

Administrative Accessibility: Towards The Operationalization of a Concept

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Among the major views explaining organization-client relationships are (a) Katz and Danet's framework conceptualizing the microrelationships that evolve in the specific interaction between the bureaucrat and the client, or the socio-psychological approach, and (b) Schaffer and his colleagues' analyses of the problem of access at the societal and microinteraction levels, or the political-economy approach. However, both approaches did not really go into administrative processes and even strongly suggested that it is these processes which may bring about the distance between the organization and their clients. Taking the organizational processes as the point of reference (or the "administrative process" view) for operationalization may offer a more manageable perspective; it can also give insights into how the operations of the organization cause access problems. Administrative accessibility is achieved when an organization's public-in-contact can get to, reach, communicate, and influence the organization to fulfill the client's changing needs through institutionalized means of involving and deliberately considering the clients' interest in the various phases of the administrative process through which the service is rendered. Finally, the factors which lead to the displacement of accessibility can be countered if constant attention is given to these possible causes, or through the preparation of an "accessibility index."

Introduction

The nature, causes, and consequences of access problems particularly as they refer to the operation of bureaucracies must be systematically studied and analyzed. A growing number of social scientists have devoted attention to this topic. Using the existing literature on administrative access and on bureaucrat-client interaction as our starting point, this article hopes to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on this issue as well as to the more practical needs of administrators who have the interests of their clients at heart. We propose to do this in this paper by:

(1) Looking into how the problem of administrative access or official-client interaction has been conceptualized and defined in the literature;

(2) Analyzing how existing notions on access have been interpreted in empirical studies or used as a framework for analyzing the workings of organizations vis-a-vis clients;

(3) Attempting to formulate an "administrative accessibility" checklist for the use of project managers or other administrators. While this checklist cannot lay claim to being comprehensive nor exhaustive, we hope that it will aid in the institutionalization of the concern for clients' interests in bureaucratic organizations or in more flexible groupings such as project teams. This checklist may also pave the way for put-

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ting together indicators which can then be used for the formulation of an administrative accessibility index.

Why Access?

Before we proceed to a discussion of the conceptualization and definition of "access," it may be helpful to present the significance which we attach to the subject of this paper, particularly as it has reference to the experience of developing countries.

There has been a serious concern for increasing the administrative capability of administrative systems in the developing nations. This concern is based on the argument that for these nations to make optimum use of their limited resources vis-a-vis the numerous claims made upon them, there must be a capable and competent mechanism which can convert the resource inputs into goods and services efficiently and effectively.¹ This emphasis on capacity while focusing on the internal processes of organization is usually related to the general and often vague goals of development.

Traditionally, this concern has manifested itself in bias for the smooth and efficient workings of the organization's internal mechanism even at the neglect of understanding

and improving relations between organizations and clients. This view is bolstered by the notion that the "general public" which is the client of the administrative system, demands only "efficiency," the latter defined simply as the achievement of maximum output at the lowest cost.

The magic of efficiency as the sole basis for evaluating the performance of management systems has rubbed off over the years. For instance, a recent conference on the problems of measuring administrative capability has identified, as crucial criteria for evaluating the performance of administrative capability, two main variables: the system's effectiveness, which focuses on the organization's impact on the public and society at large; and efficacy, its responsiveness to public needs.²

The recency of this concern for environmental linkages was aptly described by Uphoff when he compared it with the relatively older preoccupation with efficiency and innovation:

Of more recent vintage are the concerns expressed with *linkages*, how bureaucracy has an impact on its environment. This concern is often focused on "delivery systems" and on the bureaucracy's interface with its environment. Finally there is some preoccupation now in the field of public administration with feedback, how the bureaucracy can, through participatory and other means become more responsive to public need.³

¹See for instance, United Nations, *Appraising Administrative Capability for Development* (New York, 1969) or Chapter II, "Administrative Capability for Development" of a more recent publication, United Nations, *Development Administration: Current Approaches and Trends in Public Administration for Development* (New York, 1975) or Gerald Caiden, "Development, Administrative Capacity and Administrative Reform," *International Review of Administrative Science*, Vol. XXXIX, No. 4 (1973), pp. 327-344.

²Norman Uphoff, "An Analytical Model of Process and Performance for Developing Indicators of Administrative Capability," *Philippine Journal of Public Administration*, Vol. XVII, No. 3 (July 1973), pp. 372-379.

³*Ibid.*, p. 377 (Emphasis supplied).

While the literature on public administration in developing countries suggests that the greater socio-political environment within which it must operate can serve as a constraint to its effective and efficient operations, it has rarely explored the possibilities of reaching out or utilizing the existing conditions as a source of strength for the bureaucracy. This may explain the relatively sparse writing or research done on this topic. Sociological studies of organizations have produced relatively more systematic analyses of the interaction between elements of the greater system and the organization. But even these are considerably few compared to sociological and sociopsychological studies done on internal organizational processes which can improve the organization's productivity.

The current interest in project management has strongly supported the call for deemphasizing traditional organizational structures which place a premium on hierarchical arrangements. It has given impetus to an appreciation of the systems view in understanding and charting the organization's operations. Moreover, it has placed emphasis on problem-solving rather than routinized reactions to organizational challenges. These developments have opened new horizons for assessing the organization's internal operations as well as the external processes impinging on it. For these reasons, a favorable theoretical ambience for the systematic study of the organization-client nexus has evolved.

