

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN THE BUDGET PROCESS: THE EFFECT OF CITY MANAGERS

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ABSTRACT. Much of the literature on citizen participation in the budget process links the council-manager form of government with higher levels of citizen participation, assuming the council-manager form represents professional administration. This is contradictory to the reality that different forms of government have “borrowed” features from each other and many now have mixed forms of government (i.e., adapted). The literature also contains ambiguities about city managers’ role in participatory budgeting. We review the literature and identify three competing theories about the role of professional managers in the budget process. We directly examine the effect of city managers in terms of their professional dimensions, institutional environment, and individual willingness to represent citizens. Using survey data from Florida, we demonstrate that managers’ professionalism, perceived political environment, and attitude toward citizen input are important factors explaining local governments’ adoption of participatory budgeting.

INTRODUCTION

Participatory budgeting is a process of democratic policy-making in which the government invites citizen inputs during the budget process and allow their influence in budget allocations. Participatory budgeting has drawn significant attention from public administration practitioners and scholars in recent years. According to the Worldwatch Institute (2007), about 1200 municipalities around the

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world had adopted participatory budgets by 2007. Based on a survey of U.S. cities with populations greater than 50,000 in late 1999 and early 2000, Wang (2001) found that 46.2% of the respondents reported that their cities involved citizens or citizen activists in the budgeting function. In a more recent 2004 survey, Yang and Callahan (2005) found the adoption rate increased to 66% for counties/municipalities with populations from 25,000 to 49,999 and from 250,000 to 499,999. Ebdon and Franklin (2006) studied factors that affect the adoption of citizen budgets and proposed an impact model of citizen participation in budgeting (see also Ebdon, 2000; Franklin & Ebdon, 2005).

However, evidence is inconclusive as to why some local governments include citizen participation in the budget process while others do not. Ebdon and Franklin (2006, p.445) acknowledge “we have relatively little generalizable empirical knowledge about the use of participation in budgeting”. We argue that the question of what factors drive a local government to invite citizen participation deserves more attention from public administration scholars. Even for some topics that Ebdon and Franklin (2006) consider “what we already know” rather than knowledge gaps, the evidence is not definite and more systematic examinations are necessary. For example, Ebdon and Franklin assert that the council-manager form of government is more likely to solicit citizen input, but the statement, largely based on results from interviews (Ebdon, 2002) or case studies (Franklin & Ebdon, 2005), is difficult to generalize. Furthermore, the assertion is not consistent with the empirical results from Wang’s 2001 study that finds no effect of the council-manager form. We submit that the controversy of the impact of the form of government reveals the necessity to investigate in-depth mechanisms and motivations within the local government context, especially the role of city managers in the decision process. As an initial step, this article aims to clarify the linkages between city managers and citizen participation in budgeting, examining whether and how city managers’ professional characteristics and attitudes affect local governments’ adoption of citizen participation in the budget process. After the literature review, the second section of this article outlines the methodology, followed by the findings and discussions. The final section draws the conclusion.

THE AMBIGUITY IN THE LITERATURE

In a much-needed article, Ebdon and Franklin (2006) develop an impressive typology of elements and variables that are important in describing and explaining citizen participation in the budget process in terms of its adoption, process design, mechanisms, goals, and outcomes. They suggest that the form of government makes a difference in participatory budgeting adoption in the way that “the council-manager form of government appears to be more likely to solicit input” (p. 439). To substantiate this conclusion, Ebdon and Franklin (see also Franklin & Ebdon, 2005) refer to several prior studies. One is the book by Kweit and Kweit (1981), which observes that “with the presence of a full-time professional administrator, [it] is more likely to seek citizen input than other forms of government” (Ebdon & Franklin, 2006, p. 169). Another is an article by Ebdon (2002), who finds council-manager cities are more likely to use formal budget-participation methods. They also make reference to Nalbandian (1991; 1999), who finds that city managers respond to a variety of community values and have increasingly treated community participation as an important administrative value and task.

However, those studies do not provide evidence that is strong enough to support the argument. Kweit and Kweit’s (1981) observation of the role of the form of government is based on case studies. Ebdon’s (2002) results are based on interviews with budget directors in only 28 Midwestern cities. Nalbandian (1999) does conclude that “community building has become part of the city management professional’s role and responsibility” and that “managers are increasingly expected to facilitate participation” (p. 187). However, Nalbandian also states “there is less adherence to the council-manager plan as the ‘one best form’ of government” (p. 187). He points out that adaptations to both council-manager and strong mayor forms of government have moderated the distinctions between the two and questions whether the remaining differences do have an impact.

