in response to changes in market and production conditions.²¹⁾ New and more mobile technologies will not only require new types of infrastructure in cities, but also require cities to develop or attract new kinds of economic activity.

At the same time, the spread of cultures across national boundaries is altering lifestyles, customer behaviors, social patterns, and politics, and thereby the roles of global cities. The ability to adjust to cultural changes will partly determine the preparation of cities to compete in the global economy of the 21st century.

Transnational industry is defined as enterprises, large or small, that do business across national borders.²²⁾ Transnational corporations are increasingly seeking cities with strong work ethics on international standards and skilled labor resource in which to locate or expand their operations. In an international high-technology economy, the global cities that develop their intellectual, artistic, cultural, and educational institutions to provide a higher quality of life will also become more attractive to transnational corporations. Local administrators generally have been oriented to urban planning for the physical and civil engineering environment that supports work and action. But in the future they must also plan for the intellectual and creative aspects that raise the quality of life and information creation for the global competency.

Over the next decade it will become increasingly important for global cities to achieve greater balance in their development in order to attract and serve the employees of international, technology-oriented transnational corporations in a highly mobile and competitive environment.

III. Development strategy for local government in Asian nations

Market development in Asian nations requires and strengthening the private sector by providing incentives and support for privatizing state-owned enterprises, developing small-and medium-sized companies and expanding transnational corporations, for globalization.

The global economy means that enterprises of all sizes must learn to respond to greater market fragmentation, shorter product cycles, smaller production runs, and faster redesign and production of customized goods. The global economy is requiring manufacturing and service firms that wish to compete internationally to become more flexible in their operations use advanced technology to produce high quality reasonably priced goods; adopt speed-to-market methods of operations; use multi-site locations; manage just-in-time production and delivery systems and engage in world-wide sourcing of goods and service.²³⁾

Administrative reform is a deliberate effort to introduce innovative ideas into the working of government, i.e., into the structure, process, and conduct of government administration. Even a small administrative reform started in a limited sphere can eventually involve a government-wide change. But central and local government bureaucracy is basically conservative and resistant to change the local government structure. In the beginning, administrative reform may be regarded as a technical matter but it soon becomes not only a highly political matter but also a

centralization-oriented culture.

The economic and political systems of most in Asian nations currently underwent dramatic changes over the past two decades and will continue to face new challenges included as globalization and informatization in the twenty-first century. Centrally-planned economies and strong centralization in most in Asian nations has begun a transformation to market-oriented system and decentralization. The rapid development and global proliferation of new technologies has made knowledge-based industries and skills more crucial to the economic growth of most in Asian nations have begun a transformation to market-oriented system and decentralization. The rapid development and global proliferation of new technologies has made knowledge-based industries and skills more crucial to the economic growth of most in Asian nations.

1. Promoting small and medium-sized enterprise and transnational enterprise development

In Asian nations, government policies and regulations are serious obstacles to small and medium-sized enterprise expansion. Those engaged in informal-sector activities try to stabilize their customer relationships and to offer a sufficient variety of goods to attract new customers, but many cannot take the risks involved in expanding their business. Asian nations's government are recognizing the importance of small and medium-sized enterprises to job creation and wealth generation and many are seeking to develop programs that will strengthen and expand these business. The expansion of small and medium-sized enterprise and their ability to generate jobs depends ultimately on national economic growth and on government policies that create an environment conducive to private enterprise development.²⁴⁾

Asian nation's government must implement reforms of small and medium-sized

enterprise policies that allow markets to expand and operate more efficiently, including effective fiscal and monetary policies, legislation that offers investment incentives, efficient market mechanisms and competitive practices, and appropriate pricing policies for basic commodities and services. Increasingly the economic growth of cities depends on the ability of their firms and industries to compete effectively in international markets.

The success of market development will depend more heavily in the future on attracting the investment of transnational corporations and on creating a business climate that encourages privatized enterprises and small -and medium- sized business to become more actively involved in international trade and investment. In the emerging global economy of the twenty-first century, a nation's economic vitality will depend increasingly on the international competitiveness of its business and industries.

