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*Legal framework and problems of interaction of executive authorities in
the sphere of tax security: International comparative analysis*

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TALENT POLICY IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE US AND CHINA AND LESSONS LEARNED FOR VIETNAM

POLÍTICA DE TALENTOS NO SETOR PÚBLICO: ANÁLISE COMPARATIVA DOS EUA E DA CHINA E LIÇÕES APRENDIDAS PARA O VIETNAME

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ABSTRACT: This article provides a comparative analysis of public sector talent policies in the United States (US) and China, focusing on extracting lessons for Vietnam. Utilizing a qualitative comparative methodology based on legal documents, policy frameworks, academic literature, and government reports, the study examines four key aspects: talent recruitment; planning and appointment; training; and treatment regimes. The analysis highlights significant differences stemming from contrasting political systems and strategic priorities, such as China's centralized, Party-influenced approach versus the US's decentralized, merit-focused system with strong non-wage benefits. While both nations prioritize talent, their strategies diverge, particularly in balancing political loyalty with meritocracy and central control with agency autonomy. The findings reveal specific legal and policy mechanisms influencing talent attraction and retention. Based on this comparison, the article concludes with actionable recommendations for Vietnam, emphasizing the need for a unified national strategy, transparent merit-based processes adapted to Vietnam's context, competitive compensation, and clear career pathways, referencing specific areas within Vietnam's existing legal framework for potential reform.

KEYWORDS: talent policy; public sector; United States; China; comparative analysis; talent recruitment; Vietnam public administration.

RESUMO: Este artigo fornece uma análise comparativa das políticas de talentos do setor público nos Estados Unidos (EUA) e na China, com foco na extração de lições para o Vietname. Utilizando uma metodologia qualitativa comparativa baseada em documentos legais, quadros políticos, literatura acadêmica e relatórios governamentais, o estudo examina quatro aspectos principais: recrutamento de talentos; planejamento e nomeação; treinamento; e regimes de tratamento. A análise destaca diferenças significativas decorrentes de sistemas políticos e prioridades estratégicas contrastantes, como a abordagem centralizada e influenciada pelo Partido da China versus o sistema descentralizado e focado no mérito dos EUA, com fortes benefícios não salariais. Embora ambas as nações priorizem o talento, suas estratégias divergem, particularmente no equilíbrio entre lealdade política e meritocracia, e controle central versus autonomia das agências. Os resultados revelam mecanismos legais e políticos específicos que influenciam a atração e retenção de talentos. Com base nessa comparação, o artigo conclui com recomendações acionáveis para o Vietname, enfatizando a necessidade de uma estratégia nacional unificada, processos transparentes baseados no mérito adaptados ao contexto do Vietname, remuneração competitiva e planos de carreira.

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claros, referenciando áreas específicas dentro do quadro legal existente do Vietname para potencial reforma.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: política de talentos; setor público; Estados Unidos; China; análise comparativa; recrutamento de talentos; administração pública do Vietname.

1. Introduction

According to the World Bank's 2022 statistics, the population of the United States is 333,287,557 people, ranking third in the world² and the population of China is 1,412,175,000 people, ranking first in the world³ in the population rankings of countries and territories. These are also the number one and two economic powers globally. Despite opposing views on the direct relationship between population growth and economic development, no one can deny the role of abundant labor force for the development that the United States and China have achieved today. Therefore, in the context of globalization, although the requirements for workers have changed, both the United States and China value the labor force, considering human development as a decisive factor for national development, especially the talent team. The approach that focuses on people has been formed since the end of the 20th century and continues to be maintained and strengthened to this day⁴. No country, regardless of wealth, political regime, or geographical location, can stand outside the process of attracting and valuing talent, because as the World Economic Forum asserts, "it is very difficult to achieve strong innovation capacity without a healthy, well-educated and trained workforce"⁵. The talent team has a particularly important meaning for the state sector, because in rule-of-law countries like the United States and China, the state still plays a dominant role in regulating and controlling the country. Therefore, those working in the public sector will have a direct and profound impact not only on the economy but also on the culture, politics, and society of that country.

Therefore, in this article, the authors will present the laws and policies on talents of the United States and China from a comparative perspective, aiming to see the similarities and differences between these two powers, thereby drawing some reflections on the basic factors in talent work in the public sector in general for Vietnam.