In the literature of citizen participation in general (as opposed to the literature in the budget process in particular), the form of government is treated as an important predictor (e.g., Cole, 1974; Greenstone & Peterson, 1971; Streib, 1992; Wang, 2001). However, empirical research has left ambiguities about the impact of government form on citizen participation. Greenstone and Peterson

(1971), for instance, conclude that council-manager cities have more citizen participation than strong-mayor cities because information necessary to mobilize and empower citizens is often withheld in the latter (also see Streib, 1992). In contrast, Wang (2001) does not find evidence of such a correlation, regardless of the dimensions of participation. Cole (1974) even observes that council-manager governments have less, rather than more, participation. Yang and Callahan (2005) reveal that the impact of the council-manager form depends on the dimensions of citizen involvement: council-manager governments are more likely to adopt involvement mechanisms such as public hearings, community meetings, and citizen surveys; but they do not differ from other governments with regard to citizen involvement in strategic decision making, management, and service delivery.

There are many potential solutions, theoretical and methodological, to deal with the ambiguities in the literature, but one alternative is to question whether the form of government is a strong predictor of government behaviors, especially when different forms of government have “borrowed” features from each other. Frederickson, Johnson, and Wood (2004) find that in the past twenty years mayor-council cities have rapidly increased the use and the powers of chief administrative officers (CAO), powers similar to those of the city manager in the council-manager plan. They call this type of cities “adapted” ones or mixed forms of government. As they correctly observe, a majority of the cities are “adapted” and have a professional manager position. Thus, the claim that the council-manager form is better fitting for citizen participation does not square with the reality of “adapted cities.” In addition, the underlying assumption for using the form of government as a predictor is that city managers, who are centralized professional executives in charge of local governments’ daily operation, have a distinct role (Lubell, Feiock, & Ramirez, 2005). It is somewhat perplexing why the literature has largely used the dichotomous variable of the form of city government rather than including direct variables about city managers. It would seem natural to directly assess the mechanisms and motivations within the position of city manager, which may shape the adoption of citizen participation.

Unlike most of the previous studies, we are particularly interested in the role of city managers in involving citizens in the budget process. We are not alone in paying attention to city managers’ characteristics

and perceptions. For example, Yang and Callahan (2007) perceive that chief administrative officers' attitude toward citizen involvement is perhaps the most important explanatory factor in accounting for the level of citizen involvement in local governments. Wang (2001) observes that managers' and employees' willingness to be accountable is positively associated with the adoption of citizen participation. Marlowe and Portillo (2006) assume that city managers are important for citizen participation in local governments because if they "do not view participation as adding value to budget decision processes, they may discount it or even discourage it" (p. 180). Marlowe and Portillo (2006) focus on an after-adoption issue: how city managers perceive citizen inputs once the inputs are produced. None of the previous studies, however, include variables such as city managers' professional education, professional networking, professional experience, and institutional authority. This article attempts to fill that gap.

THE ROLE OF CITY MANAGERS

Competing Perspectives

There are very different perspectives about how city managers' characteristics might impact citizen involvement. Some scholars hold a "positive" perspective and believe that city managers are likely to encourage citizen participation. One reason is that city managers tend to be "modernizers" or public entrepreneurs who seek to experiment with scientific management tools (Berman & West, 1995; Feiock, 2003; Poister & Streib, 1989). Citizen participation in budgeting could be viewed as a management innovation. Another reason is that community building and participation have become a professional norm for management professionals in local government. Therefore, appointed managers may emphasize citizenship values over technocratic values (Nalbandian, 1991; 1999). We can label this first perspective as the "citizen leadership" model.

Another perspective is "negative" in that it is concerned with the tension between professional administration and citizen involvement (DeSario & Langton, 1984; Fischer, 2000; Kweit & Kweit, 1981; Simonsen & Robbins, 2000). For instance, Fischer (2000) indicates that "the tension between professional expertise and democratic governance is an important political dimension of our time" (p. ix). As public problems become highly sophisticated in modern society,

policy processes are increasingly dominated by professional experts. Such technocratic dominance, however, is likely to hamper citizen participation because administrative decision-making based on expertise and professionalism may leave little room for participatory processes. We can call this perspective the “technocratic expert” model. From this perspective, one might argue that since budgeting is a central and complex management function (O’Tool & Marshall, 1988; Simonsen & Robbins, 2000), professional administrators may fear that citizen involvement reduces administrative efficiency, and, as a result, they may discourage citizen involvement in budgeting (Bland & Rubin, 1997).

The technocratic model echoes the writings on bureaucratic personality and bureaucratic experience. In Hummel’s (1994) description, bureaucracies are in a “cold” environment in which employees are supposed to have no personal feelings, emotions, or judgments and treat various clients as cases without any distinction. Following Hummel (1994), Alkadry (2003) contends that professional administrators become indifferent to citizen needs because of their bureaucratic personality. That is, their responsiveness to citizens is constrained by their inability to take action or their unwillingness to take action given that they are constantly watched by their supervisors and governed by strict rules and job descriptions. Alkadry (2003) and Hummel (1994) aim to build a general theory and treat all bureaucratic administrators as the same regardless of the levels of government. We can call their theory the “bureaucratic indifference” model. According to this model, city managers’ personality and behaviors are shaped by their professional experience in a way that their tendency toward citizen participation in the budget process is constrained by their inability and their unwillingness to involve citizens.