Largely on account of these developments, this paper has two explicit biases. First, it adopts a strong pro-client orientation in its view of organization. Secondly, it takes immediate interest in governmental organiza-

tions. This does not mean, however, that we shall confine our literature review to those dealing with government agencies only. Because of the present state of the literature on the topic, the empirical studies which we will subsequently analyze may deal with different kinds of organizations. We believe that this is necessary in our search for pertinent insights into how bureaucratic relationships can be made to promote administrative accessibility.

The Literature on Official-Client Interaction and Access

Exploration Into Major Works

At first blush, the words "access" and "official-client interaction" may convey two different meanings. "Access" may simply suggest a way or means of getting through to something while "official-client interaction" may connote face-to-face contact between a member of an organization and a beneficiary or regular client. One can reason out that if the bureaucracy is the organization to which we want access then bureaucrat-client interaction is possibly one of the ways of achieving this. While the discussion below will show that in the literature the two words have related but not necessarily similar referents, we shall for the moment use them interchangeably. Further refinements on the distinction between these two terms will be introduced as we provide the various contexts within which their proponents have elaborated on them.

In this section, we shall present and analyze what we consider are major works on the field of organization-client relationship, particularly

those which are directed to the question of how clients can gain greater accessibility to the internal processes and workings of organizations. We shall be presenting these works with the end in view of evaluating how their conceptualization of the access or official-client relationship lends itself to, or present difficulties in our search for, operational measures of an organization's administrative accessibility.

The "Cui Bono" Principle. Peter M. Blau and W. Richard Scott are given credit for having catapulted the role of clients to prominence in organizational theory when in their book, *Formal Organizations*, they formulated a typology of organizations on the basis of their prime beneficiaries.⁴ This typology is most useful for this paper insofar as it distinguishes how the relationship of an organization with its prime beneficiaries affect its structural characteristics. Classified on the "cui bono" or "who benefits" principle, four types of organizations are identified. They are: (1) mutual benefit associations where the prime beneficiaries are the members, (2) business concerns where the owners benefit, (3) service organizations where the clients, or more generally the public-in-contact, is the beneficiary, and (4) the commonweal organizations where the prime beneficiary is the public at large.⁵ Examples of mutual benefit associations are political parties, unions and professional associations, and clubs.

⁴Peter M. Blau and W. Richard Scott, *Formal Organizations: A Comparative Approach* (Routledge and Kegan Paul: London, 1963).

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 43.

Business concerns are typified by industrial firms, and wholesale or retail stores operated for profit. Service organizations are those whose prime beneficiaries are the public with whom and on whom staff members of the organization work, like social work agencies, hospitals, schools, and legal aid societies.⁶ Finally, commonweal organizations are those whose prime beneficiary is the public-at-large, although not always to the exclusion of people who are the object of the organizations' endeavor.⁷ To this type belong the military service, tax collection office, and the police and fire departments.

Considering how the functions of government have expanded over recent years to accommodate the increasing demands for its services, we are likely to find all four types of organizations within the public sector of any state. It is interesting to note, however, that Blau and Scott's classification scheme alerts us to the fact that there is a clear distinction between the beneficiaries of service organizations and commonweal organizations. Usually assessments of the performance of government agencies are made in the name of the general public's interest even when promotion of the general interest is not really compatible with promoting the interests of its specific clientele.

Because of their clients' needs, service organizations are confronted with different problems compared with commonweal organizations. The former tend to see the clash between professional service standards and admin-

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 51.

⁷*Ibid.*, p. 54.

istrative procedures as a constant source of conflict. In the latter type there is the perennial search for democratic mechanisms whereby the organization can be externally controlled by its public.⁸ For both types of organizations, however, overbureaucratization can bring the same problem if it results in procedural rigidities which impede professional service to clients or effective service to the public's interest. Official-client relationship in these two types vary. To service organizations, professional commitment to the interest of the client is paramount. On the contrary, commonweal organizations are not supposed to work only for the interest of the persons who are the object of their endeavors. Thus, it is clearly against the public interest when members of the police department enter into a collusion with the businessmen in their "beat."

Official-Client Interaction. Ten years after Blau and Scott's book appeared, another milestone in the study of the relationship of bureaucracy and the public was published. We refer to Elihu Katz and Brenda Danet's compilation of essays on the *Bureaucracy and the Public*. Here they utilized a framework where they conceptualized the various elements which impinge on the official-client interaction as a social system.⁹ Katz and Danet zeroed in on the micro relationships that evolve in the specific interaction between the bureaucrat and the client. They probed deeper into the nature

and dynamics of the official-client encounter, even as they widened the analytical schemes to include the environment, the organization, and the situation within which the interaction occurs.

Three sets of factors were considered essential to an understanding of official client-interaction and ultimately of the relationships of organizations with their publics. These are: (1) environmental factors such as cultural and sub-cultural influences bearing on the organizations and on clients, the community context in which the official-client relationship takes place, whether the clients are organized or not; (2) organizational factors such as the nature of formal control over the organizations and its workings, the criteria by which performance is measured and supervision is carried out, and the goals of the organizations; and (3) situation factors such as the affinities shared (or unshared) by a particular client and a particular official, or whether the encounter takes place in relative isolation from other clients or officials.¹⁰

Katz and Danet have also defined "interaction" as being made up of three components: (1) the manner in which officials and clients deal with each other; (2) the procedure involved, e.g., number of forms filled out, number of different officials contacted, length of time invested by client; and (3) the resources exchanged prior to the client's getting the service(s) he needed.¹¹

The comprehensive framework provided in this work allows us to analyze

⁸*Ibid.*, p. 43.

