

Original Research Article

Human Resources Management in Government: Case study of Vietnam

Abstract: *This article is represented for a case study about human resources management in government of Vietnam. The research objective is to assess the existing system of human resources management in government of Vietnam and find out the direction of human resources management in government. The research demonstrated a moving from the existing system to the professional system from internal weaknesses and external challenges of the human resources management in Government of Vietnam. A combination of career based system and position based system is the right strategy for Vietnam as well as developing countries. Key elements of position based system and new public management should be adopted with a best practice of competency based human resources management framework which is very productive for Vietnam and developing countries.*

Key words: Human resources management (HRM), Vietnam, HRM reform

1. Introduction

Vietnam's economy has grown so rapidly for 15 years that made the country reach the middle income status in 2010. The public administration reform assisted successfully to manage the transition from centralized to market economy. In the coming years, Vietnam has a vision to build democratic, clean, strong and modernized civil service in the context of facing many internal weaknesses and rising challenges in human resources management (HRM) system. The internal weaknesses of HRM are substantially known and taken into consideration of HRM policy process in Vietnam such as human resources

planning, recruitment and promotion, training and development, salary, performance appraisal, discipline at work. In addition, the challenges are rising such as bribery, corruption, a leave of existing system to move to newly and highly professional HRM system. These weaknesses and challenges must be addressed for the future HRM system in Vietnam. Therefore, we conducted the research on HRM in government of Vietnam (GOVN).

The concept of human resource management (HRM) is related to the people that affect operations, productivity, the quality of work life, and productivity (Cascio, 2006) [1], thus the objectives of HRM is to access and maintain an adequate level of manpower strength, in terms of both quality and quantity, needed to achieve public sector goals while providing its employees a productive, safe, happy work environment, and satisfying terms employment (Selmer, Chiu., 2004) [2]. Nowadays, HRM has changed its role, from general administration to HR strategic partner (Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart, Wright, 2006) [3]. The core competitive advantages of an organization are based in the foundation of its human resources or human capital (Lin, Lee, 2012) [4].

There are many lessons learned of HRM from low income to middle income countries, so the research paper focuses on problems and challenges of HRM system in Vietnam. These lessons learned and best practices will help the Vietnam HRM system in moving from existing system toward professional system with an incorporate of new elements of new public management of standard HRM. The research paper will discuss 'paradigm shift' of integrated approach of different components such as human resources information, human resources development, human resources management. The paper also discussed about possible adoption of a good lesson learned of HRM in government of Vietnam with the Competency Based Human Resources Management Framework [5] which considered as a best practice of Malaysia for the developing countries.

Vietnam is in the transition and reform process, there is not just a change of hardware of HRM system, but also the change has been happening in software of HRM system. Objectivity will need to be a key principle next to merit and performance bases which are adopted from the position based system. The separation of political personnel and civil servants in civil service system is a key for Vietnam to reach the highly professional HR system.

Of course, the conceptions of politically neutral civil servants and public interest in Vietnam's case, the confidentiality and privacy, conflict of interest, accountable civil servants, responsible behaviors of civil servants will need to research in the coming period. The paper is a single case study, so it gained important factors and lessons for similar cases in generalization as well as for specific Vietnam in the coming period.

In order to study the HRM in government, HRM in government of Vietnam can be used as a single case study with a reference to some ASEAN countries. The research responded to the following research questions: What are weaknesses and challenges of Vietnam HRM? What is the direction of the change of HRM in government of Vietnam? What are lessons learned and actions of next steps for HRM in government of Vietnam in the coming period?

2. Human resources management of the Vietnam Government

2.1. General observations

Socialist Republic of Vietnam is a country in transition from a centrally planned to a market economy. In the past, the civil service was in estimated 80 years time of French colonial time to rule and control society, and then the civil service was under 30 years of war time with central planning, it did not allow Vietnam people build the good civil service system to serve the people rightly. Under the war time, the civil service of Vietnam followed the Soviet modern, so

the HRM was based on the Cadre system. Thus the civil servants were recognized as integration into the political system in the long time. Until now, Vietnam is under the regime of ruling Communist Party of Vietnam, most of civil servants are CPV members, so it is hard to raise the so-called ‘civil servant neutrality’ though it has an advantage in policy process.

