

*Power-Dependence of British Central-Local Government Relations and
Interdependence of International Relations in the EU*

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Abstract

The power-dependence theory of intergovernmental relations and the interdependence theory are well known approaches for analysis of intergovernmental relations and international relations. Both theories deal with political dependence and conflict in different fields, that is, the domestic political situation within the same regime of the state but different evaluation systems, and multiple states some of which belong to one regime but the other of which belong to different regime. Nevertheless, similarity between power-dependence theory and interdependence theory is worth exploring. In this paper I investigate power-dependence theory focusing on center-local governmental relations in the UK, and theory of interdependence focusing on the EU. The organization of this paper consists of three parts. First, outlined are power-dependence theory of intergovernmental relations by Rhodes and interdependence theory of international relations by Nye and Keohane. Second, I analyze characteristics of these two theories especially by considering common factors consisting of linkage, asymmetry and cost in the power-dependence theory and interdependence theory. Third, I scrutinize the power-dependence from viewpoint of the discretion of the local authorities through analysis of the financial policies in the UK. I also scrutinize the international interdependence from viewpoint of degree of the harmonization through analysis of effects of the directives in the EU. I also discuss sanction which is relevant to the discretion of the local authority in the UK and soft law in the EU.

Keywords: Power-dependence, interdependence, intergovernmental relations, international relations, UK, EU

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Power-dependence Theory in Intergovernmental Relations

In 1981, Rhodes presented power-dependence theory for analysis of the intergovernmental relations in the United Kingdom (UK) (Rhodes, 1981). Rhodes' concept of the power-dependence is based on the process of resource exchange between domestic organizations. In other words, the concept of the power-dependence is a counterexample of the traditional concept that the local government is the agency of the central government. Rhodes' power-dependence theory is addressed as policy networks (Rhodes, 1997, pp. 29-45). However, Morgan *et. al.* criticized Rhodes' 'governing without government' by showing their case study that "while central government may no longer be so directly involved in the local economic development arena, it continues to exert an extremely powerful influence" (Morgan, Rees and Garmise, 1988, p. 195-6).

Rhodes considered analysis level of the power-dependence theory composed of micro-level of analysis, meso-level of analysis and macro-level of analysis. The objectives of the micro-level of analysis are resources and internal political process. The objective of the meso-level analysis is pattern of interaction which is analyzed by corporatism as a theory of classification. The objective of the macro-level of analysis is distribution of power which is analyzed by corporatist theory (Rhodes, 1986a, pp.7-9). Rhodes proposed five propositions about dependency of domestic organizations. These propositions on the power-dependence are defined as

- (a) Any organization is dependent upon other organizations for resources.
- (b) In order to achieve their goals, the organization have to exchange resources.
- (c) Although decision-making within the organization is constrained by other organizations, the dominant coalition retains some discretion. The appreciative system of the dominant coalition influences which relationships are seen as a problem and which resources will be sought.
- (d) The dominant coalition employs strategies within known rules of the game to regulate the process of exchange.
- (e) Variations in the degree of discretion are a product of the goals and the relative power potential of the interacting organizations. This relative power potential is a product of the resources of each organization, of the rules of the game and of the process of exchange between organizations (Rhodes, 1981, p.98-9, Rhodes, 1986b, p. 17).

These organizations are summarized as four components; the central government, the national community of the local government, the local authority as the member of the national community of the local government and single function policy community. The relation between the association and central department is characterized by bargaining for resources. The resources in the above propositions are authority, money, political legitimacy, information and organization (Rhodes, 1986b, pp.17).

