

# **PUBLIC RESPONSIVENESS FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE**

~Analysis of Local Administration system in Bhutan with GNH angle~

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## **INTRODUCTION**

First of all, let me refer to the so-called “Over Goal of Gross National Happiness (GNH)”, the Total Happiness Amount (THA) of people in a society can feel in their leading the life. And I am firmly convinced that it is dependent on how the people can lead their happy life in their whole life span.

In other words, I would like to say that the THA of the people in a certain nation comes from and is related to how the people are satisfied with their own position, the standpoint or the possibility, in 1) a nation or the society; and 2) the community where they live; 3) their family: namely, whether they feel their own satisfaction as an individual in each of the above three stages, respectively.

Once people are satisfied in a physical or material sense, they tend to start looking for close relationships with others, namely, those of their family or friends. Furthermore, they tend to take actions for the sake of others with each other, through which they try to enrich human relations, especially in a spiritual sense, that is the very base of the happiness and, everything is formed and stays in the interdependent reciprocal relations like this.

Taking the above idea as the theoretical base here that, the “Happiness” is always a sort of “Variables” in a relative way, showing each of the “Positioning”. Then, we can say that the Happiness consists of the Three Stages or Phases. Namely 1) the Stable Base of the Life provided by the Society; 2) Relations of oneself with the Autonomy Bodies or the Society; and 3) State of each individual’s Mind or the levels of the Human Developments, with each of the three factors mingling each other in complicated ways, and these Multi-layered Factors that affect THA each of the people can feel.

It is also regarded that, among the Three Stages or Phases, especially the Social Life Base being stable and safe constitutes of the Environment where each individual most easily can achieve the sense of the Relative Happiness. It can be said that one of the factors in this Relativity is “Good Governance”, namely, what kind of relations each individual has with the Society or the Community.

Especially in this Article, let me take a look at the each Individual's access to the Autonomy aspects and Political Administration, the Essence of "Good Governance", since believing them as important factors in measuring the GNH, namely on what kind of relations that each Individual has toward such Two Factors, and whether the degree of the each one's Happiness can be increased or not, for those belonging to such Autonomy and Political Administration.

It is difficult to take balance between the Public Administration and Autonomy, because the needs of the each individual are not sure to be provided by the Local Governmental Organization (LGO) activities, while the services that the LGO can provide to each individual are certainly limited. In short, talking about balance between the Public Administration and the Autonomy is nothing but a theme of talking about the relations between the Individuals and the Society or how they are related to each other.

One of the reasons why the GNH's synthetic approaches have aspects of cultural protection is related to the commonly shared general recognition of the GNH in the society.

Therefore, the needs of each Individual who has high morals enough to be able to fully recognize the publicness are reflecting the needs of the Local Areas. In order to increase the "Good Governance", it is the key factor to evaluate whether it is possible or not to incorporate the needs of the Areas into the LGO policies, and whether it is possible for LGO to comply with the said local needs of the Areas.

So I would like to propose "Public Responsiveness" as such a key factor, and propose the three Factors necessary to increase the "Public Responsiveness".

Along this line, let me review and examine the Local Governmental systems of Kingdom of Bhutan, as the assertion angles using such three factors, and will prove whether that the "Public Responsiveness" is being managed and conducted smoothly or not.

Lastly, by analyzing how the Local Administration systems in Bhutan are contributing to preparing the society where "GNH" is being created let me present the conclusion of this Report.

### **The Society that "GNH" is aiming at**

According to the economics, According to economics to exchange the high of the effect (=something that enhances the happiness for the person himself) most for money by reasonable economy selections and if the amount of consumption is large, it may have greater effect. (Sodekawa, Tanabe 2007)

However, the actual reality is not the case. This is because the degree of the subjective happiness of the person does not simply accord with per capita GNP. Simply, the increase of consumption amount is not directly related to the increase of our individual Happiness.

Robert Kennedy in 1968 made these comments on what GNP measures also said that, "For too long we seem to have surrendered personal excellence and community value in the mere accumulation of material things".

As a factor composing of the local society vitality, we have the Society-related Capital, such as “Social Capital”. Robert Putnam defines “Social Capital” as a social institution or a system which works and increases the efficiency of the society by leading people into their cooperative actions and deeds.

