

COMPARATIVE STUDY - TRAINING SYSTEM OF CIVIL SERVANTS OF THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC AND JAPAN: LESSONS FOR THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

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ABSTRACT

This paper analyses the Japanese and Kyrgyz civil service training systems, such as On-the-Job Training (OJT), Off-the-Job Training (Off-JT) and mentoring and coaching. It describes their application in detail, in both countries, and in the case of the Kyrgyz training system it highlights the existence and non-existence of various elements when compared with the Japanese system. The author also analysed the strengths and effectiveness of both training systems and he concluded that the Japanese model is a potential model to be adopted by the Kyrgyz Administration in order to strengthen its current system. The article closes with some proposed recommendations.

Keywords: civil service, civil servants, training, on-the-job training, off-the-job training, shared room system, "ringi" system

INTRODUCTION

Public sector human resources have played a significant role in the economic advancement in most developed countries such as Japan, Singapore, the United States, and the United Kingdom among others. It can, therefore, be suggested that a developing country like the Kyrgyz Republic can also experience economic advancement if it devotes appropriate attention to the necessary human capacity development and financial support for the systematic of its human resources. In this context, the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic is taking adequate steps to ensure that its civil servants acquire the necessary skills and knowledge. It is assumed that the Government Decree on the training and retraining of civil servants adopted in the country is geared towards the acquisition of skills and knowledge in order to ensure their quality performance in the workplace.²

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Reform of the training system of the Kyrgyz civil servants started with the adoption of the Programme for the development of the training system of civil and municipal servants in the Kyrgyz Republic for 2013-2017 (hereinafter the Programme).³ The Programme contains new approaches to training, including types, directions, and other aspects of training certification. It identifies and delineates roles and functions of all the elements in the training system, while also distinguishing the focal points of financial, human, as well as academic and methodological patterns of the system. The training program is based on a clear division of goals and responsibilities at different levels of coordination, and it is gradually implemented in accordance with its Action Plan.

However, the important question is whether the present training system and policy are optimised to prepare the civil service to face future challenges and achieve high expectations. Thus, this paper analyses the Kyrgyz training system and policy, and compares it with an existing internationally recognised and long-established mode of a developed country, such as Japan.

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² Decree of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, No 462, 11 August 2014.

³ Approved by Presidential Decree on 12 July 2013. The Programme aims to advance the professional skills of public officers in the Kyrgyz Republic. It was developed in accordance with the Presidential Decrees "On the Concept of Modernisation of the Civil Service in the Kyrgyz Republic" (20 June 2011) and "On the National Strategy for Sustainable Development of the Kyrgyz Republic for the Period of 2013-2017" (21 January 2013).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

A study was conducted to seek answers to the following research questions:

1. What are the existing civil service training systems and policies of the Japanese and Kyrgyz Central Government?
2. Are there any differences and similarities in the implementation aspect of these training systems and policies?
3. What kinds of elements of the Japanese training system and policy can be adapted by, or applied to, the Kyrgyz Republic?

METHODOLOGY

This study will use a comparative analysis approach to analyse the existing civil servants training systems and policies of the Japanese and Kyrgyz Central Governments.

OVERVIEW OF THE JAPANESE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT TRAINING SYSTEM

Elements of the Japanese Training System

In Japan, the training system of the Central Government is systematically planned, organised, and implemented by the National Personnel Authority (NPA), and by each Ministry. The training aims at improving the government personnel's knowledge and skills, which are required for them to pursue their duties as civil servants. The training also aims at enhancing the competencies and resources necessary for civil servants to perform their work in accordance with the National Public Service Act provisions and the NPA Rule 10-3.⁴

According to the above Rule personnel training and development are broadly based on 2 methods: (i) OJT (on the job training), which is based on daily duties and tasks; and (ii) Off-JT (off the job training) courses implemented at external training facilities, away from their workplace.

On-the Job training (OJT)

Japan's public and private sectors are the most famous examples of successful implementation of OJT. It has been known that Japanese organisations, which include the civil service, place great importance on OJT. In general, OJT conducted by each ministry or agency has been done by its own personnel.

According to Article 5 of the NPA Rule 10-3, OJT is classified as a training method, which is assigned as a duty and is implemented during the discharge of daily duties. The Article also stresses that in implementing OJT, the heads of the government ministries and agencies shall: (i) have supervisors to provide the personnel with the necessary training through the discharge of their daily duties; and (ii) give guidance to supervisors of personnel and take other necessary measures to ensure the appropriate implementation of training through the discharge of their duties.

'Apprenticeship' type human development approaches

Generally, in Japan the training of newly recruited graduates in civil service is done by using the OJT modality. The implementation of OJT for personnel development is applied under group of duty systems, which begin with subsidiary tasks such as typing and making photocopies. Gradually, more important duties are entrusted to the younger personnel by more senior personnel. It is common for these new civil servants to gradually learn how to proceed with performing their duties, and acquire experience through guiding explanations and instructions given by their supervisors, and by observing their supervisor's activities, etc.

These 'apprenticeship' type human development approaches, where knowledge, skills and organisational value judgments are 'passed down' by example, have played an enormous role for the training of new employees. This conventional method is claimed to be

⁴ Rule 10-3 (Staff Training) of the National Personnel Authority (NPA), 25 June 1981.

implemented effectively for decades in personnel training and it is considered the best method to align personnel behaviours with the Japanese Central Government's Ministries' culture and values.

