

Accountability in public Administration

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Abstract: Nowadays, one of the basic subjects of plans of development in various countries is the development of the Administrative system structure and behavior for performance improvement and the increasing of accountability in public administration. In the recent citizen – oriented world the creation of accountable and efficient government is one of the modern approaches and strategies in public administration. Considering strategic importance of creation and developing accountable government, the present paper at the framework of fundamentals and theories of accountability in public administration, first it presents the Necessity and the importance of developing accountable government and then Explains the definition, the proposes, the approaches, the types, the equipments and the dimensions of accountability in public administration respectively, then accountability in public sector with private sector and also have been compared to accountability in traditional model with new model of public administration and finally the correlation of government accountability with the process of making administrative system democratized and client’s satisfaction has been studied.

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1. Introduction

Because of today's existence philosophy and main Prophecy of governments that is, public affairs management, development planning and meeting public interests, then government management should supply Material and Immaterial demands of citizens by producing appropriate and high quality services and commodities and also take accountability in front of their political demands. In this age, which is so-called customer-oriented and citizen-oriented period, governments should acquire public satisfaction and trust by appropriate accountability to them. Otherwise, public dissatisfaction lead to various Crisis like public trust Crisis, system Legit Imation Crisis, public participation Crisis, most important integrity and convergence Crisis in community. These Crises, while reducing performance and effectiveness of political and administrative system, lead to Disconnect and crisis in development process. In today's competitive world, one of main goals of administrative system change is optimization of performance and accountability increase at government division. Pollitt & Bouckaert (2000) suggested that “administrative and managerial changes lead to government cost reduction and higher quality services for public. Thoughtful persons believe that government performance and accountability optimization among of

strategic factors in successful and sustainable government organizations. They think that establishing total quality management system (TQM) in government division one of approach which lead to continuous optimization of accountability and performance of government organizations (Dixon, 1997). Optimization of accountability and performance of government organizations lead to higher competitive capability, productivity, job satisfaction and client satisfaction (Phelps & et al, 2003). In globalization age, by technology advancement and higher rate of communication and value and culture change and new political demands in public had affects on administrative change process. Because of These events, change converted to exterior matter from interior matter and it is necessitate for government to take accountability to public. In these situations, governments should observe people of community at new perspective and as private part clients and try to acquire their maximum satisfactory. From Thoughtful persons view, each government needs an accountability system to act in a manner which acquire public acceptance. Accountability is base of any government which claims for democracy. In other word, democracy Prerequisite having an appropriate accountability system. Owen E.Hughes (2003) compare relationship between

public and government with "Thoroughbred-Attorney" because in fact, public had agreed operation of community by another one in lieu of them. But they should be sure that their interests have been respected. He believe that government organization create by people and by them and must accountable to them. Lack of accountability means converting government and bureaucracy to absolute power and dominates to all affair and move to Decay. Government accountability to different fields certainly lead to increasing performance and Discipline of government system and reducing abuse opportunities from government resources. Of course prerequisite of accountability is that auditor organization or person has enough power in front of respondent one. History shows that at any period's communities encountered with accountability to public interests and requirements. But in this age and in regard of education and information development and increasing social awareness and political vision of nations, it is more pressure on governments to respond to their people (World Bank,).

2. Accountability definition and concept

"Accountability" has various definitions including:

- Accountability means describing why and how works done and what is its results?
- Accountability means describing activities and behaviors to legal references.
- Accountability means some kind of necessity sense in person or social system for describing reasons of accomplishing of certain measure.
- Accountability simply means examining someone or an organization's performance which have assigned responsibility.
- Accountability is a multidimensional concept which relate to all fields like political, public service and private divisions (Rose & Lawton, 1999).

For understanding accountability concept, following cases should be noted:

- Accountability isn't responsibility because some peoples may accept any responsibility but meanwhile hasn't any accountability sense.
- Accountability sense isn't work Conscience. in work Conscience sense, interior power take effect which originate from ethical, religious or

social attitudes, but in accountability sense we encounter some kind of behavioral attitude which mainly originate from exterior factors like legal alerts and social provisions.

