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Citizen
Feedback: Its
Upsides and
Downsides

# Measuring How Administration Shapes Citizenship: A Policy Feedback Perspective on Performance Management

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*Governments increasingly require administrators to develop outcome measurements that reflect a program's impact on society. But standard approaches to performance measurement have neglected the impact on citizenship outcomes—the individual civic capacities and dispositions and social bonds of civic reciprocity and trust. The concept is adapted from the growing policy feedback literature in political science, which offers strong empirical evidence that certain policies have measurable effects on citizenship outcomes such as political participation, social capital, a sense of civic belonging, and self-worth as a citizen. Using the Program Assessment Rating Tool as an example, the authors demonstrate the failure of performance assessments to consider the civic implications of public policies. They argue that performance management systems should focus on citizenship outcomes and offer a series of suggestions on how to measure such outcomes.*

Governments increasingly attempt to understand a program's impact on society though performance measurement. As a result, public managers have focused a good deal on how to capture the cost and quality of services provided to individual citizens. But we know far less about the democratic implications of public policies. Rather, the shift to outcome measurement has been narrowly defined and has excluded what we refer to as "citizenship outcomes," measures of the impact of a policy on the individual's role as citizen. The concept is adapted from policy feedback theory in political science, which has provided empirical evidence that certain policies have measurable effects on political participation, social capital, sense of civic belonging, and political efficacy.

This paper proceeds in the following fashion. First, we more fully explain the concept of citizenship outcomes. Then, we discuss the traditional adminis-

trative perspective, which emphasizes mission-based performance, and contrast it with the policy feedback perspective, which focuses on the civic implications of policy design and implementation. To illustrate how performance measurement excludes citizenship outcomes, we examine the U.S. Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) evaluations for programs where the policy feedback literature has shown demonstrable civic effects. We then examine a number of possible challenges to measuring citizenship outcomes, but ultimately argue that performance measurement is not inherently at odds with citizenship. We suggest that program administration and bureaucratic performance can and should incorporate measures that reflect how policy design and implementation affect democratic life and practice, and we offer examples of such measures.

## The Concept of Citizenship Outcomes
Our discussion of citizenship outcomes focuses on the effects of policy design and implementation on individual civic capacities and dispositions and on social bonds of civic reciprocity and trust. We draw strongly from policy feedback theory, which assumes that "policies help make citizens" (Campbell 2003). Policy feedback theory stresses that mass opinion and behavior are not just functions of individual characteristics and preferences but also the result of interactions between institutions and citizens (Mettler and Soss 2004). Policies can indirectly affect civic attitudes and behaviors by creating incentives for enhanced political participation. For example, Social Security has helped make senior citizens one of the most politically active groups in the electorate (Campbell 2003). But policies can also affect "citizenship" by creating opportunities for citizens to learn civic skills (Marston 1993) and enhancing their sense of obligation to the polity (Mettler 2002). Policies communicate to citizens their

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civic identity and degree of membership within the political community (Schneider and Ingram 1997), conveying messages as to whether their voices matter and whether government is responsive to their concerns, thereby encouraging engagement, passivity, or even alienation (Mettler 2002; Soss 1999, 2005).

In discussing citizenship outcomes, as with any outcomes, it is helpful to distinguish between intermediate and end outcomes (Hatry 1999, 16–18). Intermediate outcomes are measures that experience suggests will result in end outcomes. Relative to end outcomes, they are usually easier to measure and more directly under the control of service providers and therefore more useful to managers. With regard to citizenship, intermediate outcomes are service delivery procedures that provide for fair and respectful treatment, due process, and equity. The empirical relationship between these aspects of a program and end outcomes are discussed in a later section. End citizenship outcomes include civic engagement, trust, political efficacy, and participation.

Measuring citizenship outcomes is not for all parts of the public service. The key criterion for the appropriateness of measuring citizenship outcomes is whether citizens directly interact with the program. The Clinton-Gore reinvention movement suggested as much by giving special attention to the 32 "high-impact agencies" that it estimated had 90 percent of federal contact with the public.[1] Such agencies were pressured to measure customer service but not to consider broader impacts on citizenship. Moreover, in an age when citizens often experience public service through nongovernmental organizations, citizenship outcome measurement is also pertinent for third-party government actors that often operate with fewer procedural constraints than their governmental counterparts (Smith 2005).

### The Administrative Perspective on Measurement and Citizenship

Seemingly neutral administrative practices reflect assumptions about the relationship between government and the governed (deLeon and Denhardt 2000) and emphasize some values over others when it comes to delivering public services. The traditional administrative philosophy largely excludes considerations of citizenship (King and Stivers 1998), an exclusion exacerbated by recent reforms that privilege cost-efficiency and the achievement of narrowly defined goals over citizenship values such as fairness, equity, trust, and civic engagement (deLeon and Denhardt 2000; Hood 1991).

Organizations that measure only production goals are likely to displace important values (Mohr 1973, 477), and the current approach to performance measurement reflects a failure to consider citizenship. For example, Boyne's (2002) content analysis of U.K. local government performance data illustrates how governments tend to focus on service output and efficiency measures while paying little attention to responsiveness, equity, and participation. Piotrowski and Rosenbloom (2002) show that performance reporting under the Government Performance and Results Act displaced nonmission values such as transparency. And performance measurement has been found to exclude considerations of social equity at both the state (Jennings 2006) and federal levels (Radin 2006). This displacement has been made possible by the image of measurement as a neutral, rational, and technocratic exercise in expertise, thereby disguising its subjective element. But measures do not exist in nature. They are socially constructed by individuals and organizations to represent values, viewpoints, and norms (Moynihan 2006).