² World Bank. (2022). Population, total United States. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL>

³ World Bank. (2022). Population, total China. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL?locations=US-CN>

⁴ Leikuma-Rimicane, L., Komarova, V., Lonska, J., Selivanova-Fyodorova, N., Ostrovska, I. (2021). The role of talent in the economic development of countries in the modern world. *Entrepreneurship and Sustainability Issues*, 9(2), 488-507. [http://doi.org/10.9770/jesi.2021.9.2\(32\)](http://doi.org/10.9770/jesi.2021.9.2(32))

⁵World Economic Forum. (2012). *The Global Competitiveness Report 2011-2012*. http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GCR_Report_2011-12.pdf

2. Comparative Analysis of US and Chinese Public Sector Talent Policies

2.1. Research Methodology

This study employs a qualitative comparative analysis methodology to examine public sector talent policies in the US and China. The research draws upon a range of sources selected for their relevance and authority, including primary legal documents (e.g., civil service laws, specific regulations), official policy frameworks and national plans, peer-reviewed academic literature on public administration and human resource management in both countries, government reports (e.g., from the US Office of Personnel Management, Chinese government agencies), and information from official government websites. The comparative framework focuses systematically on four core dimensions of talent management consistently addressed in national policies: (1) talent recruitment mechanisms and legal requirements; (2) systems for planning talent needs and appointing individuals to positions; (3) approaches to talent training and development; and (4) legal and policy provisions regarding remuneration and treatment regimes. Data pertaining to these dimensions were extracted and analyzed within the distinct political, economic, and legal contexts of the US and China. This structured comparison identifies key convergences, divergences, and specific legal instruments shaping each country's approach. The insights gained from this analysis form the basis for deriving transferable lessons and potential best practices applicable to refining Vietnam's public sector talent management framework, considering its own unique legal and administrative environment.

2.2. Theoretical Basis for Talented People in the Public Sector

Not everyone is a talent, and not everyone who is considered a talent is a talent in the public sector. Therefore, to clearly identify who is a talent in the public sector, it is necessary to define this term.

Talent is not a new term but has been used for thousands of years with different understandings and uses. Talent, or talent in English, is “talent” and originates from the word “talente” in Old English⁶. This word originates from Latin - “talentum” and Ancient Greek - “talanton”. In ancient Greek times, a talanton was equivalent to 25.86kg. Later, a talanton corresponded to 60 minas or 600 drachmas, a currency unit

⁶ M. Christina Meyers, Mariana van Woerkom, Nicky Dries (2013). Talent – Innate or acquired? Theoretical considerations and their implications for talent management. *Human Resource Management Review*, 23(4), 306-307. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2013.05.003>

used throughout the Roman Empire. The connection between currency and talent is vividly demonstrated in the parables of the New Testament, where talent symbolizes a person's wealth or entrusted responsibility, an extended metaphor for the gifts or abilities given by God to a person. However, at present, talent is often understood as "a person with excellent talent", or "a person with talent and morality, who has a certain strength".

According to the field of human resource management, the main science studying talent and talent management, this term basically follows the above understanding, but there are different interpretations depending on each researcher. It is divided into two main streams of thought: talent refers to all people and talent refers only to an individual, a certain group of people. However, no matter how it is understood, from the perspective of language, human resource management science or legal science, the essence of talent still includes two main factors: capacity and contribution to the organization, society. Capacity includes natural abilities such as creativity, potential, expression, dedication, or it can also include behaviors that are expressed through regular practice and accumulated experience such as commitment⁷. However, having capacity, talent is not enough, this person must also create results, values that can be measured for the organization, community, and society.

Within the scope of this article, talent is understood in a narrow sense, meaning only some individuals with special qualities and work results. Therefore, first of all, talent can be defined as follows: Talent is those who have intellectual qualities; more special personality emotions than normal people and achieve higher than normal work results, thereby contributing to the general development of the organization and society.

However, those who are considered talents can only be talents in the public sector when they work for the state sector. The public sector or the state sector is considered a field within the scope of government management⁸ or a political organization established with the power to direct, manage and control the activities of citizens to help them live harmoniously and build cooperatively, as well as solve common problems more dynamically and effectively⁹.

⁷ Eva Gallardo-Gallardo, Nicky Dries, Tomas F. Gonzalez-Cruz. (2013). What is the meaning of 'talent' in the world of work. *Human Resource Management Review*, 23(4), 290. [10.1016/j.hrmr.2013.08.006](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2013.08.006)

⁸ Amran, N. A., Ahmad H. N. & Hassan N. L. (2021). Malaysian public sector size: A comparison with other ASEAN countries, *Journal of Business Management and Accounting*, 11(1), 4. <https://doi.org/10.32890/jbma2021.11.1.1>

⁹ Syed Soffian, S. I., Engku Ismail, E. A., Faudziah Hanim, H. F., & Hassan, H. (2011). Public sector accounting and financial management in Malaysia, Pearson Custom Publishing.

