

## ABSTRACT

### COMPARATIVE PUBLIC PROFESSIONALISM IN THAI AND ILLINOIS MUNICIPALITIES

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This study examines the perception of public professionalism among Thai municipal administrators, Illinois city administrators, and Illinois city managers. Public professionalism is defined as the ability to balance political, legal, bureaucratic, and professional accountabilities. There are two fundamental research questions. First, how do the differences in form of municipal government influence the chief administrators' public professionalism? Second, to what extent is public professionalism influenced by the chief administrators' membership in professional associations? Based on the survey and interview data, two models of public professionalism—the abstract and situational models—are developed to distinguish between the chief administrators' abstract perception of public professionalism and their perception when faced with a specific problem.

This researcher finds that in abstract terms, the distinction in form of government only influences Illinois city managers and city administrators' public professionalism. Illinois city administrators exhibited a greater degree of abstract

public professionalism than Illinois city managers. Also, municipal chief administrators who do not belong to professional associations had more abstract public professionalism than those who are members.

In the situational model, form of government only contributes to the difference between Thai municipal administrators and Illinois city administrators. Illinois city administrators demonstrated more situational professionalism than their counterparts in Thailand. Also, membership in professional associations, especially in U.S. professional associations, has a positive influence on situational public professionalism.

Further, this researcher identifies two other crucial factors that nurture the chief administrators' public professionalism: informal working relations between elected and appointed officials and managerial skills (e.g., interpersonal communication, awareness of administrative ethics).

This study has policy implications for local government professionalization in Thailand and other developing countries. Professional associations provide practical skills for and inculcate public professionalism and ethics among municipal chief administrators. Also, professional training should emphasize the managerial skills and a healthy working relationship between local politicians and bureaucrats. For scholars, this study provides a systematic analysis of public professionalism and adds more depth to the literature on associational life and public management.

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BY

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motivated me to work diligently throughout my undergraduate and graduate years in the United States.

## DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my grandmother, 方雪蘭 ,  
(เชาะลั้ง สุทธิพงษ์ประชา), whose poverty and lack of formal education did not  
prevent her from raising her grandson to become  
a lifelong, passionate researcher

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES.....	xii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	xvi
LIST OF APPENDICES.....	xviii
Chapter	
1 INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY.....	1
Statement of Research Questions.....	6
Unit of Analysis: Thai MAs and Illinois CAOs.....	7
Context: Decentralization Reforms in Illinois and Thailand.....	11
Conceptual Issue: Territorial Decentralization.....	11
Basis of Comparison: the Thai and Illinois Experiences.....	13
Importance and Definition of Public Professionalism.....	18
Goals of Dissertation.....	23
Organization of Dissertation.....	30
2 THE POSSIBILITY OF PUBLIC PROFESSIONALISM, SOCIOLOGY OF PROFESSIONALISM, AND MULTIPLE ACCOUNTABILITIES AS MEASUREMENT OF PUBLIC PROFESSIONALISM.....	37
Public Service as a Profession.....	37
Criteria of Profession and Professionalism.....	39
History and Dynamics of Public Administrative Profession.....	41

Chapter	Page
Defining Public Professionalism.....	49
Who Are Public Administrators?.....	50
Evaluation of the Arguments for and against Public Professionalism.....	52
The Possibility of Public Professionalism in Contemporary Society.....	56
Sociological Views of Professionalism.....	61
Current Debate and Consensus.....	61
Contrasting Interpretations of Profession and Professionalism.....	63
Implications of the Sociological Analyses for the Discussion of Public Professionalism.....	72
How to Measure Public Professionalism.....	79
Multiple Accountabilities as Measurement of Public Professionalism.....	81
Multiple Accountabilities Framework.....	86
Preferences for Accountability Approaches.....	93
Conclusion.....	96
3    DECENTRALIZATION REFORM IN THAILAND (1997) AND ILLINOIS (1970): THEORETICAL AND COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES.....	98
Beyond the Benefits and Pitfalls of Territorial Decentralization: Analytical Framework of Decentralization.....	99
The Functional Framework of Decentralization.....	103
The Political and Administrative Framework of Decentralization.....	111

Chapter	Page
History of Central-Local Relations in Thailand.....	116
Thai Public Administration and Municipal Government before Decentralization.....	116
The Decentralization Reform and Thai Municipal Government.....	124
History of State-Local Relations in Illinois.....	139
Overview of Illinois Municipal Government Responsibilities and Structures.....	139
Illinois State and Municipal Governments before the 1970 Constitutional Reform.....	144
Illinois Municipal Government after the 1970 Constitutional Reform.....	148
Conclusion.....	154
4 PUBLIC PROFESSIONALISM FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH HYPOTHESES.....	158
Public Professionalism in Decentralized Governance.....	159
Political Accountability.....	160
Legal Accountability.....	163
Bureaucratic Accountability.....	165
Professional Accountability.....	168
Taxonomy of Public Professionalism.....	171
Transformational Professionalism.....	178
Policy Professionalism.....	181
Procedural Professionalism.....	185
Apolitical Professionalism.....	187

Chapter	Page
Ersatz Professionalism.....	190
Research Hypotheses.....	191
Factors Influencing Public Professionalism.....	191
Form of Municipal Government.....	192
Membership in Professional Associations.....	198
Interaction of Form of Municipal Government and Membership in Professional Associations.....	203
Conclusion.....	206
5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	208
Research Design.....	209
Data Collection.....	211
Survey Questionnaire and Administration.....	212
Interview.....	219
Secondary Data.....	221
Variable Operationalization.....	223
Dependent Variable.....	223
Independent Variable.....	225
Data Analysis.....	230
Ordinal Logistic Regression (OLR), Generalized Ordinal Logistic Regression Model (GOLM), and Ordinary Least Squares (OLS).....	231
Factor Analysis.....	235
The Kruskal-Wallis $H$ test and the Mann-Whitney $U$ test.....	236
Qualitative Analysis.....	238

Chapter	Page
Response Rate and Respondent Characteristics.....	240
Conclusion.....	242
<b>6 ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DEGREE OF PUBLIC PROFESSIONALISM AND FORM OF MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT.....</b>	<b>244</b>
Comparative Analysis of the Thai and Illinois Municipal Chief Administrators' Attention to Each Accountability Approach.....	246
Abstract Perception of Each Accountability Approach.....	247
Perception of Each Accountability Approach When Faced with a Specific Problem.....	252
Discussion of the Discrepancies in the Survey Responses.....	256
Analysis of the Relationship between Degree of Public Professionalism and Form of Municipal Government.....	265
Qualitative Evidence and Discussion.....	278
Conclusion.....	289
<b>7 ANALYSIS OF THE IMPACT OF MEMBERSHIP IN PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND ITS INTERACTION WITH FORM OF MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT ON DEGREE OF PUBLIC PROFESSIONALISM.....</b>	<b>291</b>
Type and Distribution of Public Professionalism.....	293
Abstract Public Professionalism.....	294
Situational Public Professionalism.....	297
Apolitical Professionalism among Illinois CAOs and CMs.....	302
Thai and Illinois Chief Administrators' Strategies to Solve the Flood Scenario.....	309

Chapter	Page
Analysis of the Relationship between Public Professionalism, Membership in Professional Associations, and the Interaction Effect between Membership in Professional Associations and Form of Government.....	320
Qualitative Evidence and Discussion.....	342
Conclusion.....	353
8 CONCLUSION.....	356
Public Professionalism Framework.....	356
Summary of Theoretical Framework.....	356
Summary of Key Empirical Findings.....	361
Contributions to the Public Administration Literature and Policy Implications for Thai Municipal Governments.....	367
Limitations and Future Research Suggestions.....	372
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	375
APPENDICES.....	407

## LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1-1 Practices that Define the Commitments and Goals of Public Professionalism.....	20
1-2 Types of Public Professionalism and Characteristics.....	26
1-3 Three Institutional Forms of Municipal Government in This Study.....	28
2-1 Characteristics of Conventional Professions.....	40
2-2 Two Different Forms of Professionalism in Knowledge-Based Works.....	78
2-3 Underlying Values and Bases for Relationship within Accountability Approaches.....	89
3-1 Functional Framework of Decentralization.....	105
3-2 Questions for the Politics and Administration Variables in Hutchcroft's Political and Administrative Framework.....	113
3-3 Types of Thai Municipality with Population Size.....	120
3-4 Number of Thai Local Governments (As of September 30, 2010).....	130
3-5 Compulsory and Optional Responsibilities of Thai Municipalities.....	132
3-6 Number of Local Governments in Illinois (2007).....	141
5-1 Modifications to the NIDA Survey Questionnaire.....	215
5-2 Scenario Used in the NIDA Survey Questionnaire and My Survey Questionnaire.....	217
5-3 Qualitative Interview Design .....	220

Table	Page
5-4 Operationalization of the Dependent Variable Using Questions from Sections 1 and 2 of the Survey Questionnaire.....	223
5-5 Operationalization of Each Independent Variable.....	228
5-6 Technical and Managerial Indices.....	230
5-7 Analytic Methods Used to Test Each Research Hypothesis.....	231
5-8 Initial and Adjusted Ordered Outcome Categories.....	234
5-9 Respondent Characteristics.....	241
6-1 Municipal Chief Administrators' Responses to the Abstract Accountability Questions.....	248
6-2 Post-Hoc Tests Comparing the Municipal Chief Administrators' Responses to the Political, Legal, and Professional Accountability Questions (Abstract Model).....	250
6-3 Municipal Chief Administrators' Responses to the Situational Accountability Questions.....	253
6-4 Post-Hoc Tests Comparing the Municipal Chief Administrators' Responses to the Legal, Bureaucratic, and Professional Accountability Questions (Situational Model).....	255
6-5 Summary and Comparison of Thai MAs and Illinois CAOs' Very Important Responses to Each Accountability System (Abstract and Situational Models).....	257
6-6 OLR, GOLM, and OLS Analyses of Thai MAs, Illinois CAOs, and Illinois CMs' Degree of Public Professionalism in the Abstract Model.....	269
6-7 OLR, GOLM, and OLS Analyses of Thai MAs, Illinois CAOs, and Illinois CMs' Degree of Public Professionalism in the Situational Model.....	271
6-8 Summary of Hypotheses and Test Results.....	277

Table	Page
7-1 Distribution of Abstract Public Professionalism in Each Group of Municipal Chief Administrators.....	294
7-2 Post-Hoc Tests of the Distribution of Abstract Public Professionalism for Each Pair of Municipal Chief Administrators.....	295
7-3 Distribution of Situational Public Professionalism in Each Group of Municipal Chief Administrators.....	297
7-4 Post-Hoc Tests of the Distribution of Situational Public Professionalism for Each Pair of Municipal Chief Administrators.....	299
7-5 Differences between the Abstract and Situational Perceptions.....	300
7-6 Comparison of the Strategies to Solve the Flood Problem with Apolitical Professionalism.....	305
7-7 Summary of the Strategies to Solve the Flood and Reimbursement Issue by Thai MAs with Transformational, Policy, and Procedural Professionalism.....	310
7-8 Summary of the Strategies to Solve the Flood and Reimbursement Issue by Illinois CAO and CM with Transformational and Procedural Professionalism.....	314
7-9 Patterns of Political Accountability among Municipal Chief Administrators in the Flood Scenario as Reported in the Survey.....	319
7-10 Comparison of Abstract Public Professionalism between Members and Non-Members of Professional Associations.....	321
7-11 Mann-Whitney Test Comparing the Difference in Abstract Public Professionalism between Members and Non-Members in Professional Associations.....	322
7-12 Comparison of Situational Public Professionalism between Members and Non-Members of Professional Associations.....	323
7-13 Mann-Whitney Test Comparing the Difference in Situational Public Professionalism between Members and Non-Members in Professional Associations.....	324

Table	Page
7-14 Comparison of Abstract Public Professionalism between Members of Thai and Illinois Professional Associations.....	326
7-15 Mann-Whitney Test Comparing Abstract Public Professionalism between Members of Thai and Illinois Professional Associations.....	327
7-16 Comparison of Situational Public Professionalism between Members of Thai and Illinois Professional Associations.....	328
7-17 Mann-Whitney Test Comparing Situational Public Professionalism between Members of Thai and Illinois Professional Associations.....	329
7-18 Relationship between Abstract Public Professionalism and the Interaction Effect between Form of Government and Membership in Professional Associations.....	331
7-19 Relationship between Situational Public Professionalism and the Interaction Effect between Form of Government and Membership in Professional Associations.....	333
7-20 Five Pairwise Comparisons for the Mann-Whitney Post-Hoc Test.....	334
7-21 Post-Hoc Test Comparing Abstract Public Professionalism among Four Groups of Municipal Chief Administrators.....	336
7-22 Post-Hoc Test Comparing Situational Public Professionalism among Four Groups of Municipal Chief Administrators.....	338
7-23 Summary of Hypotheses and Test Results.....	341
8-1 Hypotheses and Findings.....	362

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1-1 Hypothesized Relationships between the Degree of Public Professionalism, Form of Government, Membership in Professional Associations, and Their Interaction Effect.....	29
2-1 Type of Accountability Approaches.....	88
3-1 The Political and Administrative Framework of Decentralization.....	114
3-2 Territorial Structure of Thai Administrative System before the 1997 Decentralization Reform.....	119
3-3 Internal Structure of Thai Municipal Government prior to the Municipality Act of 1953 (amended 2001).....	124
3-4 Territorial Structure of Thai Administrative System after the 1997 Decentralization Reform.....	129
3-5 Internal Structure of Thai Municipal Government after the Enact of the Municipality Act of 1953 (amended 2001).....	138
3-6 Classification of Illinois Local Governments.....	140
4-1 Public Professionalism: Key Elements and Central Ideas.....	175
4-2 Taxonomy of Public Professionalism.....	177
4-3 Hypothesized Relationships and Research Hypotheses.....	207
5-1 Research Design.....	209
6-1 Conceptual Map of H1 and H2.....	245
6-2 Percentage of Illinois CAOs' Very Important Responses to Each Accountability System in the Two Sections of the Survey.....	259

Figure	Page
6-3 Percentage of Thai MAs' Very Important Responses to Each Accountability System in the Two Sections of the Survey.....	263
7-1 Conceptual Map of H3-H6.....	292

## LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix	Page
A THAI MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATORS SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE ADMINISTERED BY THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION (NIDA).....	408
B THE ILLINOIS CITY MANAGERS AND CITY ADMINISTRATORS SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE.....	413
C INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR ILLINOIS CITY MANAGERS AND CITYADMINISTRATORS.....	418
D INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THAI MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATORS ADMINISTERED BY THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION (NIDA).....	420

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Municipal governments are the governmental units closest to citizens. In recent years, as the control and capacity of many centralized and formerly centralized states have withered, those small units of government have emerged as the experimental site for both grassroots democracy and local self-governance (Wei 2000). In other more decentralized countries, municipalities have become even more important than they were several decades prior. Fiscal stress at the higher levels of government resulted in an increase in the number of service responsibilities delegated to the local entities. Mouritzen and Svava (2002, 6) rightly assert that the contemporary municipal governments everywhere have become increasingly responsible for a vast array of public services: “some of these are developed locally and others are formed and funded at higher levels of government but delivered locally.” Compounding the challenge brought about by the magnitude of service responsibilities, the diversity of municipal residents and complexity of socio-economic and political problems make running a municipality a daunting public administrative task (Mouritzen and Svava 2002).

Local government provides a rich laboratory to examine one of the most fundamental questions in the study and practice of modern public administration (Nalbandian 2006). Mosher (1982) compellingly articulates the question: How can

public administrators possessing technical expertise and discretionary authority that ensure professional influence over policy formulation and execution be held accountable to the people's will, when they are not elected? The interplay between the desire for democratic accountability and the demand for efficiency is most intense at the local government level where "conflicts over values and the distribution of resources have personal immediacy....with a variety of individuals and groups living, working, and politicking side by side" (Mouritzen and Svava 2002, 6).

At the core of this study is an interest in the professionalism provided by the appointed executives in municipal government. Municipal chief administrators—the unit of analysis in this study—along with elected municipal leaders sit atop the political and administrative hierarchies of government. In this dissertation, municipal chief administrators or chief administrators consist of three groups: Thai municipal administrators (hereinafter referred to as Thai MAs), Illinois city administrators (hereinafter referred to as Illinois CAOs or CAOs), and Illinois city managers (hereinafter referred to as Illinois CMs or CMs). The nature of the chief administrative position is complex. They interact closely with the local elected officials and assist them in shaping the municipal government agenda. They are charged with coordinating the work of municipal departments and ensuring successful implementation of the public policies and programs. Also, communication with the higher levels of government and other municipal communities falls within the chief administrators' realm of responsibilities.

Such an immense list of responsibilities raises several questions: what is the appropriate contribution of municipal chief administrators to the general public welfare? What are their rules of engagement? What are the standards used to assess their performance? How should they conduct themselves when confronting a host of expectations and dilemmas generated within and outside their public organization? These questions are related to the concept of public professionalism (Bourgault and Parent 2008). Sherwood (1997, 217) argues that public professionalism is “a matter of extreme significance to the achievement of effective, responsive government.” Professionalism among local government officials, particularly the appointed executives, has become a critical issue in many countries that have adopted the decentralization reform over the past few decades. Currently, there is little disagreement over the importance of professionalism among public officials. However, there is a lack of clarity about the definition and measurement of public professionalism. Martin (1994) notes that the lack of clarity arises from the two contrasting visions of the public service: the democratic model that stresses the importance of political institutions and due process and the managerial model that emphasizes technical and economic rationality.

The contrasting visions of the public service emulate the Finer-Friedrich exchange over which type of accountability should be the cornerstone of public administration. Many empirical works in recent years have demonstrated that neither Finer nor Friedrich was entirely correct (e.g., Maynard-Moody and Leland 1999; Dunn and Legge 2001; Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2003). In their work

environment, public administrators, especially the street-level bureaucrats, have no choice but to reckon with both internal and external sources of accountability and diverse stakeholders with different, and sometimes conflicting, expectations. The major task confronting public administrators is not to choose which type of accountability to adhere to, but to seek the balance among those competing expectations in order to ensure the quality of services delivered to citizens.

In this study, I argue that the concept of public professionalism should be viewed, treated, and analyzed in a similar manner as the concept of public accountability. In the municipal government setting, it is difficult for municipal chief administrators to legitimately overlook any source of accountability and expectation. Many scholars have already indicated and implied that public professionalism is determined by the way in which public administrators manage multiple accountability approaches that both constrain and guide their actions. Green and his colleagues (1993) criticize the conventional view of public professionalism solely defined in terms of technical skills, competency, and specialized knowledge. However, without denigrating the importance of technical competency, Green and his colleagues argue that commitment to democratic values and the rule of law should also be emphasized as other core elements of public professionalism. In a similar manner, Sherwood (1997, 213) observes shifting emphasis in the concept of public professionalism among American city managers: “managers no longer simply manage; they function in an environment of increasingly complex role relationships.” Not only must the professionalization of

public administrators include technical skills and analytic capabilities, it must also enable public administrators to effectively manage other expectations generated outside the organization (Sherwood 1997).

The public professionalism framework developed and used in this study is founded upon Svava's concept of an ethics triangle (2007a). The ethics triangle situates the duty to advance the public interest at the center and stresses the importance of balancing the three major ethical approaches: teleology, deontology, and casuistry. In brief, teleology emphasizes ends, purposes, and goals that result from actions, while deontologists use "agreed-upon or settled values to determine one's moral obligation to act" (Svava 2007a, 53). To use this approach, public administrators need to have the knowledge of the ethical principles and the capacity to employ those principles in specific situations. Casuistry, ethics as virtue, is a method of "interpreting and resolving moral problems...by the circumstances of particular cases rather than on the application of ethical theories and principles" (Jonsen 1995, 237).

Normatively speaking, municipal chief administrators with a high degree of public professionalism are those who are capable of balancing the bureaucratic, legal, political, and professional accountability approaches. As conceptualized by Romzek and Dubnick (1987), these four forms of accountability offer the equally legitimate means for managing public expectations. Romzek and Dubnick further assert that the political environment influences which type of accountability would prevail in a public agency. In this study, I argue that the contextual conditions of

local governance after decentralization make all four accountability approaches equally important and that municipal chief administrators, as appointed executives of their municipalities, must seek to balance them to ensure effective, responsive government.

Yet, the public professionalism framework offers only the normative vision of how the municipal chief administrators ought to behave. In practice, different contextual factors result in the varying degrees of professionalism among municipal chief administrators. Granted, decentralization is the rage throughout the world. However, there is no uniformity in the design and implementation of the decentralization reform. Among other important contributing factors, this study focuses on two primary variables: (1) form of municipal government and (2) membership in professional associations. To examine the impact of these contextual factors on the degree of public professionalism, I use the survey questionnaire and qualitative interview to study the perception of Thai MAs, Illinois CAOs, and Illinois CMs.

### **Statement of Research Questions**

In this study, I examine two research questions. One, to what extent does the form of municipal government influence municipal chief administrators' public professionalism? Two, to what extent does municipal chief administrators' membership in professional associations affect their public professionalism?

Existing literature on decentralization offers insights into the impact of decentralization on local government finances (e.g., Cai and Treisman 2006; Parker and Thornton 2007), the relationship between decentralization and local democracy (e.g., Crook and Manor 1998; Blunt and Turner 2005), and how decentralization facilitates civic participation in local government affairs (e.g., Goldfrank 2002; Bardhan and Mookherjee 2005). Yet, we know little about the impact of decentralization reform on the administrative behavior of municipal chief administrators who are responsible for managing a variety of problems and for delivering essential public services to local citizens. The two research questions are retrospective of the decentralization reforms in Thailand and Illinois. With the two questions, I seek to explain the factors contributing to Thai and Illinois municipal chief administrators' ability to manage different, and sometimes conflicting, expectations and accountabilities. In other words, the goal of this research is to find out whether the degree of professionalism among municipal chief administrators could be enhanced by the appropriate institutional design of municipal government and encouragement of chief administrators' membership in professional associations.

### **Unit of Analysis: Thai MAs and Illinois CAOs**

This dissertation primarily examines the similarity and/or dissimilarity in Thai MAs and Illinois CAOs' ability to balance multiple accountability approaches.

The two groups of chief administrators must directly deal with the mayors, who serve as the municipal chief executive officers. At the same time, they must ensure healthy working relations with other important actors, such as city/municipal councils and national/state government agencies. Further, the Thai MAs and Illinois CAOs' discretionary authority is determined by local elected officials. On the contrary, the Illinois CMs are different from the two groups of chief administrators because the CMs are appointed by a single group of actors—the city council—and possess discretionary authority protected by the state statutory law. Therefore, this study uses the Illinois CMs as another comparison group. By comparing the two primary groups of chief administrators to the Illinois CMs, this study offers insight into the impact of form of municipal government on public professionalism and into the relationship between public professionalism and the interaction effect of form of government and membership in professional associations.

In both normative and empirical terms, public professionalism denotes the government officials' administrative behavior. Understanding the municipal chief administrators' behavior has been an intellectual challenge for public administration scholars and practitioners (Mouritzen and Svava 2002). Indeed, in theory and practice, appointed executives are important figures in their city governments. Their professionalism in managing municipal government affairs has become increasingly important in decentralized governance where municipal government responsibilities are more complex, resources less abundant, and value

conflicts among different stakeholders more intense. Yet, much remains unknown in a systematic manner about the nature of municipal chief administrators' professionalism and the factors that might explain the variations in their administrative behavior.

The officials surveyed in this study are the highest appointed administrators in their municipalities. Municipalities in this context mean *Tesaban* in Thailand and cities and villages in Illinois. Municipal chief administrators in Thailand are officially called *Palad Tesaban* or "municipal administrators" (MAs). Legally speaking, Thai MAs belong to the central government civil service and follow the meritocratic procedures of appointment and promotion. Under the Municipality Act of 1953 (amended 2003), the transfer of MAs to other jurisdictions must be initiated by the mayors and approved by the provincial commission on municipal government personnel and standards. The Municipality Act vaguely defines the MAs' responsibility, but delegates much supervisory authority over the MAs to the mayors. Generally, however, Thai MAs serve a wide range of functions in municipalities and are among the important public officials in Thai municipalities after mayors and deputy mayors. Section 48 (19) of the Thai Municipality Act of 1953 (amended 2003) specifies three broad responsibilities for MAs; supervising municipal department heads and municipal government employees, coordinating activities among different municipal government units, and ensuring efficient and effective implementation of the mayor's policies and programs (Council of State 2003).

Through this study, municipal chief administrators in Illinois consist of two groups: city/village managers (CMs) and city/village administrators (CAOs). The different titles reflect the different forms of municipal government. In Illinois, the CM is the top appointed administrator in a municipal jurisdiction which becomes a managerial city by referendum. The CM's responsibilities and authority are specified and protected by the Illinois Municipal Code. Neither the municipal council nor the city mayor (or council president) has the authority to formally decrease or increase the CM's authority (Sargent 1990). The CMs' responsibilities include enforcing the municipality's laws and ordinances, appointing and removing most or all department directors, attending council meetings with the right to participate in policy discussions but without the right to vote, recommending matters to the council, preparing the municipality's budget, and performing other duties designated by statute or local ordinance (Lucansky, Friker, Barnicale, Bayer, and Petsche 1994).

On the other hand, the CAO is the top appointed administrator in a city which adopts the managerial form by municipal ordinance. This means a municipality creates by ordinance the chief administrative position and endows it with as much or as little power as the council deems necessary (Sargent 1990). Generally, the CAOs are responsible for the proper administration of city affairs (City of Geneva, IL 2010). Three Illinois villages in the Chicago metropolitan area—Bloomington, Roselle, and Woodridge—vest their CAOs with the authority to oversee and coordinate the work of village departments, recommend

appointment, suspension, and removal of department heads, and prepare a budget for the village board's consideration (Lichter 2008). It is noteworthy that the authority to appoint and dismiss the CMs and CAOs in Illinois is shared by the mayor and the council (Lichter 2008).

Notwithstanding the different employment procedures, all officials included in this analysis in practice exercise a considerable amount of the executive power in their municipal government. Unlike public administrators in other public agencies at other levels of government, municipal chief administrators directly interact with the top elected official and council members without the mediation of other political or administrative figures. The majority of the municipal chief administrators surveyed possess the direct authority to control some sub-divisions of municipal government. These conditions altogether creates a propitious venue in which to examine how (and if) the chief administrators balance different accountability approaches.

### **Context: Decentralization Reforms in Illinois and Thailand**

#### **Conceptual Issue: Territorial Decentralization**

Throughout most of the twentieth century, the general tendency in the policy and scholarship circles was to concentrate the locus of decision making in the public sector (Simon, Smithburg, and Thompson 1950). Particularly in the first half of the century, centralization of administrative authority in the national

government was fashionable (Orlansky 2000). However, the centralization strategy lost its appeal over the last several decades due to a convergence of social and economic changes. The increased demographic diversity accompanied more diverse citizen preferences for government services. The traditional mode of centralizing the formulation and execution of public policy and program could no longer handle the demographic diversity and citizens' heterogeneous preferences. Also, the reversal in economic prosperity and growing public distrust of government compelled the government to reorient its administrative techniques.

The decline in mainstream popularity of centralization and the necessity to make government more efficient and effective converge on the idea of decentralization which began to gain considerable momentum in the 1970s. Several decades later, decentralization still occupies the center stage of policy experimentation in almost every country—federal or unitary, market-oriented or socialist, democratic or authoritarian, transitional or industrially advanced (Manor 1995). As Flanders (1995, as quoted in Devas 1997) describes, the “rolling back of the frontiers of the state” was the 1980s' policy mantra, while the 1990s were the time of rolling the state's frontiers “downwards”. Based on this observation, the idea of decentralization consists of two facets. On the one hand, the decentralization proposal seeks to rearrange the relationship between the national and subnational government in the political, administrative, and fiscal dimensions (Cohen and Peterson 1997; Schneider 2003; Falleti 2005; Cheema and Rondinelli 2007). On the other, decentralization promotes the minimization of government

authority in the aggregate through privatization and contracting out of government functions (Henig 1985).

To avoid confusion from the dual interpretation, I refer to decentralization as *territorial decentralization* because my study focuses on the restructuring of central-local relations. Nonetheless, territorial decentralization is in itself a complex term with no universal definition. Some group of scholars and practitioners consider territorial decentralization as a zero-sum process in which the increase in subnational authority and autonomy comes at the expense of the authority at the center (Burki, Perry, and Dilinger 1999). Others define territorial decentralization in a more complex manner. Instead of a zero-sum process, territorial decentralization renegotiates the relationship between a country's center and periphery and results in "a system of co-responsibility between institutions of governance at the central, regional, and local levels" (United Nations Development Program 1997, 4).

### **Basis of Comparison: the Thai and Illinois Experiences**

Over the past few decades, the Thai and Illinois municipalities underwent similar structural transformations of the central-local relations. Prior to decentralization, municipal governments in Thailand and Illinois were under direct control and supervision of the higher levels of government. After decentralization, the devolution of discretionary authority to municipal governments remains

incomplete in both Thailand and Illinois. However, the decentralization reform faces more obstacles in Thailand. Charged with overseeing the decentralization process, the Thai Ministry of Interior (MoI) still retains much influence over municipal governments. In Illinois, the General Assembly could constitutionally preempt or prohibit the Home Rule municipalities' discretionary authority.

Before decentralization, the Thai central government held and exercised considerable control over the municipalities by formulating and executing policies that affected almost every aspect of municipal government. The concept of local autonomy was alien to the central government officials and hence absent from all the constitutions prior to 1997. In Illinois, the three constitutions prior to the ratification of the 1970 constitution omitted municipal government. This omission established the notion that municipal governments ought to be limited in authority and fully subordinated to the General Assembly (Banovetz and Kelty 1987). This restrictive interpretation of municipal government authority is commonly known as the Dillon's rule. The Illinois Municipal Code was problematic for the Illinois municipal governments because it did not give them adequate discretionary authority to manage their own municipal problems. Municipal government units were required to always seek the General Assembly's "enabling legislation" in order to address specific problems in their municipal boundaries (Interview with Professor Norman Walzer, October 12, 2010).

For the Thai municipalities, the 1997 constitution resulted in the most drastic changes in the central-local relations since the Chakri Reformation in the

late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. In compliance with the constitutional mandate, the Parliament enacted several pieces of legislation (e.g., the National Decentralization Act of 2001, the National Decentralization Plan and Procedure Act of 2001) and amended several others (e.g., the Municipality Act of 1953). The Thai decentralization reform placed considerable emphasis on political decentralization with the creation of direct mayoral elections and significantly increased the mayoral authority in managing municipal government affairs. However, the administrative decentralization of service responsibilities to municipal government was incomplete. The central government agencies, especially the Ministry of Interior (MoI), still wield much influence on Thai municipalities. For instance, in terms of municipal government purchasing and procurement, the Municipality Act of 1953 (amended 2003) gave the MoI the authority to formulate the purchasing and procurement rules and procedures. The asymmetric decentralized structure (i.e., more political decentralization than administrative decentralization) raises doubt about the Thai MAs' responsiveness to local citizen demands. Instead, it is assumed that the Thai MAs remain oriented toward the central government regulations and policies.

Similarly, Illinois experimented with a radical decentralization reform in 1970. The 1970 constitution was the first state constitution that includes a separate provision on local government. Different from the previous constitution that required general application of the state's statutory laws to all municipalities, the 1970 constitution confers upon municipalities over 25,000 in population the home

rule authority which includes all the governing powers, except those explicitly denied to them by the General Assembly and the State Supreme Court. The home rule municipalities are no longer required to acquire the General Assembly's "enabling legislation" to solve their municipal government problems (Banovetz and Kelty 1987). The most well-known examples of the home rule authority are the powers to raise tax rates, to diversify revenue sources, and to incur debt. These powers are however not without limitations. The local citizens may vote in a referendum to rescind the home rule authority (Froehlich 1990; Sargent 1990). The General Assembly may also vote to limit the amount and require referendum approval of home rule municipal debt maturing more than forty years payable from ad valorem property tax receipts (Froehlich 1990).

Another limitation to the Illinois home rule reform is that not all municipalities have become home rule units.<sup>1</sup> A home rule municipality must meet the population requirement or get citizen approval through a referendum. Those non-home rule municipalities still follow the Dillon's rule (Sargent 1990). But, even home rule municipalities are not without limitations. Apart from numerous state mandates (both funded and unfunded) (Mead 1996), the state legislature is constitutionally capable of limiting the home rule authority by amending the Municipal Code and passing new state laws, such as laws limiting the use of real

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<sup>1</sup> As of November 3, 2010, there are 203 home rule municipalities in Illinois (Illinois Municipal League 2010).

estate transfer tax and local sales tax (Clark 1985; Banovetz 2001).<sup>2</sup> The General Assembly's authority to take away the power and authority of home rule is called "preemption." Froehlich (1990, 233) observes that "constitutional Home Rule in Illinois is in large measure a delicate balance of power between the general assembly and the Home Rule units." This is because in almost every feature of home rule, the state legislature potentially has the constitutional power to prevail (Clark 1985; Froehlich 1990).

The Thai and Illinois experiences reveal the delicate pattern of central-local relations in the decentralized governance. In the two cases, decentralization did not axiomatically make the central/state government authority dissipate. In fact, the Thai central government and the Illinois state government still remain important actors in the central-local relations. The complexity of decentralized governance presents immense challenges to the municipal chief administrators. First, they must deal with diverse social actors who can voice their concerns and influence the policy-making process via multiple participatory channels that emerged after the decentralization reform. Their tasks are to arbitrate among those competing interests, assist the underprivileged social groups in articulating their interests, and inform local elected officials in the policy-making process. Second, the chief

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<sup>2</sup> There are two forms of preemption by the general assembly. First, by a three-fifths vote of each house, the General Assembly may deny or limit the power to tax and prohibit any other power of a home-rule unit (Froehlich 1990). Examples of this type of preemption are fire and police pensions and sales tax reform. Second, by a simple majority vote, the general assembly may provide an exclusive exercise of power by and throughout the state. For example, the general assembly has established an exclusive authority over certain personnel management policies (Banovetz 2001).

administrators must serve as intermediaries between their local governing bodies and the higher levels of government. Their intermediary role is now more important than before decentralization. Previously, the rules, regulations, and operating procedures from the central/state government were primary influences over the municipal government operations (Mead 1996). Currently, as municipal governments became more autonomous in managing their local affairs, the chief administrators must pay attention to the local ordinances.

### **Importance and Definition of Public Professionalism**

During the last few decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, professionalism has become a subject of “scrupulous analysis” in social sciences (Kovryga and Wyman 2001). Jarausche (1990) observes that the renewed interest in public professionalism stems from “the rapid and ultimate advancing of knowledge-based economy and society.” Among many scholars with an interest in public professionalism, Caiden (1999) notes the importance of professionalism in contemporary public administration as follows:

For centuries, it has been recognized that *a proper professional public service has been a crucial link between rulers and the ruled*. It transmitted instructions from the rulers to the ruled and relayed the reactions and responses of the ruled to the rulers. For the rulers, it was seen as an important tool through which they exercised their power and commanded obedience. For the ruled, it represented the majesty and authority of government and delivered a host of public goods and services unavailable from any other source. As intermediaries, public service professionals were expected to give their undivided loyalty to the rulers and devote themselves

wholeheartedly to conducting public business, giving assistance to the best of their abilities, in return for which they were accorded favored status and a secure remunerative livelihood. (128)

Similarly, Tukur (2004) argues that “a safe and secure democratic society” requires public administrators to be “gentlemen, friends of the people, genuinely learned, and transparently upright.” In other words, in normative terms, public professionalism must be identified with democracy and its institutions and must also embrace legal equity. Tukur’s normative argument of what public professionalism should encompass is consonant with Svava’s view: “All who serve the public....have professional responsibilities to elected officials, the staff in their organization, and the ‘public’—citizens and residents of their community, country, and world, as well as future generations” (Svava 2009, 1038). Defined in this way, public professionalism is very broad and cannot be limited to technical competencies and analytic skills (Green, Keller, and Wamsley 1993).

The need to redefine local public professionalism intensifies as the public officials’ role becomes more complex than in the past (Sherwood 1997). No longer do these appointed officials simply “manage” municipal government operations. Particularly in the decentralized governance structure, the municipal chief administrators are unavoidably expected to wear different hats (e.g., organization management, conflict mediation, policy formulation, enforcement of municipal ordinances and laws of the higher levels of government). Recognizing this complexity, Svava (2009) broadly considers public professionalism to include multiple values that altogether promotes democratic government. Caiden (1999)

identifies a set of administrative actions that collectively correspond with Svvara's broad notion of public professionalism:

1. Providing public benefits
2. Enforcing the rule of law
3. Setting an example
4. Improving professional performance
5. Promoting democracy

More formally, the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) Task Force on Professionalism put together a list of six practices that define the commitments and goals of public professionalism (Keene, Nalbandian, O'Neil, Portillo, and Svvara 2007). These six practices in Table 1-1 reflect the different roles played by municipal chief administrators and the diversity of values that the local appointed executives must embrace.

Table 1-1

Practices that Define the Commitments and Goals of Public Professionalism

1. Professionals add value to the quality of public policy and produce results that matter to their communities.
2. Professionals take a long-term and community-wide perspective.
3. Professionals commit themselves to ethical practices in the service of public values.
4. Professionals help build community and support democratic and community values.
5. Professionals promote equitable, fair outcomes, and processes.
6. Professionals develop and sustain organizational excellence and promote innovation.

Source: Keene, Nalbandian, O'Neil, Portillo, and Svvara 2007, 37.

These broad concepts evoke Dwight Waldo's perspective on public professionalism several decades ago. According to Waldo (1968, 10), "the professional perspective is the only one broad and flexible enough to enable us to contain our diverse interests and objectives, yet firm and understandable enough to provide some unity and sense of direction and purpose." The disadvantage of Waldo's broad perspective is the difficulty in measuring the degree of public professionalism. This disadvantage becomes more apparent as the need to understand and enhance public professionalism in local government intensifies, particularly in those countries where the decentralization reform has been adopted (Caiden 1999; Kovryga and Wyman 2001).

To address this disadvantage, this study argues that public professionalism is determined by the appointed officials' ability to balance the accountability approaches that the context of their work environment demands. Conventionally, accountability in public administration means answerability for one's actions or behavior (Pennock 1979; Dwivedi 1985; Dwivedi and Jabbra 1988; Kernaghan and Langford 1990; Uhr 1993; Harmon 1995). However, viewing accountability as answerability implies that "accountability involves limited, direct, and mostly formalistic responses to demands generated by specific institutions or groups in the public agency's task environment" (Romzek and Dubnick 1987, 228). The accountability-as-answerability concept only covers one dimension of accountability in public administration. As Romzek and Dubnick (1987) argue, public administrators must manage diverse expectations generated both within and

outside their organization. These diverse expectations could be conceptualized and classified into four distinct categories: bureaucratic, legal, political, and professional (Romzek and Dubnick 1987). An overview of each of these accountability approaches is as follows.

*Bureaucratic accountability or organizational accountability* denotes the process by which public servants adhere to their superiors' expectations and the standard operating procedures (SOPs) of their agencies. *Legal accountability* is defined as the process by which actors outside of an agency impose legal sanctions on the agency. *Political accountability* means the process by which public administrators are responsive to their constituents. *Professional accountability* is "characterized by placement of organizational activities in the hands of the employees with the expertise or special skills to get the job done" (Romzek and Dubnick 1987, 230).

These four accountability approaches are equally legitimate mechanisms for managing public affairs in a democracy. Nevertheless, public administrators' use of the accountability approach (es) depends on the relevant institutional and contextual considerations (Romzek and Dubnick 1987). Based on their analysis of the Columbia space shuttle tragedy, Romzek and Dubnick (1987) argue that the environmental/institutional pressures developed in modern democracy enable other accountability approaches to take precedence over the professional accountability. The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) was Romzek and Dubnick's subject of study. They conclude that the political and legal pressures on

NASA before and after the space shuttle explosion enfeebled the agency by distracting it from the professional accountability based on deference to expertise.

In Thailand, Haggard (2000) attributes the macro-economic agencies' failure to cope with the 1997 financial crisis to the political pressures on those agencies. Prior to the 1990s, the three macro-economic agencies—the Ministry of Finance (MoF), the National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB), and the Bank of Thailand (BoT)—were largely insulated from political interference. However, after the transition to democratic rule in the 1990s, the agencies became heavily politicized, deviated from their technocratic orientation, and ultimately failed to address the 1997 financial failures.

### **Goals of Dissertation**

This study seeks to accomplish two goals. The first goal is to understand the way in which the municipal chief administrators in Thailand and Illinois manage different expectations in the decentralized governance context. This study is among the few empirical works that systematically measure and examine public professionalism and accountability. By using the survey instrument, I compare the degree of public professionalism among Thai MAs, Illinois CAOs, and Illinois CMs by assessing their abstract view toward the four accountability approaches and their responses to a specific problem. The taxonomy of accountability *à la* Romzek and Dubnick (1987) provides a solid conceptual framework for understanding the

diverse expectations that public administrators face. The NASA case study also reveals the dilemma of public agencies in modern democracy. Due to the public cynicism of bureaucracy and dynamic political environment, external accountability approaches tend to take precedence over the deference to specialized knowledge and technocratic expertise. However, Romzek and Dubnick do not offer a description of how public administrators struggle to deal with the dilemma, an explanation of factors that might help them cope with the institutional/ environmental pressures, or a prescription as to how to balance the four approaches to public accountability.

After decentralization, municipal chief administrators also face multiple sources of legitimate expectations. However, they ideally have to *balance* the four accountability approaches, as they seek to achieve a high degree of public professionalism in managing municipal government affairs. As discussed in detail earlier, municipal chief administrators serve many roles that reflect the four accountability approaches. Some of these roles however are likely to conflict with other roles. Hence, there is a strong need for municipal chief administrators to balance the demands, expectations, and accountability approaches associated with those roles.

Yet, to balance multiple accountabilities poses a short, but difficult, question for both scholars and practitioners in public administration: How? Ideally, municipal chief administrators ought to view all four accountability approaches as important. Otherwise, the under- and over-utilization of any accountability

approach(es) are likely to threaten the general public welfare—both local and national. This argument is similar to Svava’s ethics triangle model which argues against the under- and over-utilization of any single ethical approach to public administration (Svava 2007a). Chapter 4 will elaborate more on the need to balance multiple accountabilities and the consequences of under- and over-utilization of a single accountability approach. However, as Simon (1978) observes, human cognitive ability and attention are limited. Although the concept of balancing multiple accountabilities sounds noble in theory, it is difficult and unclear for the practitioners. Certainly, the chief administrators with a high degree of professionalism are those who consider every type of accountability approach to be “important.” However, I argue that municipal chief administrators tend to choose the accountability approach towards which they are oriented as the foundational value of their strategy to balance other accountability approach. This argument will be further elaborated in Chapter 4.

Based on the method which will be presented in Chapter 4, the municipal chief administrators surveyed were grouped into five groups. The five types of public professionalism described below can be ranked in the descending order of desirability: transformational, policy, procedural, apolitical, and ersatz (Table 1-2).

Table 1-2

## Types of Public Professionalism and Characteristics

Type of Public Professionalism	Characteristics
Transformational	All accountability approaches important, with emphasis on professional accountability
Policy	All accountability approaches important, with emphasis on political accountability
Procedural	All accountability approaches important, with emphasis on legal and bureaucratic accountabilities
Apolitical	Emphasis is on the bureaucratic, legal, and professional accountability approaches. <i>Political accountability</i> is underused.
Ersatz	One, two, or three accountability approaches are overused.

For those with transformational professionalism, every accountability approach is important, but professional accountability is considered to be very important. Policy professionalism occurs when the chief administrators consider political accountability to be very important, while paying high attention to three other accountabilities. Procedural professionalism is possible when the chief administrators emphasize the bureaucratic and legal accountability approaches, while attempting to balance the professional and political accountabilities. Municipal chief administrators acting as apolitical professionals underuse political accountability, but pay considerable attention to the other three accountability approaches. On the other hand, the chief administrators who identify ersatz professionalism overuse one, two, or three accountability approaches.

The second goal of this dissertation is to examine the municipal chief administrators' characteristics that explain their degree of public professionalism. A prior study has looked at an individual chief administrator's characteristics, such as level of education and skills (Barrilleaux, Feiock, and Crew 1992). In the organizational theory literature, many scholars examine how an individual's experiential learning influences his/her decision making in an organization (Cyert and March 1963; March 1975; 1978). Also, Barrilleaux and colleagues (1992) and Sherwood (1997) consider the influence of population size on the degree of public professionalism.

At the institutional level, in the public administration literature, there are several theoretical and empirical works on the impact of the form of municipal government on the municipal chief administrators' administrative behavior (e.g., Svara 1990; Peters 1995; Mourtizen and Svara 2002; Lichter 2008). Classic works founded upon the politics-administration dichotomy advocated the council-manager form of government, pointing out that the chief administrators in the council-manager cities enjoy substantial discretionary authority in managing the internal affairs of municipal government without having to be involved in partisan politics (Peters 1995). However, in recent years, empirical evidence appears to challenge the politics-administration dichotomy doctrine and its emphasis on the institutional form of government (Montjoy and Watson 1995).

Deviating from the conventional focus on the institutional form of government, Knoke (1981), Wollebaek and Selle (2002), and Stolle and Rochon

(1998) argue that professional associations fosters interpersonal trust and inculcate the good governance norm among their members. However, Svava and Terry (2009) note the lack of scholarly works on the influence of membership in professional associations on public officials' degree of professionalism.

Hence, this study assesses two major factors: the institutional form of government and membership in professional associations. The institutional form of government is determined by who in the municipality holds the ultimate authority to appoint and dismiss the chief administrator and by the way the chief administrators' responsibilities are defined. In this study, three forms of government are examined (Table 1-3).

Table 1-3

## Three Institutional Forms of Municipal Government in This Study

<b>Form of Government</b>	<b>Appointment, Transfer, Dismissal Procedures</b>	<b>How the Chief Administrators' Responsibilities Are Defined</b>
<i>Council-manager city</i>	The councils appoint and dismiss the CMs.	The CMs' responsibilities are determined by the Illinois Municipal Code.
<i>Mayor-council city</i>	In Illinois, the mayors appoint the CAOs with the councils' consent. The employment contract specifies the dismissal process.	The CAOs' responsibilities are determined by the municipal ordinances.
<i>Thai municipality</i>	The Department of Local Administration (DoLA) appoints MAs. The Civil Service Commission holds the authority to dismiss them. The mayors have the legal authority to ask the provincial commission on municipal government personnel and standards to initiate the transfer of MAs	The MAs' responsibilities are loosely defined in the Municipality Act of 1953 (amended 2003). The Ministry of Interior (MoI) charged with executing the act confers the discretionary authority upon the mayors to determine the MAs' responsibilities.

An interaction effect between the form of government and membership in professional associations is also examined. Figure 1-1 shows the hypothesized relationships between the two main factors, the interaction term, and the degree of public professionalism among municipal chief administrators.

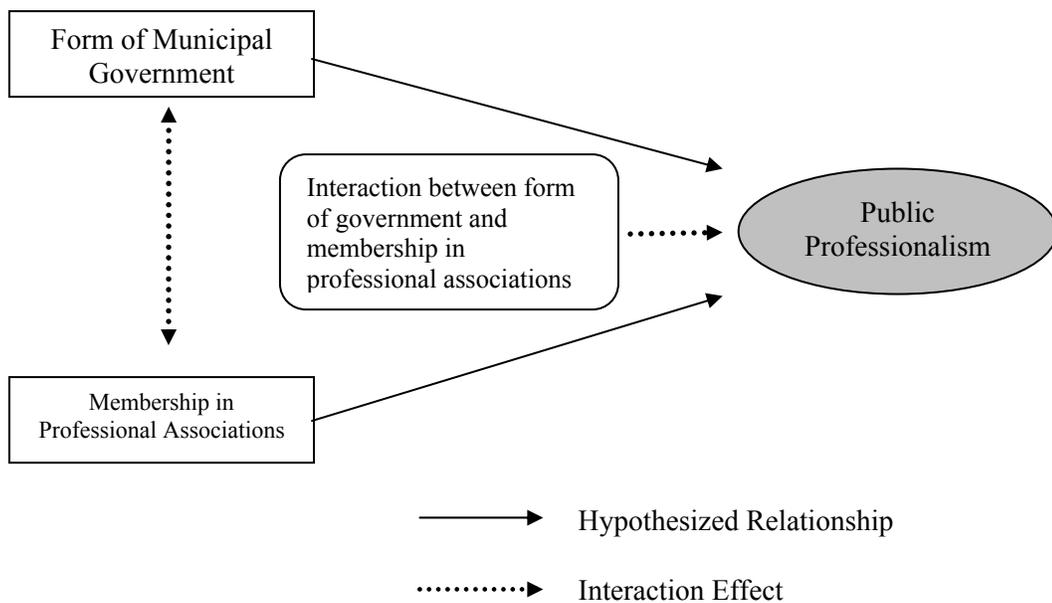


Figure 1-1: Hypothesized Relationships between the Degree of Public Professionalism, Form of Government, Membership in Professional Associations, and Their Interaction Effect.

Other characteristics are included in this study as well. In an earlier study by Barrilleaux and colleagues (1992), the level of education and skills appear to have a positive relationship with the level of public professionalism. Therefore, the two factors are analyzed as control variables. Similarly, the length of tenure in public service as proxy of experiential learning is included as another control

variable. Other control variables are the home rule status of an Illinois municipality, population size, and the existence of informal working relations between the local elected officials and municipal chief administrators.

### **Organization of Dissertation**

This dissertation fills in the gap of understanding about public professionalism as the overarching values and practices that altogether advance the general public welfare and secure local democracy in the decentralized governance. Also, the reader should walk away with an appreciation of the riches of administrative and political challenges facing municipal chief administrators and the factors that contribute to their professionalism in dealing with those complex challenges.

This dissertation contains eight chapters. Before delving into the discussion of public professionalism, Chapter 2 discusses whether public administration meets the four conventional criteria of a profession: esoteric knowledge, social values, professional standards and ethics code, and strong moral commitment (Cooper 2004). An analysis of these criteria reveals that although public administration could qualify as a profession (Pugh 1989), it is more diverse and complex than other conventional professions, such as law and medicine (Mosher 1968; Gargan 2007; Svara 2009). To explain this complexity, this chapter introduces the reader to the two main categories of public professionals: “professionals in government” and

“professionals of government” (Gargan 2007). However, a review of the public administration literature suggests that several scholars oppose the professionalization of public administration, emphasizing the anti-democratic nature of the professionalism concept (Willbern 1954; Waldo 1975). In Chapter 2, a discussion of contemporary academic works demonstrates the limitation of the conventional view which considers professionalism to only include technical competencies and specialized knowledge (Flores 1988; Green, Keller, and Wamsley 1993; Svara 2009).

The sociology of professionalism—a sociological analysis of modern professions and professionalism—provides evidentiary support for the concept of public professionalism as “the overarching knowledge, values, and standards of practice that apply to serving society and advancing the public interest and to securing sound, democratic governance” (Svara 2009, 1037). Several sociologists observe and stress the robust relationship between modernity, the development of modern nation-states, capitalism, and democracy (Spencer 1896; Dingwall and King 1995; Dingwall 1996; Evetts 2003). What is missing from these works on professionalism is how to measure it. To address this chasm, Chapter 2 extensively discusses Romzek and Dubnick’s framework which classifies accountability in the public sector into bureaucratic, legal, political, and professional accountability approaches.

Romzek and Dubnick (1987) emphasize the important influence of institutional/environmental conditions on the type of accountability approaches for

a particular agency and how the agency uses them. In order to provide the institutional context for this study, Chapter 3 analyzes the decentralization reforms in Thailand and Illinois and the challenges that the decentralized governance poses for municipal chief administrators in Thailand and Illinois. The chapter proceeds in two steps. First, two theoretical frameworks of decentralization—the functional framework and political-administrative framework—are analyzed to reveal the multi-dimensionality of territorial decentralization. The functional framework dissects territorial decentralization into the political, administrative, and fiscal dimensions (Cheema and Rondinelli 2007). Even though this framework provides an understanding of the complexity that decentralization brings to the local government landscape, the conceptual boundary between the administrative and fiscal dimensions is often murky, presenting an analytical problem for the researchers. For instance, Falleti (2005) has to exclude expenditures from her measurement of fiscal decentralization in her study of decentralization reforms in Latin America. In the political-administrative framework, Hutchcroft (2001) provides a more parsimonious taxonomy that divides decentralization into the political and administrative dimensions. The cases that Hutchcroft uses to present his framework showcase the complexity of central-local relations after decentralization.

Chapter 3 offers a historical analysis of the central-local relations before and after decentralization in Thailand and Illinois. In this analysis, the emphasis is on the chief administrative position in the Thai and Illinois municipal governments.

After decentralization, Thai MAs remain central government civil servants and hence are expected to strictly follow the standards and organizational procedures imposed by the MoI who still holds the oversight authority over the Thai local governments. Further, the appointment and dismissal of MAs in Thailand rest with the ministry. However, the mayors could ask the commission on municipal government personnel and standards to transfer the MAs with whom they have personal conflict to other jurisdictions. Further, the Municipality Act of 1953 (amended 2003) loosely defines the MAs' responsibilities, but gives the mayors the authority to define them.

In Illinois, on the other hand, the 1970 local government reform did not cause significant changes in the way the CMs and CAOs are appointed and dismissed. Local elected officials possess the ultimate authority of appointment and dismissal. However, the reform has complicated the work environment of those chief administrators in the home rule jurisdictions. The home rule authority in Illinois does not mean a *carte blanche* for the home rule jurisdictions to do whatever as they deem appropriate. Instead, there are certain limitations to the home rule authority from both the state government and local citizens. Illinois CMs and CAOs must play multiple roles in providing a ligature between the municipal elected officials, local citizens, and the higher levels of government.

Municipal chief administrators in Thailand and Illinois face a host of role expectations generated within and outside their municipalities. Chapter 4 provides the public professionalism model which argues that public professionalism in

decentralized governance is determined by the chief administrators' ability to balance those expectations or, in Romzek and Dubnick's terminology, multiple accountabilities. Similar to the way Svava (2007a) explains the logical underpinning of his ethics triangle framework, I demonstrate how the under- and over-utilization of each accountability approach could compromise the local public interest. Chapter 4 also elaborates on the five types of public professionalism that I briefly explained above. Ranking from the highest to lowest degrees of professionalism, transformational professionalism precedes policy, procedural, apolitical, and ersatz professionalism. The chapter also discusses the research hypotheses, as well as the factors that influence the chief administrators' public professionalism.

After knowing what public professionalism in decentralized governance is, how it is measured, and which factors are expected to be associated with it, Chapter 5 begins by describing the research design and the three comparison groups: Thai MAs, Illinois CAOs, and Illinois CMs. It then discusses the data collection methods—survey questionnaire, qualitative interview, and secondary data sources—and reviews the methodological approaches used in assessing the relationship between public professionalism and the hypothesized factors.

Chapters 6 and 7 present the quantitative and qualitative findings. In Chapter 6, I test the first two hypotheses on the relationship between form of municipal government and public professionalism. The chapter begins by comparing the chief administrators' responses to the accountability-related

questions from the two sections of the survey questionnaire. Based on their responses, there are two behavioral models: the abstract model and the situational model. A descriptive analysis of the chief administrators' attention to each accountability approach helps the reader better understand municipal chief administrators' perception of public professionalism. The second part of my analysis uses quantitative and qualitative methods to test Hypotheses 1 and 2.

Chapter 7 starts by quantitatively analyzing the types of public professionalism in each group of municipal chief administrators. Quantitative analysis helps enrich our understanding of the relationship between public professionalism and form of municipal government found in Chapter 6. Further, qualitative analysis of the survey responses also provides insight into the chief administrators' problem-solving strategies. Then, based on our in-depth understanding of public professionalism among the three groups of municipal chief administrators, the chapter tests Hypotheses 3 through 6 that examine the relationship between public professionalism and two major independent variables: membership in professional associations and interaction term between form of government and membership in professional associations.

Chapter 8 features a discussion that consolidates the findings from Chapters 6 and 7, as well as the implications for the professionalization of local government. This chapter focuses on the recommendations for Thai municipal government. Specifically, based on the findings from this study, this chapter explains what should be done to enhance the degree of public professionalism among the Thai

MA.s. The limitations of this study and future research areas related to public professionalism are also discussed in detail.

## CHAPTER 2

### **THE POSSIBILITY OF PUBLIC PROFESSIONALISM, SOCIOLOGY OF PROFESSIONALISM, AND MULTIPLE ACCOUNTABILITIES AS MEASUREMENT OF PUBLIC PROFESSIONALISM**

This chapter begins with a review of the public administration literature on public professionalism. The next section discusses research and theory in the sociology of professionalism and the historical development of modern professions. While the mainstream research and theory in public administration and sociology have shed light on public professionalism and modern professions, little is known about public professionalism among local government officials. In this chapter, I define public professionalism as the public administrators' ability to balance multiple accountability approaches that reflect the different social values and expectations in their work environment. In the last part of this chapter, Romzek and Dubnick's concept of multiple accountabilities (Romzek and Dubnick 1987) is used as the main theoretical framework for the analysis and measurement of public professionalism in this study.

#### **Public Service as a Profession**

Before exploring the concept of public professionalism, it is necessary to examine whether public administration is a profession and could be professionalized. The debate over the professional status of public administration

has erupted since the founding of the earliest public administration graduate program in the 1920s (Pugh 1989). The concern with professionalism in the public service grew as the late 19<sup>th</sup>-century society became more complex (Gargan 1989). Through Alexis de Tocqueville's observation of the American cities in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, state and local governments were haphazard and unsystematic. Public works were completed only when everyone in each community deemed necessary and by ad hoc arrangements or by volunteers. Nevertheless, in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, ad hoc public work arrangements were no longer sufficient. Increased urbanism and industrialism necessitated the involvement of those who claim to have specialized knowledge and skills. Into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, professionals from many fields have contributed through application of their specialized knowledge and reform proposals to achieve efficient, effective, and equitable operation of an expanding administrative state (Wiebe 1967; Skowronek 1982).

Nonetheless, whether public administration is a profession and could be further professionalized remains uncertain. Some public administration scholars oppose the idea of professionalism in public administration for a number of reasons that I will later discuss in this chapter. Despite the uncertainty of becoming a profession and the opposition from several social groups, the field's primary professional associations—such as the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA)—continue to fulfill various aspects of a conventional profession: professional academic programs and accreditation requirements, professional associations,

professional newsletters and peer-reviewed journals, professional honors and awards of best practices and excellence in the public service, and professional standards and ethics.

### **Criteria of Profession and Professionalism**

Hughes (1963, 655) argues that “a profession delivers esoteric services—advice or action or both—to individuals, organizations, or governments; to whole classes or groups of people or to the public at large.” Also, Cooper (2004) suggests four other criteria that characterize a profession (Table 2-1).

Table 2-1

#### Characteristics of Conventional Professions

1. A profession must possess the esoteric knowledge—so theoretical and technical that the general public does not easily acquire it.
2. A profession has explicitly dedicated itself to serving social values that are tied to essential human needs.
3. A profession must have a national organization that set standards for education and entry into the profession, create a code of ethics, investigate malpractice charges, encourage research to enhance the profession’s ability to serve society, sponsor educational programs to keep members up to date, advise legislatures about the delivery of professional services, and in general police themselves as an autonomous organization.
4. Members of a profession must have an extra-strong moral commitment to serve those values to which the profession is dedicated.

Source: Cooper 2004, 61-63.

First, professionals must possess the esoteric knowledge that is so technical that outsiders cannot easily acquire it. The esoteric knowledge gives professionals special status as theoretical and practical experts (Cooper 2004). This means that professionals ought to have a firm theoretical understanding of their areas of expertise and how the clients' problems could be resolved even when those cases turn out to be "unique rather than ordinary" (Cooper 2004, 61). Second, professionals (e.g., physicians, lawyers) must dedicate themselves to serve important social values that we cannot risk entrusting to incompetent individuals. In addition to the esoteric knowledge, professionals need to have "the moral sensitivity...to function as a diagnostic expert in a pluralistic social milieu" (Cooper 2004, 61).

Third, Cooper (2004, 62) asserts that "to exercise moral control over professional practice, professions need a way to standardize practice, communicate new techniques to professionals, and ensure that only people of integrity and competence become members of the professions." To achieve this aspect of professionalism, professions need an institutional structure that establishes standards for professional education programs, a code of ethics and appropriate conduct, and research programs to enhance the professions' knowledge.

Professional institutions also help regulate entry into the professions by creating the accreditation criteria for practitioners and by recognizing practices that enhance the quality of professional services. Also, as autonomous organizations, professional associations can help investigate malpractices and advise the policy-

makers about the challenges facing professional services. According to Cooper (2004), self-discipline is one of the essential features of professionalism.

Institutionalized professional groups ought to police themselves as autonomous and self-disciplined organizations in order to earn the public trust and ultimately to serve the public interest, because it is difficult for members of the public at large to judge incompetence when they lack the esoteric knowledge.

Fourth, professions claim in their code of ethics that their members have an uncommonly strong moral commitment to the quality of their work (Camenisch 1983, as discussed in Cooper 2004). The concept of professionalism dictates that professionals join their professions, not purely for financial incentives and social privileges, but for fulfillment of their professional values as well. An extra-strong moral commitment to professional values must take priority over personal and particularistic interests by emphasizing the general obligation to the public interest.

### **History and Dynamics of Public Administrative Profession**

In the United States, public administration, especially at the local and state levels, has been the target for professionalization. Pugh (1989, 2) observes that “the rise of the city manager and municipal research bureau movements...helped to establish the credibility of public administration activity as a means by which to pursue a rationally planned society and propelled it along as a legitimate candidate for ‘professional’ status.” Following the success of the federal civil service reform

under the 1897 Pendleton Act, municipal governments have become the attractive arenas for administrative development and enhanced management practices, beginning with the Progressive-era municipal reform movement.