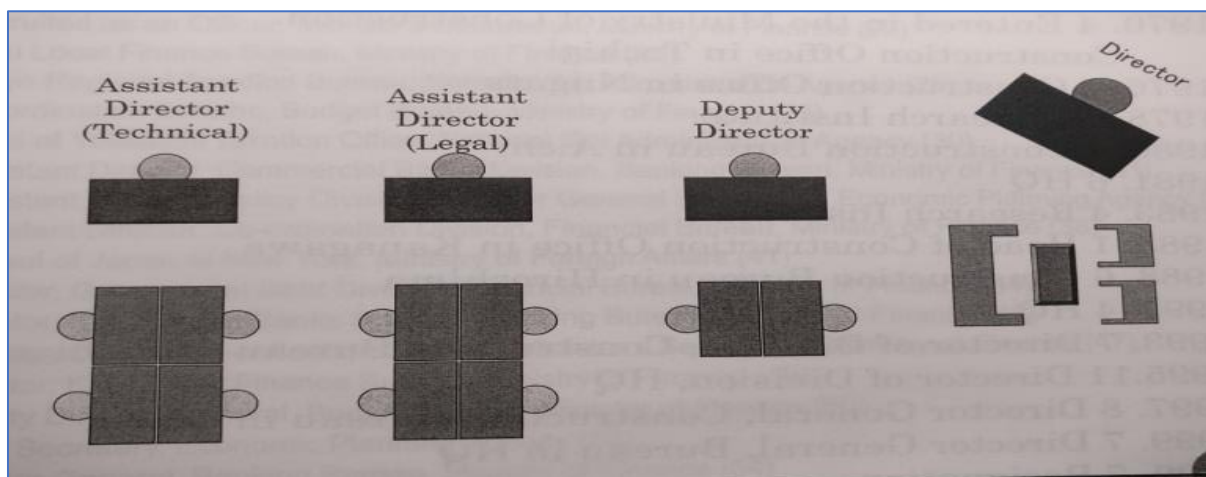
Role of the *Ringi* System

OJT in the Japanese civil service is strongly related to the implementation of the *Ringi* system, which can be described as the process of a lower-rank staff (including new personnel in charge of a particular task) to obtain approval from their superiors. This is done by the low-rank staff being given the task to prepare draft paperwork, which he or she needs to pass through seniors, supervisors and up to the senior manager. After he or she has made amendments to the paperwork as advised or ordered by those senior persons, it is quite often his or her responsibility to present or explain it to the director to obtain the director's 'seal'.

Shared Office System

The layout of an office and the allocation of desks within a particular section form the practical basis for OJT in the Japanese civil service. A shared office system is important for new personnel to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills by watching and listening to their supervisors and seniors in the same room. This results to a smooth transmission of core information regarding duties and tasks from experienced personnel to newer officers.

Figure 1. Japanese Shared Office System



Source: *Outline and Features of the Japanese Public Employee System*. Yoichi NIIYA, National Personnel Authority (NPA) of Japan. Tokyo, April 2017.

Consultation and counselling office works

According to Kim (1988), Japanese OJT can be described as follows: "In addition to reinforcing the young bureaucrat's education, the training period is designed to teach him the importance of good human relations. Early in his career, he will be invited for a drink with his middle-echelon bosses, where he will be taught the social obligations of his position, related with tales of personal experience and the otherwise indoctrinated in the ways of his supervisors".

In other words, this serves as kind of psychological consultation and counselling functions to reinforce the motivation and self-confidence of the young personnel. This also strengthens social relationships of the young personnel with their seniors.

Relationship characteristics in the Japanese Government OJT

Kim (1988) further elaborates about the 'relationship' characteristics in the Japanese Government OJT. Three broad types of vertical relationships can be observed in the Japanese bureaucracy: (i) the superior-subordinate relationship; (ii) the "*senpai-koha*" relationship; and (iii) the "*oyabun-kobun*" relationship.

The first kind of relationship relates to ranks and titles of individuals in the service. The *senpai-kohai* (seniors-juniors) relationship is based on seniority in the service and observed among officials in the same status group. *Senpais* are usually labeled for those who have longer length of service and are older in age than their *kohais*. The *oyabun-kobun* (patron-client) relationship is largely personal, and it is developed out of the superior-subordinate relationship, through old school or university ties, clubs for sports or hobbies, etc.

The above analysis shows the unique features of the Japanese OJT, which very much depends or stands on the basis of relationship and communications among the personnel. However, this Japanese OJT is not being practiced in a unified manner throughout the 'vertically segmented' central government ministries. This is because the OJT varies at the implementation stage, depending upon a central government ministry's culture and work environment.

In addition, OJT is still strongly practiced in the Japanese civil service due to the *Nenko* (seniority) based career development system. This is because senior officers do not fear being bypassed by new entries; hence there is no 'severe competitiveness' among personnel in a development, except "*Douki*" colleagues (who entered into the ministry at the same time after passing the same level examination). OJT is also important to the Japanese Government to maintain its efficiency through a small in personnel numbers national public service.

Off-the-Job Training (Off-JT)

In Japan, Article 6 of the NPA Rule 10-3 states that, if it is considered necessary, the heads of government ministries and agencies may order staff to exclusively undertake training away from their daily work. The purpose of the Japanese Off-JT is to ensure that staff acquire the skills, and enhance their ability and qualifications, that are necessary to perform their duties and responsibilities in the government positions that they currently hold or expect to hold in the future.⁵ Various Off-JT training programmes have been implemented by the NPA and individual ministries. In Japan, 95% of training is conducted by ministries for their own personnel, while the rest are inter-ministerial by NPA (Akuzawa, 2017).

In 2014, the NPA provided 210 training courses for national civil servants of the Cabinet Office and each ministry in which a total of 10,116 civil servants participated, including a total of 8,887 regular service national civil servants. In response to requests from the Cabinet Office and each ministry, the NPA dispatches its personnel as instructors for training courses conducted by the Cabinet Office and each ministry. The NPA dispatched its personnel to a total of 36 training courses at 30 organisations in 2015. The Cabinet Office and each ministry conducted a total of 39,086 training courses individually to their personnel in 2014, in which a total of 1,055,457 regular service national civil servants participated.⁶

NPA Trainings

The NPA carries out Administrative Training, Experienced-based Training, such as Front Office Services at the time of promotion, and Training for National Civil Servants of Regional Offices, in order to develop qualifications and abilities necessary for each managerial position. The NPA also organises and conducts training programmes in which administrative officials at the Cabinet Office and each ministry are dispatched to domestic or overseas graduate schools.

