The Civil Service System in Taiwan

S U. Tsai-Tsu
National Taiwan University

Taiwanese Civil Service Workforce

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>1995</th>
<th>2012</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>total personnel (persons)</td>
<td>440,386</td>
<td>343,851</td>
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<tr>
<td>male : female (%)</td>
<td>69% : 31%</td>
<td>60% : 40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>average age (years)</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>43.4</td>
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<td>college degree or higher (%)</td>
<td>57.5%</td>
<td>85.3%</td>
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<td>central : local government (%)</td>
<td>55.0% : 45.0%</td>
<td>54.6% : 46.4%</td>
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Social Status of Civil Servants

- Before entering the 21st century, civil service was credited for Taiwan's outstanding economic performance.
- In the past decade, Taiwanese civil service has degenerated into bureaucratic passivity, and gradually reduced their initiative-taking in policy making.
- Civil service positions are still attractive to young people, but it does not enjoy as much power or receive as much respect from citizens as previously.
Why Bureaucratic Capacity Declined?
1) International economic uncertainties and fast-changing globalized world;
2) Taiwan's democratization process over the past two decades;
   -- Demanding citizens, aggressive legislators, and a noisy mass media jointly transformed the once-insulated bureaucratic organization into a transparent fish tank.

Public Personnel Authority
• Dual supervision – Both the Examination Yuan and the Directorate-General of Personnel Administration (DGPA) of the Executive Yuan are in charge of making and implementing personnel policy.

Public Personnel Authority
• Dual supervision;
• Centralized management system –
The central government exercises its top-down control through the appointment of all personnel managers in local jurisdictions.
Recruiting & Selection
- Those who want to serve as civil servants must pass a civil service exam and be assigned to a public organization based on exam scores and preferences.
- The independent Examination Yuan is responsible for administering all civil service exams, which are perceived as fair and impartial.

Criticism on Selection
- Low test validities; e.g., most civil service exams employ written tests only.
- The senior-ranked positions are not open to individual outside the civil service.

Training and Development
- providing more systemized training programs, focusing more on senior-ranked officials;
- an emphasis on global vision and international connection;
- including more societal resources to form public-private partnership in training.
Pay and Pensions

- The government pays significantly more for elementary-ranked civil servants than the private sector, but not so for junior- and senior-ranked employees.
- Lucrative retirement pension scheme.
  (Under the proposed pension reform, the income-replacement ratio will be limited to no more than 80%.)

Performance Appraisal System

- Civil servants should be rated into grades A, B, C or D. If rated D, he/she is to be dismissed from the civil service.
- The current system sets an upper limit for the % of personnel who can receive grade A in each organization.
- Supervisors not only lack incentives to evaluate employees in accordance with their real job performance, also avoiding giving C or D.

Proposed Reforms & Challenges

- Improve the recruiting and selection process by enhancing test validities;
- Amend the Civil Service Performance Evaluation Act by setting a mandatory ratio of Grade C;
- Reform the public service pension system by raising the retirement age, increasing public servants' contribution to the pension fund, and reducing pension payments.
- To reform civil service, the Executive Yuan and the Examination Yuan need the support of the Legislative Yuan.