⁹See Figure 1, The Official-Client Encounter as a Social System in Elihu Katz and Brenda Danet (eds.), *Bureaucracy and the Public* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1973), p. 22.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 15.

¹¹*Ibid.*, p. 19.

with some level of specificity the extent to which the interaction between the client and a member of the organization is influenced by social values and norms which are at varying distances from the interaction. The relevant social factors are not only identified but operationalized to an extent which lends itself to empirical verification. With more variables presented, a deeper understanding of the social psychology of official and client when they meet is offered. It paves the way for the examination of such questions as: do bureaucratic organizations retain the capacity to deal with idiosyncratic cases or do they become trapped by their own routine?¹² In contradistinction to the tradition of macrosociological inquiry into the consequences of bureaucratic behavior, this framework offers a definite and quite comprehensive way of looking at the behavioral interaction of the bureaucrat and the client, thus allowing for a way of monitoring how the interaction affects both parties and their subsequent interaction in the future.

The Political-Economy View of Access and Queueing. It is Bernard Schaffer and his colleagues, however, to whom we must give credit for stimulating our interest in access as such. Influenced by A.O. Hirschman's theory on "exit," "voice" and "loyalty,"¹³ they related the problem of

access to the use of "voice" and "exit" when clients encounter difficulties in getting to or availing themselves of an organization's services. They defined access quite broadly as "the relations between the administrative allocation of goods and services and the people who need them or for whom they are intended."¹⁴

To understand what we call the "political-economy" approach of Schaffer and his associates, whom we shall henceforth refer to as the "access" group, we need to look briefly at basic components of Hirschman's theory.

Attempting to "marry" the concerns of politics and economics, Hirschman used the concept of "exit" and "voice" as the individual's two alternative ways of showing dissatisfaction with the deteriorating performance of a firm or organization, with "loyalty" usually emerging as the mediating factor which minimizes the recourse to "exit" and increases the use of "voice." A customer or member of an organization may use the market mechanism of "exit" if the quality of the product or the service of an organization drops relative to those offered by other competing organizations. The customer/member stops buying the firm's product or simply leaves the organization, causing revenues to drop and membership to decline. To use "voice" is to resort to non-market or political alternatives where the client-member tries to change the practices, policies, and outputs of the firm

¹²Elihu Katz and Brenda Danet, "Communication Between Bureaucracy and the Public: A Review of the Literature" in Ithiel de Sola Pool, Wilbur Schramm, et al. (eds.), *Handbook of Communication* Chicago: Rand-McNally College Publishing, pp. 666-697.

¹³Albert O. Hirschman, *Exit, Voice and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms Operation and States* (Harvard: University Press, 1970).

¹⁴Bernard Schaffer and Gaoff B. Lamb, "Exit, Voice and Access," *Social Science Information*, Vol. XIII, No. 6 (December 1974), p. 73.

from which he buys or of the organization to which he belongs. This may be done through individual or collective petition to the management, appeal to a higher authority or forcing a change through various forms of group action.¹⁵ Loyalty is seen as a special attachment to an organization, as a result of which most influential customers and members will stay longer than they normally would, with the hope and expectation that improvement or reform can be achieved.¹⁶

Reacting to these views, Schaffer and Lamb analyzed the "access" problems that clients meet in: (1) the administrative allocation of goods and services, referring specifically to the eligibility requirements; (2) the gateway, i.e., the manner in which eligible applicants will be arranged in the order they will be dealt with; and (3) the counter, where the actual allocation or refusal of service is to take place. Altogether, these three stages constitute an "access" situation which the client encounters as soon as policies are translated into programs and an organization takes the responsibility for implementing it.¹⁷

Distortions and dislocations in administrative access situations (which Schaffer and Lamb contrasted with the market mechanism, where by definition no access problems similar to this exist)¹⁸ invite use of "voice" from clients and even "exit" where this is possible. When confronted with

eligibility, gateway or counter difficulties, and no market alternative, clients may resort to political alternatives. Specifically, they may use "voice" in four different ways: (1) using data to prove their eligibility for the service, (2) availing themselves of organizationally-provided appeal mechanisms, (3) mobilizing a group through the use of political "voices" by taking group action or party actions or coming up with relatively unorganized or spontaneous group reactions such as riots, and (4) by brokerage or the use of individual intermediaries or alternative "voices."¹⁹ In extreme cases, clients who expect that they will be unable to secure access by any of these four ways may simply become apathetic, avoid the situation and opt for "exit" without even trying. Degraded "exits" are resorted to when clients use something inferior due to their failure to secure what they need by means of "voice" or "access."

As far as the bureaucratic structure is concerned, the first two types of "voice," maximization of data and appeal, are the only ways of coping with access difficulties. Mobilization, which refers to the tapping of political influence, and brokerage are resorted to in order to cope with actual or anticipated failures to gain access through use of data or appeal. Mobilization and brokerage usually require the clients' use of other connections aside from the purely organizational ones to strengthen or improve their chances of getting the service.

Schaffer and Wen-hsien extended their analysis of the implications of access problems to situations where organizations performing allocative

¹⁵Hirschman, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 77.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 73.

