

Abstract

Evaluation of Civil Servants' Capability on Gender Equality and Policy Suggestions : Focus on the Senior Civil Service

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This study aims to evaluate the gender equality competencies of the senior civil service in central and local governments, and to identify policy needs and make suggestions for strengthening these competencies. A model to assess gender equality competencies is described and applied to the senior civil service. This leads to a wide range of policy suggestions to enhance senior civil servants'

gender equality competencies, and to reinforce them through legal and institutional measures in the administrative organizations.

Recently the status and roles of the senior civil service have been required to change in response to government innovation and #Me_Too campaigns. Also, as gender issues have become a critical driver of government innovation, demands to improve the organizational culture of the government in a way to ameliorate sex discrimination and make working environments gender equal have been increasing. Despite these circumstances, members of the senior civil service have been found to be bystanders or direct perpetrators of various forms of sex discrimination. This demonstrates why it is necessary for the senior civil service to enhance their perceptions and competencies with regard to gender equality.

Research contents and methods used to meet the research objectives outlined above are as follows. Research contents include: a model to assess senior civil service's gender equality competencies, an examination of their competencies and related need for changes in policy; a review of international and domestic case studies on good practices and educational programmes from which lessons can be drawn, and specific policy suggestions for the enhancement of the senior civil service's gender equality Competency. The research methods include literature reviews on the enhancement of gender equality Competency for senior civil servants, interviews with 25 civil servants and relevant experts, a survey of 524 senior civil servants and civil servants who are beneath the 5th rank, and consultation with experts.

The results of the research show that the vast majority of civil servants think that gender equality Competency of the senior civil service should be enhanced. The results of the survey question,

which asked respondents to rate on a five point scale various gender equality competencies of the senior executive service have, indicate that the competencies of 'responsibility for gender equality', 'methodological speciality', and 'gender equal organizational management' are relatively strong, with an average score between 3.9 and 4.5. In contrast, the questions on institutions and infrastructure for gender equality received generally negative responses. The senior civil servants were asked nine 'yes or no' questions on whether policies and work processes undertaken by affiliated offices and units have appropriate human and material infrastructure, regulations, and institutions to strengthen gender equality and women's rights. The rates of positive response to all nine questions were low, varying between 7.7 and 31.7 per cent. This signifies that there is a large gap between the subjective perception of civil servants on their gender equality competencies, and the existing organizational institutions and infrastructure in relation to gender equality.

As for what policies are necessary to enhance the gender equality competencies of senior civil servants, the results from interviews and surveys have identified many different policy needs: conversion of the current Competency model of the senior civil service to include a gender equality Competency model, development of simulated tasks to enhance and evaluate gender equality competencies of the senior civil service, changes to male dominant organizational cultures to be more gender equal, and implementation of affirmative action to expand women in senior positions.

Based upon the research results, policy suggestions for the enhancement of senior civil servants gender equality competencies are as follows. Firstly, the current Competency model does not explicitly reflect competencies in gender equality, which needs to be

changed. Two possible changes were put forward to survey respondents. The first is to add a criterion of gender equality onto the explanatory section of the model where each Competency is defined, while leaving the current three areas and six Competency elements intact. The results of survey shows that 55.2 per cent of respondent agreed with this suggestion. The second is to add explicit 'gender equality competencies' on to the existing Competency model to create a model of four areas and nine Competency elements. 21.6 per cent of respondents have agreed with this suggestion.

Secondly, a variety of simulated tasks that can be used to evaluate gender equality competencies should be developed and used. A behavioral index to evaluate gender equality competencies also needs to be developed, and accordingly, role-plays and references of specific situations need to be included.

Thirdly, a self-checklist for the enhancement of gender equality competencies of the senior civil service is presented. Based on the 'Gender Equality Competency Model of the Senior Civil Service', gender equal responsibilities, methodological speciality, and gender equal organizational management form three competencies each measured by five items, leading to a total of fifteen items each evaluated on a five-point scale.

Fourthly, education programmes need to be developed for the enhancement of gender equality competencies of the senior civil service. The research results demonstrate very high demands for such education programmes, which are so rare at present. In this regard, education on gender equality should be made compulsory and run specifically for the education of nominees for senior civil service positions. Also, the number of hours of gender equality education should be increased, and contents need to be developed

to meet the specific features of senior civil service roles and responsibilities. Given difficulties in operating a group class for senior civil servants, new teaching methods also need to be developed. Furthermore, recruitment of special lecturers for this particular area of education, and a support programme such special lecturers' can be considered.

Finally, in order to strengthen gender equality competencies of the senior civil service, the creation and reform of organizational infrastructure is essential. In this regard, education for gender equality Competency enhancement should be offered systematically to all civil servants by rank. The male-dominant organizational culture needs to be challenged and efforts to make it gender equal should be continued. Also, a new institution should be established to include gender equality competencies as a goal of performance management or in the evaluation of performance of senior civil servants as an essential item. Above all, diverse initiatives should be taken to address the issue of gender-imbalance in the senior civil service.

Research areas: representativeness, gender equality culture and
consciousness

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