An alternative philosophy argues that governments should explicitly promote engagement in civic life and governance by encouraging a more active view of citizenship, thereby increasing political participation, social capital, and a sense of belonging among citizens (Sandel 1996). Such an approach is advocated by Denhardt and Denhardt (2000), who call for a "new public service" that explicitly reconsiders the role of citizenship. Our argument is complementary though slightly different. We argue that governments have an obligation to assess citizenship, as this is an outcome they are already affecting, and the state should better understand the consequences of its policies.

### The Program Assessment Rating Tool

The policy feedback literature has hypothesized that policies shape citizenship. We add to this scholarship by making the case that public sector performance measures fail to consider citizenship outcomes and by suggesting ways to incorporate such outcomes into program assessments. To illustrate the disjunction between the policy feedback emphasis on citizenship and the dominant administrative perspective on management, we examine PART assessments for policies where policy feedback scholars have already demonstrated an empirical relationship between policy design and outcomes.

PART was introduced in 2001, a response to a promise in the President's Management Agenda (OMB 2001) to better integrate performance information and budgeting. PART has evaluated almost all federal programs over a five-year period. OMB examiners assess each program with input from agency officials. The PART itself is a questionnaire that evaluates a program's purpose and design, strategic planning, management, and results. The assessor attaches a numerical score to each section, the sum of which places the program into five different categories: "effective," "moderately effective," "adequate," "ineffective," or, if the assessor feels that

there is not enough information to make a judgment, "results not demonstrated."

We are interested in PART as an example of how administrators believe performance assessments should work. Why PART? There are three main reasons. First, it offers a standardized process by which the executive branch issues clear statements on what performance measures it considers important, thereby providing a basis for comparison between the administrative approach and the policy feedback approach. Second, we sought to avoid using a "straw man" example of performance measurement that fails to consider citizenship because of lack of capacity. PART represents perhaps the most sophisticated cross-governmental approach to performance measurement to date. The assessments do not simply list a handful of performance measures but incorporate thoughtful discussions of what these measures mean and consider multiple aspects of program design. While the OMB examiners have the final say on the contents, agency staff are able to argue for alternative perspectives on the value of a program. The assessments also incorporate program evaluations that enable a more considered understanding of program outcomes than is possible by relying simply on performance measures. Third, PART provides a degree of detail and transparency featured in no other performance assessment system. All PART assessments are publicly available at http://www.expectmore.gov. Detailed assessments provide explanations and underlying data for answers to 30 questions per program. This detail allows the researcher to understand the stated logic behind the judgments made by OMB examiners.

### How Policies Make Citizens: Empirical Evidence of Policy Feedback

In discussing ways to measure citizenship outcomes, we draw on research demonstrating the links between specific policies and citizenship outcomes: social trust and civic engagement, political efficacy, and political participation. While the policy feedback literature has only addressed a handful of policies, these studies point out specific ways to measure and assess the civic implications of policy design and implementation. Performance measurement has a largely untapped potential to further examine and verify the relationship between programs and citizenship outcomes. Using different types of measures can help distinguish between the relative effects of the design versus implementation aspects on programs, and our discussion of specific programs reflects this distinction.

The results of our initial comparison between the policy feedback and the administrative perspectives are summarized in table 1. Consistent with our expectations,

> Performance measurement has a largely untapped potential to further examine and verify the relationship between programs and citizenship outcomes.

we found a marked disjunction between how PART defines outcomes and the evidence of citizenship outcomes in the policy feedback literature. While some of the PART evaluations do touch on the civic dimensions of public policies, in particular the important place of social capital in community development programs, they nonetheless give a very superficial treatment to these concepts, mainly treating them as "buzzwords." While much attention is devoted to questions of waste, fraud and abuse, and managerial accountability, there is no mention of values such as equity, transparency, and citizen participation.

### Social Trust and Civic Engagement

In table 1, we note that the one area where PART evaluations discuss the civic implications of programs is with respect to "social capital." Putnam defines social capital as the "features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions" (1993, 167). For citizenship outcomes, the relevant elements of social capital are social trust (in government, or interpersonal trust), and civic engagement that fosters social networks in the form of community or voluntary organizations.

Recent research provides empirical evidence of the links between policy design and social trust. Kumlin and Rothstein (2005) found that the type of welfare institutions that Swedish citizens interact with was a stronger predictor of social trust than participation in voluntary groups, even when controlling for demographic characteristics. Citizen interaction with universal welfare-state institutions led to increased social trust, while interaction with means-tested programs reduced social trust. They argue that "needs-tested programs may more readily give rise to suspicions concerning poor procedural justice and arbitrary treatment than do universal agencies, and this may influence citizen's views of the reliability of both public employees and other people" (Kumlin and Rothstein 2005, 349). Of course, such claims should be treated as hypotheses to be tested in other settings. While Kumlin and Rothstein's findings raise concerns about the bureaucratic discretion inherent in means-tested programs (see also Schneider and Ingram 1997), other evidence suggests that means-tested programs can be designed and implemented in ways that foster positive civic outcomes (Soss 2005).

