
Noritada MATSUDA

Associate Professor in Political Science at the Faculty of Law, the University of Kitakyushu, Japan

Received December 18, 2006; final version accepted January 27, 2007

Today much emphasis has been placed on “governance” and the active participation of citizens in the policy process. Such arguments are based primarily on the recognition that legislative and executive branches have not been responsive enough to meet the needs of citizens. Citizens are expected, then, to play an active role in the policy process and collaborate with other actors such as governments and corporations so that public policy could reflect the citizens’ needs.

If citizens are to participate in the policy process more actively, however, they must have proper knowledge on public policy and political process; to put it another way, they are required to possess the governability so that the collaboration with other actors could succeed.

This paper is intended to theoretically review the governability of citizens. Closer attention is given to what policy analysts could do for the improvement of citizens’ governability. It is contended that policy analysts play an active role in the policy process so that policies which they think desirable could be adopted. This paper proceeds as follows. First, modeling the policymaking process, how citizens could influence the process is demonstrated. Next, this paper reveals that, despite the potential influence of citizens over the policymaking process, policymakers are unlikely to make a policy the citizens want. There exist some limitations of citizens’ governability, which make it difficult for citizens to exert the influence; most policy problems are too technical and too complicated for citizens to deal with. Given the limitations of citizens’ governability, then, attention is paid to the roles of policy analysts in the policy process; how policy analysts could contribute to encouraging meaningful citizen participation and improving the policy process is examined. This paper is concluded by discussing the collaboration among policymakers, citizens and policy analysts in terms of knowledge utilization. The reform of the governance structure requires us to establish a policymaking system which enables policy analysts as well as citizens to actively participate in the policy process.

KEYWORDS: Citizen Participation, Citizen’s Governability, Policy Analysts, Issue Salience, Knowledge Utilization

Contents

0. Introduction

1. Citizens’ Influence over Policymaking and Their Governability

2. Policy Analysts’ Roles in the Policy Process

0. Introduction

Today much emphasis has been placed on “governance” and the active participation of citizens in the policy process. Such arguments are based primarily on the recognition that legislative and executive branches have not been responsive enough to meet the needs of citizens. Citizens are expected, then, to play an active role in the policy process and collaborate with other actors such as governments and corporations so that public policy could reflect the citizens’ needs.

If citizens are to participate in the policy process more actively, however, they must have proper knowledge on public policy and political process; to put it another way, they are required to possess the governability so that the collaboration with other actors could succeed.

This paper is intended to theoretically review the governability of citizens. Closer attention is given to what policy analysts could do for the improvement of citizens’ governability. It is contended that policy analysts play an active role in the policy process so that policies which they think desirable could be adopted. This paper proceeds as follows. First, modeling the policymaking process, how citizens could influence the process is demonstrated. Next, this paper reveals that, despite the potential influence of citizens over the policymaking process, policymakers are unlikely to make a policy the citizens want. There exist some limitations of citizens’ governability, which make it difficult for citizens to...
exert the influence; most policy problems are too technical and too complicated for citizens to deal with. Given the limitations of citizens’ governability, then, attention is paid to the roles of policy analysts in the policy process; how policy analysts could contribute to encouraging meaningful citizen participation and improving the policy process is examined. This paper is concluded by discussing the collaboration among policymakers, citizens and policy analysts in terms of knowledge utilization. The reform of the governance structure requires us to establish a policymaking system which enables policy analysts as well as citizens to actively participate in the policy process.

1. Citizens’ Influence over Policymaking and Their Governability

1.1 Politics-as-Usual and Issue Salience

One of the conventional wisdoms regarding public policy in political science is that a fundamental policy reform is extremely difficult to carry out in affluent democracies. It has been widely believed, moreover, that special interests are almost unrivaled in the policymaking process; ordinary citizens’ interests, on the other hand, are underrepresented.

Taking tax policy as an example, one may see that a large tax policy change is unlikely to occur and that many tax preferences are granted along with special interests at the expense of citizens’ interests. As major factors responsible for the proliferation of tax preferences, at least the following five can be pointed out (Matsuda 2006a):

A) Electoral contributions and economic performance by special interests are crucial for a politician’s reelection.
B) Special interests are confronted with a prisoner’s dilemma when deciding to demand tax preferences or not; although the situation in which no tax preferences are granted is socially optimal, every special interest seeks tax preferences since it is a dominant strategy for the interest.
C) To grant tax preferences is a politically rational strategy for politicians aiming at reelection: first, compared with direct appropriations, a tax preference provision draws little citizens’ attention; and second, since a small number of special interests are benefited by a tax preference whose cost is borne by a large number of citizens, special interests seek to lobby politicians for tax preferences whereas citizens have no incentive to oppose such lobbying.
D) Many citizens are not familiar with the concepts of tax policy, and hence are susceptible to manipulation by politicians.
E) Since the impacts of a fundamental tax reform are almost impossible to predict exactly, a tax reform which is predicted to improve a social welfare may make many citizens and corporations worse off; given such uncertainty about the impacts of a tax reform, politicians are unlikely to carry out the tax reform.