Administrative Training

Administrative Training targets civil servants who are expected to play a core role in the operations of the Cabinet Office and in each ministry. Its basic purpose is to improve civil servants' sense of mission, i.e. serving the whole community based on a strong ethical awareness; to raise the level of qualifications / ability required to represent viewpoints of the

⁵ Rule 10-3 (Staff Training) of the National Personnel Authority (25 June 1981).

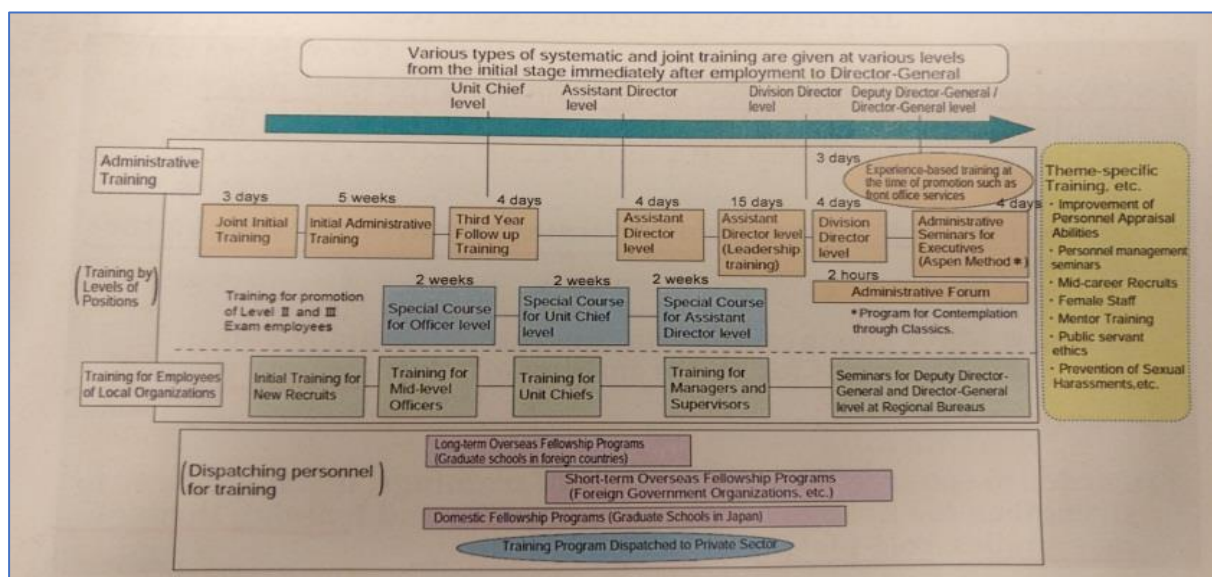
⁶ National Personnel Authority of Japan. *Annual Report FY2015*. March 2017, Tokyo.

people as a whole, such as a broad perspective and flexible ideas; and to build mutual trust enabling policies to be carried out through cooperation among national civil servants.

Administrative Training includes the Joint Initial Training provided at the time of initial appointment, Initial Administrative Training, Third Year Follow-up Training, and training courses for personnel at unit chief level, assistant director level, or division director level at Headquarters. These courses focus on 3 core curricula, namely, (i) to contemplate the mission and responsibilities of servants of the whole community; (ii) to examine ideal public policies through multiple verifications; and (iii) to learn about fair service management. In addition, the participants engage in discussions and opinion exchange in order to enhance mutual understanding and trust as they enlighten each other.

In order to broaden the participants' horizons and promote mutual understanding through exchanges with people from various fields, experts from private enterprises and foreign governments are invited to training courses at the assistant director level or division director personnel level.⁷

Figure 2. Training courses by NPA



Source: *Human Resource Development and Training in Public Service*. Toru AKUZAWA, National Institute of Public Administration. Tokyo, June 2017.

Administrative Trainings of the NPA are carried out by the National Institute of Public Administration (NIPA) in Iruma City, Saitama Prefecture, targeting prospective national civil servants at each level of positions from officer level to director-general level as shown in Figure 2, and who are expected to play core roles in the Administrative operations of the Cabinet Office and each ministry. The following are descriptions of different types of Administrative Training courses.

A. Initial Administrative Training

The Initial Administrative Training is designed for newly recruited civil servants appointed at the Cabinet Office and in each ministry through the Examination for Comprehensive Service, who are expected to engage in duties, mainly policy planning in the future. The current training curriculum was launched in 1997 and it is delivered for 5 weeks every year since 2006.

This cross-ministerial and camp style training, carried out right after the initial appointment, offers an opportunity to trainees to foster a sense of unity as national civil servants. The training is also designed to enable trainees to acquire the fundamental knowledge required for a civil servant of all citizens through the programmes, such as the lecture by

⁷ National Personnel Authority of Japan. *Annual Report FY2015*. March 2017, Tokyo.

administrative vice-ministers of ministries concerning their behaviour as civil servants, report writing to consider the ideal state of civil servants, and discussion on the ideal state of policy formation using case studies of administration from the past. In addition, it aims at allowing trainees to acquire an attitude to perform their administrative tasks, taking into account the viewpoint of ordinary people through hands-on experience at nursing care sites or local governments, as well as engaging in reconstruction assistance in cooperation with specified non-profit organisations, i.e. operating in the affected areas struck by the Great East Japan Earthquake (in Tono City in Iwate prefecture, and Ishinomaki City in Miyagi Prefecture).

B. Administrative Training for Assistant Director Level

The NPA carries out various training programmes through appropriately setting their length, venue and period to make it easier for civil servants at the assistant director level, who are busy with their duties to participate in training away from their workplace. In addition, the NPA invites trainers from private companies and foreign governments aiming at allowing trainees to ponder about their sense of mission and responsibilities as administrative officials along with enhancing their leadership abilities to cope with the globalised environment surrounding them. The box contains the curriculum of the Initial Administrative Training. The duration of this training course is 5 weeks.

Main Curriculum (1)

Case Studies on Past Important Administrative Policies. Trainees contemplate what action the administrators should take though lectures and discussion on administrative cases with historical implications.