Policies can also build social trust. For example, Mettler's (2002) study of World War II veterans found that participation in the GI Bill helped incorporate individuals into political life by cultivating shared norms of civic responsibility and reciprocity. Even

**Table 1** Comparing Administrative and Policy Feedback Perspectives on Program Measures

| Policy | Administrative* | Policy Feedback |
|---|---|---|
| GI Bill | Average number of days to complete original education claim | Social capital, norms of civic reciprocity, and extent of civic engagement |
| Social Security | Productivity, timeliness and accuracy in payments | Civic belonging and political participation |
| Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, Aid to Families with Dependent Children | Increase in percentage of adults who become newly employed | Political efficacy, extent to which recipients believe that they can discuss concerns with agency and that the agency is responsive |
| Community development programs | Increased employment; safe and stable housing | Participation in governing boards and advocacy efforts; percentage of households reporting they feel a part of the community as a result of community revitalization efforts; volunteer hours devoted to community action efforts |
| Environmental programs | Number of water bodies partially or fully restored; number of acres treated for wildlife concerns | Citizen cooperation and coproduction; effectiveness of partnerships in developing environmental strategies that demonstrate results; quality of partnerships, including representativeness and deliberativeness |

*Measures are drawn from PART assessments.

after controlling for education, income, and other childhood socioeconomic indicators, she found that those benefiting from the GI Bill were more likely to join civic organizations and be politically active. The effect was greatest for those from less advantaged backgrounds. Mettler attributes this not only to the resources bestowed by the program, but also through the "interpretative effects that altered beneficiaries' sense of obligation to the polity . . . by offering people a highly positive experience of government and public provision, one that provided them with access to education and treated them with dignity and respect in the process" (2002, 362).

Of the PART assessments we examined, the community development programs stand out for their emphasis on civic engagement and social networks. Such programs increasingly rely on nonprofit organizations and community partners to deliver services. One of the strongest arguments for engaging these organizations is that the density of local networks can improve community outcomes by facilitating cooperation and trust among residents, government agencies, and nongovernmental partners. Empirical studies have suggested that networks of public and private actors in distressed neighborhoods can lead to such positive outcomes as reduced loan delinquency rates (Baku and Smith 1998), improved housing quality, less crime in low-income housing programs (Saegert, Winkel, and Schwartz 2002), and improved community stability (Temkin and Rohe 1998).

PART assessments of community development programs explicitly acknowledge the central role of such networks. For example, the PART describes the Community Services Block Grant program as a "platform for sustained community-based creativity and flexibility in addressing the multi-faceted problems of poverty." The Community Development Block Grant program is called on to "involve faith-based and community-based organizations to improve effectiveness, transparency of local grant-making processes, and citizen participation," and the National Community Development Initiative is praised for building "local operating support collaboratives." However, none of these programs seeks to measure social capital or test how it fosters benefits. PART evaluations of community development programs may honor the ideals of social capital, but they do not make it a practical aspect of program assessment.

### Civic Belonging and Political Efficacy
Policies also promote the political incorporation of social groups (Marshall 1965). Policies such as Social Security give "standing" to individuals, offering dignity and respect to beneficiaries and recognizing them as full members of the citizenry (Mettler and Soss 2004; Sklar 1991). On the other hand, policies can delineate among social groups and differentially position them vis-à-vis the state (Marshall 1965; Soss 2005). As Schneider and Ingram (1997) argue, policies socially construct target populations, defining beneficiaries as "deserving" or "nondeserving" and as capable of self-government or requiring active government intervention.

The ways in which programs confer benefits and the ways in which those benefits are framed by public officials also shape how recipients are viewed as citizens by the mass public and "may influence the ways individuals understand their rights and responsibilities as members of a political community" (Mettler and Soss 2004, 61). For example, policies can impact the extent to which individuals believe that they possess the skills and opportunities to be politically active ("internal political efficacy") and whether they believe government is responsive to their concerns and that

they have the ability to affect political outcomes ("external political efficacy").[2]

Policies can shape such psychological attachments to the political process by creating different environments for civic socialization. For instance, Kumlin (2002) found that the extent of citizen empowerment (in the form of a realistic exit option and low bureaucratic discretion) increases the probability that individuals believe they were treated fairly in governmental programs. These interactions with public agencies in turn influence an individual's trust in politicians, satisfaction with democracy, and support for state intervention (Kumlin 2002).

Soss's work on Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) helps us understand these effects on political efficacy. Soss argues that citizens are engaged in a continual process of political learning that can be heavily influenced by individual interactions with government programs. In this respect, different policy designs affect perceptions about how government works. The interactions with welfare agencies teach clients lessons about their roles as citizens—lessons that, in turn, have a direct bearing on their sense of effectiveness as citizens. Soss found that

> AFDC participants believe that government institutions will behave like the welfare agency, in an autonomous and directive (rather than open and responsive) manner. Furthermore, some AFDC participants think that other citizens may have opportunities to influence government, but most do not expect this privilege to be extended to people who occupy the degraded status of "welfare recipient." (1999, 372)

In contrast, recipients of SSDI were found to be more politically active, viewed the Social Security Administration as a more responsive agency, and were more likely to believe that they could play an "active role in the program" (Soss 1999, 366). Differences in political views and political efficacy remained even among AFDC and SSDI clients with similar socioeconomic backgrounds. Soss concludes, "For large numbers of Americans, treatment and responsiveness in the welfare system are not administrative sidebars to democratic governance. They are, in their own right, critical measures of what citizenship means in practice" (2005, 296).

