Applying the inclusive management to emergency preparedness for the effective collaboration

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I. Introduction

“Although there were many heroes at the Pentagon on September 11, heroism is not a commodity that can be purchased and warehoused. Preparedness is a direct function of planning and training” (Titan Systems Corporation, p. A-73).

Currently, addressing emergency, such as natural and artificial disaster, is an important duty of public administration. Governments need collaboration to address ‘wicked problems’ (Agranoff and McGuire 2003b; Hicklin et al., 2009). ‘Wicked problems’, such as the disaster, earthquake, terrorist attacks, etc., can hardly be handled by single agency. They often require collaboration with other agencies (Drabek & McEntire, 2002). In a sense, the effectiveness of inter-agencies collaboration is closely related to the outcome of emergency response system. Many articles state the importance of effective collaboration to deal with emergency. However, the effective collaboration among agencies and members to deal with emergency is not easy in reality. Many emergency managers also understand that it is hard to achieve the effective collaboration including hierarchical, command and control relationships (McGuire, 2009). For example, Waugh (2009) argues that many cities, counties, and states did not fully understand their roles and responsibilities in collaboration in the 2005 Hurricane Katrina disaster, which resulted in failing to implement the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the National Response Plan (NRP). That is, there is the gap between the ideal and the real about collaboration to address emergency. Therefore, it is meaningful to ask next questions. How can the effective collaboration to address urgent situations happen? What elements or aspects need for effective collaboration?

Several scholars emphasize the importance of public management to successful collaboration (Agranoff & McGuire, 2003; Meier & O’Toole, 2003; Provan & Milward, 1991; Hicklin et al., 2009). It means that public management can affect the success or the failure of effective collaboration. This paper examines the applicability of inclusive management to the effective collaboration to deal with emergency. An agency's response to emergency is clearly a function of its preparedness (McGuire, 2009). In a sense, the paper focuses on the processes and aspects of collaboration preparedness for effective collaboration on the basis of inclusive management which includes all participants’ own knowledge, perspectives, abilities, and resources to achieve the effective performance. In other words, the paper tries to find the roles and necessity of inclusive management in the process of collaboration preparedness for effective collaboration.
The 9/11 Arlington county case in 2001 (terrorist attack on Pentagon) is selected to examine the roles of inclusive management in collaboration preparedness. The 9/11 terrorist attacks on the United States in 2001 had a strong impact on the preparedness for and response to emergency (Waugh, 2009). Especially, response to terrorist attack through inter-agencies collaboration in Arlington in 9/11 is evaluated as a successful case for the effective performance to address emergency. When the pentagon attack by terrorists happened, many agencies to deal with attacks played their own roles and were collaborated with each other effectively. The paper makes a deep investigation of the processes of emergency preparedness to achieve the successful response to emergency by interviews and documentary survey. More specifically, the primary concern of the study is the roles and effects of inclusive management, such as informational work and relational work in emergency preparedness on the effective collaboration in emergency response. It is expected to find how to include participants with different abilities, resources and perspectives for effective collaboration.

II. Emergency, collaboration, and inclusive management

1. Emergency

What is the emergency? Emergency can be understood by its characteristics. Time factor to address urgent problems is important. As well, the consequences occurred by urgent situations often are huge and negative to all society. Kapucu & Wart (2006) state that emergency or catastrophic disasters have some characteristics; unexpected or unusual size, disruptions to the communication and decision-making capabilities of the emergency response system itself, and an initial breakdown in coordination and communication. The first characteristic of emergency is unexpectedness. It is hard to prepare all urgent situations. As conventional bureaucratic systems which are common in public administration system primarily focus on expected situations, they are not appropriate to deal with unexpected problems. For example, conventional bureaucratic systems rely on relatively rigid plans, exact decision protocols and formal relationships that assume uninterrupted communications (Kapucu & Wart, 2006). Due to the characteristic of conventional bureaucratic systems, it is hard to address the unexpected problems. The second characteristic is the unusual power of the effect of emergency. Because of the special power of effect, emergency often goes beyond the capability of one agency to deal with problems. Even though an agency has its own policy to prepare for urgent situations, it often is not effective to address emergency. Therefore, the collaborative efforts are needed to deal with emergency. The third characteristic of emergency is closely related to time to tackle the urgent problems. Delaying the problems may cause huge and severe results. Considering the aspect of time, conventional hierarchy systems are problematic. For example, hierarchy puts an emphasis on rules and documents like red-tape to deal with problems. However, emergency always requires the rapid and flexible decision-making. The fourth characteristic of emergency is the seriousness of consequence occurred by problems. The seriousness of consequence gives the big public concern, even though emergency rarely happens. For example, the bursting of dams in California in 1928 killed 500 people (Rogers, 1995). As shown above, emergency or urgent problems are different from