A contrasting picture of local government professionalization is found in the developing countries. At the national level, public administration in the developing world is notorious for its ineffectiveness, inefficiency, and lack of transparency. Local public administration, on the other hand, has little to no presence in people's daily life. Since local governments are considered the creatures of national government in those countries, they are generally constrained by the *Ultra Vires* (beyond powers) doctrine and only responsible for a limited number of functions decided by the higher levels of government. For instance, the developing countries' local governments typically have limited autonomy in hiring and firing local government employees. Even in decentralized countries such as Indonesia, Pakistan, and Thailand, government employees, as well as financial resources to cover the wages and pensions, are simply transferred to the local levels (Shah 2006). This practice limits the local governments' budgetary flexibility and their ability to promote and select the employees that best fit their needs.

Administrative capacity and the degree of administrative professionalism in the developing world may differ from the developed countries. Granted, due to various contextual factors, not all administrative tasks and problems in one country are likely to be identical to those in other countries. Administrative problems also vary among agencies and levels of government as well. Yet, public administration

scholars cannot deny an increasing number of social problems that every type and level of government faces. Neither can they deny the fundamental challenge of modern public administration: how to reconcile the thrust for democracy and the impetus for efficiency (Waldo 1948; Mosher 1982; Nalbandian 2006).

Moreover, as the tasks of governing become more complex and technical, the concepts of profession and professionalism appear attractive because not only do they emphasize the importance of the esoteric knowledge in solving social problems, they also emphasize the importance of extra-strong moral commitment to serve the social values to which the professions are dedicated. However, does contemporary public administration qualify as a profession? Pugh (1989, 2) argues that public administration has met all the criteria of a conventional profession: “the combination of strong academic direction and philanthropic support enabled early public administration leaders, both practitioners and academicians, to imbue the field with many of the characteristics of a profession.” Mosher (1982) similarly states that by the late 1930s, the field of public administration has already met the most important aspect of becoming a profession: the self-consciousness among students, practitioners, and academicians of public administration.

If one uses Cooper’s four criteria of professionalism, he/she would agree with Pugh and Mosher. For the first criterion, public administration may not possess the universal esoteric knowledge similar to what the conventional professions such as medicine and law have. Nonetheless, the field has generated

several theoretical frameworks that guide the way scholars and practitioners of public administration analyze and resolve social problems. Based on the works of Woodrow Wilson, Frederick Taylor, and Frank Goodnow, the politics-and-administration dichotomy and bureaucratic management frameworks dominated the field during the first several decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>1</sup> In 1927, Leonard White's *Study of Public Administration*—the field's first textbook—emphasized those ideas and promoted a universal framework of public management modeled after Taylor's hierarchical organizational structure. Upon the publication of *Papers on the Science of Administration* in 1937, the principles of neutral competence, efficient execution of administrative tasks, hierarchical and rule-bound management, and unidirectional accountability (i.e., public servants responsive only to their organizational and political superiors) were canonized as the professional rubrics for the government sector.

Yet, the politics-and-administration dichotomy model and the principles of administration came under devastating attack from different directions, most prominently from Dahl (1947), Simon (1947) and Waldo (1948), who “questioned whether such conventional thought really constituted knowledge and asseverated that the putative ‘principles’ amounted to little more than arm-chair speculations” (Pugh 1989, 2). Nonetheless, these criticisms did not diminish the popularity of an

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<sup>1</sup> However, Weber's works on bureaucracy were not translated into English until 1946. Yet, Weber's arguments were consonant with the works of the three American scholars and the team of public administration scholars led by Gulick and Urwick.

established set of beliefs that defined public professionalism until the post-World War II era. Even the leading critics such as Simon and Waldo could not agree on the new direction for public administration.<sup>2</sup> Beyond the scholarly realm, the size and number of bureaucratic organizations before the 1970s grew exponentially due to “wars, depressions, and similar crises that create new problems requiring governmental solution” (Simon, Smithburg, and Thompson 1950). Although many of the programs undertaken between the 1930s and 1960s were temporary, the Great Depression and the Second World War left behind it a residue of permanent bureaucratic agencies.

A second attribute of a profession centers on the social value that unifies all public administrators. For public administration, the overarching social value is “a knowledgeable, responsible, and proficient public service, the humane and efficient promotion of the common defense and general welfare, and the promotion of democratic institutions” (Newland 1984, as discussed in Pugh 1989, 2). This value has long been reached since the early years of modern public administration. To this end, it is the public interest that takes priority over personal and particularistic interests. Hence, professional interest of public administrators is the pursuit of the public interest (President’s Committee on Administrative Management 1937, iii).

A third feature of a profession is the development of a formal institutional structure that connects members of a profession together. Public administration in

<sup>2</sup> See Simon, 1952, “Development of Theory of Democratic Administration: Replies and Comments,” *American Political Science Review* 46, pp. 494-496 (See also Dwight Waldo’s response on pp. 500-503 in the same issue) and Waldo, 1952, “Development of Theory of Democratic Administration,” *American Political Science Review* 46, pp. 81-103.

the United States has reached this criterion with a variety of national professional associations, namely the International City/Council Management Association (ICMA), the Municipal Finance Officers Association (MFOA), and the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA). Concomitant to this development is the creation of several professional journals that serve to enrich the wealth of knowledge in public administration, such as the Public Administration Review (PAR) and the Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory (JPART). The establishment of official professional associations and professional journals to represent practitioners and scholars fostered other facets of professionalism: regulation of entry into the profession through the accreditation program and proliferation of graduate and training programs in public administration.

A fourth attribute is an extra-strong moral commitment to the social value to which a profession is dedicated. How can we determine whether members of the public administrative profession hold an uncommonly strong moral commitment to the public? This feature of a profession is closely related to the third feature—the quality and autonomy of professional associations. An autonomous and effective public official association has its own code of ethics that explicitly describes both appropriate and inappropriate conduct. It also has the autonomy to reward conformity to the code, penalize defiant behavior, and deny non-compliant members access to privileges pertaining to the profession.

In the early years of public administration, this attribute was the weakest of all the criteria considered thus far. As Pugh (1989) observes:

Except for professional city managers through the ICMA, the field had no set of moral precepts that were concrete enough to serve as guideposts for scholars and practitioners. It is arguable whether such a pragmatic enumeration was even possible. By this period, ethics in the field had become roughly tantamount to accountability based upon broadly defined notions of personal propriety, neutral competence, and public interest. The focus was essentially legal as well as moral and negative rather than positive. (3)

However, in the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, professional ethics in public administration has made significant advances. In the academic community, the literature on administrative ethics and moral commitment to the public service profession began to flourish. Appleby's *Morality and Administration in Democratic Government* (1952) was an important work that sought to resolve the tension between democratic values and bureaucratic organizational hierarchy. Appleby demonstrates that the bureaucratic hierarchy structures the flow of information designed to maintain democratic accountability. He also discusses the pathologies potentially associated with the bureaucratic structure and various reform measures to correct those pathologies. Golembiewski (1962) further examines the internal working of bureaucratic organizations and proposes the Judeo-Christian values as the moral hallmarks of organizational leadership and intra-organizational relations.

After Appleby and Golembiewski, a stream of publications on administrative ethics and morality continue to progress in volume and depth. Scott and Hart (1973) advocate "the metaphysical speculation" as the moral touchstones of public administration. Waldo (1974) uses political philosophy to examine ethical

issues in the Watergate case. During the same decade, PAR published *The Symposium on Social Equity and Public Administration*, which includes six essays on public administrative ethics. Also, in 1968, several public administration scholars met at the Minnowbrook conference center at the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University to discuss the foundational values of public administration, such as fairness, justice, and equity. This conference is widely known as the Minnowbrook Conference I.

Apart from the expanding scholarship on public administrative ethics, various professional associations—such as ASPA, the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA), the National Civic League, the International Personnel Management Association (IPMA), and the Council of State Governments (CSG)—adopted their code of ethics to ensure that extra-strong moral and ethical commitment to the public good among members of their professions.

Since the late 19th century, academicians and practitioners have made considerable contributions to the professional status of public administration. Through analysis of several scholarly works, I have demonstrated that public administration—though broad as a field of study and practice—could be considered a profession. Some scholars have enumerated reasons and arguments against the concept of public professionalism and professionalization of the public service. However, the questions of whether the public service has already reached the status of a true profession and whether it should be further professionalized are not as

important as the question about the values of professionalism. As Pugh (1989, 7) asks, “of what value are the professional behavior and the trappings associated with a profession?” And, “how does professionalism enhance the viability of public administration and those who labor in it?” In other words, is the concept of public professionalism compatible with democratic values, such as responsiveness, equity, and fairness? If so, how can we define and measure public professionalism? These questions will be explored throughout the rest of this chapter.

### **Defining Public Professionalism**

Professionalism is on the rise in public administration in the United States (Mosher 1982; Stillman 1987; Lynn 1996; Stivers 2001). In his opening essay in the *Symposium on Public Professionalism and the Future of ASPA*, Svara (2009) asks two important questions that help guide the discussion of public professionalism in this section; “who are we and what does it mean to be public professionals at this critical juncture of history?” Indeed, it is important to know who makes up the public administration profession before understanding the nature of public professionalism. Several decades ago, Waldo (1968) did not consider the public service as a profession, but as a field of diverse professionals.<sup>3</sup> Svara (2009, 1037) extends Waldo’s view, arguing that “public administration consists of many separate professions based on distinctive expertise that, to a greater or lesser extent,

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<sup>3</sup> Bacchus (1977) asks a similar question; in becoming professionals of governance, how can there be “professionals without a profession”?

enforce normative standards tailored to fit the goals of the group.” This diversity of professionals in the field of public administration makes many wary of the public service becoming an exclusively specialized group similar to medicine and law.

### **Who Are Public Administrators?**

The concern that public administration is too incoherent to emulate the medical and legal professions does not prevent several scholars to propose the possibility of developing the overarching concept of public professionalism that inculcates the appropriate identity, conduct, and behavior of diverse public professionals. In examining the diversity of public professionals, Gargan (1989) argues that there are two broad categories of professionals involved in the public service: the professionals in government and the professionals of government.

Svara (1999) defines “the professionals in government” as those who can work inside or outside government, but have a very strong connection to public agencies. Examples of “the professionals in government” are attorneys, physicians, counselors, scientists, teachers, accountants, and engineers who work for public agencies. In exploring the uniqueness among these professions, Mosher (1978, 146) observes that each of these professions is “unique unto itself,” yet “there are some elements and attributes within each profession that are common to most or all of its members.” For example, lawyers may not always agree with each other. They are, however, paid and required to disagree. For lawyers, the ideas of advocacy and

adversary are internalized in the profession's conscience. That is, each profession, particularly the medical and legal professions, has common ways of structuring, attacking, and solving problems. Also, its members are likely to share similar views of the world and sets of skills and knowledge. With respect to this aspect of professional life, conflict may emerge between the professional standards and the governmental definition of the public interest (Rosenbloom 1984; Svava 2009). For example, a legal counselor may defend his/her client, although his/her client violates the letter and/or spirit of the law (Rosenbloom 1984). Even today many of these "professionals in government" are more likely to identify with a specialized group than promote their shared public responsibilities (Svava 1999).

Moreover, there are some "professionals in government" who are confined to the public service sector, such as military officers, foresters, and foreign service officers (Mosher 1982, 115). These professionals are largely found working in the governmental sector, but they may develop professional standards and ethics that outsiders do not consider to be in the public interest (Mosher 1976). For example, the military's concern with national security may violate several constitutional rights guaranteed to citizens (Halperin and Hoffman 1977).

The second category of public professionals—"the professionals of government" or "the professionals of governance"--are "those engaged in the supervision, management, and administration of public business" (Gargan 2007, 1129). Specifically, these professionals include administrative staff in public organizations (e.g., city managers, city clerks, treasurers), as well as staff in non-

profit and business organizations that are engaged in contracted public services<sup>4</sup> (Light 1999). Similar to “the professionals in government,” these “professionals of governance” may develop their own selection and promotional criteria, administrative ethics and values, and a set of knowledge and skills necessary for carrying out public administrative tasks.

### **Evaluation of the Arguments for and against Public Professionalism**

Gargan (2007) concludes that those “professionals of governance” are more important for the quality of public service than those “in government,” because the “professionals of governance” are ultimately responsible for both formulating and executing public policy. Indeed, the term “professionals of governance” encompasses almost everyone involved in the public business--those responsible for formulating public policies and programs, those who execute them, and even private and non-profit contractors. Given the diversity in specialized knowledge, skills, and ethical values of these professionals, is the idea of professionalism in public administration possible at all?

Despite his argument that public administration is not even close to becoming a profession, Waldo (1968, 10) envisions the concept of public professionalism to be “broad and flexible enough to enable us to contain our diverse interests and objectives, yet firm and understandable enough to provide

<sup>4</sup> Light (1999) uses the term “shadow government” to refer to non-profit and private organizations that receive government contracts to provide public services.

some unity and sense of direction and purpose.” Yet, in his later essay published in Mosher’s edited book, Waldo (1975, 223) expresses his disbelief in the possibility of public administration becoming a true profession. Waldo’s view reaffirms a similar point in Willbern’s article published in the *Public Administration Review*. Willbern (1954, 335) cautions that the idea of professionalism in the public service is incompatible with the nature of the public service in a democracy: “although the advantages of the process are almost overwhelmingly obvious, it seems clear that professionalization tends to lead to a stratification of the governmental community to separatism as between governmental functions, and to a danger of undue control by special publics rather than by the whole public.” Following the skepticism raised by Waldo and Willbern, an important question arises. Do the professional interests always contradict public interest and threaten the democratic governance? Also, if we do not professionalize the public service, what else could we do?

Indeed, the concern that the professional interests could potentially ensnare the public interest is rooted in the perceived differences between the Weberian bureaucratic structure that emphasizes the values of efficiency and economy and democratic constitutionalism that emphasizes values such as representation, responsiveness, procedural fairness, and equity (Rosenbloom 1983a; 1983b; 1984). Mosher (1978) is another scholar who observes the anti-democratic values of exclusiveness and elitism inherent in traditional public administration. Indeed, the exclusion of the poor, women, and the marginalized from the bureaucratic decision-making process was the main impetus behind the 1960s movement toward equal

rights and equal opportunities in education and employment. The concept of professionalism back then was seen as the obstacle that “narrowed the reservoir of aspirants by effectively excluding most of the poor, the minorities, and the women” (Mosher 1978, 149-150). Another element of the professionalism that may compromise the public interest is “the growth and growing militancy of unions in the public service,” such as the National Education Association or the American Foreign Service Association (Mosher 1978, 150). Unionization of professionals in the government services—which is a recent social phenomenon—further exacerbates the concern that equates professionalism with exclusiveness and elitism.

Sociologist Max Weber was similarly concerned that a rationalized, bureaucratic system of administration could present a serious danger to political life in both the Western and Eastern worlds (Scaff 1991). The development of bureaucracy enhances the power of the high-echelon administrative officers at the expense of their subordinates (Held 2006, 138). Against the bureaucratic apparatus, Weber advocated the competitive party system and strong political leadership that could prevent the domination of political life by bureaucratic officials (Held 2006).

Nevertheless, there are several counter arguments to the criticisms of public professionalism. Giddens (1979, 147-148) disagrees with Weber’s view, asserting that bureaucratic organizational politics is more dynamic than we originally think it is: “in modern bureaucratic systems, there are far more ‘openings’ for those in formally subordinate positions to acquire or regain control over their organizational tasks than Weber recognized.” For instance, the low-echelon bureaucrats may block

the collection of necessary information for the centralized decision-making process largely dominated by the top administrative officers (Peters 2001). Hence, Weber did not pay adequate attention to these intra-organizational processes of a bureaucratic agency and their significance for developments in other political spheres (Held 2006).

Another problem with the sentiment against the public professionalism is its static outlook of public administration. Apart from overlooking the internal dynamics within bureaucratic organizations, most critics tend to consider the norms and values associated with the Weberian bureaucracy to be the only values of public professionalism (Green, Keller, and Wamsley 1993). Some go to some length to caution about the “ruling servants” (Strauss 1961) that need to be “broken through” (Barzelay and Armajani 1992). Public choice theorists in particular even argue for better constitutional rules and institutions to minimize rent-seeking behavior among public professionals (Hackler 2003 in Jack Rabin). New Public Management proponents—the offspring of the public choice school—emphasize the market values such as efficiency and competition to make government services more professional (Barzelay 1992; Osborne and Gaebler 1992; National Performance Review 1993).

The values, norms, and rules governing the conduct and practice in the public sector in almost every country have changed over the years, due to a series of administrative reforms that aim to make the public service comport better with the democratic values. Consider two examples. In the United States, these changes

include the legal development in the areas of liability and immunity, the right to disobey managerial superiors' orders, and whistle blowing (Rosenbloom 1984; Young 2005). Other developments include the ideas of representative bureaucracy (Krislov 1974; Krislov and Rosenbloom 1981; Selden 1998) and the New Public Service that seek to facilitate citizen participation and involvement in bureaucratic organizations (Denhardt and Denhardt 2000; 2007).

In Thailand, the 1997 constitution created a number of independent anti-corruption agencies such as the Administrative Court system and the National Counter Corruption Commission to combat corrupt practices in the Thai political arena and the public service (Quah 1999; 2003). The constitutional reform also produced a number of channels for citizen participation in the policy-making process at both national and local levels (Klein 1998; Weerasak 2004; Hewison 2007). These changes mostly originated outside the public bureaucracy. Yet, they work to ensure that public professionalism does not become synonymous with exclusiveness, elitism, and corruption, but with democratic accountability, responsiveness, and social equity.

### **The Possibility of Public Professionalism in Contemporary Society**

Students of public administration need to be aware that the concept of professionalism evolves over time, “as it adapts to new technological innovations and to the pressures of pluralism” (Cooper 2004, 70). Public professionals cannot

always rely on traditional codes, mandates, laws and regulations, and standard operating procedures in all circumstances because they may not be current.<sup>5</sup> The complexity of the modern era is forcefully undermining the values that hold traditional communities together and the control of the nation-state and its command-and-control mechanisms.<sup>6</sup> With the departure of “the good old days of professional certainty” (Cooper 2004, 71), there is a pressing need for a new normative definition of professionalism—particularly for public administration—that would enable us to make judgments in the context of technological advancement, increased value pluralism, and globalization (Goldman 1980; Kultgen 1980; Flores 1988; Cooper 2004).

I consider Svava’s definition of public professionalism as the normative definition that serves as a foundation for an analysis of the top administrative officers in the Thai and U.S. local governments. From Svava’s perspective, public professionalism is “the overarching knowledge, values, and standards of practice that apply to serving society and advancing the public interest and to securing sound, democratic governance” (Svava 2009, 1037). Implicit in this definition, public professionalism is a commitment to excellence in exercising professional

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<sup>5</sup> This is applicable to both professionals in government and professionals of governance. Younger (1996) discusses the problem that professional healthcare providers now experience, as technological advancement has redefined the concept of “death.” In the past, life was much simpler that we could not do much to prevent a person with loss of brain function from dying. But, today, with technological innovations that can preserve vital organs for years, all 50 states treat the loss of brain function as a criterion of being legally dead. If a person loses consciousness and becomes motionless, doctors and nurses are still required to treat him/her exactly as they do a living person. Younger (1996) argues that there is no way that the tenets of healthcare professionalism can anticipate such changes in technology, social values, and laws and regulations.

<sup>6</sup> For example, see *A New World Order* by Anne-Marie Slaughter (2004).

skills and talents to achieve professional and public interests (Flores 1988). Since the professional interests—as defined by Svava—are the advancement of the public interest and security of democratic governance, public professionals who pursue their professional interests and are committed to public professionalism would normally uphold the standards of conduct that extend beyond personal interests.

Although Svava’s normative definition of public professionalism is broad, it serves as a roadmap for local government officials’ administrative behavior and conduct in the rapidly changing society that see the emergence of different social values and expectations. Needless to say, in practice, local government professionals must take into account the social, cultural, historical and political contexts of their respective communities, as well as the specific details of each problem situation. However, there must be an overarching goal of the public service to which local government managers conform, as they work to resolve public problems. Svava (2007) asserts that the core of the contemporary public service is “putting the public interest over self-interest.” Svava (2007) further argues that:

To ensure that they are making a full and balanced assessment of a problem that fairly assesses all those potentially impacted by a decision, administrators should seek to be certain that any potential personal factors that impact them will not limit and impair their judgment. This is the fundamental requirement to avoid conflict of interest. (28)

Public professionalism helps to protect the integrity of the internal organizational process and the public service in general. With the high level of public cynicism about the public service, public officials should feel more

obligated than their counterparts in the private sector to strengthen the integrity of public organizations. Promotion of public organizations' integrity requires that public administrators do not use public offices and resources for personal gain or to advance personal, partisan, particularistic, or private interests.

This discussion of how to achieve public professionalism by restraining personal and particularistic interests among public administrators is applicable to public administration in both developed and developing countries. Although the corrupt administrative practices are of much greater concern in the developing countries, students of politics and public administration in the developed countries likewise show considerable interest in corrupt practices in their countries. In his 1966 article, Wilson argues that corrupt government practices are a serious issue in the American state governments. The federal government has the highest level of public professionalism because it draws the best and brightest of public administrators alongside more professional and reelection-minded politicians who are aware of the consequences of their and their subordinates' misbehavior (Maxwell and Winters 2004).

American local governments are also vulnerable to corruption, but less so than the state governments because there are fewer patronage sources to misappropriate and more local citizen scrutiny (Wilson 1966). Similar to Wilson, David Hamilton (1993; 2010) studies the prevalence of patronage politics in the Illinois state and local civil service systems. In Hamilton's 1993 article, he analyzes and describes Governor Thompson's corrupt practices and the Supreme Court

ruling on the matter.<sup>7</sup> The vulnerability of Illinois state government's civil service to patronage was due to its highly centralized selection and promotion system.<sup>8</sup> Hamilton (2010) later observes that despite a series of court rulings, patronage and nepotism still permeate local government staffing system in Cook County and Chicago. A number of unethical and illegal violations include falsifying examination scores, patronage distributions of local government positions and contracts, and helping clients cover up wrongdoing (Hamilton 2010).

However, the most problematic part in Svava's quote—"putting the public interest over self-interest"—is how to define "the public interest" (Lippman 1956; Schick 1975). One could resort to today's political rhetoric to define "the public interest" as anything done according to the citizens' will. But, even the term "citizen" is problematic today, provided the increasingly diverse demographic composition. Also, with an increase in citizen diversity, value diversity arises which complicates the entire concept of "the public interest." The task of managing these diverse, legitimate, and sometimes conflicting values is not a simple black-and-white issue. It requires much more than the measures against corruption and nepotism.

The definition of public professionalism used in my study represents a normative framework of how public administrators ought to do in their work in

<sup>7</sup> See *Rutan v. Republican Party of Illinois* (1990).

<sup>8</sup> After the court ruling, however, the highly centralized, patronage-ridden civil service system in Illinois state government was replaced by a highly centralized bureaucratic structure that causes inefficiency and rigidity in the selection and promotion procedures (Hamilton 1993).

order to advance the public interest. However, the concept of professionalism alone has both positive and negative connotations among outsiders and citizens. On the one hand, professionalism, especially from the medical and legal professions, exudes appeal to other occupational groups. As Fournier (1999) and Evetts (2003) observe, every occupation now wants to be labeled “professional” in the eyes of the public. On the other, professionalism is believed to threaten the values of democratic governance, such as equity, transparency, and accountability. For those in doubt, professionalism represents elitism, exclusion, and exploitation of society. The positive and negative views of professionalism—along with the internal mechanisms of each profession--attracts much attention from the sociologists. Next, I will explore the sociology literature on profession and professionalism.

### **Sociological Views of Professionalism**

#### **Current Debate and Consensus**

Despite these different interpretations of professionalism and despite the dynamic working environment in which today’s professional workers work, there is an extensive consensus on the appeal of professionalism and its attractiveness in all work conditions. It is used as a marketing device to attract customers (Fournier 1999). Also, organizations—both public and private—use the term in their occupational recruitment campaigns, mission statements, aims, and objectives to motivate employees (Evetts 2003). Fournier (1999) studies how large private

service companies use the language of professionalism as a new disciplinary mechanism to inculcate appropriate work identities and practices. In this study, these companies use a professional code of conduct as “a disciplinary logic which inscribes autonomous professional practice within a network of accountability and governs professional conduct at a distance” (Fournier 1999, 280). Increasingly, the same use of managerial professionalism as a disciplinary device has become fashionable among public managers, particularly in public education (schools and universities) and in health (hospitals and primary healthcare) (Evetts 2008).

The current debate in sociology revolves around the analyses of the concepts of profession as “a distinct and generic category of occupational work” and the concepts of professionalism as “the process to pursue, develop, and maintain the closure of the occupational group” (Evetts 2008, 20). These analyses however do not reflect today’s appeal of professionalism and its popularity as observed by Fournier. Hence, it is more fruitful to shift our focus to an analysis of professionalism as a motivator for and facilitator of occupational change and relationships with other social actors (Evetts 1992; 1998; Aldridge and Evetts 2003; Evetts 2003; 2006; 2008).

Specifically, the analysis of the concept of professionalism returns to the question raised by Larson (1977): “How do a set of practices and values that characterize medicine and law become a rallying cry for other knowledge-based careerists, all of whom work in distinct employment conditions?” As Evetts (2003)

argues, engineers, accountants, school teachers, pharmacists, social workers, and law enforcement officers all possess different sets of knowledge and face different work environments, but claim to be professions and strive to demonstrate professionalism in their work.

### **Contrasting Interpretations of Profession and Professionalism**

The growth of the service-oriented sector and knowledge-based work in developed, transitional, and developing societies expands the appeal of professionalism in many occupations. In answering Larson's question of how and why a set of relations and practices in medicine and law became a discerning call for other knowledge-based occupations in different employment situations, Evetts (2003; 2008) argues that the sociology literature has over time developed three different interpretations of professionalism:

#### **Professionalism as a Normative Value System**

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, English sociologist Herbert Spencer pioneered the study of professionalism as a normative value system that is highly important for the stability and civility of modern democratic society (Dingwall and King 1995; Dingwall 1996). Spencer (1896) argued that various professions work to improve human life by the application of specialized knowledge to human problems. Webb

and Webb (1917) agree, concurring that professional value can be an alternative to the market value in organizing work in pursuit of public interests. Carr-Saunders and Wilson (1933) share the same optimistic view. In their comparative study of all occupations that qualified as professions in England at the time, Carr-Saunders and Wilson perceive professionalism as a force for stability and freedom against the encroaching governmental bureaucracies. Further, as a normative value system, professionalism is regarded as a highly desirable value that is capable of subjecting rampant individualism to the common good (Tawney 1921) and as the foundation for altruism, service orientation, and cooperative professional relations that can serve as a bulwark against any threats to liberal democracy (Marshall 1950).

Against the English sociologists' optimism, Parsons was the first scholar to address the issue of professionalism in theoretical terms (Freidson 1994). Parsons' 1939 essay reveals the inherent contradiction between the view that professionalism manifest altruistic behavior and the economic assumption that all behaviors are self-interested. However, in his later works (Parsons 1951; 1964; 1968), Parsons offers a different perspective of professionalism by examining the professional values of both medical and legal professions. Through "a theoretical base in the sociology of knowledge, in terms of a socially-grounded normative order" (Dingwall and Lewis 1983, 2), Parsons (1951) shows the mutual dependence of the market economy, the rational-legal social order, and the modern professional values. He argues that this mutually dependent relationship maintains and stabilizes the "fragile normative social order" (Evetts 2003, 400).

Moreover, the authority of professionalism and bureaucratic organizations rest on the same principles, such as functional specificity and application of universalistic, impersonal standards (Parsons 1951, as discussed in Evetts 2003). However, professionalism also relies on collegial relations and shared identity (Parsons 1951; 1964; 1968). This view has been revisited in a recent work by Freidson (2001), who examines three different logics of organizing work in contemporary societies: the market, bureaucratic organization, and professionalism. After discussing the advantages and disadvantages of each, Freidson emphasizes the importance of professionalism as the major organizing value for public service work. Professionalism is “founded on the official belief that the knowledge and skill of a particular specialization requires a foundation in abstract concepts and formal learning” (Freidson 2001, 34-35). Adding to Freidson’s analysis, Evetts (2008) points out that:

Education, training, and experience are fundamental requirements but once achieved (and sometimes licensed) then the exercise of discretion based on competences is central and deserving of special status. The practitioners have special knowledge and skill and (particularly if its practice is protected by licensing) there is a need to trust professionals’ intentions. As a consequence, externally imposed rules governing work are minimized and the exercise of discretion and good judgment, often in highly complex situations and circumstances, and based on recognized competences, are maximized. (21)

Both Freidson and Evetts allude to the attractiveness of professionalism as the principle that emphasizes both impersonalism and mutual understanding of proper behavior. Although the two values tend to contradict each other (as Parsons once argues), Evetts’ above quotation indicates that the reconciliation of the two is

possible through education, training, and the socialization process that each profession requires.

Not only does the logic of professionalism sustain the social order by its appeal of functionalism, impersonalism, and mutually agreed-upon professional values, it also helps ensure the proper balance among all societal forces by establishing trust among professional practitioners and their clients (Hughes 1958). Some occupations such as medical doctors and lawyers are privy to secrets, insiders' information, and knowledge with potentially adverse consequences outside the work situations. Hughes (1958) refers to this information as "guilty knowledge." Professionalism requires practitioners to maintain confidentiality and conceal the "guilty knowledge" by not exploiting it for their own purposes. And, in return, professionals receive authority, privilege, and higher status.

### **Professionalism as an Ideological Device.**

If the 1960s were an intellectual watershed for the study of professionalism, the 1970s and 1980s were the critical period in which the tenor of writings by scholars was, by and large, skeptical about the whole idea of professionalism as a normative value system. Historians and sociologists, under the Vietnam War zeitgeist, began producing revisionist analyses of professionalism and professional institutions (Freidson 1994). Influential sociological essays emphasize the professionals' economic self-interests and exclusive concerns for their status and

how the professional activities enhance their ability to exploit the poor and the working class (Platt 1969; Rothman 1971; Auerbach 1976; Larson 1977; Abbott 1988; Saks 1995). To this end, these sociologists caution against the adoption of professionalism and deny the possibility of altruism and neutrality.

Three sociologists produced empirical and analytical works that marked the shift of emphasis of professionalism away from its role in maintaining social order toward the issues of class conflict and struggle for power. In his analysis of the medical profession and organization of healthcare providers, Freidson (1970)<sup>9</sup> reveals the ideological dimension of professionalism, monopolistic privileges of certain professions, and the way professional organizations contrive and sustain authority over their clients. Johnson (1972) defines professionalism as a mechanism of controlling work in which an occupation (rather than individual consumers, the market, the state agencies) exercises influence over its own work.

Approaching the study of professionalism from the Marxist and neo-Weberian perspectives, Larson (1977) distrusts the concept of professional neutrality and argues that professionalism ties occupational groups to the class system of capitalist society. Also, professionalism represents a “collective mobility project” whose outcome is “a monopoly of competence legitimized by officially sanctioned expertise and a monopoly of credibility with the public” (Larson 1977, 38).

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<sup>9</sup> See *Profession of Medicine* (1970a) and *Professional Dominance* (1970b).

Analyses that consider professionalism as an ideology concentrate on the notion of professionalism as the ligature that unites powerful professional groups who can control the markets, dominate other occupations, and negotiate “regulative bargains” with the government agencies to advance the interests of their member practitioners (Cooper, Puxty, and Willmott 1998). This interpretation of professionalism sharply contrasts with the earlier interpretation that looks at professionalism as a normative value system capable of and necessary for maintaining the proper balance of modern society and market economy.

### **Professionalism as Discourse of Occupational Change and Managerial Control**

The extreme views of professionalism as occupational closure and class control mechanism lost favor with the academics in the mid 1980s. The concepts of monopolistic privilege and occupational dominance in the medical profession, for instance, were heavily criticized; the increasing diversity and social mobility within the medical profession indicate that not all physicians hold occupational dominance. The renewed interest in professionalism led several sociologists to study the dynamics within the medical profession. In her study of the changing organization of obstetrics, Annandale (1989) finds that the obstetricians’ ability to maintain their professional hegemony and control over everyday maternity care has become under increasing pressure from the midwives and external government regulators.

Similarly, Coburn (1988; 1994) examines the dynamics within Canada's medical profession in the 1980s and observes that many actors other than physicians (e.g., nurses, midwives, optometrists, chiropractors, psychologists, physiotherapists) began to assert their rights and sought to wriggle out from under the physicians' restrictive dominance. The physicians' autonomy to determine the form under which medical care is delivered has also been in decline (Illich 1975; McKeown 1976). Indications of this decline in professional hegemony are the increasingly patient-oriented laws governing informed consent and the number of lawsuits against physicians in the Canadian court system (Coburn 1994).

Annandale and Coburn's works represent the kind of scholarly works that altered the analytical focus of the sociology literature. The sociological analyses of professionalism have shifted from attention to professionalism as "a distinct and generic category of occupational work" and "the process of pursuing, developing, and maintaining the closure of an occupational group" (Evetts 2005) to a contemporary notion of professionalism as a discourse of occupational change and managerial control. This interpretation considers professionalism as the concept that "works to inculcate 'appropriate' work identities, conducts, and practices within a network of accountabilities and governs professional conduct at a distance" (Fournier 1999, 280). The use of "control" in this context differs from what was used in the two previous interpretations which exclusively refer to 'control' as external hierarchical mechanisms. On the other hand, 'control' as

Fournier describes denotes the horizontal, collegial, and trust-based disciplinary mechanisms and “moral ligatures” (Paquet 2005) that professional workers internalize.<sup>10</sup> Miller and Rose (1990) and Burchell and others (1991) refer to this type of control as “the government of professional practice at a distance.”

The concept of professionalism as a discourse of managerial control and occupational change also marks a return to the earlier interpretation of professionalism as a normative social value system. The research question on which the first and third interpretations are based differs from the one proposed by the Marxian view which considers professionalism as an ideological device of class control and closure. For the skeptics of professionalism, the question concerns how the idea of professionalism enables certain professions to capture the modern state and establish occupational hegemony at the expense of the working class and the underprivileged. Scholars who consider the concept of professionalism as facilitative of a social value system (i.e., the first and third interpretations of professionalism) argue that professions initiate projects to influence governments

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<sup>10</sup> Fournier’s interpretation of *professionalism* indicates that a certain degree and a certain form of power are involved to manage the relationships among members of a professional group and between the members, their clients, and the public. This concept of “control and discipline at a distance” is consonant with the Foucauldian concept of power and Joseph Nye’s concept of “soft power.” French intellectual historian Michel Foucault (1980) states that power is not simply the control of material resources, bodies, or actions. The mechanisms of power, according to Foucault (1980, 39), are “a capillary form of existence [and] the point where power reaches into the very grain of individuals, touches their bodies and inserts itself into their actions and attitudes, their discourses, learning processes, and everyday lives.” Foucault’s argument falls along the same line as the idea of *professionalism* as the loose disciplinary mechanisms and moral ligatures that each professional group’s members internalize. Differentiating between “hard” and “soft” power, political scientist Joseph Nye (2004) similarly argues that the tool of co-optive or “soft power” is the ability to make others want what you want and to make one’s goals and values desirable and legitimate by others. Nye’s concept “yokes together power-wielders and those they hope to act upon, so that the success of ‘soft power’ depends on willing partners” (Goethals and Sorenson 2006, 86).

and society as much as they are responding to external pressures for change (e.g., political, social, legal, economic pressures). This argument leads several scholars (e.g., Dingwall and King 1995; Dingwall 1996) to ask why governments (or the modern states) create professions, or at least permit professions to flourish.

The interpretations of professionalism as a normative social value system and as a discourse of managerial control and occupational change find their historical evidence in the parallel processes of the development of modern nation-states in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and of modern professions in the same period (Evetts 1998). That is, profession and the idea of professionalism could be among the many mechanisms that a modern nation-state has used to regulate certain spheres of the economic life without over-developing an oppressive central bureaucracy (Evetts 2003).<sup>11</sup> To empirically substantiate this argument, Perkins (2002) notes the synergy between the British government apparatus and professionals in creating a legitimate capitalist order in late 19<sup>th</sup>-century Britain.

Further, various professional groups are said to be instrumental in meeting the need for social order in the rapidly globalizing economies and international markets in two ways (Dingwall 1996). First, professions use the discourse of professionalism to inculcate appropriate conducts, identities, and practices. However, they do so differently than the traditional mode of governing that relies on the command-and-control mechanisms. Apart from the protective measures,

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<sup>11</sup> In fact, Spencer (1896) raised a similar argument at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that modern professional groups work to serve the public interest by applying specialized knowledge to solving social problems.

such as accreditation and licensing, professional groups also promote self-disciplinary mechanisms based on trust, cooperation, and *esprit de corps* among group members. This type of trust-based relationship within the professional communities represents a decentralized form of governance that is important in civil society (Durkheim 1992).

Second, professionalism and the public interest are not necessarily situated at the opposite end of a continuum (Saks 1995). On the contrary, the idea of professionalism is compatible with the pursuit of the public interest because it could work to create and sustain the moral and ethical obligations that restrain excessive competition and encourage cooperation (Dingwall 1996).

### **Implications of the Sociological Analyses for the Discussion of Public Professionalism**

The progression of sociological thoughts on profession and professionalism reflects the historical development of global societies since the late 18<sup>th</sup>-century industrial revolution in Western Europe. The industrial revolution spawned many changes in Western European societies, including the emergence of market economy, modern nation-states, and professional communities (Dingwall and Fenn 1987; Dingwall 2004). Citing Spencer, Evetts (2003) emphasizes the parallel processes of capitalist development, democratization, modern state formation, and emergence of professional societies.

Further, there seems to be an interdependence of the market economy, the state, and professional groups (Dingwall 2004). The rise of capitalist society brought about rapid urbanism, population increase, growing social movements, and many forms of market failure. Spencer (1862) refers to these changes as the transition from “an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity” to “a definite, coherent heterogeneity.” To deal with those challenges, several professional associations came to existence. For instance, the royal pharmaceutical society emerged as “the English government’s response to moral panic about the increasingly potent chemical compounds that became available and as the government attempt to regulate the health care market in support of its own developing stake in public health” (Dingwall 2004, 5). The English royal pharmaceutical society example should by no means imply that the early 19<sup>th</sup>-century English government co-opted and used professional associations to achieve its policy objectives. Rather, the example demonstrates the mutual dependence of the market, the public sector, and professional society in establishing and maintaining the modern social order. This mutual dependence led many sociologists to consider the concept of professionalism as a secular social value system that solidifies the trust among specialized workers and their clients—an alternative to the dissipating religious value based on vertical, ascriptive identity and practice (Perkin 1988; Dingwall and King 1995; Fukuyama 1995).

In public administration, the notoriety of professionalism stems from its association with the bureaucratic value of efficiency (Green, Keller, and Wamsley

1993). Svava (2009), however, argues that in addition to the concern with efficiency and economy, public service professionalism also includes the moral commitment to the public interest and democratic governance. The evolution of the public service profession throughout the history of human civilization over the past one hundred years confirms Svava's normative argument of the professionalism concept. In the history of public administrative reform, the role of professionalism was central to the social movement against patronage politics, clientelism, and corruption in the 19<sup>th</sup>-century England and the United States.

Until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, patronage politics tarnished almost all aspects of England's government from the central to local levels. The sentiment against patronage politics and impetus for administrative reform came from events such as the British defeat during the Battle of Balaclava in the Crimean War (O'Gorman 2001) and also from two groups of "rationalizing bourgeoisie" who sought to rationalize the nation's traditional institutions" (Shefter 1994, 46). These two groups consisted of both the Oxford-Cambridge educated traditional elites and the emerging entrepreneurial middle class. The 1870 civil service reform modeled after the Northcote-Trevelyan 1854 proposal was only possible through the support of these rationalizing bourgeois (Shefter 1994). As with the Northcote-Trevelyan plan, the 1870 reform measures included bureaucratic organizational management and centralized budget control, meritocratic appointment of government officials, and a clear division between staff responsible for executing policies and those responsible for formulating policies, each of which has its own educational

requirements (O’Gorman 2001).

Similar civil service reform was implemented in the United States with the passage of the Pendleton Act of 1893. In the 19<sup>th</sup>-century spoil era, patronage politics was rampant at all levels of American government.<sup>12</sup> Impetus for reform was triggered by the assassination of President James Garfield by a disappointed government officer-seeker. Also, several groups of urban middle-class scholars and administrators who had travelled to and lived in Europe formed the Progressive Movement--the overarching social movement that became the thrust of the municipal government reform (Phillips 1960; Hayes 1964; Hofstadter, Aaron, and Miller 1970; Svava 1999). The measures that these American reformers promoted were analogous to those in England: merit-based appointment and promotion of civil servants, centralized organizational and budget control, and a clear division between policy implementation and formulation that later became known as the politics-and-administration dichotomy.

The lesson learned from the sociology of professionalism and from the analyses of civil service reforms in England and the United States is that professionalism has been an important force for the establishment and maintenance of normative social order in modern times. Spencer’s contradicting phrase—“definite, coherent heterogeneity”—rightly captures the central role of modern professions and professionalism in regulating certain spheres of economic life

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<sup>12</sup> The “spoil system” came about as an unintended consequence of President Andrew Jackson’s attempt to make government more accountable to its citizens and their representatives through extension of franchise and rotation of government offices.

without having to rely on the modern state's over-oppressive apparatus. The late 19<sup>th</sup>-century concept of public professionalism that focused on organizational command and control and impersonal bureaucratic hierarchy facilitated the development of modern public organizations, both at the national and local levels.

However, the 20<sup>th</sup>- and 21<sup>st</sup>-century social problems differ from those in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Several social changes led to the erosion of legitimacy of the bureaucratic command-and-control mechanism. In certain circumstances, these mechanisms have become less effective in solving the contemporary social problems. In local government management, for instance, problems that occur in one jurisdiction could no longer be confined to that jurisdiction. They are likely to be inter-jurisdictional in nature, hence requiring collaboration among local governments in adjacent communities. Another example is the increasingly porous border between the public and private sector that has become involved in contracted public services. This is not to argue that the command-and-control mechanism is no longer useful in contemporary societies, but that it must contend with other mechanisms of governance such as collaboration.

The work of sociologist Julia Evetts offers us an analytical framework to think about the development of two ideal types of professionalism: organizational and occupational professionalism (Table 2-2). Organizational professionalism is a discourse of organizational control used by managers to ensure their subordinates' conformity to standard operating procedures, legal requirements, and organizational goals. It relies on the rational-legal form of authority, hierarchical structure of

responsibility and decision making, and external sources of regulation and accountability, such as performance review, target setting, standard operating procedures, mandates, and laws and regulations. Therefore, organizational professionalism is linked to the Weberian bureaucratic model of organization (Evetts 2010).

Also, as an ideal type, occupational professionalism is a discourse based on collegial authority and trust-based relationships among practitioners, employers, and clients. Autonomy, discretionary judgment, and objective assessment of complex cases are crucial to occupational professionalism. This type of professionalism is linked to Durkheim's concept of organic solidarity that describes the interdependence of individuals who perform different tasks and have different values and interests (Durkheim 1992). This interdependence is the key to the order and stability of capitalist society. Durkheim's concept is similar to Spencer's concept of "definite, coherent heterogeneity" that also refers to the social cohesion based on the interdependence that individuals in capitalist society have on one another, as the division of labor increases. There are various ways of fostering occupational professionalism: "common and lengthy systems of education, vocational training and socialization, and the development of strong occupational identities and work cultures" (Evetts 2010, 10).

Table 2-2

## Two Different Forms of Professionalism in Knowledge-Based Works

	<b>Organizational Professionalism</b>	<b>Occupational Professionalism</b>
<b>Basis of authority</b>	Rational-legal	Collegial
<b>Problem-solving mechanism</b>	Standard operating procedures, performance targets	Discretionary judgment, critical analysis of complex cases based on objective knowledge
<b>Accountability mechanism</b>	Externalized forms of control such as laws and regulations, performance review, target setting	Self-discipline and internalized mechanisms of control such as professional ethics and identity
<b>Structure of responsibility and decision making</b>	Bureaucratic hierarchy	Trust among practitioners, employers, and clients

Source: Adopted from Evetts 2010.

Evetts does not promote one type of professionalism over the other, but argues that the exigency and complexity of contemporary social problems require a balance between organizational and occupational professionalism (Gewirtz, Mahony, Hextall, and Cribb 2009). The interconnected notions of trust, competence, discretion, accountability, and professional practice have attracted much attention from sociologists over the years (Evetts 2010). The sociological analyses of “conventional” professions such as doctors and lawyers reveal that not only were these professionals in the 19<sup>th</sup> century trusted because of their knowledge and competence, but also they were trusted for their commitment to provide altruistic advice to their clients. This legacy provides an incentive for today’s

various occupational groups to embrace professionalism and has encouraged scholars to examine the concept of professionalism as both an organizational management tool and as a moral imperative for the maintenance of democratic social order.

### **How to Measure Public Service Professionalism**

Because of their concern with the nature of professionalism, several sociologists have attempted to measure the degree of professionalism. Hall (1968) offers an important measurement framework that consists of two general components: structural and attitudinal. These two components together set professional groups apart from simple occupational groups. The structural/institutional side includes the specific function that a profession performs, including training programs, formation of professional associations, and formulation of ethical codes (Wilensky 1964). The attitudinal aspect reflects “the manner in which the practitioners view their work” (Hall 1968, 93). This aspect consists of the use of professional organizations as a major reference, belief in public service, belief in self-regulation, a sense of “inward calling” to the field of practice (Weber 1946; 135), and decision-making autonomy.

Based on this measurement framework, Hall uses a survey questionnaire to examine the professionalism of several occupational groups and provides many crucial findings for the study of professionalism and professional groups. Among

these findings is the close connection between the respondents' attitude and their actual behavior. Hall points out that the strength of the attitudinal components is based on the type of socialization that has occurred in the sustained interactions among professionals in the professional organizations, training and educational programs, and the work context. An occupation's place in the wider social structure is also important. For this social structure aspect, the type of organization in which professionals work and the type of clients<sup>13</sup> that they serve significantly influence the way in which members of professional groups view their work.

Hall's discussion of the type of organization and clients presents an important point of departure for an analysis of public professionalism. In modern times, those who labor in public administration cannot be exclusively concerned with the internal management of their own organizations. They also have to be concerned with their relationship with colleagues in other agencies and their constituents. This relationship becomes complex at the local government level where direct and close contact with the citizens takes place and where an enmeshed web of intergovernmental relations constantly affects the available solution set for local government problems. The type of clients these local public administrators serve is complicated because there can be both well-organized and un-organized

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<sup>13</sup> Freidson (1986) similarly analyzes the relationship between the degree of professionalism and the type of clients professional groups serve. Some professions such as engineers and architects characteristically serve clients who are powerful and well organized; "rather than exercising power over their clients on the basis of professionally generated conceptions of what their needs and problems are, these practitioners serve and advance their clients' conceptions" (Friedson 1986, 218). Other professions provide services to a broad group of unorganized clients. In this situation, professionals exercise considerable power over their clientele.

citizens. Thus, the nuances of local public administration challenge the task of measuring the degree of professionalism among local government officials.

### **Multiple Accountabilities as Measurement of Public Professionalism**

The study of accountability and professionalism has a long pedigree in public administration. Beginning with the American civil service reform, the attempt to enhance the degree of professionalism among government officials became associated with the attempt to make government services more accountable to the public, as opposed to the political bosses and machines. These two parallel attempts were evident at the local government level where the early 20<sup>th</sup>-century municipal reform movement promoted the council-manager form of government to professionalize local public administration.

Hence, in my study, I argue that the use of accountability to measure local government professionalism is appropriate because the professionalization of local government officials aims at making them accountable to the public. But, as previously discussed, the public and the public interest have become increasingly “ill-defined, poorly articulated, and difficult to measure or prioritize” (Kearney and Sinha 1988, 345). When the accountability issue comes up, it is unclear as to whom and for what public administrators are to be held accountable and also which accountability approach(es) to use in different situations.

The exercise of power, accountability, and sense of responsibility are interdependent. Unrestrained power creates unresponsiveness and inefficient delivery of goods and services (McKinney and Howard 1979). Indeed, “the action of administration is so important that it is impossible for any country possessing constitutional government to allow the administration a perfectly free hand in the discharge of its duties” (Goodnow 1893, 135). Questions about enhancing the accountability mechanisms to professionalize the public service have occupied the intellectual landscape in the public administration field, taking various forms regarding who does what, to whom, and how (Smith 1971; Krislov and Rosenbloom 1981; Mansfield 1982; Mosher 1982; Gruber 1987; Levine, Peters, and Thompson 1990; Paul 1991; Shafritz 1992; Romzek and Dubnick 1994). Yet, the concept of accountability remains “that will-o’-the-wisp” (Mosher 1980), “underdeveloped” (Romzek and Dubnick 1987), and “murky” (Gormley, as quoted in Behn 2000, 4).

A number of public administration scholars define accountability as answerability for one’s actions or behavior (Pennock 1979; Dwivedi 1985; Dwivedi and Jabbra 1988; Kernaghan and Langford 1990; Uhr 1993; Harmon 1995). The answerability-as-accountability framework requires that public officials consider the consequences of their actions as they exercise discretion (Dunn and Legge 2002). The question remains: how can a democratic polity ensure that its officials are aware of the appropriateness and consequences of their actions, as they exercise discretion in their work? Public administration scholars have discussed

this question within the confines of the Finer-Friedrich dialogue (Romzek and Dubnick 1994; Kearns 1996).

Finer (1965, 176) emphasized the need for external control by elected authorities over public administrators by arguing that “the servants of the public are not to decide their own course; they are to be responsible to the elected representatives of the public, and these are to determine the course of action of the public servants to the most minute degree that is technically feasible.” On the other hand, Friedrich (1965) argued for a broader notion of administrative discretion that included using professional knowledge, technical competence, and public sentiment as a basis for guiding public administrator’s actions. Modern scholars usually cast Friedrich as espousing internalized professional values and knowledge as a source of guidance for action (e.g., Romzek and Dubnick 1987; Dunn and Legge 2002).

The Finer-Friedrich dialogue was, however, a normative discourse about whether internally or externally imposed accountability mechanism is preferable in a democracy. Beyond this normative discourse, Etzioni (1975) discusses three types of accountability in public organizations: responsibility to elected officials, responsiveness to community groups and minorities, and commitment to values and standards of morality. Similarly, McKinney and Howard (1979, 30) combine the elements of accountability proposed by Finer and Friedrich: “any situation in which individuals who exercise power are expected to be constrained and in fact are reasonably constrained by external means and to a degree by internal norms.”

The discussion of internal and external accountabilities by Finer, Friedrich, and other scholars has been articulated over the years. Mosher defines external accountability as the “objective responsibility for actions of a person or an organization to something outside of self” (McKinney and Howard 1979, 417). To be accountable to external actors and organizations, public administrators ought to constantly ask themselves the following questions:

1. How well did the results conform to the given task?
2. How efficient were the means employed?
3. Was the operation carried out in accordance with the legal mandate?
4. Are the people satisfied with the results? (McKinney and Howard 1979, 417)

Ideas, ideologies, and public interests stimulate legislative actions that articulate, aggregate, and convert those ideas, ideologies, and public interests into policies, programs, and projects. The task of implementing these policies, programs, and projects rests with the public managers in an environment in which several key conditions must be met (e.g., mandates, governmental regulations). In many cases, however, it is difficult to legislate on every detail of a public issue. Further, for many public policies and programs, it is difficult to determine who is accountable for what and to determine the policy and program results. To put it simply, the link between what the public wants and what is implemented is often missing. This missing link leads many practitioners and academicians to assume that public administrators are out of control and self-serving and that more draconian external

checks on their behavior are necessary.

Conversely, some other scholars propose the internalized professional norms as another accountability mechanism for public managers in their daily work. Gaus (1936) began the discussion of “the inner check” promoted by the standards and ideals of the public service profession which could help public managers find ways to more effectively serve the public interest. This “inner check” argument runs contrary to the fundamental principle of external accountability mechanisms in that public administrators are not necessarily out of control and self-serving. Rather, as they face difficulties in executing public programs and policies in their daily work (e.g., unclear policy guidelines, limited resources), public administrators exercise discretion in rationing the limited public resources and in making public services as efficient and effective as possible under vague policy directions (Lipsky 1980; Maynard-Moody and Leland 1999; Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2003).

In their study of the challenges and expectations that local government officials experience in their work, Dunn and Legge (2002) explore the behavior of 488 U.S. municipal and county managers to measure empirically the relative importance of accountability to elected officials, citizens, the profession, the media, and court cases. They report that local government managers place the greatest emphasis on professional knowledge when they define their general management responsibilities and on the preferences of elected officials when they develop new policy or routine matters. Dunn and Legge (2002) conclude that:

It is not a question of either Finer or Friedrich, but a question of how best to blend the factors that they emphasize— the governing board, public sentiment, and professional knowledge—in a way that produces a workable arrangement for defining responsibility and exercising accountability. (137)

### **Multiple Accountabilities Framework**

Dunne and Legge also reveal the dynamics of the relationship between public officials and their environment. The increasing diversity of and potential tensions among legitimate actors in the work environment pose serious challenges for government officials, particularly at the local level. In their study of the relationship between public organizations and their working environment, Romzek and Dubnick (1987) analyze the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), particularly the events that led to the explosion of the Challenger space shuttle that killed seven astronauts. Government investigations indicated the synthetic seal (O-rings) on the space shuttle’s rocket booster became brittle in the unusually cold weather on the launch day, causing leakage and explosion of the highly volatile and combustible rocket fuel. The NASA officials were aware that there were risks of O-ring malfunction in the cold weather, but decided to take a calculated risk and authorized the flight to launch as scheduled.

Romzek and Dubnick’s analysis is based on the idea that “public administration accountability involves the means by which public agencies and their workers manage the diverse expectations generated within and outside the organization” (Romzek and Dubnick 1987, 228). Their multiple accountabilities

framework postulates that the accountability mechanisms vary along two dimensions: source of control and degree of autonomy. These two dimensions suggest “the range of mechanisms by which public employees can be held accountable for their actions and the range of mechanisms available to public employees as they try to manage the expectations and accountabilities they face in their work” (Romzek and Dubnick 1994, 269). The source of control dimension, modeled after the Finer-Friedrich dialogue, is related to where the expectations and accountabilities come from. Internal sources originate from within each public agency and each public official’s conscience. At the organizational level, the internal sources of control include a supervisor, and standard operating procedures (SOP). At the individual level, the internal control comes from the professional standards and codes of ethics to which public officials feel obligated to adhere. On the other hand, external sources originate outside the agency, including policies and programs determine by elected officials, interest groups, citizens, oversight bodies, government mandates, laws, and regulations.

The degree of autonomy is inversely related to the degree of control over public officials’ actions. The degree of autonomy varies from low to high. Public officials with a low degree of autonomy operate under intense scrutiny of actions and close specification of responsibilities and tasks. A high degree of autonomy involves much less scrutiny, less detail of work specification, and more discretion in deciding how to manage multiple expectations. Based on the combination of

these two dimensions, Romzek and Dubnick derive a typology of four accountability categories (Figure 2-1): bureaucratic, legal, professional, and political.

		<i>Source of Agency Control</i>	
		<b>Internal</b>	<b>External</b>
<i>Degree of Autonomy</i>	<b>Low</b>	Bureaucratic	Legal
	<b>High</b>	Professional	Political

Source: Romzek and Dubnick 1987, 229.

Figure 2-1: Type of Accountability Approaches.

Each of these accountability types is equally legitimate and all may be present in the same situation. Romzek and Dubnick (1994, 271) note that in practice, public officials must face at least two types of accountability mechanisms actively competing for their attention, “with the other types in place but latent.” Further, these accountability mechanisms have different underlying values and bases for the accountability relationship (Table 2-3).

Table 2-3

## Underlying Values and Bases for Relationship within Accountability Approaches

<b>Type of Accountability approach</b>	<b>Type of Relationship (Controller/Administrator)</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>To Whom Accountable</b>
<i>Bureaucratic</i>	Superior/Subordinate	Efficiency/ Hierarchy	Managerial Supervisor, Standard Operating Procedures
<i>Legal</i>	Principal/Agent	Fiduciary/ Contractual	Local, National Laws, Court ruling, Constitution
<i>Professional</i>	Expert/Layperson	Responsibility	Professional Standards and Ethics, Professional Associations
<i>Political</i>	Constituent/Representative	Responsiveness	Elected Officials, Citizen, Interest Groups

Source: Adopted from Romzek and Dubnick 1987, 1994.

### **Bureaucratic accountability**

Under this type of accountability approach, the expectations for public administrators are “managed through focusing attention on the priorities of those at the top of the bureaucratic hierarchy” (Romzek and Dubnick 1987, 228). The

functioning of bureaucratic accountability relies on two elements: a relationship between a managerial superior and a subordinate administrator in which following orders is unquestionable and close supervision of standard operating procedures or organizational rules and regulations. The underlying value of the superior-subordinate relationships is efficiency. Old public administration scholars--especially the Progressive reformers--championed the use of bureaucratic accountability mechanisms to ensure the separation between politics and administration, apolitical neutrality, and professionalism in American public administration (e.g., Wilson 1887; Goodnow 1900; Taylor 1911; Willoughby 1927; Gulick and Urwick 1937).

### **Legal accountability**

Legal accountability is similar to bureaucratic accountability in that it involves a high degree of control over a wide range of public administration activities (Romzek and Dubnick 1987). However, the difference is that legal accountability is based on a contractual/fiduciary relationship between an external controlling party (principal) and members of public organizations (agent). The outside party includes those capable of imposing legal and contractual sanctions on public administrators through laws, regulations, and mandates which public officials are required to follow and implement. Typically, these outsiders are

lawmakers (e.g., parliamentarians, congressmen) and the court with the judicial review authority.

Also, Romzek and Dubnick (1987) point out that the principal-agent relationship found in the legal accountability approach differs from the superior-subordinate relationship found in the bureaucratic accountability approach. In bureaucratic organizations, the relationship relies on hierarchy and the managerial supervisors' ability to reward or punish subordinates. Legal accountability, on the contrary, is based on the relationship between two autonomous parties and involves a fiduciary agreement between public administrators and their legal overseers. Political theorists hold two contrasting views of public administrators and their perceptions of legal accountability. While some scholars (e.g., Lowi 1979) propose precise laws and regulations to constrain out-of-control public administrators, others (e.g., Rosenbloom 1983; Rohr 1986) believe that public administrators should exercise their discretion to fulfill their constitutional commitments.

### **Political accountability**

Responsiveness is the value that characterizes a political accountability approach. Political accountability is central to the functioning of public administration in a democracy. Romzek and Dubnick (1987) assert that the relationship under this system is between a representative (in this discussion, public officials) and their constituents to whom they are accountable. These constituents

include the general public, elected officials, agency heads, agency clientele, other interest groups, and future generations. Ultimately, under the political accountability approach, public administrators are expected to be responsive to programmatic needs of their constituents, regardless of how constituency is defined. However, Romzek and Dubnick (1987) note that even when favoritism and clientelism appear to tarnish a political system, favoritism and clientelism may in fact serve as the basis for a more open and representative government.

### **Professional accountability**

As governments become inundated by technically difficult and complex problems, they must use skilled and expert employees to offer appropriate and timely solutions. These expert employees are expected to be fully accountable for their actions. Agency leaders must trust them and give them sufficient discretion to do the best job possible (Romzek and Dubnick 1987). Under this accountability approach, the underlying relationship is based on deference to knowledge and expertise and could be achieved by placement of control over public administration activities in the hands of the knowledgeable and skilled employees. This accountability approach requires an understanding of: (1) the insular nature of a particular profession, (2) professional administrators' inclination to demonstrate loyalty to their professional associations rather than elected or appointed officials, and (3) their technocratic orientation (Moe 1984; Mosher 1982).

Outside professional associations may indirectly influence public administrators through training programs, professional standards, and ethics. But, the source of control is intrinsically internal to public organizations. That is, public administrators ought to be knowledgeable about the nature of their work and foundational values of democracy and public administration and internalize the ethical standards. While the bureaucratic accountability approach also features an internalized basis of relationship, the professional accountability approach is more complex. Agency heads, elected officials, and citizens whom public administrators take the role of the layperson. Public administrators, on the other hand, use their expertise to make important decisions. This type of relationship is founded upon the trust and horizontal connections between and among the experts and the laity.

### **Preferences for Accountability Approaches**

What determines the preference for a particular accountability approach over the other approaches in a given situation? Hood (1976) argues that in the context of “perfect administration,” one accountability approach dominates to the exclusion of the other approaches. However, in practice, public administrators work in a complex situation where more than one accountability approach are at work. Romzek and Dubnick (1987, 230) argue that the appropriateness of an accountability approach to each public administrative task depends on “the nature of existing environmental (institutional) conditions” as well as the public

administrators' technical tasks and management orientations. At the technical and managerial levels, the appropriateness of accountability mechanisms is closely tied to "the specific tasks or the strategic orientations or idiosyncrasies of individual managers" (Romzek and Dubnick 1987, 230). Yet, the two scholars contend that the institutional-level changes, such as shifting national priorities and political pressures, have a significant impact on which type of the four accountability approaches the public administrators would use in solving their technical and managerial dilemmas.

As Kearns (1996) observes, the NASA case demonstrates how the changes in the institutional level expectations influences the changes at the technical and managerial levels. In the early years of NASA, the locus of accountability mechanisms was primarily internal and technocratic. The agency has a bureaucratic structure and was aware of its vulnerability to shifting national political priorities. But, most decisions in NASA were ultimately driven by professional objectives rather than bureaucratic, political, or legal ends.