Currently, studies all show that the boundary between the state sector and the private sector is gradually blurring due to the lack of a unified definition and the private sector is increasingly having more influence on the operation of the state¹⁰. Not only the state sector but private organizations today also carry out non-profit activities and contribute to improving the quality of life for people. Therefore, to distinguish these two sectors, we can look at three main factors: environment, the relationship between organization-environment, and the structure of the organization. Public organizations do not operate in the economic market in the usual sense and depend on funding from the government, with the main goal being to create public value rather than maximizing profits. Therefore, the public sector can be defined as a system of agencies, organizations established by the state, operating in whole or in part with funds taken from the state budget with the goal of providing public services to serve the common needs of society.

Thus, combining the above concepts, talents in the public sector can be understood as those who are considered to have talent and high work results in the activities of state agencies and organizations aimed at serving the common needs of society. Within the scope of this article, talents in the public sector are understood as those who are recruited and used by the state sector in part or in whole with the state budget to pay salaries, allowances; not just limited to officials, civil servants in the public sector.

2.3. Law and Policy on Talents in the Public Sector: A Comparative Perspective

General strategy on talents in the public sector

Although both the United States and China are concerned and value the attraction and use of talent, neither has a specific legal document presenting all content related to talent. The attraction, use, and other issues related to talent are often mentioned in general policies and specified by the decisions of each locality, each recruiting agency, or incorporated in general legal documents on cadres, civil servants, or laws on immigration, nationality, labor. There is also no clear division between talent in the public sector and talent in general in the national development career. However, based on synthesis, the author draws out some characteristics and main contents about the

¹⁰ Boselie, P., Thunnissen, M., (2017). Talent Management in the public sector in: Collings, D., Mellahi, K. & Cascio, W. (2017), W., The Oxford Handbook of Talent Management. Oxford: Oxford University Press. [10.1080/09585192.2022.2032265](https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2022.2032265)

talent strategy in the public sector of China and the United States.

The view that talent is the focus of the national rejuvenation strategy has been clearly shown since this country began to open in 1978 and continues to this day. The Chinese Communist Party and Government continuously research and deploy many policies and institutions to develop the intellectual and talent team. The policy of “valuing knowledge, valuing talent” of the Chinese government is built on four basic principles of revolutionization, rejuvenation, intellectualization, and specialization, which is an important step in attracting and developing talent. In 2001, the 10th Five-Year Plan Outline was established, followed by the National Plan for Building a Talent Team for the period 2002 – 2005 based on Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought, and Deng Xiaoping Theory. Especially, the National Mid-term and Long-term Talent Development Plan for the period 2010 – 2020 marked a turning point in the history of human resource development in China. This is the first comprehensive national plan, not only aimed at attracting talent but also emphasizing the nurturing and development of existing talents.

Basically, these plans and lines all focus on attracting talent comprehensively into both the public and private sectors. For domestic resources, the main strategies applied are focusing on education, scientific research to nurture talent, create human resources, and reform talent management based on the unification between capacity and treatment. For resources from abroad, China has proposed many plans such as the “Hundred People Plan”, “Plan to Attract Outstanding Talent from Abroad”, “International Cooperative Innovation Team Plan”,... aiming to bring scholars, excellent experts who are overseas Chinese and individuals of other nationalities to the country.

For the public sector, the National Mid-term and Long-term Talent Development Plan for the period 2010 – 2020 identifies six talent groups that need special attention from the Government, in which the first group includes leaders and state officials, showing the importance that the government places on improving the quality of public administration. The plan also particularly emphasizes the quality and process of recruitment, training, and evaluation of state officials. Moreover, the plan also encourages competitive and expanded recruitment processes, aiming to enhance transparency and efficiency in public human resource management. The application of strict and higher performance evaluation standards to ensure that only the most excellent candidates can join and contribute to the state machinery.

Through these policies and plans, China has shown its commitment to building a professional and effective civil service team, to meet the increasingly high requirements of national development and public administration. At the same time, these policies and orientations are also the basis for the Government to issue many legal documents and form many enforcement agencies. Notably, the Regulations on the Selection and Appointment of Party and Government Leaders 2002, the Civil Servant Law 2006, and the agency responsible for recruiting, developing the talent team in the public sector such as the State Civil Servant Bureau under the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security (MHRSS), a combination of the former Ministry of Human Resources and the Ministry of Labor and Social Security in 2008.

These strategies have helped China attract a large number of high-quality human resources, including top university graduates in China to public agencies. Nearly half of the university graduates in China have chosen to work in the civil service sector, the public sector, and state-owned enterprises¹¹. However, there are also views that the measures that the Chinese Government implements to attract talent in the public sector are quite modest compared to the overall and comprehensive strategies to attract talent to support the private sector, state-owned enterprises in leading sectors such as in the fields of science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM), business, health, education¹².

Similar to China, the United States is also a country that is particularly interested in discovering, recruiting, and nurturing talent. The first President of the United States - George Washington once asserted “Without morality, without self-esteem and talent - the most important thing - to build the best achievements, it will never be able to achieve respect, which is the truly valuable part of humanity”. However, the talent strategy of the United States is not uniform and continuous like China due to the influence of pluralistic, multi-party political institutions. Each different presidential term has different policies. The most typical is the change in immigration policy under the most recent presidents Barack Obama, Donald Trump, and Joe Biden.

