

# Research on Civil Servant Incentive Mechanism

Lili Zhou\*

Yunnan University of Finance and Economics, School of Finance and Public Administration, Kunming, Yunnan, 650221, China

\*Corresponding author : Lili Zhou, 825893527@qq.com

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**Abstract:** Civil servants are the largest group to participate in the exercise of state power. With the advent of globalization, the importance of civil servants to the country is becoming more and more obvious. Whether civil servants have profound cognitive power, strong execution power and United spirit is related to the administrative efficiency of the government. Therefore, it is very important to study the incentive mechanism of civil servants. In recent years, the incentive mechanism of civil servants in China has gradually moved towards a scientific and institutionalized track. The motivation of civil servants should adhere to the organic unity of material motivation and spiritual motivation, and at the same time pay attention to the principle of unifying the merit system, incentive standards and incentive effects of grassroots civil servants. However, in reality, there are still some problems in the civil service system, such as the design of salary system is not strong, the design of promotion system is insufficient for grassroots civil servants, the design of training system can not effectively promote the career development of grassroots civil servants, and there is a lack of perfect fault-tolerant and error-correcting mechanism for civil servants. Incentive is conducive to civil servants to give full play to their potential, show their talents and perform their duties. Therefore, it is very important to achieve effective incentives for civil servants.

**Keywords:** Grass-roots civil servants; Civil service system; Excitation mechanism

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## 1. Introduction

Civil servants are related to whether a political party can govern the country well, whether it can be in power for a long time, and whether it can meet the growing needs of the people. Studying the incentive mechanism of civil servants can enhance the ability of political parties to solve problems, narrow the distance between political parties and the people, help the country maintain long-term stability and enhance the advanced nature of civil servants. In recent years, China's civil servant incentive system has gradually embarked on a scientific and institutionalized road. However, at present, the incentive mechanism of civil servants in China is still not perfect, especially the improvement of their work enthusiasm and job satisfaction. Therefore, the incentive mechanism of civil servants has become an effective way to build civil servants in China. Studying the incentive mechanism of civil servants is conducive to better stimulating the initiative of civil servants and improving the work efficiency of civil servants.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1 Research on Incentive Mechanism of Foreign Civil Servants

Wilson put forward that the incentive theory of management should be applied to the management of civil servants, and the enthusiasm of civil servants should be fully mobilized through salary and promotion, so as to improve the efficiency of

government work. Guy Peter believes that we should go deep into the hearts of civil servants and understand their needs, so as to arouse their enthusiasm for work. He believes that in addition to the daily needs of civil servants, self-realization motivation is also one of the important driving forces to mobilize civil servants to work actively. Robert Harden believes that the salary of civil servants is not as high as possible, but should be at a medium level, and they should be encouraged by means of bonuses and allowances, so as to maintain a long-term incentive effect.

## **2.2 Research on Incentive Mechanism of Domestic Civil Servants**

Wang Junying (2011) proposed that the incentive mechanism of civil servants includes material incentive and spiritual incentive, specifically, it includes promotion incentive mechanism, administrative honor mechanism, “honest salary” system and “honest provident fund” system. Wu Chao (2019) thinks that it is necessary to realize the construction of public fair salary system in order to enhance the work enthusiasm of civil servants. Guo Chunxia (2018) used the hierarchical demand and two-factor theory to analyze various problems faced by grassroots civil servants. He believed that the treatment of civil servants should be improved, especially the compensation for overtime work of civil servants, so as to mobilize the enthusiasm of civil servants.