The Vietnam HRM is observed as a form of career based system. Civil servants enter the civil service in the competitive recruitment and start their careers in the government system. The achievement of a higher grade in category has great influence on career opportunities to be the managers and leaders. It can be described as follows: The Vietnam HRM in government is categorized as public officials and civil servants, public employees (Laws in 2008, 2011). The public officials are elected and appointed in a fixed term positions while civil servants are recruited and working in administrative agencies in more or less on a permanent basic. Both are working in Party Organizations, Political Social Organizations and Administrative Agencies. The public employees are recruited and working for the public service deliveries.

In Vietnam, the statistic data in 2017, there are 2,726,917 people who are working in public sector. There are 611,069 Public Officials and Civil Servants, 1,983,981 millions Public Employees working in public service deliveries. The civil servants are also categorized into four groups, Group A is senior experts, Group B is principle expert, Group C is expert, Group D is below expert. Each grouping category is resulted in the promotion. It is normal for 9 years to jump the group.

2.2. As experience, before 1998, the Vietnamese civil service lacked the standardized competitive recruitment and promotion procedures, civil servants salaries did not cover the cost of living, insufficient capacity building for civil servants. Thus, there is still a number of severe shortcomings like poor HRM and development, “inadequate remuneration, low motivation, poor work ethics

and performances as well as a lack of transparency, corruption that hampers the effectiveness of the GOVN” (UNDP, 2009) [6].*The Vietnam HRM of Government in public administration reform*

Since 1998, the government of Vietnam (GOVN) shifted the mode of human resources management. In the context, Vietnam has a vision to build a democratic clean, strong and modernized civil service. There is much effort has been made to improve the HRM of Government with the promulgation of the Ordinance on Cadres and Civil Servants in 1998, the continuous revisions of 2000, 2003, and the remarkable enactment of the new Law No. 22/2008/QH12 on Public Officials and Civil Servants in 2008, this Law came in effect on 1st January 2010. The new Law on Public Employees was issued in 2011 which came in effect on 1st January 2012. The Ministry of Home Affairs become the focal actor in Vietnam HRM which help much in standardized, devolved recruitment and promotion exams to line ministries and localities.

From the introduction of Ordinance and Laws in 1998, 2000, 2003, 2008, 2011, the legal normative documents for HRM in government of Vietnam have been developed in a more systematic, it was remarked that the Ordinance in 1998 separated the public officials and civil servants and public employees from state owned businesses which were widely used at that time, continuously the revised Ordinance of 2003 divided successfully the administrative human resources and public employees who working in public service deliveries.

Actually the HRM in government of Vietnam has been reformed under the public administration reform (PAR). The promulgation of PAR master program (2001-2010) was a significant reform effort to develop a socialist rule of law state, a democratic, clean, strong, modernized and professionalized public administration, qualified and ethical cadres and civil servants, efficient and effective state agencies relevant to socialist oriented market mechanism as well

as having an integration into global market economy to meet the rapid and sustainable development of Vietnam (PAR 2001-2010) [7].

The PAR focused on four components as follows: civil service reform, organization reform, procedure reform, public finance reform. We see that the first component was to focus on HRM, the aim described that by 2010, cadres and civil servants have reasonable number, professional and capable of discharging their public duties. The results are expected to come from the change of HRM policy toward the development of cadres and civil servants, the enhancement of the accountability and moral quality of cadres and civil servants, set up professional standards, norms to encourage the accountability and transparency in civil service.

The PAR's success in technical human resource management functions have been decentralized to line ministries and localities have changed the methods of recruitment [8], for example the civil servants are recruited and promoted in a competitive examinations, the salary was reformed to enhance the motivation of cadres and civil servants, the public officials and civil servants received the proper basic training or re-training with a recognition of a need of competent civil servants to do their jobs.

However, the civil service reform had many weaknesses in all spaces of recruitment, training, performance appraisal and promotion. Therefore, the civil service reform has not yet created the success of building professional competent, standard civil servants, some evaluations concluded that the civil service is poor ethical and far away from the accountability standard. This caused more difficulty for HRM in government of Vietnam. Vietnam has now achieved the middle income status, so it needs to improve the HRM at state sectors to overcome many difficulties. This requires a moving from out of date HRM system to reaching a professional system in an edge of international standard. The shift will be discussed in the following sessions.