Lectures	By persons who actually handled the cases
Group discussion	Group discussion and preparation for the presentation
Whole class discussion	Presentation of the results of group discussion and feedback from other trainees and the lectures

Examples of Topics: Narita Airport Construction; Introduction of Consumption Tax; Minamata Disease; Nagaragawa Estuary Weir Construction, etc.

Main Curriculum (2)

Studies on Current Administration Policies. Trainees discuss about a current policy issue and makes their new policy plans. The person in charge of the related ministry may comments on their new policy plans.

Lectures	By persons who actually handled the cases or university professors
Group discussion	Group discussion and preparation for the presentation
Whole class discussion	Presentation of the results of group discussion and feedback from other trainees and the lectures

Examples of Topics: Birth rate declining; Aging society; National security; Growth policy, etc.

Main Curriculum (3)

Dispatch to local governments. Trainees in the initial administrative training are dispatched to local governments for 1-week to experience the activities such as tax collection, garbage collection and farming experience to learn about the first-line administration.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
a.m.	<u>Greeting/general remark</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greeting Overall conditions (administrative organization, financial situation, of the town etc.) Town hall tour 	<u>Experience of municipal services</u> <u>Experience of local industry /urban development</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production and sales of silk Opinion exchange with town development groups etc. 	<u>Experience of municipal services</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accompanying handling of unpaid tax Issuance of residency card at the citizen affairs section, etc. 	<u>Experience of municipal services</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Garbage collection Recycling work Tour of related facilities, etc. 	<u>Opinion exchange session with municipal employees</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> About the effect of the training, etc.
p.m.	<u>Explanation of individual departments</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local revitalization measures Challenges for tourism promotion <u>Experience of municipal services</u> etc.	<u>Experience of municipal services</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visiting day-care centers, elementary/ junior-high schools Opinion exchange with the teachers there, etc. 	<u>Experience of municipal services</u> <u>Farm work at local farms</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tending /harvesting products Opinion exchange with agricultural producers, etc. 	<u>Experience of municipal services</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum will be decided based on a discussion of the trainees and the local government 	<u>Traveling</u> (from the city / town/ village to Tokyo)

Source: Human Resource development and Training in Public Service. Toru AKUZAWA, National Institute of Public Administration. Tokyo, June 2017.

Main Curriculum (4)

Dispatch to nursing homes. Trainees in the initial administrative training are dispatched to nursing homes for one week to experience the nursing activities such as meal assistance, diaper folding or conversations with users to learn the viewpoint of citizens.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
a.m.	Greeting, briefing, preparation of lunch, etc.	Bathroom/toilet cleaning Living room cleaning Laundry assistance Preparation for lunch, etc.	Diaper folding Personal care of users Preparation for breakfast, etc.	Day-service experience, etc.	Diaper folding Wheelchair cleaning Living room cleaning Preparation for lunch, etc.
p.m.	Helping with meal/ assistance; assistance of visiting service; sorting of laundry; conversations with users, etc.	Helping with meal/ assistance Assistance of rehabilitation Assistance of recreation Conversations with users, etc.	Meal/assistance Walking with users Bathing service assistance Conversations with users, etc.	Meal assistance Day-service experience, etc.	Meal/assistance; Assistance of visiting service Opinion exchange with staff (overview of week), etc.

Source: Human Resource development and Training in Public Service. Toru AKUZAWA, National Institute of Public Administration. Tokyo, June 2017.

Japanese central government training policy

The sources of overall policy and regulation for human resource development in the Japanese Central Government are the National Civil Service Act (Act No 120 of 1947) and the NPA Rule 10-3 (Staff Training). Both policies are under the jurisdiction of the NPA.

The National Public Service Act is the basic act on the national civil service system. The objective of this Act is to assure democratic and efficient administration by establishing basic standards (including adequate measures to promote the welfare and interest of civil servants). This is applicable to all central government personnel in order to promote maximum efficiency (Tsuji, 1984). In order to achieve the objective, the Act covers (i) Establishment of the NPA; (ii) Appointment and promotion based on the merit principle; (iii) Guarantee of employee status; (iv) Remuneration; (v) Personnel training; and (vi) Various duties of national civil servants.

Article 3, in Chapter 2 of the National Civil Service Act says that: "The National Personnel Authority shall be set up under the jurisdiction of the Cabinet. The Authority shall report to

the Cabinet under the standards provided in this Act. Subject to the provisions of relevant Acts, the Authority shall administer matters concerning recommendations for improvement in personnel administration as well as in remuneration and other conditions of work; position classification; examination, appointment, and dismissal; compensation; training; disciplinary punishment; grievance procedure; and other matters concerning the maintenance of fairness in personnel administration, the protection of employee interests and other activities".⁸ This clause is the basis for the establishment of NPA as the key central government human resource agency.

Furthermore, the need to develop and improve efficiency of personnel training is stated in Article 73, Section 5 (Efficiency): "For the purpose of developing and improving the efficiency of personnel, the Prime-Minister (the Authority, in the case of item 1) and the head of the appropriate agency involved shall formulate any diligence in administering programmes concerning...training of personnel...". This Article also states that the NPA has been given the responsibility to plan and coordinate the efficiency improvement program for the central government.

National Personnel Authority

The NPA is a politically neutral and specialised administration organisation that is responsible for personnel management of national civil servants and is under the jurisdiction of the Cabinet. It is in charge of the Japanese Central government personnel recruitment examinations, remuneration recommendation, working hours and leave systems, administrative training, exchange between public and private sectors, discipline and disciplinary actions and maintenance of ethics.

The organisational structure of the NPA is headed by three Commissioners, one of whom is appointed as the President. The Commissioners are appointed by the Cabinet with approval of the Parliament and attested by the Emperor. A General Secretariat is placed under the NPA as an administrative department. The Secretariat is headed by a Secretary-General. The General Secretariat is divided into 5 divisions (General Affairs, Planning and Legal Affairs, Personnel, Financial Affairs, and International Affairs), 4 bureaus (Employee Welfare, Human Resources, Remuneration and Equity & Investigation), the National Institute of Public Administration, 8 regional bureaus (Hokkaido, Tohoku, Kanto, Chubu, Kinki, Chugoku, Shikoku and Kyushu) and Okinawa Local Office. The fixed number of personnel in the NPA was 616 at the end of 2015.