¹⁸*Ibid.*

¹⁹Schaffer and Lamb, *op. cit.*, pp. 82-84.

functions gain greater power as they exercise sole control over the distribution of goods and services. Pointing out that market systems may reinforce existing inequalities, they explain how deliberate bias against inequalities can be built into non-market bureaucrat distributions but warn that this has organizational as well as political points.²⁰

From the political implications, Schaffer proceeds to a discussion of queues as the bureaucratic institutions' way of programming services to clients, in such a manner that the interaction is routinized, compartmentalized and reduced to the simplest way of dealing with repetitive demands. Three levels of access, each governed by regulations on expected client behavior, usually confront the client in this type of encounter. These rules are: (1) admission rules which establish who can pass through an entry point, (2) line rules which determine the ordering of admitted applicants, and (3) counter rules which specify under what conditions the goods and services may be finally allocated or denied. When these rules of admission, ordering, and encounter are imposed by the organization and accepted by the clients, then rank and file decision-making is simplified and "perfect queues" are formed.²¹

This bureaucratic response to the public's demand for services does not only relieve the administrative machinery of political pressure, but also enables the organization to use its

own organizational norms to govern the behavior of people outside the boundaries of the organization. Thus, Schaffer described the queue as a:

... bureaucratic solution to the organizational functions of service. Bureaucracy turns clients into applicants, waiting in line and the rank and file men behind the grille... Queuing does and can of course occur in non-bureaucratic solutions but it is bureaucracy which uses queues for its openness, publicity, equality and simplification. In so far as the other organizations in other situations use some sort of queuing to solve the problem of access, some degree of bureaucratization is emerging.²²

Traditionally, the queue operates on a first-in-first-out (FIFO) basis. There are instances, however, when service maybe given in a random order (SIRO), or even according to last-in-first-out (LIFO) rule. These variations in the manner queueing clients are served imply that there is really no such thing as a perfect queue, where everything is routinized. Queues can be complex in that supplementary gates may be opened or complicated services which come as a packaged item necessitate more rigorous or other levels of controls. Because it is preferable for the men behind the counter to simplify the decision-making process, this usually results in compartmentalized service. From the point of view of clients, on the other hand, too much compartmentalized service can be disadvantageous since it can mean more gates to go through and maybe expenses in terms of time and resource outlays.²³

²⁰Bernard Schaffer and Huang Wenhien, "Distribution and the Theory of Access," *Development and Change*, Vol. VI, No. 2 (April 1975), pp. 20-21.

²¹*Ibid.*, p. 28.

²²Bernard Schaffer, *Easiness of Access: A Concept of Queues* (Institute of Development Studies, IDS Communication, 104, 1972), p. 5.

²³Schaffer and Huang, *op. cit.*, pp. 22-28.

On the whole, we can say that Schaffer and his colleagues analyzed the problem of access from two distinct perspectives: at the broader societal context when they elaborated on the possible uses of "voice" and "exit," and at the microinteraction level when they discussed the operation of queues as access situations.

At the societal level, the "access" group had described and analyzed how the various forces and the resources they use in social, economic, and political markets operate vis-a-vis the administrative allocation process which does not operate under market conditions. Their views on the distributional impact of access and the political and social costs involved immediately bring to mind the political-economy model where

individuals and sectors bargain and make exchanges in one market to maintain and improve their market as well. They may use their resources from one market to achieve goals in another market. Whenever resources gained in the political market are used to maintain or alter the allocation of resources in the economic and social markets (administrative access situations?) such exchanges become politicized.²⁴

The political economy bias in the "access" group's view on access, particularly its distributional impact, is perhaps best captured in Schaffer and Wen-hsien's words when they summed up their article:

What in the end the argument about access suggests is the significance of

political redress to institutional outcomes.²⁵

The Socio-Psychological and Political Economy Views of Access: Insights and Difficulties of Operationalization

The works of Katz and Danet on the one hand, and Schaffer and his colleagues on the other, represent two dimensions to the problem of access. At one end we have the behavioral or the microlevel view which is represented in both works, i.e., the official-client encounter as Katz and Danet call it, and the confrontation at the queue where Schaffer describes how the organization reduces the client to a number to be governed by admission, line, and counter rules. At the other end of this continuum, we see the macro view of the transaction as the "access" group sees the political implications of the difficulty or ease with which clients acquire goods and services distributed through administrative mechanisms.

Katz and Danet offer us a specific base for operationalizing the encounter when they concretely identified the component parts in terms of the manner, procedure and the resources exchanged during the interaction. The "access" group's analysis, although more immediately relevant for our purpose, suffers from vagueness and a rather diffused perspective, as far as concrete and definite directions for an operationalization exercise is concerned. This we attribute principally to the lack of a systematic and logically coherent framework which they could have used to analyze the relationship between the broader out-

²⁴Olivia C. Caoili, "The Ilchman-Uphoff Model of Political Economy: An Operational Research Design on Social Status," *Philippine Journal of Public Administration*, Vol. XX, No. 2 (April 1976), p. 182.

²⁵Schaffer and Huang, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

comes and the micro processes. They straddle the macro and micro levels, the political and organizational connections, even as they proceeded to the implications of queues. The shifts from one level to another became quite difficult to follow, as one begins to ask which level would lead best to operationalization. Perhaps one will immediately reply that it is clearly at the micro level. But with the "access" group's arguments running through a number of different channels, it becomes quite difficult to follow through, and relate, the arguments in a meaningful way. This difficulty can be minimized considerably if discrete and specific elements of the distributive and "queueing" dimensions of access were elaborated on instead of describing it in a generalized way as "difficulties of making organizational connection, the ways in which resources are distributed and the kind of links between clients and institutions."²⁶ In short, while they have depicted the blurred conceptual images, they still need to put it in sharper focus, perhaps by charting definite boundaries or describing and analyzing the more specific characteristics of this phenomenon which may clearly distinguish it from other dimensions of the bureaucratic-administrative mechanism. Part of the problem stems from their definition of access which does not offer concrete components of the nature of the relationship between the administrative mechanism and the client. Because it is too all-encompassing, the definition fails to isolate the distinguishing characteristics or nature of access particularly as to how it differs from other types of administrative phenomena.