3. Purposes of government accountability

In general, Purposes of government accountability including:

- ✓ *Accountability as a means for power controlling:* in every system s, process and mechanisms have been predicted for supervision of applying government power application which include government accountability to increasing demands of informed citizens, organizations, stockholder groups, media
- ✓ *Accountability as a guarantee for correct using of public resources:* Most important aspect of accountability is that people make sure that correspondent do not exceeds of laws and public service value in applying and optimum using of public resources.
- ✓ *Accountability as means for government service optimization:* in despite of last 2 cases, which often indicate to negative and punishment aspects of accountability, accountability as means for advancement and continues optimization of services point out to positive aspect of government services.

4. General accountability procedures

McGarvey (2001) believes that mitigating difficulties and complexities of general accountability is possible just by adopting multi-dimensional analytic framework. From his view, accountability in government division has various procedures and perspectives, including:

1. The Traditional Perspective:

Traditional Perspective of general accountability is simple type of accountability with chain of accountability from official to official, from official to ministry, from ministry to parliament, from parliament to public. This concept supported by Weberian.

2. Democratic Perspective:

Democratic Perspective which closely related to Traditional Perspective, emphasis on affect of democratic political system on government accountability.

3. Professional Perspective:

This procedure, which so-called non political perspective for accountability, state that knowledge and skills and capabilities of people

and organizations increase via learning and education and it in turn enhance accountability.

4. *management-oriented Perspective:*

In this perspective, accountability involve explicitly goal setting. This perspective emphasis on directly accountability of managers to users of public services.

5. *The Governance Perspective:*

The Governance Perspective emphasis on effectiveness, and how government performing duties for increasing accountability.

6. *The Regulatory Perspective:*

The Regulatory Perspective emphasis on increasing control and supervising and regulation of laws by government. In accordance to Regulatory Perspective, no longer have accountability regulated via managerial relation in hierarchical structures, but it regulate via public auditors, professional WARDENS.

7. *The Rational choice Perspective:*

This procedure emphasis on individual political strategies, physiological and behavioral factors of public managers in increasing accountability (McGarvey, 2001).

5. Types of governmental accountability

From different perspectives, government accountability has various classifications, including:

a. *Types of accountability from Owen E.Hughes (2003) view:*

From Owen E.Hughes (2003) view, it is to related accountability which is:

1-*political accountability:* this means elected government to voters.

2-*managerial accountability:* this means burocreatic accountability to elected government.

b. *Types of accountability in Richard Heeks (1998) view:*

Richard Heeks (1998) classify accountability to 6 classes:

1. Orgnaisation accountability for high level government managers

2. Legal accountability for panel staff

3. Professional accountability for expert groups

4. Public accountability for citizens and customers

5. Financial accountability for government budgeter

6. Political accountability for policy makers (Heeks, 1998).

c. *Types of accountability from Romzek (1994) view:*

In Romzek (1994) model, classified government accountability to 4 classes (table 1).

Table1. Accountability systems in terms of value and behavioral expectation from Romzek view

Types of Accountability	Intended value	Behavioral expectation
Organizational	Performance and productivity	Obeys from organizational orders
Legal	Law enforcement	Accountability to exterior orders
Professional	Expert science	Respect to judgment and special knowledge of people
Political	Accountability	Accountability to organization owners (people, parliament, etc)

d. *Types of accountability from others view:*

In another classification, accountability has 2 classes:

1. *Vertical accountability:*

Individual or administrative unit Accountability to higher level person or unit

2. *Horizontal accountability:*

Accountability of government system to public and people representatives

From another perspective, accountability has 2 classes:

First. *Direct accountability:* in this type of accountability governments inevitably describe and justify their activities for people from media

Second. *Indirect accountability:* in this type of accountability, government respondents describe their activities to people representatives indirectly

6. Different mechanisms in government division

Generally, Figure 1 indicates various accountability mechanisms for super visioning on government performance (implementing and administrative systems.)