Given Soss's work on U.S. welfare policy, we looked at the PART evaluation of the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program. TANF has expanded bureaucratic discretion to state governments. Research has shown that the use of this

discretion is driven by the racial and political characteristics of each state. For instance, as the nonwhite percentage of caseloads increases, states are more likely to impose strict lifetime limits, deny benefits to children conceived by TANF recipients, and impose tougher sanctions on noncompliance (Fellowes and Rowe 2004; Gais and Weaver 2002; Soss et al. 2001). These states are also more likely to devolve responsibility to the local level and nongovernmental organizations, further increasing diversity in client treatment (Soss, Fording, and Schram 2008).

The PART evaluation for TANF is detailed, reviewing the program's goals as defined in statute and assessing the extent to which the program has affected employability, gains in earnings, two-parent family formation, and out-of-wedlock childbirth among TANF recipients. Nowhere in the PART, however, is there any discussion of whether beneficiaries felt that they were adequately treated or that the design of the program was structured in ways that promoted open and responsive programmatic support. To the extent that the PART worries about abuse of state and local discretion, it reflects a concern about fiscal oversight rather than client treatment.

### Participation

Participation in public programs and broader political activity can be considered both as an intermediate and end citizenship outcome. As an intermediate outcome, program participation leads to end outcomes by helping individuals acquire civic skills and develop social and political networks. In this way, public policies provide "civic teaching," helping individuals and groups develop the skills, resources, and knowledge to participate in political life (Landy 1993).

For example, Head Start participants are more likely to feel that government is responsive and that they can influence the democratic process, a finding that is likely attributable to the participatory design of Head Start, which requires that parents participate in policy councils and local decision-making processes (Soss 2005). Walzer notes, "Participation in the delivery of services may constitute a kind of training for participation in the management and direction of services" (1988, 24). Through participation citizens may learn to deliberate and look beyond their own self-interest (Barber 1984; Pateman 1970).

Some policies encourage client demand-making and have shaped how individuals view their rights and responsibilities as citizens. As Social Security demonstrates, new avenues for access and institutional participation can open up opportunities for political mobilization and collective

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action (Campbell 2003). Other examples include the community development programs of the Great Society, which sought to reinvigorate civic life directly and strengthen local capacities to meet the needs of the poor (Quadagno 1994). Although viewed as a policy failure, Marston (1993) argues that these programs had long-lasting impacts on local political participation by creating new public spaces for deliberation of matters affecting city development and the allocation of local resources. These programs also helped to politically incorporate racial minorities and became a source of minority leadership in cities around the country (Browning, Marshall, and Tabb 1984). In a similar vein, research on Chicago's local school councils and community policing programs suggests these participatory institutions helped incorporate disadvantaged groups and enhanced broader forms of political participation (Fung 2004). More generally, Lawless and Fox (2001) find that positive experiences with social service agencies increase political participation among the urban poor and argue that such experiences teach the civic skills needed for participation.

For many programs, participation is essential to program performance. Participation creates a feedback mechanism, providing ways for citizens to communicate to administrators who, in turn, can use that information to improve the program (Thomas 1995). There are also a handful of programs where participation is part of the program's mission. For example, the PART for the Community Services Block Grant program acknowledges the central role played by community partners, stating, "without such partnerships, community action would not be able to achieve and sustain favorable family, community, and agency outcomes."[3] But the assessment's exclusive focus on socioeconomic outcomes provides no insight into who is involved in these partnerships or how they improve results.[4]

## Challenges to the Measurement of Citizenship Outcomes

Before turning to our suggestions for specific citizenship measures, we first examine a number of arguments against incorporating citizenship concerns into program evaluations and performance measurement.

***Citizenship outcomes are too intangible, their causes too complex, and their measurement too difficult.*** The policy feedback literature has demonstrated that there are empirical links between policy design, implementation, and various aspects of citizenship. While citizenship outcomes are indeed complex, so are many of the outcomes that government pursues. Because performance measures, by themselves, rarely tell us much about causal relationships, such measures should be supplemented with evaluations for more complex programs. While Blalock and Barnow (2001) argue that the focus on measurement has shunted aside program evaluations, the PART shows that it is possible for program evaluations to be used hand in hand with performance measures.[5]

***Citizenship outcomes reflect a normative argument to expand government.*** Some might argue that by seeking to expand what are considered outcomes, we are also promoting a more expansive view of the role of government. This argument will come from those who believe in limited government and who believe that citizenship is the product of families, communities, and the qualities of the individual rather than the efforts of government. For those concerned that our approach assumes unquestioning belief in the virtue of government, it is worth pointing out that the policy feedback literature does not claim that it is the size of government that matters, but rather the design of public policies, and seeks to empirically verify relationships rather than simply asserting that they exist. In addition, incorporating democratic values into performance evaluation can enhance the voices of citizens, thereby providing a check on governmental abuses (Hirschman 1970).