To maintain the local society having enough vitality not to be affected by GNP or GDP is the ultimate goal of the society which is heading toward GNH in actual sense, so as for the people to be able to feel GNH. As being a philosophy or theory of the nations’ economic development, GNH has a key role and an important factor in determining how the nature of the society or the nation should be, and furthermore, how the projects, the policies or the policy decisions should be, when people of a nation jointly sharing the sense of values as such.

As for the level of Happiness (or the levels of Life Satisfaction), there are many different forms of happiness measured in various ways, in addition to those measured by “emotional feelings” in the Subjective Happiness, while in the views of economic theories, the happiness is said to be closely related to and fluctuate together with the standards of per capita GDP. It is possible to assume that the Levels of the Happiness in the new realm, namely the so-called “the Levels of Subjective Happiness reflecting the Social Situations”, (Sodekawa, Tanabe 2007) are highly dependent on actual Social Situations.

Then, what does it mean by “the Social Situations”? According to Iriya, roughly speaking, “Three Environments” are necessary for the survival of people (Iriya 1969). That is to say, they are 1) the Natural Environment which is the mother’s body for the survival of people; 2) the Human Environment which was created by social groups; and 3) the Cultural Environment which is to be created through the media of the Natural Environment and the Human Environment. People get stimulated from these Environments and as a result of adopting themselves against the Environments, they create the Inner Spiritual World in themselves. It is these Three Environments that are “the Society” that people should pursue and have, when placing people in the center of this thinking.

The People who live in developing countries, is in as a vicious circle, cannot help destroying the Natural Environment for their life survival, because of their poverty. At present, they have destroyed the Natural Environment, unbalancing the biological systems, and finally having invited Natural Disasters upon themselves, and they have resulted in the destruction of the base of their life being threatened.

Therefore, even in this respect, we can safely conclude that the Society around people indeed affects each individual’s happiness living there.

### **GNH and Good Governance**

Prime Minister Jigmi Y. Thinley pointed out 4 points as the variables which they directly rely on: namely, 1) Economic Growth and Development, 2) Preservation of Natural Environment, and Sustainable Development 3) Protection and Promotion of the Cultures, and 4) Good Governance. Among these four, the “Good Governance” is the fundamental key policy toward how the social system should be. So here let me start with examining the Definition of the “Good Governance”.

UNESCAP said that, the concept of "governance" is not new. It is as old as human civilization. Simply put "governance" means: **the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented (or not implemented)**. Governance can be used in several contexts such as corporate governance, international governance, national governance and local governance (UNESCAP 2008).

Good governance has 8 major characteristics. It is participation, consensus orientation, accountability, transparency, responsiveness, effectiveness and efficiency, equitability and inclusiveness and follows the rules of law. It assures that corruption is minimized, the views of minorities are taken into account and that the voices of the most vulnerable in society are heard in decision-making.



Illustration of Good Governance: Quote from UNESCAP 2008

As for the Social System in local areas, it is difficult to judge which system is more superior to others or not, but still it is possible for us to examine and give a thought to the relationship between the Societies in Areas and the Autonomy Systems which the Nation defines as they are. That is to say, we can at least judge whether the Governance for Nation is good or bad, in terms of the 8 view points, such as, whether the System looks functioning by People side or whether the flow of its System is transparent enough or not, etc.

Then, how the systems of the Self-autonomous Governance and political system are organized toward the social needs in the Area is one of the tools to judge the superiority of a certain Society in an area. In this Report, let me try to analyze in terms of the "Public" by using view point of "Responsiveness", as one of such tools.

### **Public responsiveness**

As one of the Indicators to measure the relationship between the Social Needs in a local area and LGO, we can name out "Public responsiveness".

By "Public responsiveness", here it means how quickly the Government takes an action towards the needs of the People living there, as one of the Indicators to measure the efficiency of the Administration work there. The

Needs of the People living in the Area vary in kinds a lot, but in this Report, let me expound on the Needs related to the Administration or Autonomy politics in a concentrated way. In other words, there are such factors as whether Residents' participation in the LGO activities or policy-making planning in a subjective way is possible or not, or whether they can involve themselves in political policy-making processes in various aspects as the matters develop on.

In terms of Public Responsiveness, whether the LGO can cope with the small needs of the Residents or not: For this, there are some opinions that "Block Grant" is effective. In other words, the Budget able to be used without passing through the Local council, can be said it being efficient in terms of promptness.