## **3. Analysis on the Dilemma of Civil Servant Incentive Mechanism in China**

### **3.1 wage system incentive concept is not strong.**

#### **3.1.1 The wage survey system has not yet been established.**

Salary is the direct embodiment of the labor value of civil servants, and it is also the most basic form of material incentives. The salary of civil servants is related to their quality of life, so the salary plays an important incentive role. The low salary, slow increase, less subsidies and heavy work do not match, which leads to the lack of initiative of civil servants. The establishment of salary survey system is the premise of the scientific and steady increase of civil servants' salary, which guarantees the life of civil servants, promotes the civil servants' group to identify with their own careers, and plays a very important role in encouraging civil servants to act positively. With the reform of wage system, the salary of civil servants in China has reached the average level of various industries, but there is still a big gap compared with high-income industries. The wage survey system enables civil servants to have a steady increase in wages and gives them stable expectations. However, the investigation and management mechanism of civil servants' salary has not yet been established in China. Due to the lack of specific evaluation criteria, price increase, slow salary increase and imperfect subsidy system, the salary of civil servants in China has not been dynamically adjusted with the wage level of enterprises and economic and social development.

#### **3.1.2 The wage structure is out of balance**

The basic salary and bonus of posts and ranks have obvious incentive function, so in order to highlight the incentive effect of salary on civil servants, it is necessary to increase the proportion of basic salary of civil servants. Only by increasing the proportion of basic salary can its changes greatly affect income, thus enabling civil servants to work actively, so as to better complete their tasks and promote their ranks. However, compared with the general wage ratio of 60%-80%, China's basic wage ratio only accounts for 45%, and the design of civil servant wage system is obviously unbalanced.

#### **3.1.3 Lack of fairness in wages**

In order to improve civil servants' professional identity and encourage them to act positively, fairness is an important prerequisite. Without fairness, justice and a good development environment, outstanding talents cannot be retained. China has been implementing a centralized and unified salary management system for civil servants. However, with the implementation of the reform and opening-up policy, there is a big gap between the economic development levels of various regions, and there is also a big gap between the salary levels of civil servants and employees of enterprises in economically developed areas. If the treatment of highly sophisticated personnel cannot be different from that of ordinary civil servants, it will also lead to the brain drain of civil servants. Since the country began to implement the financial system of “eating in different kitchens” and allowed local governments to adjust their own allowances and subsidies, the salaries of civil servants have been greatly improved, which has also improved their initiative in work, but it has also caused problems such as too many items of allowances and subsidies for civil servants and a large gap in levels. In practice, governments at all levels and even various departments can introduce subsidy policies, which leads to the relatively loose management of the subsidy system in various

regions by the central government, and the lack of unfairness in the wage system reduces the enthusiasm of civil servants.

#### **3.1.4 The incentive effect of bonus materials is low.**

Bonus accounts for most of the salary incentive function, but it does not play a big role in material incentives. According to the Civil Servant Law, the amount of year-end bonus that civil servants can enjoy is small, and the bonus of civil servants is generally not high, which is not conducive to opening the salary level of civil servants with different efforts.

### **3.2 The promotion system design lacks incentives for grassroots civil servants.**

#### **3.2.1 The rank promotion system is not inclined to grassroots civil servants.**

Promotion is one of the most important contents in the incentive mechanism of civil servants. However, due to the long-term freezing of personnel and other reasons, many outstanding grass-roots civil servants did not have the opportunity or missed the opportunity to work in the higher authorities. Because there are more grassroots leaders and fewer leadership positions that can be promoted, it is possible that the number of lateral transfer personnel is full or exceeds the number of positions, so that the next rank cannot be promoted. Compared with the superior civil servants, the rank promotion of grass-roots civil servants is still weak, and the space for promotion to the grass-roots level is smaller and the number is smaller. Therefore, in the composition of cadres, a top-down pyramid is formed from top to bottom. The lower the number, the lower the status and the worse the treatment, which greatly restricts the enthusiasm of grassroots civil servants.

#### **3.2.2 Compared with leading cadres, rank promotion of ordinary civil servants is weak.**

The Civil Service Law stipulates: "The leadership positions and ranks held by civil servants can be full-time and part-time." This has led to competition between leading cadres at all levels and ordinary civil servants, which has led to a single career promotion channel for civil servants in China and a narrow career development space. Moreover, the promotion of leading cadres will generally occupy the space of rank promotion of ordinary civil servants, which on the one hand reduces the incentive effect of rank promotion on ordinary civil servants, and at the same time, it also affects the fairness of opportunities in the process of rank promotion of civil servants in a certain sense. Once the fairness of opportunity is destroyed, it may lead to problems such as low work efficiency, weak sense of service and weak sense of responsibility in the process of performing duties.