3. Moving from existing human resources management to professional system

3.1. Weaknesses and challenges of the Vietnam human resources management

The existing system has many weaknesses such as poor human resources planning, bribes frauds in recruitment, inadequate remuneration, unrealistic performance assessment, promotion is not based on merit, corruption [6]. The values of public management such as accountability, transparency, responsibility, effectiveness did not recognized in the HRM system.

Although the corruption is fairly common in Vietnam, the bribes are popular under the forms of given additional obstacles and using the public means for personal benefits. We will discuss the weaknesses and challenges in detail for each stage of the HRM. They are divided into hardware and software of HRM in government of Vietnam (Do Phu Hai, 2009) [8]. As that the hardware is included as follows: human resources planning, job analysis and job description, recruitment and promotion, training and development, performance appraisal, discipline, and salary. The software included for civil servant motivation, confidentiality and privacy, conflict of interest, accountable public servants, responsible behavior of public servants, impartiality and neutrality etc.

3.2. Human resource planning

Although the civil service reform was done for 15 years, there is no proper personnel planning, the need of personnel changes is not predicted accurately both in quantity and quality. Up to now, the human resource planning is based on 'staff size' quota, the work is much dependent on the estimated proposal by the state organizations. Off course, the estimate is not based on actual need of state agencies. Consequently, there is a waste budget or shortage of budget allocation happening at the same time. Recently the human resource planning is proposed to base on the numbers of jobs in the system in a combination of

career system and job system. However, the new element is not fully effective in irrelevant conditions and its implementation process [13].

3.3. Job analysis and job description

The policy change in HRM, the job analysis and job description are practically carried out by state agencies, as said there are some conditions, they did not support the reform. The roles and functions and tasks are defined for general grades such as experts and principles experts and specialist scales. In a technical term, it did not help much in the HRM because the job analysis must be done for each post, it is better than general job description. Thus, any post is required by their specific qualifications and competency.

Up to now, the job description is widely done with attached political will, but it does not provide much help for the HRM of state sectors in Vietnam. The major constraint is that there is no right solution to a problem, the unqualified human resource managers and lack of proper framework caused the job analysis and job description became the failure. There is a need of capacity building program for human resource managers in all state organizations. The training program is required to focus on knowledge and skills of job analysis and job description. It will take into consideration of software of HRM system in the following session. Thus, the excellent behavior and performance are all needed in the job description.

3.4. Recruitment and promotion

From Ordinance and New Law on HRM in government of Vietnam, the recruitment and promotion have been changed toward the merit based selection methods. All public officials and civil servants and public employees are recruited and promoted through the competitive examinations. Up to now, the recruitment is decentralized to line ministries and localities in provinces and cities including the public service deliveries. The recruitment criterion are to

focus mainly on fairness, openness and objectiveness. However, some recent proofs are shown that these criterion objectives are not easily to address. It is evidenced that the nepotism is known as negative impact to the recruitment [6].

Also, the competitive examination did not focus on finding the right persons for the right post because of the irrelevant methods, so even the recruitment work correctly, but the best candidates are not selected. Even some recruited exams are already computerized, but the right persons may not be selected because that the examination questions did not ensure to find the best ones by their knowledge and skills, especially the soft skills requiring for the jobs are not evaluated during all competitive examinations to recruit civil servants and public employees. Therefore, the recruitment could not find the talented persons and the best ones. Not many the best graduated students of recognized universities in Hanoi chose state agencies to work for Ministry of Home Affairs of Vietnam (MOHAV, 2013) [10]; so it is really not good news at all in a period 2003-2011.

A statement in the Top Summit of Political Report of 10th CPV Congress “*buying posts, bribes to escape legal responsibility and buying degree...*”, so it is certain that bribery with intention of being recruited and promoted is very serious, taken as “mother of bribery” because it puts the first step for the HRM in government. Thus, the phenomenon becomes the most challenges for the HRM of government in Vietnam.

3.5. *Training and development*

The training for civil servants was undifferentiated and short supply (Hausman, 2009) [11]. The training curriculums are mainly for politics and state management. The courses are designed to meet the common knowledge required for the experts, principal experts, so the training curriculums are often large, not relevant for the daily jobs. The training needs assessment is rarely carried out in all types of training courses, so the training programs are often

ineffective to fill in the capacity gaps of the civil servants and public employees. The mentoring and coaching of post training programs for long term capacity did exist rarely in the office places.