Yang and Callahan (2007) try to integrate the citizen leadership model and the technocratic expert model in examining the factors driving citizen participation in local governments. In contrast to the bureaucratic indifference model, they suggest that chief administrative officers may internalize the professional values promoting community building and civic engagement as Nalbandian (1991; 1999) observes, and in turn, proactively seek citizen input. However, Yang and Callahan (2007) acknowledge the technocratic expert model may also play a role, indicating that the citizen leadership model may explain better whether there are citizen

participation activities while the technocratic expert model may explain better whether citizen input will actually make a difference in decision outcomes:

It is likely that professional managers treat involvement mechanisms as professional management tools and use them to obtain customer feedback and improve service quality...After the mechanisms are put into place, however, whether and how citizen input is used in strategic decisions depends on the political and institutional dynamics of a particular community. In particular, professional managers may fear that citizen involvement in strategic decisions will reduce their authority and power... (Yang & Callahan, 2007, p. 259).

Hypotheses

The models of “citizen leadership,” “technocratic expert,” and “bureaucratic indifference” provide different theoretical perspectives to think about how professional administration affects city managers’ behavior in regard to involving citizens in the budget process. Considering the three competing perspectives, we are interested in empirically testing three questions:

1. As city managers become more professional, are cities less likely to open the budget process to citizen involvement? (the technocratic expert model)
2. As city managers are more constrained by their inability to take action within the government structure, are cities less likely to open the budget process to citizen involvement? (the bureaucratic indifference model)
3. As city managers become more willing to listen to citizens, are cities more likely to open the budget process to citizen involvement? (the citizen leadership model)

City managers’ professionalism can be indicated by their professional education, participation in professional associations, and professional experience. Professional education is an important component of professionalism because it is supposed to enrich students with professional skills and professional ethics (DiMaggio & Powell, 1989). Evidence shows that the values and preferences of

city managers are shaped by the modern norms of professional associations and public administration schools, which may stress ideas differently from traditional perceptions (e.g., Lubell, Feiock, & Ramirez, 2005; Nalbandian, 1999). Considering the fact that masters of public administration (MPA) programs' faculty members generally support democratic administration and a larger role for citizen participation, we are inclined to propose that city managers' professional education (MPA degree) would increase their willingness to promote citizen participation in the budget process.

H₁: City managers' professional education is positively associated with the cities' adoption of citizen involvement in the budget process.

Professional affiliation or networking has been found to shape physicians' value and ideology about their professional service (e.g., Del Gaudio, Stein, Ansley, & Carpenter, 1975; Roback, Purdon, Ochoa, & Bloch, 1993). While city managers and physicians are in distinctly different professions, it is reasonable to assume that networking with other professionals in the same profession can shape participants' cognition, attitudes, and behaviors regardless of the specific profession (DiMaggio & Powell, 1989). Considering the fact that ICMA and its branches have been advocating for community building and citizen participation for years, we propose that city managers' professional networking would increase city managers' willingness to promote citizen participation in the budget process.

H₂: City manager's professional networking is positively associated with the city's adoption of citizen involvement in the budget process.

Experience is an important indicator of professionalism because it translates into immediate outcomes of work-related knowledge, skills, attitudes, and emotions (Alkadry, 2003; Tesluk & Jacobs, 1998). In political science, the length of time that state legislators serve in the legislatures is treated as a major aspect of their professionalism and is assumed to impact legislative behaviors (Fiorina, 1994; 1999). In other fields, on-the-job experience has been widely used to predict individuals' behavior in the work place (e.g., Quinones, Ford, & Teachout, 1995; Ruth-Sahd & Hendy, 2005; Tuggle & Sneed, 1998). According to the bureaucratic indifference model and the technocratic expert model, city managers' professional experience may be negatively associated with their inclination to

adopt participatory budgeting. Admittedly, as the citizen leadership model suggests, appointed managers may start to have more experience of participatory governance and management because community building and participation has increasingly become a professional norm for management professionals in local government. Nevertheless, traditional governance styles persist in many jurisdictions, and few studies have paid attention to how city managers' professional experience influences citizen involvement. We thus tentatively follow the technocratic expert model and bureaucratic indifference model, and hypothesize:

H₃: City manager's professional experience is negatively associated with the city's adoption of citizen involvement in the budget process.

City managers' inability or ability is affected by their institutional authority and political environment. Institutional authority or autonomy refers to the legitimate power delegation that a professional exercises within the organization. One of the main claims made in the medical literature is that physicians have a strong professional identity and value their professional autonomy. Thus physicians will try to preserve their autonomy and professional control and oppose any reform that threatens their autonomy (Gross, Tabenkin, & Brammli-Greenberg, 2007), a dynamic that is consistent with the technocratic expert and the bureaucratic indifference models. Based on this dynamic, there would be a negative relationship between citizen participation and city managers' institutional authority. Again, realizing that such a statement conflicts with the modern perception of city managers' leadership role in community development, we cautiously hypothesize:

H₄: City manager's institutional authority is positively associated with the city's adoption of citizen involvement in the budget process.