This argument holds true for any policy areas, not only tax policy. Many special measures favoring special interests have been adopted across policy areas. As Smith (1999) mentions, however, citizens have the potential to influence politicians’ decisions. It must be noted, hence, that citizens’ interests are not always ignored in policymaking. Many stress one factor which can enhance the significance of citizens: issue salience (e.g., Monroe 1998; Page & Shapiro 1983; Kingdon 1977; Wade 1980; Bishin 2000).

Citizens’ preferences are likely to dominate in policymaking when an issue is highly salient to citizens. Citizens may give much closer attention to highly salient issues (Bowler & Donovan 1995). Higher attentiveness of citizens to salient issues is crucial for politicians since how politicians deal with those issues significantly affects the citizens’ evaluation of the politicians; consequently, the politicians are more sensitive to the citizens’ demands when making a decision (Edwards et al. 1995).

The high issue salience and the accompanying high attentiveness of citizens may lead to a large policy change which serves citizens’ interests: e.g., the 1991 Supreme Court nomination of Judge Clarence Thomas (Overby et al. 1992), the 1990 Civil Rights Act (Hutchings 1998), and the 1986 tax reform in the United States.3 Highly salient issues attract citizens’ attention and change the nature of policymaking into a blame-avoidance game (Weaver 1986). Policymakers, consequently, are more responsive to citizens, and sometimes engage in a large policy reform favoring the citizens.

1.2 Interaction under Uncertainty

The foregoing focuses on a politician’s decision-making in policymaking. However, it does not take into account two important things which characterize the policymaking process. First, a politician makes a decision under considerable uncertainty.2 One kind of uncertainty a politician confronts is regarding the attentiveness of citizens; citizens’ attentiveness, as pointed out above, is critical for the politician’s reelection, but he/she may not know how attentive citizens are.

Another uncertainty, related to the first one, is about the impact of policymaking. It is almost impossible to predict social and economic impacts of a policy change, as stated above. Given the imperfect information about the predicted policy impacts, a politician cannot predict citizens’ and special interests’ reactions to a particular policy change (Gretschmann & Kenis 1990). A politician, moreover, is not sure about citizens’ preferences. Citizens are not attentive enough to policy issues to have specific policy preferences. Such inattentiveness usually leads to the nonattitudes of citizens (Stimson et al. 1994; Brady & Ansolabehere 1989). It should be noted here that the nonattitudes of citizens do not mean the indifference; rather there exists “potential” public opinion toward a specific issue, which would appear if citizens had more information and applied general predispositions to the specifics at hand. Such potential public
opinion is usually revealed at later stages (e.g., implementation stage); what preferences will emerge, however, cannot be predicted (Stimson et al. 1994). In this situation, a politician is uncertain about whether or not a certain policy decision he/she makes follows citizens’ preferences (Jacobs & Shapiro 2000).

These kinds of uncertainty lead a politician to a situation where he/she does not know his/her own payoffs for each choice (e.g., carrying out a policy reform, or not changing a policy).

Second characteristic of policymaking process which the foregoing leaves out of consideration is the interaction among politicians. Different politicians have different electoral supporters, and thus differently calculate the benefits of each policy alternative. In such a situation, beyond doubt, the policymaking process should be full of compromises and conflicts among the politicians.

Taking account of these two features of policymaking process, this section briefly discusses a model of policymaking process on the basis of game theory[3]; in the analysis of interaction under uncertainty, there is fairly general agreement that a game-theoretical perspective is of great help (Gates & Humes 1997; Matsuda 2006a).

Figure 1 demonstrates the interaction between two politicians in policymaking. A politician does not know the degree of citizens’ attentiveness; hence, the Nature (N) decides its degree—high (H) or low (L) attentiveness—and the politician needs to guess which situation he/she is in now on the basis of his/her own belief. A politician has to make a decision while he/she does not know exactly how citizens will react to his/her decision; it is why the figure does not contain citizens as an actor in this game. A politician’s payoffs, moreover, are not exogenously given; instead, they are derived from his/her subjective estimation (vide Hansen 1983). Payoffs for a politician are assumed to be a function of subjectively estimated electoral support from special interests and subjectively estimated electoral support from citizens. Different politicians are presumed to differently estimate electoral support which special interests and citizens will give to the politicians as a result of their policy decisions.