Interdependence in the International Relations

The interdependence in the international relations is the concept against the traditional view of the realist who believes the global structure is determined by the military power between states. Although the traditional view based on the military power has been accepted till end of the Vietnam War, new norm of the interdependence emerged

in the mid of the 70s motivated by the Detente between the United States and the Soviet Union. The emergence of this norm are due to two reasons; recognition for a new equilibrium of post-Vietnam War as a National Security Advisor of the USA (Kissinger, 1979, pp. 65-70), and recognition of crucial importance of soft power. Nye's belief about power of the sovereign is the military power, economic power and soft power. Nye proposed the soft power by the warning that the use of force might jeopardize economic objectives (Nye, 1986, p.10). In this context, Keohane and Nye called the concept of the interdependence the overall structure approach which does not differentiate among issue areas in the world politics. These issue areas includes not only the political issue, for example the nuclear disarmament negotiation resulted in the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks 2 (SALT II), which was signed in 1979 between USA and USSR but not ratified, but also the global environment issue represented by a report 'Limit to Growth' published by Club of Rome in 1972. The traditional view of the realist based on the state power never agreed theory of regime change. However, Keohane and Nye assert that as the power of states changes, the rules that comprise international regimes will change accordingly. They emphasize this dynamic, the regime change, is at the heart of their model on the overall power structure. From viewpoint of the interdependence, the border between the domestic issue and the foreign issue becomes fuzzy. The international interdependence also affects domestic matter (Nye, 2007, pp. 210-213, Keohane and Nye, 1977, pp. 42-46).

Comparison between Power-dependence Theory and Interdependence Theory

This section considers comparison between the power-dependence theory and the interdependence theory. First, actors of the power-dependence are organizations composed of the central government and local governments within the same regime of the state but different evaluation systems, while actors of the interdependence are states some of which belong to one regime but the other of which belong to different regime. The legislative rule in the power-dependence relations is the statute and common law, while the legislative rules in the interdependence relations are the international law including treaty and soft law, especially manipulating on the balance of power and collective security. Second, common factors between the power-dependence theory and the interdependence theory are linkage, asymmetry and cost of change. Concept of the linkage is essential both in the power-dependence in the intergovernmental relations and the interdependence in the international relations. The power-dependence itself is the concept of linkage between the central government and community of the local authorities. In the framework of the power-dependence in the UK there exist four kinds of linkages. Example of the linkage between the national government environment and the national local government system is a connection between Department for Communities and Local Government and the Consultative Council on Local Government Finance (Rhodes, 1986b, p. 101). Example of the linkage within the national community of local government is a connection among Association of County Councils (ACC), Association of District Councils (ADC), Association of Metropolitan Authorities (AMA), Greater London Council (GLC) and so on (Rhodes, 1986b, p. 255). Example of linkage between the national community of local government and the single function policy community is a connection between Police & Fire Committee of AMA and Central Fire Brigades Advisory Council (Rhodes, 1986b, p. 310). Connection between Education Committee of ACC and Advisory Committee in the Department of Education and Science is also above example (Rhodes, 1986b, p. 330). The linkage plays an important role in the