Transnational corporations are now a driving force of global economic integration in the twenty-first century. The strategies of parent firms often progress from simple integration strategies in which affiliates provides inputs to the parent firms, to stand-alone strategies that involve one-way link based on ownership, finance, and technology and to complex integration in which parent firms and affiliates benefit from economies of scale, increasing revenues from exports, and increasing market share by locating business activities in many countries around the world.

2. Decentralizing and democratizing government and strengthening local government

Most Asian governments decentralize though deconcentration or delegation. Deconcentration redistributes decision-making authority and financial and management responsibilities for providing services and facilities among different regional levels of the central government.²⁵⁾ Delegation means that central

governments transfer responsibility for decision-making and administration of public function to local government and senior autonomous organizations.

Supporting market development requires democratizing the political system and expanding managerial capacity in public institutions in order to enhance local government's administrative capacity. Asian countries's government will require more decentralized administrative and political systems in order to perform their functions and implement economic and social development policies more effectively for the global economy in the twenty-first century. Administrative decentralization seeks to redistribute authority, responsibility and financial resources for providing public services among different local levels of government.

Democratization requires administrative transformation. Administrative democracy in Asian nations should be preceded by political democratization. Administrative decentralization is a necessary of political democracy. Asian nation ongoing move toward political democratization is expected to mature with its continued industrialization, globalization and informatization, a new popular consciousness, the uprise of national self-confidence, proliferation of technocratic elites and a new generation of democratic leadership.²⁶⁾ The Asian nations's government included as local government and industries currently compete aggressively and impressively on the global competition.

Asian nations seeks to create an efficient and competitive market economy, national governments must strengthen the administrative, financial and legal status of local governments, and especially those of global cities. Local government officials can often plan and set goals that reflect local conditions and that meet local needs more effectively than those in higher levels of government. Local governments in Asian nations often have an advantage over national and provincial governments in enforcing laws, rules and regulations affecting public welfare and safety and in maintaining law and order on a daily basis. Local administrators have always faced

tough challenges, since local governments are the key service providers of citizens' daily needs. They can more easily maintain facilities and equipment because they can monitor deterioration and breakdown.²⁷⁾

Local governments can play an important "enabling" role that facilitates participation by other public and nongovernmental organizations in providing services and infrastructures and that promotes more efficient decisions.

Asian nations now have the opportunity to match its socio-economic progress with local administration reforms. Administrative reforms should be directed towards deregulation, decentralization, citizen participation, and more openness in the government, shifting from bureaucratic authoritarianism to democratic autonomy. Anticipating the structural and functional changes of the government, a more adequate institutional framework should be laid down to enlarge citizen participation, and revitalizing the local autonomy.²⁸⁾

3. Using the new management technique in local government

Market development and international economic competitiveness require effective local public administration and civil service systems. Such systems must be able to attract qualified, competent, honest and realistically paid individuals into public service. The civil service in Asian nations must be able to attract and retain a corps of professionals who are responsible for formulating and implementing economic policies and support them with good training an appropriate degree of independence, and professional reward structures.

The profession on local public administration in Asian nations face multiple challenges in positioning local governments to deal effectively with anticipated demands of the twenty-first century. Local officials need to prepare themselves and their communities to deal with an increasingly interconnected global economy. The reality of well-developed organizational arrangements and basic management

practices must be acknowledged as essential to capacity. Efforts will have to be put forth to better understand community and group expectations regarding the performance of local governments.²⁹⁾

An initial stage of any management capacity building project might well be an environmental scan to determine extant organizational capacity and leadership and staff readiness to learn. This initial inspection would focus on such techniques as organizational culture and team building, communication patterns, management techniques levels of trust, interpersonal and interagency cooperation, and breadth of personal freedom. Local capacity builders will need also to consider new ways of meeting administrative responsibilities. In recent years, some of the most innovative public administration thinking has provided alternative approaches to governing included as privatization. Most of local governments in Asian nations have been made operational by such tactical devices of market-oriented models, agency decentralization, privatization, deregulation, the joint management between public and private sector, and contracting out of services. It is indicated that public sector manages are expected to maximize efficiency, and to be risk takers and entrepreneurs.