In the early 1980s, however, NASA experienced intense political pressures from Congress and the President to make its space shuttle program fully operational, commercialized, and cost-effective for space exploration. The 1980s budget-cutting environment forced NASA to use the political accountability approach more than its traditional professional accountability approach in order to fight for political and financial survival (Kearns 1996). NASA began to behave more like a large government bureaucracy with "bureaupathological" (Romzek and

Dubnick 1987, 233) practices, like goal displacement and communication breakdowns. Even though the engineers initially recommended against the launch of the Challenger space shuttle, their supervisors chose to ignore the recommendation and took a calculated risk that led to the space shuttle tragedy.

After the incident, Congress created oversight bodies to control the key decision-making points within NASA, particularly in the areas of the design and launch of future manned space flights. Romzek and Dubnick (1987) point out that too much emphasis on legal accountability mechanisms imposed upon NASA by Congress could further compromise the agency's space exploration and its overall mission. Ideally, NASA needs to return to "what it does best, using the form of accountability that best suits its organizational mission" (i.e., professional accountability based on technical competence and deference to knowledge and expertise) (Romzek and Dubnick 1987, 236).

Romzek and Dubnick's conceptualization and Kearns' observation of the NASA case suggest that contemporary public agencies encounter increasingly hostile institutional environments that place much emphasis on political, legal, and bureaucratic accountability mechanisms. This dilemma offers an important caveat to the application of the multiple accountabilities framework to analyze the degree of public professionalism among the municipal chief administrators in the decentralized governance. Before concluding which accountability approach (s) would be appropriate for the decentralized government structure, there is a need to understand the nature and dynamics of post-decentralization conditions facing

municipal governments. Even though public professionalism is essentially a normative concept, it still necessitates a firm understanding of the existing contextual conditions under which various groups of local public administrators work.

In the context of my dissertation, an extensive analysis of decentralized governance needs to precede the argument that the municipal chief administrators in Illinois and Thailand should “balance” all four accountability approaches in their work. Not only does an understanding of such contextual conditions help solidify my conceptual framework of local government professionalism, it also adds the nuances of Thai and Illinois municipal government in the post-decentralization era to my overall analysis.

### **Conclusion**

The attempt to make public service better has a long history in public administration. Many scholars and practitioners are poised to endorse the idea of enhancing the degree of public professionalism, particularly at the local level where governments are closest to their citizens. Nonetheless, others distrust the idea of professionalism, arguing that the professionalization of public administrators, as well as the emergence and consolidation of professional communities, would only make them less accountable to the public. I have demonstrated through an extensive review of both sociology and public administration literatures that the

criticisms of public service professionalism often take an extreme form and suffer from the lack of understanding of the historical development of various professions, professionalism, and modern democratic society since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. As formerly discussed, in modern times, professionalism means more than competence, knowledge, and expertise. Commitment to the democratic social order and the general public welfare is also the essential element of contemporary professionalism.

Further, I have discussed why I use Svvara's broad definition of public professionalism in my study because it acknowledges the importance of knowledge, the need to serve the public interest, and advancement of democratic values. I have also discussed the multiple accountabilities framework proposed by Romzek and Dubnick (1987) and how the framework could be used to study and measure public professionalism. Most importantly, as public administrators choose and adopt which type of accountability approach to follow, the environmental (institutional) conditions often take precedence over the technical and managerial concerns. Thus, an understanding of the public administrators' working environment is necessary for an analysis of multiple accountabilities in the public sector. The next chapter will examine the contextual conditions of Thai and Illinois municipal government after the decentralization reforms.

## CHAPTER 3

### DECENTRALIZATION REFORMS IN THAILAND (1997) AND ILLINOIS (1970): THEORETICAL AND COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES

Today, territorial decentralization is the rage throughout the world and attracts much attention in matters of democratic governance, public management, and economic development. Nonetheless, this chapter argues that the outcomes of decentralization are not necessarily confined to the enhancement of grassroots democracy, increase in local government autonomy, or decrease in central government authority. In fact, there is no guarantee that the post-decentralization intergovernmental structure would be hospitable to local governments and conducive to intergovernmental cooperation. That territorial decentralization axiomatically enhances local autonomy is nothing more than a theoretical proposition. This chapter examines the decentralization reforms in Illinois (1970) and Thailand (1997) to demonstrate that in practice decentralization could result in a complex governance structure in which some local governing bodies still remain subordinate to the center. In this analysis, my emphasis is on the Thai MAs, Illinois CMs, and Illinois CAOs who struggle to fulfill their public service responsibilities in the complex web of central-local relations in the post-decentralization era.

### **Beyond the Benefits and Pitfalls of Territorial Decentralization: Analytical Frameworks of Decentralization**

Both advocates and skeptics of the decentralization reform have legitimate arguments. However, all things considered, territorial decentralization is only a policy tool which government reformers use to improve the task of governing. Territorial decentralization consists of two related reform processes. First, decentralization is a process that rearranges the relationship between the national and subnational governments or between the state and local governments by delegating administrative responsibilities and allocating public resources to the lower levels of government. Second, decentralization is a process that restructures the state-society relations by altering the government's role in society and accommodating the involvement of new social actors both within and outside of the state's officialdom in the policy making arena.

Whether decentralization will eventually result in more efficient and effective intergovernmental relations or democratic state-society relations hinges upon the confluence of pre-conditions, such as a certain degree of local public participation, a certain degree of local government accountability, and mechanisms of transferring information between local governing bodies and the citizens (World Bank 2001). Note that several decentralization advocates refer to these pre-conditions as the goals or benefits of territorial decentralization. Confusion may arise over the symbiotic relationship between the pre-conditions and goals, but careful attention must be given to the context in which the decentralization policy is

executed. For instance, a report on political decentralization published by the World Bank (2001) suggests that the existence of some mechanisms, formal or informal, for citizen participation in the local government decision making is the basic premise for successful decentralized governance. By the same token, the absence of participatory channels also induces the demand for political decentralization. Hence, the decentralization reform must take into account the opportunities of enhancing popular participation and the limitations imposed by the traditional modes of governance in each context (World Bank 2001).

Indeed, one of the main problems with decentralization in the policy and scholarship circles is the confusion over the pre-conditions and goals. For example, the decentralization process is frequently associated with the democratization process. That is, without decentralization, there can be no democratic governance. Fesler (1965) was concerned that such close association transforms decentralization into a doctrine of management and development:

Decentralization is a means to the achievement of a number of end-values. However, by close association with certain of those values, decentralization appears to have been transformed into a value in its own right, and so into an article of faith for "right-thinking people," and into an end-value for which political scientists need merely specify how it may be maximized. (538)

The indoctrination of the decentralization concept led to the emergence of certain compound words such as “democratic decentralization” and “democratic local governance.” The two terms obscure the nuances and outcomes of the decentralization reform pursued in many countries because they promote the

assumption that decentralization is the goal to be pursued, rather than the process that, when carefully designed, could help enhance the quality of public management and democracy.

In his rejection of the term “democratic decentralization,” Appleby (1962, 443) argues that the term implies that “decentralization axiomatically enhances democracy” and that “centralization is bad, while decentralization is good.”<sup>1</sup> Regarding centralization, Appleby (1962, 447) emphasizes the vital role of central government agencies in making democracy “responsive to the needs of the nation as a whole.”<sup>2</sup> Similar to the term “democratic decentralization,” the term “democratic local governance” is problematic, for it promotes the assumption that local governments are always more democratic than national governments. Governments, regardless of level, take a variety of form and democratic quality (Fesler 1965). “The *location* of decision making” alone “does not tell us everything about the nature of the decisions being made” (Bulpitt 1972, 299; emphasis in original).

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<sup>1</sup> Reviewing several empirical works in Third World development literature, Laryea-Adjei (2000, 13) forcefully argues that “the geography of centralism is the geography of underdevelopment.” The pursuit of development in developing countries requires the scaling-back of the central government and radical decentralization of administrative and fiscal authorities. Cohen and Peterson (1999) argues that centralization is incapable of delivering basic needs to “a burgeoning urban population, much less support a productive infrastructure that can promote economic growth and social welfare.”

<sup>2</sup> Blanchard and Shleifer raise a similar argument concerning the importance of centralization in ensuring the stability of a country’s political and administration system. In their comparative study of local governments in Russia and China, Blanchard and Shleifer (2001) find that the Chinese local governments have been active players in promoting the growth of new firms in their jurisdictions, while the Russia local governments have hindered growth due to a combination of taxation, regulation, and corruption. The two authors argue that the difference is attributable to the effectiveness of China’s central government in encouraging local governments to pursue growth-oriented policies and practices.

The complexity of each social and political context in which decentralization is pursued requires a comprehensive understanding of the confluence of those contextual factors. Hutchcroft (2001) laments that scholars have not yet developed comprehensive analytic guideposts for practitioners and analysts to assess and reform the central-local relations. The existing theory of decentralization contains certain doctrinaire assumptions that predetermine solutions to concrete problems (Fesler 1965). Certainly, decentralization can bring about enormously positive results. However, precisely defining it and analyzing its impact on development and democracy can be problematic because decentralization can be used and understood in many different ways and in different contexts (Conyers 1984).

Several scholars have attempted to construct comprehensive frameworks to understand the process of decentralization and its impact on administrative development and democracy. Although Hutchcroft is concerned that such attempts have thus far been futile, I argue that a number of workable analytic frameworks of decentralization exist and that each of these frameworks has its own strengths and weaknesses. Using these frameworks together and exploiting their analytic strengths help address each framework's weaknesses and ultimately assists researchers in understanding the complexities of centralization, decentralization, and central-local relations in different country contexts. In this chapter, I discuss two frameworks which highlight various facets of territorial decentralization:

1. The functional framework of decentralization;
2. The political-and-administrative framework.

### **The Functional Framework of Decentralization**

The functional framework considers decentralization as a process of reform consisting of public policies that transfer responsibilities, resources, and authority from higher to lower levels of government (Falleti 2005). The decentralization reform, whether intentionally designed or otherwise, contains many elements, each of which is capable of influencing the power relations within both government and society:

Decentralization now encompasses not only the transfer of power, authority, and responsibility within government but also the sharing of authority and resources for shaping public policy within society. (Cheema and Rondinelli 2007, 6)

There are two justifications for the functional framework. First, Cheema and Rondinelli (2007) argue that the taxonomy of decentralization based on the functions and resources transferred from national to subnational governments is consonant with the expansion of the governance concept. Formerly, governance was conceptually viewed as the decision-making process exclusive to the governmental institutions. However, with the rapid demographic changes at the end of the twentieth century, scholars and practitioners have come to extend the concept of governance to include “the right and obligation of citizens as members of a free

electorate mobilized through social organizations and the private sector” (Cheema and Rondinelli 2007, 6).

Second, because the functional framework focuses on the responsibilities, resources, and authorities allocated to the subnational governments, it reveals the overall pattern of changes in the central-local relations, especially how much power and resources shifted away from the central government (Schneider 2003; Falleti 2005). Further, Falleti (2005) adds that the functional framework portrays decentralization as a reform process in which success depends on the “institutional design” of decentralization-related policies, thereby refuting the doctrine that decentralization inevitably enhances the degree of socio-economic development and the quality of democracy. Manor (1995) argues that if decentralization is to have significant promise, it must be a mixture of political, administrative, and fiscal decentralization policies. Based on these two justifications, three types of decentralization policy can be distinguished (Table 3-1):

Table 3-1

## Functional Framework of Decentralization

Type of Decentralization	Type of Authority Transferred	Governance Concept	Sample Policy
<i>Political</i>	Planning/ electoral	Representation	1. Popular elections of top local government officials 2. Creation of local legislative councils
<i>Administrative</i>	Functional/ organizational management	Public service responsibility	1. Transferring certain public services to local governments such as education and health 2. Separation between national and subnational civil service systems
<i>Fiscal</i>	Revenue management	Allocative efficiency	1. Introduction of local taxes and fees 2. Some degree of subnational autonomy to borrow funds from lending institutions

**Political Decentralization**

In a decentralized political system, political actors and issues at the local level are as significant as those at the national level. Local political actors are at least partially independent from the national political actors (Fox and Aranda 1996). Schneider (2003, 39) argues that decentralization theories in political science emphasize “mobilization, organization, articulation, participation, contestation, and aggregation of interests.” The best way to summarize these functions is to use the

concept of representation, which refers to the way political institutions “map the multiplicity of citizen interests onto policy decisions” (Litvack, Ahmad, and Bird 2000, 6, as quoted and discussed in Schneider 2003). In most countries that pursue political decentralization, new constitutional amendments and electoral rules have been fashioned to activate or revive spaces for the representation of local interests. In other contexts, political decentralization policies gravitate toward the enhancement of local citizen representation in political decision making through civil society organizations, such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), social movements, interest groups, and citizen groups (Schneider 2003; Cheema and Rondinelli 2007). Concrete examples of this type of decentralization reform are constitutional amendments that strengthen the autonomy of local governing bodies, popular elections of local government officials who were appointed in the previous constitutional structure, and establishment of local legislative assemblies (Falleti 2005).

### **Administrative Decentralization**

Cohen and Peterson (1997) define administrative decentralization as the distribution of authority and responsibility of providing public services such as education, health, and public works from the higher to lower levels of government. Apart from the transfer of service responsibilities, administrative decentralization also involves the restructuring of a country’s civil service system. Schneider (2003)

points out that this dimension of decentralization has its root in one of the public administration theories that highlights the importance of administrative autonomy from central control. Hence, administratively decentralized systems are those in which local jurisdictions garner the discretionary autonomy and authority over local public personnel and public finances (Rondinelli 1981). Cohen and Peterson (1997) provide a more specific list of administrative responsibilities that should be transferred to the local governments: planning, budgeting, staffing, program and project implementation, information management, and operation and maintenance.

The degree of administrative decentralization varies in a continuum characterized by a low level of discretionary authority to a high level of discretionary authority. Rondinelli (1990) uses three terms (i.e., deconcentration, delegation, devolution) to describe this continuum. Deconcentrated administrative decentralization involves the lowest level of autonomy, followed by delegation. The highest degree of discretionary authority is possible through the devolution policy which allows quasi-autonomous local government units to exercise control over the transferred service responsibilities. Deconcentration represents a bureaucratic, hierarchical relationship which only changes the geographical dispersion of administrative responsibilities without significantly increasing the field offices' autonomy (Schneider 2003). Delegation involves a contractual relationship in which the national government transfers service responsibilities to the semi-autonomous local governing bodies that remain accountable to the

national government (Schneider 2003). The national government control and supervision remain intact, but to a lower degree than in the hierarchical relationship founded in the deconcentration scenario. Devolution involves an arm's length relationship in which local governments are accountable to the national government "insofar as the central government can impose its will by threatening to withhold resources or responsibility from the local unit" (Schneider 2003, 38).

### **Fiscal Decentralization**

This dimension of decentralization deals with the challenge of allocating public resources to the government level that maximize social welfare (Musgrave 1958; Oates 1972). Schneider (2003, 36) uses local government expenditures and revenues as measurements of fiscal activities at the local level because the two items "comprise the total amount of money that governments put into or take out of an economy as well as where governments put the money and where they take it from." Other scholars disagree with the use of both subnational expenditures and revenues to measure the degree of fiscal decentralization. Falleti (2005) points out that only revenues are the valid measurement of fiscal decentralization.

Expenditures, on the other hand, are part of administrative decentralization.

According to Falleti, this analytical distinction helps avoid confusion when the processes of transferring expenditure authority and revenue collection authority do not go hand in hand, resulting in contradictory outcomes such as "centralizing

decentralization” (Wibbels 2004).

Often, these three dimensions of decentralization are in practice found together (Laryea-Adjei 2000). As a multi-dimensional reform process, decentralization could proceed with both successes and setbacks, depending on the way in which the three dimensions interact (Parker 1995; Schneider 2003; Sharma 2005). For example, as the degree of political decentralization increases, the degree of administrative decentralization may increase or decrease, depending on the pre-decentralization central-local relations. Or, the interaction could be more complex; decentralization along two dimensions enhances or sabotages decentralization along the third dimension (Sharma 2005).

Synchronization of the political, administrative, and fiscal dimensions is an important, but challenging, policy design issue. Parker (1995) likens this policy design issue to making a soufflé which requires the right amount of essential ingredients and the right way to cook. Other scholars emphasize the sequence in which political, administrative, and fiscal decentralization reforms take place. Wildasin (1989) and Martínez-Vázquez and Boex (2001) argue that political decentralization should precede fiscal decentralization because the local governing bodies need to have a certain degree of discretionary authority, legitimacy, and accountability to their constituents before they can be responsible for fiscal decision making and local public service delivery. O’Neill (2003) and Falleti (2005) offer a similar argument that if the political decentralization reform takes place first, it is likely to enhance the capacities of local government officials and citizens to

oppose any recentralization attempt. Based on her analysis of the decentralization reform in Latin America, Falleti (2005) further extends her argument to emphasize the potential of political decentralization to induce coordination among the local actors to demand for further decentralization in the other two dimensions.

The decompartmentalization of decentralization into the political, administrative, and fiscal dimensions facilitates an understanding of the multi-dimensionality of changes in the governance landscape and central-local relations. Based on this taxonomy, scholars offer a variety of conceptual and empirical frameworks to expose the dynamics and complex interactions among the three dimensions of decentralization. Yet, these frameworks have several weaknesses. For instance, the conceptual boundary between administrative and fiscal decentralization is often porous and scholars still disagree over what to use as the measurement of fiscal decentralization. Most research on decentralization use service responsibilities of local governments to measure the degree of administrative decentralization. However, service responsibilities are also expenditures that some scholars include in their measurement of fiscal decentralization (Falleti 2005). As mentioned earlier, this confusion leads to the invention of certain contradictory terms such as “centralizing decentralization” (Wibbel 2004) to describe the situation in which the central government committed to macroeconomic stability curtails the local autonomy to borrow money from external lending institutions, while delegating service responsibilities to subnational governments.

Another weakness is the assumption underlying the sequential theory of decentralization that political decentralization makes local governments more accountable to citizens and ought to precede fiscal decentralization. Again, as previously discussed, several empirical works highlight the disjuncture between political decentralization and the degree of local democratic accountability. In certain instances, area specialists who study the consequences of decentralization in Southeast Asia demonstrate that political decentralization has actually undermined democratic accountability mechanisms at the local level and reinforced the political influence of local strongmen.

### **The Political and Administrative Framework of Decentralization**

Some scholars offer caveats and observations about the application of the functional framework to a specific decentralization context. The common concern among these scholars is that the functional taxonomy lacks the analytical power due to its insufficient attention to the central-local and state-society relations prior to decentralization (Agrawal and Ribot 1999). The use of the functional framework without being informed about the pre-decentralization structure of national-subnational government relations could lead to wrong diagnosis of the governance problem.

Hutchcroft's political and administrative framework addresses these weaknesses. Before one can assess the impact of decentralization on development

and democracy, Hutchcroft (2001) argues that it is necessary to understand the complexities of decentralization and centralization in both politics and administration. In his analytical framework, Hutchcroft defines politics as partisan or electoral politics, encompassing legislatures, elections, political parties, and patronage system, while administration is the realm of military and civilian bureaucracies. The framework also integrates the analyses of centralization and decentralization by constructing a continuum that captures variation among particular administrative systems. The utility of this centralization-decentralization continuum lies in its ability to assist a comparative study of decentralization—whether cross-national or diachronic.<sup>3</sup> As shown in Table 3-2, Hutchcroft poses several questions to articulate the politics and administration variables along the centralization-decentralization continuum.

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<sup>3</sup> This model helps address the two different types of variation: the variation of central-local relations that exists between countries and the variation of central-local relations that exists within the same country across time (Hutchcroft 2001).

Table 3-2

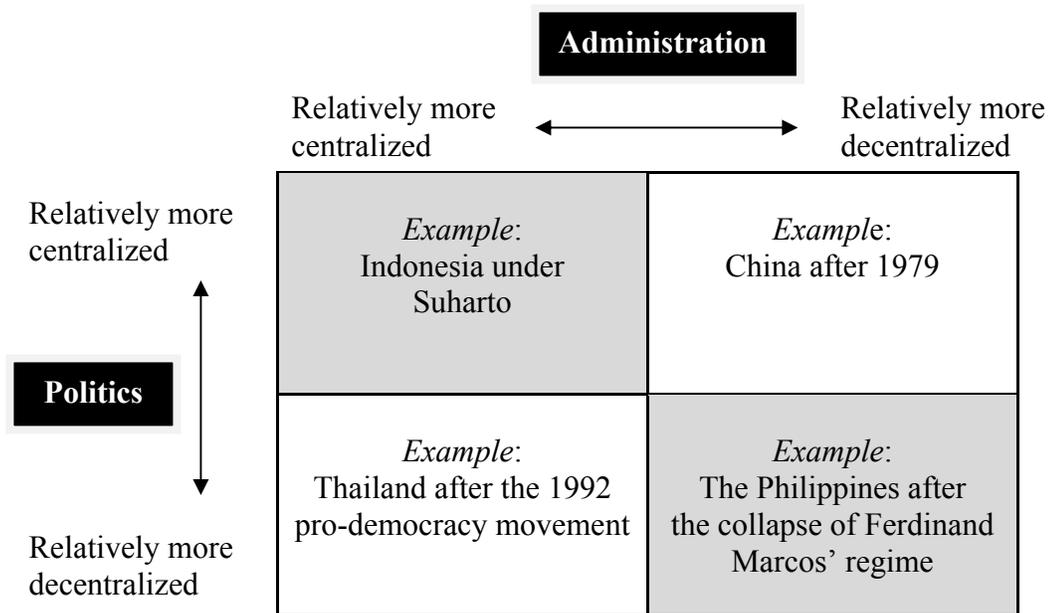
Questions for the Politics and Administration Variables in Hutchcroft's  
*Political and Administrative Framework*

Variable	Question*
<b>Politics</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are local executives appointed by popular vote?</li> <li>2. Are there effective mechanisms for popular participation at the local level?</li> <li>3. Are there municipal, provincial, state, and/or regional legislative bodies with substantial decision-making authority?</li> <li>4. Is there a concentration of socioeconomic and/or coercive power in local patrons and bosses?</li> <li>5. Is there a national legislature with significant decision-making authority?</li> <li>6. If there are effective legislative bodies, do they function within a parliamentary or a presidential system?</li> <li>7. Are national legislators elected or appointed?</li> <li>8. To what extent does the electoral system provide for representation of local or regional interests in the national legislature?</li> <li>9. Are political parties organized along national or local/regional lines, and what is their level of internal cohesion?</li> </ol>
<b>Administration</b>	To what extent are administrative structures insulated from party patronage?

Source: Adopted from Hutchcroft 2001, 34-37.

Hutchcroft's analytical model proceeds in two steps. First, the model identifies two different continua of centralization and decentralization, one for the political realm and the other for the administrative realm. Second, Hutchcroft combines the two continua in a two-by-two matrix (Figure 3-1). With this framework, analysts can move beyond the "commonly used blanket generalizations about the character of a polity as a whole, and more clearly distinguish the

territorial dimensions of the administrative sphere from those of the political sphere” without neglecting one or the other (Hutchcroft 2001, 38).



Source: Hutchcroft 2001, 39.

Figure 3-1: The Political and Administrative Framework of Decentralization.

Yet, despite its analytical quality that complements the functional framework, Hutchcroft’s political and administrative framework inadequately addresses the administrative dimension of central-local relations. Certainly, insulation from patronage politics is crucial to public administration. Nonetheless, partisan politics is not the only issue that compromises the advancement of the public interests. While articulating the

political variable much more elaborately, the political and administrative framework overlooks other components of administration, such as control over expenditures and revenue sources and organizational management.

Inadequate attention to the administrative dimension is nothing new in the recent literature on decentralization. Between the 1960s and the 1980s, exemplars of public administration scholarship examined the impact of decentralization on public administration (e.g., Kaufman 1969, Rondinelli 1981; Ornstein 1983). However, over the past few decades, the growing body of scholarship places much emphasis on decentralization as a process which alters the patterns of local political competition, civic engagement, and intergovernmental fiscal relations. Amid this trend in the contemporary decentralization literature, little is known about the impact of decentralization on local bureaucratic behavior, particularly on the ways in which these appointed officials, while getting enmeshed in a complex web of rules and regulations from various levels of government, must deal with the diversity of social groups and actors who are eager to make their legitimate claims to the local government decision making process.

My dissertation attempts to bridge this empirical gap by systematically examining the impact of territorial decentralization on municipal chief administrators. Specifically, it evaluates the outcome of the decentralization reform in Thailand which began in 1997 and compares it against the outcome of the state constitutional reform in Illinois which began in 1970 with the introduction of the

home rule authority. Through the quantitative analysis of primary and secondary data and qualitative analysis of several in-depth interviews, I seek to unravel the factors or mechanisms that influence the degree of public professionalism among Thai and Illinois municipal chief administrators in decentralized governance. As extensively defined in Chapter 2, the contemporary notion of public professionalism gravitates toward the act of balancing diverse, and sometimes conflicting, expectations and accountabilities, as opposed to adhering to only one or two types of accountability system. The importance of public professionalism so defined intensifies, as a polity embarks on its pursuit of territorial decentralization.

### **History of Central-Local Relations in Thailand**

#### **Thai Public Administration and Municipal Government before Decentralization**

In Thailand, the emergence of a municipal government system (*Thesaban*) paralleled that of the modern public administrative system. Thai leaders in the late nineteenth century adopted the Western administrative models, primarily the British and French colonial practices, to reform the country's traditional administration (Wit 1961; Christensen, Dollar, Siamwalla, and Vichyanond 1993; Pasuk and Baker 2005). King Rama V (1868-1910) initiated the *Chakkri* Reformation—the administrative reform movement that transformed the traditional administrative structure to a collection of functional bureaucratic agencies (Likhit

1973).

The nineteenth-century aristocratic reformers as well as their military and bureaucratic successors in the Constitutional Monarchy era were primarily concerned with the stabilization of the country's macroeconomic health and consolidation of territorial control (Unger 2003). They favored the centralization strategy which dictated the relationship between Bangkok and the municipal governments until the 1997 decentralization reform.

Among the European administrative practices that were fashionable in the British colonies, aristocratic leaders of the *Chakkri* Reformation era experimented with the municipal government system first in Bangkok in 1897. The reformers referred to Bangkok's municipal government as *Sukhaphiban*, or sanitary district, which was responsible for trash collection, sewage management, and slaughterhouse inspection and licensing. In the first decade of the twentieth century, the *Chakkri* reformers institutionalized the sanitary district system by propagating the Local Government Act in 1914 and established more sanitary districts in the Greater Bangkok area and in some parts of the country, charging them with the same service responsibilities as the Bangkok sanitary district (Jansen and Choedchai 2009). Yet, despite the attempt to develop the local government capacity, the *Chakkri* reformers restricted the scope of responsibilities for the sanitary districts and placed them under the centralized bureaucratic supervision of the Department of Provincial Administration (DoPA)—one of the most powerful administrative agencies in the Ministry of Interior (MoI). After King Rama V's

death, the major disruption of the development of municipal self-government occurred when King Rama V's successor abolished the sanitary district system.

However, the local government issue resurfaced and took the center stage of political and administrative development after the end of the absolute monarchy in 1932. The new regime consisting of high-level bureaucratic and military officials enacted the Public Administration Act of 1932 and the Municipality Act of 1933. The former delineated the country's administrative structure into the national, provincial, and local levels, all of which still remained largely intact until the present (Figure 3-2). The latter established municipal governments in the urban areas and upgraded several sanitary districts that were abolished during King Rama VI's reign to the municipality status. The responsibility and authority of controlling and supervising coordination among these different regional and local government units rested with the MoI and DoPA. Hence, the central-local relations after 1932 did not deviate much from the version under the absolutist rule. The provincial administrative structure mimicked the British colonial apparatus designed for effective control of rural areas (Arghiros 2002).

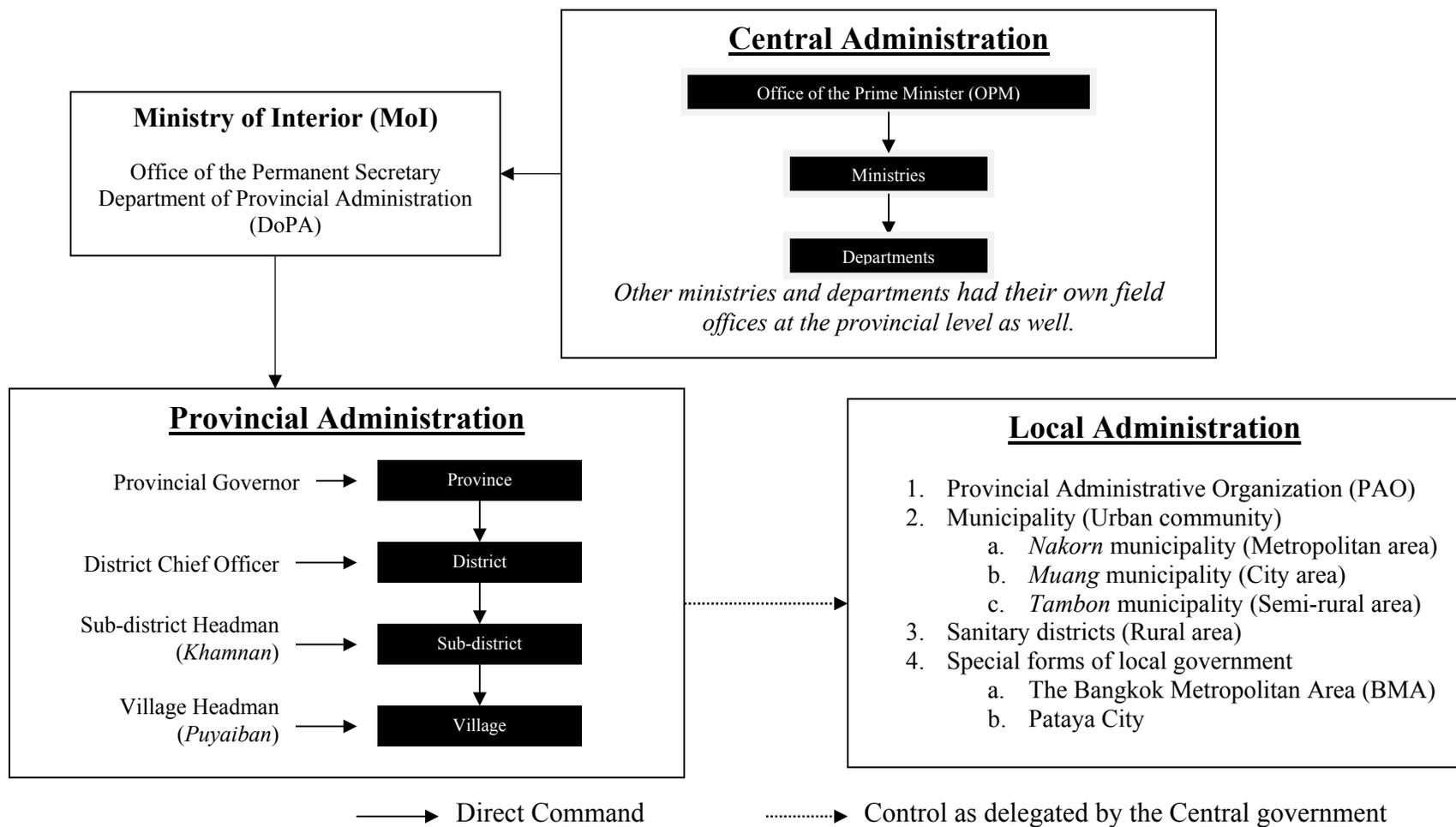


Figure 3-2: Territorial Structure of Thai Administrative System before the 1997 Decentralization Reform.

In 1953, the Thai parliament enacted another piece of legislation to replace the Municipality Act of 1933. The 1953 law divided Thai municipalities into 3 categories based on population size and density (Table 3-3). If a municipality has more than 50,000 residents, it qualifies as a “metropolitan municipality” (*Thesaban Nakorn*). If a municipality’s population size is between 10,000 and 50,000, it is a “city municipality” (*Thesaban Muang*). For municipalities with fewer than 10,000 residents, the elevation to the “sub-district municipality” (*Thesaban Tambon*) requires a royal charter.

Table 3-3

## Types of Thai Municipality with Population Size

Type	Population Requirement
<i>Thesaban Nakorn</i> (Metropolitan Municipality)	> 50,000
<i>Thesaban Muang</i> (City Municipality)	10,000-50,000
<i>Thesaban Tambon</i> (Sub-district Municipality)	< 10,000

Source: Adopted from The Municipality Act of 1933.

Due to political instability, the laws governing Thai municipalities frequently changed. The 1953 parliamentary act, however, serves as the foundation for subsequent municipality-related laws and establishes the basic governmental structure and a range of administrative responsibilities for a Thai

municipality. Thai specialists offer several observations about the Thai municipal governments and their relationship with the national and provincial governments prior to the 1997 decentralization reform. Amorn (1996) observes that the central government controlled almost all aspects of local public administration. A review of the Thai public administration laws verifies Amorn's observation. Regardless of a municipality's population size and local preferences, the 1953 act determined the governmental structure for every municipality by mandating the mayor-council form of government, set the term limit for mayors and municipal council members, and entrusted the supervision of municipal government affairs to the provincial governors—the appointed central government bureaucrats sent directly from the MoI headquarter in Bangkok.

Local citizens were allowed to choose members of the municipal council in a direct election. However, the provincial governors reserved the exclusive right to nominate and appoint the mayor and council president upon the municipal council's approval (Mutebi 2005). The 1953 law even contained a provision entitled "Measures for Controlling Municipal Government" which delegated the task of overseeing the conduct of elected and appointed municipal officials to the MoI provincial officers (e.g., provincial governors, district officers) and enabled them to suspend from office any municipal officials who did not abide by the

central government rules and policy directives.<sup>4</sup>

In addition to the mayors and municipal councilors, the MAs were another group of public officials at the apex of municipal government. Prior to decentralization, Thai MAs were responsible for managing internal municipal government affairs and delivering certain public services (Thailand Municipality Act of 1953). Supasawad (2008) examines the allocation of functional responsibilities and budgetary resources among various levels of government prior to the decentralization reform and finds that the central and provincial governments assumed responsibility for many important functions and left the unimportant functions to the local government. For example, central and provincial administrations were responsible for education, public health, agriculture, tourism, communication and transportation, and industry and commerce. Municipal governments, on the other hand, were assigned minor sanitary functions, such as street cleaning, garbage collection, slaughterhouse inspection, management of open-air markets, and maintenance of cemeteries and crematoria. Mutebi (2004) and Achakorn (2007) note that even for this limited scope of responsibilities, municipal governments lacked adequate economic and fiscal foundation and had to rely on transfers and grants from the central government. And even though the central government official policy placed fiscal and personnel management under MAs' responsibility, the MAs in practice had little autonomy in the two spheres of

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<sup>4</sup> Mutebi (2004) describes the provincial governors' authority in suspending decisions made by local authorities or even dissolving the entire local legislative bodies. In addition, he states that the central government agencies were the ones that designed, financed, and implemented important local development programs.

management (Achakorn 2007).

Since important public policies and programs flowed downwards from the central government and because the central government decisions took precedence over municipal government decisions, MAs had no significant incentive to take heed of decisions made by the mayors and municipal councils. Moreover, appointed officials at the municipal government level, including the MAs, were part of the national civil service taskforce under the MoI direct command (Figure 3-3). The MoI administered the selection, appointment, transfer, and termination processes. Due to the close supervision by several central government agencies and the MoI centralized bureaucratic system, a typical Thai municipality lacked autonomy in almost all aspects of governing in the centralization era (Achakorn 2007).

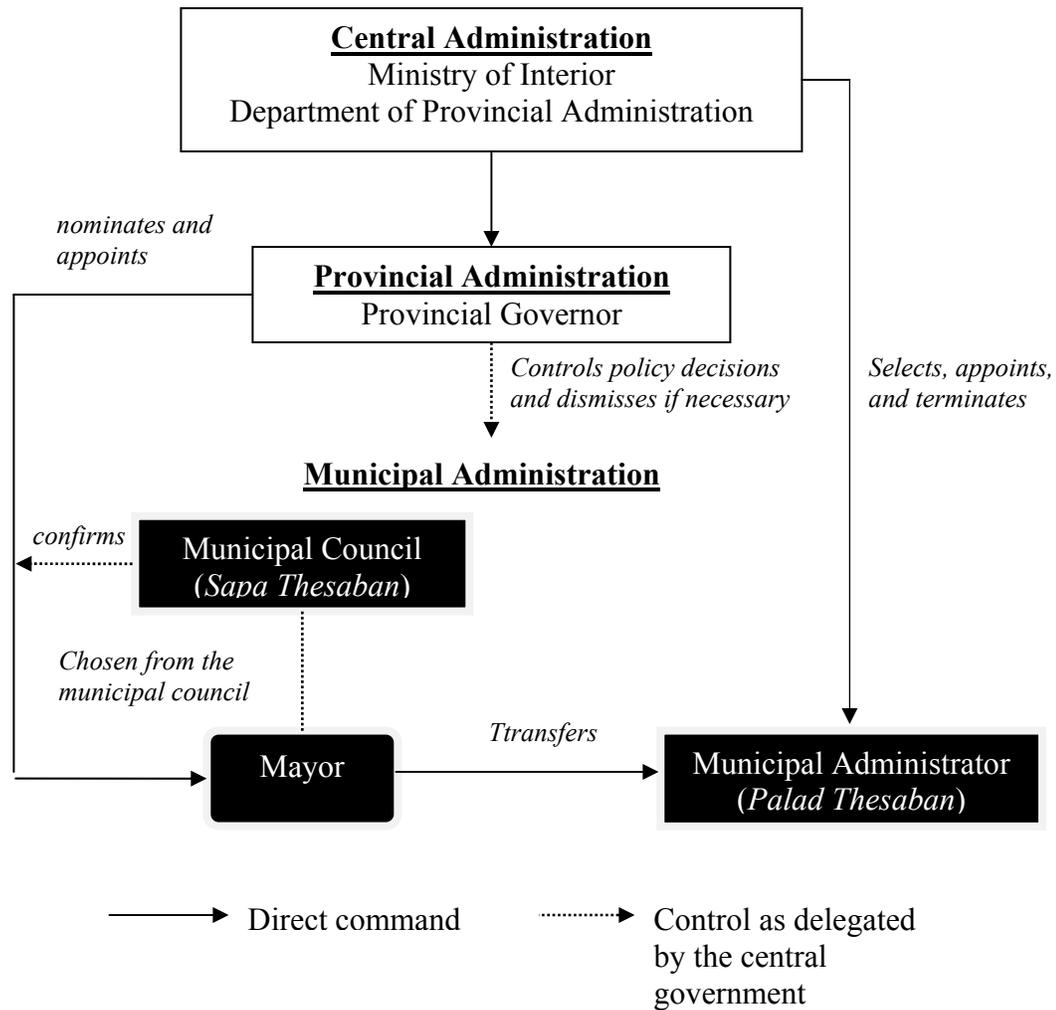


Figure 3-3: Internal Structure of Thai Municipal Government prior to the Municipality Act of 1953 (amended 2001).

### The Decentralization Reform and Thai Municipal Government

The process of territorial decentralization in Thailand officially began with the promulgation of the 1997 constitution. However, the demand for decentralization took shape several decades prior. In the 1950s and 1960s, several

efforts were mounted to induce self-governance in the rural areas, but to no avail. In the aftermath of the 1973 pro-democracy movement against the military-dominated government, Thai academics forcefully argued in favor of decentralization and promoted it as a means to nurture participatory governance at the local level (Morell and Chai-anan 1981). Yet, the dearth of public enthusiasm prohibited the idea of decentralization from gaining further momentum. The shift in Thai public opinion towards decentralization occurred, as Thailand sought the World Bank's financial assistance amid the early 1980s economic recession and agreed to the Bank's structural adjustment program which included decentralization (Nagai, Ozaki, and Kimata 2007). However, the shift in the public opinion was not dramatic enough to pressure the central government to abandon its centralized control over local governments.

In the 1990s, several factors were involved in the real changes in Thailand's central-local relations. In the international arena, the spirit of democratization that developed in many parts of the world reached Thailand in the early 1990s. The 1991 military coup d'état and the junta's reluctance to give up control heightened the pro-democracy movement and convinced the Bangkok and urban middle class to stage street protests against military authoritarianism in May 1992. The landscape of Thai administrative politics altered significantly after the 1992 pro-democracy movement. Several years ago, the central government bureaucracy led by the MoI played an almost insuperable role in determining the policies and programs concerning provincial and local administrations. The MoI's political

influence over the national policy-making process gradually faded and the ministry has since had to collude with provincial politicians and national parliamentarians in order to preserve its organizational interests. The political dynamics surrounding the drafting and enactment of several decentralization-related laws illuminate this important change.

For instance, the *Sub-district Council and Sub-district Administrative Organization Act of 1994* (commonly referred to as the TAO law<sup>5</sup>) reflected the mutual benefits and tacit collusion between the MoI bureaucrats and national politicians (Achakorn 2007). The TAO law establishes legislative bodies at the sub-district level which the national politicians, sub-district headmen, village headmen, and the MoI bureaucrats recognize that they could reap benefits from (Achakorn 2007). Another example is the passage of the *Provincial Administrative Organization (PAO) Act in 1997*, which removes the centrally appointed provincial governors from the *ex officio* chair position of the PAO and creates the PAO chief executive position.<sup>6</sup> This law preserves the provincial administrative system by maintaining the provincial governor position, while giving the PAO's more discretionary authority.

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<sup>5</sup> In Thai, the act is referred to as "the *Tambon Council and Tambon Administrative Organization Act of 1994*." *Tambon* in Thai means sub-districts.

<sup>6</sup> In the 1997 law, The PAO chief executives were selected from among the PAO council members. In 2003, the PAO act was amended to require a direct election of the PAO chief executives (Supasawad 2008).

Two other factors contributing to the decentralization reform in Thailand were the global public management reform and the 1997 currency crisis. The confluence of these two factors drove the central government to pursue more decentralization policies. In the new public management, public choice, and public finance literatures, decentralization is considered as a tool to correct government inefficiency and “debureaucratize” public service delivery (e.g., Buchanan and Tullock 1965; Oates 1972; Barzelay and Armajani 1992). As Thailand recovered from its financial meltdown and sought help from the international donor institutions, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) included decentralization in its structural adjustment program for Thailand. Similarly, the Japanese government through its “Miyazawa” plan<sup>7</sup> distributed funds to support the decentralization process, specifically targeting the sub-district level (Nagai, Ozaki, and Kimata 2007).

The decentralization movement culminated in the 1997 constitution.<sup>8</sup> Unlike previous constitutions, the 1997 constitution contained an extensive and comprehensive provision on local government autonomy (Supasawad 2008). After the constitutional ratification, the Thai parliament passed at least 10 decentralization-related pieces of legislation (Supasawad 2008). Among these

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<sup>7</sup> The “Miyazawa” plan was named after Japanese Finance minister Kiichi Miyazawa who revealed the Japanese government plan to address the currency crisis at the Asian-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) conference in 1998.

<sup>8</sup> After staging the military coup d’etat against Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra in September 2006, the Council for Democratic Reform under Constitutional Monarchy abrogated the 1997 constitution. However, the subsequent constitution which was ratified in 2007 still contains an elaborate provision on local government.

parliamentary acts, the Determining Plans and Process of Decentralization Act of 1999 authorizes the formation of the national decentralization commission charged with delineating the local government functions, planning the decentralization process, and enforcing the decentralization policies (Supasawad 2008).

Figure 3-4 shows the current territorial structure of Thai public administration after the enactment of the 1994 TAO law and the promulgation of the 1997 constitution. The current administrative structure warrants several observations. The provincial administrative structure remains largely intact, while the number and type of local governments have increased (Table 3-4). As demonstrated in Table 3-4, Thailand currently has 7,852 local governing bodies, including the Bangkok Metropolitan Area (BMA) and Pattaya. Although much of its influence over local government has dwindled, the MoI remains an important player in local politics and administration. The newly created Department of Local Administration (DoLA), formerly the Office of Local Administration under DoPA, has become an important central government agency in charge of supervising the local governing bodies.

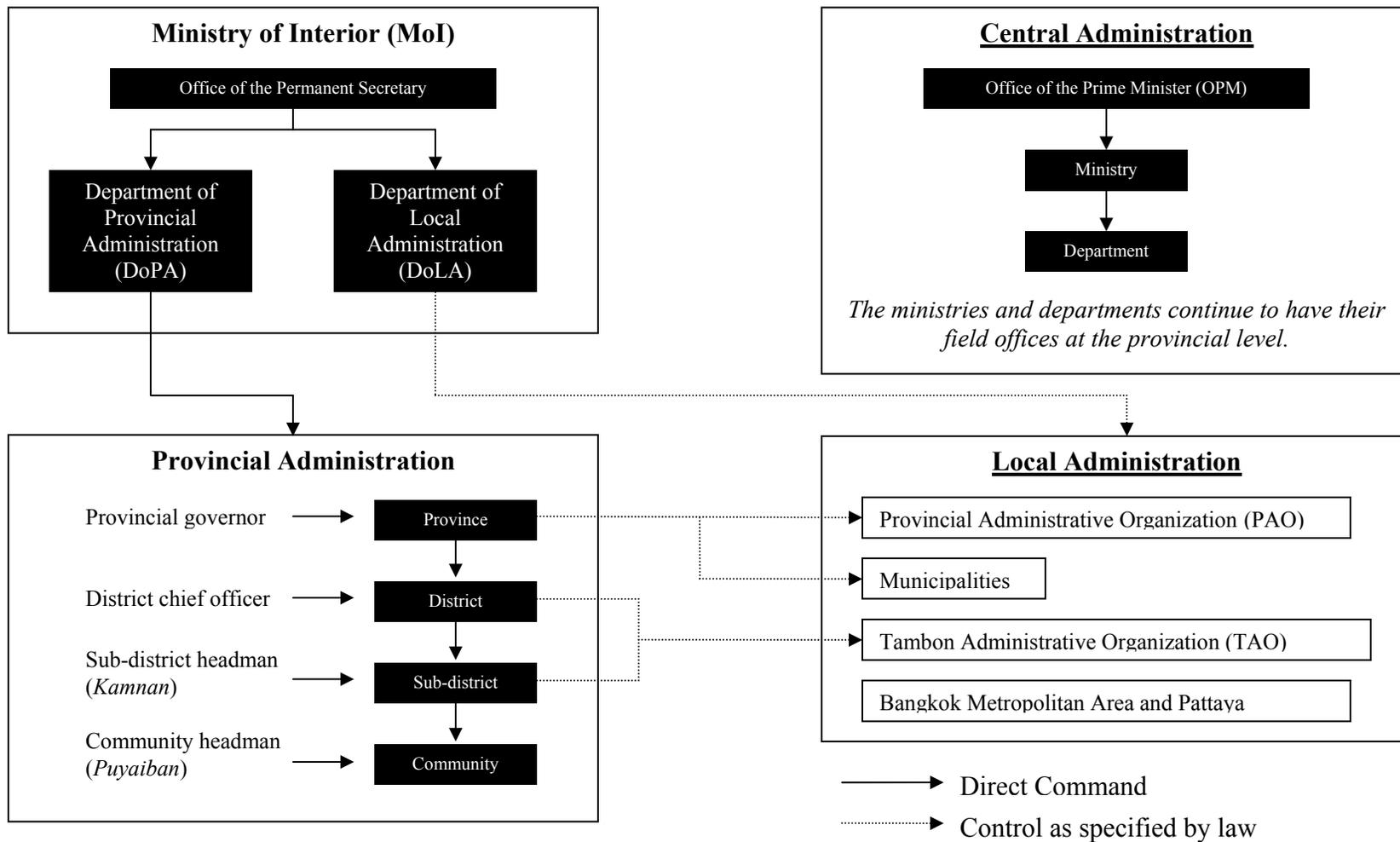


Figure 3-4: Territorial Structure of Thai Administrative System after the 1997 Decentralization Reform.

Table 3-4  
Number of Thai Local Governments  
(As of September 30, 2010)

Type	Number
Provincial Administrative Organization (PAO)	75
Municipality	2,008
<i>Nakorn</i> Municipality	25
<i>Muang</i> Municipality	142
<i>Tambon</i> Municipality	1,841
<i>Tambon</i> Administrative Organization (TAO)	5,767
Special Administrative Organization	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7,852</b>

Source: Department of Local Administration 2010.

The 1997 constitution and decentralization-related laws also resulted in the restructuring of some local authorities (Supasawad 2008). The governmental structure of municipalities underwent a dramatic overhaul. In 2000, the parliament adopted several amendments to the Municipality Act of 1953. No longer does the MoI have the constitutional or legal authority to mandate a certain form of government for the municipalities. The 2000 law now allows local citizens to choose through a local referendum between the mayor-council form of government with popularly elected mayor and the council form with no popularly elected mayor. However, Thai municipalities have not yet taken advantage of this law to modify

their governmental structure. All Thai municipalities use the mayor-council form of government with the popularly elected mayor (*Nayok Tesamontri*) and municipal councilors (*Tesamontri*) elected by ward.

Under the current administrative structure, municipal governments have also been vested with more functional responsibilities. The law specifies both compulsory and optional functions for municipal governments (Table 3-5). In the past, certain functions were reserved for the central and provincial governments, such as educational services (e.g., primary schools and vocational colleges) and public health. However, it must be noted that the municipal management of these functions is still in its early stage of development. Some of these functional responsibilities are unfunded mandates. Often, the municipalities' own source of revenues does not match their mandated duties and expenditures. They must rely on intergovernmental transfers from the MoI and earmarked loans from the Municipal Development Fund administered by DoLA to finance their operations. However, instead of using explicit formula and standard cost-benefit analysis, the central government's allocation criteria are heavily politicized (Mutebi 2005).

Table 3-5

## Compulsory and Optional Responsibilities of Thai Municipalities

<i>Tambon Municipality</i>	<i>Muang Municipality</i>	<i>Nakorn Municipality</i>
<u>Compulsory Services</u>	<u>Compulsory Services</u>	<u>Compulsory Services</u>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maintenance of law and order</li> <li>2. Provision and maintenance of roads/ sidewalks, public space, and refuse and trash disposal</li> <li>3. Prevention of infectious diseases</li> <li>4. Fire protection</li> <li>5. Education</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maintenance of law and order</li> <li>2. Provision and maintenance of roads/ sidewalks, public space, and refuse and trash disposal</li> <li>3. Prevention of infectious diseases</li> <li>4. Fire protection</li> <li>5. Education</li> <li>6. Clean water</li> <li>7. Slaughterhouse inspection</li> <li>8. Community medical centers</li> <li>9. Public restrooms</li> <li>10. Street lights</li> <li>11. Drainage</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maintenance of law and order</li> <li>2. Provision and maintenance of roads/ sidewalks, public space, and refuse and trash disposal</li> <li>3. Prevention of infectious diseases</li> <li>4. Fire protection</li> <li>5. Education</li> <li>6. Clean water</li> <li>7. Slaughterhouse inspection</li> <li>8. Community medical centers</li> <li>9. Public restrooms</li> <li>10. Street lights</li> <li>11. Drainage</li> <li>12. Other public health and social services</li> </ol>

(Continued on following page)

Table 3-5 (Continued)

<b><i>Tambon Municipality</i></b>	<b><i>Muang Municipality</i></b>	<b><i>Nakorn Municipality</i></b>
<u>Optional Services</u>	<u>Optional Services</u>	<u>Optional Services</u>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provision of market, ferry, and harbor facilities</li> <li>2. Maintenance of cemeteries and crematoria</li> <li>3. Provision of employment benefits</li> <li>4. Commercial development</li> <li>5. Clean water</li> <li>6. Slaughterhouse inspection</li> <li>7. Community medical centers</li> <li>8. Drainage</li> <li>9. Public restrooms</li> <li>10. Street lights</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provision of market, ferry, and harbor facilities</li> <li>2. Maintenance of cemeteries and crematoria</li> <li>3. Provision of employment benefits</li> <li>4. Commercial development</li> <li>5. Provision and maintenance of hospitals</li> <li>6. Other necessary public utilities</li> <li>7. Sport stadiums and wellness centers</li> <li>8. Vocational schools</li> <li>9. Public parks and zoos</li> <li>10. Other public health services</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provision of market, ferry, and harbor facilities</li> <li>2. Maintenance of cemeteries and crematoria</li> <li>3. Provision of employment benefits</li> <li>4. Commercial development</li> <li>5. Provision and maintenance of hospitals</li> <li>6. Other necessary public utilities</li> <li>7. Sport stadiums and wellness centers</li> <li>8. Vocational schools</li> <li>9. Public parks and zoos</li> <li>10. Other public health services</li> </ol>

Source: Mutabi 2005, 21.

Municipalities have the option of borrowing from commercial banks, but only for the revenue-generating purposes and with the approval of the MoI and the Ministry of Finance (MoF) (Mutebi 2005). In his study of *Nan* municipality in Northern Thailand, Mutebi (2005) finds that the unfunded mandates and limited revenue sources induce the *Nan* municipality to defer some of its functions or transfer them to the provincial field offices of certain central government agencies (e.g., the Department of Public Works). Also, Mutebi observes that the most effective revenue-enhancing strategy for the *Nan* municipality is to lobby DoLA for the particular projects it needs done.

Thai MAs also encounter new challenges in this administrative structure. While still belonging to the national civil service and being officially under the MoI's direct command, the MAs now have to be accountable to the mayors who are elected at large by citizens. Before decentralization, the mayors had less authority and autonomy from the municipal councils and provincial governors. After decentralization, mayoral authority is now similar to the presidential authority in the separations-of-power system (Tatchalerm, Wood, and Thurmaier 2008; Interview with Professor Chandra-nuj Mahakanjana, October 5, 2010). That is, under the current structure, mayors consider themselves as the municipal government's chief executives and political leaders with the ultimate authority to manage both intra-organizational affairs and public service responsibilities. Hence, they expect politically responsive MAs, but often grumble that their MAs too rigidly conform to the central government rules, regulations, and policy directives

(Chandra-nuj and Tatchalerm 2010).

Furthermore, in the post-decentralization era, the appointment, transfer, and termination procedures differ from those in the pre-decentralization era. The Local Government Personnel Management Act of 1999 creates the National Commission on Local Government Personnel Standards and places it under the MoI auspices. The commission further breaks down into several commissions, including the National Commission on Municipal Government Personnel. At the provincial level, there is a provincial commission on municipal government personnel which reports to the national commission. The provincial governor is the chair and *ex officio* member of the provincial commission. The commission's responsibilities are, but not limited to, establishing the qualification criteria for municipal government personnel, supervising the transfer of MAs, setting the appraisal and promotion criteria, managing the local government personnel pensions, and conducting ethics investigation of municipal government officials.

The local government personnel commission system adds another layer of complexity to municipal administration. The mayors do not initially appoint, initiate an ethics investigation of, suspend, and terminate their MAs. If an irresolvable conflict arises between the mayor and the MA, the mayor could petition to the provincial commission for consideration to transfer the MA to another municipality (Tatchalerm, Wood, and Thurmaier 2008).

The central-local relations in Thailand after the decentralization reform pose several important questions for both academics and practitioners in politics and

public administration. Has decentralization encouraged popular participation in local politics?

If judged by the current structure of municipal government, the Thai decentralization policy has a strong political dimension. Not only does it demarcate the local legislative and executive functions, the Municipality Act of 1953 (amended 2000) also makes the mayor a popularly elected position. The strong-mayor-council structure provides the electoral mechanism for local citizens to participate in their local government decision making by allowing them to directly choose the person to lead the municipal administration. However, the existing scholarly works provide mixed evidence on the relationship between political decentralization and grassroots democracy in Thailand. The electoral mechanism may have strengthened the local bosses and businessman-cum-politicians in several cases (Achakorn 2007), but there are also cases which demonstrate the positive impact of decentralization on local civic engagement (Weerasak 2004).

Another question concerning the Thai decentralization reform is whether decentralization has augmented the revenue-generating and administrative capacities of municipal government. The fiscal and administrative dimensions of the central-local relations have not changed as dramatically as the political dimension. Each Thai municipal government struggles to match its revenues with the expanded list of mandates and service responsibilities. The revenue-generating authority is limited and so is the ability to borrow from commercial banks and other financial institutions. Administrative decentralization is also weak and this

weakness is indicative of the central bureaucracy's dominance over the administrative reform process (Unger 2003; Tatchalerm 2009; Supasawad 2010). Particularly concerning personnel management, the national and provincial commissions on municipal government personnel maintain the exclusive authority over the selection, appointment, transfer, and termination procedures. In terms of appraisal and salary increases, the municipalities must abide by the central government statutes determined by the national and provincial commissions on local government personnel standards. As Figure 3-5 illustrates, the Thai MAs in the decentralized administrative structure are agents who serve two principals. On the one hand, they now have to work hard to advance the mayors' policies and programs. On the other, their careers depend on the mercy of the national and provincial commissions on municipal government personnel which are under the MoI's direct command.

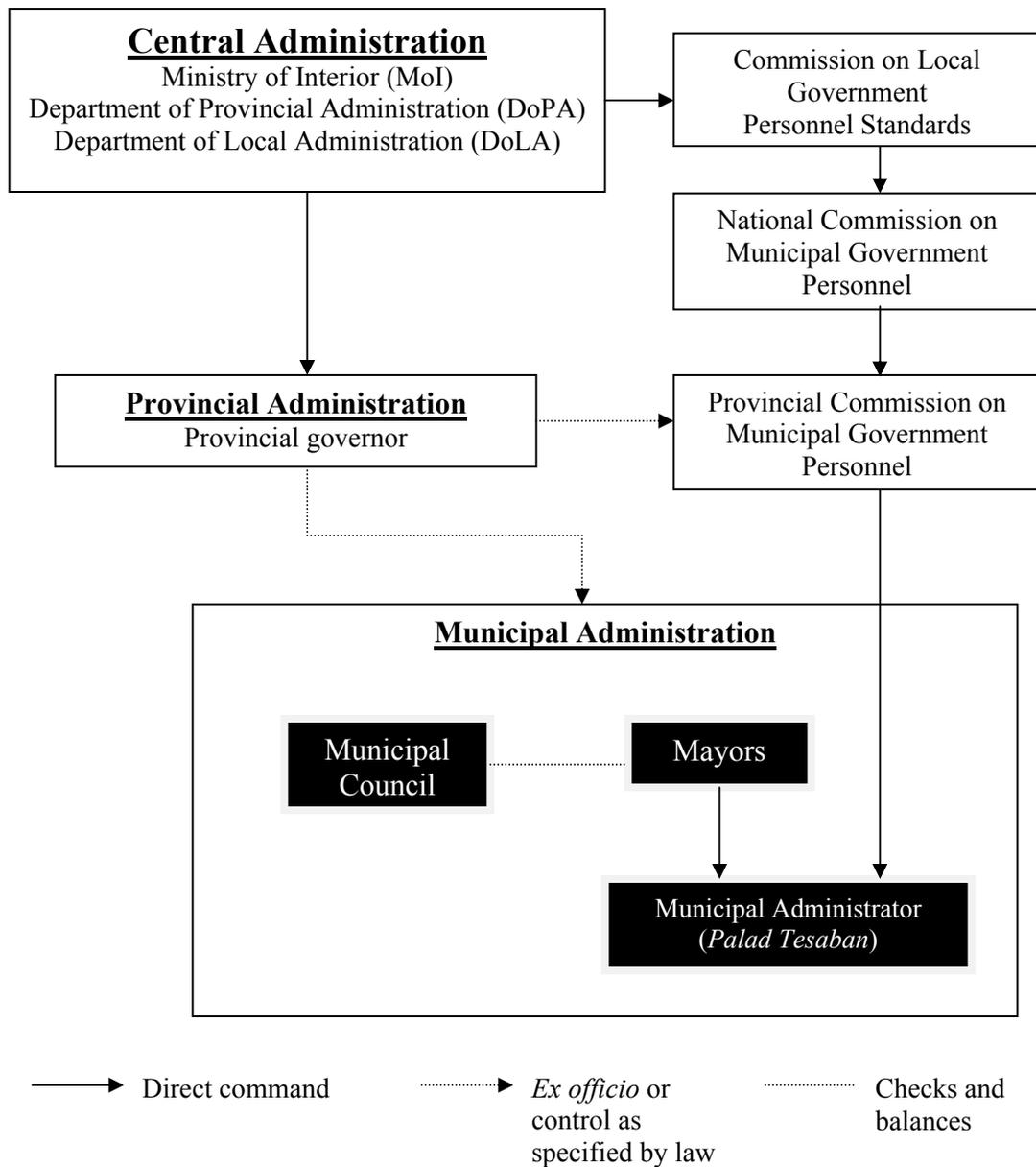
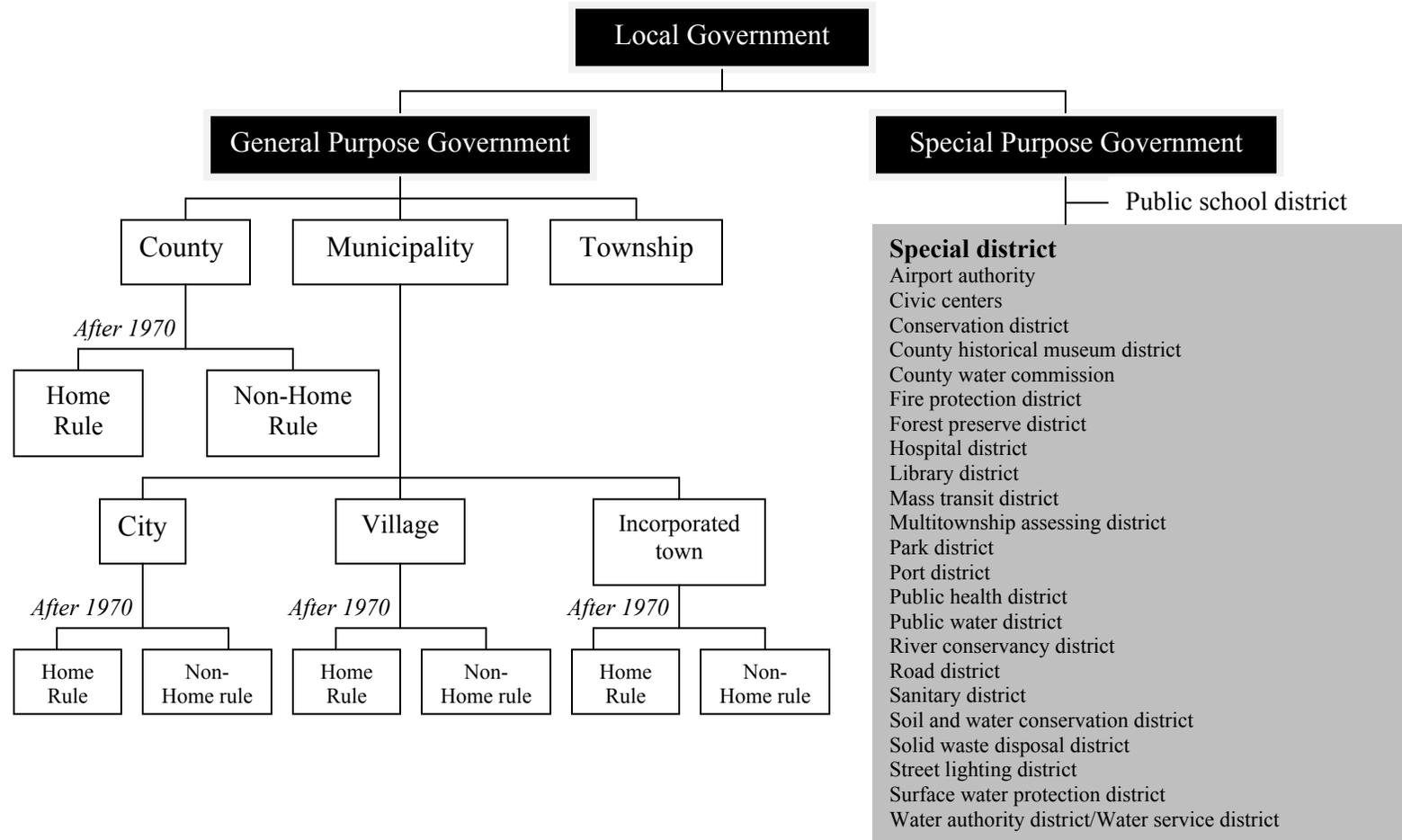


Figure 3-5: Internal Structure of Thai Municipal Government after the Enactment of the Municipality Act of 1953 (amended 2001).