The development of cadres and civil servants are also not effective to bring the values of new public management. The development of cadres and civil servants is not to retain the talented ones or good persons who should be developed. The political dimension is often paid higher attention more than the professional skills, especially the soft skills which are needed for the cadres and civil servants. Similarly, the training and development for public employees did not meet the demand of acquiring better quality of public service deliveries. Therefore, the public employees are still weak at their capacity to address the needs of public services.

3.6. Performance appraisal

The performance appraisal did not work well in the HRM system of government of Vietnam [8, 13]. There are 8 criterions which are applied for all cadres and civil servants. So the current system does not assess the performance of the cadre and civil servants accurately. Obviously when the job analysis and job description did not work well, it is really difficult for the evaluation. Actually the performance appraisal does not provide the incentive for the HRM; it also does not encourage and motivate the cadre and civil servants at the performance [12]. The results of this mechanism often use as criteria for the promotion which must not be productive in this case.

3.7. Discipline

The discipline was legalized in HRM of government of Vietnam so that the cadres and civil servants and public employees are faced with disciplinary actions such as reprimand, caution, salary down, grade drop, demotion and forcible job severance [8]. The discipline and sanctions are evaluated as not

very effective because of the weak enforcement. The reasons are grouped as the disciplinary capacity of managers and leaders, cultural characteristics of not wanting to give offence “you don’t criticize me, I will not criticize you” [12]. The HRM system recruits lifelong career employment, so it could not provide the sanction of removing the cadres or civil servants from the system if they are incompetent or bad performance.

3.8. Salary

The salary system is a great challenge for HRM in government of Vietnam. Each position or grade on a salary scale consists of 9 levels, each level is rooted by the minimum salary and salary scale. The cadre and civil servant salary in the scales is simply multiplied by the minimum salary to salary scale. The reform of salary is to increase the minimum salary from VND 180,000 in 1999 to VND 1,150,000 in the year of 2013 (66/2013/NĐ-CP) and VND 1,49 Mil. in 2019.

A problem is that the increase of salary from the GOVN’s effort does not meet the cost of living of cadres and civil servants. The reform also focuses on establish the new salary structure with scales that aims to motivate the personnel capacity and performance.

The salary does not cover the cost of living, so the cadres and civil servants often depend on other income sources. These incomes come from businesses running alongside with the government jobs. The bribery also become a good income source [6], therefore, low salary is taken into serious consideration as reason of bribes or corruption which is really a challenge for HRM in government of Vietnam. The low salary causes the leave of the good staff and talented ones to private sector and foreign direct investment because they can find better job incomes from these ones.

3.9. New directions of human resources management

A vision that requiring the high performing professional civil service with new HRM system, but the HRM now has low expertise, lack of accountability and responsiveness, closed system and rigidity. Going along with international standard and experience [12], the new system have been following the expertise, openness, professionalism, results and performance based, ethic and accountability. A merit system based on non discriminatory practices and equality access to public office would promote professionalism in the civil service. The performance is often required by rigorous staff appraisal process based on job competencies and performance targets so that the objectivity will be required for the impartial technical advice.

The promotion of merit and performance based principles would require structures and systems that align with policy goals and targets to jobs, competency requirements, performance indicators and personnel appraisal processes [3]. In Vietnam, the new enacted Law on Public Officials and Civil Servants was established with major changes toward a civil service based on position and merit. Going along with it, the competitive recruitment and promotion are set, there are many good practices in competitive promotion started in Da Nang city of Vietnam to find the public managers in both public service deliveries and administration, and then it has been spreading over Vietnam, apparently it was implemented in Ministry of Transportation, Ministry of Justice, Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences etc. It is important that this Law specified the remove and separation of public service deliveries and state owned enterprises out of the civil service.