If success in a global economy requires the aggregation of urban and regional strengths rather than incessant local rivalry, then some mechanism, formal or informal, must do the aggregating. Local officials will find the duty of better understanding the expectations they are to meet, or try to meet, simplified if they adopt group process techniques to local conditions.³⁰⁾

Asian nations's local governments, both deregulation and privatization, are necessary to fully activate the local potentials, capabilities and opportunities shadowed by the dominant intervention of central government. Local governments in Asian nations should play a leading role in local economy by inducing and revitalizing the advanced technology industries and transnational industries for the

global competency. The growth of local economic will be enhanced the personal income of citizen.

IV. Conclusion

Economic development in a globalising economy requires the role of the Asian nations to be redefined and government to play an active role in creating conditions that allow the private sector to develop and participate effectively in international trade and investment for the twenty-first century. Among central government's most important functions are to maintain security and order to stabilize macroeconomic conditions. Local government's most important functions are to generate revenues to finance essential public services and infrastructure ; maintain standards of public health and safety ; and regulate those economic activities that are "natural monopolies" or that can adversely affect the general welfare of citizens. And the local government's function will be reinforced the economic function on global competency.

Improvements in telecommunications, air transport, and information management systems have made distance to suppliers and markets less critical for high-technology and information-based industries.³¹⁾ The most dynamic global cities in the twenty-first century, therefore, are likely to be those that offer a well-trained labor force, a modern and efficient infrastructure, public service system on international standard and an attractive quality of living life. They will also be those that foster creative and flexible public and private institutions to help local economic mobility and adopt to rapidly changing international business conditions.

Despite rapid changes in technology that are making globally oriented companies more flexible, global cities will continue to be catalysts for economic and social

progress, incubators of technological innovation, and sources of national wealth well into the next century. Transnational and domestic companies are attempting to become more flexible and responsive to international business trends by adopting agile manufacturing practices, customer-driven production and service strategies, just-in-time inventory systems and speed-to-market delivery of goods and services.³²⁾

Towards the twenty-first century, the Asian local government currently must find a drastic, imperative administrative reform which is unavoidable if it is to adapt to the flood of democratization and global economy. Although any choice of paradigm for public administration is unlikely to be optimal, the administrative reform and governing capacity of Asian local government must be based on democratization, decentralization, debureaucratization, and globalization toward more efficient, effective, responsive, productive, civil-oriented and accountable governance.

Administrative reforms are successful administrative decentralization and administrative reform can mean an increase in the power not only of local bureaucrats but also of local vested interests. Their success depends on creating political commitment and new management capacities. Economic development in a globalising economy requires the role of the local government to be redefined and local government to play an active role in creating conditions that allow the private sector to develop and participate effectively in international trade and investment.

Etzioni concluded that a satisfactory basis for cross-cultural moral judgements requires that the behaviors and institutions that are assessed, in addition, will respect core virtues that we all recognize as compelling, specially a carefully crafted balance between autonomy and social order.³³⁾

Globalization means the shrinking of distance and the increase in interplay and interdependence. But there is the enormous breadth of views on globalization. On the one hand, globalization is regarded as the wave of the future which promises new

opportunities for all. On the other hand, it is a vehicle of economic and cultural disaster.³⁴⁾ We have witnessed the major globalization trends that impact upon Asian countries.

Form 1990s, economic liberalization and political democratization seem to have constructed the main theme of the globalization among Asian countries. The civil society in Asian nations has thus been liberalized and developed slowly. Thus in these perspectives, globalization can be accepted as new opportunities not only universal ethics but also Asian values for Asian countries. Nevertheless, we also need to bear in mind the things that have not changed for growth with equity.³⁵⁾

The poor are still poor, and there are a lot of them. In most Asian countries, economic gains have not been evenly distributed, and income disparities have worsened. Government capacity in local government is still weak. Civil servants are also still under skilled and under civil-service oriented.

- FOOTNOTE -

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