***Citizenship outcomes are likely to be of limited use for day-to-day management.*** Citizenship outcomes will tend to be long-term measures, but this is true for many of the outcomes tracked by government, which are intended to prompt managers to think about the overall purposes of government action (Hatry 1999). Managers are less likely to pay attention to goals if they are not measured, and the current approach gives managers little incentive to consider how their actions affect citizenship. Even if citizenship outcomes had no practical relevance to management, managers are not the only audience for performance measures, as PART itself has recognized by seeking to simplify performance measures in order to make them more appealing to policy makers and citizens. But intermediate citizenship outcomes—such as procedural justice, equity, and respect—are useful for managers because they point to specific program design choices that managers can easily implement and measure.

***Efforts to foster citizenship outcomes may result in negative unintended consequences.*** As we point out, the impact of public programs on citizenship is an example of an unintended consequence that government should better measure. But by encouraging administrators to foster citizenship, they may make choices that have unexpected costs. For example, Kumlin (2002) found that exit options in welfare state institutions were associated with higher satisfaction with democracy and trust in government. One might therefore assume that exit options will always foster such positive outcomes, but it is plausible to argue

that exit options may reduce a broader sense of community, weaken services for those who stay, and undercut voice options (Hirschman 1970).

Participation provides another example of unexpected costs. We have cited the positive benefits of participation, but other evidence suggests that some modes of participation have costs (Beck and Jennings 1982; Browning, Marshall, and Tabb 1984; Fung 2004; Leach 2006; Moynihan 2003). Participation forums may systematically exclude certain socioeconomic groups or serve only to legitimate government decisions and mollify dissent. Ultimately, such unintended consequences are an argument for carefully assessing the suitability and effects of specific program design choices, not failing to measure these effects.

***Agencies lack incentives to measure citizenship outcomes.*** This is a valid concern. Having made the case for why we should measure citizenship outcomes, a next step is to better understand how this will be done. Administrative resources for measuring performance are limited, and managers may believe that it is in their program's interest to concentrate on mission-based goals. It is not clear that this perception is necessarily accurate. Citizenship measures are largely untried in administrative discourse and reflect broadly popular values that political actors claim to support. It is possible that agencies can use such measures to demonstrate the benefits of their program in ways that more standard measures of performance fail to do.

Clearly, more resources for measurement and evaluation would help. Formal mandates to track citizenship would also make a difference. The history of performance measurement has shown that agencies are adept at measuring specific types of performance when required to do so. The reinvention movement increased attention to the quality of customer service, and recent efforts at the OMB have in many ways shifted the discussion from "outputs" to "outcomes."

Of course, discourse on performance is not limited to public officials. It may be up to other policy-analytic venues such as think tanks, academia, and professional organizations to make the case for a citizenship perspective. For example, the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) has proposed assessing the nature and influence of nature of citizen participation as a potential future practice and has also pushed for measuring "secondary effects" of a program, which would include unanticipated citizenship outcomes.[6]

## Benefits of Measuring Citizenship Outcomes
***Governments should understand the effect of its policies, including unintended consequences.*** A dominant theme of performance measurement is to develop logical links between inputs, processes, outputs, and outcomes (Hatry 1999). These logic models usefully identify how taxpayer resources are transformed into government activities. But by emphasizing the most obvious relationships between outputs and outcomes, the logic model can overlook less obvious relationships and unintended consequences.

An exclusive focus on mission-based goals fails to incorporate important democratic values such as equity, transparency, and fair treatment (Jennings 2006; Piotrowski and Rosenbloom 2002; Radin 2006), although PART has proven itself willing to measure other nonmission effects related to waste, fraud, and abuse. Hatry (1999, 22), perhaps the most effective advocate for the logic model, explicitly argues for the importance of tracking all of the outcomes that a program fosters, even those not formally mandated by program statute:

> Outcomes include side effects, whether intended or not and whether beneficial or detrimental. If the program recognizes in advance that such side effects can occur, it should design the performance measurement process regularly to assess them. As long as they are important and can be tracked, outcomes should be included in the performance measurement system, even if they are not explicitly identified in the program's mission and objective statements. Formal program's mission and objective statements seldom include all the outcomes that an agency needs to track.

The recognition of unintended consequences leads to perhaps the strongest argument for measuring citizen outcomes. The purpose of good policy analysis is to understand the effect of policies, both intended and unintended. Much like the medical field, public policy design should employ a "do no harm" standard. Policies should not diminish the civic capacity of citizens, decrease their opportunity to voice their concerns to program administrators, or send such negative messages to program beneficiaries that they see little worth in participating in the political process. Yet there is evidence that some programs are having such effects (Kumlin 2002; Kumlin and Rothstein 2005; Schneider and Ingram 1997; Soss 1999). Measuring citizenship outcomes would allow us to better understand what aspects of policy design and implementation improve or undermine citizenship and to incorporate such lessons into policy making.

Citizenship outcomes can also help us rethink the relationship between government and citizens and foster trust in government. By tracking the links between program design, implementation, and citizenship outcomes, we gain a more grounded understanding of the state–citizen relationship. This is especially true of our understanding of public confidence in the role of government. For example, it has

become a common assumption that trust in government is declining because of low confidence in government services. The premise of this approach is that people distrust government because they perceive it to be inefficient, and that administrative reform that demonstrates effectiveness will repair the citizen–government relationship. This "results build trust" assumption characterized the reinventing movement and the 1993 Government Performance and Results Act, which states that the purpose of the act is to "improve the confidence of the American people in the capability of the Federal Government, by systematically holding Federal agencies accountable for achieving program results."