international interdependence theory. Nye pointed out that much of the political conflict over interdependence involves the creation or prevention of linkage, and economic sanctions are often an example of such linkage (Nye, 2007, pp.216-7). Asymmetry is also common factor in the power-dependence and the international interdependence. Asymmetry is a concept of unbalanced power between two organizations or states. Rhodes recognizes asymmetry in the intergovernmental relations (Rhodes, *The National World of Local Government*, p. 20). Nye pointed out that asymmetry is at the heart of the politics of international interdependence. He analyzed its reason that if two parties are interdependent but one is less dependent than the other, the less dependent party has a source of power as long as both value the interdependent relationship, and concluded that manipulating the asymmetries of interdependence can be a source of power in international politics (Nye, 2007, p.215). Cost of change is also common factor in the power-dependence and the international independence. Rhodes pointed out that unilateral action is not cost-free; as the cost becomes visible, the government either intensifies the attempt to direct local authorities or employs different strategies by recognizing its dependence on local authorities (Rhodes, 1986a, p.6). The cost of international interdependence corresponds to sensitivity and vulnerability, respectively. Due to Nye's definition, sensitivity means amount and pace of the effects of dependence: scale and quickness which change in one part influences to another part. Vulnerability means the relative costs of changing the structure of a system of interdependence (Nye, 2007, pp. 213-4). Difference between power-dependence and interdependence exists in sanction. Within the intergovernmental relations in the UK, the discretionary power of the local authority is conferred by the Parliament. Although the local authority can implement policies using conferred discretion, the local authority must comply under the principle of *ultra vires*. Therefore, the sanction does exist even if the local authority acts beyond the statute. In the interdependence relations, the bilateral treaty or multilateral treaty and many trade agreements or environment protocols never provide sanction based on the legal force. However, if the compliance is not maintained, stronger state sometimes maneuvers political sanction or economic sanction. For maintaining peace and stability, the balance of power and collective security sometimes require the political sanction. The states seek alliance, the balance of power and the collective security. NATO (OTAN) is the typical collective security. The Britain and the United States special alliance and Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between the United States and Japan are typical alliance. Japan-UK Foreign and Defence Ministerial Meeting is a linkage.

I also discuss degree of dependence in the power-dependence of the intergovernmental relations and interdependence of the international relations. The political agenda in the intergovernmental relations is featured by the bargaining between the state strategy and the local interest. The political agenda in the international relations depends on the regime of states. As pointed out by Krasner, the regime is defined as a set of principles, norms, rules and decision-making procedures around which expectations of actors converge in the given area of international relations (Krasner, 1982, pp. 185-7). The interdependence relations also exist between different regimes by considering balance of power. The financial policy seems the most uncompromising agenda between centre and local in the UK, that is, the financial policy is featured by the unilateral decision of the central government, while the local government is discretionary in the decision of the rate. However, the bargaining between centre and local exists in the form of the grant negotiation, where

the grant is provided by the central government to the local authority. The financial policy motivated by the big company and National Bank is featured based on the national interest. Sometimes states within the same regime attempt coordinated intervention to avoid financial crisis issued from the critical state. The agenda of the global environment is featured by almost all states. Although the purpose of the global environment is decided as the international protocol, this decision is an objective to be complied with sanction-free. The public policy is the agenda with sanction-free in the intergovernmental relations within the state and the Member States under the EU.

Table 1 Comparison between Power-Dependence Theory and Interdependence Theory

	Power-Dependence Theory	Interdependence Theory
representative Researchers	R.A.W. Rhodes	Joseph Nye Robert Keohane
Research Area	Administration	International Relations
Objective	Intergovernmental Relations between Centre and Local	International Relations among States
Common Concept 1	Linkage between Centre and Local Connection between Organizations, Policy Networks	Linkage between States
Common Concept 2	Asymmetry between Centre and Local	Asymmetry between States
Common Concept 3	Cost Unilateral decision is not cost-free.	Cost Short-term sensitivity Long-term vulnerability
Law	Law, Statute	Treaty, Soft Law
Sanction	Law with sanction	Treaty and Soft Law without sanction
Stability	Principle of <i>Ultra Vires</i>	Collective Security and Balance of Power Alliance

This Table is made by the author. Cited by Rhodes (1986a, b), Nye (2007), and Keohane and Nye (1977).

Power-dependence in the UK and Interdependence in the EU

I scrutinize power-dependence from viewpoint of discretion through analysis of the local finance in the UK and international interdependence from viewpoint of the harmonization of the directives in the EU. Policy networks have significant degree of autonomy from government (Rhodes, 2006, p.10). The discretion of the local authority is an evaluation measure of power-dependence in the intergovernmental relations. On the other hand, the directive of the EU must be harmonized in the Member States. Therefore, effect of the EU directives is also an evaluation measure of interdependence in the international relations.