The NPA's jurisdiction includes the training of national civil servants, which is stated in the National Service Act and NPA Rule 10-3. For instance, in Article 3, paragraph 1 of the NPA Rule 10-3: "In order to ensure that training is properly implemented, the NPA shall comprehensively organise, and coordinate and give instructions and advice on training provided by heads of government ministries and agencies and may also conduct investigations and request reports on the status of the implementation of training".⁹

The NPA is the central administrative body responsible for the general training matters of the central Government of Japan. According to Article 3, paragraph 2, of the NPA Rule 10-3: "The NPA shall plan and endeavour to implement common training that is necessary to be provided to staff at all government ministries and agencies that it considers to be appropriate to provide itself. In this case, if it is considered appropriate to utilise personnel evaluation, the NPA shall develop, and make efforts to implement, training utilising personnel evaluation".¹⁰

Therefore, in fulfilling the above responsibility, the NPA has enhanced its general coordination function for personnel training: (i) Conducts training courses aimed at Central

⁸ Japanese Law Translation Database System (2006, March). National Public Service Act. <http://www.japaneselawtranslation.go.jp/law/detail/?vm=04&re=02&id=2713&lvm=01>

⁹ Rule 10-3 (Staff Training) of the National Personnel Authority, 25 June 1981.

¹⁰ Rule 10-3 (Staff Training) of the National Personnel Authority, 25 June 1981.

Government's personnel; (ii) Engages in the general planning and standards formulation of the Central Government's training system; and (iii) Provides general coordination and development of training techniques for training programs implemented by individual ministries.

According to the NPA, as for FY 2014, the training courses conducted for the Japanese Central Government personnel can be classified into 4 main categories, like 'training by level of positions', 'dispatching personnel for training', 'training courses per theme' and 'training for trainers'.¹¹ For the training by level of positions there are 2 types of training: (i) Administrative Trainings – these courses conducted by NPA and NIPA for central government officials from new entries to Director-General level; and (ii) Training for Employees of Regional Offices – these courses conducted by NPA and NIPA for officials of regional branches of ministries and agencies from new recruits to Director-General level at regional bureaus.

The NPA organises and conducts training programmes in which administrative officials at the Cabinet office and in each ministry, are dispatched to overseas or domestic graduate schools. The purpose of these trainings are to develop human resources that respond to continuing globalisation of administrative issues. The purpose of the thematic training courses is to support the development of subordinates by managers and the utilisation of personnel from the private sector, etc. For instance, Mentor Developing Training for those who are expected to be mentors is to learn the role of mentors (older officials who provide junior officials with consultation and advice based on their own experiences) and the basic knowledge/communication skills required for mentoring. The last one, Training for Trainers, is special course designed to develop training instructors and coordinators at individual ministries. This is to improve their skills to ensure the smooth implementation of training programmes.

The National Institute of Public Administration

The National Institute of Public Administration (NIPA) is the key Japanese Central Government training institution, under the administration of NPA. This institution was established in 1959, with its residential system for participants having started 9 years later.

This institution provides inter-ministerial courses for the Central Government officials from various ministries to train civil servants as servants of the nation's people. The objectives of personnel training in NIPA:

1. Deepen the sense of mission as servants of all citizens;
2. Improve qualities and abilities; and
3. Deepen mutual understanding and trust among trainees.

According to Matsumoto & Hirose (1986), the institution has been making efforts to enable all training participants to acquire a sense of unity as civil servants by having them stay in the same accommodations and cultivate each other through discussions.

Every year, about 3,000 civil servants are trained by NIPA¹². This number is quite low due to the fact that respective ministries are organising and providing training programmes without any collaboration with NIPA. Other reasons are based on oral evidence obtained during the field trip to NIPA in Saitama in July 2017 that most of the civil servants are so much occupied by their jobs that they are not willing to participate for the NIPA training programs. Their directors, also in many cases, are not so generous to let their subordinates to leave the office for several consecutive days.

¹¹ National Personnel Authority of Japan. *Annual Report FY2015*. March 2017, Tokyo.

¹² Information obtained during the field study to NIPA in Saitama, in July 2017.

ELEMENTS OF THE KYRGYZ TRAINING SYSTEM

In the Kyrgyz Republic's situation, the training system of civil and municipal servants has been systematically planned, organised, and implemented by the Agency on Civil Service and Local Self-Government Affairs under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Kyrgyz Republic since 2013. This modern training system has been gradually formed in three stages.

First Stage: 1991-2003

The Kyrgyz Republic, before the collapse of the Soviet Union, was one of the fifteen Soviet Republics with a common capital in Moscow. At the time, the training system of civil servants of USSR was well-organised. It successfully fulfilled its tasks in improving the skills of civil servants. The training system consisted of a variety of training institutions of the Soviet Union, including central universities, that focused on the training of civil servants, as well as numerous training centres under the ministries. The training system was generously funded by the state, and it undoubtedly influenced both the improvement of the technical base of training institutions and the strengthening of the teaching staff.

A significant disadvantage of the Soviet system in training civil servants was the fact that the training was intertwined with the Communist Party training, placing significant emphasis on indoctrination. In other words, a major part of the training programmes was ideologically oriented courses, raising the participants' loyalty for the Soviet Communist Party and its ideas and values, as well as the leadership of the Party and the Soviet Union.

The collapse of the Soviet Union led to the destruction of a common economic and financial space, rupturing the political, economic, social, and technological links between countries and regions, industries, companies, and people. This exacerbated the economic crisis that followed their independence from the Soviet Union. Consequently, in their first years of independence, they all experienced many difficulties, including the Kyrgyz Republic.