In some Nation, some Projects are to be conducted in order for NGO to directly contribute to the Community, instead of Block Grant. Or in some cases, By the Provincial governor's discretion, small amounts of subsidies are being provided directly to the Communities.

In many regional communities, there are many cases where the strength of "Social Capital" or close relationship among the Communities has been decreasing, as time passes by. These have occupied large portions in people's social life so far, but now that they have been destroyed, such functions have to be conducted by the LGO in most of the portions there.

For the LGO, it is useful to preserve the strength of the "Social Capital" and for the LGO administration work to support it, too. Even in terms of the efficiency of the "Governance", it is better and more meaningful for the Communities to support the Governmental Works whose "Face" we can see, and at the same time, for the LGO to do the Works suitable for relatively wider Areas.

In some countries needs of the Governmental Administration are being created more at the level that was not even thought of in the past, by the economic development, technological revolutions, or the society's aging phenomena, etc. To cope with these matters or to make ready for them in a prompt manner is also an important element in the Public Responsiveness from now on.

### **Case study of Local Administration and Autonomy system in Bhutan**

In Bhutan, introduction of the Province System named "Dzongkhag" in 1981, and the introduction of the District System named "Geog" in 1991, the branches office of the Central Government are consolidated and untied as Local Administration at the Province Level under the governing control of the Provincial Governors. Together with these separation and transfer of the Administration Works, systems enabling Residents to join and participate at the levels of the Provinces and Districts have been arranged and adjusted.

In 1981, the Provincial Development Parliament called "Dzongkhag Yargye Tshogchung" was introduced by the Provincial Development Parliament Law called "Dzongkhag Yargye Tshogchung Chathirim", while in 1991

District Development Parliament called “Geog Yargye Tshogchung” was introduced by the District Development Parliament Law called “Geog Yargye Tshogchung Chathirim”.

But now, this system was revised by Constitution of Kingdom of Bhutan on 2008. “Dzongkhag Yargye Tshogchung” would be replaced by “Dzongkhag Tshogdu(DT)” and “Geog Yargye Tshogchung” was replaced by “Geog Tshogde(GT)”.

Moreover, the system of the current provincial court was handover drastically to the people. Until the constitution is enforced, the head judge was dispatched to the prefecture by the High court. However, the head judge in the prefecture came to be chosen directly by DT in the constitution. In a word, the provinces were decentralized partially of jurisdiction by the constitution.

This is the System where members chosen from Residents at the Provincial levels plan, determine, implement, govern and evaluate subjectively out of their initiatives, with which Residents are allowed to have their Parliaments. Likewise, this is the System able to reflect the Needs of the Residents in the Province Planning and National Planning.

Now the “9<sup>th</sup> 5-Year Planning” (2002-2007) was enacted so as to head for a society whose development is rooted in the regional society, with considerations to build the realistic base in order to achieve the GNH. Furthermore, it was pursued to create Residents’ organizations in order to transfer the Administrative Works to local districts, and carry out the developments in Resident-participating manners furthermore.

Then in 2003, “Block Grants”, namely the regional Budgets were directly allocated to each District Development Parliament, and a sort of integrated cycles was put into practice, starting from Project Planning, its decision-making, managing, evaluating, and feed backing to the next term.

According to Sasaoka (2005), the Local Decentralization is grouped into 3 stages: namely, Deconcentration, Delegation, and Devolution. And especially the Devolution is the form with the most purified level of Decentralization among the three categories.

Devolution is to transfer or assign to the local Autonomy bodies the Administrative Responsibilities, Powers of Authorities and Discretions. By saying “Devolution”, it does not mean Deconcentration which is to transfer or assign responsibilities and powers of authorities within inside of the Central Government themselves, but it means to transfer or assign to the Local Autonomy bodies that have Parliaments constituting representatives of the Residents, transferring or assigning certain kinds of services, other responsibilities, and the powers of discretions related to the works, etc.

When applying the cases of Bhutan’s Decentralization to these 3 groupings, they are neither the works assigned to institutions, nor the dispersion of the powers. Therefore, it can be regarded as some manners similar to Devolution.

However, though “Geog” itself is an administration unit, it is hardly to say that it is an Autonomy body, when considering its scales or how the “Geog” can provide the residents with administrative services.