## History of State-Local Relations in Illinois

### Overview of Illinois Municipal Government Responsibilities and Structures

Since the late nineteenth century, local governments in the United States have gradually become the governments of last resort in managing the problems of the society they serve (Banovetz 1994). The last half of the twentieth century witnessed a vast expansion of local government service functions, growing public distrust of national and state governments, and dramatic changes in laws and statutes governing local government operation. Local governments in Illinois are not exempt from this generalization. The Illinois local governments consist of two types: general purpose and special purpose governments (Figure 3-6). While the Thai public administrative system has been designed largely for territorial control, the structure of Illinois local governments reflects the diverse pattern of arrangements for providing local public services. Certain public services such as law enforcement and streets fall under the responsibility of general purpose governments, which include counties, municipalities, and townships (Walzer 1995). Single purpose governments or special districts are responsible for a single public service function. Examples of the single purpose government are library districts, sewerage districts, water supply districts, and public school districts. According to the 2007 Census of Governments, Illinois had 6,994 units of local government, 1,299 of which are municipal governments (Table 3-6).



Source: Flickinger and Murphy 1990

Figure 3-6: Classification of Illinois Local Governments.

Table 3-6

Number of Local Governments in Illinois (2007)

<b>Governmental Type</b>	<b>Number</b>
County	102
Municipality	1,299
Township	1,432
School District	912
Special District	3,249
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,994</b>

Source: The United States Bureau of the Census (2007).

Illinois municipalities, including cities, villages, and incorporated towns, are service-oriented. They offer a wide array of services, such as police and fire protection, zoning, water supply, constructing and maintaining public hospitals, traffic control, and management of recreational areas (Chicoine and Walzer 1985; Burris 1990). Under the 1970 state constitution, home rule municipalities, unless prohibited by the state statutes, have the autonomy to decide which services they provide to meet the local demands. Contrariwise, municipalities without the home rule authority are required to obtain the “enabling legislation” from the state legislature to perform specific functions (Kopecky and Harris 2001).

In contrast to all Thai municipal governments that use the same governmental structure, the Illinois municipal governments use a variety of

governmental structures. My study focuses on the two dominant forms of American local government in which career local government administrators serve as the chief administrative officers: the council-manager form and the mayor-council form (Anderson 1989; Frederickson, Johnson, and Wood 2004).<sup>9</sup> Similar to the Thai MAs, the chief administrative officer of an Illinois municipality is responsible for a variety of administrative functions, such as internal management of municipal government affairs and coordination of municipal public services. However, the way in which Illinois CMs and CAOs are appointed and dismissed differs from the Thai procedures. In the council-manager cities, the council and the mayor (or council president) appoint the CM, “who serves at the council’s pleasure, directs administrative operations, appoints administrative officers, advises the council on matters of policy, and answers to the council for the performance of all administrative departments” (Anderson 1989, 25). Although the CM does not have a vote or a veto power in the council meetings, he/she has the discretionary authority and autonomy in policy formulation and execution.

In the mayor-council cities, the chief administrative officer is referred to as city administrator (CAO). Sargent (1990, 62) observes that the mayor-council form is not really a form of government, but “a legislative device adopted by

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<sup>9</sup> Other typological frameworks of American city government exist in the public administration literature. Frederickson, Johnson, and Wood (2004) develop a framework that places the council-manager prototype (administrative cities) and the mayor-council prototype (political cities) on a continuum with the “adapted cities” in the middle. The adapted cities in the Frederickson, Johnson, and Wood taxonomy are the local governments that exhibit characteristics of both the political and administrative cities. However, for the purpose of my research, I use the conventional classification of city governments to examine how the way in which city managers and administrators are appointed and dismissed influence the degree of their professionalism as measured by the ability to balance the bureaucratic, legal, political, and professional accountabilities.

municipalities which seek a full-time administrator without the permanency of the manager form of government.” Under this system, the mayor or the mayor and municipal council appoint the CAO who serves at the appointing authority’s pleasure (Anderson 1989). The CAO’s administrative authority varies, depending on the municipal ordinances or the council’s decision. The CAO may be given as much authority as the CM in a council-manager city in policy development and implementation (Sargent 1990). The CAO may be designated as the administrative head of all municipal government departments or may be given only the authority to implement policy under the mayoral leadership (Sargent 1990).

The city manager position could be traced back to the early twentieth-century Progressive movement for professionally competent administrative leadership in city governments.<sup>10</sup> Yet, despite the difference in the appointment process, both the CM and CAO are required to advise and serve their citizen constituents and the elected officials and must also comply with the state statutory laws that specify the boundary of their municipal government responsibilities. They are different from Thai MAs in that they do not belong to the civil service system of any higher-level government; the appointment process and determination of their terms in office rest with the elected municipal government officials (Interview with Greg Kuhn, October 13, 2010).

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<sup>10</sup> In 1914, the Village of Glencoe was the first city in Illinois to adopt the council-manager form of government.

### **Illinois State and Municipal Governments before the 1970 Constitutional Reform**

Before 1970, Illinois municipalities' discretionary authority was limited. As creatures of the state government, municipal governments possessed no administrative autonomy and decision-making power, unless authorized by the General Assembly. Even though the state-local relations dramatically changed in 1970 with the introduction of the home rule authority, some Illinois municipalities still operate under the restrictive interpretation of municipal authority.

While the United States as a federal state has had only two constitutions since its independence<sup>11</sup>, Illinois has undergone four constitutions since its statehood began: the constitutions of 1818, 1848, 1870, and 1970. Lousin (2010) observes the changing pattern of political and administrative preferences in the four constitutions. The 1818 Constitution was aristocratic and embodied many neo-federalist elements, including the preference for strong centralized state government, which were fashionable in the United States during that time (Lousin 2010). The county governments were mentioned in the constitution, but only with respect to the electoral procedures for county commissioners, sheriffs, and coroners. The constitution did not mention, specify, or guarantee the autonomy and functional responsibilities of municipal government (Sargent 1990). Presumably,

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<sup>11</sup> It is a typical misconception that the United States has had only one constitution since its independence. In fact, prior to the Constitution of 1787, the United States used the Articles of Confederation, which was effective one year after the country declared independence from Great Britain in 1776.

the constitution's drafters showed no interest in local government because Illinois was sparsely populated at the time. The creation of a municipal government in Illinois fell under the state's legislative authority. The General Assembly passed special legislation to charter new municipal governments (Sargent 1990).

After the rise and consolidation of Jacksonian democracy, Illinois abrogated the 1818 Constitution and ratified a new one in 1848 which was an example of "frontier populism" (Lousin 2010) and reflected the strong public distrust of government at the time. The number of elective positions in the state government increased exponentially as well as the constitutional and statutory restrictions on the state and local governments. The 1848 Constitution still had no specific reference to the establishment and operation of municipal governments. The Illinois municipalities continued to be the General Assembly's creatures through the legislative adoption of municipal charters. Municipalities created through a special act of the Illinois General Assembly are referred to as incorporated towns. The only development in the 1848 Constitution with regard to the local government issues was the creation of townships at the option of local voters (Prussing 1990).

Due to the social and economic upheavals after the Civil War and too many restrictions on the state government imposed by the 1848 Constitution, the Illinois government reformers adopted a new constitution in 1870 (Lousin 2010). This constitution governed Illinois for a hundred years until its abrogation in 1971 after the 1970 Constitution became effective. As in the 1818 and 1848 constitutions,

municipal government was omitted from the 1870 constitutional provisions. This omission established the notion that municipal governments ought to be limited in authority and fully subordinated to the General Assembly (Banovetz and Kelty 1987). This restrictive interpretation of municipal government authority was commonly known as Dillon's rule (*Ultra Vires*), which reflected the popular distrust of government due to rampant corruption in the mid-nineteenth-century municipal government (Interview with Professor Jim Banovetz, September 10, 2010). What was different about the 1870 Constitution is the prohibition of the General Assembly to enact all forms of special legislation; the incorporation of municipalities which was one form of special legislation was no longer allowed.

Instead, the 1848 Constitution required that all laws enacted by the state government be of general application. The General Assembly adopted the Municipal Code, which dictated the establishment, financing, and operation of municipal government (Sargent 1990) and applied equally to all municipalities (Froehlich 1990). The general application of the Municipal Code was problematic for the Illinois municipal governments because it did not give them adequate authority to manage their municipal problems. Municipal government units were required to seek the General Assembly's authorization in order to address specific problems in their municipal boundaries. This led to a legislative practice of enacting a long list of statutory laws applicable to specific municipal governments (Interview with Professor Norman Walzer, October 12, 2010). Kopecky and Harris (2001) note that often the state legislators in the General Assembly who hailed

from the rural areas in Southern Illinois did not understand and were irresponsive to the Northern urban needs. This lack of understanding became an urban-rural political division that triggered the decentralization reform in the late twentieth century (Interview with Professor Jim Banovetz, September 10, 2010).

Another difficulty stemmed from the restriction on the municipalities' ability to seek more revenue sources and borrow money to finance their public services. However, the restriction on local government financing was rather unintentional. Kopecky and Harris (2001) assert that the 1860s reformers had no need to pay attention to the financing issue. Illinois in the 1860s was in the midst of an economic boom due to the growth of Chicago as the Midwest's railroad and transportation hub. Government revenues were high and the demands for government services low. However, the twentieth-century economic conditions differed; Illinois municipal governments were in need of more revenues to finance their expanding service responsibilities. The restriction on revenue-enhancing options and debt limitations coupled with the growth in public demands for government services led the Illinois municipal government to form special districts. These special districts still exist today and serve a variety of functions, including parks and recreational services, public education, and sewerage. By going around the revenue restriction and debt limitation and forming more special districts, the number of local government units in Illinois constantly increased.

### **Illinois Municipal Government after the 1970 Constitutional Reform**

In 1970, Illinois ratified a new state constitution which is still currently in use. Unlike the previous constitutions, the 1970 constitution devotes a separate provision to the local government subject. Dramatically different from the 1870 Constitution that required general application of the state's statutory laws to all municipalities, the 1970 constitution confers upon certain municipalities home rule authority—the most drastic change and most important contribution to the art of public administration (Banovetz and Kelty 1987). Previously, municipal governments were presumed to possess neither the administrative autonomy nor discretionary authority, unless granted by the state's statutory laws. The 1970 constitution reverses this presumption by the home rule constitutional provision in which the home rule municipal governments possess all the governing powers, except those explicitly denied to them by the General Assembly and the State Supreme Court.

The home rule authority represents a form of decentralization and conforms to the principle of self-government. Home rule municipalities could tailor legislative policies and programs to their community needs without having to request permission from the state government. As Froehlich (1990) notes in his analysis of the Illinois home rule:

Home rule carries with it the obligation to exercise local power and authority responsively, responsibly, and effectively. The power is great. Home rule includes the ability to consider action where the applicable laws provide no solution, provide an inadequate, incomplete, ineffective, or partial solution, or even provide that the solution may not be used. Home rule municipalities may act even in the face of many proscriptive laws. (226)

However, the home rule authority is not absolute. The 1970 Constitution does not grant the home rule authority to all local jurisdictions. Some other states (e.g., Kansas, Iowa) give the home rule authority to all municipalities, regardless of their size (Dorsey and Lash 2009). However, the Illinois home rule authority is applicable to only three cases. First, a county with the elected chief executive officer automatically becomes a home rule jurisdiction. Second, the home rule status is also granted automatically to any municipality with a population greater than 25,000. Third, municipalities with fewer than 25,000 residents may choose by referendum to become home rule entities. As Froehlich (1990) summarizes, Illinois counties and municipalities may receive the home rule authority by population, form of government, or by election.<sup>12</sup>

After a municipality becomes a home rule unit, the reversal to the Dillon's Rule entity remains possible. Citizens could vote in a referendum to rescind their communities' home rule status. For example, citizens in the cities of Lisle, Lombard, and Rockford voted to remove their cities' home rule authority. The General Assembly also reserves the exclusive authority to deny, limit, or remove the home rule authority, as municipalities are technically the creatures and

<sup>12</sup> As of February 2, 2010, there are 201 home rule municipalities in Illinois (Illinois Municipal League's webpage: <http://www.iml.org/page.cfm?key=2>).

subdivisions of the state. Nonetheless, the General Assembly has yet to deny or remove the home rule authority. It has however enacted a series of laws restricting the home rule authority in certain areas. Consider the three following instances. First, with regard to the municipal government employees' right to unionize, the General Assembly enacted the Public Labor Relations Act which grants all government employees the freedom of association for the purpose of negotiating wages and employment conditions with their respective public organizations. Second, over the years, the General Assembly also broadened its legislative authority, while constraining the home rule authority on certain businesses and commercial activities. The state government through the legislative adoption of a general law prohibits the home rule municipalities from setting their own minimum age for the purchase of alcoholic beverages (Banovetz 2001). Third, the General Assembly passed a statutory law protecting the statewide retirement program and pension fund for municipal government employees.

Apart from the General Assembly, the Illinois supreme and appellate courts have served an important role in interpreting the home rule provision and determining the boundary of the home rule municipalities' authority. Even though the 1970 constitution explicitly provides that the home rule authority "shall be construed liberally," the supreme and appellate courts over the years have inconsistently upheld the liberal interpretation (Banovetz 2001). The court decision was liberal on a particular issue for a certain home rule jurisdiction, but militated against the authority of other home rule jurisdictions. In the local government

financing topic, for instance, the State Supreme Court ruled in favor of Cook County's sale of the general obligation bond without holding a referendum and the City of Chicago's employer expense tax (Kanello v. County of Cook 1972; Paper Supply v. Chicago 1974). The court, however, ruled against Waukegan's utility tax which exceeded the state statutory limits (Waukegan Community Unit School District v. Waukegan 1983).

Local governing financing is a major development in the 1970 constitutional reform. The constitution permits home rule municipalities to levy any taxes necessary for local purposes. However, there are several restrictions on the home rule municipalities' tax authority. Income, earnings, and occupation taxes are beyond the home rule tax authority. The General Assembly has also disallowed the home rule municipalities from levying a sales tax, but allowed them to increase the local portion of the state sales tax up to 2.5 percent within their jurisdictional boundaries (Banovetz and Kelty 1987). Another financing option is the property tax which the state government sets no statutory limitations on the amount each home rule unit can collect. In their evaluation of the way in which the Illinois home rule municipalities use their constitutional tax authority, Banovetz and Kelty (1987) find that the home rule units rely less on property tax, than their non-home rule counterparts. Instead, the home rule municipalities tend to shift the local tax burden to non-residents by increasing their portion of the state sales tax and by levying tax on other activities, such as hotels, motels, and restaurant food and beverage.

Where do the CMs and CAOs fit in the home rule reform? Certainly, the home rule authority has made city management less difficult for chief administrators in the home rule jurisdictions. No longer do they have to be concerned with seeking the infamous “enabling legislation” from the General Assembly to perform the necessary public service functions. Also, since the home rule authority accompanies the autonomy to diversify and increase their own revenue sources, the CMs and CAOs in home rule units are less concerned with insufficient revenues than those in non-home rule jurisdictions. Hence, a local problem that needs to be solved urgently may now be solved without having to go through the bureaucratic hurdles in getting the state legislature’s authorization. However, there are still many political constraints, such as the city council and local citizens, that the CMs and CAOs have to overcome.

Yet, the home rule provision is subject to judicial review and interpretation by the General Assembly. By and large, Illinois home rule municipalities remain the state government’s creatures and subdivisions. As previously discussed, the General Assembly and the courts have on many occasions taken away certain functions from the home rule entities. In addition, the state statutory laws still complicate certain aspects of municipal government operations, particularly personnel management; some municipal government positions are still subject to the state civil service statute (Sargent 1990). For instance, police officers and firefighters must pass a civil service examination and the promotional criteria are

established by the state civil service system.<sup>13</sup> Certain home rule municipalities (e.g., Peoria and Urbana) still use the state civil service system to appoint their police officers and firefighters (Interview with Greg Kuhn, October 13, 2010).

Yet, the 1970 local government reform did not spawn significant changes in the way the CMs and CAOs are appointed and dismissed (Interview with Professor Jim Banovetz, September 10, 2010). The authority to appoint and dismiss the municipal chief administrators still rests with the local corporate bodies. The reform has, however, complicated the work environment of those chief administrators in the home rule jurisdictions. As Froehlich (1990, p. 233) observes, “constitutional home rule in Illinois is in large measure a delicate balance of power between the general assembly and the home rule units.” This is because in almost every feature of Home Rule, the state legislature has the constitutional power to prevail. As they are charged with managing local affairs and implementing the locally determined policies and programs, the CMs and CAOs in the home rule municipalities bear considerable responsibility of ensuring that their municipal governments do not abuse their new found powers. As Caiden (2000) envisions, the Illinois chief administrators serve as a link between the local elected officials, local citizens, and the state government agencies. Even in the non-home rule municipalities, the chief administrators must contend with multiple role expectations.

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<sup>13</sup> The city police chiefs and deputy police chiefs are exempt from the state civil service requirements (Interview with Greg Kuhn, October 13, 2010).

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter, a review of several scholarly works on the pitfalls of territorial decentralization revealed the complexity of analyzing and implementing the decentralization policy. The three facets of decentralization described in the functional framework and the centralization-decentralization continuum in Hutchcroft's political and administrative framework provide a strong analytic foundation for further studies of decentralization reforms in every political unit that has renegotiated its central-local relations.

Illinois, marred by the urban-rural divide, restructured its state-local relations in 1970, Thailand, under the domestic pressure to establish democratic rule at the grassroots, began to relax the central government control over local communities in 1997. During the process of decentralization, a similar sentiment against the higher-level government's centralizing behavior arose in Thailand and Illinois. The Thai central government and the Illinois state government were both accused of being insensitive and irresponsible to the local demands. However, the reform outcomes in Thailand and Illinois are markedly different.

In the political dimension, the decentralization laws in both polities may have empowered local citizens to choose the form of municipal government and vote in a referendum to effect changes in their municipal government operations. In practice, Thai local citizens have not taken full advantage of such power. As Weerasak (2004) observes, citizens in several Thai municipalities have participated

in formulating certain local laws and programs. However, they have not been able to alter the formal structure of their municipal governments. Although the law specifically allows citizens to change the governmental structure through a referendum, all Thai municipalities throughout the country still operate under the mayor-council form of government.

On the other hand, Illinois voters in many municipalities have not been reluctant in bringing about drastic changes to their communities. Many cities with fewer than 25,000 residents became the home rule units through a referendum, while some home rule municipalities lost their home rule privilege because local citizens voted in a referendum to rescind it. The contrast between Thai and Illinois experiences with political decentralization indicates that the relationship between decentralization and local civic engagement is conditional, rather than absolute.

In the administrative dimension, the scope of service responsibilities devolved to Thai municipalities is limited. On the contrary, the Illinois municipalities are responsible for a wide range of essential public services, such as public safety and economic development. The home rule municipalities are expected to provide even more services, as they now possess the discretionary authority to do so, unless otherwise prohibited by the state statutes. Municipalities without the home rule authority, although required to seek the legislative approval for their administrative authority and responsibility, provide more public services than their Thai counterparts. Even though the devolution of service responsibilities to the Thai municipalities is still ongoing, a number of factors are likely to

constrain the service orientation of Thai municipalities, including the overlapping of service responsibilities between the field offices of certain central government agencies and the municipal government.

Fiscal decentralization in Thailand is weaker than fiscal decentralization in Illinois. As Mutebi (2005) argues, a Thai municipality's fiscal health largely depends on transfers from the central government who also places several restrictions on a municipal government's ability to generate own sources of revenues and to borrow from commercial banks. In Illinois, the home rule units can determine the property tax rate and up to 2.5 percent of a local sales tax and have the autonomy from the General Assembly to make borrowing decisions. However, not all Illinois municipalities possess the home rule authority. The state's municipal code requires those municipalities still under Dillon's Rule to seek the legislative approval to generate more revenue sources, to make borrowing decisions, and to add more public services to the list already provided by the statutory law. Yet, regardless of the national context and degree of autonomy from the central government, the municipalities are at the bottom of fiscal food chain. Further, local political constraints in Illinois and national legal constraints in Thailand militate against giving municipal governments carte blanche to determine the tax rate and tax base structure.

In Thailand and Illinois, appointed officials in municipal government work in the complex arrangement of central-local and state-local relations. The Thai Ministry of Interior and the Illinois General Assembly were influential actors in the

relationship between central/state and local governments prior to decentralization. Even though their influence subsided after decentralization, the Thai Ministry of Interior and the Illinois General Assembly have not entirely departed from the overall administrative scene. They still retain their control over the municipalities in many aspects of governing. However, under certain circumstances, they have to work with the local elected officials who now have the popular and electoral mandate to lead their communities.

Given the complexity of the decentralized administrative structure, how do municipal chief administrators in Thailand and Illinois respond to the expectations of diverse actors who claim legitimate access to the municipal government decision making? To what extent do they manage or balance these legitimate expectations and an increasingly diverse set of accountability systems? My study argues that the ability to balance the diverse, and sometimes conflicting, accountability systems is indicative of the municipal chief administrators' degree of public professionalism. Then, the central research question concerns the factors that enhance the degree of public professionalism among appointed municipal government officials. The next chapter will explore these factors and delineate the research design and methodology employed to answer the research questions.

## CHAPTER 4

### PUBLIC PROFESSIONALISM FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Municipal chief administrators sit at the apex of municipal government leadership along with the local elected officials. Mouritzen and Svava (2002, 7-8) borrow the idea of the leadership apex from Self (1972), who “visualizes the governmental process as an arch with the left arc representing the political process and the right arc representing the administrative process.” What Mouritzen and Svava overlook in their analysis is that there are always greater arches above the local government arch. Even as territorial decentralization begins to unfold, local government authorities remain engulfed in a complex mesh of relationships among different levels of government. It is inappropriate—both theoretically and practically—to posit that the central government’s formal authority and influence dissipate after territorial decentralization and that local government autonomy and discretionary authority would be high in the decentralized structure. An analysis of the challenges facing local government in the decentralized structure requires an understanding of the overall governance system in which the central and local governments inhibit and interact with one another (Bulpitt 1972).

The focus of this chapter is to develop a conceptual framework of the chief administrators’ public professionalism in managing their municipal governments based on a preliminary analysis of qualitative interview data. The public

professionalism framework uses the chief administrators' ability to balance multiple accountabilities to measure their degree of public professionalism. Two scholarly works provide a theoretical grounding for this model. As discussed in Chapter 2, Romzek and Dubnick (1987) conceptualize four distinct systems of democratic accountability to which contemporary public organizations must pay attention. Svara (2007b) proposes the ethic triangle framework which I use to support the idea of balancing multiple accountabilities.

This chapter justifies the public professionalism model and discusses how public professionalism in the decentralized governance is measured. After the measurement strategy is identified, this chapter presents the research hypotheses to test the relationships between public professionalism and different variables.

### **Public Professionalism in Decentralized Governance**

After decentralization, local governments become more visible to the public than in the past. The professional conduct of local appointed officials who are primarily responsible for executing public policies and programs and ensuring their local government's normal operation has come under the limelight. As Nalbandian (1991, 104) notes, local government is becoming "a political and social as well as an economic unit....managers cannot deal with the one without attending to the other." Hence, in the normative terms, public professionalism can be achieved by the balance of all accountability approaches. However, in practice, this

interpretation of public professionalism is neither easily attainable nor automatic under the decentralized governance. Next, I will discuss each of the four accountability approaches and the possible consequences of over- and under-utilization of each approach.

### **Political Accountability**

In this study, municipal chief administrators' political accountability is defined as their responsiveness to local citizens through elected officials; namely, mayors and municipal councils. Nalbandian (2006, 1057) argues that the chief administrative officers' role is to understand that "elected officials represent citizens in the absence of direct democracy." Nalbandian's view is consonant with the first tenet of the ICMA Code of Ethics, which states that their members must "be dedicated to the concepts of effective and democratic local government by responsible elected officials" and also with the sixth tenet that "elected representatives of the people are entitled to the credit for the establishment of local government policies." However, this does not mean that there is or should be a strict separation between policy formulation and policy implementation in municipal government. In practice, policy making is a shared responsibility between elected and appointed officials (Svara 1985). The governing body is responsible for enacting policy, while the chief administrative officer assists the

elected officials by developing technical analyses of the policy impact and impact of alternative choices.

A chief administrative officer ought to respect the governing body's policy enactment authority and try to understand the elected officials' perspectives (Nalbandian 1994). Nalbandian (1994) further observes that as the political environment in which local elected officials make policy decisions becomes more complex (e.g., severe budget constraints, diverse population), chief administrative officers must take the complex political environment into consideration when making policy recommendations. Nevertheless, after the governing body makes a decision, the chief administrative officer "must get behind it fully and ensure that the administration does the same" (Stenberg 2005, 17).

Territorial decentralization is assumed to strengthen political accountability at the local level (Turner and Hulme 1997). Yet, even though decentralization increases the opportunities for citizen participation in local government decision making, it does not necessarily increase participation (Riedel 1972). In ordinary circumstances, the citizen demands tend to funnel through the elected officials who have been granted more authority and legitimacy in the decentralized structure. Municipal chief administrative officers ought to understand this complicated aspect of decentralized governance, their advisory role in the policy-making process, and the obligation to be responsive to local elected officials who now represent an increasingly diverse electorate.

Sociologist Max Weber used two terms to encapsulate the possible flaws of under-utilizing political accountability among public administrators (Weber 1978). First, the lack of political accountability could result in *Beamtenherrschaft* (centripetal administrative authority), in which the administrative officers take over the role of democratic government or deviate from the pursuit of the objectives determined by the people's representatives (Page 1985; Lane 2005). Second, under-utilizing political accountability could also result in *Satrapenherrschaft* (centrifugal administrative authority), where "a diversified set of more or less autonomous bureaus co-operate with external groups outside the state" (Lane 2005, 130). *Beamtenherrschaft* and *Satrapenherrschaft* are both possible in the decentralized setting if local governments remain in the orbit of central government influence. For instance, Nelson (1998) and Mutebi (2005) documented the behavior of Thai local government officials in two provinces after the ratification of the 1997 constitution and the adoption of the 2001 decentralization law and found that the local bureaucrats still perceived and conducted themselves as central government officials. Both *Beamtenherrschaft* and *Satrapenherrschaft* in the two Thai cases are likely to be detrimental to the local public welfare because the public administrators with little responsiveness to local elected officials would only be occupied with advancing the central government objectives (or their own sectoral interests). Yet, what is absent from this evidence is whether such behavioral pattern is prevalent throughout Thailand.

Overutilization of political accountability in the decentralized governance structure could also compromise the public interest by increasing the risk of capture by local elites (Shah 2006). In certain political and administrative settings where feudal or industrial interests dominate the participatory and accountability channels, decentralization may increase the opportunity of patronage politics and corruption through distribution of local government jobs and contracts to political supporters.

### **Legal Accountability**

In addition to increased political responsiveness, appointed officials are expected to be beholden to the rule of law *sine irae et studio* (without anger and fondness). Legal accountability in this study refers to the chief administrators' attention to the local, regional, and national laws.

According to Moe and Gilmour (1995, 143), the legally based principles of public administration protect the citizenry from “an overbearing, arbitrary, and capricious use of government power.” In their view, no new public administrative framework can be a substitute for legal accountability. At the apex of leadership, chief administrators who are responsible for delivering municipal government services must maintain their commitment to equal treatment of all citizens. However, the legal accountability approach in the decentralized governance is complex, as rules and regulations exist at multiple levels of government. Hence, not only are local appointed officials expected to be politically responsive to locally

elected officials and abide by local ordinances, they must also have proficient knowledge of the national laws.

Too much use of the legal values (e.g., due process, neutrality, liability) could compromise the public interest if public administrators consider the rule of law to be the ultimate goal that they must advocate. In fact, rules and regulations only serve as the systems of control and surveillance that prevent abuses and undesirable ways of managing public affairs (Snijkers 2005). Overutilization of legal accountability could transform the relationship between municipal government and local citizens into a coercive one (Vigoda 2002; Vigoda-Gadot 2004), hampering the participatory channels for citizens and social groups. As citizens and local government officials are subordinate to the laws made by elected officials, their participation in law making and policy deliberation is limited to the ballot box (Bekkers 1998). Hence, as citizens can only express their discontent in an election once every four or five years, public administration could be seen as not responsive to the citizen needs (Snijkers 2005).

Similar to the underutilization of political accountability, the lack of attention to the rule of law is also detrimental to the general public welfare. Local public administrators' disrespect for legal values would likely give rise to a number of administrative pathologies, such as nepotism, corruption in public employment and contracting, abuses of citizen rights, and unfair treatment of certain groups of citizens. These pathologies would damage the legitimacy of local democratic

governance, as citizens become disappointed by corrupt practices that emerge from the dearth of legal accountability among local administrators.

### **Bureaucratic Accountability**

Bureaucratic accountability is another accountability approach of which chief administrators must be mindful as they work to ensure the normal operation of municipal government. In this study, I define bureaucratic accountability as the control mechanisms flowing downwards from the higher levels of government, such as mandates and standard operating procedures (SOP). Romzek and Dubnick (1987) define bureaucratic accountability as the expectations managed through the organizational hierarchy and adherence to SOPs. However, this definition is problematic for this study. Since the chief administrators sit at the apex of the administrative process in municipal government, they are at the summit of their local government organizational hierarchy. The argument could be made that the chief administrators' organizational superiors are the elected officials, but it would duplicate the underlying logic of political accountability. Hence, to distinguish bureaucratic accountability from political accountability, I use intergovernmental hierarchy to replace organizational hierarchy.

Another problem is the difficulty of distinguishing between national/state laws (legal accountability approach) and SOPs (bureaucratic accountability approach). In general, the legal accountability approach requires that public

administrators treat all citizens equally and protect each citizen's rights from an abuse of government power (Moe and Gilmour 1995). However, laws are often difficult to navigate and interpret (Freeman 2004). In his study of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations, Freeman (2004) points out that Congress cannot legislate on every aspect of a public issue. Sources in the form of handbooks and guidance documents are needed to teach local officials "how to incorporate" laws and regulations "into routine procedures (Freeman 2004, 3). In this way, SOPs coordinate actions by a large number of individuals and offer direction for the performance of organizational tasks, including writing reports and budget preparation.

Local governments exist in an intergovernmental hierarchy in which they exercise the least amount of power (Clark 1985; Gianakis and McCue 1999). This is true for both Thai and Illinois municipalities. All Illinois chief administrators that participated in this study were concerned with the amount of state government mandates—both funded and unfunded—in recent years. As discussed in Chapter 3, the Thai chief administrators have also encountered an increasing number of central government mandates since the decentralization reform.

The bureaucratic accountability approach may influence the Thai chief administrators more directly than the Illinois chief administrators. The Thai chief administrators remain part of the national civil service and hence are expected to execute the central government directives. Bureaucratic accountability has an indirect impact on the Illinois chief administrators. Several city managers in this

study reported the difficulty in dealing with the local police and fire commissions whose authority and autonomy to hire police officers and fire fighters are protected by the state.

Based on the Thai and Illinois experiences, it is inconclusive that the central and state government authority has diminished after decentralization. On the other hand, the central and state authority has changed from the visible command-and-control mechanisms to other less visible mechanisms, such as mandates and harmonization of local ordinances. Those less visible mechanisms do not always compromise the local public interests. In many circumstances, they safeguard the community's interests from particularistic and sectoral interests and help to cope with the interjurisdictional externalities emanating from consumption of certain local public goods and services.

However, overutilization of central/state government mandates and procedures could impair the local public welfare, especially when those mandates and procedures are outdated and hamper municipal government responses to local administrative issues. This is similar to the "goal displacement" problem that, according to Merton (1957), prevails among bureaucratic organizations. Goal displacement occurs when the bureaucratic standard operating procedures and organizational hierarchy that are intentionally designed to ensure efficient operations of the public sector induce public organizational dysfunctions. Further, the problem with overusing bureaucratic accountability intensifies when the municipal chief administrators are inadequately responsive to the local elected

officials whose principal duty is to represent the local citizen interests. This is also reminiscent of Weber's *Beamtenherrschaft* in which bureaucratic mandates, procedures, and hierarchy replace the democratic rules.

The chief administrators' underutilization of the central/state government mandates and procedures could expose their local communities to risk of financial and/or civil penalties. As discussed in Chapter 3, regardless of decentralization, the Thai and Illinois municipalities remain at the bottom of intergovernmental hierarchy. Even the Home Rule jurisdictions in Illinois are still subjected to certain state mandates and procedures (Froehlich 1990). Other possible adverse consequences of under-utilizing bureaucratic accountability include political patronage in appointing municipal government employees and favoritism in municipal government contracting.

### **Professional Accountability**

Professional accountability is another accountability approach that has gained critical salience due to the increasing complexity of municipal management. Under the forces of globalization, municipalities around the world at different stages of economic development have converged on the problems they must address, such as rising unemployment, dilapidated public infrastructure, migration, environmental degradation, and social conflict (Freire and Yuen 2004).

Similar to other public agencies, each municipal government department has become an expert organization specialized in carrying out certain specific functions. The coordination and supervision of these specialized departments require the expertise, competence, and analytical skills of municipal chief administrative officers. The technical knowledge inherent in the routines of an expert organization renders the external accountability mechanisms ineffective (Mulgan 2000, as discussed in Erkkilä 2004). Romzek and Dubnick (1987) and Erkkilä (2004) point out that the key components of the professional accountability approach are self-scrutiny and peer review. The former emphasizes the bureaucrats' internalization of the role and identity as government experts and their desire to maintain the professional credibility (Sinclair 1995). The latter involves lifelong learning and voluntary membership in a wider academic and professional community (Van Kersbergen and Van Waarden 2004).

The risk of overutilizing professional accountability may not be as serious as the risk of overutilizing the other three accountability approaches. The chief administrators' continuous and considerable effort to maintain professional credibility and integrity of the public service could do more good than harm to the local public interest. However, as discussed in more detail in Chapter 2, some scholars are apprehensive of the existence of professional guilds and informal associations among public officials, arguing that the associational life, particularly among public officials, induces elitism, reinforces class conflict, obscures their

accountability to the general public, and ultimately undermines the democratic governance (Willbern 1954; MacDonald 1995).

On the other hand, the chief administrators' inadequate attention to professional accountability poses serious setbacks for the local democratic governance. The lack of competence and knowledge in how to manage a city could cause inefficiency and dysfunctions. As stated earlier, the chief administrator is mainly responsible for coordinating the work of various city departments, each of which has become an expert organization charged with solving complex problems that require special knowledge and analytic skills. The chief administrator should demonstrate some degree of knowledge and competence in each of those areas in order to have a full understanding of the problems that his/her city faces and the strategies that his/her subordinates undertake to solve those problems.

In sum, territorial decentralization means more than the transfer of governing authority and resources from the national to subnational levels. Municipal government officials must contend with multiple accountability approaches that are embedded and intertwined in the complex intergovernmental relations. Formerly, the command-and-control mechanisms closely associated with the bureaucratic accountability approach were the yardsticks of public professionalism at all governmental levels and in every situation. In the decentralized governance, the popularity of hierarchical accountability is in retreat, if not in rout. In some cases, central and state government mandates create, rather than solve problems.

While legal accountability remains important, the concept of public professionalism is extended to emphasize political as well as professional accountabilities. Governmental bodies, especially at the local level, are expected to be politically responsive to citizen preferences and to apply their technical skills and professional knowledge to disentangling the problems facing their local communities. This is not to say that bureaucratic accountability mechanisms such as mandates and guidelines are no longer essential to public professionalism. In fact, the degree of public professionalism hinges upon the chief administrators' ability to balance all four types of accountability.

### **Taxonomy of Public professionalism**

The decline in popularity of bureaucratic accountability does not mean that mechanisms such as standard operating procedures and hierarchical control lose their legitimacy as instruments to ensure professionalism among government officials. It is the strict conformity to the bureaucratic accountability approach that has become much less important or desirable. In fact, attention to only one or two types of accountability is likely to engender policy decisions that do not reflect the public interest. For instance, Willbern (1984) discusses the difficulty of conforming to the dogma of popular sovereignty, arguing that there are multiple rather than single channels for the expression of the public will. When the voice of the people in a democracy is unclear and based on incomplete knowledge, civil servants have

the duty to exercise their expertise in reconciling the unclear popular will with “other persuasive and powerful normative considerations,” such as cost-benefit calculations, social equity, justice, and fairness (Willbern 1984, 106-107).

Willbern’s view extends beyond the Finer-Freidrich dialogue on whether an external or internal accountability approach is more preferable, and is consistent with other arguments found in the public administration literature. As discussed in Chapter 2, Dunne and Legge (2001) provide empirical evidence of the American local government officials striving to balance the diverse public interests and different stakeholders in their local communities. Likewise, Lipsky (1980), Maynard-Moody and Leland (1990), and Maynard-Moody and Musheno (2003) offer empirical evidence which indicates that bureaucrats, especially the front-line bureaucrats, must exercise their discretion on a daily basis in adjusting the policy directives (which are always unclear) to specific circumstances. Besides, with limited resources, it is difficult for the front-line bureaucrats to treat everybody equally. They must make their moral choices based on their perceived relationships with coworkers, citizens, and their organizations (Maynard-Moody and Leland 1990). Even Goodnow (1900) who furnished the politics-administration dichotomy considered this as the “semi-scientific and quasi-judicial” function which involves the application of technical knowledge to concrete cases. Goodnow (1900, 81) emphasized that “in these cases much must be left to official discretion, since what is demanded of the officers is not the doing of a concrete thing, but the exercise of judgment.”

Based on both the classic and contemporary interpretations of the administrative functions, government officials by the nature of their profession must exercise discretion on a daily basis. However, in what way must civil servants make their judgment? My central argument is that the chief administrators ought to make decisions that reflect political, bureaucratic, legal, and professional accountabilities. This argument is consonant with Svava's conceptualization of public professionalism which is the combined application of knowledge, values, and practices to serve the general public welfare (Svava 2009).

Moreover, the combined use of all accountability approaches follows the same logic as the combined use of three ethical approaches in Svava's ethics triangle framework (Svava 2007b). These three ethical approaches are teleology, deontology, and casuistry.<sup>1</sup> In the ethics triangle framework, Svava (2007b) argues that the three approaches, when used separately or underutilized, could even justify "unethical" behavior. On the other hand, balancing those approaches reinforces the premise of ethical actions and helps to prevent the shortcomings of underutilizing any single approach (Svava 2007b). The ethics triangle is consistent with Willbern's ethic of compromise and social integration, which he considers as the highest ethical level of civil servants (Willbern 1984). If an ethical behavior is to do what is right, the question becomes: how do we define "what is right"? In complex social situations, it is difficult to differentiate between right and wrong; "thus, compromise can be viewed as a highly moral act—without concessions to those

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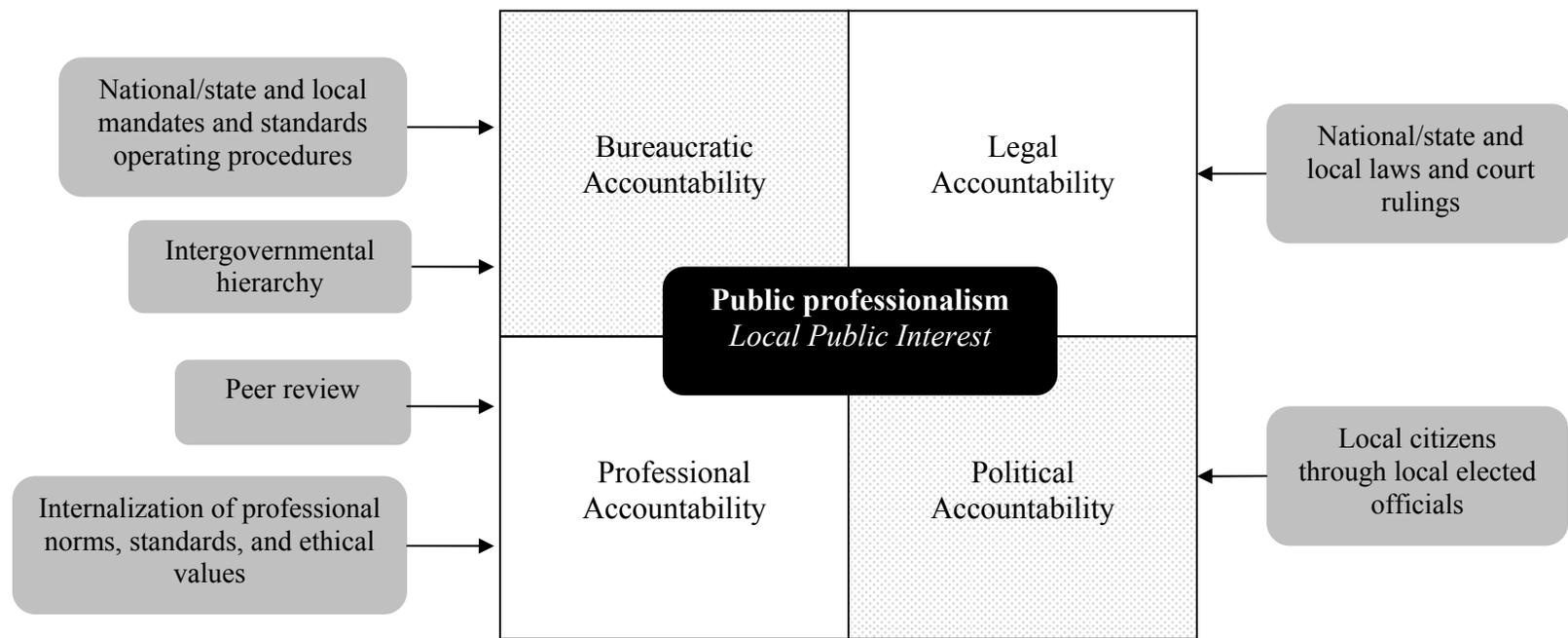
<sup>1</sup> See Chapter 1 for more discussion on these three ethical approaches to public administration.

who disagree, disagreement becomes stalemate and then conflict” (Willbern 1984, 108).

As illustrated in Figure 4-1, the degree of public professionalism is measured by a public administrator’s ability to balance all four accountability approaches. To this end, public professionalism enables public administrators to exert professional influence over the local government decision making that broadly considers every form of accountability and expectation. Overutilization or underutilization of any single accountability approach is likely to compromise the degree of public professionalism and ultimately the public interest. Awareness and integration of competing accountability approaches are more likely to produce positive administrative results, increase the public trust in government, and enhancing the quality of public services. In normative terms, I argue that in advancing the general public welfare, “professionals of government”<sup>2</sup>, including municipal chief administrative officers, should balance accountability approaches in supervising, managing, and administering public affairs.

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<sup>2</sup> See chapter 2 for a detailed discussion on the distinction between “professionals in government” and “professionals of government.”



Source: Adapted from Romzek and Dubnick 1987, 1994.

Figure 4-1: Public professionalism: Key Elements and Central Ideals.

Nonetheless, that municipal government officials should balance all four types of accountability in their judgment is easier said than done. As Simon (1975) notes, knowledge and values are never scarce in the real-world setting; it is the human mind and attention that are the scarcest of all resources. Simon's concept of *Homo administrativus* emphasizes the inherent ambiguity and complexity in public affairs, the problem of bounded rationality, and the satisficing model of decision making. The ambiguity and uncertainty in public affairs steer public administrators "toward the most appropriate of the possibilities within the 'zones of acceptance' constituted by their inherent knowledge, skills, abilities, and predilections (Justice and Miller 2006, 284: emphasis in original). In his original *Administrative Behavior*, Simon (1941) drew a demarcation line between the public managerial realm, which is exclusively concerned with operational decision making, and the political realm, which determines the political and social values. However, even Simon (1975, 1997) acknowledged that in practice, the line between ethics and technical efficiency in administrative judgment is murky. Simon's acknowledgement implies that the "zones of acceptance" in administrative decision making are influenced by a host of values, including, for instance, technical efficiency channeled through the bureaucratic accountability approach and even responsiveness channeled through the political accountability approach.

Thus, as administrators attempt to solve complex and ambiguous public problems, their limited cognitive ability prohibits them from using every

accountability approach at once. Automatically balanced decisions are improbable at best. In the public professionalism model, I argue that *the municipal chief administrators tend to use the accountability approach with which they are familiar as the basis for their strategy to balance other accountabilities*. A preliminary review of empirical evidence in this study reveals five types of public professionalism which could be ranked in order of desirability (Figure 4-2).

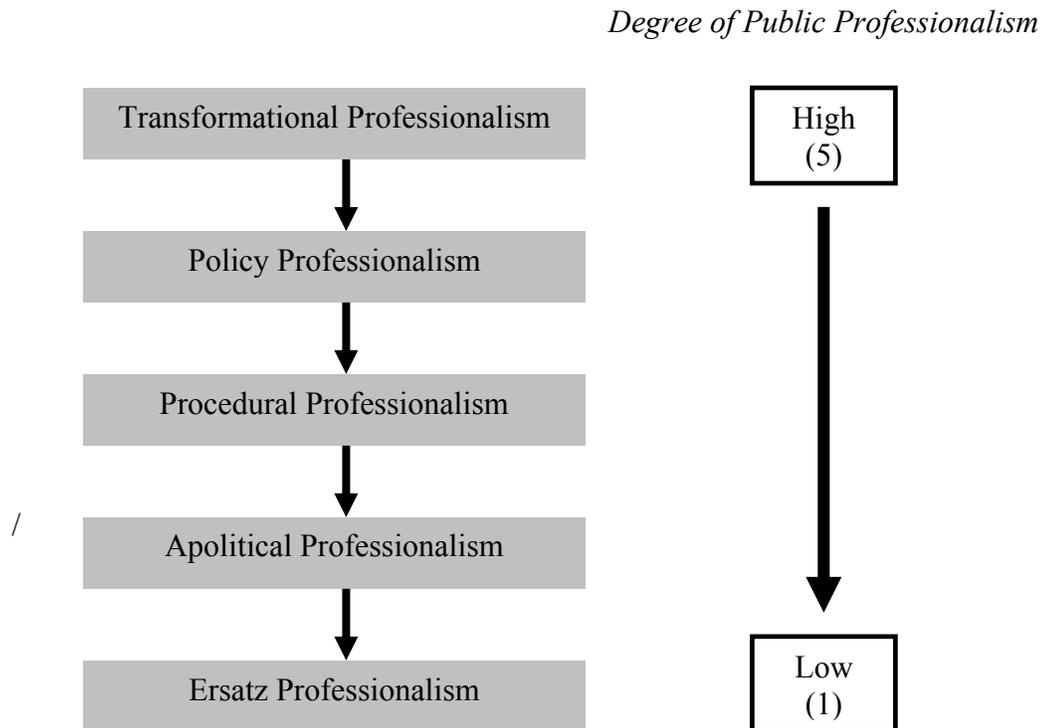


Figure 4-2: Taxonomy of Public Professionalism.

### **Transformational Professionalism**

Transformational professionalism is the ideal type of public professionalism. Municipal chief administrators acting as transformational professional, first and foremost, value professional accountability the most in their integration of other accountability approaches. The *primus inter pares* (first among equals) status of professional accountability has its historical origin in the writings of the seventeenth-century French philosophers, Count Louis de Rouvroy Saint-Simon and Auguste Comte, who envisioned the administration of the future to be founded upon technology, knowledge, and skills. The mechanisms of professional accountability, including self-scrutiny, expertise, and horizontally based relationship among experts (peer review), is the premise upon which citizens give appointed public officials the discretionary authority and legitimacy through elected officials (Hann and Freeman 1989; Caiden 2000).

To emphasize Saint-Simon and Comte's vision, several chief administrators in this dissertation first used facts and technical knowledge in their responses to the flood scenario in the survey. Also, based on these chief administrators' qualitative responses, transformational professionalism consists of two salient attributes: innovation and communication. First, in terms of innovation, transformational chief administrators transform the central/state government standard operating procedures (bureaucratic accountability approach), the municipal government policies (political accountability approach), and laws (legal accountability approach)

into working knowledge pertinent to their communities' problems and general interests. Not all mandates, policies, and laws—either local or national—are sufficiently clear and specific for implementation (Lipsky 1980; Maynard-Moody and Leland 1999; Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2003). Without sacrificing the core components of those mandates, policies, and laws, transformational chief administrators exercise judgment in executing them in a way that does not jeopardize their communities' interest.

Moreover, even a vast corpus of specialized knowledge in public administration may not always be directly pertinent to actual administrative problems. Freidson (1986, 226) asserts that “when the pure knowledge to be found in textbooks and disciplinary publications is put to use, it is transformed by the administrators and practitioners of the professions.” Indeed, the transformation of formal knowledge into “working knowledge” (Kennedy 1983) is bound to take place within the municipal government setting where problems are complex, problem-solving tools diverse, and policy guidelines unclear. In the process of crafting the working knowledge, chief administrators acting as transformational professionals are dictated by the mechanisms of professional accountability, particularly a set of ethical values nurtured by the horizontal network of administrative experts who are likely to have experienced similar work situations.

The second attribute of transformational professionalism—communication—is based on the concept of transformational leadership (Lee, Newcomer, and Davis 2007). As the twenty-first century gets under way,

organizations—both public and private—face a multitude of changes (e.g., globalism, importance of horizontal relationships among governmental and social actors, resource constraint, demand for higher quality of services). Municipal governments are not immune from these challenges. Municipal chief administrators acting as transformational professionals can help mitigate the impact of those changes on their local governments and communities by “providing a balance of competing interests, the need to change, and the need to be constant to core public values” (Lee, Newcomer, and Davis 2007, 180).

Most importantly, transformational chief administrators possess the skill to engage others in the municipality in a discourse about how they can contribute to their communities. In the interview, municipal chief administrators acting as transformational professionals are willing to work closely community leaders, local businesses, and social groups on many important issues, including community economic development, natural disaster prevention, and communicable disease control.

In addition, while maintaining their professional integrity, transformational administrators are politically astute in dealing with the local elected officials. In this study, municipal chief administrators acting as transformational professionals know when it is appropriate to offer policy advice to the elected officials, to argue against the elected officials’ policies with facts and knowledge, and to lead the policy-making process. In this way, transformational professionalism extends beyond a balance of multiple accountabilities. Transformational chief

administrators also serve as moral leaders in “elevating public discourse and in fostering human development” (Morgan 2001, 165).

These two attributes of transformational professionalism find support in Nalbandian’s (1999) analysis of city managers’ contemporary roles and responsibilities. Nalbandian emphasizes the role of municipal chief administrators as community leaders and enablers of local democracy. The municipal chief administrators in Nalbandian’s study reported that they have become “skilled at facilitative leadership and at building partnerships and consensus” due to the awareness that legitimacy of the chief administrative officer position demands more than the manager’s adherence to the value of efficiency (Nalbandian 1999, 187-188). In an increasingly complex political environment, municipal chief administrators must expect and attend to claims for social equity, political representation, and protection of individual rights. Municipal chief administrators can help build a sense of community among local citizens by incorporating the values of efficiency, equity, representation, and individual rights into their decisions and by encouraging the local citizens to contribute to their own communities.

### **Policy professionalism**

Similar to the transformational administrators, chief administrators with policy professionalism are likely to balance all four accountability approaches, but

consider political accountability as more important than other accountabilities. Policy professionalism is less desirable than transformational professionalism because it considers the chief administrators as primarily advisors and assistants to the elected officials. Municipal chief administrators acting as policy professionals are directly engaged in the politics of policy making. A Thai MA interviewed for this study serves as prototype of policy professionalism. The mayor gave him a rough outline of the program that was the cornerstone of his electoral campaign. The Thai MA developed a detailed implementation scheme, but the mayor made several changes which did not conform to the central government regulations. The Thai MA pointed out that the policy would put the municipal government in financial difficulty in the future and that the mayor's changes would incur serious legal liability. The Thai MA did so without suggesting any alternative course of actions and remarked that the mayor had the ultimate authority to decide whether to continue with the draft program or come up with a new one. After listening to what his chief administrator had to say, the mayor agreed to consult with his political advisors and came up with a new policy. Several days after the meeting, the mayor insisted upon implementing his policy and issued the executive order. The Thai MA executed the policy without challenging the mayor's executive order.

Both transformational and policy professionals are involved in the politics of policy making. However, in this situation, transformational chief administrators would be inclined to recommend several changes to the mayor's policy, persuade him to agree with those recommendations, and cooperate with the mayor in

ensuring that the council and community successfully endorse the policy. In contrast, chief administrators with policy professionalism, albeit involved in the politics of policy making, leave all the ultimate decisions to the elected officials and execute those decisions. In the above situation, the Thai chief administrator appropriately used both his professional ethics and knowledge to inform the mayor that the program would risk the community's future financial position. However, if he were a transformational public manager, he would have pushed further by refusing to implement the mayor's policy and offering an alternative course of actions.

Policy professionalism is similar to Mouritzen and Svava's (2002) responsive administrator model in which appointed officials support elected officials with facts, knowledge, and policy recommendations well suited to the elected officials' needs. Moe (1985, 148) refers to this administrative behavioral model as responsive competence which is "developed and adapted" in light of the elected officials' political needs and "willingly made available to them."

Hence, policy professionalism has a prominent place in the public administration literature. Public administration is essentially a problem in political theory that deals with the representativeness and responsiveness of public administrators to the citizenry through elected officials (Wallace 1978; Rosenbloom 1983). However, Wallace and Rosenbloom's view differs from the strict interpretation of the politics-administration dichotomy in that it advocates the bureaucratic involvement in the policy-making process. In modern times, public-

service practitioners are often involved in providing information to elected officials as they formulate policy (Box 2009). The similarity between the contemporary political theory of bureaucracy and the strict model of politics-administration dichotomy is the importance of elected officials as agents who represent the citizenry.

Svara (2007a) offers a valuable insight into one of the most important challenges facing contemporary public administrators. Local elected officials in recent years have become more assertive in local government affairs than in the past (Svara 2007a). This is true in both Thai and Illinois cases under study. The preliminary analysis of several in-depth interviews of Thai and Illinois municipal chief administrators reveal the elected officials' rise to prominence in municipal government decision making. In Thailand, a chief administrator pointed out that decentralization has disproportionately increased the mayors' prerogatives, while reducing the administrators' discretion. In Illinois, even though a city manager's managerial discretion is explicitly spelled out in the state's municipal code, a clear line between legislative and administrative functions never exists in practice. An Illinois city manager remarked that his village's board members have been actively involved in almost every aspect of village government.

While balancing multiple accountabilities is a desirable administrative act, many academics, practitioners, and ordinary citizens would argue that political accountability to the citizenry through elected officials should be the premise upon which administrative officers balance all other accountabilities. Even though

appointed officials have become increasingly involved in policy making, the public remains leery of the extent and nature of such involvement (Box 2009). This concern has a strong American flavor; concepts, such as politics-administration dichotomy and political control of bureaucracy, pervade every fabric of American political and administrative theories (Box 2009).

### **Procedural Professionalism**

Procedural professionalism is the third most desirable type of public professionalism that considers the four accountability approaches to be important, but emphasizes the bureaucratic and legal accountabilities. Procedural professionalism is less desirable than policy professionalism because it makes chief administrators similar to national/state government bureaucrats. The preliminary examination of qualitative interview data justifies the combination of bureaucratic and legal accountabilities into the concept of procedural professionalism. During an interview, an Illinois city administrator was unsure about the distinction between the laws (state and local) and the state mandates. For him, both serve to control local administrative discretion. In the Thai case, a municipal administrative officer included both the laws and the MoI mandates in a discussion about the administrative procedures to which she must adhere.

In this study, Thai and Illinois chief administrators acting as procedural professionals still balance multiple accountability approaches and interact with

local elected officials. However, the procedural professionals' interaction with the elected officials is limited to lecturing them about the national/state laws, regulations, and standard operating procedures. Put differently, procedural chief administrators are paternalistic towards local elected officials in the policy-making process.

Public administration literature abounds with theoretical support for procedural professionalism. Kettl and Milward (1996) argue that public administration actually has its origin in law and that public administrators assisted by their knowledge and technological tools are expected to execute the law to the highest professional standard. Similarly, Rosenbloom (1983, 33) asserts that the legal approach of public administration charges public administrators with the duty of “applying and enforcing the law in concrete circumstances.” Beckett and Koenig (2005, 1) also argue that “the administrative concern is law in action.” Public administration is essentially “government telling citizens and businesses what they may and may not do” (Shafritz and Russell 1997, 14).

Nonetheless, in criticizing Lowi's juridical democracy, Vigoda (2002, 3) states that law furnishes “platforms for healthy performance of public administration,” but in itself does not account for “its effectiveness or efficiency.” The laws and bureaucratic standards sometimes even hamper administrative discretion necessary for effective and efficient administration. Moe and Gilmour (1995) consider that a legal problem requires a legal solution. For Moe and Gilmour, the public law—not the elected officials or organizational managers—

determines the missions and priorities of administrative agencies. To address the problems facing public administration, the ultimate solution should be based on rules, procedures, and hierarchies (Moe and Gilmour 1995). This does not mean that public administrators must abandon their professional knowledge, expertise, and political responsiveness to elected officials. Other accountability approaches remain important, but legal and bureaucratic accountabilities are more important and precede any political and professional priorities.

### **Apolitical Professionalism**

Municipal chief administrators acting as apolitical professionals consider every accountability approach important, except political accountability or political responsiveness to elected officials. In an interview, an Illinois CM provides an example of apolitical professionalism by pointing out that in general, he does not trust elected officials. If the mayor and the city council do not abide by the laws or standard operating procedures or engage in unethical behavior, this Illinois CM stated that he does not need to show his deference to the elected officials' directives or discuss with them about the legal and bureaucratic concerns. Instead, he will be poised to file lawsuits against the local elected officials over their behavior and political directives that violate the laws and standard operating procedures. In his city management experience in three states, this city manager was involved in at least one lawsuit against the local elected officials in each city.

Also, a Thai MA interviewed for this study serves as a good example for apolitical professionalism. The Thai MA believes that local elected officials are still unready to govern due to their lack of understanding of transparency, good governance, and public service. Hence, if legal or ethical issues about the mayor's directives arise, the Thai MA acting as apolitical professional does not think it is necessary to discuss with the mayor about the issue. Instead, he will report to the provincial governor, file a lawsuit in the administrative court, or file a formal petition to the MoI, the National Counter Corruption Commission, or Office of the Parliamentary Ombudsman.

Municipal chief administrators who exhibit apolitical professionalism evoke Max Weber's vision of *Beamtenherrschaft* (centripetal administrative authority) in which bureaucrats take over the role of democratic government and deviate from political objectives established by democratically elected officials (Page 1985; Lane 2005). In this study, municipal chief administrators as appointed officials show their distrust of local elected officials and ignore their political directives. Conversely, these chief administrators emphasize the law, standard operating procedures, and ethics in their strategies to manage municipal government affairs.

Nonetheless, apolitical professionalism does not follow the strict interpretation of the politics-administration dichotomy that held sway the American local government landscape in the 1930s. In the strict interpretation, city managers might offer advice, but refrained from doing so as much as possible (Fassett 1922). In this discussion, politics is defined here as partisanship and patronage, which

differ from policy making. By ignoring the local elected officials' directives and instead choosing to comply with the national/state government regulations and standard operating procedures, municipal chief administrators acting as apolitical professionals are directly involved in determining local government policy. However, they are inclined to promote the national/state government interests, rather than the local community interests. Hence, the apolitical professionals' behavior emulates the officialdom-unofficialdom dichotomy (Siffin 1966) more than the politics-administration dichotomy. In this study, the officialdom-unofficialdom dichotomy marks the boundary between the appointed officials, who serve the national/state governments, and the municipal elected officials, who represent local community interests.