As shown in Fig. 1, there are three possible outcomes: policy reform on citizens’ behalf (Rs), policy reform favoring special interests (Rc), and no reform (~R). This model, moreover, assumes two politicians as a player: i and j. Politician i has the power to present a proposal and is committed to a policy reform on citizens’ behalf. He comes from an electorally safe district, so he thinks that a successful policy reform will lead to increase in citizens’ electoral support; it will cause more serious resentment of citizens (kc); in this case the politicians gain lower payoff than the case citizens are not attentive (L). If the outcome is Rs, special interests give more support (e) to both politicians. When citizens are attentive (H), however, Rc will cause more serious resentment of citizens (kc; k > 1). The preference order of each politician can be written as shown in Fig. 1.

1.3 Citizens’ Influence over Policymaking

On the basis of the model of policymaking process presented above, let us examine how citizens could influence the policymaking process to get a policy adopted that is as close as possible to their ideal points (Rp). Beforehand, it would

\[ H: \text{Citizens are attentive} \]
\[ L: \text{Citizens are not attentive} \]
\[ R_p: \text{Policy reform on citizens’ behalf} \]
\[ R_c: \text{Policy reform serving special interests} \]
\[ \sim R: \text{No policy reform} \]
\[ c: \text{Citizens’ opposition} \]
\[ d: \text{Special interests’ opposition} \]
\[ e: \text{Special interests’ support} \]
\[ kc: \text{More serious resentment of citizens} \]

be of great help to identify under what conditions politician \( j \) will support \( R_p \) (Matsuda 2006a). Now denote \( \rho \) politician \( j \)'s belief that the current situation is the high attentiveness of citizens \((H)\). For politician \( j \), the expected utility of \( R_p \) must be higher than those of \( R_j \) and \( \sim R \) when she supports \( R_p \). The expected utility for politician \( j \) of each choice is as follows:

\[
EU_j(R_p) = \rho \cdot (a - d) + (1 - \rho) \cdot (a - d) = a - d \\
EU_j(R_j) = \rho \cdot (b - kc + e) + (1 - \rho) \cdot (b + e) \\
EU_j(\sim R) = \rho \cdot (b - c) + (1 - \rho) \cdot b
\]

Politician \( j \) will support \( R_p \) when the following conditions are satisfied:

\[
EU_j(R_p) \geq EU_j(R_3) \\
EU_j(R_p) \geq EU_j(\sim R) \\
\therefore \rho \geq \frac{b - (a - d)}{c} = \omega_1 \\
\rho \geq \frac{(b + e) - (a - d)}{kc} = \omega_2
\]

These equations imply that the possibility of politician \( j \)'s support for \( R_p \) increases as the value of \( \rho \) is larger and/or that of \( \omega_1 \) and/or \( \omega_2 \) is smaller.

What could citizens do to raise \( \rho \) and lower \( \omega_1 \) and \( \omega_2 \)? Active citizen participation in the policy process, which has been stressed today, is expected to affect the game of policymaking so that politicians might turn to citizens’ interests. In any institutional arrangement that prompts citizens to play an active role in policymaking, citizens are likely to become more attentive to policy issues. At least to a politician, many citizens seem to pay closer attention to the issues; politicians will perceive, in short, that the current situation is \( H \) in Fig. 1. This means that citizen participation may contribute to the rise in \( \rho \).

Active citizen participation also leads to the decline in \( \omega_1 \) and \( \omega_2 \). Specifically, citizens could affect policy outcomes through raising \( c \) and \( k \). If citizens participate in policymaking, they may be more knowledgeable about policy issues and attempt more seriously to predict the effects of a particular policy change on their lives. Such citizen participation, consequently, is likely to influence a politician’s estimate of citizens’ oppositions, which lower the possibility of the politician’s reelection; that is, the politician will revise upward his/her forecasts of \( c \) and \( k \).

The model of policymaking presented above, thus, reveals that citizens are not necessarily excluded from the policy process nor have tiny influence on the policy process. Institutional arrangements encouraging citizen participation, moreover, might contribute to the policymaking on citizens’ behalf.