#### **3.2.3 There is substantial unfairness in the promotion period.**

Because the promotion of the rank of chief clerk at the central and provincial levels has not yet restricted the proportion of posts, it can be promoted naturally after the specified number of years, while ordinary civil servants have restrictions at the rank of chief clerk, and only a few grassroots civil servants can achieve promotion. Therefore, for young people who are also new to the administrative organs, the promotion speed of civil servants at the central and provincial levels is faster than that of grassroots civil servants. Due to the large number of grass-roots civil servants, there are fewer positions that can be promoted, so they can get few promotion opportunities.

### **3.3 Training system design can not effectively promote the career development of grass-roots civil servants**

#### **3.3.1 Lack of training opportunities**

Due to financial pressure, complicated work and other reasons, only leading cadres usually have training opportunities, while ordinary civil servants can get few training opportunities. Even if ordinary civil servants have the opportunity of education and training, not everyone can pursue further education and training. Many grass-roots civil servants have little chance to go abroad for further study except for initial training. Civil servant training is not only an obligation, but also a right. Grass-roots civil servants are the concrete implementers of policies. They are the closest group to the masses, and their service quality and service level are directly related to the people's satisfaction with the government. Therefore, their understanding of policies, their proficiency in skills and their understanding of advanced experience are related to the effect of policy implementation, so it is very important to protect the training rights of grass-roots civil servants through system formulation.

#### **3.3.2 The training content is not rich enough.**

At present, the training of grass-roots civil servants is mostly organized by local party schools, and the content of training is mainly theoretical learning, which usually does not meet their own business needs. Different types and positions of civil

servants need different skills, and exams for different majors and ranks are also different. Because of the lack of classified training system, it is impossible to carry out targeted training for civil servants, so their attitude towards training is mostly perfunctory.

### **3.3.3 Insufficient application of training results**

The significance of training is to enable civil servants to improve their professional skills through training and make civil servants work actively, and these functions need to be fed back through training results. In fact, training has not yet established a collaborative mechanism for civil servant assessment and promotion, and training is only a single part of civil servant management, and the training results of civil servants are also lacking in inspection, evaluation and application. This has caused civil servants to be indifferent to the training results, thus affecting their skills and career development.

## **3.4 Lack of fault-tolerant and error-correcting mechanism for civil servants**

### **3.4.1 Under the guidance of control, civil servants lose their autonomy and initiative in their work.**

One of the important foundations of the development of modern society is people-oriented. With the popularization of people-oriented concept, more and more grass-roots civil servants begin to pay attention to their rights and interests in work and life. At present, our government departments overemphasize organizational authority and personal obedience, which leads to some civil servants' inaction and laziness in their work. However, too much emphasis on obedience will lead to the lack of initiative and courage of ordinary civil servants because of their superiors' responsibilities, and leading cadres will be timid and afraid to act because they have taken on too many responsibilities.

### **3.4.2 Lack of incentives for positive actions**

At present, China's punishment system for civil servants' violation of law and discipline is becoming more and more perfect, but no fault-tolerant and error-correcting mechanism has been established for civil servants. The responsibility for administrative inaction can only be investigated according to relevant laws and regulations, which is unfavorable to administration according to law. It is urgent to establish relevant supervision mechanisms and punishment mechanisms. However, the lack of a clear basis for investigating the problems of inaction, laziness and poor service attitude has led to the result that lazy politicians sit on the sidelines and active officials can't display their hands and feet. Since a perfect accountability system has not been established, the government's handling of the phenomenon of inaction and laziness mostly stays in criticism and education. Unless serious consequences are caused, few civil servants are punished for inaction and laziness. Due to asymmetric information, it is difficult to define inaction and laziness, and so on, there are indeed many problems in the supervision of inaction and laziness, which need to be further standardized at the institutional level.

