

Review Salary Policies for Vietnamese Civil Servants from the Independent Day in 1945 to 1950

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Abstract:

This is an article in a series of articles on the salary policy of Vietnamese civil servants from 1945 to the present. The first article on salary policy for the period 2010-2019 has been published and this article is the second. During the difficult period of 1945-1950 of Vietnam in the new period of independence, the salary policy was still not stable, but basically, a salary policy by grade and grade was established to be applied to the employees. later stage. The main body of the article presents the salary policy of the period Sep 1945-April 1948 and the period May 1948-1950.

Keywords: Vietnam, civil servant, salary, minimum wage, allowances

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I. INTRODUCTION

Salary is one of the main components of the payment system, which is a matter of concern to employees. The main purpose of salary is to compensate them for their hard work and to motivate them to do better work (Mukherjee, 1998). For the public sector, the salary policy for civil servants is one of the important issues. According to research results for commune-level civil servants in Vietnam in 2020, the more satisfied with the salary civil servants are, the better performance they do (Huyen, 2020).

Since independence day on September 9, 1945, Vietnam has undergone many reforms in the salary policy for civil servants. Each period has its characteristics and is a premise for a better salary policy of the post-reform period. In a series of articles on salary policy for Vietnamese civil servants from 1945 to the present, the author has published an article for the period 2010-2019 (Le & Phan, 2019) and this time will write about the early period 1945-1950 when the country Vietnam just gained independence.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHOD

There are several research works on the salary policy of Vietnamese civil servants over time. They are Vu Thi Nga's research paper in 2014 on Vietnam's minimum wage system from 1945 to 2010 (Nga, 2010); Luu Thi Lam master thesis in 2014 with the topic of Vietnamese law on minimum wages (Lam, 2014); Bui Thi Thuy Ngan's thesis on wage reform in Vietnam and some other articles by many authors (Bui, 2015; Imbert, 2011; Nguyen et al., 2017; Phuong et al., 2018; Sakellariou & Fang, 2014).

This article uses a descriptive qualitative method, based on secondary data of the period 1945-1950 on the civil servant salary policy to analyze and draw assessment to help readers have more knowledge about the wage policy for civil servants in a historical period of Vietnam.

III. FINDINGS

1. The content of salary policies for Vietnamese public servants from 1945 to 1950

The salary policy is a set of legal regulations on the basic salary regime, salary scale, salary plan, salary rules according to job position or employee (Campo & Sundaram, 2001). Salary policy for Vietnamese civil servants in this period includes main salary, supplementary salary, allowances and minimum salary, These terms can be understood as follows:

The main salary is the specific salary specified according to the rank and grade of the civil servant

Supplementary salary is the salary applied temporarily for a certain time, accounting for 40% of the main salary and not applied for a long time like the main salary, not used to calculate 10% to the retirement fund.

Allowances are amounts provided in addition to the main salary to support civil servants during their work.

The minimum wage is specified by a specific number. It is the smallest amount of the total main salary, supplementary salary (if any) and allowances that the civil servant receives each month. The minimum wage is equivalent to the first-level salary of civil servants.

1.1. Stage from 1945 to April 1948

Since President Ho Chi Minh read the Declaration of Independence, proclaimed the establishment of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam on September 2, 1945 and launched the Provisional Government, there has been lots of different titles referring to people working in the public sector such as civil servants, public servants, cadres, workers for Government, contract-based staffs or officials. But “civil servant” is the most commonly used. Civil servants in this period include official civil servants (or full-time civil servants) and temporary civil servants (Ordinance No.330, 1946). Official civil servants were those holding administrative ranks, professional ranks working in ministries, regional or local administrative committees. Temporary ones were those who work by day or work on a monthly contract or other contract types.

Under Ordinance issued on November 10, 1938 (promulgated by Governor-General of Indochina, the old Government) on the classification of civil servants, they were classified into 9 grades on the base of qualification: A1, B1, A2, B2, C2, third, fourth, fifth and sixth grade (partly mentioned in Ordinance 330 on August 16, 1946).

In the early days of the nation’s founding, salaries for civil servants were temporarily applied as same as the former regime by Decree No. 47 issued on October 10, 1945 on temporary applying the current laws in North, Central and South Vietnam (Ordinance No.47-SL, 1945).