### 1.4 Limitations of Citizens’ Governability

The foregoing suggests that the interaction between politicians in the policy process is likely to result in policy outcomes favoring special interests. Citizens have the potential, on the other hand, to influence the interaction; especially, they are able to affect policy outcomes through participating in the policy process so that the outcomes will serve their interests.

Much emphasis, hence, has been placed on citizen participation and collaboration among governments, private profit sector and non-profit sector. Institutional arrangements which encourage citizens to play an active role in the policy process are expected to contribute to the deviation from the politics-as-usual. Such institutional arrangements include “community governance,” in which citizens are not only monitored by but also do monitor governments (Yamamoto 2004a, 2004b).

When active citizen participation is stressed, however, one runs into a stone wall: citizens’ governability. Can one assume that citizens have sufficient ability to deal with policy problems? Unless citizens have sufficient governability, institutional arrangements for citizen participation might not lead to policy outcomes serving citizens’ interests. At worst, citizen participation would make society worse off. The rest of this section examines citizens’ governability and points out some critical limitations of their governability.

First, policy problems are too intricate for ordinary citizens to work out (Matsuda 2006b). The participation in the policy process requires expertise and technical knowledge of participants in the policy process. If citizens lack such expertise and technical knowledge, hence, it must be extremely arduous for them to play an active role in the policy process. Emphasis on citizen participation without considering this point may lead to the deterioration in the quality of policy.

Some empirical research shows citizens’ ignorance. Let us take tax policy as an example. According to Roberts et al. (1994), citizens lack understanding of the concept of progressive taxation; they support progressive taxes in abstract questions whereas their support for these taxes declines in concrete questions. Obler (1979) demonstrates, also, that citizens do not understand the incidence of various taxes; their opinions vary little according to their incomes.\(^4\)

Various analyses have revealed that the more salient a policy issue to citizens the more interested the citizens in the issue (Krosnick 1990; Lavine et al. 1996). Citizens might be more familiar with complicated policy issues such as tax
policy ones if those issues become more salient. Many policy problems, however, would be exceedingly subtle for citizens; even if citizens make every effort to collect and process information on tax policy issues, for instance, the citizens are unlikely to understand the current financial situation and compare policy alternatives in terms of social and collective welfare.

Second, even if citizens had enough ability to deal with policy issues, new information the citizens collect would not necessarily improve their understandings about the issues. As the theory of cognitive dissonance stresses (Festinger 1957), citizens are likely to select and interpret information so that their original opinions could be strengthened. Such biased information collection and interpretation are considered to prevent citizens from learning about policy issues.

Third, there is likely to be the disagreement between each citizen’s preferences and social and collective welfare. The model presented above (Fig. 1) assumes that the Nature has only two choices regarding citizens’ attentiveness: the high \( H \) or low \( L \) attentiveness. Citizens with high attentiveness, moreover, are presumed to support a policy reform on their behalf \( R_p \). This is not always the case, however; although citizens are highly attentive, they may prefer no change in policy system \( \sim R \) to \( R_p \). The problem here, thus, is what aspects of a policy issue citizens attend to (Miller et al. 2003). Specifically, do citizens give close attention to a salient issue because the issue is seen critical for the social welfare, or because the issue may significantly impact their self-interests? Social security, for instance, has many characteristics of public goods; as for the way to bear the costs of social security there could be the problem of free-riding. Individual citizens may support the existing social security service in a fiscal crunch whereas demanding that others and next generations bear the costs of the service. Although it would be socially undesirable that every citizen takes this position on social security issues, this strategy is regarded as rational for individual citizens. Social and collective welfare, in short, is not always consistent with individual interests.

To sum up, citizen participation, which could make citizens more attentive to policy issues, does not necessarily lead to socially desirable policy outcomes. One should not easily assume that citizens successfully deal with policy problems; the governability of citizens is seen quite limited. Even if citizens give closer attention to policy issues, the citizens may not necessarily understand the complexity of the issues nor are likely to consider the issues from a social and collective perspective. Even politicians sensitive to citizens’ demands and preferences, consequently, may not have incentive to support a policy reform that will improve the social and collective welfare; this is the same result as the politics-as-usual (Matsuda 2006c). Given the limitations of citizens’ governability, should one give up active citizen participation and the collaboration with citizens in the policy process? Is it implausible to expect policy to be shaped in a way that social and collective welfare is improved?

2. Policy Analysts’ Roles in the Policy Process

2.1 Knowledge Utilization in the Policy Process

The preceding section demonstrates that the politics-as-usual is the policy process by which special interests are overrepresented whereas citizens’ interests are underrepresented. Citizens have potential influence to draw politicians’ attention to their interests; in many cases, however, they fail to exert such influence due to their limited governability.