²⁶*Ibid.*, p. 14.

It will be noted that neither of the two views presented above, the socio-psychological and "political-economy" approaches, really goes into the administrative processes even as it is strongly suggested that it is this process which may bring about the distance between organizations and their clients. From the administrator or the project manager's vantage point, these theories offer no concrete means of doing something about the problem in terms of the processes which are more or less within his control. Doubtless, these two ways of looking at the phenomenon will help him immensely in understanding the issues and questions involved but they do not provide him with a systematic way of addressing himself to the problem from the organization's point of view.

The immediate problem as far as the operationalization is concerned is to decide at which vantage point the problem may be best dissected and analyzed. If the social-psychological interest which focuses on the behavioral aspect is too micro and the political view of access too broad, we feel that taking the organizational processes as the point of reference will offer a more manageable perspective and one which can give insights into how the operations of the organization cause access problems. This way of looking at the problem will also enable the project manager to examine how his organization can make itself more accessible to its clients.

*Empirical Studies on
Official-Client Interaction
and Administrative Access*

Before we proceed to analyze the problems of access from the adminis-

trative process perspective, it may be useful at this point to look into findings of selected empirical studies on organization-client relations and as presented in Katz and Danet's compilation,²⁷ the special issue of the *Development and Change*,²⁸ and other selected sources. Through an examination of the findings of these studies, we hope to gain some insights into how the dynamics of bureaucrat-client interaction and the operations of bureaucracies may minimize or reinforce problems under different cultures, structural arrangements and other similar context variables.

It may be useful to bear in mind that the studies discussed here have been conducted within different theoretical frameworks. Thus, the five studies from *Development and Change* start with an attempt to show how Schaffer's theory of access operates in selected governmental services in five underdeveloped countries. The studies from the Katz and Danet reader, on the other hand, were selected to fit the different factors which they have identified in their theoretical framework, i.e., the environment's, organization's and physical aspects' influence on the outcome of the official-client interaction at the organization's boundary point.

The collection of "case studies" in *Development and Change* exemplifies how the broad framework of the "access" group's theory can be interpreted

²⁷ Katz and Danet, *Bureaucracy and the Public*, *op. cit.*

²⁸ The April 1975 issue of the *Development and Change* which was edited by Schaffer has as its theme the Problems of Access to Public Services.

ed in the light of experiences of different political systems in separate cultural contexts. Thus, Alan Rew's study of the allocation of housing as a wage good in Port Moresby showed how housing has been distributed as a means of rewarding performance and potential performance as determined by the allocator rather than the need of prospective applicants.²⁹ Palmer's study of the attempts of the Indonesian and Malaysian governments to "hasten adoption of new technology and to reach farmers whose customary access to the input market is poor and handicapped" showed that Schaffer's notion of queue, gateway and counter can take different forms. In this particular case, the agricultural extension officer determines the nature of the gateway, queue and counter service in the field depending on how he decides to distribute his time.³⁰ This study emphasized the change in the nature of the gateway, queue and counter when public services are provided to producers expected to make economic returns. It stresses the critical role of the counter personnel when it is at this phase where applicants learn for the first time whether they qualify for the service or not.³¹ The need for an "outreach" effort to get to clients who are fully occupied during normal working hours is also described.

²⁹ Alan Rew, "Without Regard for Persons: Queueing for Access to Housing and Employment in Port Moresby," *Development and Change*, Vol. VI, No. 2 (April 1975), pp. 37-50.

³⁰ Ingrid Palmer, "Problems of Access: Notes on Indonesian and Malaysian Case," *Development and Change*, Vol. VI, No. 2 (April 1975), pp. 51-60.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

On a different scale, Mars' extensive case study of the assistance extended to small scale industries in Kerala revealed how the programs which are intended to minimize inequality can actually work against such an end. This occurred when two types of access rules — "share-out" and "incentives" — are fused and confused as a result of the welfare ethos and the generally socialistic ideologies of some developing countries which keep politicians from openly announcing rewards for the strongest. The structural ambiguity of programs which are planned as an efficiency incentive system as well as shortages for welfare or distribution is bound to be reflected in the nature of the access situations. This usually redounds to the disadvantage of the client who lacks resources of contact and wealth.³²

Charles Harvey's study on the accessibility of rural credit in Zambia showed how the search for credit-worthy borrowers should be encouraged because it results in employment for the poor instead of bureaucratically-allocated credit. He observes that "attempts to reach the small-scale farmers with credit seem to result in greater packaging of credit with other services and attempts at closer supervision of the farmer."³³

The final study in this journal was done by Colebatch who looked at how the provision of local services for primary education, rural health

and minor roads in Kenya became a function of the organizational linkages between central-local authorities. Here the country-councils were considered as a client who needed access to central funds for the efficient delivery of its services. Pointing out that "access" need not necessarily refer to direct encounters, Colebatch defines any organization connection whether they be with people or with organizations of any sort as being in themselves access problems. He proceeded to analyze how the flow of resources from the central government to the local centers, clients' participation in the control of some agencies such as local schools, and the attempt of a government structure to define more strictly the rules of access to the organization presented themselves as different ways by which the organization grappled with the day-to-day realities which formed part of an organization's normal operations. Three alternatives which were examined as possible ways of minimizing access problems — (1) centralization, (2) provision of policy control, and (3) establishment of self-help organizations — resulted in "access" manifesting itself in different forms.³⁴

The studies we have cited above are suggestive of the formidable political and organizational connections which the clients of organizations face in a world where organizations and institutions have gained an upper hand over individuals.