## **4. Optimal design of civil servant incentive mechanism**

### **4.1 Pay attention to the incentive function when designing the wage system.**

#### **4.1.1 Establish civil servant salary survey system as soon as possible.**

In order to truly implement the salary system of civil servants in China, we must continue to improve the legal growth mechanism of basic wages in China and establish and improve the salary survey system of civil servants as soon as possible. First of all, according to the actual situation of our country, we should construct a set of statistical index system of salary survey and standardize it in more detail. Secondly, it is necessary to build a statistical data basket of salary level survey, and when determining the sample, it is necessary to conduct stratified sampling and comparison with the enterprise attributes.

#### **4.1.2 Improve the salary management system.**

The imperfect subsidy system leads to the imbalance and unfairness of the salary system of civil servants in China. Since 2005, China has started to standardize the management of civil servants' allowances and subsidies, and has achieved great results, but there are still some institutional contradictions. At present, China implements a unified basic work standard that is centrally managed by the central government, but the economic development level of different places is quite different, which makes the unified basic salary management system contradict with the civil servant incentive that adapts to the local price level. Although there is a certain gap in the degree of economic development in different regions, on the whole, the salary elasticity of grass-roots civil servants is low, and "material reward" can not adapt to economic development and it is difficult to adapt to the development and changes of market economy. Therefore, it is necessary to clarify the respective powers of

the central and local governments. First of all, we should strengthen the control of local government subsidies, standardize local government financial subsidies, standardize local government financial subsidies, and make appropriate adjustments to the types and standards of government financial subsidies. Secondly, the central government should give local governments full authority to manage basic wages, and no longer implement unified basic wage payment standards. According to local conditions, the basic wage standard that adapts to the level of economic development in various places can be introduced, so that civil servants can be effectively motivated.

#### **4.1.3 Increase the bonus amount**

Rewards can promote the enthusiasm of civil servants, and the issuance of bonuses is also a concrete embodiment of performance appraisal. After the reform, the performance bonus of civil servants has been improved, but it is still less on the whole. In addition, the payment of performance bonus is linked to the job rank, so the corresponding performance bonus of ordinary civil servants is less. Therefore, the performance bonus plays a little role in the assessment results, which greatly reduces the incentive effect of performance bonus on civil servants. In order to increase the incentive effect of performance bonus on civil servants' work, we should increase the amount of different types of bonuses, have more rewards in material terms, distinguish the efforts of different civil servants through the results of assessment, and widen their wage gap, so as to really stimulate civil servants' work enthusiasm and improve their work attitude.

### **4.2 Promotion system design is inclined to grassroots civil servants.**

#### **4.2.1 Optimize the rank promotion structure of grass-roots civil servants**

Grass-roots civil servants are the concrete implementers of the major policies of the country, and their values and behaviors have a direct impact on the vital interests of the people, so it is very important to motivate grass-roots civil servants. In the design of rank structure, we should fully tilt towards grass-roots civil servants. First, we should abolish the ceiling restrictions on rank promotion by organs at all levels. Secondly, we should increase the allocation ratio of rank positions of grass-roots civil servants, break the ceiling of rank promotion of grass-roots civil servants, and make them work actively.

#### **4.2.2 Strengthen the fairness in the process of rank promotion**

First of all, we should avoid the phenomenon of "dual-channel" competition in job promotion. In rank, civil servants who hold leading positions shall not encroach on the promotion opportunities of ordinary civil servants. Different levels of civil servants should have different promotion channels. Secondly, it is necessary to adjust the promotion time of civil servants at all levels according to the specific situation at the grassroots level. For a new generation of civil servants with excellent work, under the premise of increasing the intensity of public direct election, they can be appropriately upgraded to give them more career development space and promotion opportunities. In order to prevent grass-roots civil servants from facing the ceiling of career promotion prematurely, the service life of rank promotion can be adjusted according to the vacancy and age of different ranks, so that grass-roots civil servants can have a stable and smooth promotion path and create psychological expectation that they can be promoted quickly as long as they work hard and do a good job.

