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THE EXPERIENCE OF JAPAN AND SINGAPORE IN TRAINING PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION PERSONNEL

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Abstract

In the context of modernizing public administration systems, developing human capital, and forming a professional corps of civil servants, studying advanced foreign experience and adapting it to national conditions has become increasingly relevant. In particular, the approaches, institutional systems, and practical mechanisms used by developed countries such as Japan and Singapore in training public administration personnel represent valuable models worthy of in-depth analysis. This article examines the experience of these two countries with a focus on personnel policy implementation, professional development and training systems, selection criteria for civil servants, as well as mechanisms for motivation and continuous professional growth.

Keywords

Public administration, personnel policy, foreign experience, Japan, Singapore, human capital

Introduction

The process of globalization and the rapid development of science and technology have significantly increased the demand for new approaches, as well as for highly qualified, professional, and dedicated personnel at all levels of public administration. Contemporary global experience demonstrates that the socio-economic development of any country, the effectiveness of reforms, and citizens' trust in government institutions are directly dependent on the competence, knowledge, dedication, and ethical qualities of civil servants.

Therefore, the issues of training, retraining, and continuous professional development of personnel working within the public administration system occupy a central place on the political agenda of many countries. Japan has established a complex and rigorous system of entry into the civil service based on competitive examinations, ensuring continuous professional development through in-service training, internal programs, and international internships. The personnel selection process in Japan is based on the principles of meritocracy and is aimed at identifying the most talented young professionals and attracting them to the public administration system.

Moreover, Japan's personnel policy places particular emphasis on enhancing the intellectual potential of civil servants, strengthening their social status, and encouraging loyalty to public institutions. This approach contributes to long-term professional stability and organizational commitment.

Singapore, in turn, is distinguished by its modern, innovative governance model and its strong stance against corruption. In this country, recruitment into the civil service is conducted through open and competitive selection processes, closely integrated with leading educational institutions. Notably, the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy plays a significant role in providing advanced training in strategic thinking, international governance, and economic analysis. In addition, Singapore has implemented a remuneration system that ensures civil

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servants' salaries are competitive with those in the private sector, thereby attracting highly qualified specialists.

This system promotes high performance, accountability, and continuous professional growth, ultimately enhancing the attractiveness and prestige of public service.

Under the initiative of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, large-scale reforms are being implemented in the field of public administration. One of the key directions of these reforms is the introduction of modern, effective, and internationally grounded approaches to forming a professional civil service corps. For this purpose, the Agency for the Development of Public Service under the President has been established, and a number of programs aimed at training and improving the qualifications of civil servants have been developed.

However, to further improve the national personnel policy, it remains essential to conduct an in-depth study of foreign experience and adapt it to national conditions. International practice shows that developed countries actively attract the most talented young people to public service through strict selection procedures, systematic education, continuous professional development programs, and effective incentive mechanisms that encourage productivity and efficiency.

In this regard, the experiences of Japan and Singapore deserve special attention. In both countries, advanced systems for training public administration personnel, selecting civil servants, and shaping a strong management culture have been established. These systems are now widely studied and recognized worldwide as exemplary models.

Japan stands out for its combination of traditional values, systematic governance, continuous education, and a service-oriented approach based on loyalty. Civil servants in Japan play a decisive role in the country's socio-economic life, and their professional preparation, commitment to self-development, acquisition of international experience, and dedication to public service are highly valued.

At the same time, Singapore is characterized by its innovative approach, high standards in combating corruption, and the provision of a high social status to civil servants. Despite differences in cultural and political systems, both models share common features, including meritocracy, investment in education, systematic career development, and a strong commitment to serving the public interest.

The System of Training Public Administration Personnel in Japan

Japan is one of the advanced countries that has maintained a high level of professionalism, political neutrality, and stability in the field of public administration. Its civil service training system has developed on the basis of a strong legal framework, meritocracy (i.e., selection based on qualifications and abilities), and centralized administrative institutions. The overall management of the civil service is carried out in accordance with the *National Public Service Act*, adopted on October 12, 1947. Oversight and coordination of this system are performed by an independent state body—the National Personnel Authority (NPA).

The National Personnel Authority is responsible for the recruitment, training, promotion, remuneration, and protection of the rights of civil servants. It operates independently of the executive branch, which helps prevent political interference in the civil service system. In Japan, the civil service is divided into "general" and "special" services. The "special" service includes military personnel, judges, and political positions, while the "general" service consists of employees selected through competitive examinations who serve on a permanent basis.

Recruitment and Selection System

Entry into the civil service is carried out through a three-tier examination system:

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- Level I – for candidates holding a master's degree,
- Level II – for candidates with a bachelor's degree,
- Level III – for candidates with secondary education.