That bureaucratization and too much involvement in rules and pro-

³²Zoe Mars, "Assistance to Small Scale Industries in Kerala: An Indian Case," *Development and Change*, Vol. VI, No. 2 (April 1975), pp. 61-88.

³³Charles Harvey, "Rural Credit in Zambia," *Development and Change*, Vol. VI, No. 2 (April 1975), pp. 89-103.

³⁴H.K. Colebatch, "Access and the Study of Local Services: A Kenyan Case," *Development and Change*, Vol. VI, No. 2 (April 1975), pp. 107-118.

cedures eventually lead to the disadvantaged position for the client in most access situations have likewise been shown in a study. Paulias, in his analysis of the operation and implementation of a farming systems program of Papua New Guinea's Department of Agriculture, Stock and Fisheries disclosed that "the bureaucratic queueing and access systems, rules and regulations which are supposed to promote openness, equality, fairness and orderliness have in fact been biased against the small poor farms. Queues and access rules appear relevant but in practice they give preference to large progressive individual farmers."³⁵

Further analysis of the factors that cause the displacement of the clients' interest within the means or the procedure through which their interests are to be served shows that this frequently occurs in multiple-goal organizations. In 1956, a study conducted by Francis and Stone³⁶ revealed the basic conflict between service and procedure in a U.S. state employment security agency. Because of the agency's dual goals of giving unemployment compensation and placing the unemployed in jobs, data from the study showed that procedure was unduly emphasized at the expense of service to clients.³⁷

³⁵Nelson E. Paulias, "Problems of Rural Development and Growing Inequalities in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea" (Master's Thesis submitted to the Institute of Social Studies), p. 80.

³⁶R.G. Francis and R.C. Stone, *Service and Procedure in Bureaucracy* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1956).

³⁷*Ibid.*

Another study done on the French Social Security System in 1966 described how the staff in different levels of the organization, in their preoccupation with administrative procedures, lost sight of the insured person's need for an administrator who is really accessible and who can extend personal attention.³⁸

Blau's studies on a state employment agency³⁹ disclosed similar results in that the agency's dual goals of having to place clients in jobs and to check their eligibility for employment compensation brought about a conflict among the officials. This internal conflict was resolved by officials by joking about the clients among themselves, thus displacing their aggression while maintaining the service orientation. In a later study of officials' orientation towards clients in a public welfare agency, Blau found a similar conflict between service to clientele and the need to check their eligibility for service.⁴⁰

Aside from the duality of goals, Blau and Scott also showed how variations within organizations in goal implementation have consequences

³⁸Antoinette Catrice-Lorey, "Social Security and Its Relation with Beneficiaries: The Problem of Bureaucracy in Social Administration," *Bulletin of International Social Security Administration*, Vol. XIX, pp. 286-297, also reprinted in Katz and Danet, *Bureaucracy and the Public*, *op. cit.*, pp. 245-256.

³⁹Peter M. Blau, *The Dynamics of Bureaucracy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955).

⁴⁰Peter M. Blau, "Orientation Towards Clients in a Public Welfare Agency," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, Vol. V (1960), pp. 341-361.

for clients.⁴¹ In their study of two departments of a county agency, they showed that clients of the public assistance division were dependent on and had to accept aid from the agency's team, while officials on the child welfare division had to deal with the foster and adoptive parents on whom they were dependent for cooperation.⁴²

Bureaucrats and clients' influence on each other and the latter's approaches to officials of different organizations have been empirically explored by a number of other researchers. Katz and Eisenstadt found that as a consequence of the different pressures on bureaucrats, they may assume the roles of a teacher, socializing agent or even leader vis-a-vis clients.⁴³ From the clients' point of view, Katz and Danet's study on the influence the type of organization has on the clients' choice of appeal revealed that the content of the appeals is influenced more by the normative basis on which the organization rests, i.e., the prime beneficiary whom it is serving, rather than by the client's ability to offer his resources in exchange for the organization's services.⁴⁴ Danet's study on the Israel Customs author-

ities' reaction to the clients' social characteristics showed that on the whole, Customs officials treat their clients universalistically. However, the evidence indicated a tendency to give the "underdog" a break, even if this took a longer time. It appeared that customs officials, knowingly or not, deviated from the rules to help unemployed Middle Eastern men establish themselves in Israeli society.⁴⁵

The sociological studies which we have described above and the earlier country studies analyzed by the "access" group are rather too focused or too diffused for purposes of the needs of the administrators. Convinced that a meaningful way of operationalizing the concept can be done through an "administrative process" view of the organization, we shall cite two empirical studies along this approach. One is a case study of non-bureaucratic client-oriented organization. This showed that the central differences between the bureaucratic and non-bureaucratic types lay in the process by which client needs are defined.⁴⁶ Thus, bureaucratic types treat clients as "children" in that they are seen as subordinates to the organization and are therefore incapable of determining their needs. Meanwhile, the non-bureaucratic agency in the study treated clients as "adults" who feel no relative power deprivation and hence no fear

⁴¹Blau and Scott, *op.cit.*

⁴²Cited in Katz and Danet, "Communication between Bureaucracy and Public," *op.cit.* p. 678.