City managers' institutional authority is delegated by elected officials and their ability in the position is greatly influenced by the local political environment—whether the local politics is healthy and easy to deal with, and whether there is political stability. With unhealthy and unstable politics, city managers are likely to be distracted from substantive managerial issues, become risk-averse, avoid entrepreneurial actions, and not exercise their autonomy (O'Toole & Meier, 2003; Thompson, 1967; Yang & Pandey, 2008). As

Yang (2008) shows, public managers are less likely to involve stakeholders, including citizens, in measuring public organizational performance if public managers work in a hostile political environment. Similarly, we submit that a healthy and stable political environment should positively impact city managers' inclination to involve citizens in the budget process.

H₅: Healthy and easy politics is positively associated with the city's adoption of citizen involvement in the budget process.

H₆: Political stability is positively associated with the city's adoption of citizen involvement in the budget process.

As mentioned above, evidence shows that city managers' personal attitude toward citizen involvement is an important predictor of the adoption of citizen participation mechanisms (Yang & Callahan, 2007). Since a positive attitude toward citizen involvement reflects strong felt-accountability toward citizens, this attitude-adoption link is consistent with Wang's (2001) finding that there is a positive association between city managers' willingness to be accountable and the adoption of citizen participation. We thus hypothesize:

H₇: City managers' willingness to represent the community they serve is positively associated with the city's adoption of citizen involvement in the budget process.

We include two groups of control variables. The first group is about city government. Following Ebdon (2000), we consider cities' representative structure and government size, despite the fact that Ebdon (2000) does not find strong evidence to support the effect of representative structures. We also consider whether the mayor is full-time because a full-time position can be taken as an indicator of professionalism; full-time mayors have more policy knowledge and skills than part-time mayors. This logic has been used, for example, in measuring the professionalism of state legislators (Fiorina, 1994). In addition, we control for racial representation on city council as a diverse council is more likely to involve different groups of citizens to participate. Ebdon (2000) uses racial diversity of city population as a predictor but does not find empirical support. We contend that racial representation on the council is a better predictor than population diversity because it is council members who possess legislative power and determine city policies.

The second group of control variables consists of cities' demographic factors: population, population growth, poverty, and education. While Ebdon and Franklin (2006) assert that larger population sizes lead to more support for participatory budgeting, the relationship between population and participation is debatable in the literature, with some scholars contending that larger communities are associated with greater participation while others argue for the contrary (Kelleher & Lowery, 2004; Yang & Callahan, 2005). The influence of population growth has rarely been considered in previous studies on citizen participation. A rapid growth of population may lead to a resources shortage in a community. In the meantime, growing communities are more likely to confront newly-emerged interests and conflicts; they thus have to pay more attention to parochial development issues than do other communities, which further constrains governments' ability to involve citizens in the budget process. We also control for socio-economic status of cities, as more wealthy and educated citizens tend to demand more participation opportunities (Weber, 2000), while low-income and less educated residents usually have less desire to participate because of their work and family priorities (Irvin & Stansbury, 2004).

METHOD

Sample

The primary data source is from a mail survey that was designed for a broader project. Two different surveys with overlapping questions were sent to Florida mayors and city managers respectively from October 2006 through February 2007. The mayor survey focused on questions of institutions, budget process, and mayors' individual-level information. The city manager survey included questions about managers' interactions with the council, economic development policies, and managers' individual-level information. Florida is an excellent study site because of the great political, economic, and demographic variation among its cities. Among Florida's 404 cities, 276 (68 percent) have a city manager, city administrator, or chief administrative officer position so the questionnaires were sent to the mayors and the managers of those 276 cities. Responses were received from 203 (74%) of the city managers and 200 (73%) of the mayors. The number of cities with both a mayor and manager who responded is 151 (55%). Due to

some missing data, our working sample for this study consists of 141 cities (51%).

The sample is relatively representative. For example, among 276 targeted cities, 36% are small cities with a population less than 6,000, 39% are medium cities with a population between 6,000 and 30,000, and 25% are large cities with a population of more than 30,000. In our working sample, the three types of cities make up 28%, 42%, and 30%, respectively. The sample contains slightly more medium and large cities but fewer small cities. This is probably because small cities have fewer staff members to assist their mayors and city managers, who would then be less likely to respond. We conducted t tests to compare the sample cities with the targeted cities on variables such as population size, median income, education, and ethnicity; no statistically significant difference was found.

Measurement

Dependent Variables

The level of citizen participation in the budget process was measured by respondents' evaluation of two statements in the mayor survey: (1) the council considers formal recommendations on the proposed budget from citizen groups or committees; and (2) the council coordinates with local media to highlight the community input process. Both statements had a 7-point scale (1=never, 7=always). Adapted from the 1996 ICMA survey on roles and relationships of local government officials (see Ebdon, 2000), the two statements captured the levels of formal citizen participation and less formal citizen participation in budgeting at the stage of budget consideration (as opposed to budget preparation). Our survey did not include the other three items that appeared in the ICMA survey because in our pre-test, the responses to them were highly skewed with very small data variation. For example, "making the proposed budget document or summary available to the public prior to adoption" was almost universally used by local governments (35 out of 37 or 95%).