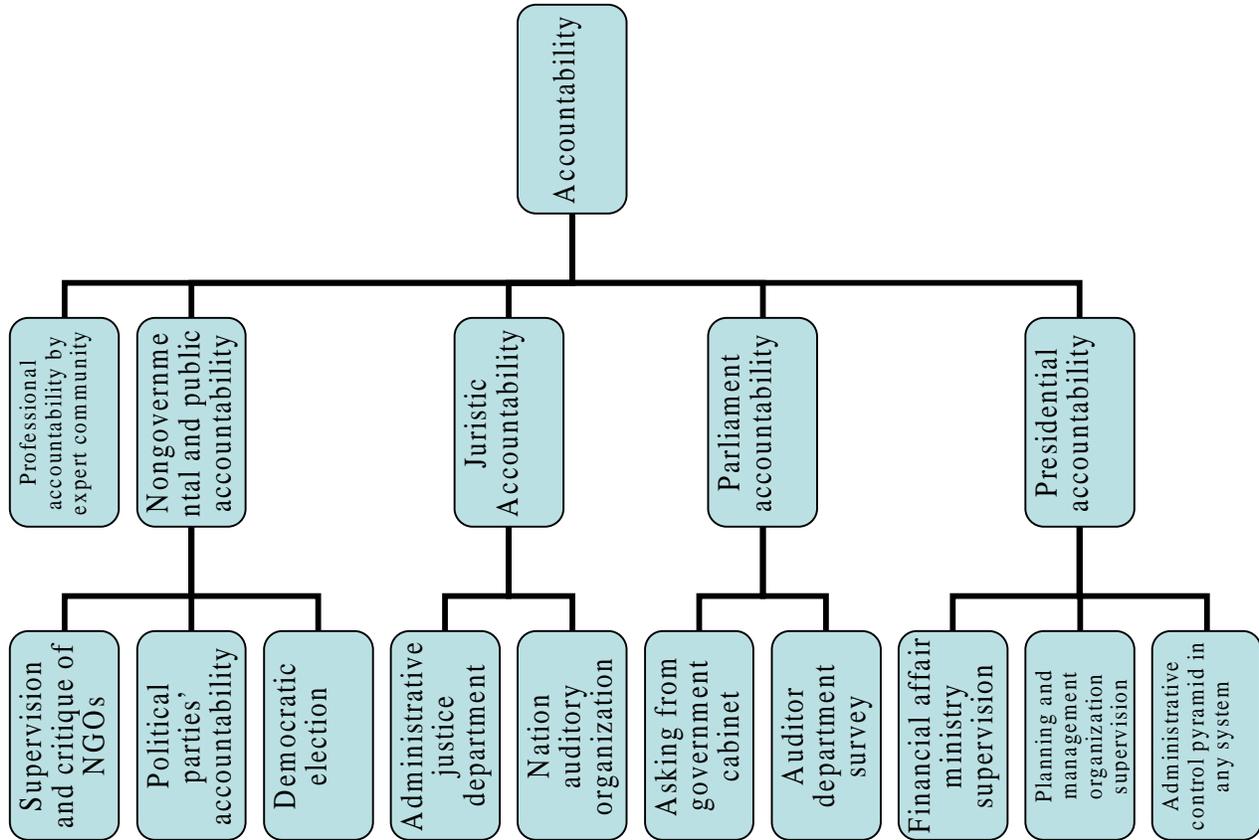


Figure1. Various mechanisms for accountability and supervision on government performance

7. Government accountability aspects

As showed in figure 2, in regard to 4 factors:

- First. Referrers
- Second. Staff

- Third. Mangers
 - Fourth. Organization,
- Accountability has 9 aspects.

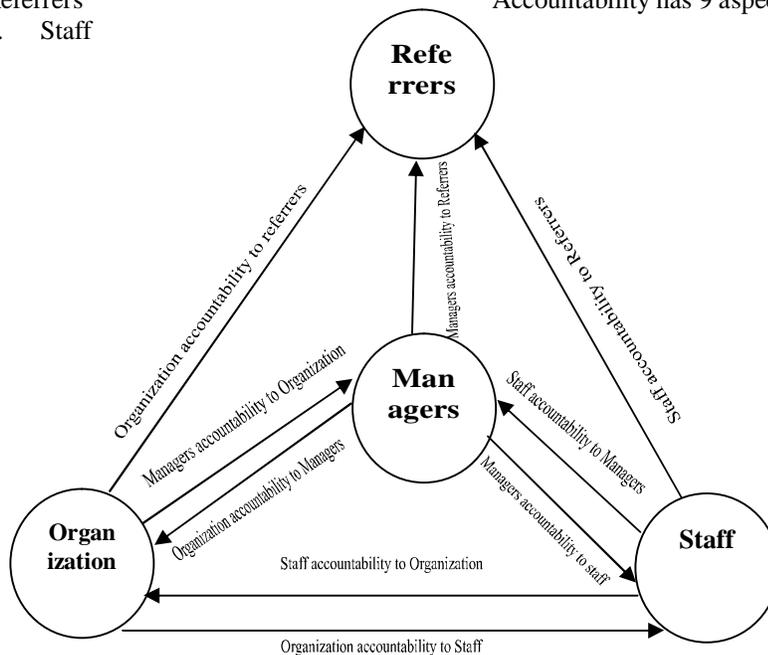


Figure2. Accountability aspects in government organization

As we see, relation and accountability of the three factors (organization, staff, managers, referrers) with each other is as mutual relationship but relation and accountability of each of this factors with referrer is Unilateral relationship.