Also, the apolitical professionals are different from the procedural professionals in their unwillingness to interact with local elected officials. If the procedural professionals thought the mayors' policies did not comply with the national/state laws and regulations, he would likely educate the local elected officials about relevant laws and regulations and instruct them to come up with the new policies. On the other hand, if a similar circumstance arose, apolitical professionals would be unlikely to communicate with the local elected officials and settle any problem in court or ask national/state government agencies to rectify the situation.

### **Ersatz Professionalism**

Ersatz public professionalism is the least desirable form of professionalism. According to the 1995 Merriam-Webster's dictionary of English usage, ersatz means "being a usually artificial and inferior substitute or imitation." Tukur (2004) distinguishes between real and ersatz professionalism, as he discusses the Nigerian bureaucratic behavior. As Tukur describes, ersatz public professionals conduct themselves as "appendages to ruling groups, parties, and the monied class," show no respect for democratic institutions, and do not imbibe the values of equity and justice. On the other hand, real public professionals are "gentlemen, friends of the people, genuinely learned, and transparently upright" (Tukur 2004). They identify themselves with the democratic institutions and always strive to ensure that their actions are legal, equitable, and ethical.

Ersatz public professionalism connotes the lowest degree of public professionalism. Ersatz public professionals underutilize one or more accountability approaches or are not aware of any accountability approach at all when making decisions. For instance, a chief administrator is an ersatz public professional if he/she only serves the mayor, but fails to use other accountability approaches, such as the legal, bureaucratic, or professional accountability.

## **Research Hypotheses**

I now develop my hypotheses based on my two research questions. First, what impact does the form of municipal government have on municipal chief administrators' public professionalism? Second, what is the impact of membership in professional associations on municipal chief administrators' public professionalism? To answer the first question, the first pair of hypotheses examines the degree of public professionalism among Thai MAs, Illinois CAOs, and Illinois CMs. The second pair of hypotheses explores the relationship between municipal chief administrators' public professionalism and their membership in professional associations. The third pair of hypotheses assesses the interaction effects of form of government and membership in professional associations on public professionalism.

### **Factors Influencing Public Professionalism**

In the developed countries, professional associations and institutions of higher education have developed programs to enhance the degree of public professionalism (Svara 2009). Further, international development agencies and international professional associations, such as the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), have shown considerable effort in developing professional public administration in the transitional states (Kovryga and Wyman 2001).

Despite the efforts to enhance the degree of public professionalism, Jabes (1997) remarks that the success in professionalization of the public service remains limited due to the incomplete transferability of public administrative models from the West to transitional countries. Kovryga and Wyman (2001) attribute this limitation to overemphasis on training and re-training individuals engaged in governmental activities. The two authors argue that the assumption that well-trained or re-trained public servants will help improve the quality of public service does not match the reality in transitional countries. Neither does it reflect the historical development of public professionalism in the United States (Kovryga and Wyman 2001). Certainly, educating individual public servants with the professional knowledge and technical skills has historically been the hallmark of American public administration. But, there are also other aspects that are conducive to the professional quality of the American public service.

### **Form of Municipal Government**

As discussed in Chapter 1, Thailand and Illinois share many common characteristics, including the time period in which territorial decentralization became the hot-button political issue and the lateness in adopting the decentralization reform compared to other countries and states. However, one of the key differences between the Thai and Illinois municipalities is the status of Thai MAs and Illinois CAOs. Thai MAs is still appointed by the MoI, even after the

decentralization reform.

Since its inception in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Thai national bureaucracy has assumed many Weberian attributes, such as strict organizational hierarchy and meritocratic appointment system, but its attention to the political and legal accountabilities was deficient (Wilson 1962; Siffin 1966; Riggs 1966). Riggs in particular used the term “bureaucratic polity” to explain that because the Thai public was largely unorganized and politically dormant, the degree of bureaucratic autonomy from effective political party control was high. In addition, Unger (2003) observes the lack of attention to the rule of law among all Thai bureaucratic agents.

The 1997 constitutional reform presented a new chapter in the Thai political and administrative history. Following the ratification of the 1997 constitution, the royal Thai government embarked on an ambitious campaign to reorganize the national bureaucratic structure and to enhance its accountability and transparency. Unger (2003), however, argues that the 1997 constitution and the subsequent reform package enfeebled, rather than strengthening, the professional capacity of Thai public agencies by introducing more national regulatory agencies and arming those agencies with the authority to oversee administrative agencies and local governments. In the post-decentralization era, only the political accountability approach, particularly responsiveness to elected officials, has appeared to strengthen, particularly during and after Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra’s national bureaucratic overhaul that advocated the political control of bureaucracy (Painter 2005; Haque 2007).

However, literature on Thai public administration and politics only focuses on the national bureaucratic behavior. Local public administration in Thailand largely remains an uncharted territory in the Thai public administration scholarship. As discussed in Chapter 3, after the 1997 constitution and subsequent administrative reform, the MoI still controls the appointment and dismissal of Thai MAs. However, the mayors now have the authority to ask the municipal government personnel commission to transfer municipal administrators. How this appointment, dismissal, and transfer procedures affect the Thai MAs' public professionalism awaits systematic investigation.

On the contrary, local government in Illinois has attracted considerable attention from scholars and practitioners for many years. Modern public administration in Illinois and elsewhere in the United States emerged out of the Progressive movement that unleashed a powerful tide of administrative expertise and public professionalism (Bendix 1956; Graebner 1987; Adams and Balfour 1998; Interview with Professor Jim Banovetz, September 10, 2010). This legacy is expected to predispose Illinois CAOs to balance multiple values, accountability mechanisms, and expectations. In contrast to the emergence and nature of the Thai public service, Illinois local government and the reform movement have encountered less control and intervention by higher levels of government.

Lichter (2008) provides empirical evidence that form of government in Illinois does not make much difference in the Illinois CAOs and CMs' professional influence in municipal government policy making. In fact, the Illinois CAOs and

CMs share a mutual concern for public professionalism (Lichter 2008). Frederickson, Johnson, and Wood (2004, 16) argues that as American cities are “coming increasingly to resemble each other structurally,” they become more similar in terms of professional management, statutory charter, and city officials’ responsibilities. Similarly, Svava (2001, 179) finds that despite the legal distinction in form of government, American city officials—both elected and appointed—are likely to join together in the common pursuit of sound governance.” Svava refers to this shared governance as the complementarity model, which describes the political-administrative relationship more accurately than the politics-administration dichotomy model.

Nonetheless, the concepts of public professionalism and accountability have not been examined in a systematic manner. Professionalism, in particular, remains a mystery for some and an anathema to democracy for many. Thai MAs and Illinois CAOs’ work environment is similar because they must deal with the mayors, who serve as the municipalities’ chief executive officers and also the councils. Also, the Illinois CAOs’ responsibilities are specified in municipal ordinances as determined by the city councils. Similarly, the Thai Municipality Act of 1953 (amended 2001) leaves the right to determine the Thai MAs’ responsibilities to the mayors. Yet, as previously described, the important distinction between the two forms is that a Thai MA is initially appointed by the MoI and must maintain a healthy relationship with the principal governor—the most senior MoI official in each province. Does this

distinction cause a difference between the Thai MAs and Illinois CAOs' ability to balance multiple accountability approaches? To address this question, I hypothesize:

**H1: Illinois CAOs will exhibit a greater degree of public professionalism than Thai MAs.**

Nonetheless, the old public administration theory stresses the organization form of municipal government, particularly the council-manager form of government, as an instrument to combat against political corruption, make government operations more efficient and accountable, and ensure the public administrators' dedication to the general public welfare. The salient characteristics of the council-manager form are the institutional firewall between politics and administration (Stillman 1974) and the specification of a CM's administrative roles (Kemp 1999). Under this plan, the municipal council appoints the CM. The CM is responsible for implementing the policy determined by the council and for running the daily operations of city government. The CM's role is purely administrative and serves at the pleasure of the council, who serves a legislative role.

As previously discussed, Lichter (2008) does not find much difference between the council-manager and mayor-council forms of government. Nonetheless, other scholars provide both theoretical and empirical evidence contrary to Lichter's findings. Formally, the Illinois city manager and administrator positions follow distinct appointment and dismissal procedures. While the city manager is appointed and dismissed by a single elected body, the city administrator

is appointed and dismissed by the mayor and/or the municipal council, depending on each community's municipal ordinances. Due to the different appointment and dismissal mechanisms and the likelihood of "conflictual pattern of interaction" in the mayor-council relationship, the city administrators tend to be less professional and independent of the elected officials' political influence than the city managers (Svara 1990; Mourtizen and Svara 2002).

In a cross-cultural analysis of local government, Mourtizen and Svara (2002) find that the appointment method significantly influences the chief administrator's attitude and behavior. If the chief administrators are appointed by the mayors alone, they are likely to consider themselves as the mayors' agents. Furthermore, how the municipal chief administrators' responsibilities are defined are likely to affect the manner in which they manage administrative problems. Illinois CMs' responsibilities are specified in the state statute, while the CAOs' are determined by local ordinances and hence vary by jurisdictions.

Sherwood (1997, 215) argues that "the council-manager form carries the explicit expectation that a competent, fully qualified professional will play a defined role in the affairs of the city." The council-manager form of government is also more conducive than the mayor-council form of government to giving the chief administrators ample discretion to use their expertise in managing municipal affairs (Svara 1990). On the other hand, in the mayor-council cities, the council determines the boundary of the city/village administrators' discretion by enactment of municipal ordinances.

Mixed evidence regarding the relationship between the form of government and the Illinois chief administrators' public professionalism leads to the following hypothesis:

**H2: Illinois CMs will exhibit a greater degree of public professionalism than Illinois CAOs.**

### **Membership in Professional Associations**

Nonetheless, the form of government that provides role expectations and incentive structures would not function effectively without its agents' commitment to the general public welfare (Williamson 1985; Ostrom 1990). Commitment is becoming important, as extra-organizational forces—such as technological advances, demographic shift, and globalizing economy—are transforming the way in which private and public organizations operate (Drucker 1988; Peters 1995). Robertson and Tang (1995, 67) argue that an effective cooperative arrangement within a modern organization necessitates “the active involvement of all self-motivated participants” and that those self-motivated participants' commitment to one another and to the organizational goals is “a critical and, at times, even necessary mechanism for directing their behavior toward collective goal accomplishment.”

The public administration literature abounds with different guideposts for ensuring that the public servants do not go awry. Among those guideposts, the

“social capital movement” is another initiative that seeks to improve the quality of democratic governance (Morgan 2001). Proponents of the social capital movement argue that the health of democracy depends on the quality of social capital (Fukuyama 1995; Putnam 1995).

Social capital also contributes to the degree of public professionalism (Svara and Terry 2009) and hence serves as a viable mechanism to instill the administrative and democratic values among public officials. Associational life that involves sustained, face-to-face interaction with people from different backgrounds cultivates social capital by generating greater societal trust (Wollebaek and Selle 2002). As Svara and Terry (2009, 1056) observe, the generalized trust beyond the associational life is related to the association’s ability to “integrate the values and interests of broader social categories.” Public official associations in particular generate and secure the interpersonal trust, professional norms, and commitment to governance within the confines of public administration scholarship and practice (Knoke 1981; Stolle and Rochon 1998).

Merton (1957, 50) contended that “the professional association is an organization of practitioners who judge one another as professionally competent and who have banded together to perform social functions which they cannot perform in their separate capacity as individuals.” However, we must not deny the instrumental purposes of joining professional associations. Public officials could benefit from the training programs, conferences, and activities that help to enhance their professional knowledge and credentials and provide the opportunities to build

personal networks with their peers in the public sector. Moreover, certain professional associations also play an advocacy role in achieving goals outside the organization that collectively benefit the members, such as political influence over the policy-making process affecting their professional activities and prestige (Cafferata 1979).

Nonetheless, Svava and Terry (2009) lament that associations harnessing the trust-based relationship among public officials remain an understated and understudied aspect of governance, in America and worldwide. Due to the dearth of systematic analyses of the role that membership in public official associations plays in enhancing the chief administrators' professionalism, I examine the following hypothesis:

**H3: Municipal chief administrators who belong to professional associations will exhibit a greater degree of public professionalism than municipal chief administrators who do not belong to professional associations.**

Furthermore, U.S. professional associations generate and transmit specialized knowledge pertinent to their members, whether they consist of elected officials who speak for their particular type of government or their own jurisdictions, such as the National League of Cities, or appointed administrators who promote professionalism in their respective fields of expertise, such as the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) and the Government

Finance Officers Association (GFOA) (Arnold and Plant 1994). In Illinois, the ICMA state chapter—the Illinois City/County Management Association (ILCMA)—exerts indirect influence on local government management through its training programs, publications, semi-annual conferences, and technical assistance for local government officials, especially the chief administrative officers (Interview with Professor Jim Banovetz, September 10, 2010).

What is unique about associational life among the Illinois local government officials is the absence of government intervention. The ILCMA members as a collective body forge their own professional code of ethics, internalize it as the moral compass in their work, and impose sanctions upon members who breach the code. Neither the General Assembly nor state government officials nor political parties could exert control over the ILCMA professional activities.

On the contrary, the National Municipal League of Thailand (NMLT) and the Thai Municipal Officer Association (MOAT) always have a close connection to the central government agencies, particularly the MoI. Prior to the 1997 constitutional reform, the MoI closely controlled the NMLT; the DoPA director-general was the chair and ex officio member of both associations. The MoI and DoPA justified its supervisory role on the ground that municipal government officials lacked sufficient capacity to developing meaningful self-governance. Hence, the MoI and DoPA exercise command and control over the association's activities, including budget control and policy directives. After decentralization, the two associations remain financially dependent upon the MoI (Interview with

Professor Achakorn Wongpredee, October 14, 2010). Their accomplishments have been largely limited to lobbying activities concerning the budgetary issue, appraisal and promotion assessment, and pension fund.

Another key difference is the quality of training programs offered by the Thai and Illinois professional associations. The NMLT and MOAT have not been quite successful in terms of their training programs and inculcating the sense of public professionalism among municipal government officials. Most of their training programs have largely been confined to foreign language training and a series of lectures on the new laws and statutes by the MoI representatives (Interview with Professor Achakorn Wongpredee, October 14, 2010). The professional code of ethics for Thai municipal government officials continue to flow downwards from the National Civil Service Commission.

Do the different characteristics of U.S. and Thai professional associations contribute to a difference in degree of public professionalism among municipal chief administrators? The fourth hypothesis is:

**H4: Illinois CAOs and Illinois CMs who belong to U.S. professional associations will exhibit a greater degree of public professionalism than Thai MAs who belong to Thai professional associations.**

**Interaction of Form of Municipal Government and  
Membership in Professional Associations**

Despite their limited management discretion, the CAOs exhibit high administrative and professional competence (Nelson 2002; Svava 2006; Lichter 2008). They are also eligible for the ICMA and ILCMA memberships and receive the same level of recognition as the CMs from both associations. The code of ethics and training offered by the two professional associations enable the CAOs to integrate multiple accountability approaches, as they execute public programs, formulate policy recommendations, and interact with different stakeholders in their local communities. Conversely, the lack of research on Thai MAs and Thai professional associations obscures our understanding of Thai MAs' public professionalism in decentralized governance. This study seeks to close this empirical gap by testing the following hypothesis:

**H5: Illinois CAOs who belong to U.S. professional associations will exhibit a greater degree of professional professionalism than Thai MAs who belong to Thai professional associations.**

Furthermore, Cassella (1999) reviews the historical trajectory of professional associations in the United States and finds a strong connection between professional associations and the council-manager form of government. Cassella's finding makes sense because the ICMA, the National Civic League, and

many other associations that still exist today were staunch advocates of the council-manager form since the 1920s (Svara 1999). However, Banovetz offers his complex view of this relationship: “the principle behind the council-manager form of government is not all about the council-manager form *per se*, but about the professionalization of local government” (Interview with Professor Jim Banovetz, September 10, 2010). Nonetheless, it is still worth exploring the interaction effect between the council-manager system and the role of professional associations. The following hypothesis systematically considers this interaction effect on public professionalism:

**H6: Illinois CMs who belong to U.S. professional associations will exhibit a greater degree of public professionalism than Illinois CAOs who belong to U.S. professional associations.**

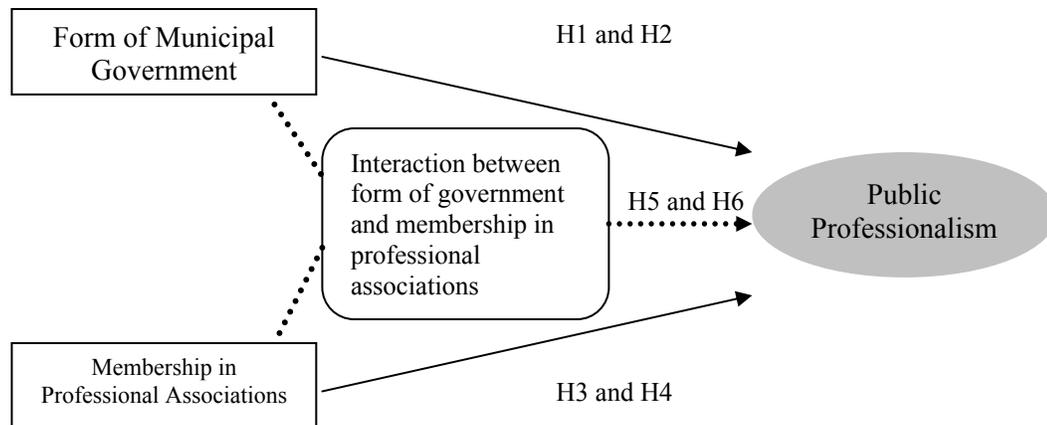
As I assess how the form of government and the role of professional associations contribute to public professionalism, I will also control for other potential factors. Barrilleaux, Feiock, and Crew (1992) identify several characteristics and correlate them with the level of professionalism in state government. Among those key characteristics, the level of education and skills of state administrators constitute the core of administrative expertise that enhances public professionalism. Barrilleaux and his colleagues also find a positive correlation between population size and degree of public professionalism. In explaining this relationship, Sherwood (1997) argues that a bureaucracy in a large

community tends to be costly; particularly in the metropolitan setting, the bureaucrats enjoy greater merit protection and are likely to be guided by a professional code of ethics.

Years in the chief administrator position could also influence the degree of professionalism because it tends to correlate with experiential learning by individual administrators. Cyert and March (1963), March and Olsen (1975), and March (1978) refer to experiential learning as adaptive rationality, which individuals use in their decision making as they deal with drifts in environmental or taste attributes. Chief administrators who have been working in city government for a long time are likely to be flexible in dealing with complex administrative and political problems. Two other factors are the home rule status of a municipality and the relationship between mayors and chief administrators. The home rule authority provides a jurisdiction with a higher degree of administrative discretion, particularly in terms of revenue diversification. With more discretionary authority, the chief administrators in the home rule municipalities are more likely to use their specialized knowledge than those in the non-home rule jurisdictions. Also, the chief administrator who maintains a regular working relationship with the mayor or president of the municipal council would be more capable of using the formal knowledge and managerial expertise to assist the elected officials in formulating policies and implementing those policies in the community's best interest.

## Conclusion

This chapter has discussed what public professionalism is and its components. The taxonomy of public professionalism in decentralized governance was developed. The characteristics of each type of public professionalism (transformational, policy, procedural, apolitical, and ersatz) were discussed in detail. In addition, the factors that are expected to influence municipal chief administrators' degree of public professionalism were discussed, along with the hypothesized relationships between those factors and public professionalism. The conceptual framework in Figure 4-3 summarizes all hypothesized relationships and research hypotheses. Chapter 6 will test Hypotheses 1 and 2. Chapter 7 will test Hypotheses 3 through 6. The following chapter will discuss the methodological approaches used to test these hypotheses.



- H1:** Illinois CAOs will exhibit a greater degree of public professionalism than Thai MAs.
- H2:** Illinois CMs will exhibit a greater degree of public professionalism than Illinois CAOs.
- H3:** Thai MAs, Illinois CAOs, and Illinois CMs who belong to professional associations will exhibit a greater degree of public professionalism than those who do not belong to professional associations.
- H4:** Illinois CAOs and CMs who belong to U.S. professional associations will exhibit a greater degree of public professionalism than Thai MAs who belong to Thai professional associations.
- H5:** Illinois CAOs who belong to professional associations will exhibit a greater degree of public professionalism than Thai MAs who belong to professional associations.
- H6:** Illinois CMs who belong to professional associations will exhibit a greater degree of public professionalism than Illinois CAOs who belong to professional associations.

Figure 4-3: Hypothesized Relationships and Research Hypotheses.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Three data collection methods are employed in this study: survey, secondary data, and interview. For the data on Thai municipal administrators, the National Institute of Development Administration (NIDA) supplied both the survey results and interview data. The NIDA research team used a survey questionnaire to explore the perceptions of multiple accountabilities among the Thai municipal administrators in 2009<sup>1</sup> and conducted in-depth interviews with several municipal administrators. Also, I used the NIDA survey questionnaire to examine the perceptions of multiple accountabilities among the Illinois municipal chief administrators. Several questions in the survey questionnaire were, however, modified to reflect the nuances of Illinois municipal government. After the survey was completed, in-depth interviews were conducted with several Illinois chief administrators to understand the survey responses and results of the statistical analyses.

This chapter proceeds as follows. First, I introduce the research design used to answer my research questions. The second section focuses on the design and execution of each data collection method. Afterwards, variable operationalization and data analysis are discussed in detail. The final section concentrates on the

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<sup>1</sup> The English translation of this survey questionnaire is included in Appendix A.

survey response rate and respondents' characteristics.

### Research Design

The focus of this study is on the degree of public professionalism among municipal chief administrators in Thailand and Illinois. To address this focus, I use three comparison groups to explore the impact of form of government and membership in professional associations on the chief administrators' ability to balance multiple accountability approaches (Figure 5-1).

<b>Experimental Group I</b>	Thai Municipal Administrators (MAs) <b>Ob<sub>TH</sub></b>	X <sub>1</sub>	
<b>Experimental Group II</b>	Illinois City Administrators (CAOs) <b>Ob<sub>IL1</sub></b>	X <sub>1</sub>	X <sub>2</sub>
<b>Comparison Group</b>	Illinois City Managers (CMs) <b>Ob<sub>IL2</sub></b>	X <sub>1</sub>	X <sub>2</sub>

Notes: (1) X<sub>1</sub> = Form of Municipal Government  
(2) X<sub>2</sub> = Membership in Professional Associations

Figure 5-1: Research Design.

Two primary groups of comparison are Thai MAs (Ob<sub>TH</sub>) and Illinois CAOs (Ob<sub>IL1</sub>). As discussed in Chapters 3 and 4, Thai MAs and Illinois CAOs must deal with the mayors—the municipalities' chief executive officers. While the Thai MAs are initially appointed by the MoI, Thai mayors have the authority granted by the national law to transfer the MAs and to determine the MAs' responsibilities.

Illinois mayors appoint the CAOs, supervise them, and along with the city councils, enact municipal ordinances that determine the CAOs' discretionary authority. In this research design, Thai MAs ( $Ob_{TH}$ ) and Illinois CAOs ( $Ob_{IL1}$ ) serve as the first and second experimental groups.

Also, Illinois CMs in the council-manager cities ( $Ob_{IL2}$ ) enjoy more discretionary authority than the two other types of chief administrators because their responsibilities and authority are determined and protected by the Illinois state statutory law. While Thai MAs and Illinois CAOs must deal with multiple actors (i.e., mayors, councils, national government), Illinois CMs are appointed and dismissed by a single legislative body—the city council. Confluence of these factors is expected to result in Illinois CMs' high public professionalism. Hence, Illinois CMs serves as the comparison group in this study.

The two interventions in this research design are form of municipal government ( $X_1$ ) and membership in professional associations ( $X_2$ ). In this study,  $X_1$  includes the council-manager form, the mayor-council form, and the Thai municipal government form.<sup>2</sup>  $X_2$  indicates whether a chief administrator belongs to any professional associations. This dissertation focuses on the effects of these two factors on the chief administrators' degree of public professionalism.

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<sup>2</sup> See Chapters 3 and 4 for the differences and similarities of these three forms of government.

### **Date Collection**

This study uses a triangulation of research methods for both data collection and data analysis. Triangulation involves the use of quantitative and qualitative methods (Denzin 2006) and is widely perceived to help bridge the gap between the strengths and weaknesses of the two methods (Smith 1997; Creswell 2009; Riccucci 2010). By triangulation of methods, the validity of research findings increases, as the strengths of each research method compensates for the shortcomings of another method (Creswell 2009). Triangulation also expands an understanding of research problems and hence is appropriate for public administration research (Yang, Zhang, and Holzer 2008). My data collection procedures began with the administration of on-line survey questionnaire to 192 Illinois municipal chief administrators between June and August 2010. After the survey was completed, I proceeded to schedule telephone and face-to-face interviews with the Illinois city managers and administrators. The interviews were conducted between August and October 2010. Also, in October 2010, I obtained the survey response dataset from NIDA and the population dataset for each participating community from the United States Census Bureau and the Thai Department of Provincial Administration.

### **Survey Questionnaire and Administration**

Surveys are essential to the social scientific research (Converse 1987).

Schutt (2006) states that the survey instrument owes its continuing popularity in the academic circles to three attributes: versatility, efficiency, and generalizability.

First and foremost, although the survey instrument is not the perfect research method for learning about every social phenomenon, a well-designed survey can help enhance an understanding of almost every social issue (Schutt 2006). Second, surveys are popular because they are the least costly of all data collection methods (Prosavac and Carey 1997; Schutt 2006; McNabb 2008). Third, because surveys involve probability sampling from large populations, they are in many cases the only available instrument “to develop a representative picture of the attitudes and characteristics of a large population” (Schutt 2006, 235).

In public administration, researchers frequently use the survey instrument to gather information on individual attitudes, behaviors, values, and organizational commitment among individuals in public organizations (Majumdar 2007). Thus, this data collection method is appropriate for the focus of my study. Nevertheless, scholars have identified several weaknesses associated with the survey approach. First, a poor sampling frame can compromise the survey results, if the sample used in a survey is not representative of the large population (Groves 1989; Cui 2003). Second, non-response is another major hazard in survey research and may make it difficult to generalize the results to the population from which a random sample

was drawn (Taylor-Powell and Hermann 2000; Schutt 2006). Schutt 2006 and McNabb (2008) point out that non-response should not be a major concern, if the response rate is between 25 and 40 percent. The third weakness is a precaution rather than a weakness. McNabb (2008, 139) argues that “very great differences in responses can occur with small variations in the wording of a question.” Hence, the principles of writing survey questions are clarity, brevity, simplicity, non-bias, and appropriateness (Prosavac and Carey 1997; McNabb 2008).

With those principles in mind, I followed Prosavac and Carey’s advice that “once the survey and instructions are prepared.....the best practice is to administer the survey to a small sample of people to learn how they understand the instructions and the items” (Prosavac and Carey 1997, 83-84). I used the software by Survey Monkey (<http://www.surveymonkey.com>) to develop the survey questionnaire based on the NIDA municipal administrator survey questionnaire, which I translated into English.<sup>3</sup> Afterwards, I pre-tested the on-line questionnaire with four chief administrators in DeKalb and Ogle counties who were later included in the broader survey. On average, it took the four chief administrators approximately twenty minutes to complete the pilot survey. During the pre-test period, the respondents provided comments and suggestions. For instance, one respondent identified difficulty with the way the pre-determined choices on the on-line survey were structured. Another respondent who is a city manager was confused with the question: “how long have you been chief administrator in this

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix B for the Illinois CMs and CAOs survey questionnaire.

municipality?” To make this question applicable to both the city managers and city administrators, I changed the question to “how long have you been in your current position in this municipality?”

The questions on my survey questionnaire are based on the NIDA survey questionnaire and several were modified to correspond with the specific elements of Illinois municipal government (Table 5-1). The first and second sections collect data on the general information of chief administrators and municipal government structure. The third section elicits the chief administrators’ abstract perceptions of multiple accountabilities. The fourth section uses a flood situation to obtain the chief administrators’ responses to different accountability approaches. The fifth, sixth, and seventh sections deal with intra-organizational relationships in the municipal government, role of professional associations, administrative problems, and skills.

Table 5-1

## Modifications to the NIDA Survey Questionnaire

Category	NIDA Survey Questions	Modifications on My Survey Questionnaire
General Information	How long have you been <i>municipal clerk</i> in this municipality?	How long have you been <i>in your current position</i> “in this municipality”?
	How long have you been <i>municipal clerk</i> in your career?	How long have you been <i>city manager/administrator</i> in your career?
	<i>Are you originally from this municipality?</i>	<i>What were your last professional position and location (city and state)?</i>
Perceptions of Multiple Accountabilities	To what <i>degree</i> do you respond to the mayor’s needs?	To what <i>extent</i> do you serve as the assistant to the mayor?
	<i>How do municipal ordinances</i> influence your management decision making?	<i>To what extent do laws</i> influence your management decision making?
	<i>How do national laws and regulations</i> influence your management decision making?	
	To what extent do you consider yourself working to meet <i>the directives and policies of DOLA?</i>	To what extent do you consider yourself working to meet <i>the state and federal mandates?</i>
	To what extent do you perceive yourself as a professional municipal officer?	To what extent do you perceive yourself as professional municipal officer?
Scenario	How important would it be for you, as <i>municipal clerk</i> , to be responsive to the mayor’s directives?	How important would it be for you, as <i>city manager/administrator</i> , to be responsive to the mayor’s/ <i>council president’s</i> directive?
	How important would it be for you, as <i>municipal clerk</i> , to follow the terms of the procurement contract with the storeowners?	How important would it be for you, as <i>city manager/administrator</i> , to follow the terms of the procurement contract with the storeowners?
	How important would it be for you, as <i>municipal clerk</i> , to follow the <i>MoI</i> regulations?	How important would it be for you, as <i>city manager/administrator</i> , to follow <i>the municipal rules and regulations?</i>
	How important would it be for you, as <i>municipal clerk</i> , to follow your conscience as professional public manager?	How important would it be for you, as <i>city manager/administrator</i> , to follow your conscience as professional public manager?

(Continued on following page)

Table 5-1 (continued)

Category	NIDA Survey Questions	Modifications on My Survey Questionnaire
Intra-organizational relationship and role of professional associations	Does your municipality have a strategic plan <i>for the community</i> ? If yes, what does the strategic plan contain?	Does your municipality have a strategic plan <i>that was created with the participation of citizens, elected officials, and municipal government officials and staff</i> ?
	Do <i>local politicians, municipal clerk, and municipal government employees have informal meetings on a regular basis</i> ?	Do <i>the elected officials and the municipal staff meet in work sessions on a regular basis</i> ?
	Do you belong to professional associations? If yes, list the professional associations of which you are a member.	Do you belong to any professional associations? If yes, list the professional associations of which you are members.  Please specify the type of activities your professional associations provide (if applicable).

Then, I asked the ILCMA Secretariat at Northern Illinois University's Center for Governmental Studies to distribute via electronic mail the cover letter and link to the on-line survey to 192 city managers and administrators. During the survey period, two problems arose. First, one of the city managers pointed out that the scenario used in the survey omits "other significant variables, including the balance of the local government purchasing policy, the state law on purchasing and contracts, the authority that the manager/administrator has to approve bills, and the legal restriction that any purchase and reimbursement exceeding \$20,000 require the council action" (E-mail correspondence with an Illinois city manager, June 15, 2010).

For the purpose of comparison, a similar scenario was used in the NIDA survey questionnaire, but I slightly modified it to fit with the Illinois municipal government setting. Table 5-2 presents the two versions of the scenario.

Table 5-2

## Scenario Used in the NIDA Survey Questionnaire and My Survey Questionnaire

NIDA Survey Questionnaire (Verbatim English Translation)	My Survey Questionnaire
<p>There is a big flood in your municipal area. The mayor unilaterally decided to react to the disaster by telling residents the municipality would reimburse all disaster relief costs incurred by the households. The mayor directed residents to obtain food and construction materials as necessary from a couple of stores in town that do business with the municipality and to charge the expenses to the municipality's account. The procurement contract between the storeowners and the municipality call for the municipality to pay the bill in full within 30 days. The next day the municipal clerk received a bill of 100,000 baht from the two store owners and learned from the 11 store owners that the mayor had directed him to reimburse the store owners for all disaster relief costs incurred by residents. The store owners also reminded the municipal clerk about the procurement contract that required payment within 30 days, and threatened to reclaim any unused construction materials from the residents and sue the municipality if the terms of the contract were not followed.</p> <p>The municipal clerk found a provision in the municipal disaster relief standard operating procedures that stated the municipal government may reimburse disaster relief expenses up to 2,500 baht per household and that any additional costs shall be approved by the Ministry of Interior.</p>	<p>There is a big flood in your municipal area. The mayor unilaterally decided to react to the disaster by telling residents the city administrator/city manager would reimburse all disaster relief costs incurred by the households. The mayor/city council chair directed residents to obtain food and construction materials as necessary from a couple of stores in town that do business with the municipality and to charge the expenses to the municipality's account. The procurement contract between the store owners and the municipality call for the municipality to pay the bill in full within 30 days. The next day the city administrator received a bill of \$100,000 from the two store owners and learned from the store owners that the mayor/city council chair had directed him to reimburse the store owners for all disaster relief costs incurred by residents. The store owners also reminded the city manager/city administrator about the procurement contract that required payment within 30 days, and threatened to reclaim any unused construction materials from the residents and sue the municipality if the terms of the contract were not followed.</p> <p>The city manager/city administrator found a provision in the municipal disaster relief standard operating procedures that stated the municipal government may reimburse disaster relief expenses up to \$2,500 per household and that any additional costs shall be approved by the State Comptroller's Office (which would take longer than 30 days).</p>

Although I used the survey instrument developed by others, there are a limited number of public administration research works that have sought to quantitatively assess the public officials' perception of multiple accountabilities by using a survey instrument. The city manager's comment was, however, legitimate and prompted me to supplement the survey results with the qualitative interview method that would enhance an understanding of the dynamics in the chief administrators' use of multiple accountabilities when they face an ill-structured problem.

The second problem was the potential bias problem. With the ILCMA secretariat's assistance, I sent the survey questionnaire to only the ILCMA members and possibly missed several chief administrators who might not belong to the ILCMA. My study may include a large number of Thai municipal administrators who do not belong to any professional associations other than the NMLT. Nonetheless, generalization of the survey results to a population of Illinois chief administrators would be challenging, provided I only surveyed the ILCMA members. Also, my analysis would miss how those chief administrators who are not ILCMA members manage multiple accountabilities. I specifically conducted a review of qualitative interviews of those non-member chief administrators to help address this potential bias.

### Interview

Qualitative interviews provide an understanding of depth and complexity in social meaning and people's experiences (Mason 2002). They are also useful for collecting in-depth information by probing to clarify answers obtained from other data collection techniques (Kumar 2005). The qualitative interview method would help address the issues with the survey instrument as previously analyzed. It would also enable me to gain an in-depth understanding of the strategies that municipal chief administrators use to balance multiple accountabilities, as well as the impact of the form of government and membership in professional associations on those strategies.

Table 5-3 demonstrates the structure of my interviews. The interview design divides the chief administrators into six major groups based on the form of municipal government and membership in professional associations. Within each cell, I also grouped the chief administrators into Home Rule and Non-Home Rule jurisdictions. For the Thai cases, the metropolitan municipalities most closely resemble the Illinois Home Rule municipalities because they have become responsible for a variety of essential public services since the 1997 decentralization reform.<sup>4</sup> Note that the membership in professional associations in the interview design means the membership in professional associations other than the NMLT in the Thai case and the membership in the ILCMA in the Illinois case.

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<sup>4</sup> See Chapter 3 for a complete list of service responsibilities of each type of Thai municipality.

These 30 interviews used a loosely structured questionnaire which was designed to match the interview questionnaire used by the NIDA researchers (See Appendix C). Rubin and Rubin (1995) note that the qualitative interview uses three kinds of questions: main questions that begin and guide the conversation, probes to clarify answers or request further examples, and follow-up questions that pursue the implications of answers to main questions. As each interview progressed, I relied on the main questions included in Appendix B, but remained attentive to a variety of comments and meanings and asked the respondents to clarify or provide concrete examples.

Table 5-3

## Qualitative Interview Design

Form of Government	Membership in Professional Associations		TOTAL
	Yes	No	
Illinois City Manager ( <i>n</i> = 9)	Home Rule Municipality ( <i>n</i> = 4)	Home Rule Municipality ( <i>n</i> = 1)	5
	Non-Home Rule Municipality ( <i>n</i> = 3)	Non-Home Rule Municipality ( <i>n</i> = 1)	4
Illinois City Administrator ( <i>n</i> = 9)	Home Rule Municipality ( <i>n</i> = 3)	Home Rule Municipality ( <i>n</i> = 1)	4
	Non-Home Rule Municipality ( <i>n</i> = 2)	Non-Home Rule Municipality ( <i>n</i> = 3)	5
Thai Municipal Administrator ( <i>n</i> = 12)	Metropolitan Municipality ( <i>n</i> = 3)	Metropolitan Municipality ( <i>n</i> = 1)	4
	City and Sub-district Municipality ( <i>n</i> = 3)	City and Sub-district Municipality ( <i>n</i> = 5)	8
<b>TOTAL</b>	18	12	30

The majority of interviews with the Illinois chief administrators were conducted on the telephone. I only conducted four face-to-face interviews with chief administrators. For the Thai cases, members of the NIDA research team conducted 52 face-to-face interviews with the Thai chief administrators. The method of selecting the Thai survey and interview data will be discussed in the next section.

### **Secondary Data**

As previously mentioned, the NIDA research team conducted both the national survey and interview of the Thai municipal administrators.<sup>5</sup> I used both the NIDA survey results and interview data in my analysis. However, there is a discrepancy in the number of observations between my Illinois dataset and the NIDA dataset. In terms of the survey results, the NIDA dataset includes 208 complete responses, whereas my dataset has 72. To deal with this discrepancy, I used the stratified random sampling method to select 72 responses from the NIDA survey dataset based on population size. First, each Illinois municipality's population data was collected from the United States Census Bureau's database. Second, based on the population dataset, the Illinois municipalities were divided into three groups to correspond with the three types of Thai municipality (*Nakorn*,

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<sup>5</sup> See Appendix D for the list of NIDA interview questions in English.

*Muang*, and Sub-district).<sup>6</sup> This method made it easy to determine the number of Thai municipalities in each category to be randomly selected. Then, I instructed Microsoft Excel to generate random numbers for the Thai municipalities in each category and sorted the Thai municipalities into order by the random numbers. For each category, I chose my sample by selecting the first rows that match the number of the Illinois municipalities.

Furthermore, the NIDA research team conducted 52 in-depth interviews with the Thai municipal administrators. In my study, only 18 Illinois chief administrators were interviewed. To address this discrepancy issue, I relied on two criteria to purposively sample 12 interviews from the NIDA interview dataset. First, I selected the Thai interviewees based on whether they belong to professional associations other than the NMLT. The objective of using this criterion was to examine and compare the degree of professionalism between those who are active members of other professional associations and those who only belong to the NMLT. The second criterion was each municipality's population size. In Thailand, the *Nakorn* or metropolitan municipalities with more than 50,000 residents have more service responsibilities and discretion than other types of municipality, hence resembling the Illinois Home Rule municipalities.

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<sup>6</sup> As discussed in Chapter 3, the categorization of Thai municipalities is based on population size.

## Variable Operationalization

### Dependent variable

Questions from the first and second sections of the survey questionnaire are used to operationalize public professionalism. Public professionalism is treated as an ordered categorical variable with five distinct categories: transformational professionalism, policy professionalism, procedural professionalism, apolitical professionalism, and ersatz public professionalism. The transformational professionalism is the most desirable and ersatz professionalism the least desirable. Table 5-4 describes in detail how the operationalization method for each type of public professionalism was carried out.

Table 5-4

Operationalization of the Dependent Variable Using Questions from Sections 1 and 2 of the Survey Questionnaire

<b>Type of Public Professionalism</b>	<b>Professional Accountability Question</b>	<b>Political Accountability Question</b>	<b>Legal Accountability Question</b>	<b>Bureaucratic Accountability Question</b>
<i>Transformational</i>	<i>Responses are “very important” (4).</i>	Responses are “important” (3) or “very important” (4).	Responses are “important” (3) or “very important” (4).	Responses are “important” (3) or “very important” (4).
<i>Policy</i>	Responses are “important” (3).	<i>Responses are “very important” (4).</i>	Responses are either “important” (3) or “very important” (4).	Responses are either “important” (3) or “very important” (4).

(Continued on following page)

Table 5-4 (Continued)

Type of Public Professionalism	Professional Accountability Question	Political Accountability Question	Legal Accountability Question	Bureaucratic Accountability Question
<i>Procedural</i>	Responses are “important” (3).	Responses are “important” (3).	Responses are “important” (3) or “very important” (4).	Responses are “important” (3) or “very important” (4).
<i>Apolitical</i>	Responses are “important” (3) or “very important” (4).	Responses are “not important” (1) or “somewhat important” (2).	Responses are “important” (3) or “very important” (4).	Responses are “important” (3) or “very important” (4).
<i>Ersatz</i>	<p><b>Two criteria:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Respondents rated all accountability questions either “not important at all” (1) or “somewhat important” (2).</li> <li>2. Respondents rated one, two, or three accountability questions either “not important at all” (1) or “somewhat important” (2). However, if respondents rated political accountability “not important at all” (1) or “somewhat important” (2), but rated others “important” (3) or “very important” (4), their responses would be labeled “politically neutral public professionalism.”</li> </ol>			

The dependent variable derived from the first section of the survey is used in the abstract model, which evaluates how the chief administrators perceive multiple accountability approaches in the abstract. The second section of the survey supplies the data for the situational model, which examines the way chief administrators manage multiple accountability approaches when faced with a specific problem.

However, the situational model helps improve our understanding of the abstract model by revealing how municipal chief administrators react to an ill-structured problem. Ill-structured problems are difficult to define, have more than

one solution, and require “action steps in spite of ambiguities” (Stepien and Pyke 1997, 384). As Voss and colleagues (1983) observe, most public policy issues are ill-structured problems. Peddle (2000) points out that public administrators would recognize this characteristic in many policy decisions and that learning to solve ill-structured problems is an important skill for public officials. In this study, the skill to solve ill-structured policy issues is indicative of the chief administrators’ professionalism.

Another advantage of using a scenario to examine public professionalism is to overcome the social desirability effect of a survey instrument. In a discussion of cross-cultural management research, Smith and colleagues (2008) suggest that the scenario-based approach helps enhance internal validity of the survey results by reducing inherent limitations in the survey method, such as response biases and fixed responses. Moreover, if open-ended questions are included, the approach could also enrich an understanding of the respondents’ solution to a scenario (Smith, Peterson, and Thomas 2008).

### **Independent variable**

In this study, three major independent variables are: (1) the form of municipal government, (2) membership in public official associations, and (3) interaction variable between the form of government and membership in public official associations. I operationalize the form of government variable by the way

in which the chief administrators' responsibilities are determined and by who holds the authority to appoint and dismiss the chief administrators. The survey questionnaire and a review of the ILCMA database provide the data to operationalize this variable.

As previously discussed, in the Illinois council-manager form of government, the CM is appointed by the city council and his/her responsibilities determined by the state statute. In an Illinois mayor-council city, the mayor or village president with the city council's consent appoints the CAO (Lichter 2008). However, the CAO's responsibilities are determined by municipal ordinance, not the state statute. This means that the local governing body in a mayor-council city could vote to limit or expand the CAO's responsibilities. On the other hand, the local governing body in a council-manager city does not have as much authority to determine the CM's responsibilities.

Thai MAs are appointed by DoLA and remain members of the national civil service. However, Thai mayors can petition to the provincial commission on municipal government personnel standards to transfer the MAs to other municipalities. Similar to the Illinois mayor-council form, the Thai Municipality Act of 1953 (amended 2001) leaves the right to determine the MAs' responsibilities to the elected mayors.

The second variable—membership in professional associations—is operationalized by using the results of the NIDA and my survey questionnaire. The Thai respondents are asked whether they belong to the NMLT and MOAT, while

the Illinois chief administrators are asked whether they belong to any professional associations. In Thailand, the MoI, DoLA, and the mayors dominate the NMLT and MOAT. Their domination makes it unlikely that the association would be independent in producing the professional training programs and code of ethics which would enable the Thai chief administrators to integrate multiple accountabilities in their decision making.

The third major independent variable is the interaction variable between the three forms of government and membership in public official associations. The data used to operationalize the first and second independent variables are used to operationalize the interaction variable. However, the survey data yields four groups of municipal chief administrators:

- (1) Illinois CMs who are ILCMA and ICMA members,
- (2) Illinois CAOs who are ILCMA and ICMA members,
- (3) Thai MAs who are NMLT and MOAT members, and
- (4) Thai MAs who are *not* NMLT and MOAT members.

Table 5-5

## Operationalization of Each Independent Variable

Variable	Operationalization Method	Data Used
<b>Form of municipal government</b> (Major independent variable)	1. How the chief administrator's responsibilities are determined (by statute or by local ordinance) 2. Who holds the authority to appoint and dismiss the chief administrator.	1. Survey questionnaire 2. ILCMA database
<b>Membership in professional associations</b> (Major independent variable)	"Do you belong to any professional associations?"	Results from the NIDA and my survey questionnaires
<b>Interaction variable</b> (Major independent variable)	1 = Illinois CMs who are ILCMA/ICMA members 2 = Illinois CAOs who are ILCMA/ICMA members 3 = Thai MAs who are NMLT and MOAT members 4 = Thai municipal administrators who are <i>not</i> NMLT and MOAT members	1. Survey questionnaire 2. ILCMA database
<b>Each municipality's population size</b> (Control variable)	Population estimate for year 2009	1. the American Community Survey (ACS) by the United States Census Bureau 2. the population data by the Department of Provincial Administration (DoPA)
<b>Tenure as chief administrator</b> (Control variable)	"How long have you been chief administrator in your career? (measured in months)"	Results from the NIDA and my survey questionnaires
<b>Home Rule status</b> (Control variable)	1. "Is your municipality a home rule municipality?" 2. All Thai municipalities are considered non-home rule municipalities.	The Illinois Municipal League database

(Continued on following page)

Table 5-5 (continued)

Variable	Operationalization Method	Data Used
<b>Level of education</b> (Control variable)	“What is the highest level of education you have achieved?” 1. Less than a Bachelor’s degree 2. Bachelor’s degree 3. Master’s degree 4. Doctorate	Results from the NIDA and my survey questionnaires
<b>Informal and regular working relationship with elected officials</b> (Control variable)	Do the elected officials and the municipal staff meet in work sessions on a regular basis?	Results from the NIDA and my survey questionnaires
<b>Managerial skills</b> (Control variable)	Respondents were asked to evaluate their skills in several areas.	Results from the NIDA and my survey questionnaires
<b>Technical skills</b> (Control variable)		

Apart from these three major variables, I included other controlled variables as suggested by the empirical and theoretical works discussed earlier. These variables are each municipality’s population size, tenure as chief administrator, a municipality’s home rule or non-home rule status, level of education, informal and regular working relationship with elected officials, managerial skills, and technical skills. Table 5-5 summarizes the independent variables, operationalization methods, and the data used to measure each variable.

Using factor analysis, the technical skill index was found to consist of ten variables. The managerial skill index was found to consist of eight variables. The factor loadings for each index are presented in Table 5-6. The Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  values for the technical skill and managerial indices were 0.915 and 0.861, respectively. A

Cronbach's  $\alpha$  value between 0.7 and 0.8 indicates a high degree of internal consistency or reliability of an index (Field 2006). As the Cronbach's  $\alpha$  values for both managerial and technical skill indices are above 0.8, they exceed the reliability range.

Table 5-6  
Technical and Managerial Indices

Managerial Skill Index		Technical Skill Index	
<i>Variable</i>	<i>Factor Loading</i>	<i>Variable</i>	<i>Factor Loading</i>
Ethics policy	0.600	Auditing procedures	0.613
Interorganizational communication	0.813	Budgetary process	0.688
Interpersonal communication	0.685	Community economic development	0.726
Leadership	0.629	Conflict resolution	0.765
Problem-solving process	0.722	Decision making	0.754
Contract/project management	0.741	Interdepartmental coordination	0.736
Public relations	0.450	Employee motivation	0.754
Standard operating procedures	0.436	Employee participation	0.726
<i>Cronbach's <math>\alpha</math>: 0.861</i>		Employee performance assessment	0.631
		Employee selection	0.608
		<i>Cronbach's <math>\alpha</math>: 0.915</i>	

### Data Analysis

Upon completion of the data collection process, both quantitative and qualitative analyses are performed to test each hypothesis (Table 5-7). The data collected from the interviews as well as the detailed responses to the scenario made

by several respondents were used to enhance an understanding of the statistical analyses. The discussion and justification of the analyses used in this study are as follows.

Table 5-7

## Analytic Methods Used to Test Each Research Hypothesis

Hypothesis	Analytic Method
Hypothesis 1	(1) Ordinal Logistic Regression (OLR) (2) Generalized Ordinal Logistic Model (GOLM)
Hypothesis 2	(3) Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) (4) Factor analysis (5) Qualitative analysis
Hypothesis 3	
Hypothesis 4	(1) Mann-Whitney <i>U</i> test (2) Kruskal-Wallis <i>H</i> test
Hypothesis 5	(3) Qualitative analysis
Hypothesis 6	

**Ordinal Logistic Regression (OLR), Generalized Ordinal Logistic Model (GOLM), and Ordinary Least Squares (OLS)**

Hypotheses 1 and 2 assess the impact of form of municipal government on public professionalism. The dependent variable that measures the chief administrators' public professionalism has five possible outcome categories, which were coded as 5 (transformational), 4 (policy), 3 (procedural), 2 (apolitical), and 1

(ersatz). This coding scheme produces an ordinal, not an interval, scale. The difference between a 2 (politically neutral public professionalism) and a 3 (political public professionalism) cannot be treated as equivalent to the difference between 3 and 4 (Kennedy 2003).

Therefore, in testing the three hypotheses, ordinal logistic regression (OLR) is more appropriate than ordinary least squares (OLS) because OLS relies on the assumptions of normality and constant variance for the residual. Chen and Hughes (2004) note that it is difficult to assume the normality and homogeneity of variance for ordered categorical outcomes since those outcomes contain a small number of discrete categories. Not only does the ordinal regression model take into the ordinal nature of the dependent variable in my study, it also allows for the distances between the ordered categorical outcomes to be unequal, rather than treating them as an interval (Liao 1994).

Also, the OLR is superior to the multinomial logit model—the other logit model widely used to analyze the categorical dependent variable. This is because the multinomial logit model overlooks the nature of ordered categorical outcomes and estimates a separate equation for each dichotomous contrast in each category of the dependent variable (Garrett 1997). In contrast, in the OLR model, a single equation is constructed with a single parameter estimate ( $B_j$ ) and corresponding odds ratio for predictor  $X_j$  for the full data set (Cohen, et al. 2002, 523). As a result, the OLR model corresponds to the overall impact of each predictor on the probability of membership in each category of the ordered outcomes. Thus, while

the multinomial logit model yields many complex regression equations, the OLR model generates only one equation, hence producing simpler results.

Yet, even though the OLR model does not assume normality and homogeneous variance for the residual, it requires the assumption of parallel lines across all ordered categorical outcomes (Chen and Hughes 2004; Field 2006). In other words, the OLR model assumes that the location parameter estimates are equivalent across all levels of the dependent variable (Knoben 2008). To ensure that my two ordinal regression models met this assumption, I run the test of parallel lines for each model, using five categories of public professionalism. The null hypothesis for this test states that the location parameters are the same across the five outcome categories. Nonetheless, the initial abstract and situational OLR regression models do not meet this assumption. The test of parallel lines for the abstract perception model is significant at the 0.05 level ( $p = 0.000$ ). Hence, the null hypothesis of parallelism is rejected. Similarly, the test of parallel lines for the scenario model is significant at the 0.05 level ( $p = 0.002$ ), hence the null hypothesis is rejected.

If the test of parallelism fails, there are two possible remedies: (1) merging outcome categories or (2) using the generalized ordinal logistic model (GOLM). The first remedy involves merging outcome categories until parallelism is achieved (Norūsis 1997). The adjusted outcome categories of public professionalism share the same characteristics and order of desirability as the initial outcome categories, except that there are only 3 adjusted outcome categories (Table 5-8).

Transformational professionalism is the highest level of public professionalism. A combined outcome category of policy and procedural public professionalism is the second highest degree of public professionalism. Finally, both apolitical and ersatz public professionalism are in the unbalanced public professionalism category and have the lowest degree of public professionalism.

The test of parallel lines for the new abstract OLR model is insignificant ( $p = 0.063$ ), while the test for the situational model is robustly insignificant ( $p = 0.291$ ). The models with three outcome categories satisfy the assumption of parallelism.

Table 5-8

## Initial and Adjusted Ordered Outcome Categories

<b>Initial Outcome Categories (5 Categories of Public Professionalism)</b>	<b>Adjusted Categorical Outcomes (3 Categories of Public Professionalism)</b>
<i>Transformational</i> Professionalism	<i>Transformational</i> Professionalism
<i>Policy</i> Professionalism	<i>Policy and Procedural</i> Professionalism
<i>Procedural</i> Professionalism	
<i>Apolitical</i> Professionalism	<i>Apolitical and Ersatz</i> Professionalism
<i>Ersatz</i> Professionalism	

The second remedy is to use GOLM instead of OLR (Wang 2005). Long and Freese (2003) argues that in social scientific research, the assumption of

parallelism is always violated and that an alternative method should not require the parallel regression assumption. Unlike OLR, GOLM relaxes the proportional odds assumption (Fahrmeir and Tutz 1994). However, Dobson (2001, 148) and Fox (2008) point out that the GOLM models may still give results “very similar” to the OLR models. Thus, in testing Hypotheses 1 and 2, I use and compare the GOLM and OLR results because both models are expected to show similar relationships between public professionalism, form of municipal government, and membership in public official associations.

Further, Liao (1994) notes that if the number of ordered outcome categories exceeds four, the OLS model could be used instead of OLR. He further notes that if the analyst is in doubt, he/she could use both OLS and OLR and compare the differences between the two models. If no conspicuous difference is detected, OLS would be an acceptable approach. Otherwise, the OLR model is preferred. In this study, I followed Liao’s advice and compared the results from both OLS and OLR models.

### **Factor Analysis**

Two of the explanatory variables—technical and managerial skills—are measured using multiple questions on the survey and used in the OLR, GOLM, and OLS models. Factor analysis is performed to ensure each concept’s reliability. The Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  value for each skill variable is previously reported to test whether the

questions indeed measure the underlying concepts. The tests confirm that the questions used to measure the chief administrators' technical skills have a score of 0.915 and managerial skills 0.861. With this confirmation, all questions are used to measure the two underlying concepts.

In terms of selecting the cutoff point in the number of variables loading on a factor, McNabb (2008) points out that the choice is at the researcher's discretion. Conventionally, researchers include only variables with 0.60 correlation values or greater and factor loadings between 0.30 and 0.59 are considered as possibly worth including (McNabb 2008). In this analysis, even though the public relations and knowledge of standard operating procedures had less than 0.60 correlation value, I choose to include them in the managerial skill factor because their factor loadings are within the 0.30-0.59 range and dropping both variables would reduce the Cronbach's  $\alpha$  of the managerial skill factor.

### **The Kruskal-Wallis $H$ Test and the Mann-Whitney $U$ Test**

The Kruskal-Wallis  $H$  test and the Mann-Whitney  $U$  test are used to test Hypotheses 3 through 6 because the OLR and GOLM models could not provide parameter estimates for membership in professional associations and the interaction variable between form of government and membership in professional associations. The inclusion and exclusion of the two variables did not affect the OLR and GOLM model significance or other variables' parameter estimates.

Parametric statistical tests, such as the independent  $t$  test and one-way analysis of variance (one-way ANOVA), are inappropriate for this study because the dependent variable—degree of public professionalism—is measured on an ordinal scale. These parametric tests are insensitive to this ordering of variables (Buckingham and Saunders 2004; Moore and McCabe 2005). The non-parametric statistical tests, particularly the Kruskal-Wallis  $H$  test and the Mann-Whitney  $U$  test, are more appropriate for a hypothesis-testing situation involving a design with nominal categories and ordered categories (Sprenst and Smeeton 2000; Kerr, Hall, and Kozub 2002; Ho 2006).

The Kruskal-Wallis  $H$  test is a non-parametric analog to the one-way ANOVA test for differences among population means and handles  $k$  independent groups or samples (Anderson, Sweeney, Williams, and Williams 2008). However, the Kruskal-Wallis test has no normality or equal variance assumptions (Elliot and Woodward 2006) and assesses a statistically significant difference by ranks (Sheskin 2003). Hence, this non-parametric test takes into considerable the ordinal nature of the dependent variable.

After the Kruskal-Wallis test identifies a statistically significant difference exists among the  $k$  independent samples of municipal chief administrators for each hypothesis, I proceed to run the Mann-Whitney post-hoc test for a significant difference between each individual pairs of municipal chief administrators. The Mann-Whitney  $U$  test—a non-parametric equivalent to the two independent samples  $t$  test—examines an association between the relative rankings of the scores

in one group with the rankings of the scores in the second group (Comrey and Lee 2007).

In the Mann-Whitney test, two samples are incorporated into one order, with each sample value identified by the original sample group (Kazmier 2003). Then, the values are ranked from lowest (labeled as 1) to highest. The mean rank is computed by dividing the total sum of ranks by the number of cases. The mean rank is assigned to the tied or equal values. Instead of the arithmetic mean for each sample, the mean rank is used to report the Mann-Whitney test results because it takes into consideration the ordinal nature of the data (Comrey and Lee 2009).

Also, in performing the Mann-Whitney post-hoc test, the Bonferroni adjustment procedure is used to avoid the experimentwise error rate (Sheskin 2003). The post-hoc test results are compared against the  $\alpha/k$  significance level, where  $k$  is the number of planned pairwise comparisons. Nonetheless, De Muth (2006) warns against the use of the Bonferroni adjustment procedure that the procedure may be too conservative and not have enough statistical power to identify significant differences.

### **Qualitative Analysis**

The in-depth interview supplies information to better understand the results of the statistical analyses by unraveling some of the dynamics in the chief administrators' decision making process and their perceptions of the multiple

accountabilities and values. The interview is not intended to be generalized to all chief administrators—in Thailand or in Illinois—or to be used as predictive data. Rather, it provides the explanatory data that help to appreciate the chief administrators' work experiences, as they told the stories of dealing with a variety of values and demands in decentralized governance. In this study, the interview data are coded and used to supplement the quantitative results.

As demonstrated earlier, the in-depth interview is systematically designed to allow for a comparative study of public professionalism in Thailand and Illinois. The comparative case study has the potential to bridge the theory-practice gap and enrich the public administration literature (Bailey 1992). Rihoux and Ragin (2008) identify a menu of qualitative analytic techniques, one of which is employed extensively in this study: checking coherence of data. That is, qualitative analysis helps check data coherence by detecting contradictory evidence from the quantitative analysis, such as singling out cases that are identical with respect to their causal relations, but different in outcomes (Rihoux and Ragin 2008). By seeking and attempting to correct those contradictions, researchers will obtain a more thorough knowledge of the cases and a more coherent body of evidence (Rihoux and Ragin 2008). In other words, combining quantitative and qualitative methods offers more holistic explanations for many social and political outcomes than using a single method (Landman 2008).

### **Response Rate and Respondent Characteristics**

My surveys were sent via electronic mail to 198 ILCMA members. The total response rate was 35.89 percent (72 respondents). As Babbie (2007) notes, the survey literature remains largely vague about an acceptable survey response rate. McClure and Bertot (2001) argue that the acceptability of survey response rates depends on the purpose of the survey. For instance, if the survey is designed for policy purposes, a high response rate is necessary to make statistical population estimates. But, a large response rate is not needed for evaluation purposes. On average, for the paper-based and web-based questionnaires, the response rates range between 30 percent and 50 percent (Dillman 2000). Thomas (2004) suggests that if the survey response rate is low (e.g., approximately 30 percent), it is important that the researcher validates the survey results with telephone interviews or other sources of information.

The survey dataset includes 142 observations with 71 Thai municipal administrators and 71 Illinois municipal chief administrators. Table 5-9 provides the information on survey respondent characteristics. In the Illinois dataset, 36 respondents are chief administrators from the statutory council-manager cities and 35 respondents from the non-statutory mayor-council cities. Non-Home Rule jurisdictions in Illinois and the Thai municipalities account for 72.5 percent of the entire respondents. In terms of education level, 73.9 percent of the chief administrators hold a Master's degree. 22.5 percent hold a baccalaureate degree.

Table 5-9  
Respondent Characteristics

Characteristics	Mean	Count and Percentage*
Form of Government		
- <i>Council-Manager Form</i>		36 (25.4%)
- <i>Mayor-Council Form</i>	N/A	35 (24.6%)
- <i>Thai Municipality</i>		71 (50%)
Home Rule Status	N/A	103 Non-Home Rule (72.5%)
Education		
- <i>Less than a Baccalaureate Degree</i>		3 (2.1%)
- <i>Baccalaureate Degree</i>	N/A	32 (22.5%)
- <i>Graduate Degree</i>		105 (73.9%)
- <i>Doctorate</i>		2 (1.4%)
Informal Relationship between Elected and Appointed Officials	N/A	119 “Yes” responses (83.8%)
Membership in Professional Associations	N/A	99 “Yes” responses (69.7%)
Population in 2008	25,036	N/A
Tenure (measured in months)	59	N/A

Note: \*Percentage of all valid responses

When asked whether the local elected and appointed officials had an informal working relationship, almost 84 percent reported that the informal working relations exist between them and their elected officials. Also, when asked whether they belong to any professional associations, 69.7 percent of the respondents reported their professional memberships. Further, on average, the

municipal chief administrators in this study are from the communities with a 25,036 population. According to the 1970 Illinois constitution, every community from which the respondents hailed would automatically be granted the home rule status. In addition, on average, respondents have been working as chief administrators for 59 months or approximately 5 years.