3.10. The staffing personnel in public service deliveries are public employees who are recruited and managed by public service providers; actually the reform creates more flexible HRM practices in the public service delivery agencies. It is required that higher obligation and responsibility and accountability, confidentiality and privacy are all needed for the cadres

and civil servants who are working for the administrative agencies [12]. Actually there is a distinction of these groups including cadres, civil servants and public employees based on their recruitment conditions, obligations, training and development. That is why, the HRM reform is still needed for Vietnam. *Paradigm shift*

The existing HRM in government of Vietnam is more traditional public administration, so the shift will need to follow the model of new public management, or at least inclusion of critical elements of new public management. In the existing model, the HRM in government of Vietnam has an adherence to rules and procedures, so it is necessary to shift to exploit efficiently country resources to achieve the results of standardized civil service system.

In traditional public administration of existing Vietnam HRM, the state organizations acting as controller under agency oriented model, thus it needs to shift to more proactive problem solver. It means the citizen orientation is a key for solving any public problem. In the existing system, the tradition orientation is shifted to change and renewable. The risk avoidance is shifted to risk taking. The paradigm shift can be described in the following Table 1.

Table 1: Paradigm shift in case of HRM in government of Vietnam

<i>Moving from</i>	<i>Moving to</i>
Passive personnel function	New vision for the future and the role of HRM (strategy for the development)
Not competitive	Merit based (meritocracy)
Non-standardized and non-transparent core HR policies	Expertise to match the private sector -eg specialist posts
Unfocussed workforce	Standardized and monitored core HR policies
Little manpower planning	Workforce that knows what it is supposed to do - job description - Effective and Efficient

Unstructured/unplanned talent management	Planning for retaining talented ones
Ineffective evaluation procedures	Workforce that is evaluated against set criteria
Limited capacity skills for change	A workforce that is developed to meet the needs of the organization to do their job well
Inefficiency	Highly professional
Lack of accountability	Responsive and ethical

(Source: Hai Phu Do, 2009)

3.11. More integrated approach for Vietnam human resources management

Per discussed, the Vietnam HRM has evolved from a rather low developed basis, but it is widely known as a fragmented system if we divide it into three areas such as ‘HR information’, ‘HR management’, ‘HR development’. The HR information in Vietnam includes HR research and statistics that are available in HRM agencies of any country. Thus, it is a function of some line Departments in MOHAV in Vietnam.

The HR development in Vietnam includes training and development, organizational development; it belonged to National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) and Department of Training in MOHAV in Vietnam. The HR management includes the selection and staffing, performance management system, human resources planning, organizations and job design. The functions are decentralized for line ministries and localities in Vietnam, but before it belonged to MOHAV.

It is required that these components need to be integrated for generating the HR results such as quality, productivity, innovation, HR fulfillment, readiness for change. In fact, the change of HR system in Vietnam has been done so far going along the vision of PAR reform process. Under the HRM component, the changing HRM in government of Vietnam is multi-dimensional, not just for personnel, but also there is a change of state organization [8, 9]. The state

organization structure has been reformed toward coherent HRM which meets the demand of new public management. The changing of Vietnam HRM in PAR has been described in the following Table 2.

Table 2: The change of Vietnam HRM in public administration reform

<i>HRM component</i>	<i>HRM in government of Vietnam before reform</i>	<i>Changing HRM in government of Vietnam after reform</i>
Governing organization	Each ministry and agency	Coherent HRM
Personnel system	Career-based rank system (Pay level, promotions and transfers conducted according to rank)	Combination of Career & Position-based system (Position-based system: pay level, promotions and transfers based on position)
Recruitment	Internal recruitment within each ministry and agency (Officials promoted or transferred according to seniority and exam without serious performance evaluation)	Open recruitment can be possible (Recruitment is carried out through government-wide competition or outside competition; promotion is based on an serious evaluation)
Performance management	Perfunctory performance management based on seniority (There is a performance system but its operation was largely based on seniority)	Strict performance management (serious action is taken against inadequate performance)
Pay level	Low Rank-based pay	Need to consider /introduce performance-related pay or incentives (individual & group-based)
Performance evaluation	Subjective and superficial evaluation	Result-centered or competency evaluation system
Human resources development	Uniform training (it lacks diversity, and it is not used to recognize and develop abilities)	Individual and customized training/education (Improvement is made after looking into the level of competency and leadership/abilities)

(Source: *The Summary of PAR narratives*)

3.12. Change of hardware

- *Coherent HRM*

The coordination of government agencies is very weak before the reform for HRM in government of Vietnam. The change started under the PAR, it was named after the organization reform, as that it can generate a part of coherent HRM. It is evidenced from 1997 to 2013, MOHAV led the government's effort to merge related ministries reducing fiercely the total number of ministries from 36 to 18 ministries and 4 equivalent ministry organs. The merger demonstrated that it yielded the substantial efficiencies in the system. The ministry merger is really necessary efficiency measure that benefits the coherent HRM.