What would the policymaking system in which social and collective interests are emphasized be like? How could it be built? These are critical questions to be worked out in social sciences including political science. One may ubiquitously find arguments that policymakers should be more responsive to broader interests. Various institutional reform proposals have been presented to improve the policymakers’ behaviors: e.g., electoral reform and administrative reform. This paper, on the other hand, discusses this issue from a different angle: it stresses the roles of policy analysts to improve the policy process.

The roles of policy analysts in the policy process are worthy to be considered for at least two reasons (Matsuda 2006b). First, policy analysts are likely to be confronted with the gap between policy outcomes shaped in the policy process and policy knowledge supplied by the policy analysts; the policy analysts are expected to play an active role to have policy knowledge utilized in the policy process so that policy outcomes they consider as socially beneficial could be determined. Second, the aforementioned limitations of citizens’ governability refer primarily to citizens’ ignorance and misunderstanding of policy issues. Policy analysts, who produce policy knowledge, could improve citizens’ understanding by providing them with policy knowledge; in order to enhance citizens’ governability, policy analysts need to help citizens utilize policy knowledge.

The active involvement of policy analysts in the policy process, hence, is significant for the improvement of the policy process. They are required to devote themselves not only to knowledge production but also to knowledge utilization. What knowledge, then, should be provided? What knowledge is likely to be utilized in the policy process?

Zaltman and his colleagues present a knowledge utilization theory on the basis of the social marketing perspective (Kotler & Zaltman 1972; Zaltman 1979, 1983). According to the social marketing perspective, a product \( \text{viz.}, \) knowledge should not be considered as the constant; rather, every effort needs to be made to find out what a target audience \( \text{viz.}, \) a knowledge user wants and, then, to create such a product \( \text{viz.}, \) knowledge as satisfying these wants. This principle suggests four critical variables to be considered, which may be referred to as 4Ps: “developing the right product backed by the right promotion and put in the right place at the right price” (Kotler & Zaltman 1972: 559, emphases in the original).
From the social marketing perspective, then, the user orientation is derived. The user orientation forms a striking contrast to the traditional view of knowledge utilization. The user orientation emphasizes "much more understanding of user abilities, circumstances, and values in advance of the knowledge production and dissemination process" (Zaltman 1979: 103, emphasis in the original). In this sense, this knowledge utilization theory regards knowledge utilization as an "exchange or transaction" process involving at least two active parties (viz., knowledge producers or disseminators and users); the traditional term "transfer," on the other hand, implies a unidirectional flow of knowledge into a passive user (Zaltman 1979).

Policy analysts, to sum up, should not unilaterally provide policy knowledge for users; rather, they are required to supply users with policy knowledge, taking account of the users’ needs (Rich 1991, 1997). Policy knowledge, thus, is likely to be utilized in the policy process, and the gap between policy outcomes and policy knowledge would be bridged.

2.2 Policy Analysts’ Strategies to Enhance Citizens’ Governability

If one is to follow the social marketing principle in knowledge utilization, knowledge users need to be identified; otherwise, the user orientation would be meaningless. Referring to Zaltman’s theory of knowledge utilization, Matsuda (2006b) sees policymakers and citizens as a user and suggests some strategies of policy analysts to have policy knowledge utilized by those users. This paper, on the other hand, focuses exclusively on the case where citizens are knowledge users and theoretically analyzes policy analysts’ strategies to enhance citizens’ governability and improve the policy process.

One of the limitations of citizens’ governability, as stated above, is their lack of knowledge on policy issues. If policy knowledge policy analysts produce is successfully utilized by citizens, the citizens may overcome the limitation to a large extent. Most policy knowledge, however, is too intricate for citizens to understand. What policy analysts are expected to do here is the role as “translator” (Akiyoshi 2003; Takechi 2002, 2004). Meaningful citizen participation, as the preceding section suggests, entails balancing citizen involvement in the policy process with the technicality of policymaking. Policy analysts need to translate expertise into ordinary language so that citizens can understand policy knowledge.