#### **4.2.3 Strengthen the guarantee for the promotion of grass-roots civil servants.**

The implementation of the system of parallel positions and ranks depends on scientific and accurate assessment of civil servants' work, stable and firm financial guarantee and strict and effective supervision mechanism. First of all, it is necessary to establish an assessment system that is coordinated with rank promotion, so as to achieve fair, open and sensitive feedback. Secondly, it is necessary to strengthen the financial budget guarantee. In order to implement the salaries and benefits of grassroots civil servants, the central and provincial governments should increase financial support and allocate transfer payment funds to ensure earmarking. Finally, it is necessary to strengthen the inspection and supervision of the promotion of grass-roots civil servants, protect the promotion rights of grass-roots civil servants, and ensure the fairness of the process and the fairness of the results.

### **4.3 Optimize the training system**

#### **4.3.1 Increase training opportunities for grass-roots civil servants.**

Organizational departments and competent units should provide various training opportunities for grass-roots civil servants, improve their ability and accomplishment, promote the renewal of their knowledge and skills, and broaden the ways of their



career development. First of all, we should increase the opportunities for grass-roots civil servants to participate in training, so that they can learn advanced experience from personal experience. Secondly, we should increase the number of times for grass-roots civil servants to attend training in higher-level units, so that grass-roots civil servants can better understand various policies and implement them more accurately by learning from the interpretations of higher-level organs.

#### **4.3.2 Implement classified training for civil servants.**

Classified training for civil servants means different types of training for different types of civil servants. All kinds of organs should introduce the training methods for civil servants in this system, determine the training content, methods, hours and other detailed rules, and provide institutional basis for training in various places. In addition, classified training should not be limited to party school training, and the introduction of socialized training institutions can make the training of civil servants more professional.

#### **4.3.3 Increase the application of training results.**

To formulate a scientific training assessment system, on the one hand, it is necessary to test the learning achievements of civil servants through the graduation examination, on the other hand, it is necessary to evaluate the effect of applying the training results to specific work. It is necessary to feedback the training effect of civil servants through long-term uninterrupted dynamic evaluation, and apply the evaluation results to the promotion of civil servants' salary, position and rank, so as to change the attitude of civil servants to participate in training and improve their initiative in work.

### **4.4 Improve the assessment and incentive mechanism**

#### **4.4.1 Building an enabling civil servant management system**

Strengthen the subject consciousness of civil servants, and effectively enhance their post performance ability and administrative ability according to law. The first thing is to be responsible for your own position and take responsibility for your own work. The starting point of public management should shift from opposition and control to coordination and cooperation, so that civil servants can participate in decision-making and enhance their sense of responsibility, thus truly stimulating their work enthusiasm and innovative spirit and improving their work attitude. According to the classification of civil servants, combined with different types of professional characteristics, the rights and responsibilities are rationally allocated to form a participatory public management system, which makes the public sector and civil servants, leading members and non-leading members form a "community of destiny" and share the responsibility when risks come, which promotes the civil servant management from political control to administrative construction.

#### **4.4.2 Improve the supervision and accountability mechanism for inaction and laziness.**

First of all, we should clarify the subject of supervision. Compared with corruption, the external manifestations of inaction and laziness are not obvious, and there are regulatory problems. A multi-party supervision system should be established to form a coordinated and coordinated supervision mechanism of internal supervision, social supervision and supervision by the Commission for Discipline Inspection. At the same time, it is necessary to avoid unclear regulatory responsibilities, repeated supervision and blind spots, and effectively discover the inaction and laziness of civil servants. Further clarify which behaviors belong to the category of inaction and laziness, and clarify the handling situation and corresponding handling measures. At the same time, all responsible units are required to formulate and refine the relevant management system of their own units, improve the accountability system, establish a long-term mechanism, and include the lack of supervision and education on inaction, laziness, and mistakes in employing people in the accountability scope, so that the accountability system covers the whole process of the government's performance of its duties.

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