Immigration is considered a long-standing talent strategy of the United States because this is a multi-ethnic, religious, cultural country. The abundant source of immigration

¹¹ Wang Yiran, Fan Quaojia, Wang Xintong, Caixin. (2022). Fresh graduates in China flock to government, state firms. <https://asia.nikkei.com/Spotlight/Caixin/Fresh-graduates-in-China-flock-to-government-state-firms>

¹² Wang, Huiyao. (2011). *China's National Talent Plan: Key Measures and Objectives*. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1828162>

provides labor for not only the private sector but also the state sector. The President Barack Obama's government relaxed immigration policy, especially for those with high professional qualifications¹³. But during the term of President Donald Trump, with the idea of a pure America, he implemented many measures to restrict immigration such as building a wall along the US-Mexico border¹⁴ or abolishing the "Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals" (DACA)¹⁵. However, in the current term of President Joe Biden, he returned to the views of the Obama administration, supporting immigrants through job creation policies, student loan forgiveness¹⁶. The US immigration policy represents a policy of attracting high-skilled labor and experts, people with talent in various fields, not just talent working in the state sector. In the public sector, the US federal government has issued some laws and framework programs such as The Civil Service Reform Act of 1978; Pathways Program provides internships, scholarships, and career development opportunities in the public sector. Along with that is the system of non-governmental organizations, service units implementing the attraction, recruitment of talent in the public sector such as the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), Civil Service Commission (CSC), The UnlockTalent, The ConnectTalent. In which, OPM plays an important role in planning, evaluating, and developing a flexible, agile organization that responds to all changes. OPM will identify vacant positions at government agencies, thereby determining what skills, requirements are necessary for this position to carry out recruitment for that position.

The lack of an overall talent strategy has not allowed the United States to reap much success in attracting talent in the public sector. Policies and laws on attracting talent in the public sector are not complete, there is no strong separate mechanism to recruit this team. The Building the Next Generation of Federal Employees Act was submitted in 2022 but was not passed. This bill has many progressive policies and regulations such as expanding access to internship opportunities at federal agencies; establishing

¹³ Adam B. Cox and Rodriguez, Cristina. (2015). The President and Immigration Law Redux. *125 Yale Law Journal*, Forthcoming. https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2635638

¹⁴ Sitompul, E., & Cipto, B. (2023). Securitizing the Unseen: Behind Trump's Reliance on Mexico in Combating Irregular Immigration. *Global Strategies*, 17(2), 327–346. <https://doi.org/10.20473/jgs.17.2.2023.327-346>

¹⁵ Jens Manuel Krogstad. (2017). DACA has shielded nearly 790,000 young unauthorized immigrants from deportation. <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2017/09/01/unauthorized-immigrants-covered-by-daca-face-uncertain-future/>

¹⁶ The White House. (2024). President Joe Biden Outlines New Plans to Deliver Student Debt Relief to Over 30 Million Americans Under the Biden-Harris Administration. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2024/04/08/president-joe-biden-outlines-new-plans-to-deliver-student-debt-relief-to-over-30-million-americans-under-the-biden-harris-administration/>

an internet platform serving a centralized resource for federal internship opportunities; increasing the number of new university graduates that the head of the agency can recruit through fast recruitment agencies, creating competitive recruitment priorities for interns and research students¹⁷.

Recruiting talents

Article 23 of China's Civil Servant Law of 2006 stipulates that all civil servants at level 1 or lower, as well as similar ranks, are recruited through open examinations, strict review, and equal competition. These exams are held centrally on an annual basis. In the past year 2023, about 1.5 million candidates took the exam and the government selected 37,100 personnel¹⁸. The examination consists of two main parts: written examination and application examination. The written exam includes but is not limited to subjects such as politics, law, foreign languages, professional knowledge suitable for the position applied for. The application exam, depending on the position, candidates may have to go through specific tests to assess skills related to the job. However, for the group of people identified as talents, recruitment is carried out more flexibly and shorter. Typical is direct recruitment. With this form, candidates do not have to participate in the above-mentioned national exam but will be recruited directly based on qualifications, experience, and usually only through document screening and interviewing. This direct recruitment process is especially popular in agencies or specialized agencies of the government that require specific technical skills or advanced knowledge. In addition, the government also has some other programs for talents who are graduates abroad. Accordingly, graduates from top universities abroad can skip the provincial civil service exam if they have previously spent two to three years working in rural or difficult areas. Some cities such as Shanghai, Beijing, Hong Kong also expand the scope of exemption from the national exam for graduates from some of the world's top schools. However, this has caused a wave of outrage from domestic students because according to them, not all university graduates abroad are really good and capable; many people believe that many rich people use money for their children and grandchildren to study at prestigious schools abroad, so the increase