8. Difference between government accountability and private accountability

Accountability is not limited to government division. In accordance to "accountability theory", anyone who does something in lieu of an individual or group should report to this individual or group or take responsibility in front of them with any means (Owen E.Hughes, 2003). But accountability in government part has some difference with accountability in private division. People often think that government part has lower accountability than private division and it is one of reasons for their downsizing. In their opinion, assigning commodities and service supply to private division lead to optimization of services and performance via accepting prevalent accountability mechanism at private division (E.Hughes, 2003). In accordance to Thoroughbred- Attorney theory or owner-manager, accountability in government division and particularly at public institutions naturally deficient compared to private division. It means that aside to economic reasons; weak accountability of government division is a Justification for lowering power of bureaucracy and Tendency to privatization (E.Hughes, 2003).lacking political accountability in private division like government division is another difference between accountability in these two.

9. Differences of accountability in traditional pattern and modern government management pattern

In traditional pattern of government management, because of pyramid structure, bureaucracy and product-oriented organization structure, customers and citizens are not in first priority and then this pattern's final goal is increasing productivity. In traditional pattern for public affair management, because of focusing on bureaucracy,, accountability system is weak. In accordance to current theories, pyramid and traditional structures by creating fear and stress decrease innovation and deteriorate organization performance (Johnson, 1995). E.Hughes believes that one of reasons of modern government management pattern acceptance, which developed in early 1990s, is failure of traditional pattern. in this new pattern, accountability is more transparent, dynamic and political than traditional pattern (E.Hughes, 2003).another change in accountability system in modern management pattern is b optimization of relationship with customers and citizens via customer-oriented and organic structures. In modern management pattern, public affairs managers as part of their current duties try to create direct accountability which in this new system organization is direct responsible of relating with customer and service optimization. In this new pattern, customer role gradually similar to its role in private division (E.Hughes). Table 2 compares modern pattern features (new customer-oriented organizations) with traditional pattern (pyramid product-oriented organization).

Table2. Compare of new customer-oriented and traditional product-oriented organization

Traditional product-oriented organization	New customer-oriented organization
Focuses on cost and production -goal and organization -control management -staff and queue -complete procedures and policies -pyramid and vertical organization structure -identify problems by reports -competition on production -defined and limited duties -big and jumped changes -periodical goal setting -special job training -emphasis on hi-tech production -make profit from organization goal s	Focuses on common service and demands -common goal and perspective -common leadership, vision and participation -self management and intergroup networks -staff enabling -flexible and horizontal organization structure -electronic fast communication -competition on quality and attention to customer satisfaction -flexibility and adaptability to role change -partial change with optimization -continues performance optimization -training and optimization of human resources -emphasis on process and behavior technology -Work and acquire efficiency from total quality and customer goals

10. Conclusion

In humanization process of administrative system it is tried to encourage people to participation and while developing government capacity for more accountability, exploit from current resources whether material or mental one. Generally, administrative system humanization has two interior and exterior aspects:

First. Interior aspect:

In interior aspect, structure and performance of administrative system must change from pyramid situation and each division should have ability to participate in decision making.

Second. Exterior aspect:

In exterior aspect, administrative system must use all of its resources to accountability and meeting public demands. Accountability of government division to public demands and requirements lead to increasing satisfaction and public trust and Loyalty (Organization of European Economic Cooperation, 2002). Client Satisfaction one of new criteria for measuring and evaluation of performance and service quality at public division. Today, various models and theories developed for definition and describing Client Satisfaction which mainly emphasis on Impression and performance quality of him (Everelles & Leavitt, 1992). Piters and waterman suggested understanding client's requirements and demands as feature of successful organization. In other words, survey and evaluate client's opinions is fast and inexpensive approach to service quality optimization (Willams et al., 2000).

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