

State Civil Service: Career Mobility as a Factor of Career Satisfaction

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Abstract—The problem of the dynamics of career growth of employees, affecting the motivation of officials, remains at the civil service. The research is aimed at studying the factors that can have a negative impact on career progress - career barriers. During the research methods of system analysis, general scientific methods were used. The researchers give ambiguous estimates of the role of some factors that play the role of career barriers in the system of motivation of officials. Therefore, the purpose of the work is to answer the following question: "can career mobility have a negative impact on career attractiveness and career satisfaction, and be a career barrier?". In 2018, we conducted a study of career barriers among civil servants of the Sverdlovsk region, which was attended by 150 respondents. It was established that civil servants, in general, have a low level of assessment of career growth, a high level of career satisfaction, the desire to maintain the achieved career level, the position, which indicates the absence of career aspirations and is a subjective career barrier. Career mobility is at a low level, which is an objective career barrier. Career mobility has a restraining effect on the formation of career aspirations and career attractiveness, encourages to be satisfied with the achieved results in the career of officials who, upon reaching the "career plateau", find motivation for service in professional development or strengthening of positions held, or leave the service.

Keywords—public civil service, career mobility, career aspirations, satisfaction with career.

I. INTRODUCTION

Career processes in the civil service have traditionally been in the field of management theorists and practitioners. Career as a result of rank advancement and professional growth of an official reflects the interests of a particular individual and the authority where he serves. The formation of a career in the civil service is complex, as it occurs, as a rule, in a limited career space, a high level of competition, socio-cultural characteristics of working with personnel. Objective factors that negatively affect the career or career barriers of an objective nature have a significant impact on the individual career behavior of a civil servant, forming career barriers of a subjective nature, which often lead to an outflow of talented professionals. Career limiting factors reflect an individual's perception of negative conditions that can hinder career progress.

Career barriers are of theoretical and practical interest in view of their importance in the strategic approach to the construction, planning of individual careers of officials, the organization of the work of authorities. These topical issues

determine the research task of the work: on the basis of the study of the career of civil servants to determine the nature of the impact of career mobility on career attractiveness and satisfaction with career.

II. METHODOLOGY

With all the variety of approaches and points of view, most authors understand career as a process of promotion through the ranks, accompanied by a new quality of skills, competencies, and improvement of the qualification level of the employee. There are two general types of career: professional (reflects the replenishment of knowledge, competencies, growth of professionalism) and official (implies a change in official status). Career barriers of the state civil service, as a rule, are understood as obstacles, negative factors of objective and subjective character, reducing opportunities of rank advancement and professional growth. These approaches are also divided for this work.

Max Weber's concept of an ideal bureaucracy developed in his work "Economy and Society" [24] had the greatest influence on the formation of the modern model of public administration. The scientist justified the principle of the official's career, considering it as an objectively defined and planned process of moving the employee on the hierarchical ladder on the basis of meritocratic criteria (meritocracy - the power of the best) and predictability of the career ladder. Evans P., Rauch J. [17] empirically established the relationship between the principles of meritocratic hiring and career predictability, which provide officials with a long and predictable career in the administration (mainly through internal promotion) with the efficiency of the state apparatus. The unpredictability of a career was considered by the authors as a factor that negatively affects its construction, that is, a career barrier. Perry D. and Hondenghem A. [20], Shane E. [21] included career growth in the main groups of incentives of civil servants, which in various combinations allow to form the necessary motivations of employees. Therefore, the factors limiting career movement were considered in the aspect of negative influence on motivation. Hall D. [18] proposed the main criteria for determining the success of a business career. The most common criterion is financial and/or hierarchical success, followed by personal perception and evaluation of the career by the employee himself, as well as the criteria of career identity and career adaptability.