¹⁷ US Congress (2021), H.R.6104 - Building the Next Generation of Federal Employees Act. <https://www.congress.gov/bills/117/congress/house/bills/6104?q=%7B%22search%22%3A%5B%22%22%5D%7D&s=1&r=2>

¹⁸ Du Qiongfang. (2023). Nation to recruit 39,600 civil servants in 2024 annual intake. <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202310/1299896.shtml>

in such preferences makes people doubt the fairness of the system¹⁹. In the United States, the selection of civil servants is approached in a more decentralized manner. Before 1980, the federal government still organized a common exam called the Civil Service Career for all positions. However, after civil service reform, the government has applied both decentralized forms, allowing each agency to recruit separately according to needs. However, the recruitment of individuals into state agencies basically complies with a process that federal and state laws stipulate. In which, the examination is the main method. According to this method, individuals must go through a competitive recruitment process before being appointed to a vacant position. This process may include a written test, evaluation of the individual's education and experience, an interview, and/or evaluation of other characteristics necessary to successfully perform the position being recruited. The process of implementing this method is similar to the usual recruitment process at non-state enterprises, organizations. However, the advantage of the United States is that all career positions in state agencies are posted on USAJobs.gov, which is extremely convenient for candidates from all over the world to look up and apply. In addition, the US recruitment process is also highly appreciated for its clarity, thoroughness, and professionalism in the job description and requirements for candidates. All recruitment steps are strictly controlled, ensuring fairness and transparency, helping to select the best candidates. At the same time, the US Office of Management and Budget also issued four criteria to improve the federal recruitment process, including: enhancing feedback information for candidates about the status of the application; encouraging the participation of managers in recruitment stages; ensuring the detail of recruitment notices; and developing and perfecting a federal recruitment roadmap²⁰. However, in addition to the normal recruitment process above, the United States also has some other special recruitment mechanisms in a flexible, simpler direction and suitable for positions needing talent, such as:

- Direct Hire Authority (DHA) (US Office of Personnel Management): This is a mechanism that the US government uses to rationalize the recruitment process to fill vacancies in difficult-to-recruit or important recruitment demand positions. Examples

¹⁹ Mimi Leung and Yojana Sharma. (2023). Top civil service posts open to overseas university graduates. <https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20231123175509554>

²⁰ U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board. (2004). Managing Federal Recruitment: Issues, Insights, and Illustrations. https://www.mspb.gov/studies/studies/Managing_Federal_Recruitment_Issues_Insights_and_Illustrations_253626.pdf

are positions in the fields of cybersecurity, science, technology, engineering, mathematics,... The DHA application process is simpler, focusing directly on connecting the candidate's level with the job requirements without going through the traditional scoring system. However, these recruitment positions are still publicly announced to ensure transparency and provide equal opportunities for all candidates.

- Recruitment of members of the high-level executive agency (SES) (US Office of Personnel Management): These positions are all particularly important positions, and therefore candidates must have high professional qualifications and necessary leadership skills. Candidates must have the Core Executive Certificate (ECQ) and after reviewing the initial application, eligible candidates will be evaluated by the Qualifications Review Board (QRB). This board, including current SES members, evaluates the candidate's ECQ to ensure they meet the high standards necessary for SES positions. QRB certification is an important step and must be passed before the candidate can be appointed to the SES position. Agencies use different methods to further evaluate candidates, such as interviews, reference checks, and evaluation of professional skills as well as management skills. In addition to the above factors, the author also notes a major difference in recruiting talent into the public sector between the United States and China is that although not all Chinese civil servants are members of the Chinese Communist Party, up to 95% of these people are party members (Kjeld Erik Brodsgaard et al 2009). Therefore, it can be seen that joining the Party, showing loyalty to the Party and the Chinese government can be considered an important factor in being recruited into the state. Meanwhile, in the United States, political freedom is highly valued and recruitment only prioritizes the actual ability of candidates.

Planning and appointing talents

Article 43 of China's Civil Servant Law of 2006 stipulates: "To promote civil servants must meet the requirements of ideological level, politics, work capacity, education level and work experience. The promotion of civil servants is carried out by rank. Those who are particularly outstanding or have work needs for special reasons are exempted from the usual constraints or promoted two levels according to relevant regulations." Thus, it can be understood that even if a person is talented, if they have been recruited and become a civil servant, subject to the adjustment of this law, the promotion is carried out linearly from low to high level according to a clear rank system. The promotion will be based on performance, work time, and the orientation of "guanxi". Guanxi in

Chinese is understood as a personal relationship with people in positions of power²¹. These relationships can affect decisions such as promotions or other benefits at work. According to a survey with 886 civil servants, up to 40% of people see promotion based on performance, 20% due to guanxi orientation with 10% believing that promotion is the consensus of both sides and 30% considering that promotion is mandatory²².