We first treat responses to the two questions as two separate dependent variables, "consideration of formal recommendations" and "coordination with media for input"; then we add up the values of these two questions and create a third dependent variable, the "general involvement." The first two dependent variables are measured at the ordinal level and their distributions are presented in

Table 1. The third dependent variable has quasi-continuous values ranging from 2 to 14, with the mean at 9.4 and standard deviation at 3.3.

Independent Variables

Regarding the professional factors, professional education was measured by a dichotomous item: a city manager holding the MPA degree was coded 1, and 0 means no MPA degree. Among the respondents, 52 (37%) have the MPA degree and 89 (63%) do not. Professional networking was measured by the level of respondents' involvement in the activities of ICMA and Florida City and County

TABLE 1
Distribution of the Dependent Variables

Values (1=Never, 7=Always)	Consideration of formal recommendations		Coordination with media for input	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
1	7	5	19	13
2	17	12	11	8
3	4	3	11	8
4	29	21	23	16
5	20	14	26	19
6	22	16	22	16
7	42	30	29	21
Total	141	100	141	100

Management Association (FCCMA). We asked how often they attended meetings and other activities organized by ICMA and FCCMA respectively, using a 4-point scale (1=never, 4=very often). We then constructed an index by averaging the values of the two items (M=2.2; SD=0.9). Professional experience was measured by the number of years a manager has served as a management professional in local governments. The score for this variable ranged from 1 to 48 years (M=20; SD=10).

As to city managers' ability, we used the number of department heads that a city manager can directly appoint or remove to measure managers' institutional authority. Among the 141 cities, the value of this variable ranges from 0 to 7 (M=4.9; SD=1.7). Healthy and easy

political environment is measured by the statement in the manager survey: "The local politics is easy to deal with," with 1 being "strongly disagree" and 7 being "strongly agree" ($M=3.8$, $SD=1.6$). Political stability was measured by mayors' response to the statement "The council sets long-term goals and provides direction for the city manager," with 1 representing "never" and 7 representing "always" ($M=5.9$; $SD=1.5$).

City managers' attitudes toward citizen participation was measured by city managers' evaluation of the statement "I gather community input and use that information to determine community needs during budget preparation," with a 7-point scale (1=never, 7=always). The responses range from 1 to 7 ($M=4.4$; $SD=1.7$).

Control Variables

As an indicator of representative structure of city government, elected mayor is a dichotomous variable: 0 being "directly elected by citizens" while 1 being "selected from the council". In the sample, 31% of the cities directly elect the mayor, while 69% select the mayor among council members. Similarly, full-time mayor is also a dichotomous variable with 1 being "full-time" and 0 being "part-time". 95% of the cities have a part-time mayor while only 5% have a full-time mayor. At-large election of council is measured by the percentage of at-large election seats. Racial representation on city council is measured by two terms: percentage of Black members and the percentage of Hispanic members on the council. Wang (2001) uses the number of full-time government employees, not adjusted by population, as the measure of government size. Since government size varies along with city population, the number of government employees per se may not accurately capture governments' resources and capacities. The simple use of the number of government employees may also cause a collinearity problem with city population in the model. We assume a curvilinear relationship between the number of government employees and the population size, so we adjusted government size by the natural logarithmic term of population and called it relative government size.

Population size was measured by the city's population in 2006. Again population size may have a curvilinear relationship with the dependent variables, so we used its natural logarithmic term in the model. Population growth was calculated in terms of the growth rate

from 1999 to 2006. The socio-economic status was measured by two items: the percentage of households below the poverty line and the percentage of citizens holding high school diplomas and above. The percentage of households below the poverty line may also be seen as an indicator of economic stress faced by city government. The demographic data were collected from city-data.com and reflected the 2000 census results.

Test Procedure

Since the first two dependent variables are ordinal, we used ordered logistic MLE models to estimate the extent to which a city government decides to consider formal recommendations from citizen groups or committees in the budget process (Model 1) and to coordinate with local media to highlight the community input process respectively (Model 2).¹ With the “general involvement,” which has quasi-continuous values due to the aggregation, the third model uses OLS regression. Prior to running the models, a correlation matrix was produced (not presented in this article) and no multicollinearity threat seemed to exist. According to Hamilton (2006), a better assessment of multicollinearity is to look at the variance inflation factor (VIF). The highest VIF value in our models was 4.6 (for the poverty variable) and most of the other values were below 2.0, suggesting that multicollinearity is not an issue in this study.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 2 presents the results with the coefficients and standard errors of the three models, while Table 3 reports the odds ratios of the two ordered logistic models. The results show that the two MLE models are statistically significant at the .001 level based on the likelihood ratio chi-square;² and they have Count R² 40% and 34% respectively.³ The OLS model is significant at the .001 level regarding the F value as well; its adjusted R² for the OLS model is 22%. These results suggest that the three models generally fit the data well and have acceptable explanation power. Our discussion will focus first on Model 1 and then compare Model 1 with the two other models.