Policy analysts as a translator, moreover, could contribute to meaningful citizen participation by conveying citizens’ intentions to policymakers. Today much emphasis has been placed on knowledge citizens have, which may be referred to as “ordinary knowledge” or “local knowledge”; such knowledge is seen critical for policymaking based on citizens’ demands (e.g., Akiyoshi 2003, 2004; Bryant 2002). Citizens’ demands, however, are unlikely to be clear enough for policymakers to understand; citizens do not know technical terms and knowledge which are essential for policymaking. Policy analysts, thus, need to translate those demands into languages relevant to policymaking. In this sense, policy analysts and citizens could be likened to doctors and patients. A doctor explains technical knowledge on a disease to a patient; listening to the patient’s words, moreover, the doctor grasps the patient’s condition.

The role of policy analysts as a translator, hence, would contribute to enhancing citizens’ governability. Policy analysts could help citizens acquire policy knowledge and express their needs. According to some empirical research, the more information there is available for citizens and the more opportunities citizens have to listen to experts’ opinions, then the more knowledgeable they will be about policy issues through the utilization of the information and opinions (Barabas et al. 2003; Gordon & Seguna 1997; Nicholson 2003). With the help of policy analysts, consequently, citizens will play a meaningful role in the policy process; citizens will effectively affect the policymaking so that policymakers would turn to the citizens’ interests. In the aforementioned model (Fig. 1), for instance, more knowledgeable citizens could oppose $R_1$ and $\sim R_2$ more easily and more effectively through increasing the value of a variable such as $c$ and $k$.

Another limitation of citizens’ governability discussed above is that citizens do not always compare policy alternatives in terms of the interests or welfare of the society they belong to; rather, they stress their individual self-interests. If a citizen’s individual preference does not contradict social and collective interests, a policy analyst might draw a citizen’s attention to socially beneficial policy alternatives.

Support that there are two (groups of) citizens in a society: A and B. These citizens are assumed to have two choices: support or oppose the environment tax. Each citizen’s payoff for each alternative is described in Fig. 2. If both citizens

Fig. 2. The Environment Tax as an Assurance Game.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>4, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oppose</td>
<td>3, 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
support the tax, the outcome will be socially optimal; the government will be so well funded that socially beneficial environmental policy will be implemented. In this case, moreover, both citizens will win the highest payoffs; hence, this case is individually optimal, too. The proposal that both citizens must pay the tax is seen as $R_p$ in Fig. 1. If citizen A pays the tax but citizen B does not, the government may not receive enough funds for implementing socially beneficial environmental policy. In this case, citizen A will get the lowest payoff due to the burden of the tax; citizen B, avoiding the tax, will win higher payoff than citizen A but lower than citizen B will get in the preceding case. This case might be the result of $R_c$ in Fig. 1 (reform favoring citizen B). Finally, if neither pays the tax, any environmental policy could not be implemented; this is the case that no reform is carried out ($\sim R$ in Fig. 1). In this game, which is usually called an assurance game, there are two Nash equilibria: \{support; support\} and \{oppose; oppose\}.

Citizens without understanding of the environment tax, the tax reform proposals, or the payoff matrix they face may choose “oppose” since citizens tend to always hate paying any tax; the outcome is not socially efficient. If policy analysts provide the citizens with policy knowledge, the citizens may recognize that the outcome {support; support} is both socially and individually optimal and choose “support.” In the case that individual self-interests are consistent with social and collective ones, hence, policy analysts could encourage citizens to choose socially beneficial policy alternatives.

When individual optimality contradicts social optimality, the situation will be more complex. Suppose that the government is debating the reform of public works projects; it plans to reduce public works projects to deal with a fiscal crunch. Two (groups of) citizens living in different areas (citizens A and B) are presumed to decide whether to demand pork barrel projects for their areas or not. Figure 3 shows the payoff matrix of this game. If one citizen supports pork barrel projects and the other does not, the former will win the highest payoff because he/she may enjoy the benefits of the projects and the fiscal problem will be solved in some degree; the latter, paying the costs of the projects and obtaining no benefits, will gain the lowest payoff. This is regarded as the result of $R_r$ in Fig. 1. In the case both citizens demand pork barrel projects of their representatives, the citizens would enjoy the benefits of the projects but suffer from fiscal crunch. This case would be the current situation; no reform of public works projects is carried out ($\sim R$ in Fig. 1). If neither of citizens supports pork barrel projects, the fiscal condition might improve significantly and the outcome will be socially desirable; the sum of citizens’ payoffs is maximized. This situation could result from carrying out $R_p$ in Fig. 1.