An alternate view to the "results build trust" approach to the citizen–government relationship is the "policies build citizens" approach of the policy feedback perspective. This view rejects the assumption that citizens are deeply attentive to efforts to foster efficiency. Instead, citizens pay attention to and are affected by the public services they receive and make generalizations about government based on that experience (Kumlin 2002; Lawless and Fox 2001). Those who feel they were fairly treated by government are more likely to trust government (Kumlin and Rothstein 2005) and feel that government is responsive to their concerns (Soss 1999). This is a more policy-focused view of the citizen–government relationship. The "policies build citizens" approach suggests that if reformers really wish to improve citizens' view of government, they should take into consideration the democratic implications of program design and delivery.

***Citizenship outcomes can affect the success of mission-based goals.*** This is especially true for programs that seek to foster behavioral changes or depend on citizen coproduction for success. Participation advocates have argued that providing feedback mechanisms improves program performance and the possibility of coproduction (Thomas 1995). The policy feedback literature provides a rationale for why policy design affects individual willingness to cooperate. It is relatively easy to imagine vicious cycles forming in welfare policies in particular. If clients are sent messages that they are of limited worth, they may become less likely to cooperate with the government sending that message. Virtuous circles might also form. The new governance movement has proposed that citizen involvement can reduce the transaction costs of monitoring personal behavior or corporate use of regulations. For example, Scholz and Wang (2006) found that the creation of local business-government partnerships increased inspection rates and decreased violation rates under the Clean Water Act.

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***We should understand the civic implications of third-party government.*** Assessing the civic implications of public policies offers us a means to protect democratic values in the midst of increased third-party delivery of public services. These delivery mechanisms are governed increasingly by performance contracts that focus on measures of cost-effectiveness and socioeconomic impact while excluding democratic values of due process. Simply by using third parties, the relationship between citizen and government is made more remote, the responsibility of any single actor is muddied, and the discretion of street-level bureaucrats is increased. This lack of visibility may make it easier for street-level bureaucrats to use discretion without accountability, reduce service quality, and ration services (Smith 2005). The measurement of citizenship outcomes would provide a corrective mechanism to such accountability problems by providing a means by which clients can express dissatisfaction with due process failures. Such measures could easily be incorporated into performance contracts and tracked by surveying clients. The policy feedback literature suggests that civic orientations are affected by how individuals feel they were treated, by the opportunity to voice their concerns, and by the perceived responsiveness of service providers. This suggests an understanding of customer service that is less centered on market ideology and recognizes the inherent standing of citizens (deLeon and Denhardt 2000; Crenson and Ginsberg 2004).

## Making Democratic Values Matter for Performance Measurement

There is a false choice between democratic values such as fair treatment and the values emphasized by the current approach to performance measurement, namely efficiency, effectiveness, and socioeconomic benefits. If we accept that public policies do impact civic dispositions and behaviors and that public agencies should not diminish civic capacities, the question of how to bridge the gap between the goals and practices promoted by a focus on "results" and democratic values remains. How should agencies measure citizenship outcomes?

### Policy Design Characteristics as Intermediate Citizenship Outcomes

While in the previous section we argued that the logic model of performance measurement tended to exclude non-mission-based outcomes, it serves as a useful framework for organizing intermediate from end outcomes (Hatry 1999). The policy feedback literature offers empirical support for a number of program design characteristics that can serve as intermediate outcomes. First, *procedural justice* reflects the

nature of interactions with state institutions and how citizens perceive they were treated and what messages were conveyed to them. Research from psychology has shown that citizens care about procedural justice as much as they care about distributive outcomes (Tyler and Lind 1992). Measures of procedural justice include whether people received services they were entitled, were treated correctly and with respect, and did not experience discrimination or corruption (Kumlin 2002; Lawless and Fox 2001). Faith in procedural justice can, in turn, help enhance cooperative governance, particularly in areas that rely upon coordination among multiple policy makers and stakeholders (Schneider et al. 2003).

Second, evaluations can assess *inequities* in program design and performance. Where appropriate, agencies should seek to disaggregate their performance trends among particular subgroups to evaluate whether some groups have significantly worse outcomes than others (Radin 2006). But evaluations could also look at whether all groups have equal opportunity to voice their concerns to program administrators and whether there are disparities among groups in terms of how they perceive program effectiveness and agency responsiveness.

Third, evaluations can examine whether *conditions of service* matter to citizenship. Research cited in this paper has shown that universal programs, curtailed bureaucratic discretion, the existence of an exit option, and the provision of service independent on judging or prescribing behavior tend to result in more positive citizenship outcomes. Conditions of service may not be easy to change for a particular program, but their civic implications should be tested.

