

Long term Effect of Citizen Participation procedure on public acceptance: A Case study of Waste Management System in Sapporo

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Introduction

This study examined the long term effect of citizen participation, which acts as a measure of procedural fairness, on public acceptance. Many studies have shown that fair procedure of citizen participation has an effect on public acceptance. However, even though people once accept the decision of a new rule in the planning stage, people might refuse the rule at the implementation stage due to that they need to bear a burden. Nevertheless, a successful implementation of a new rule can be brought on by continuous communication in which opinions of the public can be reflected by holding a participatory program.

This study explored the effect of citizen participation from the planning to the implementation of a new rule. This paper presents a case study of implementing a new waste management rule, including charge system on household waste, in Sapporo. The Sapporo city conducted large scale participatory programs at the planning stage, in which the opinions of the citizen were being reflected. The City continued to foster communication with residents before and after the implementation of the new rule.

A general hypothesis is that the opportunity to participation in the decision of a new rule has an effect on procedural fairness, which determines the public acceptance of the new rule.

Method

Two types of sampling set were obtained by social surveys. Both were measured twice as pre-test and pro-test: before implementing the new rule (pre-test, May 2009), and eight months after implemented the new rule (pro-test, February 2010). The first dataset was a between-respondents design, in which individuals were randomly sampled each

time. 1603 of 3000 respondents in the pre-test (54.5% of response rate) and 798 of 1500 in post-test (53.9%) were obtained. The other dataset was a repeated-respondents design, in which the same individuals answered the questionnaire twice. 658 of 3000 responded in pre-test (21.9%), who agreed to answer the questionnaire twice. And 552 from the first 658 responded in the post-test (83.9%: 18.4% from the first sampling).

Results

Comparison of average scores of pre-post design in both between and repeated dataset showed that public acceptance, procedural fairness, and the relevant variables (such as availability of communication) were significantly positive in post-test than that of pre-test. People evaluated the new rule more positively after its implementation.

The results of SEM in between dataset showed that each participatory program and communication had effects on the procedural fairness, which determined public acceptance. However, the results of SEM in the repeated dataset showed that participatory program in pre-test did not have effect on procedural fairness observed in post-test, and procedural fairness measured in pre-test did not influence public acceptance in post-test.

Discussion

Results indicated that a) people are more likely to accept the new rule after it is implemented, b) participatory programs and communications had effects on procedural fairness and public acceptance, but c) the effects of each program and communication were not lasted long. It is interpreted that people accept the new rule more after its implementation not because of the procedural fairness at the planning stage but because of the continuous opportunities to participation.