All explanatory variables in Model 1 are significant at the .05 level and have the relationships with the dependent variable as hypothesized. First, professional education, or holding the MPA

TABLE 2
Results (N = 141)

Variables	1) Ordered Logit: Consideration of formal recom- men-dations		2) Ordered Logit : Coordination with media for input		3) OLS regression: General citizen involvement	
	Coefficient	Std. Error	Coefficient	Std. Error	Coefficient	Std. Error
Predictors in interest						
Professional education (MPA)	0.71**	0.35	0.19	0.35	.68	1.23
Professional networking	0.43**	0.20	-0.04	0.19	.27	.85
Professional experience	-0.04**	0.02	-0.01	0.02	-.03	-1.04
Manager' authority	-0.27**	0.12	-0.24**	0.11	-.52**	-2.95
Easy politics	0.22**	0.10	-0.05	0.10	.07	.46
Stable politics	0.36**	0.11	0.46**	0.12	.79**	4.28
Manager's attitude	0.20**	0.10	0.16*	0.10	.32**	2.04
Control variables						
Elected mayor	-0.36	0.37	-0.59*	0.36	-.70	-1.19
Full-time mayor	1.91**	0.96	0.21	0.94	1.17	.89
Relative government size	0.01	0.01	-0.00	0.01	-.01	-.70
At-large election of council %	0.50	0.41	0.05	0.41	.25	.37
Black councilors %	0.02	0.01	0.00	0.01	.01	.67
Hispanic councilors %	-0.02	0.02	0.01	0.02	-.01	-.40
Population (Inpop)	0.42**	0.20	0.46**	0.20	.77**	2.47
Population growth (99-06) %	0.00*	0.00	-0.00	0.00	-.00**	-2.12
Below poverty %	0.02	0.05	-0.08*	0.04	-.05	-.72
Education level	0.02	0.03	0.04	0.03	-.01	-.33
Model is significant at	.000	.000	.000			
R ²	Count R ² = .40	Count R ² = .34	Adjusted R ² = .22			

Notes: * p<.10; ** p<.05.

TABLE 3
Results with Odds Ratios (N = 141)

Variables	1) Ordered Logit: Consideration of formal recommendations	2) Ordered Logit: Coordination with media for input
	Odds Ratio	Odds Ratio
Predictors in interest		
Professional education (MPA)	2.03**	1.21
Professional networking	1.54**	.96
Professional experience	.96**	.99
Manager' authority	.76**	.79**
Easy politics	1.25**	.95
Stable politics	1.44**	1.58**
Manager's attitude	1.22**	1.17*
Control variables		
Elected mayor	.70	.55*
Full-time mayor	6.75**	1.23
Relative government size	.99	1.00
At-large election of council %	1.65	1.05
Black councilors %	1.02	1.00
Hispanic councilors %	.98	1.01
Population (Inpop)	1.52**	1.58**
Population growth (99-06) %	1.00*	1.00
Below poverty %	1.02	.92*
Education level	1.02	.97

Notes: * $p < .10$; ** $p < .05$.

degree, is found to have a positive association with seeking formal recommendation from citizen groups in the budget process, with an odds ratio of 2.4. The result is likely to suggest that city managers with MPA experience are more equipped with knowledge and skills necessary for citizen participation, and thus more confident to handle citizen involvement in the budget process. It is also likely that the socialization process in MPA programs may shape managers' cognition, attitudes, and decision making. Given that public administration scholars have been advocating for more citizen participation and democratic citizenship, observing a positive relationship between the MPA degree and greater motivation to involve citizens is not surprising.

Professional networking is significantly and positively associated with formal citizen involvement in the budget process with an odds ratio of 1.5.⁵ Professional networking is part of managerial networking from which county/city managers can get access to training, best practices, opportunities, and socialization. Meier and O'Toole (2003) find that managerial networking leads to better organizational performance. Our study further confirms the role of ICMA and its local branches in promoting modern professional values such as citizen participation, transparency, and democratic governance. The result suggests that professional networking does not reinforce the sense that budget decisions are territories only for professionals; rather, it helps managers appreciate the positive role of participatory budgeting. While public administration associations such as ICMA were perceived as merely voluntary with little or no influence over the entrance, promotion, training standards, and ethical performance of individual city managers (Stillman, 1977), their positive effect on participatory budgeting seems to be substantive at present.

Professional experience is negatively associated with cities' use of formal citizen recommendations in the budget process. The result can be explained by the bureaucratic indifference model which treats bureaucratic experience as a barrier for citizen participation because it produces a bureaucratic personality that is antithetical to individual responsiveness, participation, and flexibility (Hummel, 1994). This explanation is not necessarily contradictory with the citizen leadership model which observes that recent city managers may embrace community building and citizen engagement as a new professional norm (Nalbandian, 1991; 1999). It is reasonable to expect a high correlation between managers' age and their professional experience, so the impact of professional experience may reflect the influence of age. In other words, this finding may imply that younger managers are more likely to support citizen involvement than do senior managers because younger managers are more likely to be shaped by the new professional norm of citizen engagement. Nevertheless, while the data of managers' age are not available for this article, we expect future study to further explore the relationship between citizen involvement and managers' age.