### Measuring End Citizenship Outcomes

The policy feedback literature offers a wide variety of measures for end citizenship outcomes. In measuring social capital, Putnam (1993, 2000) uses measures of participation in civic and religious organizations, volunteerism, and political activity. Knack (2002) uses measures of social trust, volunteering, and census response rates. Brehm and Rahn (1997) consider civic engagement, interpersonal trust, and confidence in government. Similar measures have been developed in urban studies (Berry, Portnoy, and Thomson 1993), in studies of school reforms (Schneider et al. 1997), and in the community development literature (Holyoke 2004). Additional measures of trust include perceptions of program effectiveness, trust in public officials, satisfaction with democracy, confidence in government, and willingness to support state intervention (Kumlin 2002). Measures of political efficacy include whether individuals feel that they have the skills necessary for civic participation, that their actions can influence government, and that government is responsive to concerns once they are voiced (Soss 1999).

Program participation can be measured in terms of the number and background of individuals participating in public meetings, governing boards, or other participatory forums. Broader measures of political participation (e.g., voting and voter registration) may actually be useful for certain types of programs that are trying to draw causal links between social capital and program performance.[7] With increased devolution to nonprofits and other private entities, many policies now depend on citizen coproduction for success, and measuring participation in that context poses greater challenges. Program evaluations such as PART have had difficulties measuring the success of "capacity-building" programs. A more citizen-centered approach may solve these difficulties. For example, Scholz and Wang (2006) use an innovative way to estimate the effect of local network context on inspection and violation rates under the Clean Water Act, considering the number of local institutions, voter turnout, and census response rates. To examine watershed management partnerships, Leach (2006) offers a quantitative framework to measure whether collaborative public management meets normative participation ideals.

Figure 1 distinguishes between intermediate and end citizenship outcomes and suggests ways to measure these outcomes. The types of measures suggested in figure 1 do not require new or innovative forms of social science analysis. Most can be collected through customer surveys or more general population surveys. Aspects of procedural justice could also be easily collected through "mystery shoppers" who assess the nature of the service they received, through participant observation by researchers, or through natural experiments that control for client characteristics.

Actually linking program design to citizenship outcomes requires more detailed social science analysis. Again, this should not be considered a formidable barrier. One positive aspect of PART is that its demand for evidence of program success has reignited interest in program evaluations that make casual connections between program attributes and outcomes. PART therefore presents an opportunity to broaden and deepen discussions of program performance and impact. Applying a citizenship perspective to PART would move beyond what Dahler-Larsen (2005, 624) describes as the traditional goal-oriented approach of evaluation, which rests on a "relatively simple theory of representative democracy," to "theory-based evaluations," which develop and test causal theories for the relationship between policy design, administration and plausible outcomes.[8]

Therefore, our prescription for measuring citizenship is feasible. We know how to measure the key variables. At all levels, government agencies are asked to collect information on important outcomes and to undertake
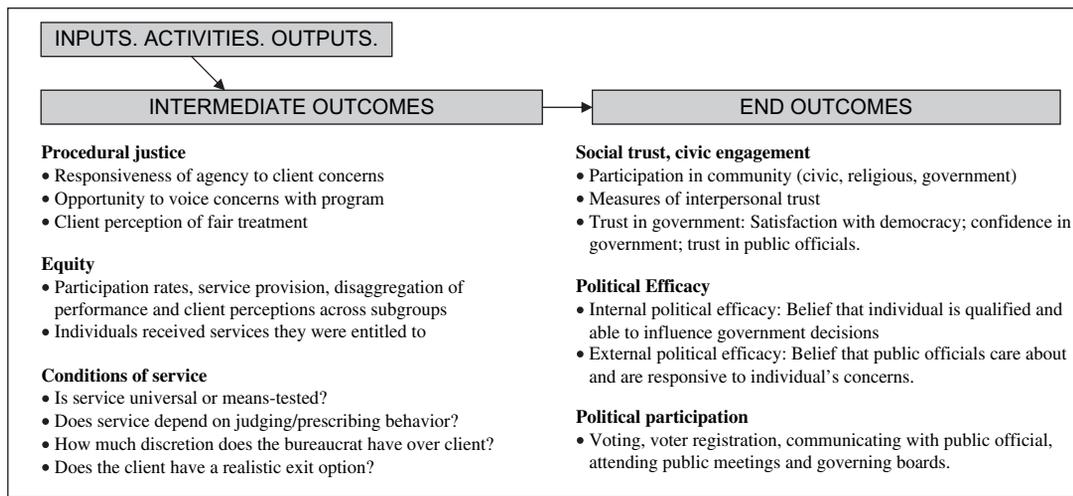
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**Procedural justice**
- Responsiveness of agency to client concerns
- Opportunity to voice concerns with program
- Client perception of fair treatment

**Equity**
- Participation rates, service provision, disaggregation of performance and client perceptions across subgroups
- Individuals received services they were entitled to

**Conditions of service**
- Is service universal or means-tested?
- Does service depend on judging/prescribing behavior?
- How much discretion does the bureaucrat have over client?
- Does the client have a realistic exit option?

**Social trust, civic engagement**
- Participation in community (civic, religious, government)
- Measures of interpersonal trust
- Trust in government: Satisfaction with democracy; confidence in government; trust in public officials.

**Political Efficacy**
- Internal political efficacy: Belief that individual is qualified and able to influence government decisions
- External political efficacy: Belief that public officials care about and are responsive to individual's concerns.

**Political participation**
- Voting, voter registration, communicating with public official, attending public meetings and governing boards.