In addition, promotion in China is also subject to strict compliance and guidance from the Communist Party of this country. In this country, there is integration between the evaluation and the Party's consciousness, promotion, especially high-level positions affecting public policy and administration usually requires approval from the higher levels of government or directly from the Communist Party. These mechanisms of China are rigid and less transparent than the regulations of the United States. It can also be seen that failing to reach consensus on promotion or job change can create dissatisfaction, dissatisfaction of civil servants, including those recruited as talents.

Meanwhile, in the United States, promotion is almost entirely based on capacity assessment. The US policy and legal institutions are designed to ensure that civil servants can perform their duties with a degree of independence from political pressure. The promotion process in the United States is transparent, with clear guidelines and criteria that can be publicly accessed. This is consistent with the principles of fairness and equal opportunity governing public employment in the United States. This mechanism of the United States is also more flexible because civil servants have clear paths to promotion based on capacity and can often move horizontally or vertically through different government agencies. Accordingly, many federal agencies require employees to use the "Individual Development Plan" (IDP) as a formal work form. They require employees to plan in detail for their short-term and long-term career goals in government and the government relies on this content to make evaluations and approve promotions²³.

However, for the group of talented people, some other promotion methods are applied. The human resources management agency can allow the person to be promoted

²¹ Yadong Luo. (1997). Guanxi: Principles, Philosophies, and Implications. *Human Systems Management*, 16(1). <http://dx.doi.org/10.3233/HSM-1997-16106>

²² Liang Ma, Huangfeng Tang, Bo Yan. (2015). Public Employees' Perceived Promotion Channels in Local China: Merit-based or Guanxi-orientated?. *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 74(3). <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8500.12147>

²³ Nguyen, T. T. (2020). US Government's policy of attracting talent and lessons for Vietnam. *International Journal of Management and Economics*, 12. <https://tapchi.ftu.edu.vn/>

beyond the level, without having to follow each step in the government's personnel law (US Office of Personnel Management). Or the SES program allows senior leaders to be flexibly rotated between agencies to enhance efficiency and innovation in government machinery. The human resources management agency can also allow talented people to be promoted beyond the level without having to follow each step in the government's personnel law. In China, there is also a mechanism to fast-track promotion for talented people who work with high performance. This is especially popular with individuals in strategic fields such as technology, foreign relations, and defense.

Training talents

Both of these countries place emphasis on education to create a source of talent. However, within the scope of this article, the author will present about regular training for cadres, civil servants, including talented people to improve work efficiency and increase the contribution of this team to society.

In the U.S. government system, the civil servant training program emphasizes personal development and leadership skills. Designed to encourage independent thinking and creativity, the courses focus on improving analytical, managerial, and advisory skills. Civil servants are encouraged to develop skills to lead not only themselves and their work but also to become future leaders. For example, programs such as the Senior Management Training Program and the Executive and Leadership Implementation Program at institutes like the Federal Executive Institute or universities like Harvard Kennedy School, all provide high-quality training opportunities with the participation of professors, experts, and advisors from various fields²⁴.

In contrast, China applies a centralized training system, in which political education occupies an important position. Civil servant training in China not only includes professional skills but also emphasizes political theory, administrative law, and concepts of state management in the spirit of the Communist Party. Training programs are usually organized at Party schools and administrative institutes with the aim of forming and consolidating practical capacity, enhancing political and professional qualities of civil servants. The basic training model combining specialties is popular, combining lectures, discussions, surveys, and practical courses. This training is

²⁴ United States Government Accountability Office. (2014). Human Capital – Agencies should more fully evaluate the costs and benefits of executive training. Report to the Ranking Member, Committee on the Judiciary, U.S. Senate. <https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-14-132.pdf>

centrally managed by the Central Committee Organization Department²⁵.

When comparing, it is clear that both the United States and China value the training of civil servants, but with different criteria and objectives. While the United States focuses on personal development, analytical and leadership skills based on the principles of freedom and creativity, China tends towards disciplining and loyalty to the Party through political education and professional training in the state orientation. This difference is not only shown in the teaching content but also in the approach and ultimate goal of the training program, clearly reflecting the difference in state management and policy orientation of the two countries.

Treatment regime for talents

In the United States, according to the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) statistics in 2017, a paradox in the treatment of talent in this country is the wage gap between workers in the public and private sectors. The difference is shown when comparing the wage difference between the least educated workers, those with a bachelor's degree (the most common level of education in the federal workforce), and those with a high level of education. Specifically, employees with a level not exceeding a bachelor's degree, federal government workers have an average wage higher than 34% compared to the private sector. Employees with a bachelor's degree have a wage higher than 5% compared to similar employees in the private sector. Meanwhile, individuals with high degrees, professional levels, doctors have a lower bonus wage by 24% when compared to labor with similar levels in the private sector²⁶. In fact, the wages of some federal civil servants, including high-skilled labor in the STEM field, usually depend on the standards set by the Government, calculated based on the US federal wage ranking system which is a system of classifying each job in the General Schedule (GS) by evaluating factors related to the job (FES)²⁷.