⁴³Elihu Katz and S.N Eisenstadt, "Some Sociological Observations on the Response of Israeli Organizations to New Immigrants," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, Vol. V. (1960), pp. 113-133.

⁴⁴Elihu Katz and Brenda Danet, "Petitions and Persuasive Appeals; A Study of Official-Client Relations," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. XXXI (1966), pp. 811-822.

⁴⁵B. Danet, "Giving the Underdog a Break: Latent Particularism Among Customs Officials" in Katz and Danet, *Bureaucracy and the Public*, *op.cit.*, pp. 329-337.

⁴⁶Orion F. White, Jr., "The Dialectical Organization: An Alternative to Bureaucracy," *Public Administration Review*, Vol. XXIX, No. 1 (January/February 1969), pp. 32-42.

of powerful institutions.⁴⁷ White showed how the agency in the study manifested accessibility through its client orientation, administrative structure, and organizational ideology and mentality which led to a fluxional internal decision process.⁴⁸

On the other hand, client participation and the structure of the organization are not always assurances of the protection of the clients' interest in the organization. As a study in goal-setting in a local community showed, a highly participative process which ensured an intimate involvement of the client in the planning process can eventually lead to lower priority being given to the originally set goals simply because equal attention was not given to the means or resources in the planning process.⁴⁹

Administration Accessibility: An Operational Definition and an Index

We shall attempt in this section to work out a definition of administrative accessibility which we shall then try to operationalize. We will then suggest an administrative accessibility checklist which project managers may use to provide the necessary administrative linkages with their organization or project clients.

⁴⁷This conceptualization of client-organization relations was proposed by Victor Thompson in *Modern Organizations* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965), pp. 170-177.

⁴⁸Ernest R. Alexander, "Goal Setting and Growth in an Uncertain World: A Case Study of a Local Community Organization," *Public Administration Review*, Vol. XXVI, No. 2 (March/April 1976), pp. 182-191.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*

Literally, the word "access" is defined as denoting: (1) permission, liberty or ability to enter, approach, communicate with, or pass to and from, (2) freedom or ability to obtain or make use, (3) a way or means, or (4) the action of going to or reaching.⁵⁰ Thus, an access road is defined as one that provides a way of getting to a particular area, while access time is the time lag between the time stored information (as in a computer) is requested and time it is delivered.⁵¹ These literal meanings suggest that anything that is accessible is capable of being reached, used, seen, or influenced.

When one speaks of having access to anything or anybody, he refers to a capacity to get to, reach or influence that object or person through certain means. Conversely, something that is not accessible is far, distant or cannot be reached because of certain obstacles. Depending then on the distance or the obstacles that make something inaccessible, the means that would be utilized to reach, use, see, or influence will differ. These means will also differ according to the object being sought, who has the capacity to make it available, and who are seeking it.

Obviously in the case of administrative organizations, it is the services or goods produced by the organization which are being sought and it is the organization which has the capacity to make it available or unavailable to the clients who need them. Thus, when we speak of administrative

⁵⁰Webster New Collegiate Dictionary (G and C Merriam Co., 1974), p. 7.

⁵¹*Ibid.*

accessibility, we refer to the extent to which the administrative organization makes itself distant or remote or, conversely, capable of being reached, seen or influenced by its clients for purposes of benefiting from the service it renders.

It will be noted that at this point of the paper we shall be talking more specifically of "service" agencies rather than commonweal organizations as we have the public-in-contact in mind rather than the general public.

It is our contention that it is the operations of the administrative processes, particularly in organizations overconcerned with rationality and efficiency that create distance between the organizations and the clients, making the former inaccessible to the latter. If the administrative processes pose the greater obstacle to the accessibility of the bureaucracy, then infusing this structure and process with a strong client orientation may yet make the organization more open to its clientele.

Proceeding from this argument then, we can say that administrative accessibility is achieved when an organization's public-in-contact can get to, reach, communicate, and influence the organization to fulfill the clients' changing needs through institutionalized means of involving and deliberately considering the clients' interest in the various phases of the administrative process through which the service is rendered. By administrative process here, we mean broadly the planning, policy formulation, plan implementation, and evaluation system which results once resources are allocated. The interaction within the organization as these processes take place could easily lead to the further-

ance of the institutions' interests and the neglect of the clients' welfare.

*Accessibility Displacement:
A Function of Administrative
Processes?*

The empirical studies we have reviewed indicated that it is through the different administrative processes that an organization ensures institutional survival, with the organization's interest competing with those of the clients. Aside from pressures coming from the external environment, the organizational processes which are triggered off when the institution starts to convert inputs into goods and services may result in what we call accessibility displacement. This means that while the concern for clients may have been initially uppermost in the organization's priorities, it becomes a secondary concern as more emphasis is placed on efficiency and rationality, criteria by which the greater society tends to judge its performance.

How does this occur? Displacement of accessibility can happen at every stage in the administrative process including goal setting, policy formulation, resource acquisition and allocation, procedure design, and even in the evaluation of the organization's output and outcomes.

Broad goals which are not operationalized in terms of specific clients' needs can be misperceived and translated into sub-goals which are antithetical to their interest. Conflicting goals may also lead to a wider distance between the organization and the client when they serve to direct attention to maintenance activities which are not client-oriented.

The pressures of interest groups and the lack of adequate information on clients may unwittingly result in disregarding their needs when final decisions are made as to what alternative strategies may be adopted to carry out a program.