### **Conclusion**

This study uses several sources of data to measure the chief administrators' degree of public professionalism, operationalize the factors that influence their public professionalism, and analyze how the chief administrators balance multiple values and accountabilities in their work. The measurement, operationalization, and analysis are exploratory due to the lack of systematic empirical and theoretical grounding with regards to public professionalism and accountability at the local government level.

To measure public professionalism, each of the two similar survey questionnaires (i.e., the NIDA and my surveys) consists of the questions that asked respondents to rank their perceptions of each accountability approach. The questions were divided into two sections: general perceptions of multiple accountabilities and a hypothetical situation. Other questions on the survey and several secondary sources provide the data on the explanatory variables, particularly the three major explanatory variables of interest: the form of municipal

government, membership in professional associations, and the interaction between form of government and membership in public official associations.

Various statistical analyses are conducted to test the research hypotheses. Further, the qualitative analytic technique is used to supplement the statistical results by facilitating an exploration of the way in which municipal chief administrators demonstrate their public professionalism in balancing multiple values and accountabilities. The two following chapters present the results and analyses.

## CHAPTER 6

### ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DEGREE OF PUBLIC PROFESSIONALISM AND FORM OF MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

This chapter proceeds in two steps. First, it begins with a comparative analysis of the municipal chief administrators' responses to each accountability question in the survey. The analysis is divided into the abstract and situational models. This step is essential to my hypothesis testing because, as explained in Chapter 5, those responses are used to determine to which type of public professionalism each municipal chief administrator belongs.

Second, this chapter addresses the first research question of this study: to what extent is the degree of public professionalism among Thai MAs, Illinois CAOs, and Illinois CMs impacted by the form of municipal government? To accomplish this goal, this chapter tests Hypotheses 1-2 (Figure 6-1).

The analyses performed throughout this chapter are only exploratory due to the lack of established empirical research on public accountability and professionalism at the local government level and also the size of the sample. In addition, since decentralization began in Thailand only a decade ago, more research is needed to explore the impact of decentralization reform on local governance, especially on the municipalities that have grown in importance due to increased urbanism. As discussed in detail in Chapter 5, ordinal logistic regression (OLR), generalized ordinal logistic model (GOLM), and ordinary least squares (OLS) are

used to test the two research hypotheses that explore the relationship between the dependent variable (degree of public professionalism) and the independent variable (form of municipal government). I also qualitatively analyze evidence from the interview with selected Thai MAs, Illinois CAOs, and Illinois CMs to provide more insight into the statistical results.

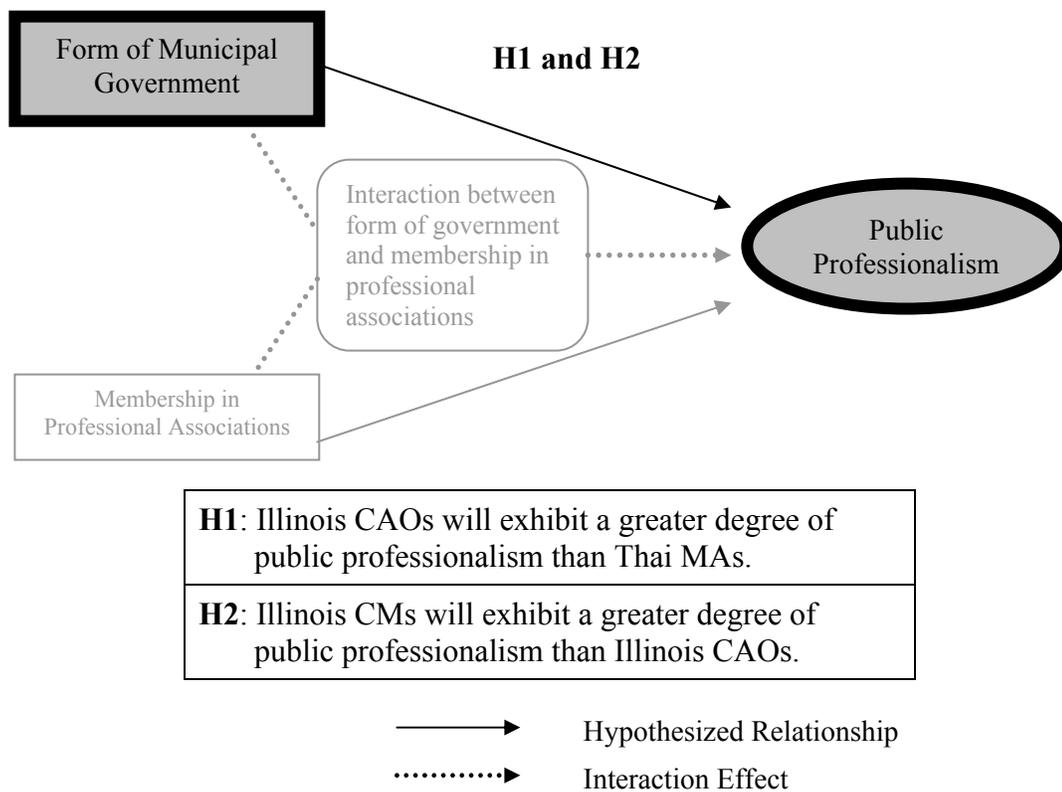


Figure 6-1: Conceptual Map of H1 and H2.

### **Comparative Analysis of the Thai and Illinois Municipal Chief Administrators' Attention to Each Accountability Approach**

Cross-tabulation and non-parametric statistical methods are used in this section because the survey responses are based on an ordinal scale of 1 (Not important at all) to 4 (Very important).<sup>1</sup> After examining the distribution of municipal chief administrators' responses in cross-tabulation tables, I determine whether statistically significant differences exist among Thai MAs, Illinois CAOs, and Illinois CMs by using the Kruskal-Wallis *H* test—the non-parametric equivalent of the one-way ANOVA. Only when the difference in an accountability approach among Thai MAs, Illinois CAOs, and Illinois CMs is statistically significant, I proceed to conduct a post-hoc Mann-Whitney *U* test with a Bonferroni adjustment procedure<sup>2</sup> to determine which individual pairs of municipal chief administrators are significantly different from each other. There are three pairwise comparisons in this analysis: Thai MAs Vs. Illinois CAOs, Illinois CAOs Vs. Illinois CMs, and Thai MAs Vs. Illinois CMs. Ultimately, the post-hoc test helps to determine whether there is a significant difference between Thai MAs and Illinois CAOs in each of the accountability questions.

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<sup>1</sup> See Chapter 5 for an in-depth discussion of these non-parametric statistical methods.

<sup>2</sup> Also, refer to Chapter 5 for an in-depth discussion of this statistical procedure.

### **Abstract Perception of Each Accountability Approach**

As shown in Table 6-1, Thai MAs reported a high degree of responsiveness to their mayors. About 69 percent of Thai MAs viewed political accountability as very important. The rest (31 percent) considered political responsiveness to be important. In sharp contrast, both Illinois CAOs and CMs reported all four degrees of attention to political accountability, with 6 percent of Illinois CMs and 17 percent of Illinois CAOs reporting very important responses. About 40 percent of Illinois CAOs and more than half of Illinois CMs (69 percent) considered political accountability to be not very important and somewhat important.

Thai MAs, Illinois CAOs, and Illinois CMs reported a high degree of consideration for legal accountability, as they all considered this accountability approach as important or very important. Yet, Illinois CAOs appear to have a stronger sense of accountability to the rule of law than Illinois CMs and Thai MAs. That is, approximately 86 percent of Illinois CAOs viewed legal accountability as very important, compared with 72 percent very important responses among Illinois CMs and 54 percent very important responses among Thai MAs.

Table 6-1

Municipal Chief Administrators' Responses to  
the Abstract Accountability Questions

Accountability	Municipal Chief Administrator	Number and Percentage of Responses			
		Not Very Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
<b>Political</b>	<i>Thai MAs</i>	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	22 (31%)	<b>49(69%)</b>
	<i>Illinois CAOs</i>	9 (26%)	5 (14%)	<b>15 (43%)</b>	6 (17%)
	<i>Illinois CMs</i>	12 (33%)	<b>13 (36%)</b>	9 (25%)	2 (6%)
<b>Legal</b>	<i>Thai MAs</i>	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	33 (46%)	<b>38 (54%)</b>
	<i>Illinois CAOs</i>	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	5 (14%)	<b>30 (86%)</b>
	<i>Illinois CMs</i>	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	10 (28%)	<b>26 (72%)</b>
<b>Bureaucratic</b>	<i>Thai MAs</i>	1 (1%)	4 (6%)	<b>40 (56%)</b>	26 (37%)
	<i>Illinois CAOs</i>	0 (0%)	2 (6%)	<b>27 (77%)</b>	6 (17%)
	<i>Illinois CMs</i>	0 (0%)	3 (8%)	<b>17 (47%)</b>	<b>16 (45%)</b>
<b>Professional</b>	<i>Thai MAs</i>	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	<b>35 (50%)</b>	<b>36 (50%)</b>
	<i>Illinois CAOs</i>	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (6%)	<b>33 (94%)</b>
	<i>Illinois CMs</i>	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (6%)	<b>34 (94%)</b>

Note: Numbers and percentages in bold indicate the modal responses.

Similarly, 92 percent of Illinois CMs, 93 percent of Thai MAs, and 94 percent of Illinois CAOs considered the bureaucratic accountability approach to be important or very important. However, Illinois CMs seem to have a stronger sense of bureaucratic accountability than Thai MAs and Illinois CAOs. About 45 percent of Illinois CMs considered bureaucratic accountability as very important, followed by 37 percent of Thai MAs and 17 percent of Illinois CAOs.

Further, all three groups of municipal chief administrators considered professional accountability to be either important or very important. However, almost all Illinois CAOs (94 percent) and CMs (94 percent) reported that the

identity as professional public manager was very important to them. On the other hand, half of Thai MAs (50 percent) thought professional accountability was very important to them.

The Kruskal-Wallis  $H$  test asks whether the difference among the three groups of municipal chief administrators is statistically significant in each accountability approach. The differences among Thai MAs, Illinois CAOs, and Illinois CMs are statistically significant in the political accountability approach ( $\chi^2(2, 141) = 69.31, p = 0.000$ ), legal accountability approach ( $\chi^2(2, 141) = 27.27, p = 0.000$ ), and professional accountability approach ( $\chi^2(2, 141) = 33.73, p = 0.000$ ). The three groups of municipal chief administrators are not statistically different in their abstract views of the national/state mandates and standard operating procedures ( $\chi^2(2, 141) = 4.30, p = 0.117$ ).

Post-hoc tests with the Bonferroni adjustment are performed to assess the three pairwise comparisons (Table 6-2). Recall from Chapter 5 that in these post-hoc tests, the statistical significance level is now 0.017 (0.05/3) because the Bonferroni adjustment requires that  $\alpha$  must be divided by the number of pairwise comparisons. Thus, each pairwise comparison is tested at the  $\alpha/3$  level.

Table 6-2

Post-Hoc Tests Comparing the Municipal Chief Administrators' Responses to the Political, Legal, and Professional Accountability Questions (Abstract Model)

Accountability	Pairwise Comparison	Mann-Whitney <i>U</i>	Wilcoxon <i>W</i>	Z	Sig.*
<b>Political</b>	<i>Thai MAs Vs. Illinois CAOs</i>	444.00	1074.00	-5.93	<b>0.000</b>
	<i>Illinois CAOs Vs. Illinois CMs</i>	461.00	1127.00	-2.03	0.042
	<i>Thai MAs Vs. Illinois CMs</i>	192.00	858.00	-7.70	<b>0.000</b>
<b>Legal</b>	<i>Thai MAs Vs. Illinois CAOs</i>	592.50	3148.50	-4.75	<b>0.000</b>
	<i>Illinois CAOs Vs. Illinois CMs</i>	545.00	1211.00	-1.38	0.167
	<i>Thai MAs Vs. Illinois CMs</i>	811.00	3367.00	-3.32	<b>0.001</b>
<b>Professional</b>	<i>Thai MAs Vs. Illinois CAOs</i>	701.00	3257.00	-4.41	<b>0.000</b>
	<i>Illinois CAOs Vs. Illinois CMs</i>	629.00	1259.00	-0.03	0.977
	<i>Thai MAs Vs. Illinois CMs</i>	719.00	3275.00	-4.47	<b>0.000</b>

Note: \*The *p*-values in bold are significant at the 0.017 (0.05/3) level due to the Bonferroni adjustment procedure

In the abstract perception of political accountability, the post-hoc tests indicate that Thai MAs are significantly different from Illinois CAOs ( $U = 444.00$ ,  $Z = -5.93$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) and from Illinois CMs ( $U = 192.00$ ,  $Z = -7.70$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). However, there is no statistically significant difference between Illinois CAOs and CMs' abstract perception of political accountability ( $U = 461.00$ ,  $Z = -2.03$ ,  $p = 0.042$ ). These statistical results confirm the information in Table 6-1 that Thai MAs (69 percent) are more likely than Illinois CAOs (17 percent) and CMs (6 percent) to be politically responsive to their mayors.

In the abstract views of legal accountability, there is a significant difference between Thai MAs and Illinois CAOs ( $U = 592.50, Z = -4.75, p = 0.000$ ). Also, the post-hoc tests show a significant difference in the legal accountability responses between Thai MAs and Illinois CMs ( $U = 811.00, Z = -3.32, p = 0.001$ ). Nevertheless, similar to the political accountability question, there is no statistically significant difference between Illinois CAOs and CMs ( $U = 545.00, Z = -1.38, p = 0.167$ ). Hence, as shown in Table 6-1, it is evident that Illinois CAOs (86 percent) and CMs (72 percent) were more likely to adhere to the national/state and local laws than Thai MAs (54 percent).

Further, a significant difference is found between Thai MAs and Illinois CAOs' abstract perception of professional accountability ( $U = 701.00, Z = -4.41, p = 0.000$ ). There is also a statistically significant difference between Thai MAs and Illinois CMs ( $U = 719.00, Z = -4.47, p = 0.000$ ). However, the post-hoc tests indicate no significant difference between Illinois CAOs and CMs' abstract attitudes toward professional accountability ( $U = 629.00, Z = -0.03, p = 0.977$ ). These test results and the information in Table 6-1 suggest that Illinois CAOs (94 percent) and CMs (94 percent) have a stronger abstract identity as professional public manager than Thai MAs (51 percent).

In sum, the Kruskal-Wallis  $H$  test suggests that form of municipal government does not affect the municipal chief administrators' abstract attitudes of bureaucratic accountability. However, there are differences between Illinois municipal chief administrators (CMs and CAOs) and Thai MAs in their abstract

perception of political, legal, and professional accountability approaches.

Conversely, within the groups of Illinois CAOs and CMs, form of municipal government does not affect either their abstract or situational perception of political, legal, and professional accountabilities.

### **Perception of Each Accountability Approach When Faced with a Specific Problem**

Survey responses to the flood situation provide a different picture of the chief administrators' attention to the four accountability approaches in the abstract. Recall that, in the flood situation, the mayor unilaterally entered into a procurement contract with a local construction company that would distribute construction materials to the flood victims. The reimbursement cost exceeded the amount allowed by the municipal ordinance, and the state and central government guidelines.

As shown in Table 6-3, Thai MAs demonstrate a stronger situational perception of political accountability than Illinois CAOs and CMs. More than half of Thai MAs (56 percent) considered political accountability to be “very important,” compared with 46 percent of Illinois CAOs and 39 percent of Illinois CMs. In contrast, both Illinois CAOs and CMs have a stronger situational perception of legal accountability than Thai MAs; there are more Illinois CAOs (40 percent) and CMs (31 percent) than Thai MAs (10 percent) with a very important response.

Table 6-3

Municipal Chief Administrators' Responses to the Situational  
Accountability Questions

Accountability	Municipal Chief Administrator	Number and Percentage of Responses			
		Not Very Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
<b>Political</b>	<i>Thai MAs</i>	0 (0%)	7 (10%)	23 (32%)	<b>40 (56%)</b>
	<i>Illinois CAOs</i>	1 (3%)	4 (11%)	14 (40%)	<b>16 (46%)</b>
	<i>Illinois CMs</i>	3 (8%)	6 (17%)	13 (36%)	<b>14 (39%)</b>
<b>Legal</b>	<i>Thai MAs</i>	9 (13%)	16 (23%)	<b>38 (54%)</b>	7 (10%)
	<i>Illinois CAOs</i>	3 (9%)	3 (9%)	<b>15 (43%)</b>	14 (40%)
	<i>Illinois CMs</i>	4 (11%)	5 (14%)	<b>16 (44%)</b>	11 (31%)
<b>Bureaucratic</b>	<i>Thai MAs</i>	0 (0%)	12 (17%)	<b>31 (44%)</b>	27 (38%)
	<i>Illinois CAOs</i>	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (9%)	<b>32 (91%)</b>
	<i>Illinois CMs</i>	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	2 (6%)	<b>33 (92%)</b>
<b>Professional</b>	<i>Thai MAs</i>	0 (0%)	7 (10%)	<b>31 (44%)</b>	<b>32 (45%)</b>
	<i>Illinois CAOs</i>	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (9%)	<b>32 (91%)</b>
	<i>Illinois CMs</i>	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	2 (6%)	<b>33 (92%)</b>

Note: Numbers and percentages in bold indicate the modal responses.

Where bureaucratic accountability is concerned, only 38 percent of Thai MAs considered it to be very important, compared to 91 percent of Illinois CAOs (91 percent) and CMs (92 percent). A similarly sharp contrast is found in the professional accountability question. Almost all Illinois CAOs (91 percent) and CMs (92 percent) reported very important responses to the professional accountability question, while only 45 percent of Thai MAs did so.

The Kruskal-Wallis  $H$  test assesses whether the differences among the three groups of municipal chief administrators are statistically significant in the

situational model. In the political accountability approach, the Kruskal-Wallis test indicates no statistically significant difference among Thai MAs, Illinois CAOs, and Illinois CMs ( $\chi^2(2, 141) = 4.29, p = 0.117$ ). Conversely, significant differences are found in the legal accountability approach ( $\chi^2(2, 141) = 11.60, p = 0.003$ ), the bureaucratic accountability approach ( $\chi^2(2, 141) = 43.33, p = 0.000$ ), and the professional accountability approach ( $\chi^2(2, 141) = 34.46, p = 0.000$ ). The post-hoc test results are compared against the  $\alpha/3$  ( $0.05/3 = 0.017$ ) significance level.

The post-hoc tests indicate that in their situational perception of legal accountability, Thai MAs are significantly different from Illinois CAOs ( $U = 794.50, Z = -3.25, p = 0.001$ ) (Table 6-4). However, there is no statistically significant difference between Illinois CAOs and Illinois CMs ( $U = 552.50, Z = -0.96, p = 0.340$ ). Similarly, no significant difference exists between Thai MAs and Illinois CMs' perception of legal accountability ( $U = 981.50, Z = -2.11, p = 0.035$ ). This statistical evidence supports the results in Table 6-3 that with regard to the flood problem, Illinois CAOs (40 percent) were more likely than Thai MAs (10 percent) to honor the legal contract with the local vendor.

In the situation perception of bureaucratic accountability, there is a significant difference between Thai MAs and Illinois CAOs ( $U = 559.50, Z = -5.15, p = 0.000$ ). Also, the post-hoc tests show a significant difference between Thai MAs and Illinois CMs' situational perception of bureaucratic accountability ( $U = 600.50, Z = -5.02, p = 0.000$ ). There is no statistically significant difference between Illinois CAOs and CMs ( $U = 630.00, Z = -0.00, p = 1.000$ ).

The post-hoc tests provide support for the results in Table 6-3 that both Illinois CAOs (94 percent) and Illinois CMs (94 percent) were more likely than Thai MAs (38 percent) to adhere to the reimbursement ceiling established by the state and municipal governments.

Table 6-4

Post-Hoc Tests Comparing the Municipal Chief Administrators' Responses to the Political, Legal, and Professional Accountability Questions (Situational Model)

Accountability	Post-Hoc Pairwise Comparison	Mann-Whitney <i>U</i>	Wilcoxon <i>W</i>	Z	Sig.*
<b>Legal</b>	<i>Thai MAs Vs. Illinois CAOs</i>	794.50	3350.50	-3.25	<b>0.001</b>
	<i>Illinois CAOs Vs. Illinois CMs</i>	552.50	1218.50	-0.96	0.340
	<i>Thai MAs Vs. Illinois CMs</i>	981.50	3537.50	-2.11	0.035
<b>Bureaucratic</b>	<i>Thai MAs Vs. Illinois CAOs</i>	559.50	3115.50	-5.15	<b>0.000</b>
	<i>Illinois CAOs Vs. Illinois CMs</i>	630.00	1260.00	0.00	1.000
	<i>Thai MAs Vs. Illinois CMs</i>	600.50	3156.50	-5.02	<b>0.000</b>
<b>Professional</b>	<i>Thai MAs Vs. Illinois CAOs</i>	654.50	3210.50	-4.57	<b>0.000</b>
	<i>Illinois CAOs Vs. Illinois CMs</i>	630.00	1260.00	0.00	1.000
	<i>Thai MAs Vs. Illinois CMs</i>	693.00	3249.00	-4.47	<b>0.000</b>

Note: \*The *p*-values in bold are significant at the 0.017 (0.05/3) level due to the Bonferroni adjustment procedure

The post-hoc tests show a statistically significant difference between Thai MAs and Illinois CAOs' perception of professional accountability ( $U = 654.500$ ,  $Z = -4.571$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). Likewise, a statistically significant difference is found between Thai MAs and Illinois CMs ( $U = 693.000$ ,  $Z = -4.465$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). These

results indicate that both Illinois CAOs (91 percent) and Illinois CMs (92 percent) are more likely than Thai MAs (45 percent) to act as professional public managers when faced with the flood problem. There is no significant difference between Illinois CAOs and CMs' situational perception of professional accountability ( $U = 630.00$ ,  $Z = 0.00$ ,  $p = 1.000$ ).

In sum, the analysis suggests that form of municipal government does not affect the municipal chief administrators' responsiveness to the mayoral directives to reimbursement the local vendor. Neither does the form of government affect the municipal chief administrators' adherence to the contractual agreement with the local vendor, conformity to the state and municipal reimbursement policy, nor their conscience as professional public managers. However, it is evident that Illinois municipal chief administrators (both city administrators and managers) are more likely to use legal, bureaucratic, and professional accountabilities in the flood scenario than Thai MAs.

### **Discussion of the Discrepancies in the Survey Responses**

Several discrepancies are evident in the municipal chief administrators' survey responses. Table 6-5 summarizes and compares Thai MAs and Illinois CAOs' very important responses both in their abstract perception and when they face a specific problem. The first discrepancy concerns Thai MAs and Illinois CAOs' perception of political accountability. A larger number of Thai MAs

consistently rated political accountability as very important in the abstract and situational models. However, in the flood situation, the difference in Thai MAs and Illinois CAOs' responses is not statistically significant ( $p = 0.12$ ). This means that the difference is due to chance, rather than geographical location.

Second, in both sections of the survey, Thai MAs and Illinois CAOs are different in their attention to legal accountability. In the abstract, more Illinois chief CAOs reported legal accountability was very important. In the scenario section, both groups of chief administrators were asked to what extent they would honor the city's procurement contract with the local vendor. Still, more Illinois CAOs considered the contractual agreement to be very important. Nevertheless, the number of very important responses among the Thai and Illinois officials decreases considerably from the abstract perception section.

Table 6-5

Summary and Comparison of Thai MAs and Illinois CAOs' Very Important Responses to Each Accountability System (Abstract and Situational Models)

Accountability System	Abstract Perception			When Faced with a Specific Problem		
	Thai MAs	Illinois CAOs	Post-Hoc Test	Thai MAs	Illinois CAOs	Post-Hoc Test
<i>Political Accountability</i>	69 %	17 %	$p = 0.00$	56 %	46 %	*
<i>Legal Accountability</i>	54 %	86 %	$p = 0.00$	10 %	40 %	$p = 0.00$

(Continued on following page)

Table 6-5 (Continued)

Accountability System	Abstract Perception			When Faced with a Specific Problem		
	Thai MAs	Illinois CAOs	Post-Hoc Test	Thai MAs	Illinois CAOs	Post-Hoc Test
<i>Bureaucratic Accountability</i>	37 %	17 %	*	38 %	91 %	$p = 0.00$
<i>Professional Accountability</i>	51 %	94 %	$p = 0.00$	45 %	91 %	$p = 0.00$

Notes: 1. The percentages in black shading denote group of municipal chief administrators with more very important ratings of that accountability system.  
2. \* indicates that no post-hoc test results are available because the Mann-Whitney  $U$  test indicates that Thai MAs, Illinois CAOs, and CMs are not different in their responses to that accountability question.

Third, different responses among the Thai and Illinois officials were also found in the bureaucratic accountability section. In the abstract perception, the number of Thai officials who viewed the reimbursement procedures to be very important are not significantly different from the Illinois officials. However, when facing the reimbursement issue in the hypothetical flood situation, the Illinois chief administrators were much more likely than their Thai counterparts to consider the standard operating procedures concerning local government purchasing and procurement to be very important.

Figure 6-2 shows Illinois CAOs' very important responses to the abstract and flood situation-related questions. Figure 6-2 shows a considerable contrast is in the bureaucratic accountability approach (74 points). A wide gap also exists in the political accountability approach (29 points) and legal accountability approach (46

points). However, these differences in the political and legal accountability approaches are not as great as the difference in their responses to the bureaucratic accountability questions.

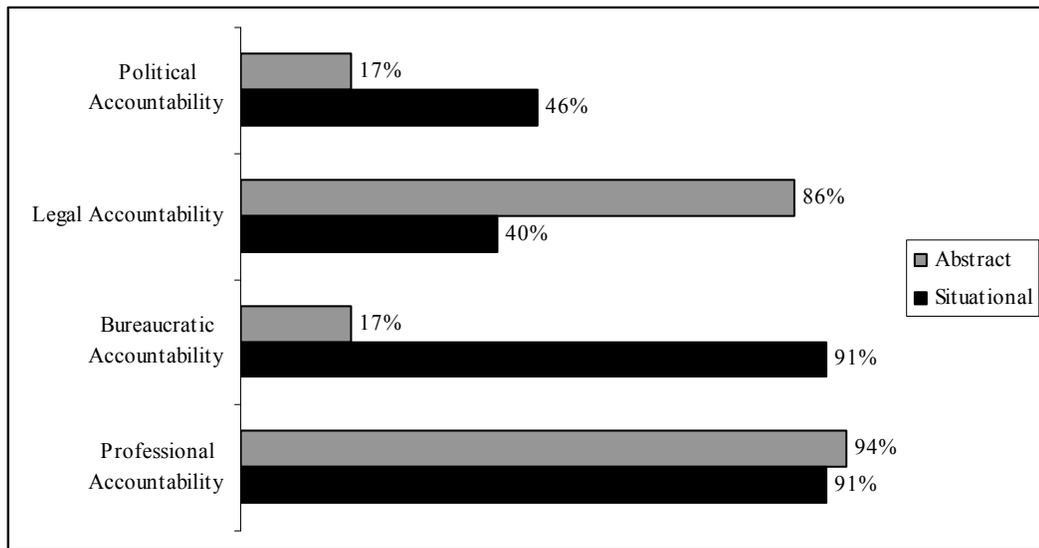


Figure 6-2: Percentage of Illinois CAOs' Very Important Responses to Each Accountability System in the Two Sections of the Survey.

A plausible explanation for the discrepancy in Illinois CAOs' views of bureaucratic accountability is that they might not fully understand the consequences of their decisions in the abstract. The chief administrators could not weigh all the available courses of action until given a specific problem. During one interview, an Illinois CAO maintained that the flood scenario was complicated because there are many legitimate actors and procedures involved. He specifically

emphasized that most municipal chief administrators in Illinois do not have the authority to approve payments greater than \$20,000. Hence, in the flood problem, the CAO would have to seek the city council's approval.

An alternative explanation is the close connection between Illinois CAOs' strong conscience of professional accountability and their acute awareness of the need to follow the state government's operating procedures. Figure 6-2 demonstrates that when faced with the flood problem, the same percentage of the Illinois officials considered bureaucratic and professional accountabilities to be very important.

The fourth tenet of the ILCMA and ICMA professional code of ethics states that "the chief function of local government at all times is to serve the best interests of all people." In the flood situation, violation of the bureaucratic accountability mechanisms, especially the state purchasing and reimbursement policies, could jeopardize the community's long-term financial interest. As one of the Illinois city managers from a home rule city pointed out:

Going around the state procedures and regulations implies that we may be doing something in the grey area. With that, we have to be careful that what we do is not compromising or putting the community's interest at risk. *I do not view myself as an overt bureaucrat. But, I am not going to put myself and the community at risk of financial penalty or other penalties.* (emphasis added)

Therefore, regardless of the contractual agreement with the vendor, the majority of Illinois CAOs felt it was safer to abide by the state reimbursement policy than the contract. Several chief administrators explained in their detailed

survey responses that the procurement contract was not legitimate in the first place. One of the Illinois CAOs argued that: “the procurement contract is not a factor given that purchases were most likely not made in accordance with the contract (e.g., not authorized by board action, no purchase order, not purchased by a village employee).”

Moreover, some Illinois jurisdictions rely on many grant projects from the state government, so they might be inclined to religiously follow the state policies and procedures. If the reimbursement limit were mandatory, then it would have the legal accountability dimension. An Illinois CAO asserted that it was difficult for him to tell the difference between bureaucratic accountability and legal accountability, especially when the state policies and procedures are mandates. Since the mandates are legal requirements, the chief administrators have no choice but to abide by the letter and spirit of those laws. On the other hand, if it is only a recommendation, the decision could boil down to the relationship between that particular jurisdiction and the state government.

Overall, Illinois CAOs cannot take state mandates and procedures lightly because those mandates and procedures are different from the city ordinances, which are amendable by the corporate authorities. As one of the city administrators contended, if he feels the city ordinances have become obsolete, he would advise the council to adjust them so they would not hinder the city operations. However, if the state mandates and laws are obsolete and impractical, there is nothing much he and the city council could do. The State of Illinois is sovereign and has the ultimate

authority over its local governments. The local governments, be they home rule or non-home-rule, are required by law to do as the state tells them to.

Conversely, Thai MAs were consistent in their attention to bureaucratic accountability. As Figure 6-3 shows, the numbers of Thai MAs who viewed bureaucratic accountability as very important are virtually equal in both the abstract and situational models. However, a sharp disjuncture (44 points) is found in Thai MAs' responses to the legal accountability questions. In contrast to their abstract perception of legal accountability (54 percent), only 10 percent of Thai MAs rated the commitment to the procurement contract with the local vendor as very important.

The Thai officials' qualitative responses and several in-depth interviews explain this difference. When asked about their general view of legal accountability, all Thai municipal administrators in the interviews emphasize the conformity to the rule of law because failure to do so would lead to multiple investigations by the National Counter-Corruption Commission (NCCC) and the Public Finance Audit Commission.

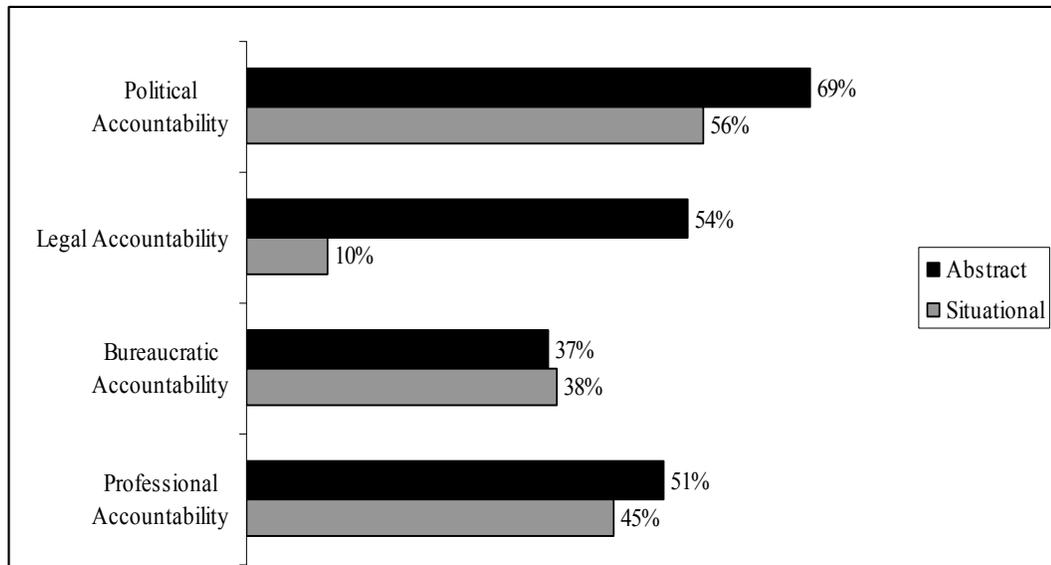


Figure 6-3: Percentage of Thai MAs' Very Important Responses among to Each Accountability System in the Two Sections of the Survey.

In the flood situation, Thai MAs who did not view the contractual agreement with the local vendor as very important stated that the contract did not follow the MoI procurement procedures in the first place. A Thai MA asserted that the central bureaucratic procedures are more important than the legal commitment to the procurement contract, especially in the flood situation, because:

Even though the Municipality Act of 1953 [amended 2001] has given much discretionary authority to municipal governments, it clearly states that all local government purchases and procurements must abide by the MoI procedures and directives.

In other words, in the area of purchasing and procurement, the central government procedures supercede the municipal ordinances and even any contractual commitment made between the municipal government officials and local

businesses. Failure to follow the central government procedures carries with it financial penalties for municipal government as a whole, as well as penalties for each individual municipal official involved (e.g., demotion, salary reduction, expulsion from the national civil service). It is noteworthy that in their detailed responses to the professional accountability question, many Thai MAs regard the adherence to central bureaucratic procedures as the most important professional value. In fact, only a small number of MAs were able to differentiate between bureaucratic and professional accountability systems.

In summary, there are statistically significant differences in Thai MAs and Illinois CAOs' abstract perceptions of political, legal, and professional accountabilities. Thai MAs were more likely to pay high attention to political accountability. On the other hand, Illinois CAOs were more inclined to pay high attention to the legal and professional accountability systems. In the scenario, the Thai and Illinois officials' perception of the mayoral directives are not statistically different. However, the differences in their perception of the other three accountability mechanisms are statistically significant. Illinois CAOs reported a higher degree of attention to legal, bureaucratic, and professional accountabilities than Thai MAs.

### **Analysis of the Relationship between Degree of Public Professionalism and Form of Municipal Government**

Efforts to professionalize public organizations in developing countries have long been focused on training and re-training individuals employed in those organizations (Kovryga and Wyman 2001). Training individual public servants with the necessary technical skills is important. However, the review of the extant public administration research in Chapter 4 suggests that other factors contribute to the professional quality of public service. This section explores the relationship between municipal chief administrators' degree of public professionalism and form of municipal government.

As discussed in Chapter 4, the organizational form of municipal government is expected to influence the degree of public professionalism among Thai MAs, Illinois CAOs, and Illinois CMs. Thai MAs and Illinois CAOs' work environment is similar because they must deal with the mayors, who serve as the municipalities' chief executive officers, and also the councils. The important distinction between the two forms is that a Thai MA is initially appointed by the MoI and must maintain a healthy relationship with the principal governor—the most senior MoI official in each province. Does this distinction cause a difference between the Thai MAs and Illinois CAOs' perception of multiple accountabilities? In addressing this question, I hypothesize that Illinois CAOs will exhibit a greater degree of public professionalism than Thai MAs (H5a).

Chapter 4 demonstrates that the five types of public professionalism are arranged in degree of desirability (i.e., from ersatz to transformational professionalism). Therefore, the degree of public professionalism—an ordinal dependent variable—requires an ordinal logistic regression (OLR). However, there are two issues with using the OLR model to analyze my data: (1) zero and small frequencies and (2) the violation of the proportional odds assumption. To deal with these two issues, I combine several outcome categories and run the OLR models, as described in Chapter 5. Three new outcome categories are category 1 (transformational professionalism), category 2 (policy and procedural professionalism, and category 3 (apolitical and ersatz professionalism). The OLR models using these three outcome categories no longer violate the proportional odds assumption. Another remedy is to use the generalized ordinal logistic model (GOLM), which relaxes the proportional odds assumption (Fahrmeir and Tutz 1994). Also, as Liao (1997) suggests, researchers could use ordinal least squares (OLS) to analyze ordinal data whose number of ordinal levels exceeds four and compare the OLS results against the OLR results.

The OLR, GOLM, and OLS analyses are done on variables from the abstract model (Table 6-6) and the situational model (Table 6-7). The purpose of these statistical models is to determine which variables impact and predict the Thai MAs, Illinois CAOs, and Illinois CMs' degree of public professionalism. The test of H1 and H2 focuses on the three forms of government as a categorical variable: Thai municipal government form (Thai MAs), Illinois council-manager form

(Illinois CAOs), and Illinois mayor-council form (Illinois CMs). However, with categorical variables, I can only make a statement about the effect of a specific category in comparison to some other category (Norūsis 1997). Thus, an indicator-variable coding scheme is used to create two separate variables (TH\_MA and IL\_CM) to analyze the relationship between form of government and degree of public professionalism. With this method, the variable TH\_MA is the indicator variable for the Thai municipal government form, coded 1 for Thai MAs and 0 otherwise. The variable IL\_CM is the indicator variable for the Illinois council-manager form, coded 1 for Illinois CMs and 0 otherwise. The reference category is the mayor-council form.

Further, several goodness-of-fit tests are conducted to see how well each of the regression models fits the data. The model  $\chi^2$  for OLR and the omnibus test for GOLM are comparable to the  $F$  test for OLS. Other goodness-of-fit measures include the Nagelkerke pseudo- $R^2$  statistic<sup>3</sup> for OLR, the deviance ratio for GOLM<sup>4</sup>, and the  $R^2$  statistics for OLS. Tables 6-6 and 6-7 provide this goodness-of-fit information for each regression model.

As shown in Table 6-6, the OLR abstract model is a valid model ( $\chi^2(12, 141) = 46.11, p = 0.00$ ). Also, the Nagelkerke pseudo- $R^2$  value of 0.32 shows the

<sup>3</sup> Although two pseudo- $R^2$  statistics for OLR are reported in Tables 6-6 and 6-7, Norūsis (1997) argues that Nagelkerke's pseudo- $R^2$  is the most commonly cited because a value of 1 can be achieved with the Nagelkerke method. However, Nagelkerke's pseudo- $R^2$  should not be interpreted as percentage of variance explained by logistic regression (Norūsis 1997). Instead, it indicates the overall effect size of an OLR model.

<sup>4</sup> A deviance ratio with value close to 1 indicates a well-fitting GOLM model.

abstract model's moderate effect size.<sup>5</sup> The model  $\chi^2$  for the situational model is significant, indicating that the OLR situational model is also a well-fitting model ( $\chi^2(12, 141) = 56.21, p = 0.00$ ) (Table 6-7). In addition, the Nagelkerke pseudo- $R^2$  statistic for the situational model is 0.38, indicating a moderate effect size. Similarly, the GOLM abstract model is a well-fitting model ( $\chi^2(12, 141) = 28.82, p = 0.00$ ) with the deviance ratio of 0.66. The omnibus test also shows that the GOLM situational model fits the data well ( $\chi^2(12, 141) = 59.96, p = 0.00$ ) with the deviance ratio of 0.69. Further, the OLS abstract model is a well-fitting model ( $F(8,141) = 4.02, p = 0.00$ ) that explains about 20 percent of the variation in the outcome variable. Also, the OLS situational model fits the data well ( $F(8,141) = 5.70, p = 0.00$ ). Based on the  $R^2$  statistic, about 28 percent of the variance in the outcome variable is explained by the OLS situational models.

Statistical results in the abstract model do not support H1 (Table 6-6). The OLR, GOLM, and OLS coefficients for the indicator-variable TH\_MA are not statistically significant. This means that despite the different appointment procedures, Thai MAs and Illinois CAOs do not differ in their degrees of public professionalism in the abstract.

<sup>5</sup> Norūsis (1997) points out that the Nagelkerke pseudo- $R^2$  estimate of about 0.30 represents moderate effect size.

Table 6-6

OLR, GOLM, and OLS Analyses of Thai MAs, Illinois CAOs, and Illinois CMs'  
Degree of Public Professionalism in the Abstract Model

Variable	OLR <sup>2</sup>		GOLM		OLS	
	B (SE)	Sig.	B (SE)	Sig.	B (t)	Sig.
Thresholds <sup>1</sup> [1=Ersatz]	-0.71 (1.08)	0.51	-4.13 (1.66)	0.01	3.13 (2.66)	0.01
[2=Apolitical]	0.10 (1.08)	0.93	-1.80 (1.61)	0.26		
[3=Procedural]			-1.20 (1.60)	0.56		
[4=Policy]			-0.65 (1.60)	0.17		
TH_MA [1=Thai MA]	0.28 (0.40)	0.48	0.33 (0.64)	0.60	0.12 (1.00)	0.32
IL_CM [1=Illinois CM]	-1.21 (0.40)	<b>0.00</b>	-1.55 (0.51)	<b>0.00</b>	-0.30 (-2.94)	<b>0.04</b>
Informal relations [1=Yes, 0=No]	-0.04 (0.35)	0.91	-0.42 (0.49)	0.66	0.56	0.58
Home Rule [1=Yes, 0=No]	0.27 (0.39)	0.48	0.18 (0.55)	0.75	0.05 (0.52)	0.60
Education [1=High School]	0.38 (1.26)	0.76	0.85 (2.01)	0.67	-0.05 (-0.67)	0.50
[2=Baccalaureate]	-0.56 (1.08)	0.60	-0.68 (1.60)	0.67		
[3=Graduate]	-0.65 (1.06)	0.54	-0.58 (1.58)	0.71		
2009 Population	5.58E-6 (4.75E-6)	0.24	5.70E-6 (7.71E-6)	0.46	0.03 (0.37)	0.71
Tenure	-0.00 (0.00)	<b>0.09</b>	-0.00 (0.00)	<b>0.06</b>	-0.20 (-2.10)	<b>0.04</b>
Technical skill	0.05 (0.11)	0.65	0.06 (0.16)	0.70	0.06 (0.76)	0.45
Managerial skill	0.02 (0.11)	0.86	0.06 (0.17)	0.75	0.06 (0.70)	0.49
	Model $\chi^2 = 46.11$ d.f. = 12, $p = \mathbf{0.00}$		Omnibus Test : $\chi^2 = 28.82$ , d.f. = 12, $p = \mathbf{0.00}$		Model Summary: $F = 4.02$ , d.f. = 8, $p = \mathbf{0.00}$	
	Cox and Snell $R^2 = 0.28$ Nagelkerke $R^2 = 0.32$		Deviance ratio = 0.66		$R^2 = 0.20$ , SE = 1.32	

Notes: 1. Thresholds are intercepts for all but the highest level of the ordinal dependent variable.

2. For OLR, recall from Chapter 5 that there are three outcome categories: 1 = ersatz and apolitical professionalism, 2 = procedural and policy professionalism, and 3 = transformational professionalism. In this table, there is no threshold for category 3, which is the highest level of public professionalism.

However, H1 is supported by the situational regression models (Table 6-7). The coefficients in the OLR and GOLM situational models suggest that compared to Illinois CAOs, the odds of a Thai MA having a high degree of public professionalism decrease by a factor of 0.21<sup>6</sup> ( $p = 0.02$ ) in the OLR model and 0.15<sup>7</sup> ( $p = 0.01$ ) in the GOLM model, holding all other variables constant. Similarly, the standardized  $\beta$  of -0.30 ( $p = 0.02$ ) in the OLS situational model shows that compared to Illinois CAOs, being a Thai MA leads to a 0.36-point decrease in the degree of public professionalism, holding all other variables constant. In other words, in their situational perception of public professionalism, Thai MAs scored 0.36 point on average less than Illinois CAOs. Thus, the regression models only support H5a in the situational model; when faced with a specific problem, Illinois CAOs exhibited a greater degree of public professionalism than Thai MAs.

Moreover, as discussed in Chapter 4, crucial differences exist between Illinois CAOs and Illinois CMs. The Illinois state municipal code spells out the CMs' administrative responsibilities for all municipalities that adopted the council-manager form of government by referendum. Also, a single elected body appoints and dismisses the CMs. As expected by the theoretical model in Chapter 4, the appointment and dismissal procedures together with the explicit duties and discretionary authority established by the state statute enable the CMs to effectively use their professional knowledge and expertise to manage municipal government

<sup>6</sup> The odd ratio is the natural logarithm base (e) raised to the power of the exponent (b), where the exponent (b) is the parameter estimate. In this case, b is -1.55. Hence, the odd ratio is  $e^{-1.55}$  or 0.21.

<sup>7</sup> In the GOLM model, b for the coefficient is -1.91. The odd ratio is  $e^{-1.91}$  or 0.15.

Table 6-7

OLR, GOLM, and OLS Analyses of Thai MAs, Illinois CAOs, and Illinois CMs'  
Degree of Public Professionalism in the Situational Model

Variable	OLR <sup>2</sup>		GOLM		OLS	
	B (SE)	Sig.	B (SE)	Sig.	B (t)	Sig.
Thresholds <sup>1</sup> [1=Ersatz]	172.80 (1.22)	0.00	21.82 (24.05E+3)	1.00	7.05 (8.85)	0.00
[2=Apolitical]	173.54 (1.18)	0.00	22.06 (24.05E+3)	1.00		
[3=Procedural]			22.41 (24.05E+3)	1.00		
[4=Policy]			22.77 (24.05E+3)	1.00		
TH_MA [1=Thai MA]	-1.55 (0.68)	<b>0.02</b>	-1.91 (0.70)	<b>0.01</b>	-0.30 (-2.40)	<b>0.02</b>
IL_CM [1=Illinois CM]	0.55 (0.54)	0.31	0.63 (0.57)	0.27	-0.14 (-1.45)	0.15
Informal relations [1=Yes, 0=No]	2.42 (0.99)	<b>0.02</b>	0.69 (0.67)	<b>0.01</b>	0.19 (2.43)	<b>0.02</b>
Home Rule [1=Yes, 0=No]	0.34 (0.56)	0.55	0.41 (0.60)	0.49	0.05 (0.51)	0.61
Education [1=High School]	337.89 (2.18E+3)	0.88	44.73 (30.74E+3)	1.00	-0.31 (-4.11)	0.11
[2=Baccalaureate]	172.91 (0.48)	0.34	24.71 (24.05E+3)	1.00		
[3=Graduate]	171.78 (0.00)		23.22 (24.05E+3)	1.00		
2009 Population	9.51E-6 (8.11E-6)	0.24	1.04E-5 (8.06E-6)	0.20	0.10 (1.16)	0.25
Tenure	-0.00 (0.00)	0.74	-0.00 (0.00)	0.54	-0.02 (-0.25)	0.80
Technical skill	-0.40 (0.23)	<b>0.09</b>	-0.36 (0.24)	0.13	-0.10 (-1.29)	0.20
Managerial skill	0.64 (0.26)	<b>0.01</b>	0.68 (0.24)	<b>0.00</b>	0.22 (2.74)	<b>0.01</b>
	Model $\chi^2 = 56.21$ d.f. = 12, $p = 0.00$ Cox and Snell $R^2 = 0.33$ Nagelkerke $R^2 = 0.38$		Omnibus Test : $\chi^2 = 59.96$ , d.f. = 12, $p = 0.00$ Deviance ratio = 0.69		Model Summary: $F = 5.70$ , d.f. = 8, $p = 0.00$ $R^2 = 0.28$ SE = 1.62	

Notes: 1. Thresholds are intercepts for all but the highest level of the ordinal dependent variable.

2. For OLR, recall from Chapter 5 that there are three outcome categories: 1 = ersatz and apolitical professionalism, 2 = procedural and policy professionalism, and 3 = transformational professionalism.

In this table, there is no threshold for category 3, which is the highest level of public professionalism.

affairs (Sherwood 1997). However, Lichter (2008) finds that form of government does not make much significant difference in the CAOs and CMs' public professionalism. This mix evidence leads to H2 (Figure 6-1).

Statistical evidence in the abstract regression models does not support H2 (Table 6-6). The three coefficients for IL\_CM (indicator variable for Illinois CMs) show a statistically significant difference between Illinois CMs and CAOs (OLR model:  $p = 0.00$ , GOLM model:  $p = 0.00$ , OLS model:  $p = 0.04$ ) with respect to the degree of public professionalism. However, contrary to H2, Illinois CMs exhibited a lower degree of public professionalism than Illinois CAOs in the abstract.

Compared to Illinois CAOs, the odds of an Illinois CM having a high degree of public professionalism reduce by a factor of 0.30<sup>8</sup> ( $p = 0.00$ ) in the OLR model and 0.21<sup>9</sup> ( $p = 0.00$ ) in the GOLM model, holding all other variables constant. Also, the standardized  $\beta$  of -0.30 ( $p = 0.04$ ) in the OLS abstract model shows that compared to Illinois CAOs, being an Illinois CM leads to a 0.30-point decrease in the degree of public professionalism, holding all other variables constant. This means that in their abstract perception of public professionalism, Illinois CMs scored 0.30 point on average less than Illinois CAOs. Therefore, the three abstract regression models do not support H5b (Table 6-6); Illinois CMs in abstract terms showed a lower degree of public professionalism than Illinois CAOs. This evidence suggests that form of government makes a difference in the Illinois CAOs and CMs' abstract

<sup>8</sup> In the OLR model, b is -1.21. Hence, the odds ratio is  $e^{-1.21}$  or 0.30.

<sup>9</sup> In the GOLM model, b is -1.55. The odds ratio is  $e^{-1.55}$  or 0.21.

perception of public professionalism.

Neither do the situational regression models support H2 (Table 6-7). The indicator variable IL\_CM is not significantly related to the degree of public professionalism. Statistical results obtained from the OLR, GOLM, and OLS analyses consistently indicate this insignificant relationship. However, contrary to the abstract regression models, the situational models indicate that form of government has no impact on the Illinois CAOs and CMs' degree of public professionalism when they face a specific problem.

Other significant variables in the abstract and situational models are noteworthy. In the abstract regression models (Table 6-6), tenure (which represents the municipal chief administrators' years in the chief administrative position) shows a marginally significant<sup>10</sup> relationship with the degree of public professionalism in the OLR model ( $p = 0.09$ ) and the GOLM model ( $p = 0.06$ ). In OLS model, tenure is also significantly related to with the degree of public professionalism ( $p = 0.04$ ). Nevertheless, the OLR and GOLM models show that tenure has no substantive effect on the municipal chief administrators' abstract perception. The OLR and GOLM parameter estimates for tenure are -0.00, which makes the odds ratios equal 1.<sup>11</sup> On the other hand, in the OLS model, tenure appears to negatively affect the municipal chief administrators' degree of public professionalism. That is, holding other variables constant, a one-year increase in

<sup>10</sup> As discussed in Chapter 5, marginal significance refers to the results with  $p$ -values between 0.05 and 0.10.

<sup>11</sup>  $e^{-0.00} = 1$ .

tenure reduces a municipal chief administrator's degree of public professionalism in the abstract model by 0.20. In other words, the longer one has held the municipal chief administrator position, the lower his/her degree of public professionalism is in the abstract model. However, the tenure variable is not significant in the situational regression models (Table 6-7).

In the situational regression models, several variables are significantly related to the degree of public professionalism (Table 6-7). The informal relations variable (which indicates whether a municipal chief administrator has informal working relations with the mayor) shows a statistically significant relationship with the dependent variable (OLR model:  $p = 0.02$ , GOLM model:  $p = 0.01$ , OLS model:  $p = 0.02$ ). Controlling for other variables, having informal working relations with the mayor increases the odds of a municipal chief administrator demonstrating transformational professionalism by a factor of 11.25<sup>12</sup> (OLR model:  $p = 0.02$ ) and 1.99<sup>13</sup> (GOLM model:  $p = 0.01$ ). In other words, the OLR and GOLM situational models reveal a positive relationship between informal relations and degree of public professionalism. Similar to the OLR and GOLM models, the standardized  $\beta$  of 0.19 ( $p = 0.02$ ) in the OLS situational model shows that having informal working relations with the mayor increases a municipal chief administrator's degree of public professionalism by 0.19. In other words, when faced with a specific problem, Thai MAs, Illinois CAOs, and Illinois CMs who have informal

<sup>12</sup> The parameter estimate (b) is 2.42. Hence,  $e^{2.42} = 11.25$ .

<sup>13</sup> As the parameter estimate (b) is 0.69 in this case,  $e^{0.69} = 1.99$ .

working relations with the mayors exhibited a greater degree of public professionalism than those who do not.

The managerial skill variable is also significantly related to the degree of public professionalism in all three situational regression models (Table 6-7). As discussed in Chapter 5, the managerial skill variable is a composite variable that measures the municipal chief administrators' proficiency in ethics policy, interorganizational communication, interpersonal communication, leadership, problem-solving process, contract/project management, public relations, and standard operating procedures. The OLR and GOLM models indicate that for each one-point increase in this composite variable, the odds of a municipal chief administrator showing a high degree of public professionalism increase by a factor of 1.90<sup>14</sup> (OLR model:  $p = 0.01$ ) and 1.97<sup>15</sup> (GOLM model:  $p = 0.00$ ). These results suggest that proficiency in each of the managerial skills increases the municipal chief administrators' degree of public professionalism. In a similar vein, the standardized  $\beta$  of 0.22 ( $p = 0.01$ ) in the OLS situational model shows that a one-point increase in the managerial skill composite variable is associated with a 0.22-point increase in the degree of public professionalism, controlling for other variables in the model. In other words, on average, municipal chief administrators who were proficient in the managerial skills exhibited a high degree of public professionalism when faced with a specific problem.

<sup>14</sup> In the OLR model,  $b$  is 0.64. Hence, the odds ratio is  $e^{0.64}$  or 1.90.

<sup>15</sup> As the parameter estimate ( $b$ ) is 0.68, the odds ratio is  $e^{0.68}$  or 1.97.

In addition, the technical skill variable is marginally significant only in the OLR situational model ( $p = 0.09$ ). As shown in Chapter 5, the technical skill composite variable measures the municipal chief administrators' proficiency in auditing procedures, budgetary process, community economic development, conflict resolution, decision making, interdepartmental coordination, employee motivation, employee participation, employee performance assessment, and employee selection. In the situational model, controlling for other variables, each one-point increase in the technical skill variable reduces the odds of municipal chief administrators having a high degree of public professionalism by a factor of 0.67<sup>16</sup> ( $p = 0.09$ ). The result suggests that the municipal chief administrators' proficiency in technical skills decreases their degree of public professionalism when they face a specific problem. However, this evidence must be carefully interpreted because the variable shows a marginally significant relationship with the dependent variable and only in the OLR situational model. It is reasonable to conclude from the abstract and situational regression models that technical skill level does not influence the degree of public professionalism.

Table 6-8 presents a summary of findings from testing H1 and H2. Statistical results from the abstract models contradict H1; Thai MAs and Illinois CAOs did not show a significant difference in their degree of public professionalism. Form of government only influences the degree of public professionalism among Illinois CAOs and CMs. However, contrary to H2, Illinois

<sup>16</sup> In this case, the parameter estimate for the technical skill variable is -0.40. The odds ratio is  $e^{-0.40}$  or 0.67.

CMs showed a lower degree of public professionalism than Illinois CAOs.

Table 6-8

Summary of Hypotheses and Test Results

H	Test Result		Finding
	Abstract Model	Situational Model	
H1	Not supported	<b>Supported</b>	In the abstract model, the coefficients for TH_MA are not significant.
H2	Not supported	Not supported	In the abstract model, Illinois CMs showed lower public professionalism. In the situational model, the coefficients for IL_CM are not significant.

The situational regression models indicate that form of government is related to the degree of public professionalism and provide empirical support for H1. When faced with a specific problem, Illinois CAOs exhibited a greater degree of public professionalism than Thai MAs. Yet, in contrast with the abstract models and H2, form of government is not significantly related to public professionalism among Illinois CAOs and CMs. The CAOs and CMs who participated in my study did not show a statistically significant difference in managing multiple accountability approaches in the flood scenario.

In addition, the situational regression models identify two other variables that are significantly related to the degree of public professionalism. Informal working relationship between the chief administrators and mayors showed a

positive relationship with public professionalism among Thai MAs, Illinois CAOs, and Illinois CMs. The regression results show that when the chief administrators face a specific problem, having informal relations with the mayors enhances their degree of public professionalism. Also, the managerial skill level, which is a composite index of administrative skills listed in Chapter 5, has a positive impact on the chief administrators' ability to balance multiple accountability approaches in the scenario.

### **Qualitative Evidence and Discussion**

Qualitative analysis of the interview data provides insight into the influence of governmental form on municipal chief administrators' public professionalism. Specifically, I asked each municipal chief administrator in the interview about the extent to which form of government affects his/her ability to balance multiple accountability approaches.

Thai MAs in the interview have worked under two forms of municipal government, as discussed in Chapter 3. Before decentralization, Thai municipalities used a weak-mayor-council form of government in which mayors were chosen from among municipal council members and could be unseated by a no-confidence motion. After decentralization, a strong-mayor-council form has been adopted. Under the new system, mayors are elected at large and enjoy more discretionary authority and political stability than under the weak-mayor-council system.

All Thai MAs in the interview asserted that in theory, they know what public professionalism is because the MoI, DoLA, and the Office of Civil Service Commission (OCSC) repeatedly emphasize good governance, transparency, and ethics during the government-sponsored training programs. Hence, in the abstract, the Thai MAs did not think the transition to the strong-mayor-council form significantly affects their ability to balance multiple accountabilities. On the contrary, they pointed out that the strong-mayor-council system has given mayors broad authority in personnel management, especially with respect to the transfer of MAs. This type of mayoral authority appears to have some influence over the Thai MAs' strategy to solve an administrative problem, as they have to ensure that their solution sets do not conflict with the mayors' political agenda. If an irresolvable conflict between a mayor and an MA emerges, the mayor could submit a petition to the municipal government personnel commission for consideration to transfer the MA to another municipality (Thurmaier, Wood, and Tatchalerm 2008). However, according to the national law, the transfer could only be complete when the mayor in the other municipality approves the transfer. If no municipality agrees to accept the transfer, the MA would be transferred to the provincial government office. Yet, Thai mayors rarely use the transfer method. As a Thai MA noted:

Even though the law authorizes the transfer, no one uses that power. Usually, if the mayor really dislikes the municipal administrator, he could just keep that administrator, but refuses to give him any assignments. I have often heard of this kind of situation and feel very bad for those administrators. You know not having anything to do is considered an insult to their dignity. Their subordinates in the municipal government would look down on them.

Another MA criticized the current decentralization law for not granting sufficient policy-making authority to the municipalities. Rather, the law empowers the mayors to unfairly penalize the municipal administrators. Even if the MA feels he receives unfair treatment from the mayor, he has no legal right to petition the personnel commission. Two channels to rectify the mayor-administrator conflict are filing a lawsuit in the administrative court and submitting a petition to the National Ethics Promotion Commission—a division within the National Civil Service Commission (OCSC). These solutions are, however, difficult and time-consuming.

Nonetheless, there were few reports of irresolvable mayor-administrator conflicts in the interviews. Apart from the personnel management issue, almost every Thai MA did not think form of municipal government has a significant bearing on their work. They pointed out that everything they do still has to follow the central government regulations and standard operating procedures. The Thai MAs in the interview stated that if mayors do not follow those regulations and procedures, they know that they could face criminal investigation by the National Public Finance Audit Commission, the National Counter-Corruption Commission, or the Parliamentary Ombudsman. These MAs concluded the interview that their duties, both before and after decentralization, remain to inform the mayors of all national regulations and procedures pertinent to the problem and to present the mayors with an action plan. In other words, the Thai MAs' perception of professional obligation is not different from their perception of legal and

bureaucratic accountabilities. This evidence confirms Thurmair, Wood, and Tatchalerm's (2008) focus group findings about the Thai MAs' persistent identity as national government bureaucrats.

In a similar vein, three Northeastern MAs, two from the Eastern Seaboard, and three from the South, felt that form of government is a matter of partisan politics which they have tried to avoid. In their experiences, all the mayors' policies, both before and after decentralization, have been geared towards advancing the common good. These municipal administrators' duties are to ensure that the mayors' policies conform to the national law and MoI standard operating procedures, while keeping the mayors satisfied with their execution plans. An MA from Northern Thailand stated that:

In the public sector, accountability and legal constraints are very important. But, they slow down our work. I understand that. To my knowledge, there are some municipal administrators who do not care to explain the rationale behind those legal constraints to the elected officials. I, on the other hand, like to be a middleman between the politicians and the law. If the mayor's policy and program are decent and in accordance with the regulations, I would definitely say yes and would develop an action plan for the mayor. Otherwise, I would warn the mayor that his program doesn't sound morally right and is illegal. In that circumstance, I would come up with an alternative program for the mayor and explain the reason to him.

The challenges the Thai MAs face in their work remain the same both before and after decentralization. A Thai MA from the Northern region argued that the mayor-administrator relationship is a delicate issue. To nurture the delicate working relations, many Thai MAs in the interview emphasized interpersonal communication skill. One of them explained that:

In a certain situation, in fact, many situations, I have to make sure that the elected officials understand the rules and regulations. Sometimes, it is difficult for them to understand because some elected officials get into office for kick-back money. So, I have to be careful when talking to them. I can't be too aggressive. In this type of situation, I may have to look for help from a network of friends and colleagues in other municipalities and government agencies.