Minimum wage

For the period 1945-1947, the minimum wage is the lowest salary that civil servants receive monthly. This monthly salary is specified as the sum of the main wage and allowances. The main salary and allowances were regulated by specific amounts according to the rank of civil servants (Decree No.587-TC, 1946).

On 23 July 1946, the Government issued Ordinance 133-SL (took effective since July 1st 1946) on granting an extra allowance for high-price rice and stabilizing the minimum wage of civil servants of all grades (Ordinance No.133-SL, 1946). Then Ministry of Finance issued Decree No. 587-TC on July 24, 1946 provided guidelines to calculate minimum wage for civil servants. Accordingly, if the total monthly salary (main salary plus allowances) is less than 150 VND (with civil servants in capital Hanoi and Hai Phong province) and less than 130 VND in other provinces will be summed up to 150 VND or 130 VND depending on the region (Decree No.587-TC, 1946). More specifically, the minimum wage of 150 VND is the lowest salary amount that civil servants in Hanoi, Hai Phong received monthly and 130 VND for civil servants in other provinces. The minimum wage of 130VND is equivalent to 52kg of rice with the price of 2.5VND per kilogram. When the rice price is higher than 2.5VND per kilogram, civil servants will receive the expensive rice allowance.

By November 4, 1946, the Minister of Finance's Circular 3926-BTC/5 on minimum salary for civil servants having bachelor diploma is VND 400/month; in other cases, it is still as stipulated in Ordinance 133.

Main salary

The main salary is determined according to specific amounts depending on the rank of the civil servant.

Table 1: Payscale of Vietnamese civil servants from 1945 to April 1948

Grade	Main salary (VND/year)	Grade	Main salary (VND/year)
A1	> 3600	3	750 – 959
B1	3000 – 3599	4	456 – 749
A2	1900 – 2999	5	400 – 455
B2	1400 – 1899	6	< 400
C2	960 – 1399		

Source: (Ordinance No.330, 1946)

Allowances

Allowances in this period have many types such as regional allowance, expensive living cost allowance (Decree No.587-TC, 1946), allowance for business travel (Ordinance No.330, 1946), expensive rice allowance applied when the rice price is higher than 2.5VND per kg (Ordinance No.133-SL, 1946), family allowance for civil children under 16 and for the wife who is not a civil servant (Decree No.587-TC, 1946; Ordinance 199, 1946), leader position allowance (Ordinance 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 1946), responsibility allowance (Decree 548-TC, 1946), temporary special allowance according to market rice price (Ordinance 87-SL, 1947), job-specific allowance (Ordinance 171, 1946), etc. These allowances were specified in many different documents, the amount varies depending on the title/position of the civil servant.

The financial situation of the country was difficult at this time, on the one hand, building a newly established country, on the other hand, still having to deal with foreign invaders, but the Government still

granted main salary and many kinds of allowances to all civil servants and other public-sector employees to ensure a stable life for them. In contrast, to support the new government, many civil servants volunteered to work without pay or to receive a salary equal to the minimum living standard.

1.2. Stage from May 1948 to 1950

On May 29th 1948, Ordinance no.188-SL which was promulgated and took effect on the first of May was the first fairly complete salary policy for civil servants and other public-sector employees at that period. This document is about the establishment of a new regime for civil servants and a general pay scale for different grades and ranks. There were two circulars guiding the implementation of Ordinance 188, namely Circular 476 on the implementation of the new regulation on Vietnamese civil servants (Circular No. 476-NV/CC, 1948); Circular 600 on ranking salary levels for civil servants (Circular No.600-NV/KC, 1948). In Ordinance 188, civil servants were divided into five grades A, B, C, D, E and five ranks by their qualification. Grade E is the highest for the civil servant who has a doctoral degree or equivalent capacity. All civil servants follow a common 25-level pay scale in which each salary level corresponds to a specific amount and 25 is the highest level corresponding to the highest salary (see Table 3).