Managerial authority is significantly and negatively associated with the adoption of citizen participation in budgeting (odds ratio of 0.8), as predicted in the bureaucratic indifference and the

technocratic expert models. When a city manager has greater institutional power, s/he is more likely to rely on formal administrative channels for decision making and less likely to open the administrative process to citizen involvement. A manager with great managerial authority is more likely to rely on professional knowledge, subordinate support, and hierarchical control. In contrast, a front-line professional administrator, given his/her constant interaction with citizens/clients, may be more likely to appreciate local knowledge and embrace citizen participation. This is particularly true for administrative functions that are complex and highly sophisticated such as budgeting. However, considering the measure of this variable—the number of department heads that the city manager can appoint and remove—the result may alternatively suggest that when the city manager has a greater span of control, s/he may have less motivation or time to involve citizens in the budget process.

Easy and stable local politics encourages managers to consider formal citizen participation in government budgeting, as both variables (easy politics and stable politics) are significantly and positively associated with the dependent variable (odds ratio of 1.3 and 1.4 respectively). In such an environment, citizen involvement is less likely to be controversial because citizens' preferences and expressions are likely to be stable, so city managers may feel fewer risks in involving citizens. In addition, managers facing easy and stable politics can concentrate on managerial and policy issues without fears about job security and dirty politics, so they are more likely to be entrepreneurial and to be responsive to citizens. This finding is in line with Yang's (2008) observation that a supportive political environment enables organizations to involve their stakeholders in performance measurement. While the public management literature has emphasized the importance of a stable environment for organizational performance (O'Toole & Meier, 2003; Thompson, 1967; Yang & Pandey, 2008), our result highlights the positive effect of such an environment in fostering open government, transparency, and participation.

As hypothesized, managers' attitude toward citizen input is found to be significantly and positively associated with local governments' adoption of formal citizen recommendations (odds ratio of 1.2). This confirms Yang and Callahan's (2007) observation that managerial attitude is a significant predictor of citizen involvement efforts by local

governments (see also Yang, 2006). More generally, the finding is consistent with the recent public management and bureaucratic politics literature, which demonstrates that bureaucratic values are far more important than external political factors in explaining bureaucratic decisions, outputs, and outcomes (Meier & O'Toole, 2006). Public managers do not just passively respond to external political pressures; rather, they make judgments about what is best for the community and strive to solve community problems.

Regarding the control variables, elected mayor is not statistically significant in the model, but full-time mayor is significantly and positively associated with the dependent variable. This finding is consistent with the result regarding the significant and negative influence of managers' institutional authority because the full-time mayoral position means that greater power is possessed by the political leader and less authority is delegated to the manager. Taken together, the results indicate that a more politically representative government is more likely to adopt formal citizen participation in the budget process, while a more managerially oriented government is less likely to do so. The results are in line with Yang and Callahan's (2007) conclusion that strong elected officials may be strong advocates for more citizen participation in the administrative process and decision making.

Relative government size is not statistically significant in the model. While Wang (2001) finds that larger government sizes are associated with higher levels of participation, our result suggests that, after adjustment for population size, larger government sizes are not associated with governments' adoption of formal citizen recommendations. Larger relative sizes may mean more resources and stronger capacity, which support more citizen participation, but they may also mean more red tape and stronger hierarchical control, which prevent citizen participation.

For council selection method, Black council member percentage, and Hispanic council member percentage, none is found to be statistically significant in the model. The result regarding council selection method is consistent with Ebdon's (2000) finding. Although Ebdon hypothesizes that cities with more representative structures—elected mayor and council members elected by district rather than at-large—may be more inclined to involve citizens in the budget process, she finds no evidence supporting the claim. The lack of effect from

minority council representation suggests that ethnicity may not be a good predictor of council members' attitude toward formal citizen participation. Certainly, this warrants more systematic examination by future studies.

Regarding the influence of demographic factors, population size and population growth are statistically significant in Model 1 at the .1 level. Formal citizen recommendations are more likely to be considered in larger cities than in smaller cities, a result that is consistent with Ebdon and Franklin's (2006) contention. It also echoes Yang and Callahan's (2007) conclusion that large population categories are associated with higher levels of involvement mechanisms. Two theories can be offered to account for this relationship: a larger population means more conflicts that lead to greater demands for participation, or it means stronger capacity and more resources supporting participation. The significant and negative impact of population growth may suggest that the governments' abilities and resources are greatly constrained by the rapid growth of the communities, which leaves little room for them to adopt community-wide citizen participation in the budget process.