In this game citizens are confronted with a prisoner’s dilemma. To demand pork barrel projects is a dominant strategy for both citizens, and thus the outcome \{Demand; Demand\} is the Nash equilibrium. This equilibrium, however, is less socially efficient than the outcome \{Not Demand; Not Demand\}. If policy analysts hope to have the socially efficient policy supported by citizens, what could the policy analysts do? Citizens may have little understanding about the problems of public works projects and be shortsighted. If policy analysts, for instance, explain the payoff matrix to citizens and persuade them of the social efficiency of $R_p$ from a long-term perspective successfully, citizens might turn to $R_p$. Many economic and social psychological experiments and analyses have attempted to find a solution for a prisoner’s dilemma; referring to those findings, policy analysts could speak to citizens.

Fig. 3. Public Works Projects as a Prisoner’s Dilemma Game.

|       | B
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Not Demand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Demand</td>
<td>4, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demand</td>
<td>5, 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the two games above—assurance and prisoner’s dilemma games—it is assumed that policy analysts are able to show citizens their predicted payoffs for each outcome. Knowledge which policy analysts produce, however, does not always present a solution for a policy problem.

According to Zaltman (1979: 86), knowledge can be divided into two types: positive and nonpositive. Positive knowledge refers to knowledge which involves a specific solution to a problem. Nonpositive knowledge, on the other hand, possesses two critical characteristics: (1) it indicates that a currently operating social service program or policy is not supported by scientifically valid and reliable data; and (2) however, it does not present a sound alternative.

Policy knowledge is usually nonpositive one. Although theories relevant to a particular policy problem propose some policy alternatives, those theories could not choose the best alternative that meets every critical policy criterion. There are always some disagreements among policy analysts over expected impacts of a certain policy alternative (Kato 1997; Dye 2002, Yamanouchi 1992; Smith 1999).

Nonpositive knowledge is unlikely to be utilized easily, as Zaltman states. Unless a sound policy alternative is
proposed, those who regard the existing policy as beneficial to themselves would put up stiff resistance to any policy change. However, if policy analysts make every effort to inform citizens of social problems which the existing policy is considered to cause, then the citizens, especially those who think they do not enjoy the benefits of the policy, will have better understanding of the policy. Policy analysts’ efforts to have nonpositive knowledge utilized, consequently, may contribute to the constructive discussions involving citizens.

In Fig. 1, the variables which stand for citizens’ influence over policymaking include c, k, and ρ. The aforementioned strategies of policy analysts focus primarily on c and k. Policy analysts, additionally, could enhance citizens’ governability and improve the policy process by raising ρ, that is, by heightening issue salience (Matsuda 2006b). If policy analysts successfully make an issue more salient, for instance, through the attendance at various public meetings and the media coverage, then citizens will be more interested in the issue. As an issue is more salient, as mentioned above, citizens will try to collect and utilize knowledge and information on the issue; the governability of citizens, consequently, will be improved.7

In the politics-as-usual, to sum up, policy outcomes are likely to serve special interests. Citizens have potential influence over policymaking, as Fig. 1 implies. Citizen participation, helping citizens exert influence on policymaking, may turn policymakers’ attention to citizens’ interests. The limited governability of citizens, however, makes meaningful citizen participation extremely difficult; in many cases, citizens do not have sufficient understanding, knowledge or information on policy issues. This paper theoretically scrutinizes the roles of policy analysts to enhance citizens’ governability and to conform policy outcomes to theoretically desirable ones. Policy analysts need to make efforts to have policy knowledge utilized by citizens, even if it is nonpositive knowledge; policy analysts are required to act as a translator, explain predicted impacts of policy outcomes to citizens, and contribute to heightening the issue salience.

2.3 Policy Analysts in the Policy Process

This paper is concluded by reflecting on what policymaking system is needed in an era when much emphasis is placed on governance. The recent calls for reforming the governance structure are considered to derive primarily from the failure of government; that is, there is a large gap between an actual policy outcome and policy knowledge about the theoretically desirable policy. The study on governance has been devoted to the design of the governance structure to bridge the gap (Niikawa 2004; Nakamura 2004).

The focus on governance could be explained by likening the policymaking system to the market system: “political market,” where public policies are produced. There have been some market entry regulations, under which a limited number of actors are allowed to entry the political market: e.g., politicians, bureaucrats, some special interests and so on. Recently many customers (viz., citizens) feel dissatisfied with outcomes in this market (viz., public policies), and, thus, deregulation is seen as necessary; that is, various kinds of actors are expected to join the policy process and to collaborate with one another. Turning to the nongovernment sector, this line of study has often stressed active citizen participation in the policy process.