First, I focus on the financial policies of the UK as an example of the resource-exchange process in the power-dependence theory, where the central government attempts to decrease local expenditure using the rate support grant (RSG), while the local authorities attempt to increase the rate with their discretionary power. The financial policy through bargaining of the rate support grant is an appropriate example to show the power-dependence theory. I trace short history of the relationships between the national government and the national local government system. The Local Government Act 1974 is codified to establish new financial management (Local Government Act 1974, Part 7A) and rate and charges (LGA 1974, Part 9). Rhodes pointed out that this Act sought to make changes in the fiscal system to coincide with the reorganization of local government (Rhodes, 1986b, p.107). Rates rose by 25% in 1974-75 (Travers, 1986, p.41). To cope with this situation of the enormous increase of the rate, the government set up the Layfield Committee to review the local government finance in 1974. The Consultative Council on Local Government Finance (CCLGF) was established in 1975. The Consultative Council seems to start in the context of the Layfield Committee. But Rhodes pointed out that CCLGF did not originate in the deliberations of the Layfield Committee. In 1974-9, the CCLGF played successfully in the grant negotiation in place of the AMA as the existing member of the RSG machinery (Rhodes 1986b, p.114). In 1975, cash limit in the grant system was introduced for the 1976/7 negotiations (Rhodes 1986b, p.108). Hepworth addressed that the grant aid using the cash limit is fixed in terms of the price levels considering the year of the expenditure rather than at the price levels with automatic adjustment for inflation in the previous November (Hepworth, 1984, p.29). In 1975-76, the rate support grant (RSG) increased by 66.5% which was never seen before (Travers, 1986, p.41). The central grant to local government amounted £ 8.4 billion annually and the total expenditure of the local government is £ 14.8 billion in 1975/6 (Rhodes 1986b, p.102). In 1979 the Thatcher Administration reduced the statutory services of the local authorities such as the school meals and milk. As a consequence of reduction of the statutory services, there was a room for the discretion of the local authority such as adult education service (Elcock, 1994, p. 115-20). The parental participation in the school board and parental school selection at the admission are also the delegation from the local authority to the parent (Education Act 1980). However, Thatcher's successive financial legislations to restrain the rate resulted in reduction of the discretionary services by the local authorities. The role of CCLGF was also declining in 1979-83. Because Secretary of State, Michal Heseltine, took unilateral requirement of the RSG settlement; 3 % reduction in 1979/80 and 5 % reduction 1980/81 in the targets of the Labour government's White Paper, *The Government's Expenditure Plans, 1979-80 to 1982-83* (Cmnd 7439) (Rhodes 1986b, p.140). In November 1979 Secretary of State, Michael Heseltine, announced block grant to cope with the overspenders, that is, the local authorities. In March 1980 against the block grant the local authorities also produced a joint alternative proposal by the ACC and AMC with the London Boroughs' and the Great London Council. However, in March 1980 this joint proposal was rejected by the government (Travers, 1986, pp. 87-89). The Local Government, Plan and Land Act 1980 set out the block grant. The block grant is a new system of the rate support grant. The amount of block grant for a year is the balance left after deducting the amount of domestic rate relief grant from the aggregate amount of the rate support grants (The Local Government, Plan and Land Act 1980, section 56). The Local Government Finance Act 1982 established rate capping which is limiting of rating power. The limiting of rating power is codified as follows; A rating authority shall not have power-(a) to make a

supplementary rate; or (b) to make a rate for any period other than a financial year (Local Government Finance Act 1982, section 1). Furthermore, Local Government Finance Act 1988 introduced the poll tax. The Thatcher Administration in 1979-90 is addressed by wandering RSG policies by many changes of unilateral legislation.