Another Thai MA agreed:

If both the mayor and the municipal administrator were too aggressive, we would never get things done here. The municipal administrator serves a very important role in mitigating the conflict between elected officials, appointed officials, and municipal government employees. The conflict resolution and arbitration skills are two foremost qualifications of any municipal administrator.

The qualitative evidence is consistent with the statistical results from the situational regression model. When asked about a specific problem (i.e., personnel management), the Thai MAs uniformly reported that the current form of government affects their ability to balance multiple accountabilities. In addition to their compliance with the national law and MoI standard operating procedures, the Thai MAs must take heed of the mayors' agenda and their unchallengeable authority to transfer them. Moreover, the interview data suggest that healthy mayor-administrator informal relations and communication skills exert important influence on the Thai MAs' public professionalism.

Conversely, form of municipal government does not appear to have a strong impact on Illinois CAOs and CMs' ability to balance multiple accountabilities.

Only two out of nine Illinois CMs in the interview argued to the contrary. One of these two CMs stated:

In theory and in practice, there are great differences. The council-manager form in Illinois is authorized by state law. The manager gets a considerable amount of authority by state law. The councils may give them additional authority by ordinance, but cannot take away the authority expressly granted to the manager by state government. A city administrator, on the other hand, is empowered by his local government ordinance, which means his amount of authority could be limited by the corporate authority.

The other CM provided more specific examples of his extensive decision-making authority, especially the hiring and firing of department heads and budget allocation. He also argued that in the city administrator form of government, things take a lot more time to get done because city administrators require much more approval by the councils to do things.

An important observation is that these two CMs worked as CMs in Alabama and Missouri prior to taking up their present positions in Illinois. Neither has worked under the Illinois mayor-council form of government. Presumably, no crucial differences exist between the council-manager form in those two states and the Illinois council-manager form. A different Illinois CM, who previously lived and worked as city manager in Michigan, did not think there are that many differences between the mayor-council and council-manager forms of municipal government. In his current community, the trustees buy into the transparency and watchdog concept and always try to micro-manage every city government issue. This CM also mentioned that one week before the interview, the village president convinced other trustees to vote on a motion that would take away some of his appointment authority granted by the Illinois municipal code. This is because the village president thought that some of the CMs' discretionary authority is unclear

and subject to interpretation by the board of trustees.

All Illinois CAOs in the interview did not report much significant influence of the legal differences in form of government on their discretionary authority, besides the level of authority in hiring and firing municipal government employees. This evidence resembles Lichter's (2008) findings that form of government affects the Illinois CAOs and CMs' influence over the appointment and dismissal of department heads. An Illinois CAO expressed some discomfort with his personnel management discretion:

In the administrative form of government, the village president appoints the department heads and police chief with the consent and approval of the council. The president also has direct contact with the department heads, which he often contacts them and that bothers me a bit. Also, even though those officials work under me, the village president has the ultimate authority to perform an annual performance evaluation.

However, there is no consensus on the differences in the appointment and dismissal authority between the council-manager and mayor-council forms. An Illinois CAO argued that in practice there are fewer differences than what it appears on paper:

In administrative cities, the administrators do not hire department heads. The mayors or village presidents do. But, the city administrators' influence in the hiring process varies across jurisdictions. Some city administrators have as much involvement in the hiring and firing processes as city managers, while others just rubber stamp the mayors' choices.

Similarly, another CAO mentioned that his role in appointing the department heads is "not ultimate, but significant" and that he still makes the recommendations on who to hire. On other municipal government issues, the differences between Illinois CMs and CAOs are subtle. Most CMs and CAOs in the interview emphasized other

factors, such as each community's political culture, a municipal chief administrator's personality, and informal working relations between elected officials and municipal chief administrators. Regarding political culture, a CAO from Northeastern Illinois pointed out:

In a community where there's a long and established history of the council-manager form of government, the people are more willing to rely on city government staff, department heads, and even the city manager to deal with and respond to the day-to-day concerns with city services and programs. In my community, even after some years of having a professional administrator, people still tend to rely on direct contact with the elected officials, rather than the city staff.

Similar to the Thai MAs, all Illinois CAOs and CMs in the interview discussed the importance of personality and informal working relations between elected and appointed officials. An Illinois CM contended that:

The way I look at it is that the managerial form of government provides very specific powers, such as the appointment powers. But, ultimately, a city manager can't do what the mayor and council do not order them to do because they are the manager's employers. So, I'm not a big believer in the council-manager form versus mayor-council form of government. You have to work *in compliance and cooperation* with the elected officials (emphasis added).

To work in compliance and cooperation with the elected officials, "effective and frequent" communication is essential. An Illinois CAO whose previous job was in a council-manager city stated:

I don't know how a city manager or a city administrator *can be ultimately successful without effective and frequent informal communication with elected officials* in order to meet their needs. My management style is to have the elected officials involved in all important decisions. So, even if I were a city manager now, I'd keep the elected officials informed of all my key decisions, even though it is in my formal authority to make those decisions (emphasis added).

Another CM reported that the firewall between politics and administration does not exist in reality in the council-manager form of government. The formal organizational structure does not necessarily protect the manager from getting caught up in politics. However, what helps him deal with political conflicts is constant communication with the people in his city government and the mutual respect between the elected officials and city staff.

Before using the managerial form of government, we used the commission form of government when my grandfather and father were mayors. But, the managerial form doesn't really protect me from getting caught up in politics. In my situation, I have been fortunate enough to work with an agreeable group of elected officials and staff members. Also, because of constant communication, we respect each other's duty and authority. They respect my function as village manager and I respect their authority as elected officials.

The Illinois CAOs and CMs also emphasized the importance of personality and communication skill. An Illinois CM recounted her experience as an arbitrator in a pending lawsuit between the city council and the police union. The lawsuit was filed against her city government because the council decided to dismiss several police officers without prior notice. The council justified its decision on the ground that the charter authorizes it to do so and that the city needed to balance its operating budget. The local police union argued that the dismissal was a breach of contract between the city government and their employees. This CM pointed out that communication skill matters more than anything else because in this situation, she had to deal with a variety of people, especially elected officials and union members who hold completely different views on the issue.

Therefore, the city administrator or city manager position means more than managing the city government affairs. It involves everything from taking up the city's leadership from time to time, arbitrating on a dispute, and serving the elected officials' needs. An Illinois CAO noted:

It's not just a managerial position. I have to be actively involved in the policy-making process with the trustees, particularly providing support and output. The politicians always look for professional direction from me and the staff in formulating and deliberating on policies and programs. When disagreement occurs, I would characterize it as constructive discussion: we always work through an issue together. Our discussion is never combative.

Contrary to the old public administration theory, the qualitative evidence suggests that form of government does not significantly influence Illinois CAOs and CMs' public professionalism. Illinois CAOs expressed their concerns with the mayors' influence over the appointment and dismissal of department heads, but did not feel such an influence significantly affects their ability to balance multiple accountabilities. Otherwise, the difference between the council-manager form and mayor-council form of government is more subtle than real. Hence, these qualitative findings confirm the quantitative results from the situational regression models; in practice, the distinction in form of government does not have a significant impact on Illinois CAOs and CMs' public professionalism.

Further, the qualitative evidence is consonant with the results from the regression models; form of government does not affect Thai MAs' public professionalism in the abstract, but influences their situational perception. Also, the analysis adds more depth to our understanding of Thai MAs' public

professionalism. In the interview, Thai MAs reported having difficulty with the mayors' authority to transfer municipal administrators. This mayoral authority compels the Thai MAs to use the political accountability approach to ensure the mayors' satisfaction with them. At the same time, Thai MAs also consider themselves as national government bureaucrats and seek to ensure that the mayors' policies and programs comply with the national law and MoI standard operating procedures. In other words, Thai MAs in the interview are stranded between political responsiveness to their mayors and conformity to the national government.

Nonetheless, Thai MAs, Illinois CAOs, and CMs converged on the view that informal mayor-administrator relations and managerial skill level have an important influence over the chief administrators' ability to balance multiple accountabilities. Thus, this qualitative evidence suggests that the two variables have pronounced cross-cultural similarities in their effects on municipal chief administrators' public professionalism. As municipal government problems become more complex and citizen expectations more diverse, the municipal chief administrators' ability to manage municipal government affairs depends on their ability to communicate with the elected officials and community members.

## **Conclusion**

Public professionalism is a much used, but understudied, concept in the public administration theory and practice. In this chapter, I have demonstrated that this concept could be systematically studied by relying on the concept of public accountability—albeit an equally broad concept in the public administration literature. Based on the survey instrument with the abstract accountability questions and the flood scenario, I have tested two hypotheses that analyze the relationship between form of government and degree of public professionalism.

The theoretical model in Chapter 4 predicts that the distinction in form of municipal government would have an impact in measurable differences in the degree of public professionalism among Thai MAs, Illinois CAOs, and CMs. Instead, what emerged from the quantitative analyses is the evidence that form of government affects public professionalism in a complex way. Its effects depend on the context and groups of municipal chief administrators. In the abstract, the distinction between Thai municipal government and Illinois mayor-council cities does not influence Thai MAs and Illinois CAOs' perception of public professionalism. However, the distinction between Illinois mayor-council and council-manager forms of government contributes to the difference in degree of public professionalism between Illinois CAOs and CMs.

In contrast with the abstract model, when faced with a specific problem, Thai MAs showed a lower degree of public professionalism than Illinois CAOs.

Also, the difference in public professionalism between Illinois CAOs and CMs dissipates in the situational model, suggesting that form of government does not impact the Illinois municipal chief administrators' situational perception of multiple accountability approaches.

Qualitative findings offer insight into the relationship between form of government and public professionalism. For Thai MAs, the difficulty with balancing multiple accountability approaches stems from the mayoral authority to transfer municipal administrators. Also, despite the decentralization reform, Thai MAs still have a strong identity as national government agents who must work to ensure that all municipal government policies strictly follow the national law and MoI standard operating procedures.

However, the quantitative and qualitative findings raise two empirical questions and do not provide any specific answers. First, why did Illinois CAOs show a higher degree public professionalism than Thai MAs only in the situational regression models, but not in the abstract? In the abstract regression models, the difference between Thai MAs and Illinois CAOs is not statistically significant. Their difference in public professionalism becomes significant in the three situational models. Second, why in the abstract did Illinois CMs exhibit a lower degree of public professionalism than Illinois CAOs, but not in the situational model? More research is necessary to determine which factors contribute the CMs' different perceptions of public professionalism.

## CHAPTER 7

### ANALYSIS OF THE IMPACT OF MEMBERSHIP IN PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND ITS INTERACTION WITH FORM OF MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT ON DEGREE OF PUBLIC PROFESSIONALISM

The goals of this chapter are two-fold. First, this chapter examines the types and distribution of public professionalism among Thai MAs, Illinois CAOs, and Thai MAs based on their abstract and situational dispositions toward the four accountability approaches in the survey. Also, to achieve this goal, I discuss specific strategies that municipal chief administrators in this study use to solve the flood scenario. This analysis is an essential step of hypothesis testing because it adds more depth to our understanding of the dependent variable—the degree of public professionalism.

The second goal of this chapter is to examine four research hypotheses (H3-H6) that explore the relationship between the dependent variable and two other independent variables—municipal chief administrators' membership in professional associations and its interaction with the form of municipal government (Figure 7-1). In this chapter, I use the same quantitative methods to test all four hypotheses: cross tabulation, Kruskal-Wallis  $H$  test, and the Mann-Whitney post-hoc test with the Bonferroni adjustment procedure. As discussed in Chapter 5, these statistical methods are used because the OLR and GOLM models cannot provide parameter estimates for the two independent variables. Also, qualitative evidence

from the interview with selected municipal chief administrators provides insight into the statistical findings.

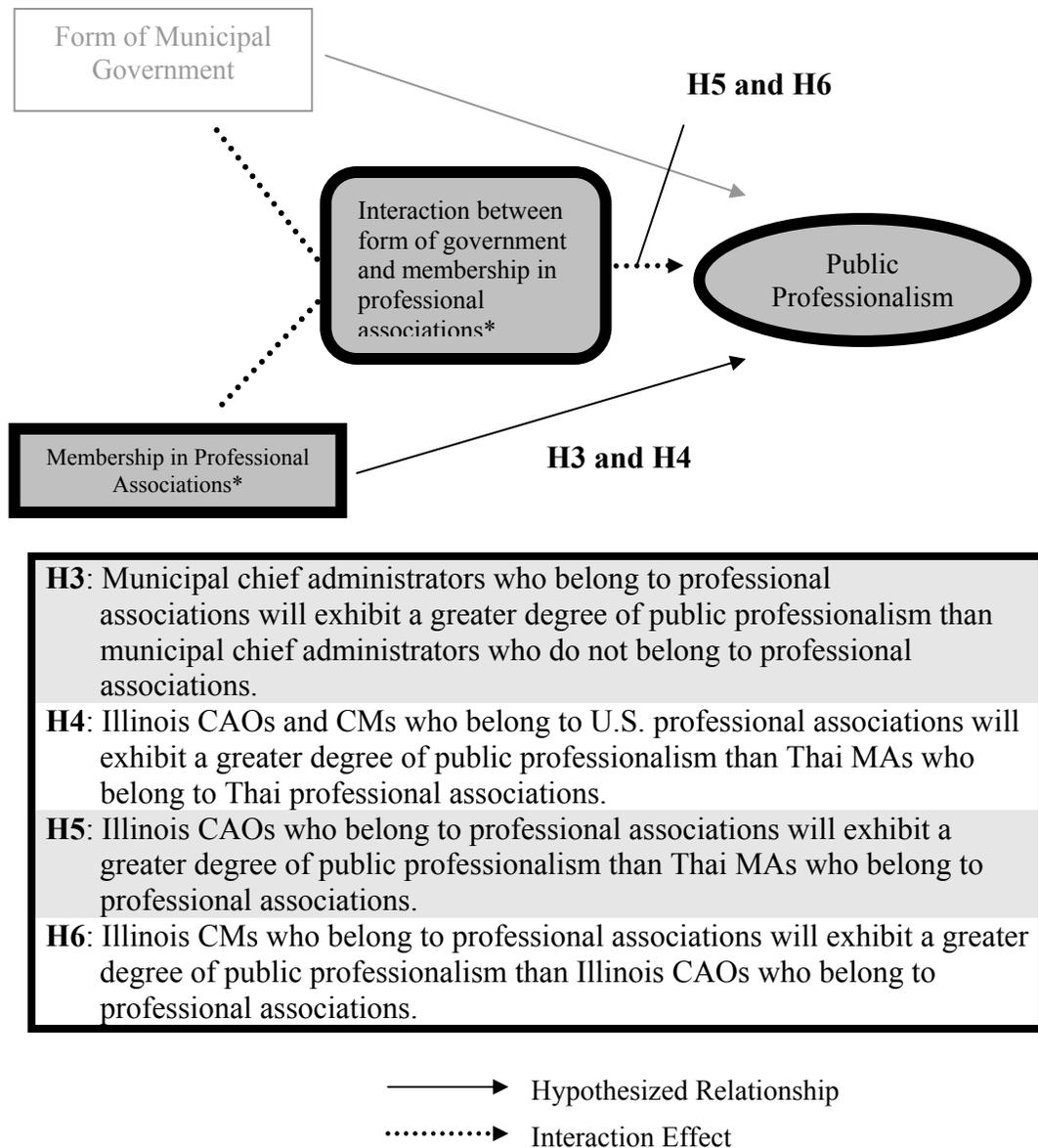


Figure 7-1: Conceptual Map of H3-H6.

### Types and Distribution of Public Professionalism

Cross-tabulation and non-parametric statistical methods<sup>1</sup> are used in this section because the types of public professionalism are based on an ordinal scale of 1 (ersatz) to 5 (transformational). Recall from Chapter 5 that each type of public professionalism is derived by examining municipal chief administrators' responses to the accountability questions. The analysis consists of the abstract and situational models. After examining the distribution of types of public professionalism for each group of chief administrator in each model, I determine whether statistically significant differences in the distribution exist among Thai MAs, Illinois CAOs, and Illinois CMs by using the Kruskal-Wallis  $H$  test—the non-parametric equivalent of the one-way ANOVA. Only when the model indicates a significant difference in the distribution of types of public professionalism among the three groups of municipal chief administrators, I proceed to conduct a post-hoc Mann-Whitney  $U$  test with a Bonferroni adjustment procedure<sup>2</sup> to determine which individual pairs of municipal chief administrators show a significant rank order difference in the distribution of public professionalism. There are three pairwise comparisons in this analysis: Thai MAs Vs. Illinois CAOs, Illinois CAOs Vs. Illinois CMs, and Thai MAs Vs. Illinois CMs.

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter 5 for an in-depth discussion of these non-parametric statistical methods.

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter 5 for an in-depth discussion of the Bonferroni adjustment procedure.

### Abstract Public Professionalism

As shown in Table 7-1, Thai MAs' modal responses (50 percent) fall within the transformational professionalism category. Also, 54 percent of Illinois CAOs reported this type of public professionalism. Only 28 percent of Illinois CMs showed transformational professionalism in the abstract. In fact, more Thai MAs (73 percent) identified with transformational and policy professionalism, followed by Illinois CAOs (57 percent). However, Illinois CMs' modal responses (57 percent) are in the apolitical professionalism type. This number makes the Illinois CMs the only group of municipal chief administrators with the majority in that category. On the other hand, no Thai MAs exhibited apolitical professionalism, compared to 37 percent of Illinois CAOs.

Table 7-1

Distribution of Abstract Public Professionalism in Each Group of  
Municipal Chief Administrators

Type of Public Professionalism	Thai MAs	Illinois CAOs	Illinois CMs
Ersatz Professionalism	4 (6%)	2 (6%)	3 (8%)
Apolitical Professionalism	0 (0%)	13 (37%)	<b>23 (64%)</b>
Procedural Professionalism	15 (21%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Policy Professionalism	16 (23%)	1 (3%)	0 (0%)
Transformational Professionalism	<b>35 (50%)</b>	<b>19 (54%)</b>	10 (28%)

Note: Numbers and percentages in bold indicate modal responses.

The Kruskal-Wallis  $H$  test assesses whether there is a significant rank order difference in the distribution of abstract public professionalism among the three groups of municipal chief administrators. The test result indicates that the rank order difference in the distribution of abstract public professionalism among Thai MAs, Illinois CAOs, and Illinois CMs is statistically significant ( $\chi^2(2, 141) = 18.34, p = 0.000$ ).

Table 7-2

Post-Hoc Tests of the Distribution of Abstract Public Professionalism for Each Pair of Municipal Chief Administrators

Pairwise Comparison	Mann-Whitney $U$	Wilcoxon $W$	$Z$	Significance (2-sided)
Thai MAs Vs. Illinois CAOs	1080.50	1710.50	-1.06	0.288
Illinois CAOs Vs. Illinois CMs	453.50	1119.50	-2.27	0.023 <sup>1</sup>
Thai MAs Vs. Illinois CMs	623.00	1289.00	-4.46	0.000 <sup>2</sup>

Note: 1.  $p$ -value is marginally significant at the 0.017 level.  
2.  $p$ -value is statistically significant at the 0.017 level.

The post-hoc Mann-Whitney  $U$  tests determine which pairs of municipal chief administrators show a significant rank order difference in the distribution of abstract public professionalism (Table 7-2). Again, following the Bonferroni adjustment procedure, the test results are compared against the  $\alpha/3$  ( $0.05/3 = 0.017$ ) level. The post-hoc tests indicate no statistically significant difference between Thai MAs and Illinois CAOs ( $U = 1080.50, Z = -1.06, p = 0.288$ ). On the other

hand, there is a statistically significant difference between Thai MAs and Illinois CMs ( $U = 623.00$ ,  $Z = -4.46$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), and a marginally significant difference exists between Illinois CAOs and CMs ( $U = 453.50$ ,  $Z = -2.27$ ,  $p = 0.023$ ).

The post-hoc test results are consistent with the regression results in Chapter 6. In the abstract, there is no significant difference in the distribution of public professionalism types between Thai MAs and Illinois CAOs. However, the Illinois CAOs and CMs are statistically different from each other in the distribution of their abstract public professionalism. Recall from Chapters 4-6 that the types and distribution of public professionalism are identical to the degree of public professionalism. Hence, the test results indicate that form of government does not affect the degree of abstract public professionalism among Thai MAs and Illinois CAOs, but influences the difference in degree of abstract public professionalism between Illinois CAOs and CMs. We learned from Chapter 6 that Illinois CMs exhibited a lower degree of public professionalism than Illinois CAOs. Now, it is evident that compared to 37 percent of Illinois CAOs, the majority of Illinois CMs (64 percent) identified with apolitical professionalism (Table 7-1). Based on this evidence, it is conclusive that form of government determines the Illinois municipal chief administrators' abstract public professionalism.

### Situational Public Professionalism

Results in the situational model differ from those in the abstract model. In the modal responses, half of Thai MAs (50 percent) identified ersatz professionalism in the situational model, and they are the only group with half of the respondents reporting this type of public professionalism (Table 7-3). In contrast, the majority of Illinois CAOs (71 percent) and CMs (58 percent) exhibited transformational professionalism in their responses to the flood scenario. In fact, only 50 percent of Thai MAs identified transformational, policy, and procedural professionalism in the situational model, compared to 74 percent of Illinois CAOs and 64 percent of Illinois CMs.

Table 7-3

Distribution of Situational Public Professionalism in Each Group of  
Municipal Chief Administrators

Type of Public Professionalism	Thai MAs	Illinois CAOs	Illinois CMs
Ersatz Professionalism	<b>35 (50%)</b>	7 (20%)	9 (25%)
Apolitical Professionalism	0 (0%)	2 (6%)	4 (11%)
Procedural Professionalism	6 (8%)	1 (3%)	2 (6%)
Policy Professionalism	9 (13%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Transformational Professionalism	20 (29%)	<b>25 (71%)</b>	<b>21 (58%)</b>

Note: Numbers and percentages in bold indicate modal responses.

The Kruskal-Wallis  $H$  test determines whether there is a significant rank order difference in the distribution of situational public professionalism among Thai MAs, Illinois CAOs, and Illinois CMs. The test indicates a statistically significant rank order difference in the distribution of professionalism types among the three groups of municipal chief administrators in the situational mode ( $\chi^2(2, 141) = 16.33, p = 0.000$ ).

Then, the post-hoc Mann-Whitney tests identify which pairs of municipal chief administrators show a significant rank order difference in the distribution of situational public professionalism (Table 7-4). Again, the result from each pairwise comparison is compared against the  $\alpha/3$  ( $0.05/3 = 0.017$ ) significance level. As shown in Table 7-4, there is a significant difference between Thai MAs and Illinois CAOs' distribution of public professionalism when they face a specific problem ( $U = 719.50, Z = -3.71, p = 0.000$ ). The rank order difference in situational professionalism between Thai MAs and Illinois CMs is also statistically significant ( $U = 886.500, Z = -2.67, p = 0.008$ ). On the contrary, the test results do not show a significant difference in the distribution of situational professionalism between Illinois CAOs and Illinois CMs ( $U = 555.00, Z = -1.02, p = 0.308$ ).

Table 7-4

Post-Hoc Tests of the Distribution of Situational Public Professionalism for Each Pair of Municipal Chief Administrators

Pairwise Comparison	Mann-Whitney <i>U</i>	Wilcoxon <i>W</i>	<i>Z</i>	Significance (2-sided)
Thai MAs Vs. Illinois CAOs	719.50	3204.50	-3.71	<b>0.000<sup>1</sup></b>
Illinois CAOs Vs. Illinois CMs	555.00	1221.00	-1.02	0.308
Thai MAs Vs. Illinois CMs	886.50	3371.50	-2.67	<b>0.008<sup>2</sup></b>

Notes: 1. *p*-value is marginally significant at the 0.017 level.  
2. *p*-value is statistically significant at the 0.017 level.

The post-hoc tests provide results consistent with the regression results in Chapter 6. When Illinois CAOs and CMs face a specific problem, there is no significant difference in distribution of the types of public professionalism among the Illinois chief administrators. In other words, form of government does not contribute to a difference in degree of public professionalism between Illinois CAOs and CMs. On the contrary, the test results reveal a significant rank order difference in the distribution of situational public professionalism between Thai MAs and Illinois CAOs, and a significant rank order difference between Thai MAs and Illinois CMs. These suggest that the distinction in form of government between Thai and Illinois municipalities affects the municipal chief administrators' situational public professionalism.

This analysis provides more depth to the statistical results. Differences in the distribution of types of public professionalism between municipal chief administrators' abstract and situational perceptions are noteworthy. In Table 7-5, a

positive value indicates a greater percentage in the abstract than in the situational model. A negative value indicates a smaller percentage in the abstract than in the situational model. Put differently, a positive value indicates stronger abstract responses, while a negative value indicates stronger situational responses.

Table 7-5

## Differences between the Abstract and Situational Perceptions

Type of Public Professionalism	Abstract Perception – Situational Perception		
	Thai MAs	Illinois CAOs	Illinois CMs
Ersatz	<b>-44%</b>	-14%	-17%
Apolitical	0%	<b>31%</b>	<b>53%</b>
Procedural	13%	-3%	-6%
Policy	10%	3%	0%
Transformational	21%	-17%	-30%

Notes: 1. A positive value indicates a greater percentage in the abstract than in the situational model.  
2. A negative value indicates a smaller percentage in the abstract than in the situational model.  
3. Values in bold indicate modal differences.

In Chapter 4, transformational professionalism represents a municipal chief administrator who uses professional accountability to balance the other three accountability approaches. The positive difference between the abstract and situational models implies that MAs are more inclined to use professional accountability in the abstract than in a specific situation. The number of Thai transformational professionals drops by 21 points.

Compared to Thai MAs, Illinois CMs (58 percent) and Illinois CAOs (71 percent) were more likely to show transformational professionalism when they faced the flood problem than in the abstract. For Illinois CAOs, there is a 17-point difference from their abstract perception of transformational professionalism. For Illinois CMs, the difference is even greater (30 points). These results suggest that when faced with a specific problem, Illinois CAOs and CMs were more likely to use professional accountability to balance other accountabilities than when asked about their abstract perception.

The opposite of transformational professionalism is ersatz professionalism. There is a 44-point difference in the number of Thai ersatz professionals between the abstract and situational models. In abstract, about 6 percent of Thai MAs showed ersatz professionalism. However, when faced with a specific problem, half of Thai MAs in this study identified the least desirable form of public professionalism. This difference suggests that when faced with a problem, the Thai officials' ability to balance multiple accountabilities is considerably weaker than their abstract understanding of public professionalism.

Also, noteworthy is that there is no apolitical professionalism among Thai MAs and no policy professionalism among Illinois CAOs and CMs. The modal differences for Illinois CAOs (31 percent) and CMs (53 percent) are in the apolitical professionalism category. Both groups of Illinois chief administrators show positive values, indicating that Illinois municipal chief administrators are more likely to use political accountability when faced with a specific problem than

in the abstract. The next section qualitatively examines the nature of apolitical professionalism among Illinois municipal chief administrators.

### **Apolitical Professionalism among Illinois CAOs and CMs**

According to the results in Table 7-3, four Illinois CAOs and two CMs exhibited apolitical professionalism when faced with the flood problem. Specific responses from a CAO and a CM with this type of public professionalism provide insight into their attitudes toward the elected officials—both the mayor and city council.

In Chapter 4, apolitical professionalism describes a municipal chief administrator who considers every accountability approach to be important or very important, except political accountability. Recall from Chapter 6 that in the abstract, the large numbers of CAOs and CMs considered every accountability approach to be important and very important, except political accountability. The CAOs and CMs' lack of abstract attention to political accountability is evident in their very important responses; 6 percent of Illinois CMs and 17 percent of Illinois CAOs considered political responsiveness to the mayors to be very important, compared to 69 percent of Thai MAs. Statistical tests reveal no statistically significant difference between the CAOs and CMs. However, the Thai MAs' attitudes toward political accountability are significantly different from those of the CAOs and CMs.

An explanation as to why Illinois CAOs and CMs identified apolitical professionalism is because the question about responsiveness to the mayor in the abstract section did not fit with the Illinois local government context and hence did not effectively capture the Illinois CAOs and CMs' political accountability.<sup>3</sup> A CM from Northeastern Illinois commented that in Illinois “managers and administrators work for their councils, not the mayors.” Another CM was similarly concerned with how the question is worded. Even Illinois CAOs in the survey voiced their concerns that although they formally serve under the mayors, they must also work closely with their city councils. These CAOs and CMs' feedbacks point out that the political accountability question only covers one aspect of their abstract perception of political accountability. Thus, Illinois CAOs and CMs did not consider political accountability to be as important as other accountability approaches, causing a large percentage of apolitical professionalism in the CAOs and CMs' abstract perception

Moreover, four Illinois CAOs and two CMs exhibited apolitical professionalism when faced with the flood problem (Table 7-3). Specific responses from a CAO and a CM with this type of public professionalism provide insight into their attitudes toward the elected officials—both the mayor and city council. Two Illinois chief administrators in this analysis are representative of all the CAOs and CMs in the overall study. The CAO (city administrator) comes from an aldermanic city government in which the mayor, who is elected at large, serves as the chief

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<sup>3</sup> The question asked, “to what extent do you serve as the assistant to the mayor?”

executive officer and the city council consists of ten aldermen elected from each ward. The CM (village manager) comes from a trustee city government in which the village board (city council) consists of the village president (mayor) and six other trustees who are all elected at large. In the aldermanic city, the mayor presides over the council meetings, but does not vote unless there is a tie. On the contrary, the trustee city's mayor votes on all issues before the council and must vote to break a tie.

The city administrator and village manager did not exactly overlook the political accountability approach (Table 7-6). Instead of being responsive to the mayor's order to reimburse the construction company, both municipal chief administrators would ask the council to determine the appropriate course of actions. Neither of them indicated what recommendations he would make to the councils.

Table 7-6

Comparison of the Strategies to Solve the Flood Problem with Apolitical Professionalism

Illinois Municipal Chief Administrator	Municipal Government Structure	View of the Mayor's Unilateral Action	View of the City Council's Involvement	Any Recommendation (s) Made to the Mayor and/or Council
<b>Village Manager</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trustee form</li> <li>• Village council consists of village president (mayor) and six trustees—all elected at large.</li> </ul>	Inappropriate and ethically questionable	The city council must meet in an open meeting to discuss the issue.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No recommendations made</li> <li>• The council has to determine how to deal with the reimbursement issue.</li> </ul>
<b>City Administrator</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aldermanic form</li> <li>• Mayor is the chief executive officer elected at large.</li> <li>• City council consists of 10 aldermen--2 from each of the 5 wards).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not think the mayor has the authority to enter into a unilateral agreement</li> <li>• A unique situation that is not likely to happen</li> </ul>	The city council's involvement is necessary in this unique situation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No recommendations made</li> <li>• Would abide by any decisions made by the council</li> <li>• Would ask the council to come up with a better purchasing policy</li> </ul>

The village manager was apprehensive about the mayor's unilateral action and questioned whether what the mayor did was in the community's best interest. He assessed the mayor's action in terms of the ethical standard, financial impact on the municipality, and conformity to the rule of law:

The mayor acted arbitrarily and without the consent of the council. His directive was inappropriate and might be illegal, but directing residents to purchase only from preferred vendors is ethically questionable, and raises a host of questions. The mayor's directive could bankrupt the municipality, which is a greater liability than trying to appease the mayor and those who have benefited from his irresponsible statements.

Despite his criticism of the mayoral directive, the village manager did not specify whether he would discuss the matter with the mayor or whether he would inform the mayor of the purchasing policy. Instead, the village manager felt the need to report directly to the council.

I would discuss the situation with the village attorney and the council members. This situation requires a meeting of the elected officials to discuss the issue in an open meeting and have a determination made as to how to address the issues considering the emergency situation. I would ask for direction and guidance from the council in terms of finding an agreeable solution.

Based on his strategy, this village manager fits Price's description of administrative technician. He showed his accountability to the rule of law by expressing the need to consult with the village attorney. However, the manager did not indicate any recommendations that he would make to the council. In other words, he implied that he would not be involved in the legislative process, but would follow "the direction and guidance from the council."

The Illinois CAOs in the survey also shows apolitical professionalism in the flood situation. In his analysis of the situation, the city administrator referred to the legal and bureaucratic accountability mechanisms:

First, I do not know how this could happen. Any type of charge would need a purchase order and approval from the purchasing agent, even in a time of disaster. The businesses need clearance codes as well before an item is charged to the village, which would exclude random purchasing by homeowners.

The question remains as to what a CAO or a CM would do in absence of this policy because other cities may not have one or the same policy. The city administrator indicated that he would take the issue directly to the city council without first communicating with the mayor:

In this unique situation, the city council would have to be made aware of what was said and by whom and then decide whether to pay the bills or take some other form of action. *I would abide by the decision of the council either way since they have to justify either their actions of not paying or the mayor's action of promising to pay.* In any event, a town that could allow this situation to occur needs a more sophisticated purchasing policy (emphasis added).

In this situation, the city administrator was clearer than the village manager in his political accountability to the council. As quoted above, he would do anything that the council orders without making any recommendations. Further, he emphasized the need for more legal and bureaucratic accountability mechanisms to prevent similar problems with purchasing and procurement in the future.

Two things need to be emphasized about the two Illinois chief administrators' qualitative responses. First, the two Illinois officials perceived the importance of their councils, but did not specify how they would deal with the

Mayor, who was initially responsible for entering into the contract that conflicted with the municipal and state purchasing procedures. This does not mean that the village manager and city administrator shunned the mayor. Conversely, they might have considered the mayor as part of the council because both officials are from the municipalities where the mayors preside over the council meetings and can vote on the policy agenda. The qualitative responses are consistent with the quantitative results that form of government does not lead to a significant difference between the CAOs and CMs' situational perceptions of apolitical professionalism.

Second, the apolitical professionals' attitudes are consistent with the strict interpretation of the politics-administration dichotomy in the 1930s. That is, they were exclusively occupied with executing "the assignments handed down from the realm of politics" (Sayre 1958, 103). Both implicitly said they would refrain from advising the councils on what measures need to be taken to address the reimbursement issue. As "administrative technicians," they would follow the councils' decisions.

A question remains: why did the Illinois chief administrators overlook the importance of political responsiveness to the mayor? A different Illinois CAO argued that apolitical professionalism could be caused by the CAOs and CMs' disillusionment with the elected leaders. Such cynicism about elected officials could be acute among the CAOs and CMs who came of age during and after the Watergate era. In the flood scenario, the mayor might not have intended to violate the purchasing and procurement code, but could have misunderstood the policy and

forgot to consult with his administrative officer before making the commitment with the local store. An Illinois CM acting as transformational professional argued that if that were the case, the CM and CAO should have been willing to educate the mayor, provide him with the correct information, or work with him on a new solution set. Instead, the Illinois chief administrators who identified apolitical professionalism in the situational model would not discuss the matter with the mayor. Nonetheless, these findings are only based on the CMs and CAOs' responses to the flood scenario in the survey. Hence, the CAO and CM's lack of responsiveness to the mayor could have been a poor relationship that does not have any bearing on the CAO and CM's general distrust of local elected officials.

### **Thai and Illinois Chief Administrators' Strategies to Solve the Flood Scenario**

The previous section has discussed in detail how the Illinois CAOs and CMs with apolitical professionalism would deal with the flood problem. This section examines the detailed responses of Thai MAs, Illinois CAOs, and Illinois CMs from the top three categories of public professionalism: transformational, policy, and procedural professionalism. This enriches an understanding of the techniques that the municipal chief administrators use to balance multiple accountabilities in dealing with the flood problem. Recall that the statistical results indicate that Thai MAs do not show apolitical professionalism and that Illinois CAOs and CMs do not show policy professionalism. Hence, the two public

professionalism types are omitted from discussion in this section. Table 7-7 summarizes the basic guideposts for the Thai MAs' strategies and the detail of their strategies to deal with each accountability approach and stakeholders in the flood scenario.

Table 7-7

## Summary of the Strategies to Solve the Flood and Reimbursement Issue

Public Professionalism	Basic Guideline	Strategy
<b>Transformational</b>	The "expertise" in dealing with emergency situation and "an understanding of the actual situation" in the affected areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gather the information on the affected areas. Meet with all the affected parties, including the local store. Use the information about the actual situation to prepare a set of recommendations, including what the mayor should do and what he cannot do.</li> <li>• Meet and work closely with the mayor. Share the findings from the analysis with the mayor and work with the mayor on the final solution.</li> <li>• Make sure that the reimbursement conforms to the MoI procedures as much as possible. If necessary, consult with the provincial governor on how to exempt the reimbursement from the MoI purchasing process.</li> </ul>
<b>Policy</b>	Every solution must be made based on the mayor's decision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First, reimburse the local store because the mayor has already made the commitment.</li> <li>• Ask the mayor's approval to form a committee to investigate the damage on the local community.</li> <li>• Report the findings to the mayor, explain all the relevant MoI procedures, advise the mayor on what is not allowed, and have him decide on the course of actions.</li> </ul>

(Continued on following page)

Table 7-7 (Continued)

Public Professionalism	Basic Guideline	Strategy
Procedural	The central government regulations and standard operating procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet with the mayor to discuss his policy objective.</li> <li>• Explain to the mayor that the reimbursement can only be done according to the MoI purchasing policy and that the mayor's emergency-related policy must strictly follow the MoI procedures.</li> <li>• Consult with the provincial governor on how to deal with the local vendor.</li> </ul>

A Thai MA acting as transformational professional stressed the use of knowledge in dealing with an emergency situation and the need to go into the affected areas to gain an accurate understanding of the flood situation.

As municipal administrator, I am obligated to advise the mayor on the legal and bureaucratic procedures. In addition, I have to be well-versed on every aspect of municipal government affairs, including how to deal with the natural disaster situation. The knowledge and experience help enhance my discretion and assist me in determining which legal and bureaucratic mechanisms to use and what kind of recommendations to make to the mayor.

As discussed in Chapter 4, transformational professionalism includes innovation and communication. In terms of innovation, a Thai MA who identified transformational professionalism implied that if necessary, he would work with the provincial governor on how to exempt this situation from the MoI statutory requirement.

Not only did the transformational Thai MA emphasize the value of knowledge and fact finding, he also mentioned that an accurate understanding of

the affected areas would reveal whether that the mayor's initial motive to contract with the local store was ethically sound. This is important because the contract was against the MoI purchasing policy and "pay-to-play" practices could be involved. In addition, this municipal administrator indicated that he would present to the mayor a set of recommendations, including both what the mayor cannot do, and how he should proceed with the reimbursement issue.

In terms of communication, the transformational Thai MA expressed his intention to talk to all stakeholders, including the mayor, the local store, and the flood victims. If necessary, he reported that he would ask the local store to consider donating to the city the amount of the material cost that could not be reimbursed. Lee and colleagues (2007) refer to this as "transformational stewardship" in which public administrators engage every important actor in a municipality in a discourse about how to contribute to their community.

Instead of knowledge and expertise, the Thai MA acting as the policy professional used his responsiveness to the mayor as the basic guideline to solve the flood problem.

Not following the mayor's policy is a violation of the Municipality Act of 1953. However, before executing the mayor's directives, I must receive his executive orders in writing. Once the executive orders have been issued, it is my duty to do as the mayor wishes.

As with the transformational Thai MA, the Thai MA acting as policy professional reported that he would also examine the actual flood situation, study all the relevant

MoI statutes, and abide by the legal contract with the local store. He, however, maintained that:

I would form a committee to investigate the flooded areas and, if directed by the mayor, get in touch with the higher authorities. Of course, the solutions to help the flood victims and whether to reimburse the local store have to be determined by the mayor—the municipality’s chief executive officer.

In contrast, the Thai MA acting as procedural professional emphasized the central government regulations and operating procedures. This Thai official differs from the apolitical Illinois chief administrators in that he would discuss the matter with the mayor. The discussion, however, would only be about the illegality of the mayor’s unilateral agreement with the local company.

I would inform the mayor that what he did violated the bureaucratic procedures. Also, I would straighten out the reimbursement issue with him and the local vendor. It is also necessary to ask for direction and guidance from the MoI representatives at the provincial level. Craft all solutions with the elected officials based on the MoI procedures.

In the procedural municipal administrator’s comment, the MoI representatives at the provincial level appeared to be the main actors in determining the solutions to the flood situation. Further, the municipal administrator showed no flexibility in applying the related standard operating procedures to the flood situation. Based on the quote above, every solution made by the mayor would be acceptable—as long as they strictly comply with the central government regulations.

Table 7-8 presents the fundamental values and strategies reported by a transformational Illinois CAO and a procedural Illinois CM. In responding to the reimbursement problem, the transformational CAO explained what political

responsiveness meant to him:

Being responsive does not necessarily mean paying all invoices pursuant to the mayor's direction provided to community residents; more likely, it means working through the issue in a professional manner. Thus, my expressed interest in being responsive is informed by an interpretation that I must act, but not necessarily be bound to the mayor's reported advice to residents.

Table 7-8

Summary of the Strategies to Solve the Flood and Reimbursement Issue by Illinois CAO and CM with Transformational and Procedural Professionalism

Municipal Chief Administrators	Basic Guideline	Strategy
<b>Transformational CAO</b>	Working through the issue with the mayor in a professional manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immediately contact mayor and make sure that the matter has been discussed with the council.</li> <li>• Determine course of action necessary following discussion with mayor.</li> <li>• Immediate contact with local stores to reaffirm limits on eligible expenses and work with them to solve the issue.</li> <li>• Review and update procurement policies/procedures, including contract with local stores and procedure for authorizing municipal account charges, spending limits, etc.</li> <li>• Meet with the mayor to tell him to stop telling residents that they have unlimited reimbursement from the city.</li> </ul>
<b>Procedural CM</b>	Municipal ordinance and state regulations on local government purchasing, procurement, and disaster relief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform the local vendors that the city can only reimburse up to the statutory amount of \$2,500.</li> <li>• If necessary, follow the state's disaster reimbursement process for an additional funding.</li> </ul>

Put differently, political responsiveness for transformational professionals did not connote a vertical relationship between this CAO and the mayor. Rather, it involved a horizontal working relationship based on mutual understanding and communication. The transformational CAO reported that he would immediately contact the mayor to verify that he actually provided the direction to reimburse the store and also to confirm that the direction had been discussed with the full council. Only after the discussion with the mayor would he determine the solutions.

Potential actions include:

Immediately contact the local store to affirm limits on eligible expense, including the process for expenses that exceed the prescribed limits, and discuss how the city and the local store could cooperate to solve this issue together. Notify the council of the issue and potential remedies. Determine if any applicable laws or codes were violated and handle accordingly. Review and update the municipal emergency management procedures and procurement policies.

The CAO's intention to review and update the emergency management procedures exemplifies transformational professionalism because the new and updated procedures would help the municipal government solve a similar problem in the future without having to go through the same problem. In other words, this transformational CAO contributes to municipal governance by laying the procedural foundation for future mayors, municipal chief administrators, and municipal government employees to follow in this kind of situation.

On the contrary, the procedural CM believes that everything the mayor does is subject to the national/state government rules and standard operating procedures. He would discuss the flood problem with the mayor. However, the purpose of that

meeting would only be to inform the mayor that what he did was wrong and that he needs to stop telling the residents of their entitlement to unlimited reimbursement from the city. The procedural CM would also hold a similar meeting with the local vendor to impart the state purchasing and reimbursement policies to them.

The Illinois CAO and CM differ from each other in how they would deal with the mayor and local store. For the transformational CAO, it would be necessary to work closely with the mayor and local vendor to determine the solution together. Note that the CAO did not pass judgment on whether the mayor was involved in unethical behavior. Instead, he reported that he would talk to the mayor before determining the course of actions. On the other hand, the procedural CM appeared to behave more like a law enforcement officer than a public manager. Every step he indicated was all about conveying and enforcing the rules and procedures about municipal government purchase and procurement.

Based on this comparative analysis of Thai MAs, Illinois CAOs, and CMs, there are two important observations about the relationship between the municipal chief administrators and their local elected officials. First, both Illinois CAOs and CMs in this study spoke of political accountability to both the city councils and mayors. In many cases, the CAOs and CMs implied that the accountability to their councils matters more than their responsiveness to the mayors. In other words, form of government does not affect the Illinois CAOs and CMs' political accountability.

However, the Thai MAs who provided their answers to the flood scenario did not express the need to work with the municipal councils. The Thai MAs could be further divided into two groups. The first group stated that the responsiveness to the mayoral directives is very important, as many of them considered the mayors to be the spokespersons for local citizens. Because all Thai mayors are elected at large, the MAs were concerned that not listening to the people's spokespersons would create a bad impression of a bureaucratic chief administrator going awry. This is different from the other group of Thai MAs, who would only work with the MoI agents at the provincial level.

The second observation from the comparative analysis is the three distinct patterns of political accountability among the municipal chief administrators who participated in the survey. In this study, political accountability is generally defined as the responsiveness to the elected officials. However, the comparative analysis of the municipal chief administrators' responses to the flood scenario reveals the complexity of this accountability system. Table 7-9 presents the three patterns of relationship with the mayors in the flood scenario.

Table 7-9

Patterns of Political Accountability among Municipal Chief Administrators  
in the Flood Scenario as Reported in the Survey

Type of Public Professionalism	Pattern of Relationship	Solution
<i>Transformational</i>	<i>Horizontal</i> (mutual understanding, mutual respect)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work closely working with the mayor to agree on solutions</li> <li>• Rely on knowledge, facts, and analysis of actual situation</li> </ul>
<i>Policy</i>	<i>Vertical</i> (The mayor at the top of the municipal government hierarchy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform the mayor of the procedures and policies involved and what the mayor cannot do</li> <li>• Have the mayor decide on solutions and execute them accordingly</li> </ul>
<i>Procedural</i>	<i>Vertical</i> (The mayor subject to national/state rules, regulations, SOPs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform the mayor of the procedures and policies involved</li> <li>• Advise the mayor to strictly follow the rules and policies</li> </ul>

For the transformational chief administrators, the relationship with the mayors would be based on mutual understanding and respect. An understanding of the problem could be attained by examining the flooded areas, gathering all the facts about the situation, and analyzing the data by using the knowledge in emergency management. In terms of mutual respect, the chief administrators with transformational professionalism revealed their willingness to work closely with the mayors to determine the solutions together.

In both the policy and procedural professionalism categories, the patterns of relationship between the mayors and chief administrators are vertical. However, for Thai MAs acting as policy professionals, the mayors would get to determine the solutions after being informed by the Thai MAs of the relevant procedures and

policies. It was unclear whether the Thai MAs acting as policy professionals would offer any recommended actions. They only indicated that they would execute whatever decisions the mayors make and put in writing. On the other hand, the procedural chief administrators expressed themselves as if they were national/state government representatives. They were different from apolitical chief administrators in that they would still contact the mayors. Nevertheless, they would only discuss with their mayors the aspects of the purchasing and procurement policy that the mayors have violated.

This analysis extends the results from Chapter 6 by offering more insight into the types of public professionalism among municipal chief administrators in the three forms of government. The statistical results reveal the distribution of public professionalism types among Thai MAs, Illinois CAOs, and Illinois CMs in the abstract and situational models. Thai MAs did not identify apolitical professionalism, while substantial numbers of Illinois CAOs and CMs reported this type of public professionalism. On the other hand, Illinois CAOs and CMs did not demonstrate policy professionalism in the abstract or situational models. Qualitative evidence from the survey responses adds more depth to our understanding of the specific strategies that chief administrators with each type of public professionalism used to solve the flood scenario.

### **Analysis of the Relationship between Public Professionalism, Membership in Professional Associations, and the Interaction Effect between Membership in Professional Associations and Form of Government**

This section examines the relationship between public professionalism and two independent variables—membership in professional associations (H3 and H4) and the interaction effect between membership in professional associations and form of municipal government (H5 and H6). As previously discussed, the OLR and GOLM regression models could not provide parameter estimates for the membership in professional associations variable and interaction term. Instead, cross-tabulation tables, the Kruskal-Wallis  $H$  test, and the Mann-Whitney  $U$  test are used to test the four research hypotheses.

In theory, membership in professional associations is expected to enhance the interpersonal trust and professionalism among public officials (Merton 1957; Knoke 1981; Stolle and Rochon 1998; Wollebaek and Selle 2002). However, due to the lack of research on the influence of professional associations on public professionalism, I hypothesized in Chapter 4 that municipal chief administrators who belong to professional associations will exhibit a greater degree of public professionalism than municipal chief administrators who do not belong to professional associations (H3).

In the abstract model, the majority of chief administrators who belong to professional associations (44 percent) identified transformational professionalism. The majority of chief administrators without the membership in professional

associations (48 percent) also exhibited transformational professionalism (Table 7-10). However, the second majority of the members in professional associations (36 percent) reported apolitical professionalism, while the second and third majorities of the non-members reported policy (26 percent) and procedural (21 percent) public professionalism, which have higher values than apolitical professionalism.

Table 7-10

Comparison of Abstract Public Professionalism between Members and Non-Members of Professional Associations

Degree of Abstract Public Professionalism	Membership in Professional Associations		TOTAL
	Yes	No	
1 = ersatz	7 (7%)	2 (5%)	9
2 = apolitical	36 (36%)	0 (0%)	36
3 = procedural	6 (6%)	9 (21%)	15
4 = policy	6 (6%)	11 (26%)	17
5 = transformational	<b>44 (44%)</b>	<b>20 (48%)</b>	64
<b>TOTAL</b>	99	42	141

Note: Numbers and percentages in bold indicate modal responses.

Thus, results from the cross tabulation table do not support H3; in the abstract, municipal chief administrators who are members of professional associations did not show a greater degree of public professionalism than the municipal chief administrators who are not members of professional associations. The Mann-Whitney *U* test assesses the statistical significance and effect of membership in professional associations on abstract public professionalism (Table

7-11).

Table 7-11

Mann-Whitney Test Comparing the Difference in Abstract Public Professionalism between Members and Non-Members in Professional Associations

Membership in Professional Associations	Ranks			Test Statistics			Asymp. Sig. (2-tail)
	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mann-Whitney <i>U</i>	Wilcoxon <i>W</i>	Z	
Yes	99	66.41	6575.00	1625.00	6575.00	-2.17	0.030*
No	42	81.81	3436.00				
<b>TOTAL</b>	141						

**Note:** \**p*-value is statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

The Mann-Whitney test results are statistically significant ( $U = 1625.00$ ,  $p = 0.030$ ,  $r = 0.18^4$ ), but do not support H6a. Municipal chief administrators with the membership had a mean rank of 66.41<sup>5</sup>, while the non-members had a mean rank of 81.81. However, the effect size of 0.18 is considered small. Contrary to H3, these statistical results indicate that membership in professional associations does not enhance the degree of abstract public professionalism among municipal chief administrators. Nonetheless, the small effect size of this variable on the degree of

<sup>4</sup> The formula for calculating the effect size of the Mann-Whitney *U* test is  $r = Z/\sqrt{N}$ , where *N* is the total number of the sample. As discussed in Chapter 5, only the absolute value of *r* is reported. In this case,  $r = |-2.17/\sqrt{141}| = 0.18$ .

<sup>5</sup> As discussed in Chapter 5, the Mann-Whitney *U* test calculates a mean rank by first calculating the rank for each value instead of using the values as is and then dividing the sum of ranks by *N*. A mean rank informs us about the ordinal data more than an arithmetic mean because the mean rank takes into account the ordinal nature of public professionalism.

abstract public professionalism implies that other important variables are at play.

When faced with the flood scenario, the majority of municipal chief administrators who are members of professional associations (54 percent) reported transformational professionalism. On the contrary, the majority of municipal chief administrators who do not belong to professional associations (45 percent) identified ersatz professionalism (Table 7-12). Also, noteworthy is that the second majority of chief administrators with the membership in professional associations (32 percent) demonstrated ersatz professionalism, while the second majority of the non-members (31 percent) reported transformational professionalism.

Table 7-12

Comparison of Situational Public Professionalism between Members and Non-Members of Professional Associations

Degree of Situational Public Professionalism	Membership in Professional Associations		TOTAL
	Yes	No	
1 = ersatz	32 (32%)	<b>19 (45%)</b>	51
2 = apolitical	6 (6%)	0 (0%)	6
3 = procedural	7 (7%)	2 (5%)	9
4 = policy	1 (1%)	8 (19%)	9
5 = transformational	<b>53 (54%)</b>	13 (31%)	66
<b>TOTAL</b>	99	42	141

Note: Numbers and percentages in bold indicate modal responses.

Table 7-12 provides evidence in support of H3; when faced with the flood scenario, municipal chief administrators who are members of professional

associations exhibited a greater degree of public professionalism than the municipal chief administrators who are not members of professional associations. The Mann-Whitney  $U$  test examines the effect of membership in professional associations on situational public professionalism (Table 7-13).

Table 7-13

Mann-Whitney Test Comparing the Difference in Situational Public Professionalism between Members and Non-Members in Professional Associations

Membership in Professional Associations	Ranks			Test Statistics			
	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mann-Whitney $U$	Wilcoxon $W$	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tail)
Yes	99	74.89	7414.50	1693.50	2596.50	-1.95	<b>0.049*</b>
No	42	61.82	2596.50				
<b>TOTAL</b>	141						

**Note:** \* $p$ -value is statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

The test results are statistically significant ( $U = 1693.50$ ,  $p = 0.049$ ,  $r = 0.16^6$ ) and support H3. Municipal chief administrators who belong to professional associations had a mean rank of 74.89, while the non-members had a mean rank of 61.82. However, the effect size of 0.16 is considered small. This statistical evidence provides support for H3; membership in professional associations enhances situational public professionalism. Nevertheless, similar to the abstract model, the

<sup>6</sup>  $r = |-1.95/\sqrt{141}| = 0.16$ .

small effect size of this variable in the situational model implies that other important variables also influence situational public professionalism.

Moreover, I am interested in whether the differences between Illinois and Thai professional associations contribute to a difference in the degree of public professionalism between Thai MAs and Illinois municipal chief administrators (both Illinois CAOs and CMs).

Based on the discussion in Chapter 4, the American professional associations, particularly the ICMA and ILCMA, are expected to enhance their members' public professionalism more effectively than the MOAT and NMLT—two professional associations for Thai MAs. More specifically, I hypothesized in Chapter 4 that Illinois CAOs and CMs who belong to U.S. professional associations will exhibit a greater degree of public professionalism than Thai MAs who belong to Thai professional associations (H4). Similar the test of H3, I use the nested cross tabulation table and Mann-Whitney  $U$  test to test H4.

Table 7-14

Comparison of Abstract Public Professionalism between Members of Thai and Illinois Professional Associations

Degree of Abstract Public Professionalism	Members		TOTAL
	Thai	Illinois	
1 = ersatz	2 (7%)	5 (7%)	7
2 = apolitical	0 (0%)	<b>36 (51%)</b>	36
3 = procedural	6 (21%)	0 (0%)	6
4 = policy	5 (18%)	1 (1%)	6
5 = transformational	<b>15 (54%)</b>	29 (41%)	44
<b>TOTAL</b>	28	71	99

Note: Numbers and percentages in bold indicate modal responses.

In the abstract model, the majority of Illinois CAOs and CMs who are ICMA and ILCMA members (51 percent) reported apolitical professionalism, while the majority of Thai MAs who are NMLT and MOAT members (54 percent) reported transformational professionalism (Table 7-14). Also, the second and third largest numbers of Thai MAs with the NMLT and MOAT memberships identified procedural (21 percent) and policy (18 percent) professionalism. In contrast, the second majority of Illinois CAOs and CMs with the ICMA and ILCMA memberships (51 percent) exhibited apolitical professionalism, which is less desirable than procedural and policy professionalism. Therefore, contrary to H4, these results indicate that in the abstract, Thai MAs who belong to Thai professional associations exhibited a greater degree of public professionalism than Illinois CAOs and CMs who belong to U.S. professional associations.

The Mann-Whitney  $U$  evaluates the statistical difference in abstract public professionalism between Thai MAs who are NMLT and MOAT members and Illinois CAOs and CMs who are ICMA and ILCMA members (Table 7-15). In the abstract model, the results are significant ( $U = 667.50$ ,  $p = 0.030$ ,  $r = 0.25^7$ ), but do not support H4. Compared to Illinois CAOs and CMs who belong to U.S. professional associations (mean rank = 45.40), Thai MAs who are members of Thai professional associations (mean rank = 58.13) scored higher on the degree of public professionalism.

Table 7-15

Mann-Whitney Test Comparing Abstract Public Professionalism between Members of Thai and Illinois Professional Associations

Geographic Location	Ranks			Test Statistics			
	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mann-Whitney $U$	Wilcoxon $W$	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tail)
Thailand	28	58.13	1627.50	667.50	3223.40	-2.49	<b>0.013*</b>
Illinois	71	45.40	3223.50				
<b>TOTAL</b>	99						

Note: \* $p$ -value is statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

The situational model reveals a different picture. About 65 percent of Illinois CAOs and CMs with the membership in U.S. professional associations reported transformational professionalism, while 25 percent of Thai MAs with the

<sup>7</sup>  $r = |-2.49/\sqrt{98}| = 0.25$ .

membership in Thai professional associations exhibited transformational professionalism (Table 7-16). In fact, the majority of Thai MAs who are NMLT and MOAT members (57 percent) showed ersatz professionalism—the least desirable type of public professionalism. These results support H4; when faced with a specific problem, Illinois CAOs and CMs who are members of U.S. professional associations demonstrated a greater degree of public professionalism than Thai MAs who belong to Thai professional associations.

Table 7-16

Comparison of Situational Public Professionalism between Members of Thai and Illinois Professional Associations

Degree of Situational Public Professionalism	Members		TOTAL
	Thai	Illinois	
1 = ersatz	<b>16 (57%)</b>	16 (23%)	32
2 = apolitical	0 (0%)	6 (9%)	6
3 = procedural	4 (14%)	3 (4%)	7
4 = policy	1 (4%)	0 (0%)	1
5 = transformational	7 (25%)	<b>46 (65%)</b>	53
<b>TOTAL</b>	28	71	99

Note: Numbers and percentages in bold indicate modal responses.

Also, the Mann-Whitney test of the situational model provides results that support H4 (Table 7-17). The difference in situational public professionalism between Thai MAs who belong to Thai professional associations and Illinois CAOs and CMs who belong to U.S. professional associations is statistically significant (*U*

= 575.00,  $p = 0.001$ ,  $r = 0.34^8$ ). As expected by H4, when faced with a specific problem, Illinois CAOs and CMs who are members of U.S. professional associations (mean rank = 54.90) had a greater degree of public professionalism than Thai MAs who are members of Thai professional associations (mean rank = 34.04)

Table 7-17

Mann-Whitney Test Comparing Situational Public Professionalism between Members of Thai and Illinois Professional Associations

Geographic Location	Ranks			Test Statistics			
	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mann-Whitney $U$	Wilcoxon $W$	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
Thailand	28	34.04	953.00	575.00	953.00	-3.39	<b>0.001*</b>
Illinois	71	54.90	3898.00				
<b>TOTAL</b>	99						

Note: \* $p$ -value is statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

Next, I explore the connection between public professionalism and the interaction effect between membership in professional associations and form of government. As hypothesized in Chapter 4, Illinois CAOs who belong to the ICMA and ILCMA will demonstrate a greater degree of public professionalism than Thai MAs who belong to the NMLT and MOAT (H5).

<sup>8</sup>  $r = |-3.39/\sqrt{98}| = 0.34$ .

Also, in theory, there is strong connection between membership in professional associations and the council-manager form of government. However, as discussed in Chapter 4, mixed evidence of the connection between the two variables prompted me to test whether Illinois CMs who are members of professional associations will show a greater degree of public professionalism than Illinois CAOs who are members of professional associations (H6).

Due to inadequate data, the OLR and GOLM regression models could not provide the parameter estimate for the interaction variable between membership in professional associations and form of government. Instead, I choose nested cross tabulation, the Kruskal-Wallis *H* test, and the Mann-Whitney post-hoc tests with the Bonferroni adjustment procedure to test H5 and H6.

In the abstract model, approximately 54 percent of Illinois CAOs with the membership in professional associations and 54 percent of Thai MAs with the membership reported transformational professionalism (Table 7-18). However, the second largest number of Illinois CAOs who are members of professional associations (37 percent) exhibited apolitical professionalism, compared to 0 percent of Thai MAs with the membership in professional associations. The second and third majorities of Thai MAs who belong to professional associations reported procedural (21 percent) and policy (18 percent) professionalism, which are more desirable than apolitical professionalism. Thus, contrary to H5, Thai MAs who are members of professional associations exhibited a greater degree of abstract public professionalism than Illinois CAOs who are members of professional associations.

Table 7-18

Relationship between Abstract Public Professionalism and the Interaction Effect between Form of Government and Membership in Professional Associations

Degree of Abstract Public Professionalism	Members			Non- Members	TOTAL
	Thai MAs	IL CAOs	IL CMs	Thai MAs	
1 = ersatz	2 (7%)	2 (6%)	3 (8%)	2 (5%)	9
2 = apolitical	0 (0%)	13 (37%)	<b>23 (64%)</b>	0 (0%)	46
3 = procedural	6 (21%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	9 (21%)	15
4 = policy	5 (18%)	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	11 (26%)	17
5 = transformational	<b>15 (54%)</b>	<b>19 (54%)</b>	10 (28%)	<b>20 (48%)</b>	64
<b>TOTAL</b>	28	25	36	42	141

Note: Numbers and percentages in bold indicate modal responses.

Neither does the abstract model support H6. The majority of Illinois CMs who belong to professional associations (64 percent) showed apolitical professionalism, compared to 37 percent of Illinois CAOs (Table 7-18). In contrast, the majority of Illinois CAOs who belong to professional associations (54 percent) showed the most desirable form of professionalism—transformational professionalism. Only 28 percent of Illinois CMs exhibited transformational professionalism. Hence, the abstract model does not provide empirical support for H6; in the abstract, Illinois CAOs who are members of professional associations showed a greater degree of public professionalism than Illinois CMs who are members of professional associations.