In Bhutan, there are 20 Provinces, and 201 Districts throughout the whole country. Assuming the population being 720 thousands, the average population per Province is some 36 thousands, and some 3580 per District, so as a whole, with a very little population. Though the population is small, the Administrative Services are not easy to provide, due to the difficult geographical features.

So in some areas, they cannot help providing quite inefficient administrative services, therefore, the roles of the Provinces are very important in taking the geographical balances in case of the wider area administrative services. Speaking of the broader-based administrative services, in Bhutan in 1989, there were once introduced “Zone” systems, dividing the whole country into 4 administrative regions, but not functioning at present.

Under the District, there are Autonomy units called “Chiwog”, meaning Villages. These Villages have been started and created in a natural way indeed, and village representatives called “Tsogpa” chosen in those Villages compose the members of the District Development Committees, therefore, these systems can cater to even quite minute needs of Residents.

Comparing with the case in Japan, populations of the Provinces seem to be equally comparable with those of Japanese municipalities. So the Administrative Unit smaller than cities determine policies to solve certain specific Administrative Problems autonomously, and can put them into actual practice there, which can be regarded as sort of an effective system with which the will of the Residents are more accurately reflected.

However, when looking at the Devolution in terms of the Effectiveness, Efficiency, Accountability, and Equity of the Administrative Services, it is possible for other Systems of other Grouping to be more appropriate than the Devolution, especially in case of the local areas whose potentiality ready to receive the Devolution is low.

In case of Bhutan, the capability of the Autonomy bodies to provide Administrative Services is not enough yet at present. And also the volume of such Administration cannot be said to be a lot. But in either case, it is possible to say that the present systems are appropriate as the system to absorb the Residents’ wishes and wills.

And also, through monk body organization ”Dratshang Lhentshog” who are respected by the Residents a lot, beside the Legislative Institutions, the wills of the Residents are to be reflected in the State Administration, in terms of systems. This is a unique feature of Bhutan, unlike other countries, and because of this, we can say that Bhutan has wider choices of Public responsiveness.

### **Three elements of Public responsiveness analysis**

In this Report, we could define the individual happiness degree that belongs to the commune by Public responsiveness efficient rises. It is really a big decisive factor of determining the levels of Residents’ satisfaction

whether the Residents can subjectively get involved and participate in the Administration and Policy-making, or whether they can join in each stage of shaping policies as they proceed or not.

Generally, it is said that there are three important factors to make the Public responsiveness to be high levels: namely, 1) whether the systems are arranged well so as for the needs of the regional societies to be included in the policies, 2) whether the Administration is highly responsive toward the needs of the regional societies or not, and 3) whether there is no discrepancy in the needs between the national policies and the regional societies or not.

Therefore, let me analyze the Bhutan's systems of Self-government and Administration in terms of the three factors, as follows:

FACTORS	ANALYZED RESULTS	POINTS IN RESERVATION
1 Systems are arranged for the needs of the regional societies to be included in the policies.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Through GT and DT, the Representative of the Residents able to join the Policy Decision-making.</li> <li>2. Through members of the National Council and National Assembly by Public Election, able to make their opinions reflected in National Policies.</li> <li>3. Due to the small population as the Basic Administration Unit, easily able to commit themselves in Administration.</li> </ol>	In Q & A and Decisions-making in GT and DT, with the Province administration side staff's participation being made.
2 Administration's responsiveness to the needs of the regional societies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Through GT and DT, funds and other services able to be provided directly to Local Residents.</li> <li>2. Good control and arrangement over the local agencies of the Central Government, under Provincial Governors Initiative.</li> </ol>	<p>Strengthening Provincial Functions is necessary until Autonomous Administration getting to go on smoothly.</p> <p>Through channels of Monk body, People can pass a remark to the government Administration.</p>
3 There is no discrepancy in the needs between the national policies and the regional societies or not	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Easily able to have Residents' opinions reflected in the National policies. (One Parliament member per population of about 15,000.)</li> <li>2. Able to discuss among the people concerned for better arrangement and implementation between national policies and needs in Areas.</li> </ol>	<p>Arrangements by Province levels are necessary.</p> <p>The number of NGO directly supporting is small.</p> <p>This is the point that the Province switched from the consideration of rule to the consideration of the adjustment.</p> <p>The cost-effectiveness of the civil service that is appropriate for the broader-based local government is low.</p>

Exhibition: Author made self.