The examinations are conducted in several stages, including tests, written assignments, logical reasoning assessments, and interviews. In Japan, the civil service operates on the principle of long-term (often lifetime) employment. Employees are rotated to different departments or ministries every two to three years, which helps develop the principle of "universality," meaning the ability to work across various fields. On average, an official serves in the system for more than 25 years and undergoes approximately 8–10 rotations during their career.

The performance of civil servants in Japan is evaluated annually. Assessment criteria include quality of service, teamwork, initiative, effectiveness, and other indicators. Based on the evaluation results, employees' salaries, positions, and additional benefits are determined. In recent years, alongside the traditional seniority-based promotion system, a competency-based approach has also been introduced.

The Experience of Training Public Administration Personnel in Singapore

Singapore is one of the countries in the Asian region with the most effective and competitive public administration systems. Civil servants in Singapore have consistently demonstrated a high level of professionalism, integrity, and accountability to the public. These achievements are based on a strong legal system, a meritocracy-based personnel policy, and a strategic system of training and professional development. Public administration in Singapore is founded on the principles of "efficiency," "transparency," and "integrity." Civil servants are regarded as "servants of the people," and the standards applied to them are extremely high.

Following independence in 1959, the public administration system was shaped by key political leaders, with meritocracy as its core principle—meaning that appointments and promotions are determined solely by knowledge, ability, and performance. The recruitment of personnel for the civil service is coordinated by the Public Service Division. Talented students are identified as early as their school years, and special scholarships are awarded to them by the Public Service Commission (PSC). Students educated abroad under these scholarships return to the country and begin their careers in public administration.

In addition, all candidates undergo a rigorous selection process. Through interviews, written tasks, psychological tests, and leadership assessments, the most suitable candidates are identified. Singapore's personnel system is transparent and clearly structured. A personalized professional development plan is created for each employee. Newly recruited civil servants participate in special orientation programs aimed at enhancing their knowledge of society, politics, and public service ethics.

Professional development for specialists is organized through the Civil Service College (CSC), which trains thousands of employees annually and offers specialized modules tailored to each leadership level. Employee performance is evaluated annually through the Performance Management System, with Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) established for each civil servant. Based on these evaluations, decisions are made regarding salaries, bonuses, promotions, and participation in further training programs.

In Singapore, civil servants' salaries are set at levels comparable to those in the private sector, which serves as an important measure to prevent corruption. High-performing employees receive substantial bonuses at the end of the year, while underperforming individuals may receive warnings or be dismissed from their positions. Singapore maintains zero tolerance for corruption. The Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau (CPIB) conducts

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continuous oversight of public officials, and investigations are launched immediately when any suspicion arises. As a result, Singapore is recognized as one of the countries with the lowest levels of corruption in the world.

Conclusion

The experiences of Japan and Singapore are regarded as among the most effective and innovative models of public administration at the international level. The success of both countries is primarily reflected in the careful selection of highly qualified personnel, their continuous training and retraining, the implementation of strict anti-corruption policies, and the wide application of modern technologies in governance.

In Japan, recruitment into the civil service is based on strict and merit-based selection criteria. Japanese civil servants approach public administration with a high level of dedication, responsibility, and professionalism. In this country, regular professional development courses, internships, and internal training programs are systematically organized for civil servants at all levels, which significantly enhances administrative efficiency.

Singapore, in turn, stands out for its firm and consistent policies in digital governance and the fight against corruption. According to Transparency International's 2024 report, Singapore ranked 3rd among countries with the lowest levels of corruption worldwide. In this country, civil servants are required to undergo mandatory retraining on average once every five years, ensuring their adaptation to modern requirements. At the same time, special attention is paid to maintaining a balance between the age and experience of public officials. The experience of these two countries demonstrates that the success of the civil service is based on highly qualified personnel, a fair selection system, transparency, and an innovation-driven governance approach.

For Uzbekistan, analyzing these experiences and adapting them to national conditions could lead to new achievements in the field of public administration. In recent years, Uzbekistan has taken positive steps toward reforming the civil service, reducing corruption, and introducing digital governance systems. However, it is necessary to pursue these reforms in a systematic and in-depth manner. In particular, enhancing the capacity of civil servants, equipping them with modern knowledge and skills, and introducing mechanisms for preventing corruption based on international best practices are essential.

In conclusion, the experiences of Japan and Singapore offer a distinctive roadmap for Uzbekistan. This roadmap leads toward a civil service built on professional personnel, fair governance, innovation, and reliable systems. By following this path, Uzbekistan can elevate the quality of public administration to a new level while ensuring harmony between national values and contemporary global experience.

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