As career research has been conducted in all the diversity of this phenomenon, scientists' attention to career barriers has

intensified. Foreign authors, for example [22], investigating career barriers, define them as negative conditions of objective and subjective nature, which are perceived by the individual as factors that negatively affect career progress. As the most significant career barriers in the public service the following are noted: lack of career opportunities, unfavorable career policies towards civil servants and belief in unfair selection and promotion processes, lack of support from direct management, lack of qualifications. In addition, the authors note the politicization of the career development system in Lithuania. The problems of career in public service associated with the politicization of the career development system in Germany are investigated by German authors. Thus, for federal officials, career growth is conditioned by political loyalty [23]. Iliesh K. notes that the planning and development of official growth can be distorted due to the existence of "career myths" - the stereotypes of career building in society, in captivity of which some officials are. Incorrect assessment of their own capabilities and objective conditions of professional growth and rank advancement, setting career goals that do not take into account all the goals in life in general, "defensive approach in the development of their careers", are career limiting factors [19]. At the same time, employee's personal qualities such as leadership, competence, high performance contribute to satisfaction with career and create career prerequisites [25].

Russian scientists [5,8,12] discuss the career crises of officials associated with their age, time in one position, when motivation to work falls sharply, which leads to their mass outflow to other spheres of activity. Thus, career crises in the age intervals of 25-30 and 35-45 years, associated with the achievement of the "ceiling" of competence by officials or (and) awareness of the impossibility of further advancement, are analyzed. Scientists consider the problems of passability of career channels, which are hampered by age "career traffic jams" – the official movement of employees under 40 years is constrained by the employment of senior and elderly people [14], as well as the possible negative consequences of raising the retirement age in the state civil and municipal service [16].

The analysis of researches of the Russian authors has shown that they refer the following to the most actual and essential personnel barriers on the state civil service: subjective and unfair process of selection and promotion of personnel, as well as the lack of career opportunities [9,13,6,1,3,7,14,10]. In addition, among the main factors inhibiting rank advancement and professional growth, the authors note the lack of a unified structured model of personnel policy, career development, as well as a poorly developed system of career counseling and mentoring [2,6,3,7] and others. Meanwhile, in our opinion, some aspects of career problems are insufficiently investigated. Thus, it seems expedient to make a theoretical assessment of empirical studies of the process of formation of career barriers by career attractiveness, career satisfaction and career mobility.

III. RESEARCH RESULTS

In 2018, we conducted a study of the career of civil servants and factors influencing this process, on the basis of public authorities of the Sverdlovsk region. The survey was attended by 150 officials, the study was conducted in a continuous way, by questionnaire. In fact, 85% of the officials who took part in the survey were women, the average age of

the respondents was 45-50 years, the average term of public service was 17 years.

To answer the question "can career mobility have a negative impact on career attractiveness and career satisfaction, and be a career barrier?" the following has been investigated: career attractiveness for civil servants as a desire for a career and actions aimed at achieving career growth; career mobility as an actual indicator of career growth, as well as satisfaction with career (career satisfaction) as an individual's attitude to career results. In addition, the impact of career mobility on career attractiveness and career satisfaction was assessed.

To assess the attractiveness of a career as a motive of civil service, a questionnaire was conducted on the question "How do you assess the attractiveness of a career opportunity in the civil service?" with the ranking of answers on a five-point scale of assessments (five points – the highest score) among respondents, the results of which are presented in table I.

TABLE I. MOTIVATION FOR CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IN THE STATE CIVIL SERVICE

Points	Number of respondents	(%)
5 - high level	31	20.4
4 - high enough level	21	13.8
3 - average (satisfactory) level	37	24.4
2 - low level	12	7.9
1 - very low level	51	35.5

Source: the author's research conducted in 2018.

From the data presented in the table, it can be seen that more than 34 % of respondents rate career as a motivation of a high and sufficiently high level. For more than 43% of respondents, career motivation is at a low level, and does not have a stimulating value.