In this context, the unified training system for civil servants that covered the entire USSR, also crashed after the Soviet Union's collapse. Many of the training institutions for civil servants of various directions of study remained outside of the Kyrgyz Republic, along with the coordinating bodies of the system. Nevertheless, a small part of the training institutions, specialising in the training of civil servants, remained in the Kyrgyz Republic. However, lack of adequate funding led to the deterioration of their technical base and to the outflow of qualified staff. Therefore, the training of civil servants was conducted in small volumes, mainly by the training centres under the ministries or agencies, during this period.

Second stage: 2004-2012

In 2004, two important events occurred. The first was the adoption of the Law on the Civil Service and the other one was the establishment of the Agency of the Kyrgyz Republic on Civil Service (the Agency on Civil Service and Local Self-Government since 2009). For the first time the law clearly introduced the obligation of training civil servants with the aim to improve their skills and performance. In addition, the Law defined the role of the Agency on Civil Service for civil service training.

The Agency on Civil Service has strived to create a unified training system for civil servants. It has repeatedly tried to develop a strategic document, reflecting goals and ways of establishing training systems. But due to political reasons - two revolutions, in 2005 and in 2010 respectively – have blocked its approval.

Third Stage: 2013-Present

The Presidential Decree of 12 July 2013 approved the Programme development of the training system of public civil and municipal servants in the Kyrgyz Republic for 2013-2017. This programme was a strategic document defining the training system goals, objectives and main directions. According to the Programme, training of public civil servants is divided into two types: (i) Retraining – training courses for the acquisition of additional knowledge, skills,

and abilities, and of individual disciplines necessary for performing a new type of professional activity; and (ii) Advanced training – training courses to improve theoretical and practical knowledge, skills, and abilities of civil servants. Retraining is conducted for individuals entering the civil service for the first time and for civil servants who are promoted from the 'specialist' to the 'executive' category. Advanced training is provided for the professional development of civil servants within a group of posts.

Off-JT in the Kyrgyz Republic

The main objective of the Kyrgyz Off-JT as stated in the Law on Public Civil Service is the professional development of civil servants necessary for the performance of ministries' and agencies' tasks. Off-JT includes General Trainings and Departmental Trainings. General Trainings are provided by the Agency for Civil Service and Local Self-Government for all ministries and agencies. Departmental Trainings are conducted by ministries and agencies for their own personnel. This article focuses on General Trainings.

The objectives of General Trainings are: (i) to strengthen human resource capacity of state and local self-government bodies to improve the efficiency of the public administration system; (ii) to increase human resource capacity of state and local self-government bodies for the effective performance of their duties; and (iii) to provide professional development and career development of civil servants.¹³

The organisation process of General Trainings is carried out by the Agency through the formation and control over the implementation of the relevant State Order. The State Order is the training plan for civil servants for one calendar year within the means provided in the state budget for the purpose.¹⁴ In 2019, the Agency provided 186 training courses for central government ministries and agencies and for local self-government bodies through which 2,900 servants were trained.¹⁵ Training courses consisted of thirteen different types of Advanced Training and two types of Retraining.

Table 1. Retraining courses in 2019

No	Course title	Content description	Category of trainees
1	Fundamentals of public administration of the Kyrgyz Republic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – system of public and municipal administration; – system of public and municipal service; – system of normative legal acts; – office work in public bodies; – professional ethics and anti-corruption. 	Newly appointed civil servants
2	Strategic management in the public sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – project management and development programmes; – monitoring and evaluation of projects and programmes; – effective skills of management; – basics of strategic planning. 	Civil servants who were promoted to executive positions

Source: The State Order for training public and municipal servants of the Kyrgyz Republic 2019. Approved by Decree of Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, 24 July 2019, #229.

¹³ Article 25, Decree of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic "On Public Civil Servants and Municipal Servants Trainings" No 462 (11 August 2014).

¹⁴ The organisation process of General Training includes several stages: (i) assessment of training needs for civil servants; (ii) formation and approval of the State Order for training; (iii) training of civil servants; (iv) control, monitoring, and evaluation of training; and (v) preparation of the report on the results of training.

¹⁵ Annual Report of the Agency on Civil Service and Local Self-Government for 2019.

Table 2. Some main courses of Advanced Training in 2019

No	Course title	Content description	Category of trainees
1	Training for trainers		Trainers
2	Finance management		State Secretaries of ministries and agencies
3	Management, monitoring, and evaluation state development programmes. Analysis, development, and implementation of public policies.		Assistant Director and Director level
4	Civil service in the Kyrgyz Republic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – organisation of civil service; – performance appraisal; – training of civil servants; – gender issues in civil service. 	Civil servants of Human resource management departments
5	Public finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – budget policy; – program budgeting; – internal and external audit; – 1C accounting; – public procurement procedures. 	Civil servants of Finance departments
6	Normative and legal support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – system of normative and legal acts of the Kyrgyz Republic; – rule-making and legislative technology; – methodology of developing normative legal acts; 	Civil servants of Legal departments
7	Anticorruption policy Professional Ethics Gender approaches		All category of civil servants

Source: The State Order for training public and municipal servants of the Kyrgyz Republic 2019. Approved by Decree of Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, 24 July 2019, #229.

Kyrgyz central government training policy

The period of 1991 to 2013 lacked a systematic approach to the civil servants' training system. Furthermore, given the existing legal base, the civil servants' training system did not function to the fullest extent, which affected the relations among ministries/agencies, training institutions, and international organisations in this sphere.

Reform of the system started with the adoption of the Programme for the Development of the Training System of Public Civil and Municipal Servants in the Kyrgyz Republic for 2013-2017.¹⁶ It aims at advancing the professional skills of civil servants in the Kyrgyz Republic and it contains new approaches to training, including types, directions, and other aspects of training certification. It identifies and delineates roles and functions of all the elements in the training system, which also distinguishing the focal points of financial, human as well as academic and methodological patterns of the system. The training programme is based on clear division of goals and responsibilities on different levels of coordination.