Deregulation, which is expected to improve the system, is prone to entailing some negative impacts on it; hence, some measures are usually taken to deal with such impacts when implementing deregulation. This paper points out one negative impact of citizen participation on the policymaking system, which derives from the limited governability of citizens. The limitations of citizens’ governability should be overcome if one is to insist on citizen participation; otherwise, citizen participation might lead to the deterioration in the quality of policy. As one way to facilitate the effective citizen participation, this paper attends to the contribution of policy analysts to enhancing citizens’ governability.

Figure 4 illustrates the structure of the gap between policy knowledge and a policy outcome and some expected roles of policy analysts for bridging the gap. The thin continuous lines in the figure demonstrate the process by which the knowledge-outcome gap arises. Citizens reveal their preferences/utilities regarding particular policy issues, which policymakers and policy analysts take into account. The policy analysts, then, provide some knowledge on the policy issues and, hopefully, offer several policy alternatives to improve social welfare. The policymakers, on the other hand, make a policy decision on the basis of their recognition of citizens’ preferences and the knowledge provided by the policy analysts. It should be noted, moreover, that special interests, though not shown in the figure, attract the policymakers’ attention in the policymaking process; on the other hand, citizens influence the policymaking to some degree through electing politicians, demanding the public release of information and so on. The resulting policy outcome often departs from an outcome the policy analysts expect; here one can find the knowledge-outcome gap. All actors—citizens, policymakers and policy analysts—are expected to collaborate with one another to bridge the gap; such collaboration is indicated by the heavy lines in Fig. 4.

The expected roles of policy analysts to bridge the gap are expressed by the two heavy dotted lines in the figure. This paper examines the contribution of policy analysts to improving citizens’ governability. Additionally, though not discussed in this paper, policy analysts could do a lot to improve the policy process through turning to policymakers (Matsuda 2006b).

There is a view which divides the policy discourse into two stages (MacRae 1988). In the first stage policy claims are generated whereas the second is characterized by persuasion. The second stage is a so-called “political” one, where
political bargaining among participants, for instance, may be found. Traditional models dealing with the roles of policy analysts, such as the structural model of argument (Toulmin et al. 1979; Dunn 1990), regard policy analysts just as an actor at the first stage (Matsuda 2004).

It is implied in this paper, however, that policy analysts should be an active actor at the political stage, in addition to the knowledge production stage. The contribution of policy analysts, to put it another way, is not only the production and supply of policy knowledge; through actively involving in policymaking, also, they are expected to affect the rules of bargaining games at the political stage so that policy proposals which they believe are desirable can be adopted (Dixit 1996).

It is essential for policy analysts to regard both “policy analysis” and “policymaking” as component parts of a great entity, which may be called “policy process.” The questions policy analysts need to work out are not only what desirable policies are but also what the analysts could do to have those policies implemented (Wagenaar et al. 1982).

In the era of governance, the policymaking system is under reconstruction. Many regard citizens as a critical actor in the system, and every effort is made to work out how citizens could play an active role in the policy process. In order to accomplish this task, developing the system which encourages the effective involvement of policy analysts in the policy process is worthy to be done.⁸

Notes
2 Matsuda (2006a) scrutinizes the uncertainty with which politicians are confronted in policymaking.
3 The model of policymaking process presented in this paper is originally built in Matsuda (2006a). For the detailed explanations of the model, the way to develop and enrich it and some derived hypotheses about the interaction between politicians, vide Matsuda (2006a).
4 Besides citizens’ ignorance of tax policy issues, many studies point out the inconsistency of citizens’ preferences. Especially, citizens’ inconsistent evaluation of government services and taxes—the “more for less” paradox—attracts much attention (e.g., Beck et al. 1987; Welch 1985).
5 Matsuda (2005) illuminates the gap between policy outcomes and policy knowledge through the examination on the knowledge utilization in the consumption tax adoption in Japan.
6 The reality is not so simple. As many studies have revealed, various institutions and incentive structures are critical for citizens to choose “support.”
7 To make an issue salient to citizens may affect politicians’ behaviors and lead to policy outcomes which favor the citizens. As demonstrated in Fig. 1, when politicians perceive that the attentiveness of citizens gets higher, the

---

Fig. 4. Policy Analysts in the Policy Process.

politicians will turn to citizens’ interests (Matsuda 2006a, 2006b).

Akiyoshi (2003) proposes the policymaking support system, which provides ordinary knowledge, stakeholder knowledge and expert knowledge through the cooperation of three panels: citizen panel, stakeholder panel and expert panel. Bryant (2002), attending to health policy, contends that a framework which enables experts and citizens to work together be built to develop meaningful health policy.

References