Accessibility may also be displaced by: (1) organizational structures which are not flexible and responsive to client's needs as they become set and rigid because of hierarchical control, (2) procedures which routinize everything to simplify decision-making processes for counter personnel, (3) personnel who by their loyalty to the organization become less sympathetic to individual clients' needs, (4) undue emphasis on resource allocation for administrative infrastructure rather than on client service, and (5) an evaluation scheme which ignores the problem of accessibility because it does not jibe with the interest of the organization.

A Proposed Administrative Accessibility Checklist

The factors which lead to the displacement of accessibility can be countered if constant attention is given to these possible causes of accessibility displacement in the organization. For this reason, we are attempting to raise some questions which the client-oriented administrator can use to check the accessibility of his organization. This checklist is tentative since this is an initial formulation. It cannot lay claim to being comprehensive nor exhaustive. All we are trying to do here is to identify certain considerations which must be borne in mind by the administrator or the project manager in improving the administrative accessibility of his organization or project.

Planning

(1) In the identification of the project/problem, was there a particular target clientele in mind?

(2) If there was such a target clientele, was there a thorough client analysis that would lead to the description of the characteristics of the specific clientele in terms of how homogeneous the group is, what interest groups exist among the clientele which might present their interests as being the clients' interest?

(3) Was there a deliberate effort on the part of the administrators to get client participation in the formulation or identification of the problem?

(4) If there was such an effort, were adequate time, resources, and facilities provided for the clients' representatives to be actively involved in the definition of the problem?

(5) To what extent were the clients involved in the formulation of the objectives?

(6) Do these objectives specifically and operationally address themselves to the problems of the client as perceived by them?

(7) Does the project/organization have multiple goals which can lead to the subsequent displacement of the clients' interest?

Policy Formulation

(1) Did the organization/project management provide ways through which clients can participate in the determination of the strategy to be adopted for carrying out the program?

(2) Were the alternatives identified by the clients given preference over those identified by management?

(3) To what extent were the

client's need, characteristics, economic and political power vis-a-vis the population in general and their way of life considered in the decision of what strategy to adopt for the implementation of the program?

(4) To what extent were the cost of client services and the organization of outreach efforts considered in determining the cost of the program and the necessary resources for these activities?

Plan Implementation

A. Organizational Structure

(1) Is the structure of the organization flexible and directed more to the solution of client-defined problems rather than fixed and set to fulfill the rationality and efficiency consideration of the organization?

(2) To what extent has the location of field offices been influenced by the consideration to reduce the physical distance between the organization's units and the target clientele?

(3) If there are field offices, are the officials in these offices given the authority and responsibility to use their discretion to the utmost to accommodate clients?

(4) Is there a unit especially organized to attend to clients?

B. Resources

(1) Are the services made available to clients at a time convenient to the clients rather than to the officials?

(2) Does the organization/project spend more resources on client services rather than on administrative infrastructures?

(3) Is manpower distributed in such a way that boundary units are

manned with more personnel during peak hours?

(4) Is there a deliberate attempt to put better qualified personnel in boundary areas where they are in frequent contact with clients?

(5) Does the organization continually stress the need for boundary personnel to be service-oriented?

C. Procedures

(1) Are the procedures simple enough for the clients to comprehend or comply with?

(2) Are there administrative requirements which make unnecessary demands, thus making it difficult for clients to comply with the procedures? Are there requirements which result in the exclusion of the poorer clients?

(3) Does specialization of tasks for efficiency considerations result in the segmentation of procedures such that the delivery of integrated services which a client may prefer is no longer possible?

(4) Is there enough information given to clients so that they are fully aware of the rules and regulations, their rights and their constraints, and are therefore not set at a disadvantage by the organization's access to information?

(5) Is there too much organizational emphasis on statistics and other returns so that it deflects attention away from the service needs of the clients?

(6) Is there a continuous check on the procedures to make sure that they are not too rigid that their implementation may actually result in disservice rather than service?

(7) Is there enough flexibility in the procedure to allow for appropriate treatment of cases which do

not really fall under the situations anticipated?

D. Evaluation

(1) Do the performance standards of the organization recognize and put a premium on the quality of service as well as the quantity?

(2) Does the evaluation scheme provide for a way of measuring the accessibility of the service to the target clientele?

(3) Is there a distinction made between accessibility and the outcome of the program/organization?

(4) Is there a systematic effort on the part of management to check continuously whether any part of the administrative process can lead to accessibility displacement in the organization?

Beginnings of an Accessibility Index?

Certainly much can be done for improving and systematizing the checklist given above. This effort may be seen as an initial move which we hope will trigger off an improvement of these questions which, for the moment, may not be mutually exclusive enough for operationalization purposes. It is expected that the specific answers to these questions can form the preliminary basis for the preparation of an "accessibility index"

which can be used to measure the extent to which the organization is open to and can be reached or influenced by its clientele. An accessibility index will measure the extent to which services are delivered and utilized by clients at the least material, socio-psychological, informational, and temporal cost *to the client*. An accessible project/organization which may rate "high" in this index is one which is physically, procedurally, and materially within the reach of the target clientele. The accessibility index can perhaps be worked out on the basis of physical distances between organization and clients, the ratio of personnel to actual or prospective clients, and scheduling of the service such that process and waiting time can be determined. Thus far, we must admit that the methodology for coming up with the quantification of this index must still be developed. However, the value of accessibility must be appreciated first before it can spur more serious effort along this line.

This paper is only a start towards the refinement of this complex concept. We hope that it will convey the message that administrative institutions and the techniques and processes used are merely means of serving the people, never meant to become ends in themselves.