Its main objective is to establish and develop a flexible and effective system of training civil servants that meets the requirements of an effective public management in accordance with

¹⁶ Approved by Presidential Decree on 12 July 2013. The Programme was developed in accordance with the Presidential Decrees "On the Concept of Modernisation of Public Service in the Kyrgyz Republic" (20 June 2011) and "On the National Strategy for Sustainable Development of the Kyrgyz Republic for the period of 2013-2017" (21 January 2013).

the goals of the Concept of Public Service Modernisation and the National Strategy for Sustainable Development of the Kyrgyz Republic 2013-2017.

The analysis of the current situation, issues, and opportunities for the training system considers the following tasks:

- Legal support for the training system;
- Establishment of an effective management system;
- Strengthening institutional opportunities for the training system;
- Renovating approaches to training;
- Development of sustainable mechanisms of resource supply;
- Singular management and coordination of all the elements of the system;
- Regular training;
- Functioning of the system based on State Orders financed by the State and local budgets, and by other resources;
- An obligation for civil servants to take training courses for promotion and rotation;
- Compliance of the training programmes with the public service requirements;
- Division of training between general and departmental trainings;
- Providing highly-qualified training as well as academic potential and advanced methodological analytical-based information;
- Establishment of an advanced agenda for training that is capable of meeting all contemporary requirements of public and municipal services;
- Full exercise of both domestic and foreign experiences, new methodologies, and mechanisms in training programmes;
- All procedures of creating the legal base have been completed. Thus, the followings have been developed and approved by Decrees from the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic:
 - The regulation for civil servants' training (Government Decree No 462, 11 August 2014) explains the principle definitions of the new training system, regulates the process of organising the trainings, and defines the guarantees and responsibilities of the servants taking the courses;
 - The regulation of State Orders on civil servant's training (Government Decree No 462, 11 August 2014) defines the procedures of forming, financing, and implementing state orders. According to the Law of the Kyrgyz Republic "On the public civil and municipal service", not less than one percent of the state agency's budget must be allocated for the training of civil servants;
 - The regulations on the cost of training and payment ratios for the trainers, (Government Decree No 529, 12 September 2014), adjust new payment ratios for trainers and cost training, which are used in forming the state order on trainings;
 - The regulation of coordinating the training of Kyrgyz civil servants at the donors' expense, (Government Decree No 631, 10 November 2014), aims to systemise and singularly coordinate the training process, complying with the general qualification requirements, career planning, and evaluation of the training results. All general training programmes must be concentrated one designated body – the Agency.

In the period 1991-2013, the training of civil servants was maintained by various organisations at the expense of donors' support and was not coordinated. Hence, each governmental agency and units of the local government interacted with donors and foreign organisations directly or through the Kyrgyz Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Agendas and guidelines of trainings were settled solely by donors without considering the demands of the public administration system in the Kyrgyz Republic concerning the training of civil servants.

Considering the fact that the Agency is the coordinating body of general training programmes, training programmes held at the donors' expense need to be coordinated in

compliance with the new training system. The new Regulation provides coordination of mechanisms in the sphere of training public officers. According to the new procedures, governmental agencies and agencies of the local governments must choose and send their officers to general training programmes through the Agency. This coordinating mechanism is enabling the Agency to regulate and systematise the training held by the donors in international and foreign organisations both within and outside the Kyrgyz Republic.

The State Agency for Civil Service and Local Self-Government Affairs under the Cabinet Ministers of the Kyrgyz Republic

The State Agency on Civil Service and Local Self-Government Affairs (hereinafter the Agency) is the government body authorised to develop, implement, and ensure the sustainable functioning of the integrated personnel policy in government bodies and local self-government units of the Kyrgyz Republic. It is the single coordinating body for the formation of State Orders for the Government's programmes for training, retraining, advanced training, and internships of civil and municipal servants, which may also include overseas training.¹⁷

The main functions of the Agency are:

- Improvement of a unified State personnel policy in the sphere of civil and municipal services;
- Development of a highly professional system of managing civil and municipal services;
- Enhancing the prestige of civil and municipal services;
- Ensuring the rights and legitimate interests of the civil and municipal servants;
- Develops and implements the public policy of training public and municipal servants;
- Provides the central government bodies and units of the local governments with methodology for defining demands in trainings;
- Forms and allocates the State Orders among the educational institutions on a competitive base and regulates their implementation;
- Monitors the training systems, including the departmental training programmes and the foreign training programmes of central government bodies and units of the local government;
- Participates in the implementation of all foreign training programmes for public and municipal servants held by state agencies and agencies of local governments;
- Cooperates with civil society, non-governmental organisations, and associations of the local government agencies (the Union of municipalities) in the sphere of training servants;
- Maintains the organisation of human resource as well as the academic and methodological supply of the training for public and municipal servants.

The Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Kyrgyz Republic

The Academy of Public Administration (APA) is a leading educational and research institute in the field of training and development of senior and junior managers of public and local government officials of the Kyrgyz Republic. The APA is provided under the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic, as well as the Laws of the Kyrgyz Republic "On education", "On Science and Foundation of State Science and Technology Policy" and other pertinent statutes of the Kyrgyz Republic government. The main activities of the Academy are: (i) Set-up of effective training, retraining and advanced training systems for public and municipal servants; and (ii) Implementation of the state order for training, retraining and advanced training of officials of state and municipal services.

The governing authority of the Academy consists of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic – the founder of the Academy, the Rector of the Academy, the Board of Trustees, and the

¹⁷ Nowadays, the Agency's workforce comprises 135 civil servants.

Scientific Council. The Rector is the head of the Academy appointed by the President of the Kyrgyz Republic.

FINDINGS

The analysis seeks answers to the research questions by examining the effective aspects of Japanese training system that can be adapted to the Kyrgyz training system. In Japan, public servants' assignments change on average every 2-3 years through job rotation. Public bodies of Japan train their personnel through an effective combination of job rotation, OJT and Off-JT.