However, the coherent HRM requires more than that, it needs to integrate at least three components named after the HR information and HR development and HR management toward the public policy process (Hai DO, 2009) [8]. The HRM could not be separate in each ministry, each agency as before PAR reform. It means the coherent HRM becomes the overall HRM system in the whole government. The system is lively existing to support each other from the different components. Actually we can see Vietnam HRM is far from the goal of coherent HRM system.

- *Combination of Career & Position-based system & department based system*

It is hypothesized that the civil service included “*career and position based systems*” whereas each may has different impacts on incentives and culture in Vietnam. In career based system, civil servants are usually hired at the very beginning of their career and expected to remain in the public service more or less throughout their life. The initial entry is mostly based on examination in

case of Vietnam and the promotion is often based on a system of grades attached to the individual rather than to a specific position.

While the position based systems focus on selecting the best suited candidate for each position whether by external recruitment or internal promotion or mobility that is added by the system of HRM in government of Vietnam from the Law of Cadre and Civil Servant. This system allows more open access and lateral entry is relatively common. Both systems have inherent strengths and weaknesses in maintaining ethical standards and promoting government collective values through entry mechanisms in the civil service and incentive mechanism. Recent term “*department based systems*” in some countries (Table 4) to characterize the hybrid systems, many countries moving toward this model which give a lot of HRM responsibilities to line ministries in the definition and practices of HRM policies, but where civil servants make a career mostly in a single ministry.

Before the reform, there is a growing consensus that the current predominantly career based system in the Vietnamese civil service is one of the major causes of the shortcomings of the system. The increasing interest in position based civil service systems is now reflected in the new Law of Public Officials and Civil Servants. Thus, there is a need to combine the “career and position based”, but the this Law does not provide exactly how to establish this combination. Actually the career based system of Vietnam HRM need to adopt the position based system as new element of new public management.

Thus, there are these new elements of the position based system as defined by MOHAV as follows: (i) recruitment and promotion of the right person with the right skills and qualifications to the right job (ii) recruitment and promotion criteria should be based on job requirements. However, key elements in position based system are such as job analysis and description, pay, performance

appraisal, motivation, objectivity etc have not yet taken into account for the reform.

Table 3: Main features of the these two systems

<i>Features</i>	<i>Career based system</i>	<i>Position based system</i>
Employment arrangement	Life long	Contract
Stability	High	Lower
Focus	Emphasis common values and consistency	Emphasis individual performance and results
Recruitment	Initial open competition at entry level	Open competitions at all levels based on job requirements
Promotion	Length of service and seniority	Competencies necessary for performance
Private sector	Closed, little interaction with private sector	Open interaction with private sector and greater use of private sector HR practice

(Source: OECD 2004)

Table 4: Classification of HRM system

<i>More career based system</i>	<i>More department based system</i>	<i>More position based system</i>
France	Austria	<i>High delegation</i>
Greece	Belgium	Australia
Hungary	Czech Republic	Finland
Ireland	Germany	Iceland
Japan	Italy	New Zealand
Korea	Mexico	<i>Average</i>
Luxemburg	Netherlands	Denmark
Slovak Republic	Poland	Norway
Spain	Portugal	Switzerland
		United Kingdom
		<i>Low delegation</i>
		Canada
		Sweden
		United states

(Source: OECD survey in 2002)

- *Open recruitment*

The recruitment in Vietnam HRM is competitive and decentralized. However, there are many weaknesses (2.1 item), the recruitment will need to be more opened; it means that the selection method is needed to change toward 'the right person for the right post'. The recruitment is based on the job analysis and description to support in the competition, it is better than uniform examination. The candidates are often academic graduates to start their careers, but the recruitment needs to open to candidates who are successful in their professionals, who are talented ones.