From this short history, it is seen that when unilateral decisions of the central government increase, the linkage for the negotiation between centre and local decreases. The power-dependence between centre and local financially depends on the budget of the local government. The local authorities' expenditure affects the discretionary activity. In the 1960s and 1970s, the statutory services was about 80 per cent of the local authorities' budget such as education and social service, and remaining 20 per cent was discretionary activities (Elcock, 1994, p. 115-20). Even in the statutory service, the discretionary power exists in the local authorities. As the Thatcher Conservative Administration reduced the discretionary power of the local authorities, due to the rate restraint policies, the power-dependency between the centre and local changed from bargaining in the 70s to unilateral central control in the 80s. The Thatcher Administration is remarked by frequent transfer of power from the local authorities to the private sector in the education, housing and health care, using the Act of Parliament. These examples are seen in the transfer of power from the local education authority to the privatized body corporate of the further education established in the Education Reform Act 1988, that from the local authority to the private tenant by the 'Tenant Choice' codified in the Housing Act 1988 and that from the Regional, District or Special Authorities to the National Health Service trusts codified in the National Health Service and Community Care Act 1990. Detailed study of the relationship between delegation and intervention in the education policy is seen in the literature (Nagata, 2015, pp. 95-106, Nagata, 2016, pp. 455-66).

Second, degree of discretion of the local authority in the UK is an index of the power-dependence of the intergovernmental relations, because the discretion is interpreted as trust. The discretion is tightly connected with the delegation conferred to the local authority by the Parliament. The degree of discretion is reflected not only in the local government finance but also legislation. I discuss the degree of discretion from viewpoint of the finance. In 2011-2012, local authorities' total expenditure is £ 162bn and the central government's total expenditure is £ 535bn, that is, the local government expenditure is 23 % ($=162/(162+535)$) in total managed expenditure, while the central government expenditure is 76%. About 63% of local authorities' total gross income in 2011-12 came from central government and the remaining 37% from local source. Total grant to the local authority is £ 87.4bn in the gross income of £ 162bn. The total grant consists of the specific government grants outside AEF (£ 18.6bn), the specific government grants inside AEF (£ 45.5bn), the revenue support grant (£ 5.9bn), the police grant (£ 4.5bn), the council tax benefit grant (£ 4.3bn) and the capital grants (£ 8.6bn), while the council tax is £ 22.2bn (DCLG, 2013, pp. 9-10, 14).

Third, as for the interdependence in the EU, I discuss degree of harmonization in the EU in a sense of effects of directive. Before proceeding to the discussion, the EU legislation is outlined. There are three basic types of EU legislation: regulations, directives and decisions. A regulation is binding like a national law with the difference that it is applicable in all EU countries. Directives set out general rules to