**Figure 1   Measuring Citizenship Outcomes: A Policy Feedback Logic Model**

evaluations to demonstrate causal connections. It would be relatively easy to encourage appropriate programs to incorporate citizenship into their measurement strategies and evaluation efforts. In some cases, agencies are open to tracking citizenship outcomes. An example is the Community Services Block Grant. In 2001, 22 states tracked the number of volunteer hours devoted to community action activities, 15 tracked participation on governing boards, and 5 states measured the proportion of households that felt more "a part of the community as a result of community action efforts" (NASCSP 2003). And in 2004, every state tracked the number of volunteer hours in the community and 48 tracked participation in community groups and government boards. Initiatives to track such measures are encouraging, but are unlikely to be sustained if they are not given attention in performance assessments such as PART.

## Conclusion

In a well-functioning democracy, we expect citizens to be capable of self-governance, treated with equal respect and dignity, responsible to their communities, and active participants in political life. Evidence from the policy feedback literature suggests that citizen–government interactions can promote as well as undermine such visions of citizenship. Performance measurement has focused attention on the impacts of public policies, but in a narrow way, emphasizing socioeconomic and efficiency indicators as the only vantage point from which to assess program performance. We do not disagree with the usefulness of such measures. Rather, we argue that by defining performance in such limited terms, analysts and policy makers miss broader implications about how policies matter in a democracy. There is no intrinsic attribute of performance measurement that prevents it from refocusing administrative attention to democratic concerns. Indeed, it could become a powerful means to do so.

We have made a number of arguments for why we should measure the democratic context and consequences of public policies. First, public administration should employ a "do no harm" standard. Policies should not undermine civic capacities or send messages to citizens that their voices do not matter. Governments should be especially concerned that policies do create messages that some citizens are valued participants, while others are second class citizens. This paper has cited evidence from the policy feedback literature demonstrating such unintended consequences in program design. Second, politicians, political scientists, and public administration scholars tell us that citizenship outcomes such as social capital, political participation, and a citizen's relationship with government are vital aspects of good governance. There are, therefore, instrumental as well as normative reasons to consider citizenship outcomes. Third, our approach reorients performance evaluations to give voice to citizens. Having clients offer input can certainly help improve bureaucratic performance and foster accountability. But such feedback is in itself a civic act and can provide important political lessons and enhance one's sense of political worth.

We make a normative argument for grounding performance management discourse in democratic theory, but we do so based on empirical evidence that policies have citizenship outcomes. From a socio-psychological perspective, there is evidence that citizen–government interactions affect whether the "oughts" of citizenship implicit in democratic theory (e.g., voting, staying informed, tolerance of others) are strengthened. Conover and Searing argue that "the potential for citizen identities to motivate publicly oriented behavior turns on citizens' understandings of their role as citizens" (2000, 98). Public policies are an overlooked area where citizens can learn the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and develop the skills and motivations to sustain a liberal political

culture. The current approach to performance management has largely failed to acknowledge that such outcomes exist, or that public policies have anything to do with them. To continue in this fashion would be to willfully ignore how public policies, management and measurement matter to what it means to be a democracy.

## Acknowledgments

## Notes

1. See http://govinfo.library.unt.edu/npr/library/announce/hiapage3.html.

2. There is a detailed literature in political science on how political efficacy influences one's likelihood of being politically active (see Almond and Verba 1965 for an early articulation of this theory).

3. The Community Services Block Grant maintains a similar purpose to the original Community Action Plans of the 1960s and continues to fund the Community Action Agencies, first authorized in 1965. Approximately 90 percent of funding is directed to states and eligible local entities (mostly Community Action Agencies) that coordinate and deliver social service programs to low-income communities, families, and individuals.

4. Included in this set are the number of jobs created, new housing units constructed, and the provision of social services, including education, health care, transportation, and education.

5. PART calls for "independent evaluations of sufficient scope and quality conducted on a regular basis or as needed to support program improvements and evaluate effectiveness and relevance to the problem, interest, or need."

6. Details on these suggestions can be found at http://www.auditorroles.org/exemplary-practices/framework-of-roles-and-practices.html, and in Concepts Statement no. 2, "Service Efforts and Accomplishments Reporting," Governmental Accounting Standards Board, section 50(2)(c). The GASB notes such secondary effects as a decrease in traffic accidents because of an increase in the percentage of the population using public transit. However, we believe that this section could also be extended to citizenship outcomes those agencies that have extensive contact with the public.

7. Lang and Hornburg argue, "Observers of the urban scene have long noted the widely divergent impact that the same level of federal spending has on different communities. In some places you spend a dime and local government can leverage it into a million. In other places you can spend a million and it doesn't amount to a dime's worth of difference in the lives of most citizens" (1998, 8). Citizenship outcomes such as political participation, local citizen interaction with community organizations, levels of volunteerism, and involvement in local and agency decision making may shed light on why some places are more successful in translating investments into successful community revitalization efforts.

8. The policy feedback approach appears to be consistent with the type of approach to evaluation that Dahler-Larsen is discussing when he writes, "Parts of the field of evaluation are in clear alignment with the dominant doctrines of public management focusing on outcomes, performance, and the like. Other parts of the field of evaluation see it as their mission to deliver forms of knowledge and organizational feedback, which are richer, more nuanced, more learning-oriented, or more oriented towards transformative social change than that, which is in demand by the dominant management discourses" (2005, 637).

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