In Model 2, the dependent variable, the extent to which city governments coordinate with local media to highlight the community input process, is a less formal and less substantive approach of citizen involvement than the dependent variable in Model 1. It is not surprising that the results from these two models are not identical. In Model 2, only 3 out of the 7 explanatory variables—managers' institutional authority, stable politics, and managers' willingness—are statistically significant at the .1 level, while the other 4 variables do not make a difference in shaping cities' inclination to highlight the citizen input process through local media. In particular, none of the three professional factors is statistically significant in the model. It might suggest that professional managers are more likely to adopt a formal approach of citizen involvement rather than informal ones. From the perspective of the citizen leadership model, professional education and networking enrich managers with professional norms supporting citizen engagement. Internalized norms and values may lead managers to support substantial involvement efforts such as considering formal citizen recommendations, but their effect on less substantive involvement activities may be tenuous. Highlighting citizen participation processes through local media may be conducted

for procedural and public-relations purposes. Such less substantive efforts may not be in the decision domain of senior managers, which explains why professional experience is not significant in the model.

In Model 2, elected mayor rather than full-time mayor is significantly and positively associated with citizen participation that is less formal and less substantive. This suggests that elected mayors, regardless of the time they spent on the job, are likely to appeal to constituencies by promoting citizen participation and transparency through local media. Population size is significant and positive probably because large population sizes indicate stronger capacity and more resources that are necessary to launch a public relations campaign. It is also likely that when population size is large, it is necessary to use the local media to make sure the information about the participation process can reach most residents.

In Model 3, the dependent variable is created by adding the dependent variables in Models 1 and 2. The aggregation is somewhat arbitrary since the two original variables were quite distinctive, but not exhaustive—that is, there are other activities or dimensions of participatory budgeting. Hence, the inclusion of Model 3 is only for comparison purposes. The results show several variables remain statistically significant, such as stable politics, managers' attitude, and population size. This makes sense because perceived political environment directly affects managers' calculations on stakeholder involvement (Yang, 2008), and managerial attitude toward citizen participation is probably the most important predictor of citizen involvement decisions (Yang, 2006; Yang & Callahan, 2007). External political environment and internal bureaucratic values are two of the most significant factors in explaining bureaucratic decisions (Meier & O'Toole, 2006).

CONCLUSION

While a common belief in the participatory budgeting literature is that council-manager governments are more supportive of citizen participation in the budget process than other forms of government, we argue that this belief does not square with the reality that many cities have adopted mixed forms of government. In an era when adaptive or mixed forms of government are increasingly popular (Frederickson, Johnson, & Wood, 2004), the form of government alone cannot capture the institutional complexities of local

governments, and it is more appropriate to directly measure the dimensions of a city manager's professional status and background in order to better understand how city managers relate to citizen participation in the budget process. In the meantime, the current literature is ambiguous on the relationship between professional administration and citizen participation as it provides contradictory arguments.

This article discusses the competing theoretical perspectives and examines how the adoption of citizen participation in the budget process is associated with city managers' professional factors, institutional environment, and willingness to represent citizens. The results suggest that this is a useful approach to study the adoption of participatory budgeting. Specifically, the results strongly support Nalbandian's (1991; 1999) observation that community building and citizen engagement have become professional norms for local government managers, as professional education and networking are positively associated with the consideration of formal citizen recommendations in the budget process. Even when the negative effect of professional experience seems to support the bureaucratic indifference and technocratic expert models, it may well just reflect the fact that new professional norms have emerged only since the mid-1990s and it is younger managers who are more likely to be deeply influenced. Furthermore, our results are consistent with the public management literature in finding that external political environment and managerial attitude toward citizen participation are important factors in accounting for local governments' decisions in the area of citizen involvement.

The study has limitations. The sample is from Florida, so caution must be taken in generalizing the results beyond the sample. Moreover, the results of this study depend on the way variables are measured. The dependent variables measure the extent to which local governments use participation mechanisms in budgeting, but does not assess whether citizen input really makes a difference in budgetary outcomes. Whether local governments allow citizen participation in the budget process and whether such participation really makes a difference in budgetary outcomes are different questions, for which the effects of professional administration may vary. Future studies may choose different samples and different ways of measurement to verify our results. In addition, the actual level of

citizen participation is determined by both the extent to which governments provide involvement opportunities and the extent to which citizens are willing and competent to participate. Studies occasionally used the demand-side (citizen-side) mechanisms to develop hypotheses and interpret results, but the focus of this article is on the supply- (government) side. Future inquiries may pay more attention to citizen-side factors such as the accessibility of issues critically important to citizens in the budgetary process. Despite the limitations, our results are informative considering the purpose of this exploratory study, which is to show that different dimensions of professional administration may have different effects on citizen participation.

NOTES

1. We also operated ordered probit MLE models. The results are very similar to those in the ordered logistic MLE models that we present in this article.
2. Likelihood ratio chi-square evaluates the null hypothesis that all coefficients in the model, except the constant, equal zero.
3. Count R^2 measures the difference between the predicted and actual outcomes on the dependent variable.
4. It indicates that in the cities with managers holding MPA degrees, the odds ratio of being in a higher level to a lower level of citizen involvement (in a 1-7 scale) is 100 percent higher than the odds ratio in the cities where the managers do not hold MPA degrees, controlling other factors constant.
5. The odds ratio of being in a higher level to a lower level of citizen involvement (in a 1-7 scale) will increase 50 percent as the index of professional networking increases one unit, holding other factors constant.

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