Also, to assess the attractiveness of a career, a survey was conducted on the question "Is the lack of career prospects that most of all is not attracted to public service?". With the ranking of answers on a five-point scale of assessments (five points – the highest score) among respondents, the results of which are presented in table II.

TABLE II. LACK OF CAREER PROSPECTS AS THE MAIN FACTOR OF LOW MOTIVATION TO SERVICE

Points	Number of respondents	(%)
5 - high level	14	9.2
4 - high enough level	18	11.8
3 - average (satisfactory) level	23	15.1
2 - low level	24	15.8
1 - very low level	73	48.0

Source: the author's research conducted in 2018.

From the data presented in the table, it can be seen that the lack of career prospects does not attract 21% of respondents to the civil service most of all, for more than 63% of officials, career prospects in assessing the attractiveness of the civil service are at a low and very low level, that is, practically do not matter.

Assessment of career aspirations and preferences of officials gave the following results. In this way, 124 people, or 81%, declared satisfaction with their career, while they estimated the chances of continuing their career as high enough - 35 %, "small, but there are" - 47 %, "almost unrealistic" - 17 %. Would like to have promotion - 39 %, increase a class rank - 11 % and to keep all as it is - 48 %.

When respondents assessed their preferences, between the possibility of career growth and increasing the salary by 20%, the priorities were on the side of increasing the salary – 101 people, or 66%, wished it.

Thus, when analyzing respondents' assessment of the attractiveness of career civil servants and career satisfaction, it is possible to draw some conclusions. Thus, only a third of officials see a career as highly motivated to serve, more than 80 % are satisfied with their career, and almost half of respondents would like to retain their positions, and do not have career aspirations, while assessing the chances of continuing a career as very modest – 64% of respondents. For more than 63% of officials, career prospects in assessing the attractiveness of the civil service are at a low and very low level, that is, practically do not matter. The preferences of the majority of respondents were in the sphere of raising money, rather than career growth. Meanwhile, for a considerable number of respondents, the career has not lost its attractiveness – so half of officials would like to be promoted or promoted to the class rank. Those who are motivated by career, have the nature of career aspirations, more vertical (by position) than horizontal (by class ranks), respectively, 39 % and 11 %.

Lack of career growth is not a determining factor in the dismissal of officials from the service. So 23 respondents, or 15% of the personnel, plan to leave the civil service. Meanwhile, the lack of official and professional growth is the reason for dismissal from the civil service for only a third of respondents who plan to leave the civil service.

Thus, the low level of assessment of career growth as motivation for civil service, a high level of career satisfaction, the desire to maintain the achieved career level and not to apply for further growth, a low assessment of career prospects in the majority of respondents, indicates the absence of the bulk of officials career aspirations, low career attractiveness, which is a subjective factor.

In our opinion, the results of the study were influenced by the following factors. First, the studies were conducted on the basis of regional executive authorities, the very fact of service in which is assessed as a high social status (prestige, opportunities and acceptable monetary content) in the region, giving the right to respondents to positively assess the achieved career level. Second, 85% of respondents are women, and their average age is 45-50 years. There are many studies, for example, [15], in which it is noted that women are less demanding in the career aspect, less career-oriented than men. And the specified average age of respondents corresponds to the stage of "career plateau" (preservation of achievements), when the probability of career advancement is estimated as unlikely by an official and career motivation switches to increasing the level of professionalism and job satisfaction, despite the low probability of moving on the official career [5]. Meanwhile, the stage of "career plateau" often generates serious problems, as it is an impetus to stagnation or change of the scope and nature of the career itself.

Career mobility. In assessing the career mobility such components as average values were investigated: term of service of the civil servant, the number of promotions and class rank during this period, as well as the period of service prior to promotion. In addition, the personnel reserve in the

civil service as a channel of career mobility, its dynamics. The results of the study are presented in table 3.