Japanese OJT occurs through 3 elements: (1) flexible job assignments: there are no individual detailed assignments to each position; (2) shared workspace system; (3) and periodic job rotations in a ministry and/or among other state bodies of central and local governments. According to Ishikawa (2007), Japanese OJT has its own significance in both the public and private sectors as the most central method of personnel training, because it is seen as the most effective means for personnel to acquire knowledge, skills, and know-how, both general and work-specific – regarded as necessary for performing their tasks satisfactorily. This finding proves that OJT is an effective training methodology for personnel training.

Ishikawa (2007) states that the systematic procedures to ensure the effective acquisition of knowledge, skills, and attitudes through OJT are: (i) Analyse the current situation; (ii) Confirm the important points of training; (iii) Decide main procedures; (iv) Establish detailed plan; (v) Implement actual training; and (vi) Follow up on results.

He also explains that the important aspect in the Japanese OJT is believed to be for managers to 'provide guidance and advice appropriate for the situation of each official'. To ensure this, the following competencies are required of managers: (i) Suitable awareness of the skills required by officials to perform the duties required of them in that work area; (ii) Identification of the skills or talents that personnel already possess; and (iii) Provision of appropriate instruction on methods for developing specific skills in the case it is discovered that there is a gap between the skills required to perform their work and the skills they already possess.

Off-JT is systematically, well planned, organised and implemented by the NPA and by each ministry and most of the ministries have their own training centres. The purpose of the Japanese Off-JT is to ensure that staff acquire the skills, and enhance their ability and qualifications, that are necessary to perform their duties and responsibilities in the government positions that they currently hold or expect to hold in the future. Various Off-JT training programmes have been implemented by the NPA and individual ministries. In Japan, 95% of training is conducted by ministries for their own personnel, while the rest are inter-ministerial by NPA.

If the civil service system in the Kyrgyz Republic is compared with the Japanese system, there are differences in recruitment processes, career path, and in training system. In the Kyrgyz training system, there is no system like OJT in Japan, no definitions and regulations in the laws and decrees of the government. However, in some cases a newly recruited civil servant can get the help and advice of senior colleagues. In the author's case when he had been appointed to the civil service in 2012, he often asked questions how to do tasks more effectively and efficiently from senior officials. Sometimes he was ignored due to their busiest duties or subjective reasons like interpersonal relations. No one was obliged to train the author due to the lack of regulations in the laws. Most of the freshmen are faced with this kind of things.

According to the Regulation on the Order of Rotation of public civil and municipal servants of the Kyrgyz Republic, job rotation is the transfer of individuals in the public civil service and municipal service. Rotation is carried out on the condition of compliance of prospective civil

servants to qualification requirements of the position to which they move to. Job rotation usually occurs to fill a vacant position.

Article 3 of the above Regulation states that job rotations are carried out for the following purposes: (i) increase the efficiency of the activities of state bodies and local government; (ii) rational use of the potential of civil servants; (iii) increasing career motivation; (iv) filling vacant positions; and (v) preventing conflicts of interest and reducing the risk of corruption. The Regulation does not mention anything about a periodic job rotation system, except in case of corruption risk, in which job rotation takes place no more than once every two years.

Off-JT in the Kyrgyz Republic is provided systematically by the State Agency on Civil Service since 2013. Most of the ministries do not have their own training centres. The Agency provides general training courses like the Japanese NPA, but the Agency also conducts 'semi-general courses' like accounting, legal base, ICT courses, etc.

POLICY PROPOSALS FOR THE KYRGYZ TRAINING SYSTEM

By studying the features of the training systems of the two countries, some elements of the Japanese system can be adopted to improve the training system of the Kyrgyz Republic. Thus, this article ends by offering some policy proposals:

Proposal 1: Introduction of OJT in the Kyrgyz training system

OJT seems not to be implemented and utilised in the most proper and appropriate way in the Kyrgyz civil service due to the civil service systems differences between Japan and the Kyrgyz Republic. For first time, OJT tends to be implemented just for new personnel for a period of two to three weeks. After that, newly appointed personnel are left on their own to deal with their daily tasks. Therefore, there is a need for introducing OJT by adapting the 'spirit' of Japanese OJT. This system has proven to be effective in improving skills and experience of personnel in the private and public sectors of Japan. Therefore, Japanese OJT should be integrated as part of the 'excellent working culture' in the public service. This 'OJT culture' would create a counter balance for the Kyrgyz Government to offset the heavy concentration on Off-JT.

Proposal 2: Establishing training centres in each ministry

Each ministry should establish its own compact training centres (or training rooms) in order to provide specialised training courses. Each Ministry should allocate from 1% to 5% of its budget for training staff purposes, which is allowed by the Law on Public Civil Service and Municipal Service of the Kyrgyz Republic. The efficiency of civil servants and of each ministry depends much on training courses which are relevant to their mandated functions.

Proposal 3: Training courses related to practical fields

The Agency should introduce training courses which are more practically oriented. Trainings should be conducted by discussing real case studies originating in the history of public administration of the Kyrgyz Republic, similar to the system of Administrative Trainings provided in Japan, discussed earlier in this article. Furthermore, in the long-term perspective, the Agency should conduct trainings only for civil servants who are expected to play a core role in the administrative operations of each ministry. The basic purpose of these training programmes should be to improve civil servants' sense of mission as servants of the whole community based on a strong ethical awareness; to raise the level of qualification/ability required to represent viewpoints of the people as a whole, such a broad perspective and flexible ideas; and to build mutual trust enabling policies to be carried out through cooperation among civil servants.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this limited research has extensively analysed the Japanese and Kyrgyz civil service training systems and policies. Some interesting and important findings have derived from this research, which may provide the basis for significant inputs to the Kyrgyz civil

service for improving its current personnel training system and policy. The proposed model would better meet the training needs of the civil servants in overcoming current or future challenges and fulfilling the Nation's high expectations. An important point should always be remembered, that in this ever-changing world, the Kyrgyz civil service will not be able to survive by depending on the same skills and knowledge over long periods of time. Consequently, the Kyrgyz civil service has to improve, renew, and reinvent its training system. The proposed model and its new approaches are thought to be necessary and important, not only to strengthen the country's training system and policy, but also to ensure a better future for the Nation.

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