Table 2: Salary levels of civil servants by rank/grade from May 1948 to 1950

Grade	Rank	Qualification	Payscale
A	Assistant	primary or equivalent	10 levels of salary, from level 1 to level 10
B	Staff	high school or equivalent	12 levels, from level 5 to 16
C	Counsellor	senior high school or equivalent	10 levels, from level 10 to 19
D	Specialist	bachelor or equivalent	10 levels, from level 13 to 22
E	Supervisor	PhD, doctorate or equivalent	10 levels, from level 16 to 25

Source: (Ordinance No. 188-SL, 1948)

Minimum wage, main and extra salary

In this period, monthly salary embraces main salary, extra salary and allowances. 10% of the main salary is deducted monthly for the pension fund. Extra wage is equal to 40% of the main salary, this wage is temporarily applied. The minimum wage since May 1948, which was the sum of main salary and allowances, was 220 VND per month (Circular No. 476-NV/CC, 1948; Ordinance No. 188-SL, 1948). The minimum wage of 220VND was equivalent to 220kg of rice with the price of 1VND per kilogram in 1948. When the rice price is higher than 1 VND per kilogram, civil servants will receive the expensive rice allowance (Decree 403-NV-TC, 1948). Since August 1, 1949 minimum wage was 250dong/month which was tantamount to 83kg rice with the rice price of 3dong/kg. When the rice price was higher than 3dong/kg, the civil servant would receive the allowance for expensive rice (Circular No. 8-LB/6, 1950).

In Feb and March 1950, there were documents issued to amend and supplement Ordinance 188, namely Ordinance No. 30 dated February 19, 1950 (Ordinance No.30-SL, 1950), Decree No. 49-LB/6 issued on February 20, 1950 regulating on supplementary wage (Decree No. 49-LB/6, 1950). These documents took effect on August 1st 1949. Furthermore, Ordinance No. 47 was issued on March 25, 1950 and applied since Jan 1st 1950 (Ordinance 47/SL, 1950). Accordingly, the main salary and supplementary salary of civil servants increased compared to 1948, detailed in Table 3.

On May 22, 1950, faced with the situation of rice prices being too expensive, the Ordinance No. 81 (Ordinance No.81-SL, 1950) was issued, effective from May 1, 1950, regulating how to pay salaries and allowances to civil servants an amount equal to the price of medium-grade rice sold on the market which recognized by the Resistance Committees of districts, towns and cities. The salary was calculated by the rice price, the lowest was 35kg rice and the highest was 72kg (see Table 3).

Table 3: Common pay scale of Vietnamese civil servants from May 1948 to 1950

Level	Yearly salary (unit: VND)				Monthly base salary (After deducting 10% for pension)		Monthly salary by rice price of (kg-kilogram)
	Full main salary (A)		Extra salary (40% of the main salary) (B)		(A- 10% *A + B)/12		
	May 1948	Aug 1949	May 1948	Aug 1949	May 1948	Aug 1949	Jan 1950
25	12,720	14,130	5,088	5,652	1,378	1,531	72.0 kg rice
24	11,880	13,230	4,752	5,292	1,287	1,433	69.0
23	11,040	12,330	4,416	4,932	1,196	1,336	66.0
22	10,200	11,430	4,080	4,572	1,105	1,238	63.0
21	9,480	10,530	3,792	4,242	1,027	1,141	60.0
20	8,760	9,630	3,504	3,852	949	1,043	57.0
19	8,040	9,030	3,216	3,612	871	978	55.0
18	7,320	8,430	2,928	3,372	793	913	53.0
17	6,600	7,830	2,640	3,132	715	848	51.0
16	6,000	7,230	2,400	2,892	650	783	49.0

15	5,400	6,630	2,160	2,652	585	718	47.0
14	4,800	6,210	1,920	2,484	520	673	45.7
13	4,200	5,790	1,680	2,316	455	627	44.5
12	3,600	5,370	1,440	2,148	390	582	43.2
11	3,360	4,950	1,344	1,980	364	536	42.0
10	3,120	4,530	1,248	1,812	338	491	40.7
9	2,880	4,230	1,152	1,692	312	458	40.0
8	2,640	3,930	1,056	1,572	286	426	39.2
7	2,400	3,630	960	1,452	260	393	38.5
6	2,160	3,330	864	1,332	234	361	37.7
5	2,040	3,030	816	1,212	221	328	37.0
4	1,920	2,850	768	1,140	208	309	36.5
3	1,800	2,670	720	1,068	195	289	36.0
2	1,680	2,490	672	996	182	270	35.5
1	1,560	2,310	624	924	169	250	35.0 kg rice

Source: (Decree No. 49-LB/6, 1950; Ordinance No. 188-SL, 1948; Ordinance No.30-SL, 1950)