Although federal wages are lower than the private sector, non-wage benefits (Non-wage compensation) are a factor that attracts and retains talent. Non-wage benefits are an important part in the treatment regime for talent including paid leave, health and

²⁵IRG. (2006). A research report on the training system of civil servant in China. <https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-14-132.pdf>

²⁶ Congressional Budget Office. (2017). Comparing the Compensation of Federal and Private-Sector Employees 2011 to 2015. <https://www.cbo.gov/publication/52637>

²⁷ Astana Civil Service Hub. (2023). Public Sector Compensation: A Comparative Review. https://www.astanacivilservicehub.org/uploads/20230511_Remuneration_FIN.pdf

life insurance, retirement benefits, and taxes paid to workers. It is estimated that state and local government employees on average receive non-wage benefits averaging 81.9% of wages compared to private sector employees at establishments with 100 or more employees²⁸. Typically, the wages of workers in the private sector are not highly valued, however, combining non-wage benefits such as bonuses, health insurance, and benefits, government employees with a bachelor's or master's degree tend to earn a basic wage equivalent to colleagues in the private sector. Meanwhile, government employees with professional levels or doctorates have lower wages compared to the private sector.

In China, the treatment policy for civil servants in general and talents working in the public sector in particular has many differences compared to the United States. Accordingly, the Chinese government pursues a policy of equal wages between the public and private sectors. This stems from the purpose of limiting income inequality between civil servants and reducing corruption. At the time the Civil Servant Law of the People's Republic of China was passed in 2005, the salary of Chinese civil servants was structured to include basic salary, allowances, subsidies, and bonuses. Both basic salary and bonuses are strictly managed by the central government while allowances, living expenses are less managed. Regional authorities can set very different living costs²⁹. In correlation with the treatment regime of countries around the world, the civil servant salary policy in China is rated at a low salary level. Although four major reforms of the wage system have taken place in the history of the People's Republic of China, the low salary policy for civil servants has hardly changed. The orientation of the salary policy for civil servants was only implemented decisively and determinedly in the late 1990s and early 2000s with six consecutive salary increases in 1997, 1999, 2001, 2003, and 2006 with a not small salary increase. The total salary paid to state agencies and social organizations increased by an average of 21% in 2001, increased by 23% in 2007 at the request of the central government. The civil servant salary in 2007 was 8.38 times that of 1993³⁰.

However, the current law of China only has the Civil Servant Law and related

²⁸ Andrew Biggs, Jason Richwine. (2011). Comparing Federal and Private Sector Compensation. *American Enterprise Institute Working Paper No. 2011-02*. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1991405>

²⁹ Alfred M. Wu. (2012). The Equal Pay Policy in China: A Preliminary Assessment, *Journal of Comparative Asian Development*, 11(2). <https://doi.org/10.1080/15339114.2012.720129>.

³⁰ Ting Gong and Alfred M. Wu. (2012). Does Increased Civil Service Pay Deter Corruption? Evidence from China. *Review of Public Personnel Administration* 32(2), <https://doi.org/10.1177/0734371X1243824>.

regulations such as the Civil Service Salary Reform Program, the Civil Service Reward Program (Trial) but does not have any specific policies on remuneration and non-wage benefits. In fact, the United States has built a federal civil service wage system based on scientific job classification, relatively scientific and reasonable structure including: basic salary and allowances and benefits, allowances but not more than 10% of the total salary. Meanwhile, the basic salary of Chinese civil servants is rated low but the phenomenon of allowances, subsidies has a disparity between industries, localities leading to an imbalance in salary structure³¹.

In summary, the policy for civil servants in China is more tightly controlled by authorities at all levels, especially the central government. This is clearly shown through the fact that the central government is the only agency to build and make decisions about the unified civil service salary system nationwide. On the other hand, China's non-wage benefit regimes are not highly valued. Compared to the United States, attracting talent to the public sector in China is determined by various factors such as the long-standing mentality of civil servants as "iron rice bowls" (meaning a job with not high income but long-term stability) combined with massive layoffs from private companies due to the consequences of the economic downturn.