- *Strict performance management, result-centered or competency evaluation system*

On PAR, the roles and functions of state are changed toward enabling regulatory environment for socio-economic development [7]. The personnel performance is necessary linking to the implementation of strategy and delivery of results which are under the results based management (RBM). The set goals, planning outputs, activities must be well connected to the HRM system. It would change the Vietnam HRM from personnel management to capable staff management with a connection of HRM system and performance planning system with three factors as follows (i) the competence required to do the job (ii) the performance outputs and indicators (iii) annual targets. Therefore, it can be defined as results centered and competency evaluation system.

The performance appraisal has been introduced in Vietnam recently, however it was done in the conditions of the absence of staff competency and job related targets (RBM), so there are many difficulties and constraints in setting proper mechanism to implement this combination of results – performance in Vietnam. As we saw that Malaysia established the Competency Based Human Resource Management Framework brings together recruitment, selection, reward and career development, training and performance management into one integrated

HR system [5]. It is good example for developing country like Vietnam where this can be learned from the framework. Thus, it can provide the foundation of staff appraisal to determine salary pay and promotion. The competency framework makes sense to what the performance and behavior which are needed for the reward. It is certain that the framework can provide better basis for staff career development and human resource planning, job analysis and description etc. Some ASEAN countries also started applying the framework for the HRM to integrate the HRM and RBM into one system.

- *Performance-related pay*

It is so new for Vietnam though this was known as very good practice in many countries, which require Vietnam to adopt with [9]. Many countries have incentive schemes such as performance related pay as it has been ever seen in Singapore, 25% of the pay top civil servants and ministers are linked to the performance of the Singapore GDP because the Singapore has very flexible salary scheme where pay can go down and/or up.

The success of a performance bonus system is critically dependent on the credibility of the performance appraisal system. It can be a lesson learned for the system considered as not fair and transparent as Vietnam's case (2.1. item), a performance related pay system would quickly fail. As experienced, Philippine conducts semi-annual performance evaluation of civil servants to follow the specific standards which working out both quality and quantity of outputs and deliveries of civil servants as the major measure of the performance. As that the performance is measured on the targets set at the beginning of the year in accordance with rules and regulations prescribed by the HR management agencies. Of course, it has not been used in Vietnam up to now due to many weaknesses in institutional arrangement (2.1. item).

- *Individual and customized training/education*

The range of knowledge, skills and attitudes associates with the competent staff for a particular post to work on daily jobs and generate the outputs and outcomes which set as the annual target. Having the competent staff, we need to provide the training and staff development. Unluckily, this work has not been well done in Vietnam up to some key reasons specified in item 2.1, even a Department of Training in MOHAV is responsible for the work. The training and staff development must follow the competency framework while it does not exist, so the training and staff development are too fragmented in Vietnam's case.

Based on the competency framework, it means the capacity building is needed to address the gap of the range of knowledge and skills and attitudes on post requirements in a combination with strategy and outputs and allocated works based on RBM as well as accordance to the work of human resources planning. Also, the high attention to capacity building for their cadres and civil servants has been are paid by all civil services, thus there are numerous types of training to improve the staff performance, but they did not work well.

As an experience, we saw that Malaysia and Philippine and Thailand have major policies on training and staff development which set out the target that training and development must be geared toward equipping civil servants with up to date knowledge, skills and appropriate attitudes to serve effectively the civil service [5]. In these countries, Civil Service Commission provided the manuals for the capacity building in line ministries and departments for the civil service development plans.

However, it is not enough, Malaysia did it very well from a year 2002 because the training and development is closely linked to the Competency Based Human Resources Management Framework [5], so the training and development focus on those competencies that leverage most job improvement. By this way, the training and development framework can be set up based on the above

competency framework with specific objectives, curriculum design and training delivery under 6 levels such as knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. Surely, it is really a good practice for developing countries, especially for Vietnam to learn and replicate.

The capacity is required for the reform it is a linkage between the competency and public policy process, it reflects the executive policy capacity. From Table 5, the competency dimensions with analytical managerial and political areas and policy capacity is related to each another which set out in the policy cycle from policy planning, policy formulation, policy implementation, policy evaluation (Hai DO, 2014) [13].