According to this “Three Factor” analysis, it can be said that the level of Public Responsiveness is quite high. However, as shown in the above Table, the following 3 points will be important questions for the future: namely, 1. the importance of Provinces; 2. Development of NGO; 3. efficient implementation of Administration Works for wider Administration Areas.

The roles of the Provinces are quite important. In the past, Provinces used to have functions for the sake of administration, such as, conveying the Government wills and ideas to the Province Residents, thinking whether matters would go on in the way that the Government’s development plans had projected or not.

However, now that Residents have the Democratic Constitution, Provinces are the places, where both those Central Government wishes and ideas, and the Local Residents’ needs are being mixed and arranged well together. By DT becoming the key figure or the place for such an arrangement /adjustment, Administration Works for Wide Administration Areas. It will become able to reflect the Residents’ needs more. And the attitudes of the commitment by the Provinces toward the Development Committee will be the decisive factors to the policies in running the Development Committee. In other words, the Public Responsiveness will be changed, depending on how these DT will be run.

And also, for the future matters in question, it is necessary to review and rearrange the flame works regarding the matters in question for the wider areas, like “Zone Systems”, etc. Therefore, I would like to present and propose here the three-layer structures of Governing Organizations for Wider Areas: namely, in terms of the population scales, running of the Autonomy Bodies by the population of ten thousands to thirty thousands; running of the Basic Autonomy Bodies by the population of some several thousands; and Governing Organizations for wider areas by the population of some hundred thousand which are regarded as more efficient.

## **Conclusion**

Ogata (2005) said, “It is necessary to strengthen both the Governing Powers by the Government from the Top, and the Autonomy Powers of the Residents from the Bottom, by combing together. It may sound very difficult, but, for example, by focusing the points on the people or the Community there, so that protection and development of the ability of each individual can be strengthened one by one”.

This means supports should be made so that they can reach directly to the people or the communities, so that people can make their own selection of their own life or daily life. People can choose and determine their own life or daily life, so that they can have the ability to implement them. So this means such supports should be extended and provided directly to the people or communities there.”

It is quite difficult in any country to take balance between the Public Administration and Autonomy activities. But also, it is quite worth challenging as a trial. If well-balanced, nation’s Administrative systems will directly benefit

the Residents, and if contributed to the continuity, then it may be the good factors to enhance the Residents' satisfaction quite a lot. And in the framework of the well-balanced Administration systems where, if possible, management of Public responsiveness can be smoothly conducted, then the Residents there will be able to feel further benefits and satisfactions. Then this will enhance Good Governance, which may result in higher GNH.

As a conclusion, after analyzing and reviewing the present Local Administration systems of Bhutan in terms of 3 factors of Public responsiveness, the Bhutan's Administration Systems can be said that they have structures where the social needs of the areas centering on "Gewog" can be materialized and implemented into the national policies through GT and DT. The reasons for that they have smaller population as the basis Administrative units, which results in Administration systems easier for each individual opinion to be reflected in the Administrations.

And also, in society area which compose the basis administrative units, human relations are strong enough to practically be able to constitute "Face-visible Administration" ("Administrations we can see faces") as a system. This is quite useful for the administrative needs, since it is necessary to comply with individual needs there.

And to Administration needs for the wider areas, the systems in Provinces are arranged for orders of the Province Governors to be made in "Top-down" manner. Namely, since the basic Administrative Units are small in size, the works for wider areas, such as, Medical Care or Infrastructure Arrangements, etc. is being administrated under the initiatives of the Province Government, since it is more efficient for wider area Administrations.

Therefore, we can safely conclude and it can be analyzed that, in terms of the systems there, arrangements between the Autonomy rights and Administration Works are being made by the Provinces as a system. It can be pointed out, as another feature, that the area's needs are being absorbed as a system through by the Autonomy bodies, locally elected Congressmen in Parliament and the Monk bodies. Especially it is an unusual feature compared with other countries that they have approaches from the Monk bodies.

From the 3 points of the assertion above, I think I am firmly convinced by this Report that the Bhutan's administration systems at present have high "Public Responsiveness". That is to say, out of these points, they have good "Governance" which leads the Residents to the satisfaction, constituting the base which contributes to people in Bhutan feeling "GNH" themselves.

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