Allowances

Sine May 1st 1948, every month the civil servants also receive these types of allowances: family allowance contains 50dong/month for the wife who was not a civil servant, from 30 to 60 dong depending on the number of children under 16 (Circular 752-NV/TC, 1948; Ordinance No. 188-SL, 1948); expensive rice allowance applied when the rice price over 1dong/kg (Circular 752-NV/TC, 1948; Circular No. 476-NV/CC, 1948; Decree 403-NV-TC, 1948); allowance for bad-weather areas were 30/60/80 dong by area 3/2/1 (Circular No. 476-NV/CC, 1948; Decree 118-ZY/TD, 1949; Decree 432-NV/YT, 1948; Decree 798-ZY/TD, 1949; Decree 948-ZY-TD, 1949; Ordinance No. 188-SL, 1948), frontage zone allowance were 80/60/30 by zone 1/2/3 (Circular No. 476-NV/CC, 1948; Ordinance No. 188-SL, 1948). Besides, civil servants were also entitled to receive allowances such as allowance for leadership position, job-specific and allowance for bussiness travel (Circular No. 476-NV/CC, 1948). Allowances were specified in specific amounts.

Since August 1, 1949, some new documents provided for changes in allowances. Civil servants would receive the expensive rice allowance when the market price was higher than 3dong/kg (Circular No. 8-LB/6, 1950; Decree 48-LB/6, 1950). Allowance for business travel was stipulated in Decree 324/BTC on December 1, 1949.

Until Jan 1st 1950, the norms (specific amounts) for these allowances changed. Civil servants receive expensive rice allowance when the market price was higher than 5dong/kg (Ordinance 47/SL, 1950). Regulation on other allowances was updated by some documents issued in 1950 such as allowance bad-climate zones (Decree 135-LB/6, 1950); family allowance (Decree 136/LB-6, 1950), allowance for business travel (Circular 4-LB-TT, Circular 226P-6, 1950). Besides, civil servants also received other allowances such as allowance for the leadership position, job-specific allowance,...which were stipulated in other legal documents.

On May 20th 1950, Ordinance 76 was promulgated the Regulation on civil servants with full contents on civil servant management since recruitment to retirement. In this Ordinance, the concept of civil servants had been defined as "Civil servants are Vietnamese citizens recruited by the people's government to hold a regular position in Government agencies, in or outside the country" (Decree No.76, 1950). Regarding the salary regime, the Ordinance clearly states that the salary of civil servants paid includes the main salary and allowances, the increase in the salary level (on the next level in the same rank) will be periodically reviewed for civil servants. 2 years or more of seniority, if civil servants do not violate any discipline, they will be increased. In the case of many achievements, it was possible to increase multiple salary levels at a time. The majority of people working in the state apparatus of the people's government will apply this Regulation to manage, separate cases will be set by the Government.

On May 22, 1950, due to the rice price was too expensive, the state budget was little, so the President issued Ordinance No. 81 (took effective since Jan 1950) stipulating wages and allowances calculated according to the rice price. From January 1, 1950, civil servants received only two types of allowance (family and allowance for bad-weather zones). Family allowance was equal to the price of 11 kg of rice (for his wife) and equal to the rice price of 5.5 kg for each child under 16 years old.

2. Evaluation of salary characteristics of civil servants in the period 1945-1950

This was a very difficult period for Vietnam because it had only just declared its independence after the victory over the French in the August Revolution 1945. During this period, it was necessary to build the country in the north and provide aid to the south to continue the resistance war against the French and American invaders.

The state budget was still meagre, the salary payment for civil servants was continuously adjusted at this stage. Ordinance 188 in 1948 on the general salary scale for civil servants and the regulations on civil servants issued in Ordinance 76 in 1950 are quite complete documents on salary policy and how to manage civil servants in this period. In general, during this period, the salary consists of main salary, supplementary salary

and many allowances. These policies were not stable yet and were often modified and supplemented. The minimum wage policy was also soon issued to ensure a minimum standard of living for civil servants.

The salary policy of this period is very simple to implement, the salary scale has 25 levels with a specific salary and civil servants are divided into 5 grades and ranks, each grade has its salary scale. Other positions are specified in separate documents on the salary regime. The salary policy of this period is the basis for the policy of the following period, even in the 2010-2019 period itself, Vietnamese civil servant salary also includes 2 components: basic salary (main salary) and lots of allowance types.

IV. CONCLUSION

The article presented an overview of the salary policy of Vietnamese civil servants in the period 1945-1950, a period when Vietnam faced many difficulties. The civil servant management policy and the salary policy have set the basic foundation of the salary system according to rank and grade, which is valid until the present time.

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