TABLE III. CAREER MOBILITY AT THE STATE CIVIL SERVICE

Values	Indicator
Average term (length of service) of civil servant (years)	17
The average number of promotions at the office for the period of service (times)	1.3
Officials who have never received a promotion (%)	30.9
The average number of promotions of the rank for the period of service (times)	1.3
Officials who have never received a promotion of class rank (%)	27.6
The average term of service before promotion (years)	12.6
The average term of service before rank promotion (years)	12.4
Are in the personnel reserve (%)	7.9

Source: the author's research conducted in 2018.

The analysis of career mobility showed that respondents had promotion or increase class ranks once in 12.6 years and 12.4 years, respectively, and the average number of promotions for the period of service is 1.3 times, for class ranks - 1.3. Moreover, almost a third of officials have never received a promotion and a class rank increase during their service. 12 civil servants, or 7.9%, are in the personnel reserve for nomination. Received a promotion within the personnel reserve: one - 100% of those in reserve, two promotions - 25 %. The results of the analysis make it possible to conclude that career mobility is a rare phenomenon in the civil service, and the personnel reserve as a channel of career mobility works poorly. The basis of low career mobility is limited career space of the civil service, so career mobility is a career barrier of an objective nature.

It can be reasonably assumed that the absence of the majority of respondents' career aspirations and high career satisfaction are directly related to the low level of career mobility, the lack of objective opportunities for career growth. Career barriers of an objective nature form the sphere of career aspirations of a civil servant, as a career barrier of a subjective nature. Career mobility, which in fact is more career stability, has a restraining effect on the formation of career aspirations, encourages to be satisfied with the achieved results in the career of officials who, upon reaching the "career plateau", find motivation for service in professional development or strengthening of positions (stagnation period), or leave the state civil service.

The results of the study correlate the identified trends with earlier studies, which can be considered as a stable trend in terms of the ratio of career-minded and unwilling officials. Thus, studies conducted in 2013 by E.A. Lazukova among Perm state civil servants [11] showed a high (more than 70 %) level of satisfaction of respondents-officials with their position, only a third of them were candidates for official growth, of which more than half associate career dissatisfaction with the lack of prospects for promotion. Research conducted in 2018 [4] also showed that the majority of respondents (75%) are satisfied with their career in public service, a third have high career ambitions, more than half do not see a real prospect of career growth, only a third of respondents are confident in official growth.

The problem of career barriers in the civil service needs to be investigated on a larger scale, especially related to new challenges that have difficult to predict consequences – the increase in the retirement age in the civil service.

IV. CONCLUSION

The results of the 2018 study of the career of civil servants of the Sverdlovsk region and the factors influencing this process, make it possible to draw the following conclusions. The low level of officials' assessment of career growth as motivation for civil service, the high level of career satisfaction, the desire to maintain the achieved career level and not to apply for further growth, weak career mobility and low assessment of career prospects in the majority of respondents, indicates the absence of career aspirations among the majority of officials, a sense of career attractiveness, which is an important subjective factor holding back a career. The analysis of career mobility showed that promotion to a position or class ranks increase occurs once in 12 years, so career mobility is a rare phenomenon in the civil service, and the personnel reserve as a channel of career mobility works poorly. Low level of career mobility is the most important objective career barrier. It can be reasonably assumed that the absence of career aspirations among the majority of respondents, career satisfaction, are associated with a low level of career mobility, the lack of objective opportunities for career growth due to limited career space. Career mobility has a restraining effect on the formation of career aspirations of officials who, upon reaching the "career plateau", find motivation for service in professional development or strengthening of positions (stagnation stage), or leave the state civil service.

To the question posed in the study - "can career mobility have a negative impact on career attractiveness and career satisfaction, and be a career barrier?" there can be a positive answer: the lack of career mobility determines the low level of attractiveness of career and career aspirations, forms satisfaction with the career, position held, which is a career barrier.

The results of the study will be useful in the formation of the motivational environment of civil servants in conditions of low level of career mobility.

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