Table 5: Competency dimension and policy capacity

<i>Competency</i>	<i>Capabilities of Cadres and Civil Servants</i>
Policy Analytical Competences	Knowledge of policy substance and analytical techniques and communication skills
Managerial Competences	Strategic management, leadership, communication, negotiation and conflict resolution, financial management and budgeting
Political Competences	Understanding of the needs and positions of different stakeholders; judgement of political feasibility; Communication skills

(Source: Adaped from Howlett, Wu & Ramesh, 2014 [14])

3.13. Changes of software

There is a distinction between objectivity and responsible public servants. In Vietnam's case, it became very complicating issue. As we know that in almost countries in the world, the systems for managing staff in political parties are independent and separated from their civil service. In Vietnam, the HRM of Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV) runs in parallel and sometimes overlapping with HRM in government of Vietnam.

Thus, the so-called dual system is correct for Vietnam HRM. On the one side, it has an advantage giving the Party's control in ensuring the effective public policy implementation. On the other side, the civil servants in dual system often face tensions of priorities of civil service and the political needs of Party. Even, the political needs are sometimes going along with the civil service requirements. However, it is more than that the civil service requires the impartialness and technical competency.

In the reform process, it should be able to change the software; it means that there are two systems which are surely better than one. Thus, the clarification of two systems is required in the longer term, the Law of Public Officials and Civil Servants could be guided by two Laws, the first on Law of Public Officials who should commit the loyalty to Party while the second on Law of Civil Servants who should commit the standardized values of civil service system to implement the public policy which are planned by the Party. This helps much for the check and balance from policy planning of the Party to the implementation of public management for the case of Vietnam. Of course, the kind of public servants in separation system will create very well a HRM system in the next phase of reform that will allow adoption of new elements from position based system toward effectiveness, efficiency, responsible civil servants [15].

4. Conclusions

The HRM in government of Vietnam has been in reform process so that it became a good case study for a dynamic HRM in government. Facing internal weaknesses and external challenges in parallel, the existing HRM in government of Vietnam has been in a practical need of change and on the way of changing from the existing system to the professional system.

The research found out that the combination of career based system and position based system is the right strategy for Vietnam so far, so it should be able to

continue to adopt key elements of position based system and new public management. The model of Competency Based Human Resources Management Framework of Malaysia [5, 16, 17] which is very productive for Vietnam. This finding can be fruitful for developing countries in generalization.

Moving forward of professional HRM system has been taking some steps in Vietnam became a good lesson learned such as the substantial change of human resource planning from standardized formulas to meeting the demands of actual job requirements, development of system of competencies, job analysis and description in recruitment and promotion, change of recruitment criteria from general grade standards and general qualifications to more specific job requirements, change of promotion criteria from seniority to competency and performance, change of focus of performance appraisal from compliance with rules and regulations to work results, provision of better remuneration and some other incentives to encourage better performance and retention of capable staff, change of the focus of training from meeting grade criteria to improving job performance, strengthening the role and capacity of the line managers in HRM, provision of training on HRM for HRM managers in government agencies, strengthening disciplinary and enforcement procedures, as well as appeal mechanism.

However, the HRM in government needs to shift deeply in paradigm from existing system to professional system in developing countries, it is required the consistent reforms such as organization and finance to support the integrated approach for HRM as well as continuous reform to separate the cadres, civil servants, public service providers by their distinctions. From the Vietnam's case study is shown that the categorical separation between civil servants and public service providers are already done gaining early achievements. If the civil service is categorized separately, it is promising to generate a great change such as HRM in government of Vietnam to follow the professional system with

outcomes of effectiveness, efficacy, accountability, responsible civil servants to pursue the vision of building democratic, clean, strong and modernized civil service. If having a categorized separation, the role of Cadres should be shifted toward the policy planning and monitoring and evaluation of policy formulation and leading policy implementation, it is really a certain path of professional agenda setting.

On other direction, the clear roles and functions of these Cadres and Civil Servants are categorized separately, it means the system of HRM in government could be shifted to the human resources competency system. Thus, it should be able to change the software such as regulations, that is opened to a requirement of research expansion in responsible civil servants on objectivity. Also, the research questions are substantially raised in a relation of HRM to public interest, the politically neutral civil servants such as in Vietnam's case study. The confidentiality and privacy, conflict of interest, and accountable civil servants, responsible behaviors of civil servants are in a need to be taken into a consideration.

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