2.4. Experiences for Vietnam

The United States and China are both large countries in terms of population size and economic scale. Therefore, Vietnam will be more limited in using these two resources. However, Vietnam can still learn some legislative experiences and policy issuance from the United States and China as follows in the work on talents in the public sector. Firstly, there should be a unified general orientation and policies, overall strategy on talent management and human resources in the public sector. Having such a strategy can be considered a specialty of China because at each stage of national development, China has its own talent development strategies. This strategy will be the guideline for the enactment and enforcement of laws from the central to local levels. These strategies also show the far-sighted and unified vision of the leadership team. The lack of a general strategy on talent management in the United States stems from political

³¹ Li Yongkang, Sun Weiyan, Bai Yang, Wang Xiaofen. (2012). U.S. Federal GS Civil Service Pay Systems and Its Enlightenment to P.R.C. *International Conference on Public Management (ICPM 2012)*, <https://doi.org/10.2991/icpm.2012.46>

characteristics, but it can also be seen that this somewhat affects the enactment of policies and laws in this country. The law is not synchronized, less comprehensive, and when implemented, it has not achieved high efficiency. Therefore, to attract and retain talent, especially in the state sector, there must be a unified general orientation and policy on talent management and human resources. The development and implementation of a national strategy on talent management not only contribute to improving the quality of human resources but also are a key factor to create attractiveness, attract talent to work in the state sector. To do this, Vietnam needs to clearly identify the priorities for human resource development and talent management, thereby developing comprehensive and comprehensive policies and laws. There needs to be close coordination between state management agencies with each agency, organization using labor as talent to develop and use talent most effectively. Secondly, policies and laws on attracting, using talent in the public sector need to focus on some core content. China and the United States have shown that the construction and implementation of policies and laws on attracting, using talent in the public sector need to focus on some core content to achieve high efficiency. For Vietnam, the application of these principles to the practical management of talent also needs to be carefully considered and adjusted to suit the specific conditions and circumstances of the country. In which, the above countries propose some basic content that Vietnam should pay attention to build policies and laws, including:

- Talent recruitment process: Recruitment needs to be carried out transparently, fairly, and based on the actual capacity of the candidate. A scientific and effective recruitment process not only helps to attract the most talented people to work for the state but also enhances the prestige and image of the public sector in the eyes of the public. This requires the candidate evaluation system to be diverse, evaluating many aspects from professional knowledge, soft skills to ethics and work spirit.
- Have a promotion and training path suitable for talent: Promotion helps talented people have space and opportunities to promote their abilities, especially they can contribute more to national development. Therefore, building a clear promotion path is necessary when recruiting and attracting talent. The experience of the United States and China shows that promotion can be stated from the beginning (by rank) but when implemented, it must be based on capacity assessment, even participating in tests to ensure the right person, right job. Because talent is not a person who does well in all positions and therefore, what they do, who they work with, where they work all need to

be carefully considered. In addition, investing in training and developing talent is indispensable, helping them constantly update new knowledge and develop skills. The training program needs to be designed based on actual needs and long-term development orientation of each field, thereby helping talent maximize capacity and contribute to the common career. This also includes creating conditions for workers who are talented to participate in short courses, seminars, study abroad scholarships, or participate in research projects. With a one-party country like Vietnam, similar to China, high-ranking leadership positions are Party members who need to study and research more deeply about theory, thereby enhancing patriotism and imbuing the Party's ideology.

- Salary regime, treatment with talent: To retain talent, the salary and treatment regime must be commensurate with their capacity and contribution. These regimes not only include basic salary but also bonuses, allowances, career development opportunities, and a good working environment. Ensuring a good standard of living for employees not only shows respect for them but also creates motivation for them to dedicate themselves to the common development of the country for a long time. The two studied countries show that the enjoyment of capacity-based benefits is commonly applied. This not only motivates talented people to strive but the state also benefits from the fact that this person creates more value instead of enjoying a hard salary for all workers, leading to laziness, dependence.

3. Conclusion

Talent is an important long-term strategic task and countries, regardless of size, regime, have and are struggling to find effective ways to attract and use. A unified political institution helps China have a synchronized policy and law on talent, along with support from the state budget helps the plans to attract talent in general and attract talent into the public sector in particular all achieve positive results. The United States itself also has to show caution and careful evaluation of these policies of China to ensure that there is no brain drain. However, the limitation of China is still conservative, heavily political in state management, making the working environment of talent cramped. As for the United States, the weaknesses of China have become the advantages of this country. The attraction of talent is transparent, open; but along with that is the lack of a thorough guiding line. Vietnam, as a developing nation needing talent to drive progress, must selectively learn from these giants. Establishing a clear

national talent strategy, reforming recruitment and promotion to be transparent and merit-focused (while acknowledging political context), investing strategically in tailored training, and designing competitive, equitable compensation packages are crucial steps. These lessons, adapted to Vietnam's specific legal, political, and socio-economic context, can inform amendments to the Law on Cadres and Civil Servants and associated regulations, strengthening the public sector's ability to attract, retain, and leverage the talent essential for national development.

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