be harmonized into national law by each Member State as they deem appropriate. The directive requires individual Member State to set out goal to be achieved. A decision only deals with a particular issue and specifically mentioned persons or organizations (European Commission, http://ec.europa.eu/legislation/index_en.htm). The directives and decisions are also binding. Other than them there are non-binding recommendations and opinions. Especially, the open method of coordination is a procedure to set out the goal of the harmonized directive and monitor the achievement process of the goal. As the directives must be harmonized in the individual Member State, degree of harmonization is a measure of the interdependence between the EU and Member States. I introduce a survey concerning degree of harmonization in the Member States by focusing on three kinds of directives; the working time directive, the young workers directive and the part-time work directive. The working time Directive lays down minimum safety and health requirement for the organization of working time (OJ 1993 No L307/18-24). The young workers directive lays down so that Member States take the necessary measures to prohibit work by children (OJ 1994 No L216/12-20). The purpose of the part-time work directive is to implement the Framework Agreement on part-time work concluded on 6 June 1997 between the general cross-industry organizations (UNICE, CEEP and the ETUC) annexed hereto (OJ 1998 No L14/9-14). Degree of legal misfit of the Working Time Directive is medium (France), medium (Finland) and low (Germany), while degree of total policy misfit is low (France), medium (Finland) and low (Germany). Degree of legal misfit of the Young Workers Directive is low (France), low (Finland) and low (Germany), while degree of total policy misfit is low (France), low (Finland) and low (Germany). Degree of legal misfit of the Part-Time Work Directive is medium (France), high (Finland) and medium (Germany), while degree of total policy misfit is low (France), medium (Finland) and low (Germany) (Falkner, Treib, Hartlapp and Leiber, 2005, pp. 100, 125, 165). I calculated degree of misfit from Falkner's survey of effects of these directives. Degree of legal misfit of the Working Time Directive is low (27%), medium (47%) and high (27%), while degree of total policy misfit is low (53%), medium (33%) and high (13%). Degree of legal misfit of the Young Workers Directive is low (62%), medium (38%) and high (0%), while degree of total policy misfit is low (62%), medium (38%) and high (0%). Degree of legal misfit of the Part-Time Work Directive is low (29%), medium (21%) and high (50%), while degree of total policy misfit is low (50%), medium (50%) and high (0%). I also calculated averaged degree with weight one to low, two to medium and three to high. The results are the following: averaged degree of legal misfit of the Working Time Directive is 2.2 (medium), that of total policy misfit of the Working Time Directive is 1.1 (low), that of legal misfit of the Young Workers Directive is 1.38 (low), that of total policy misfit of the Young Workers Directive is 1.38 (low), that of legal misfit of the Part-Time Directive is 2.2 (medium) and that of total policy misfit of the Part-Time Directive is 1.5 (low). The averaged degree of misfit of three directives is low or medium. From this result, I can evaluate that interdependence between the EU and its Member State holds in the aspect of the harmonization of the EU Directive. Furthermore, I discuss sanction which is relevant to the discretion of the local authority in the UK and soft law in the EU. The discretionary power conferred to the local authority by statute is not subject to control by the courts (Garner, 1974, p.423), but this power depends on the doctrine of *ultra vires*. The *ultra vires* doctrine applies to every legal person including local authorities. The exercise of an administrative power is *ultra vires* (Garner, 1974, p.302). The EU directive is binding but sanction free, therefore, the EU monitors every Member State about extent of implementation

of the derivative and recommends next goal for achievement of the derivative using the Open Method of Coordination (Kröger, 2009, p.1-5).

Conclusion

The intergovernmental relations and international relations are different fields. However, the power-dependence theory and the interdependence theory interact each other. I attempted to study this interaction in this paper. After delineating the power-dependency theory of intergovernmental relations and the interdependence theory in the international relations, I discussed comparison between them. Especially, I focused on common factors between power-dependency and interdependence: linkage, asymmetry and cost. The linkage in the power-dependency is connections for bargaining or negotiation for achieving goals rather than relations of dispute or conflict between central government and local government. However, when unilateral decisions of the central government increase, the linkage for the negotiation declines and the litigations against the central government occur, as seen in the mid of the 80s. It is true that asymmetry exists in the intergovernmental relations. However, Page criticized the power-dependence theory because levels of central government are embedded in complex network and the scope for unilateral influence upon the policy process is limited (Rhodes, 1986a, p. 5, Page, 1982, p. 336). As for cost, Rhodes pointed out that unilateral action is not cost-free (Rhodes, 1986a, p. 6). This lesson is examined by the wandering policies of the rate support grant by unilateral legislation in the Thatcher Administration. I also discussed the power transfer from the local authority to the privatized sector in education, housing and health in the 1980s. As for power-dependency in the intergovernmental relations, the degree of discretion in the UK was studied from the budget of the local authority. It is observed that the discretion in the UK is explained by (1) local authorities' total expenditure is 23% (£ 162bn) in total managed expenditure, (2) local authorities' total gross from central government (63%) and local source (37%), and (3) the total grant (£ 87.4bn) in the gross income of £ 162bn in 2011-2012. The degree of harmonization in the EU is also important index in the interdependence. From the survey of effects of three EU directives, the averaged degree of misfit of three directives is low or medium. From this evaluation, I can conclude that EU harmonization is well worked.

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