Equally noteworthy is that in the abstract, the majority of non-member Thai MAs (48 percent) showed transformational professionalism, followed by policy professionalism (26 percent) and procedural professionalism (21 percent). These numbers suggest that the Thai MAs who do not belong to professional associations showed a greater degree of abstract public professionalism than the Illinois CMs who do not belong to professional associations.

Contrary to the abstract model, the situational model supports H5, but does not support H6. When faced with a specific problem, the majority of Illinois CAOs with the membership in professional associations (71 percent) showed transformational professionalism, while the majority of Thai MAs who are members of professional associations (57 percent) exhibited ersatz professionalism (Table 7-19). Only 25 percent of Thai MAs who are members of professional associations identified transformational professionalism in the scenario. As predicted by H5, when faced with a specific problem, Illinois CAOs who belong to professional associations had a greater degree of public professionalism than Thai MAs who are members of professional associations.

Table 7-19

Relationship between Situational Public Professionalism and the Interaction Effect between Form of Government and Membership in Professional Associations

Degree of Situational Public Professionalism	Members			Non-Members	TOTAL
	Thai MAs	IL CAOs	IL CMs	Thai MAs	
1 = ersatz	<b>16 (57%)</b>	7 (20%)	9 (25%)	<b>19 (45%)</b>	41
2 = apolitical	0 (0%)	2 (6%)	4 (11%)	0 (0%)	6
3 = procedural	4 (14%)	1 (3%)	2 (6%)	2 (5%)	9
4 = policy	1 (4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	8 (19%)	9
5 = transformational	7 (25%)	<b>25 (71%)</b>	<b>31 (58%)</b>	13 (31%)	76
<b>TOTAL</b>	28	35	46	42	141

Note: Numbers and percentages in bold indicate modal responses.

Moreover, in the situational model, the majority of Illinois CMs with the membership in professional associations (58 percent) demonstrated transformational professionalism, compared to 71 percent of Illinois CAOs (Table 7-19). In the ersatz professionalism, there are more Illinois CMs with the membership in professional associations (25 percent) than Illinois CAOs with the membership in professional associations (20 percent). Hence, contrary to H6, Illinois CAOs who are members of professional associations showed a greater degree of public professionalism than Illinois CMs who are members of professional associations.

The Kruskal-Wallis  $H$ -test assesses the statistical significance of the differences in abstract and situational public professionalism among the four groups of municipal chief administrators: Illinois CAOs who are members of professional associations, Illinois CMs who are members of professional associations, Thai MAs who are members of professional associations, and Thai MAs who are not members of professional associations. For the abstract model, the test indicates a statistically significant difference among the four types of chief administrators ( $\chi^2(3, 141) = 18.35, p = 0.000$ ). In the situational model, the test also indicates a statistically significant difference among the four groups of municipal chief administrators ( $\chi^2(3, 141) = 16.84, p = 0.001$ ).

The Mann-Whitney post-hoc test assesses the statistical significance of five pairwise comparisons (Table 7-20). Due to the Bonferroni adjustment procedure, the results are compared against the  $\alpha/5$  ( $0.05/5 = 0.01$ ) level.

Table 7-20

## Five Pairwise Comparisons for the Mann-Whitney Post-Hoc Test

<b>Pairwise Comparison</b>
Illinois CMs with the membership Vs. Illinois CAOs with the membership
Illinois CAOs with the membership Vs. Thai MAs with the membership
Illinois CAOs with the membership Vs. Thai MAs without the membership
Illinois CMs with the membership Vs. Thai MAs with the membership
Illinois CMs with the membership Vs. Thai MAs without the membership

In the abstract model, the post-hoc test results do not support H5 or H6. Contrary to H5, Illinois CAOs with the membership in professional associations (mean rank = 30.23) had a lower degree of abstract public professionalism than Thai MAs with the membership in professional associations (mean rank = 34.21) ( $U = 1058.00$ ,  $Z = -0.94$ ,  $r = 0.12^9$ ) (Table 7-21). However, these results are not statistically significant ( $p = 0.347$ ). Also, contrary to H6, Illinois CMs with the membership in professional associations (mean rank = 31.10) showed a lower degree of abstract professionalism than Illinois CAOs with the membership in professional associations (mean rank = 41.04) ( $U = 453.50$ ,  $Z = -2.27$ ,  $r = 0.27^{10}$ ). The results are statistically significant ( $p = 0.013$ ).

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<sup>9</sup>  $r = |-0.94/\sqrt{63}| = 0.12$ .

<sup>10</sup>  $r = |-2.27/\sqrt{71}| = 0.27$ .

Table 7-21

Post-Hoc Test Comparing Abstract Public Professionalism among  
Four Groups of Municipal Chief Administrators

Pairwise Comparison	Chief Administrator	Ranks			Test Statistics			Asymp. Sig. (2-tail)
		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mann-Whitney <i>U</i>	Wilcoxon <i>W</i>	Z	
CMs with membership Vs. CAOs with membership	CMs with membership	36	31.10	1119.50	453.50	1119.50	-2.27	<b>0.013*</b>
	CAOs with membership	35	41.04	1436.50				
	<b>TOTAL</b>	71						
CAOs with membership Vs. Thai MAs with membership	CAOs with membership	35	30.23	1058.00	428.00	1058.00	-0.94	0.347
	Thai MAs with Membership	28	34.21	958.00				
	<b>TOTAL</b>	63						
CAOs with membership Vs. Thai MAs without membership	CAOs with membership	35	36.64	1282.50	652.50	1282.50	-0.91	0.363
	Thai MAs without Membership	42	40.96	1720.50				
	<b>TOTAL</b>	77						
CMs with membership Vs. Thai MAs with membership	CMs with membership	36	25.56	920.00	254.00	920.00	-3.58	<b>0.000*</b>
	Thai MAs with Membership	28	41.43	1160.00				
	<b>TOTAL</b>	64						
CMs with membership Vs. Thai MAs without membership	CMs with membership	36	28.75	1035.00	369.00	1035.00	-4.06	<b>0.000*</b>
	Thai MAs without Membership	42	48.71	2046.00				
	<b>TOTAL</b>	78						

Note: \**p*-value is statistically significant at the 0.01 level.

Other results in the abstract model are noteworthy. Illinois CAOs with the membership in professional associations (mean rank = 36.64) had a lower degree of abstract professionalism than Thai MAs without the membership (mean rank = 40.96) ( $U = 652.50, Z = -0.91, r = 0.10^{11}$ ). However, these results are not statistically significant ( $p = 0.363$ ). Similarly, Illinois CMs with the membership in professional associations (average rank = 25.56) appeared to have a lower degree of abstract professionalism than Thai MAs with the membership in professional associations (average rank = 41.43) ( $U = 254.00, Z = -3.58, r = 0.48^{12}$ ). The test results are significant ( $p = 0.000$ ). Illinois CMs with the membership in professional associations (average rank = 28.75) also showed a lower degree of abstract professionalism than Thai MAs without the membership in professional associations (average rank = 48.71) ( $U = 369.00, Z = -4.06, r = 0.46^{13}$ ). The results are also significant ( $p = 0.000$ ).

The situational model provides evidence to support H5, but not H6 (Table 7-22). As expected by H5, Illinois CAOs who are members of professional associations (mean rank = 38.53) showed a greater degree of situational professionalism than Thai MAs who are members of professional associations (mean rank = 23.84) ( $U = 261.50, Z = -3.49, r = 0.44^{14}$ ). The test shows statistically significant results ( $p = 0.000$ ).

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<sup>11</sup>  $r = |-0.91/\sqrt{77}| = 0.10.$

<sup>12</sup>  $r = |-3.58/\sqrt{64}| = 0.48.$

<sup>13</sup>  $r = |-4.06/\sqrt{78}| = 0.46.$

<sup>14</sup>  $r = |-3.49/\sqrt{63}| = 0.48.$

Table 7-22

Post-Hoc Test Comparing Situational Public Professionalism among  
Four Groups of Municipal Chief Administrators

Pairwise Comparison	Chief Administrator	Ranks			Test Statistics			
		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mann-Whitney <i>U</i>	Wilcoxon <i>W</i>	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tail)
CMs with membership Vs. CAOs with membership	CMs with membership	36	33.92	1221.00	555.00	1221.00	-1.02	0.308
	CAOs with membership	35	38.14	1335.00				
	<b>TOTAL</b>	71						
CAOs with membership Vs. Thai MAs with membership	CAOs with membership	35	38.53	1348.50	261.50	667.50	-3.49	<b>0.000*</b>
	Thai MAs with Membership	28	23.84	667.50				
	<b>TOTAL</b>	63						
CAOs with membership Vs. Thai MAs without membership	CAOs with membership	35	46.91	1646.00	458.00	1361.00	-3.09	<b>0.002*</b>
	Thai MAs without Membership	42	32.40	1361.00				
	<b>TOTAL</b>	77						
CMs with membership Vs. Thai MAs with membership	CMs with membership	36	37.57	1352.50	321.50	727.50	-2.67	<b>0.008*</b>
	Thai MAs with Membership	28	25.98	727.50				
	<b>TOTAL</b>	64						
CMs with membership Vs. Thai MAs without membership	CMs with membership	36	44.81	1613.00	565.00	1468.00	-2.05	0.040
	Thai MAs without Membership	42	34.95	1468.00				
	<b>TOTAL</b>	78						

Note: \**p*-value is statistically significant at the 0.01 level.

Contrary to H6, Illinois CAOs with the membership in professional associations (mean rank = 38.14) had a greater degree of situational professionalism than Illinois CMs with the membership in professional associations (mean rank = 33.92) ( $U = 555.00$ ,  $Z = -1.02$ ,  $r = 0.12$ <sup>15</sup>). However, the test results are not significant ( $p = 0.308$ ).

Equally noteworthy is that compared to Thai MAs who are members of professional associations (mean rank = 25.98), Illinois CMs who are members of professional associations (mean rank = 37.57) showed a greater degree of situational public professionalism ( $U = 321.50$ ,  $Z = -2.67$ ,  $r = 0.33$ <sup>16</sup>). This difference between these two groups of municipal chief administrators is significant ( $p = 0.008$ ). Also, Illinois CMs with the membership in professional associations (average rank = 44.81) showed a greater degree of situational public professionalism than Thai MAs without the membership in professional associations (average rank = 34.95) ( $U = 565.00$ ,  $Z = -2.05$ ,  $r = 0.23$ <sup>17</sup>). The test is, however, not statistically significant.

The test of H5 and H6 indicates that Illinois CAOs who belong to professional associations showed a greater degree of public professionalism than Thai MAs who are members of professional associations only when they face a specific problem. In abstract terms, there is no significant difference in public

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<sup>15</sup>  $r = |-1.02/\sqrt{71}| = 0.12$ .

<sup>16</sup>  $r = |-2.67/\sqrt{64}| = 0.12$ .

<sup>17</sup>  $r = |-2.05/\sqrt{78}| = 0.23$ .

professionalism between Illinois CAOs with the membership in professional associations and Thai MAs with the membership in professional associations. With respect to the difference between Illinois CAOs and CMs, Illinois CAOs with the membership in professional associations only had a greater degree of abstract public professionalism than Illinois CMs with the membership in professional associations. On the other hand, when faced with a specific problem, the Illinois CAOs and CMs did not show statistically significant difference in situational public professionalism.

Table 7-23 presents a summary of findings from hypothesis testing. As expected by theory, membership in professional associations enhances the degree of professionalism among municipal chief administrators when they face with a specific problem. Also, U.S. professional associations promote situational professionalism more effectively than Thai professional associations. On the contrary, the abstract model offers the opposite results. Municipal chief administrators without the membership in professional associations demonstrate a greater degree of abstract professionalism than those who are members in professional associations. In addition, Thai professional associations promote abstract professionalism more effectively than U.S. professional associations.

Table 7-23  
Summary of Hypotheses and Test Results

H	Test Result		Finding
	Abstract Model	Situational Model	
H3	Not supported	<b>Supported</b>	The results are significant in the abstract model, but non-member administrators showed greater public professionalism.
H4	Not supported	<b>Supported</b>	In the abstract model, Thai MAs show higher public professionalism than Illinois CAOs and CMs.
H5	Not supported	<b>Supported</b>	In the abstract model, Thai MAs with membership had greater public professionalism, but the results are not significant.
H6	Not supported	Not supported	Illinois CMs had a lower degree of public professionalism than Illinois CAOs in both models, but the results in the situational model are not significant.

The interaction between membership in professional associations and form of government does not affect the difference in abstract public professionalism between Illinois CAOs who belong to professional associations and Thai MAs who belong to professional associations. However, the interaction term influences the situational professionalism of Thai MAs with the membership in professional associations and Illinois CAOs with the membership in professional associations. As expected, the Illinois CAOs have a greater degree of situational professionalism than the Thai MAs.

Moreover, Illinois CAOs who are members of professional associations showed a greater degree of abstract professionalism than Illinois CMs who are members of professional associations. Nonetheless, no difference in situational professionalism exists between Illinois CAOs with the membership in professional associations and CMs with the membership in professional associations.

### **Qualitative Evidence and Discussion**

Qualitative analysis produces mixed evidence of the relationship between membership in professional associations and degree of public professionalism. During the interview, selected Illinois CMs and CAOs were asked about the benefits of their membership in professional associations, particularly the ICMA and ILCMA. Thai MAs were given a similar question by the NIDA research team: what are the benefits of their NMLT and MOAT membership?

Qualitative evidence does not indicate a robust relationship between the council-manager form of government and membership in professional associations. In the interview, only two out of seven CMs who are ICMA and ILCMA saw a strong connection between the council-manager form, membership in professional associations, and degree of professionalism. One of these two CMs stated that his ICMA and ILCMA membership gives him the opportunity to interact with other CMs and CAOs. The networking experience allows him to learn about how other officials solve their management problems. The other CM emphasized a strong link

between his managerial position and the ILCMA membership. Had he not been CM, he would not have kept his ILCMA membership.

Two other CMs argued that the amount of discretionary authority granted by the council-manager form is important to their work, but strongly expressed their doubt about the effectiveness of the ICMA and ILCMA training programs and professional code of ethics. One of them even stated that “just because one group of people say it’s ethically right to do certain things, that still doesn’t make it right.” Also, as quoted earlier, the other CM did not believe membership in professional associations determines the degree of public professionalism.

Illinois CAOs and CMs in this interview did not show positive attitudes toward the ICMA and ILCMA training programs, workshops, and conferences. In the interview, only three CAOs and CMs considered both associations’ training programs to be beneficial to them. They did not directly state that the training programs are futile, but mentioned that they do not have time to participate in the training programs offered by the ICMA and ILCMA. The CAO reported that

I don’t regularly participate in the training programs for a variety of reasons. Most often, the city doesn’t have the fund to send people to conferences and training opportunities. Even in the past, when the fund is available, it may have been related to logistical factors. The location of conferences is not convenient or I have a family commitment.

However, the two CMs reported that they take advantage of the ICMA and ILCMA publications, as well as the information available on the internet. One of them stated that:

Interestingly, although I have high regard for both associations, I personally have not done a great deal in terms of training due to time constraints. This is because their publications and websites provide excellent resources for when I want to do research on certain issues.

Other Illinois CAOs and CMs in the interview considered the ICMA and ILCMA training programs to be slightly beneficial to them and their communities. The most common criticism was that the majority of training programs have not been tailored to the members' needs. An Illinois CM asserted that:

I give them, the ICMA and ILCMA, a solid B. Very often, the topics of those training programs are too faddish. You know let's jump on the band wagon because everybody else is doing it. I think the programs are generally well-designed, but the question really is whether we really need those training.

Another CM stated that:

I have high regard for both organizations. But, a lot of times, training programs become redundant. I've been city manager for many years, so there are many training topics that I don't find useful for me or my community.

Further, a CM from a suburban municipality near Chicago felt the ICMA and ILCMA training programs are only beneficial and necessary for small communities. For his community,

We are a larger community with our own legal department. We can a lot of stuff on our own. I think those associations are gonna be beneficial to small municipalities who don't have the horse power to do things internally.

Despite the mixed views of the merits of professional associations' training programs, all Illinois CMs and CAOs with the ICMA and ILCMA membership agree with the two associations' professional code of ethics and recognize its importance in their city management profession. An Illinois CAO added that the

code of ethics helps him determine how to act when the law and standard operating procedures do not provide definitive answers to the problems at hand. An Illinois CM considered the code of ethics to be the foundation upon which he balances “diverse expectations from the elected officials and community.”

However, one CM and one CAO were not entirely positive about the ICMA and ILCMA professional code of ethics. On a more negative note, the CM argued that ethics is an individual interpretation of appropriate conduct. For him, it is “a waste of time” to foster and disseminate a collective interpretation of ethical values. The CAO did not necessarily think that the code of ethics is “a waste,” but that it must be combined with other factors to have a significant impact on the degree of public professionalism, such as a healthy relationship with the elected officials and local community.

In the interview, all six Illinois CAOs and CMs who do not belong to public official associations are from small municipalities with fewer than 10,000 residents. Recall the CM’s comment that public official associations would only benefit small communities. Evidence from the interview contradicts this assertion. All non-member CMs and CAOs stated that because their communities are small, they did not think the membership would help them and their communities in any way. Further, I asked why they decided not to join the ICMA or the ILCMA. The two common reasons are the funding issue and the lack of personal interest.

Due to the impact of the current recession on their municipal governments, the non-member CAOs and CMs do not receive any subsidy to pay their

membership dues and were disinclined to use their own money. However, this disinclination is indicative of their lack of interest in the membership in professional associations. On the contrary, when asked whether they would still keep their membership even if their municipal governments no longer subsidized their membership dues, the twelve CAOs and CMs who are ICMA and ILCMA members reported that they would still maintain the memberships with their own money. One of the CMs argued that his city management career and membership in public official associations are strongly related: “Had I not been city manager, I would not have kept my membership.” Other CMs and five CAOs felt that the ICMA and ILCMA professional networks help them keep in contact with their colleagues in other jurisdictions and provide a venue for sharing stories of their work and learning from one another.

However, the above results do not necessarily mean that the non-member CAOs and CMs lack the opportunity to enhance their professional knowledge, professional ethics, and mechanism to connect with other chief administrators. Regarding the opportunity to enhance the professional knowledge, the non-member officials showed high respect for the ICMA and ILCMA professional publications and reported that they regularly access and consult the two associations’ on-line publications. Moreover, two non-member CAOs mentioned that their children belong to both the ICMA and ILCMA and that they often take advantage of both associations’ newsletters and training materials to which their children subscribe.

Where the professional code of ethics is concerned, none of the non-member CMs and CAOs criticized the ICMA and ILCMA professional code of ethics. In the interview, they all agreed with the code and are aware of it because the ICMA and ILCMA publish it on their websites. One CAO warned against the assumption that the non-membership status signifies their lack of attention to the code of ethics: “just because I’m not a member of the ICMA and ILCMA, that doesn’t mean I wouldn’t adhere to their codes of ethics.” Another CM strongly believed that the extent of professionalism or lack thereof is not a function of membership in the professional associations and that he did not consider them linked.

Although there are other benefits of membership, such as getting a chance to interact with your peers, one can be a good and honest manager without necessarily being members of the ICMA and ILCMA.

Nonetheless, the non-member CAOs and CMs do not lack the opportunity to interact with their colleagues in other municipalities. In the interview, all non-member officials in Illinois are involved in the local networks of municipalities in the same geographical areas, which they considered to be more advantageous than the ICMA and ILCMA. This is because the CAOs and CMs in nearby jurisdictions are likely to face the same set of problems and concerns, such as local economic development and environmental issue. Besides, in terms of transportation and related expenses, the local networks offer “more convenient and economical” venues for meetings, luncheons, and seminars than the ICMA and ILCMA. In fact,

all non-member CAOs reported that they attend their local government network meetings on a monthly basis.

Therefore, it is difficult to qualitatively assess the impact of membership in professional associations on Illinois CAOs and CMs' public professionalism. The ICMA and ILCMA training programs received both praise and criticisms from Illinois CAOs and CMs who belong to both associations. On the other hand, both members and non-members unanimously commended the ICMA and ILCMA professional publications for their usefulness and quality.

Further, advances in information technology play an instrumental role in facilitating the non-members' access to those publications and in relaying the professional code of ethics to the general public. Even the non-members are aware of the ICMA and ILCMA professional code of ethics and agree with it. In fact, contrary to ICMA and ILCMA members (both CAOs and CMs), all non-member CAOs and CMs spoke highly of the associations' code of ethics. Further, all Illinois CAOs and CMs are involved in some kind of local public management network.

Statistical tests of H4 provide an additional layer of complexity to the role of membership in professional associations in enhancing public professionalism. The scenario model supports H4. These results suggest that when municipal chief administrators face a specific problem, the ICMA and ILCMA were more likely than the NMLT and MOAT to enhance public professionalism. In the abstract model, statistical results suggest the opposite. The Thai professional associations

are more likely to improve abstract public professionalism than the U.S. professional associations.

Qualitative evidence contradicts the statistical results by exposing several problems of the NMLT and MOAT. According to Thai MAs who are active members, the two associations hinder, rather than facilitating, efforts to enhance public professionalism among Thai municipal government officials. The NMLT and MOAT have been closely linked to and financially dependent on the Thai central government (Tatchalerm, Wood, and Thurmaier 2008). Most of their training programs have mostly been a series of lectures conducted by MoI representatives on the new laws and statutes. Besides, the professional code of ethics for Thai municipal government officials flows downwards from the National Civil Service Commission.

Indeed, all Thai MAs in the interview stated that the NMLT and MOAT do not play an active role in providing and enforcing the professional code of ethics. Further, the two associations offer few training programs. Each year the central government agencies hold more conferences and seminars where, in addition to relaying new laws and government policies, government representatives and lecturers teach municipal administrators about morality, Buddhist values, and the ways to become good civil servants. In the interview, several Thai MAs asserted that in theory they know what public professionalism is because the national government agencies, particularly the MoI, repeatedly emphasize good governance, transparency, and ethics. However, when asked to evaluate the practicality and

effectiveness of the training sessions offered by government agencies and the two professional associations, all Thai MAs did not think those training programs have equipped them with the necessary skills to deal with specific problems. Some of their criticisms are as follows:

Those conferences and seminars are boring and not very helpful. I would not call them training programs because we do not receive much training. Let us call them lectures or complaining sessions. On many occasions, we just sit around and complain about our mayors, national laws and MoI standard operating procedures. After these complaining sessions, things never get improved.

Another Thai MA pointed out that most MAs do not see the merit of those training programs:

There are two major types of conference attendants. The first group consists of serious attendants who hope to get something out of the conferences. The second and larger group consists of municipal administrators who use these conferences as vacation and entertainment opportunities.

No Thai MAs in the interview see any merits of the training programs.

There is always a gap between the knowledge gained from the conferences and the real-world situations. Municipal governments operate under so many laws and MoI standard operating procedures. It is impossible to learn about them all in one, two, or three seminars.

Also,

A lot of times, there are inconsistencies in the information provided by different organizations. The National Decentralization Commission could say one thing today. Tomorrow, DoLA orders us to another thing. Few days later, the Public Finance Audit Commission tells us totally different things.

Moreover, more than half of Thai MAs questioned the NMLT objectives and past activities. They argued that the association is only for mayors, while the MOAT, which is oriented towards MAs, is more poorly organized. One Thai MA

pointed out that:

As a matter of fact, I could say the NMLT is a training camp for mayors. But, they only train mayors how to win over municipal administrators. Field trips, conferences, and workshops they organized are non-sense. They do not do anything academic or practical at those events. In fact, it is the opportunity for mayors to get together to form a lobbying group. The MOAT and municipal administrators' networks, on the other hand, are very weak and powerless, compared to the NMLT.

Another MA explained why the NMLT is more powerful:

The NMLT is strong because they devote their time and resources to it. I have to say that NMLT members are more serious about their association than the MOAT members. Some municipal administrators are also NMLT members, but our role is unimportant. Let me put this way. Mayors are first-class members in the NMLT. Municipal administrators are second-class.

One MA attributed the MOAT weakness to the mayoral prerogative to transfer

MAs:

We do not have much say because we do not want to. We have to be careful because what we say could risk our career. The mayor still gets to evaluate my work performance and is empowered by law to micro-manage the personnel issues.

On the contrary, the ICMA and ILCMA training programs and professional code of ethics more effectively provide Illinois CAOs and CMs with practical

managerial skills. With regard to the ICMA and ILCMA training programs, an

Illinois CAO stated that:

I think both the ICMA and ILCMA training programs are really good. The ICMA training programs look at broad perspectives that kind of cut across communities nationally. The ILCMA training programs focus more on the state of Illinois and are more situation-specific.

In terms of the professional code of ethics, an Illinois CM argued that the ILCMA

code of ethics is more effective than the state-sanctioned one:

The ICMA and ILCMA codes of ethics are more effective than the state government code of ethics, because they are more specific. The state code of ethics has to be broad enough to cover the state government employees. So, it could be too general.

The qualitative evidence offers a nuanced picture of U.S. and Thai professional associations. Yet, the role of professional associations in promoting public professionalism remains inconclusive based on the qualitative evidence, especially with respect to the associations' training programs. Also, with advances in information technology, the general public and non-member CAOs and CMs could benefit from many activities that the ICMA and ILCMA put together for their members. Even in terms of networking opportunity, Illinois CAOs and CMs in the interview, both members and non-members, are involved in their own local public management networks.

Compared to the ICMA and ILCMA, the NMLT and MOAT serve a less influential role in Thai local public management. Thai MAs stated in unison that the two organizations do not offer any serious benefits for them. The Thai professional associations provide no practical training programs and are unclear on the professional code of conduct. Both the training programs and ethics code remain within the central government's sphere of influence. Based on the qualitative evidence, government sponsored training programs do not provide management skills tailored to the specific problems that Thai MAs face.

## Conclusion

This chapter has accomplished several tasks. It has extended the findings from Chapter 6 that indicate that the form of government influences the difference in abstract public professionalism between Illinois CAOs and CMs, and the difference in situational public professionalism between Thai MAs and Illinois CAOs. Statistical analyses of the distribution of public professionalism types in each group of chief administrators revealed that Thai MAs do not exhibit apolitical professionalism in the abstract or situational model and that Illinois CAOs and CMs do not demonstrate policy professionalism in the two models. In the abstract and situational models, more Illinois CAOs and CMs report apolitical professionalism than Thai MAs.

Moreover, this chapter has demonstrated that the Illinois CAOs and CMs acting as apolitical professionals in the qualitative analysis do not exactly replicate *Beamtenherrschaft* or *Satrapenherrschaft*<sup>18</sup> as Max Weber feared. Rather, they reveal their accountability to the city councils, which include the mayors. The CAO and CM's political accountability to the councils resembles a vertical relationship found among procedural municipal chief administrators. However, the difference between these two apolitical administrators and procedural administrators is that the Illinois CAO and CM acting as apolitical professionals do not indicate whether

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<sup>18</sup> *Beamtenherrschaft* (centripetal administrative authority) describes public administrators who take over the role of democratic government or lack political accountability to their constituents. *Satrapenherrschaft* (centrifugal administrative authority) describes public administrators who co-opt clients and actors outside of the government. See more discussion on these two terms in Chapter 4.

they would make any policy recommendations to the councils. On the other hand, procedural administrators instruct the mayors to strictly follow the relevant policies and rules.

The qualitative analysis also reveals three patterns of relationship between the elected and appointed officials. Transformational professionalism involves a horizontally-based working relationship that centers on mutual understanding and respect. The Thai MAs, Illinois CAOs, and CMs who demonstrated transformational professionalism tended to view their mayors as their equals and stressed the need to discuss the flood problem with the mayors prior to passing any judgment on the contractual agreement and determining the next course of actions. In contrast, policy professionalism is based on a vertical working relationship in which the mayor decides on the policies and the chief administrator implements them.

Procedural professionalism is also built upon a vertical working relationship, but differs from the vertical political accountability expressed by policy professionalism. The mayors still determine the policies. However, the Thai MAs, Illinois CAOs, and Illinois CMs who exhibited procedural professionalism acted more like national/state government bureaucrats than local government officials. They only impart the rules, regulations, and national/state standard operating procedures to the mayors, but do not show the willingness to work through the issue with the elected officials.

Furthermore, the quantitative analysis indicates that membership in professional associations in general and in U.S. professional associations positively

influence situational public professionalism, but not abstract public professionalism. Qualitative evidence suggests that the positive influence of U.S. professional associations comes from their professional code of ethics and publications published online more than their training sessions. In addition, statistical results demonstrate that Illinois CAOs who are members of professional associations only showed a greater of public professionalism than Thai MAs who are members of professional associations in the situational model. Qualitative evidence points out that Thai professional associations do not adequately provide necessary practical skills or professional code of ethics for their members.

The quantitative evidence also did not reveal any difference in situational professionalism between Illinois CAOs who are members of professional associations and Illinois CMs who are members of professional associations. However, contrary to the theoretical model in Chapter 4, Illinois CMs who are members of professional associations showed a lower degree of public professionalism than Illinois CAOs who are members of professional associations.

## CHAPTER 8

### CONCLUSION

This chapter discusses what has been done and what has not been done in this dissertation. It begins with a summary of the theoretical frameworks used in this study, followed by the key empirical findings to validate the public professionalism framework. Next, it discusses the implications that this dissertation contributes to the public administration literature and the study of Thai municipal governments after the 1997 decentralization reform. Finally, the chapter concludes with the limitations and future research suggestions.

#### **Public professionalism Framework**

#### **Summary of Theoretical Framework**

In this dissertation, public professionalism among municipal chief administrators denotes *their ability to balance bureaucratic, legal, political, and professional accountability approaches*. This definition builds on Svara's concept of an ethics triangle (Svara 2007a) and Romzek and Dubnick's multiple accountabilities framework (Romzek and Dubnick 1987). That is, the major task confronting local public administrators in decentralized governance is not to choose which type of accountability or administrative value to adhere to, but to seek the

balance among different accountability approaches in order to ensure the quality of services delivered to local citizens.

In Chapter 2, this definition of public professionalism finds support in the contemporary public administration literature and the sociological interpretation of professionalism. Empirical studies in public administration reveal that public administrators, especially street-level bureaucrats, must deal with many accountability approaches and diverse stakeholders with different, and sometimes conflicting, expectations (e.g., Maynard-Moody and Leland 1999; Dunn and Legge 2001; Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2003). Similarly, sociological research offers theoretical and empirical evidence that professionalism is not exclusively confined to occupational closure and technical expertise. Professionalism also serves as a bulwark against any threats to liberal democracy (Carr-Saunders and Wilson 1933; Marshall 1950), supports and stabilizes the market economy and social order (Parsons 1951; Dingwall 1996; Evetts 2003), and nurtures the sense of altruism and interpersonal trust among members of each professional group (Parsons 1951; Perkin 1989; Durkheim 1933 [1992]; Dingwall 1995; Fukuyama 1995; Freidson 2001; Evetts 2003; 2010).

Such a definition of public professionalism is a significant departure from the old public administration literature. In the old public administration, professionalism is only defined in terms of technical skills, competency, and specialized knowledge (Green, Keller, and Wamsley 1993; Sherwood 1997). For instance, the politics/policy-administration dichotomy framework specifically

divides the task of government into policy formulation and policy execution (Wilson 1887; Goodnow 1900). In this framework, appointed public administrators' sphere of responsibility is limited to the policy execution realm. Furthermore, the old public administration literature has spawned many contrasting visions of public administration. Among them, Martin (1994) argues that the two distinct visions of the public service are the democratic model with an emphasis on political and legal accountabilities and the managerial model that stresses technical and economic rationality. Also, the Finer-Friedrich dialogue over internal and external approaches to democratic accountability enkindled public and scholarly debate about which type of accountability better serves the public.

Chapters 3 and 4 exposed the weaknesses of the old public administration visions of public professionalism and accountability. In Chapter 3, a comparative analysis of Thailand's 1997 decentralization reform and Illinois' 1970 constitutional reform demonstrated that Thai and Illinois chief administrators work in a complex structure of central-local and state-local relations. In decentralized governance, the chief administrators' political responsiveness to local citizens and elected officials has become more important due to increased popular participation in local government affairs. Yet, the central/state government agencies did not entirely leave the overall local administrative sphere. The Thai Interior Ministry and the Illinois General Assembly in particular still retain much influence over the municipal governments in many aspects of governing, such as personnel management issues, public pension, and revenue generation. Thus, in decentralized

governance, municipal chief administrators must deal with more than one accountability approach, including local and national/state legal requirements, expectations from diverse local stakeholders, and the standard operating procedures established by government agencies at the higher level of government.

As demonstrated in Chapter 4, reliance on one approach to democratic accountability would likely be detrimental to local community. Thus, to advance the general public welfare, municipal chief administrators must balance all accountability approaches in their decisions. This ability to balance the different accountability approaches determine the chief administrators' degree of public professionalism. Preliminary analysis of the survey and interview data in this study reveals five types of public professionalism. *Transformational* professionalism is an ideal form of public professionalism that emphasizes professional accountability. If a municipal chief administrator uses political accountability as the foundation for their management strategy and partakes in municipal government policy making, he/she has *policy* professionalism, which is the second most desirable form of public professionalism. Inferior to transformational and policy professionalism, *procedural* professionalism describes a municipal chief administrator who balances multiple accountabilities based on the legal and bureaucratic accountability approaches.

The fourth type—*apolitical professionalism*—considers every accountability approach important, except political accountability. Municipal chief administrators with this form of professionalism tend to act as administrative

technicians who only implement the laws, regulations, and standard operating procedures, but refrain from interacting with local elected officials and offering policy advice to them. *Ersatz* professionalism is the least desirable form of professionalism. *Ersatz* public officials underutilize one accountability approach or are unaware of any accountability approach when making decisions.

Based on the public professionalism framework, this dissertation addresses two research questions. First, what impact does the form of municipal government have on the municipal chief administrators' degree of public professionalism. Second, what is the impact of membership in professional associations on the municipal chief administrators' public professionalism. In answering these two questions, this dissertation examines the impact of two major independent variables and their interaction on the degree of public professionalism. The two independent variables are form of municipal government and the municipal chief administrators' membership in professional associations.

The primary data for this research came from the national survey of Thai mayors and municipal administrators conducted by the National Institute of Development Administration (NIDA) in 2009 and also from the statewide survey of Illinois municipal chief administrative officers in 2010. Interviews with selected municipal chief administrators in Thailand and Illinois were also used to supplement the survey results. With these data, two empirical models—abstract model and situational model—were operated to address each research question and examine the usefulness of the public professionalism framework. The abstract

model explores Thai and Illinois chief administrators' abstract public professionalism. The situational model applied the public professionalism framework to investigate the chief administrators' view of multiple accountability approaches in the flood scenario.

### **Summary of Key Empirical Findings**

By reviewing and synthesizing the existing literature, the first four chapters make theoretical arguments about public professionalism among Thai and Illinois chief administrators. The sixth and seventh chapters use the survey data to examine the relationship between public professionalism and two major independent variables and their interaction. This section summarizes and consolidates the empirical findings in Chapters 6 and 7 (Table 8-1).

First, form of government contributes to the differences in abstract public professionalism between Illinois CAOs and Illinois CMs and the differences in degree of situational public professionalism between Thai MAs and Illinois CAOs. In abstract terms, Illinois CAOs had a greater degree of public professionalism than Illinois CMs. However, when faced with a specific problem, Illinois CAOs and CMs are not statistically different in their public professionalism. Also, Thai MAs had a lower degree of situational public professionalism than Illinois CAOs.

Table 8-1  
Hypotheses and Findings

Hypothesis	Finding	
	Abstract model	Situational Model
<b>H1:</b> Illinois CAOs will exhibit a greater degree of public professionalism than Thai MAs.	Not supported	<b>Supported</b>
<b>H2:</b> Illinois CMs will exhibit a greater degree of public professionalism than Illinois CAOs.	Not supported	Not supported
<b>H3:</b> Municipal chief administrators who belong to professional associations will exhibit a greater degree of public professionalism than municipal chief administrators who do not belong to professional associations.	Not supported	<b>Supported</b>
<b>H4:</b> Illinois CAOs and CMs who belong to U.S. professional associations will exhibit a greater degree of public professionalism than Thai MAs who belong to Thai professional associations.	Not supported	<b>Supported</b>
<b>H5:</b> Illinois CAOs who belong to professional associations will exhibit a greater degree of public professionalism than Thai MAs who belong to professional associations.	Not supported	<b>Supported</b>
<b>H6:</b> Illinois CMs who belong to professional associations will exhibit a greater degree of public professionalism than Illinois CAOs who belong to professional associations.	Not supported	Not supported

Second, Thai MAs do not exhibit apolitical professionalism in the abstract or situational model. On the other hand, substantial numbers of Illinois CAOs and CMs underuse the political accountability approach and identify apolitical public professionalism in both models. Equally noteworthy is that Illinois CAOs and CMs do not demonstrate policy professionalism in the abstract or when faced with a specific problem. However, qualitative evidence suggests that Illinois municipal

chief administrators are accountable to their councils, not to the mayors alone.

The qualitative analysis also reveals three patterns of relationship between the elected and appointed officials. Transformational professionalism represents a horizontally-based working relationship that centers on mutual understanding and respect. Municipal chief administrators acting as transformational professionals know when to let the elected officials decide on the policy agenda and when to take charge of the policy decisions. On the other hand, policy and procedural professionalism involve a vertical working relationship. Chief administrators acting as policy professionals participate in the policy-making process, but they only let the elected officials decide and implement the elected officials' decisions. Conversely, chief administrators who reported procedural professionalism acted more like national/state government bureaucrats than municipal government officials. They participate in the policy-making process and interact with local elected officials. Their interaction, however, is limited to checking whether the elected officials follow the rules, regulations, and standard operating procedures.

Third, qualitative evidence suggests that in practice, the difference between Illinois CAOs and Illinois CMs is negligible and does not affect their ability to balance multiple accountability approaches. Instead, Illinois CAOs and CMs identified other factors that influence their perception of public professionalism, such as their informal relations with local elected officials, their communities' political culture, and interpersonal communication skill. Noteworthy is that the regression models in Chapter 6 also show that informal relations and managerial

skills positively influence the municipal chief administrators' situational public professionalism. Nonetheless, form of government appears to affect Thai MAs' situational public professionalism. Thai MAs in the interview described several problems with the national laws that give considerable authority to the mayors, particularly in the mayoral authority to transfer municipal administrators.

Fourth, membership in professional associations only enhances the chief administrators' situational public professionalism. Specifically, when faced with the flood problem in the survey, municipal chief administrators who are members of professional associations showed a greater degree of public professionalism than those who are not members of professional associations. Similarly, statistical results in the situational model indicate that membership in U.S. professional associations is positively related to the Illinois CAOs and CMs' public professionalism. Put differently, Illinois CAOs and CMs with the ICMA and ILCMA memberships show a greater degree of situational perception of public professionalism than Thai MAs with the NMLT and MOAT memberships.

Qualitative evidence is consistent with the quantitative findings. Thai MAs in the interview expressed their doubt about the effectiveness of training programs and ethics code offered by the NMLT and MOAT, arguing that the two associations do not help them cope with many administrative problems that have emerged after decentralization. On the other hand, most Illinois CAOs and CMs considered the ICMA and ILCMA code of ethics to be both practical and helpful. However, their views of the ICMA and ILCMA training programs were

inconsistent. A large number of Illinois CAOs and CMs reported that they do not have time to attend those training programs. Meanwhile, many did not think that those training programs are relevant to their communities' needs and problems. Thus, they were uncertain that they would benefit from leaving their administrative responsibilities to attend those meetings and conferences.

Fifth, this dissertation explores whether and the extent to which the interaction term between form of government and membership in professional associations affects the degree of public professionalism. In the abstract model, Illinois CAOs with the ICMA and ILCMA memberships do not show significantly different public professionalism from Thai MAs with the NMLT and MOAT memberships. Also, contrary to theoretical prediction, Illinois CMs with membership in professional associations show a lower degree of public professionalism than Thai MAs with membership in professional associations.

Nonetheless, when faced with a specific problem, Illinois CAOs with the membership in professional associations have a higher degree of public professionalism than Thai MAs with the membership in professional associations. Also, different from the abstract model, there was no statistically significant difference between Illinois CMs who are members of professional associations and Illinois CAOs who are members of professional associations.

Qualitative analysis of the interview data provides similar results. The Thai MAs in the interviews argue that the government-sponsored training programs instill solid abstract perception of public professionalism. However, the Thai

professional associations do not adequately provide them with practical managerial skills or professional code of conduct to cope with real-world problems. On the other hand, the ICMA and ILCMA training programs and professional code of ethics are more situation-specific and more effectively enable Illinois chief administrators to manage municipal government affairs. Qualitative evidence also shows that Illinois CAOs and CMs who are not ICMA or ILCMA members indirectly benefit from the professional knowledge and code of ethics offered by the two professional associations. Even without formally joining the two associations, the non-member chief administrators are aware of their professional codes of ethics, agree with them, and use them as moral compass in their work. These chief administrators also have access to various training materials and publications that are available on the ICMA and ILCMA websites.

Sixth, the situational regression models and qualitative evidence indicate that the chief administrators' informal working relations with elected officials and managerial skill level are important determinants of their public professionalism. The three regression models consistently show a positive relationship between the two variables and the degree of situational public professionalism. Qualitative evidence similarly reveals that robust mayor-administrator relations and communication skills influence the chief administrators' ability to balance multiple accountabilities. In the interview, these findings are consistent among Thai MAs, Illinois CAOs, and Illinois CMs.

In sum, these empirical findings address the two research questions and preliminarily confirmed the public professionalism framework. Public professionalism is measured by the chief administrators' ability to balance political, legal, bureaucratic, and professional accountability approaches. This dissertation compares the perceptions of public professionalism among Thai MAs, Illinois CAOs, and Illinois CMs in decentralized governance. Empirical evidence in Chapters 6-7 shows the distribution of public professionalism among these municipal chief administrators. However, when examining the factors that potentially influence the chief administrators' degree of public professionalism, the abstract and situational models provide different results. More empirical works are necessary to determine why there are differences between abstract and situational views of public professionalism.

### **Contributions to the Public Administration Literature and Policy Implications for Thai Municipal Governments**

Apart from addressing the three research questions, the empirical findings of this dissertation offer several contributions to the public administration literature and potential policy implications that are relevant to the Thai municipal government context.

First, this dissertation contributes to the studies of accountability in public organizations, especially in municipal government. Classic public administration literature, without empirical investigation, implicates several theoretical arguments

that indirectly show the multi-faceted nature of democratic accountability (e.g., Friedrich 1940; Finer 1941). In recent years, public administration scholars have offered empirical evidence to demonstrate the complexity of holding government agencies accountable (Romzek and Dubnick 1987; Kearns 1995; Dunn and Legge 2001). Dunn and Legge (2001) in particular show that American local government officials must deal with multiple expectations and social actors in their work.

This dissertation extends these theoretical and empirical works by laying out the public professionalism framework that combines both Svava's ethics triangle model and Romzek and Dubnick's concept of multiple accountabilities. In order to maximize local public welfare, the public professionalism framework emphasizes that municipal chief administrators—the highest appointed municipal government officials—must balance the political, legal, bureaucratic, and professional accountability approaches in their decisions. Quantitative and qualitative analyses of the survey and interview data provide preliminary empirical support for this framework. Overall, this research demonstrates that Thai and Illinois chief administrators who participated in the survey must contend with political, legal, bureaucratic, and professional accountability approaches in decentralized governance.

Second, more than previous research, this dissertation systematically explores the concept of public professionalism. Previous research, without empirical support, argues that public professionalism is a combination of multiple values, each of which has its own legitimacy and potential to advance democratic

governance (Waldo 1968; Green, Keller, and Wamsley 1993; Sherwood 1997; Svara 2009). In theoretical terms and by empirical evidence, this dissertation explicitly demonstrates that a municipal chief administrator's degree of public professionalism hinges upon his/her ability to balance the four accountability systems in his/her decisions.

Also, this dissertation contributes to the public administration literature by offering the taxonomy of public professionalism. The five types of public professionalism are contingent upon the accountability approach (es) that municipal chief administrators use to balance other accountability approaches and could also be ranked in order of desirability.

Third, besides the contributions to the public administration scholarship in general, preliminary empirical evidence in this dissertation enriches the literature on Thai local public administration by exposing Thai MAs' perceptions of multiple accountabilities after the 1997 decentralization reform. Contrary to the existing research on Thai bureaucracy, this study demonstrates that no Thai MAs demonstrate apolitical public professionalism. In fact, they are more likely to demonstrate policy public professionalism than Illinois CAOs and CMs. These findings are consistent in both the abstract and situational models.

Fourth, based on the situational model, efforts to further professionalize Thai MAs ought to involve the development of a healthy informal relationship between the mayors and municipal administrators, as well as enhancement of Thai MAs' interpersonal communication skills. In other words, the degree of public

professionalism among municipal chief administrators depends on mutual understanding and respect between elected and appointed officials. To gain the local elected officials' respect for their managerial and policy roles, municipal chief administrators must be able to communicate effectively and persuade the elected officials to agree with their recommendations. This is consistent with Banovetz's argument that contemporary local government officials are under political and social pressures to "match their technical competence with human relations skills" (Banovetz 2003, 58).

Fifth, this research indicates that to promote public professionalism in local government, membership in professional associations needs not be compulsory. Both quantitative and qualitative results suggest that U.S. professional associations foster public professionalism more effectively than the Thai professional associations. Even the non-member Illinois chief administrators benefit from the ICMA and ILCMA training materials and on-line publications. They are also aware of the ICMA and ILCMA codes of ethics and use them in their work. Therefore, a necessary step in professionalizing local government officials is the development of an active professional association that offers practical ethics code and that serves as a repository for public management knowledge. Voluntary members in this kind of professional association would serve as role models for the non-member local government officials.

Sixth, this dissertation also makes two methodological contributions. On the one hand, despite its several weaknesses and exclusive emphasis on municipal

chief administrators, the survey used in this study represents one of the few studies that attempt to operationalize and measure public accountability. On the other, this dissertation demonstrates how to conduct a cross-country comparison of local public administration. Przeworski and Teune (1970) point out that one of the goals in comparative research is to replace proper names of social systems by relevant variables. Granted, the administrative tasks and problems in Thai and Illinois municipalities have their own specific details that may render comparative research difficult.

Nonetheless, this dissertation replaces those specific tasks and problems with general conceptual terms, especially the four accountability approaches, to apply over a range of situations. For example, while the interior ministry holds the authority to intervene in Thai municipal government affairs, the General Assembly has that type of authority in Illinois. Thus, instead of specifying which higher governmental agencies oversee Thai and Illinois municipalities, this dissertation uses intergovernmental hierarchy and bureaucratic accountability to explore Thai and Illinois chief administrators' perceptions of central and state government mandates and standards.

### **Limitations and Future Research Suggestions**

This study offers evidence to support the fundamental argument that municipal chief administrators' public professionalism depends on their ability to balance of political, legal, bureaucratic, and professional accountabilities. Thus, it represents theoretical and empirical progress over prior literature that merely considers public professionalism as technical competence. However, the conceptual framework and empirical models are preliminary. Additional research is necessary to improve and refine the theoretical and empirical investigations. Theoretical and methodological limitations of this study and future potential research areas are as follows.

First, as this dissertation demonstrates, the term public professionalism needs to be carefully defined. Also, the distinction and connection of professionalism with democratic accountabilities need to be clarified. This study treats public professionalism as a broad concept that refers to an ability to balance the four accountability approaches. However, this concept may conflict with the concepts used in other studies. For example, certain scholars may emphasize political accountability or legal accountability, as they discuss public professionalism.

Second, in future research, the four accountability approaches that are essential elements of the public professionalism framework should be more carefully refined and differentiated. Although this study explicitly distinguishes

legal accountability from bureaucratic accountability, the two accountability approaches may not be different in some practical circumstances. Perhaps, broader theories, such as organizational theory and strategic management, could be incorporated into the public professionalism framework.

Third, empirical evidence in this dissertation is inadequate to validate the entire theoretical framework. For example, this study proposes that the degree of public professionalism depends on the interaction between form of municipal government and membership in professional associations. However, time constraints and poor data availability constrain regression analysis of this proposition. Future studies need to include more American municipal chief administrators who do not belong to professional associations.

Fourth, in this research, municipal chief administrators showed a wide gap between their abstract and situational perceptions of public professionalism. Quantitative analyses also show different results between the abstract and situational models. Future studies need to explain such a gap by identifying which factors contribute to the chief administrators' inconsistent responses. Perhaps, the abstract perception of public professionalism may not matter in local public management or public management in general. Future research is also necessary to determine whether the situational perception should be the only focus in the studies of public professionalism.

Fifth, with respect to the survey data, some instruments do not adequately measure the variables. A more carefully designed survey instrument is expected for

the future studies. The political accountability question in particular does not seem to correspond with the Illinois municipal government context because it overlooks the city council's prominent role in municipal government affairs. Even in the Thai context, inclusion of the municipal council in the political accountability question could shed light on the legislative-executive relationship at the municipal government level. In addition, the question that measures membership in professional associations needs to be more carefully designed to capture the impact of social capital on the degree of public professionalism. Perhaps, this aspect of public professionalism needs to be examined using other research methods, such as story-telling or participant observation.

Sixth, a multi-state comparison in the United States could enrich future studies. Likewise, future research is likely to benefit from examining municipal government officials in Indonesia and the Philippines that also underwent decentralization reforms at the same time period as Thailand. If possible, longitudinal data may even facilitate an analysis of the changes in municipal chief administrators' perception of public professionalism as decentralization starts to take effect in those Southeast Asian countries.

Overall, as an exploratory study of municipal chief administrators' public professionalism, this dissertation remains far from complete and definitive. Future research suggestions discussed above could help improve the theoretical framework and provide empirical evidence to gain a better understanding of municipal chief administrators in the decentralized governance system.

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APPENDIX A

THAI MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATORS SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE  
ADMINISTERED BY THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF  
DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION (NIDA)

### PART 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

1. How long have you been *municipal clerk* in this municipality?
2. How long have you been municipal clerk in your career?
3. What is the highest degree you have earned?
4. Are you originally from this municipality?

### PART 2: ABSTRACT PERCEPTION OF MULTIPLE ACCOUNTABILITIES

For the questions below, check the most accurate response pertaining to your role as municipal clerk.

Question	Very Important	Important	Moderately Important	Not Important
To what degree do you respond to the mayor's needs?				
How do municipal ordinances influence your management decision making?				
How do national laws and regulations influence your management decision making?				
To what extent do you consider yourself working to meet the directives and policies of DOLA?				
To what extent do you perceive yourself as a professional municipal officer?				

### PART 3: SITUATIONAL PERCEPTION OF MULTIPLE ACCOUNTABILITIES

For the questions below, check the most accurate response that pertains to your sense of what you, as municipal clerk, would do in response to the following situation:

There is a big flood in your municipal area. The mayor unilaterally decided to react to the disaster by telling residents the municipality would reimburse all disaster relief costs incurred by the households. The mayor directed residents to obtain food and construction materials as necessary from a couple of stores in town that do business with the municipality and to charge the expenses to the municipality's account. The procurement contract between the store owners and the municipality call for the municipality to pay the bill in full within 30 days. The next day the municipal clerk received a bill of 100,000 baht from the two store owners and learned from the 11 store owners that the mayor had directed him to reimburse the store owners for all disaster relief costs incurred by residents. The store owners also reminded the municipal clerk about the procurement contract that required payment within 30 days, and threatened to reclaim any unused construction materials from the residents and sue the municipality if the terms of the contract were not followed. The municipal clerk found a provision in the municipal disaster relief standard operating procedures that stated the municipal government may reimburse disaster relief expenses up to 2,500 baht per household and that any additional costs shall be approved by the Ministry of Interior.

Question	Very Important	Important	Moderately Important	Not Important
How important would it be for you, as municipal clerk, to be responsive to the mayor's directives?				
How important would it be for you, as municipal clerk, to follow the terms of the procurement contract with the storeowners?				
How important would it be for you, as municipal clerk, to follow the MoI regulations?				
How important would it be for you, as municipal clerk, to follow your conscience as professional public manager?				
How important would it be for you, as municipal clerk, to be responsive to the mayor's directives?				

1. If you face a similar situation in your work, what questions would you have before making your decision? With whom would you consult in order to deal with this kind of situation?
2. Explain in detail how you would solve this type of situation.

### **PART 3: INTRAORGANIZATIONAL RELATIONSHIP AND MEMBERSHIP IN PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS**

1. Does your municipality have a strategic plan for the community? If yes, what does the strategic plan contain?
2. Does your municipality have an ethics policy that is related to gift acceptance?
3. Do local politicians, municipal clerk, and municipal government employees have informal meetings on a regular basis?
4. Do you belong to any professional associations? Indicate professional associations of which you are a member.
5. Evaluate professional associations of which you are a member in terms of:

<b>Question</b>	<b>Very Beneficial</b>	<b>Beneficial</b>	<b>Somewhat Beneficial</b>	<b>Not Beneficial</b>
Training programs, workshops, conferences				
Professional code of ethics				

6. To what extent does each of the following issues complicate your management of municipal government affairs?

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Not a problem at all</b>	<b>Occasionally</b>	<b>Often</b>	<b>Always</b>
Evaluation and audit				
Budgetary process				
Community development				
Conflict resolution				
Decision-making process				
Work coordination				
Incentive management				
Municipal employees' participation in decision-making process				
Performance evaluation				
Hiring new municipal employees				
Ethical standards				
Diversification of fiscal resources				
Foreign languages				
Information management				
Interorganizational communication				

Issue	Not a problem at all	Occasionally	Often	Always
Communication skills				
Leadership				
Mayor-clerk working relationship				
Problem-solving process				
Project management				
Relationship with local community				
Standard operating procedures				

7. Evaluate your skills in the following issues?

Issue	None	Some level of familiarity	Proficient	Excellent
Evaluation and audit				
Budgetary process				
Community development				
Conflict resolution				
Decision-making process				
Work coordination				
Incentive management				
Municipal employees' participation in decision-making process				
Performance evaluation				
Hiring new municipal employees				
Ethical standards				
Diversification of fiscal resources				
Foreign languages				
Information management				
Interorganizational communication				
Communication skills				
Leadership				
Mayor-clerk working relationship				
Problem-solving process				
Project management				
Relationship with local community				
Standard operating procedures				

APPENDIX B

THE ILLINOIS CITY MANAGERS AND CITY ADMINISTRATORS SURVEY  
QUESTIONNAIRE

### PART 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

1. In your municipality, who has the power to appoint city manager/city administrator?
2. In your municipality, who has the power to dismiss city manager/city administrator?
3. How long have you been in your current position in this municipality?
4. How long have you been city manager/administrator in your career?
5. What is the highest degree you have earned?
6. What were your last professional position and location (city and state)?

### PART 2: ABSTRACT PERCEPTION OF MULTIPLE ACCOUNTABILITIES

For the questions below, check the most accurate response pertaining to your role as municipal clerk.

Question	Very Important	Important	Moderately Important	Not Important
To what extent do you serve as the assistant to the mayor?				
To what extent do laws influence your management decision making?				
To what extent do you consider yourself working to meet the state and federal mandates?				
To what extent do you perceive yourself as professional municipal officer?				

### PART 3: SITUATIONAL PERCEPTION OF MULTIPLE ACCOUNTABILITIES

For the questions below, check the most accurate response that pertains to your sense of what you, as municipal clerk, would do in response to the following situation:

There is a big flood in your municipal area. The mayor unilaterally decided to react to the disaster by telling residents the city administrator/city manager would reimburse all disaster relief costs incurred by the households. The mayor/city council chair directed residents to obtain food and construction materials as necessary from a couple of stores in town that do business with the municipality and to charge the expenses to the municipality's account. The procurement contract between the store owners and the municipality call for the municipality to pay the bill in full within 30 days. The next day the city administrator received a bill of \$100,000 from the two store owners and learned from the store owners that the mayor/city council chair had directed him to reimburse the store owners for all disaster relief costs incurred by residents. The store owners also reminded the city manager/city administrator about the procurement contract that required payment within 30 days, and threatened to reclaim any unused construction materials from the residents and sue the municipality if the terms of the contract were not followed.

The city manager/city administrator found a provision in the municipal disaster relief standard operating procedures that stated the municipal government may reimburse disaster relief expenses up to \$2,500 per household and that any additional costs shall be approved by the State Comptroller's Office (which would take longer than 30 days).

Question	Very Important	Important	Moderately Important	Not Important
How important would it be for you, as <i>city manager/administrator</i> , to be responsive to the mayor's/council president's directive?				
How important would it be for you, as <i>city manager/administrator</i> , to follow the terms of the procurement contract with the storeowners?				
How important would it be for you, as <i>city manager/administrator</i> , to follow the municipal rules and regulations?				
How important would it be for you, as <i>city manager/administrator</i> , to follow your conscience as professional public manager?				
How important would it be for you, as <i>city manager/administrator</i> , to be responsive to the mayor's/council president's directive?				

1. If you face a similar situation in your work, what questions would you have before making your decision? With whom would you consult in order to deal with this kind of situation?
2. Explain in detail how you would solve this type of situation.

### **PART 3: INTRAORGANIZATIONAL RELATIONSHIP AND MEMBERSHIP IN PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS**

1. Does your municipality have a strategic plan that was created with the participation of citizens, elected officials, municipal government officials, and employees?
2. Does the municipality have an ethics policy that relates to acceptance of gifts?
3. Do the elected officials and the municipal staff meet in work sessions on a regular basis?
4. Do you belong to any professional associations? If yes, list the professional associations of which you are a member.
5. Evaluate professional associations of which you are a member in terms of:

<b>Question</b>	<b>Very Beneficial</b>	<b>Beneficial</b>	<b>Somewhat Beneficial</b>	<b>Not Beneficial</b>
Training programs, workshops, conferences				
Professional code of ethics				

6. To what extent does each of the following issues complicate your management of municipal government affairs?

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Not a problem at all</b>	<b>Occasionally</b>	<b>Often</b>	<b>Always</b>
Evaluation and audit				
Budgetary process				
Community development				
Conflict resolution				
Decision-making process				
Work coordination				
Incentive management				
Municipal employees' participation in decision-making process				
Performance evaluation				
Hiring new municipal employees				
Ethical standards				
Diversification of fiscal resources				
Foreign languages				
Information management				
Interorganizational communication				

Issue	Not a problem at all	Occasionally	Often	Always
Communication skills				
Leadership				
Mayor-clerk working relationship				
Problem-solving process				
Project management				
Relationship with local community				
Standard operating procedures				

7. Evaluate your skills in the following issues?

Issue	None	Some level of familiarity	Proficient	Excellent
Evaluation and audit				
Budgetary process				
Community development				
Conflict resolution				
Decision-making process				
Work coordination				
Incentive management				
Municipal employees' participation in decision-making process				
Performance evaluation				
Hiring new municipal employees				
Ethical standards				
Diversification of fiscal resources				
Foreign languages				
Information management				
Interorganizational communication				
Communication skills				
Leadership				
Mayor-clerk working relationship				
Problem-solving process				
Project management				
Relationship with local community				
Standard operating procedures				

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR ILLINOIS CITY MANAGERS AND  
CITY ADMINISTRATORS

## PART 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Is your city/village a Home Rule entity?
2. How does your city's Home Rule authority affect your professional relationship with the mayor and council?
3. If conflict between you and the mayor/council occurs, how does it get resolved?
4. In your experience as manager, what is the most effective way of resolving such conflict?

## PART 2: RESEARCH QUESTIONS, VARIABLES, INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Research Question	Variable	Interview Question
To what extent is the CMs and CAOs' public professionalism influenced by form of municipal government?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structure of municipal government</li> <li>• Illinois council-manager form of government</li> <li>• Illinois mayor-council form of government</li> <li>• Thai mayor-council form of government with the central government's extensive oversight</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Describe the organizational structure of your city/village government               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How are you appointed and dismissed?</li> <li>- How does the structure of your city/village government influence your management of city/village affairs?</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. When a conflict arises between the mayor, the council, the municipal ordinances, and your professional code of ethics, how do you manage such conflict?</li> </ol>
To what extent is the CMs and CAOs' public professionalism influenced by their membership in professional associations?	Membership in professional associations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Explain in detail your experience as member of professional associations listed in your survey response</li> <li>2. Do you often participate in the decision-making process of your professional associations?</li> <li>3. Are your professional associations subject to any overriding interests of external actors such as state, national, or federal authorities?</li> <li>4. What are the benefits of belonging to those professional associations? How do those benefits influence your role as city/village manager?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How do you perceive the training programs, workshops, and conferences?</li> <li>- How do you perceive the professional code of conduct?</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

## APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THAI MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATORS  
ADMINISTERED BY THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF  
DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION (NIDA)

### **List of NIDA Interview Questions (English Translation)**

1. Evaluate the mayor-clerk relationship prior to the 1997 decentralization reform.
2. What is the mayor-clerk relationship after the 1997 decentralization reform?
3. When conflict arises between you and the mayor, how do you solve the conflict? With whom do you consult?
4. What are the effective ways of resolving the conflict with the mayor?
5. How important is your accountability to the directives and policies of the interior ministry?
6. How important is your accountability to the mayor?
7. What is your opinion of the proposed legislation to end the two-term limit of the mayoral position?
8. How is the relationship between you, the mayor, and local constituents?
9. How would you solve the problem in the flooding situation?
10. What do you think of professional and ethics training programs, apart from the ones offered by DOLA?
  - What should be included in the professional training programs?
  - How should the programs be administered?
11. Is there any collaborative venture and partnership with other municipal governments?
12. Are you involved in any formal or informal social networking with other local government officials?
13. What are the activities (both formal and informal) that you think would enhance your management of municipal government affairs?
14. What are the most burgeoning issues in your municipal community?